

What's New in Reference?

Social Sciences/Social Work

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Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Arab States Today: An Encyclopedia of Life in the Arab States. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2009. 2 vols.

“This extremely timely and helpful ready reference will familiarize all students and readers with the Gulf region and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Dubai, the UAE, Kuwait, Oman, Yemen, and Qatar. These states are bound by the desert culture, the Gulf, new oil economy, and Islam, to name some commonalities. Most Americans know something about the region, such as oases, dates, camels, oil, Bedouin tribes, and the legends of Lawrence of Arabia to Osama bin Laden. Islamic concepts and practices are still unfamiliar. On one extreme, Saudi Arabia, the cradle of Islam, has been largely closed off to Western tourists. On the other extreme, Dubai courts tourist dollars as it constructs modern architectural showcases. This is the first A-Z encyclopedia to focus on the Gulf, illuminating the land, people, religion, culture and traditions, institutions, economy, and much more for general readers. The more than 200 essay entries have a current focus with historical context as necessary. The breadth of coverage means that this resource will be of use for a wide range of researchers and browsers. Besides individual entries on each state, major cities and regions are also profiled. The natural environment and human adaptation to it receives significant space. Islamic customs and rules and various interpretations are clearly explained. Essays on key public figures, institutions, major events, politics, and state structures and more also make this the first-choice resource for accurate information. Further reading accompanies per most entries. The contributors have mined sources often not available in English. A chronology, selected bibliography, and photos complement the text. Entries include: Arabian Gulf, Aramco, Banking, Islamic, Bedouin Culture, Camels, Coffee, Arabic and Turkish, Crime, Cultural Heritage, Customary Law, Death Rites, Dhofar Liberation Front, Dubai Media City, Divorce, Ethnic Groups, Faysal bin Abd al-Aziz, Film Industry, Fiqh, Gender and Gender Relations, 2003 Gulf War, Holidays and Festivals, National, Ibadi Kharaj, Islam, Islamic Fundamentalism, Salafiyah, League of Arab States, Markets, Traditional, Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Pearling, Saudization, Social Organization, Tribal and Non-Tribal, Travelers and Explorers, [and] Women's Rights.”

(annotation from booksinprint.com)



