The Arabs: A Compact History

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The history of the Arabs begins in the mid-ninth century BC, which is the earliest known attestation of the Old Arabic language. The Arabs appear to have been under the vassalage of the Neo-Assyrian Empire; they went from the Arabian Peninsula to Mauritania. Arab tribes, most notably the Ghassanids and Lakhmids, begin to appear in the southern Syrian Desert from the mid-third century CE onward, during the mid to later stages of the Roman and Sasanian empires. Tradition holds that Arabs descend (The Arabs â€“ A Compact History, 1963). Social Conditions: Arabia was a male-dominated society. Women had no status of any kind other than as sex objects. The number of women a man could marry was not fixed. When a man died, his son â€œinheritedâ€ all his wives except his own mother. A savage custom of the Arabs was to bury their female infants alive. The period in the Arabian history which preceded the birth of Islam is known as the Times of Ignorance. Judging by the beliefs and the practices of the pagan Arabs, it appears that it was a most appropriate name. The Arabs were the devotees of a variety of â€œreligionsâ€ which can be classified into the following categories. 1. Idol-worshippers or polytheists. Most of the Arabs were idolaters.
Drawing on the writings and eyewitness accounts of those who lived through the tumultuous years of Arab history, The Arabs balances different voices - politicians, intellectuals, students, men and women, poets and novelists, famous, infamous and the completely unknown - to give a rich, complex sense of life over nearly five centuries. Rogan's book is remarkable for its geographical sweep, covering the Arab world from North Africa through the Arabian Peninsula, and for the depth in which it explores every facet of modern Arab history. This multilayered, fascinating and definitive work is the essential guide to understanding the history of the modern Arab world - and its future. Read more.