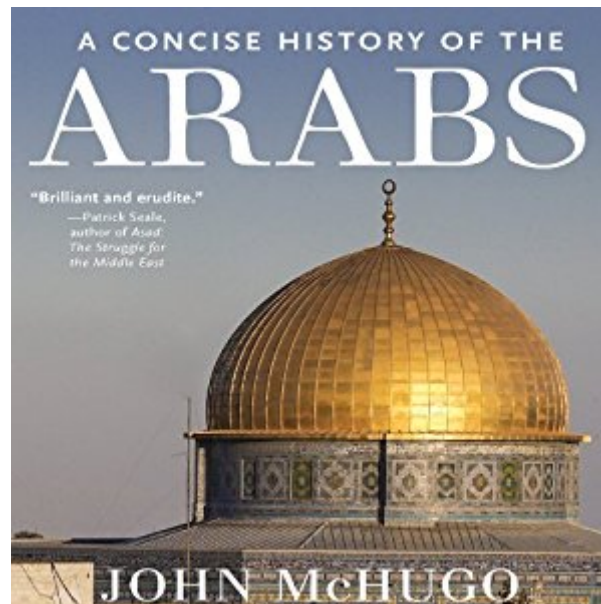




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A Concise History Of The Arabs



Synopsis

The key to understanding the Arab world today - and in the future - is unlocking its past. John McHugo takes the reader on a journey through the political, social and intellectual history of the Arabs from the Roman Empire right up to the present day. He covers the mission of the Prophet Muhammad, the expansion of Islam, medieval and modern conflicts, the interaction with Western ideas, the struggle to escape foreign domination, the rise of Islamism, and the end of the era of dictators. The concise history reveals how the Arab world came to have its present form, why change was inevitable and what choices lie ahead following the Arab Spring.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A great short book for people who can't tell a Sunni disposition from a Shiite shape

I bought the book because it was recommended by Tyler Cowen in his (and Alex Tabarrok's) blog Marginal Revolution. After having read the book I am a bit baffled why he liked it. A Concise History of the Arabs is too concise to further one's understanding of Arab history. The book is full of facts, but they lack serious context. The overarching message is that during the modern times the Arabs have been victims of colonialism - mainly British and French - and Zionism. They have a distinct culture and a worldview based on, but not necessarily identical with, Islam. That culture is in some important ways superior to the Western secular culture of hedonism and excess. Their recent past as victims of that same Western culture, however, did not let the Arabs develop a healthy response

to modernity causing Arab-on-Arab and Arab against the West violence. Still not all is lost - the Arab Spring may turn out to be the new beginning for them. All well and good, but the author ends up more or less just stating that point. His analysis is extremely one-sided and biased toward the Arabs and against the West. He seems to be hiding behind the disclaimer that his history is "concise and not definitive". But in such a case he should have found a neutral context for his work, not a moral one.

Interesting knowledge acquired in reading this book. I'll finish it eventually.

Many times short-handing a subject in effect short-changes the matter. Such is not entirely the case in *A Concise History of the Arabs*. Although, it does suffer from some superficial glossing over history not much more can be expected from a book that promises to be concise. The defining feature of this book is its one of the first books to break away from orientalist views of the Region and shows that McHugo is an invested individual that has spent time in the region and can successfully empathize with the Arab population. He chooses to heed to facts and does not try to forcefully fit pieces of a puzzle in the wrong places. He approaches the subject with an open-mind and an open-heart and as a result has contributed a cultural and historical artifact. merci, beaucoup.

This book is the first comprehensive history of the Arabs to appear since the Arab Spring erupted. I found it informative and very readable. It covers Arab history from the time of the Prophet Muhammad up to 2013, with increasingly detailed coverage of the most recent events. The book gave me a much better appreciation of the impulses behind Islamism, of the pivotal importance of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and of why so many Arab countries came to be ruled by autocrats. In looking to the future, McHugo is cautiously optimistic, but draws attention to some great challenges facing Arab countries, notably sectarianism, the position of women, and the impact of poor education on Arab societies. This is the book to read if you want a good overview of the topic.

The author writes well in describing the evolution of the Arabs. The Arabs are descended from Abraham just as the Jews are also descended from Abraham. So these two groups would be better named Arabs and Irabs. The DNA of Arabs and Irabs is very similar since there is a common progenitor. The author describes the history of Mohammed living in Mecca and developing a loyal following. The activities of Mohammed's followers was so disgusting to the majority of Arabs living in Mecca that they were driven out. They moved to Medina. The author's excellent command of the

Arabic language clearly enables him to analyze the Arabic 'culture' very minutely. After describing the past history of the Arabs he arrives at the more recent times and discusses the evil organization developed by the Arabs called Zionism. He shows how the Zionists used every means at their disposal to lie, cheat and steal territory from the Arabs. Thus was born the present day tribal warfare between the Arab Sunnis, Arab Shias and the Arab Hebrews (Arabs). The author discusses how the Arabs stole the nuclear bomb secrets from the United States and how they continue to corrupt and influence the U.S. Congress to give large sums of money and weapons to Israel. The book was published before the horrific Gaza Holocaust that we all witnessed recently and so this terrible genocide is not discussed. In conclusion, this is an important book which must be read by the American voter in order to protect our country in the future.

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