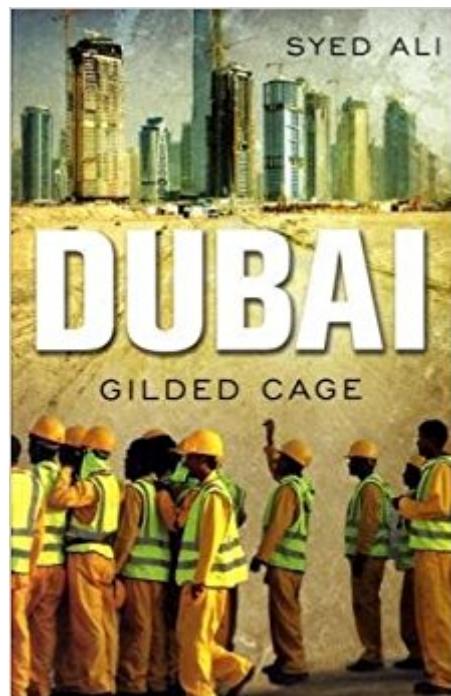


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Dubai: Gilded Cage



Synopsis

In less than two decades, Dubai has transformed itself from an obscure Gulf emirate into a global center for business, tourism, and luxury living. It is a fascinating case study in light-speed urban development, hyperconsumerism, massive immigration, and vertiginous inequality. Its rulers have succeeded in making Dubai into a worldwide brand, publicizing its astonishing hotels and leisure opportunities while at the same time successfully downplaying its complex policies towards guest workers and suppression of dissent. In this enormously readable book, Syed Ali delves beneath the dazzling surface to analyze how "and at what cost" Dubai has achieved such success. Ali brings alive a society rigidly divided between expatriate Westerners living self-indulgent lifestyles on short-term work visas, native Emiratis who are largely passive observers and beneficiaries of what Dubai has become, and workers from the developing world who provide the manual labor and domestic service needed to keep the emirate running, often at great personal cost.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"At last, a comprehensive exposé of the economic and sexual exploitation that erected this utopia of greed. Syed Ali has seen the future in Dubai and it doesn't work." - Mike Davis, author of *Planet of Slums*

Syed Ali currently teaches at Long Island University, Brooklyn, NY.

Found this book through an search and, with reserved expectations, ordered it. I was blown

away! While in a quickly developing place like Dubai a book like this can only be fully relevant for so long, I felt that this easy to read book gave me such a wealth of knowledge before visiting Dubai. There were so many times my mind referred back to this information during my visit and made my experiences much more meaningful. Importantly, talking with locals and reading the paper only reinforced the information - no issues with accuracy. It is a must-read before visiting Dubai.

A good insight into Dubai but I would like to have known why Dubai has chosen to be a "copy-cat" city, complete with replicas of sky scrapers seen elsewhere in the world, like a "Xerox" of Atlantis in the Bahamas and a very unimpressive version of NYC's Chrysler building. Why not be creative and have unique attractions and architectural masterpieces to attract tourists to their "fly buy Dubai" world? The national Dubaians are said to be lazy but the reason why they are not strongly urged/coerced by the UAE to become highly educated leaders, architects, etc. was not fully explained.

It's an interesting read concerning a seemingly choice place to live with a lot of the crap that's going on in the rest of the world. However you are not much more than a visitor/prisoner subject to the whims of the autocratic authorities.

If you live in the UAE or in the Gulf then much of what Syed Ali discusses is not new, but depressingly familiar - exploitation of labor from the developing world, the pursuit of money and affluent lifestyles by the world's professional class, the ennui and slothfulness of the indigenous population, and astride it all the benevolent dictatorship of the Sheikhs. If you know little about this part of the world, *Gilded Cage* would be a good introduction. Despite being written by a professional sociologist, it is refreshingly free of jargon and pretension (quite unlike *Dubai Dreams*, a book of similar scope, in which the author - though not an academic - tries far too hard to be witty and meaningful). Conceived as an academic investigation into the lives of expats born and raised in Dubai, *Gilded Cage* eventually grew to cover a whole range of people and issues, from labor and capital, to prostitutes and the pampered Emiratis. The book is largely an extended magazine feature written using much the same methods employed by journalists - reading lots of books and articles about the subject, visits to the scene, and interviews with the locals. Besides the police who showed up at his hotel to warn him off his research and escort him from the country, it seems Syed didn't interview widely among Emiratis or speak with anyone in government. Consequently this corner of his mural is lacking in color and depth. There is also no discussion of religion and some of its peculiar manifestations. (Almost all Sunni imams are employees of the state and are, just like the

maids and construction workers, foreigners on temporary work visas.) To his surprise, Syed discovers impermanency not as bad as he imagined. In fact, he finds that among those who grew up in Dubai, the permanently impermanent, an acceptance of their condition sets them free and confers on them a "worldly attitude." For them there is one less thing in life over which to suffer, the loss of place. "[They] seem to be 'free' of the weight of staying." Perhaps someday we can look back on this group as some of our first truly global citizens, people liberated from the tyranny of home, with no place to go back to, only places to move on to.#

as description. I absolutely love this product! I purchased this product along with a cutting board for a fruit platter that I needed to make for a party this past weekend. This product worked perfectly. It cut right threw the hard watermelon rind also cut the pineapple so perfectly. I am very pleased with the purchase! If your thinking about ordering this product you won't be disappointed. Thank you to the seller for a nice an smooth purchase! this price is valuable. as a gift to tiny, arrive on time,

When the book finally arrived - it was in perfect condition and was a very good read. Unfortunately the delivery was not quite as advertised. Not only did the book not arrive when suggested on the site, the site said the item was delivered when it wasn't.

In writing Dubai, Gilded Cage Syed Ali covers subjects that could be dry and, for lack of a better word, boring. He has however taken this book and made readable, interesting and enjoyable without "dumbing it down." The subject matter is covered in depth and I enjoyed the book thoroughly. I think this book is much like Marketplace on NPR. With many business reports, unless you are a business professional many people do not understand and may be bored by the content. Marketplace is the one business report that I listen to, understand and enjoy. The book does for Dubai what Marketplace does for business, makes it enjoyable, highly interesting and understandable without having to be a sociologist. This is a must read.Dan

At the end of a few-day business trip to Dubai I downloaded this book o learn more about this place I'd been. Enlightening.

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