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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 topics such as key public figures, institutions, major events, politics, and state structures?some based on sources often not available in English?make this two-volume set the first-choice resource for accurate information. Suggestions for further reading accompany most entries; a chronology, selected bibliography, and photos also complement the text.

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