

Why do they love Mohammed bin Salman?

“We wouldn’t have gone alone, we needed him to be able to go further into the dream,” this is exactly what a young man whom I met in a London hotel lobby told me.

I have seen the enthusiasm of Saudi youth after the kingdom’s [Vision 2030](#) was announced – an enthusiasm which was about to burn out before that. When I delivered a lecture in Columbia University in December 2017, this point was implicit in every question, why do the Arab youth, particularly those from Saudi Arabia, love Prince Mohammed bin Salman?

In terms of my generation, we may describe ourselves as confused; angry because years from our lives were hijacked by religious movements and in the name of nationalism and wars that only ended for new ones to begin. Yes, in the Gulf, we were and we are still more stable and enjoy better welfare than other Arab countries, but we were standing tall without a dream in the distance. We were standing tall as our students went to study abroad, we paved roads that were full of sand and watched Arabic movies in hopes that we’d have screens which we’d see our sons and daughters on, so that we see ourselves. We believed in the arts and we still do. We used to love in silence, walk in silence and stay distant from everyone. We were building the house where the dream will dwell – a dream that awoke with Mohammed bin Salman.

Irish satirist Jonathan Swift, who died in 1745, once said: “Vision is the art of seeing what is invisible to others.” The ability to dream since the dawn of history continues to awaken the path and empower men. Bright minds are those that see the blessing in productiveness and hard work, not in stillness and inactivity. There’s nothing truer than the determination of a man who experienced staying in his office 18 hours a day to smile and say: “We can go far over there. We have everything. God granted us nature that makes the whole wants to visit. Why don’t we invest in museums? Who are we leaving the coral reefs and the magnificent islands for? For how long will we rely on oil when we have everything? We will not allow the best years of our lives to be hijacked from us.”

Mohammed bin Salman sees the challenge and takes it head on, and he makes rapid progress. It is the walk of a man whose dream will be stopped by nothing except death. How can we not love him, Turki? the young Saudi man said.

You cannot blame Arab and Gulf youths for loving the prince. Our Arab countries have been struggling since the 1960s across the region – with few exceptions that can be counted on the fingers of one hand. They have been through an unprecedented phase of weakness as republics slipped into chaos, some countries’ springs turned into autumns, and violence only produced more violence, all the way to the Levant, where one is distressed from the news of those killed every day. All of this happened because an Iranian cleric saw an Arab soft spot and snuck in from the North and South and in vain wanted to snatch away Yemen, considered the “old house” of the Arab world. He armed the militia of ignorance in Saa’da, but only to create a graveyard. Yemen is the origin of every Arab as bin Salman put it. He’s the one who supplied Yemen with forces and committed to purge Yemen of the defilement of Khomeini and his rogue remnants.

War on corruption

In Saudi Arabia, everyone loves Prince Mohammed bin Salman because his war on corruption surprised those who do not know him and confirmed to those who do know him that his ambitions are higher than first perceived. Where others need a long time to achieve something, Mohammed bin Salman needs less. Since he can deal with all these affairs during this short time, it’s his right to dream and to see the dream approaching him!

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Turki Aldakhil

During his [interview](#) with American writer David Ignatius, Prince Mohammed bin Salman said: “You have a body that has cancer everywhere, the cancer of corruption. You need to have chemo, the shock of chemo, or the cancer will eat the body,” adding that the kingdom couldn’t meet budget targets without halting the looting.

Numbers, which the prince is fond of, do not lie and cannot be embellished. He cites numbers, holds others accountable based on them and is biased to them just like a man of law who trusts laws and regulations. This is why numbers came in his favor when Arab youth were asked about him in the 10th annual ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey. It found that 90% of Saudi youth and 60% of Arab youth view Mohammed bin Salman as a strong and influential leader who will impact the region in the future.

This survey was not random as it included 3,500 youths from both genders and aged between 18 and 24 years old. The survey was conducted face to face with the youths who represent 16 Arab countries.

Whenever I see Prince Mohammed bin Salman’s ambition, I believe in the honesty of the smiling young man in the lobby at the London hotel when he said: “We wouldn’t have done it alone,” but we needed a man who could turn dreams into reality.