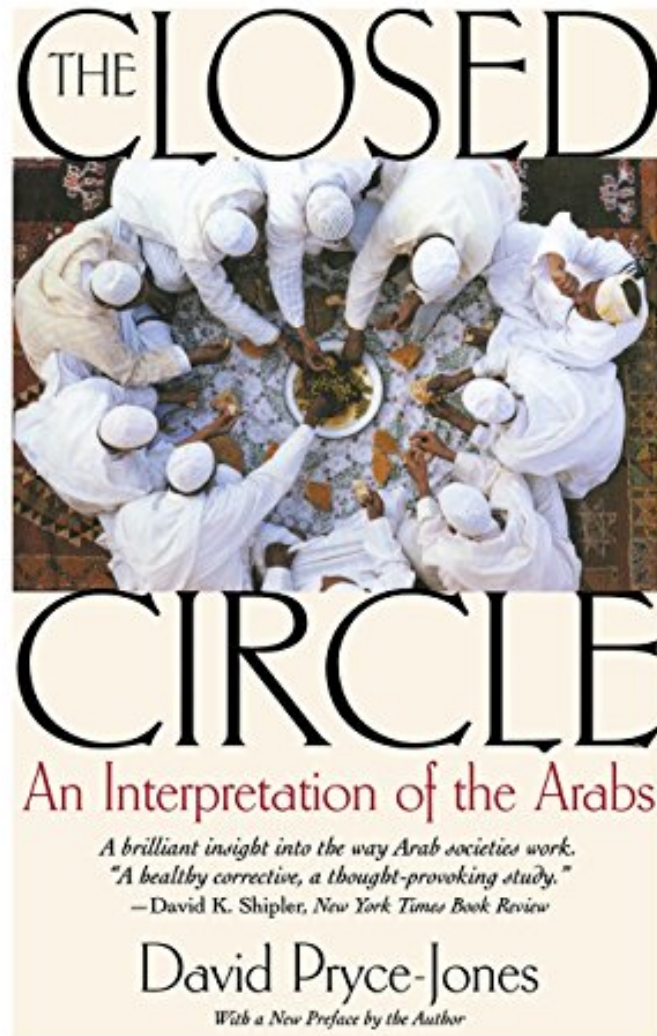


[FREE] The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs (Edward Burlingame Book)

The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs (Edward Burlingame Book)

David Pryce-Jones

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David Pryce-Jones : The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs (Edward Burlingame Book) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs (Edward Burlingame Book):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A revelation of recent Arab history, politics, and cultureBy QThis is

a profound and revealing analysis of Arab culture and history. He calls his book an "interpretation," which is quite correct, but it is based on factual history and events. His thesis is that Arab history is defined by the imperatives of shame-honor and absolutist power politics. Arab politics are a pure struggle for power, in which the winner becomes a tyrant who monopolizes all state resources for himself and his family, and the voices and welfare of everyone else is disregarded. Pryce-Jones also discusses insightfully how politicians from Europe and the USA have romanticized the Arab countries and people and remain willfully blind to the reality of its politics. In this way, the West enables the fundamental oppression and violence found everywhere in the Middle East. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. ... fully endorse this book for people who want to better understand Arab politics. By Anonymous I fully endorse this book for people who want to better understand Arab politics, culture, and behavior. I have read many other books, blogs, and articles to try to have a truly deep understanding of a lot of things that happen in the Arab world and with Arabs, but only this book really hammers home for me a lot of the explanations why certain things are said, written, and done. It would be fascinating to read a similar book with analysis of recent events included. 13 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Do you want to understand Arab culture? By Donald N. Anderson Mr. Pryce-Jones has written an essential description of the honor-shame nexus that is so central to Arab culture. Those who view honor and shame as people in the West do, must read this book to understand the very different properties honor-shame has in this culture. His description of power relationships is exemplary. He provides many examples of the dangerous consequences to which these power seeking conspiracies lead. The implications are discouraging, but having knowledge of probable consequences is much better than pursuing goals in ignorance. Perhaps we can then select goals and approaches that have some hope of success in this very different culture. I only hope any of our diplomats charged with a Middle East assignment understand the content of this book. I have recommended this book strongly to all my friends who have any interest in the Middle East.

As the violence of the Middle East has come to America, many Westerners are stunned and confounded by this new form of mayhem that appears to be a feature of Arab societies. This important book explains how Arabs are closed in a circle defined by tribal, religious, and cultural traditions. David Pryce-Jones examines the forces which drive the Arabs in their dealings with each other and with the West. In the postwar world, he argues, the Arabs reverted to age-old tribal and kinship structures, from which they have been unable to escape. In tribal society, loyalty is extended to close kin and other members of the tribe. The successful nation-state the model that Westerners understand generates broader loyalties, but the tribal world has no institutions that have evolved by common consent for the general good. Those who seek power achieve it by plotting secretly and ruthlessly eliminating their rivals. In the Arab world, violence is systemic. "This is a healthy corrective, a thought-provoking study. And Mr. Pryce-Jones has done his research, bringing a wealth of reading to his task; the book is extensively documented, with a good section of reference notes." David K. Shipler, New York Times Book Review. "Acute insights into how the Middle East works, or fails to work. This is definitely a book to be read, if also one to be thought about carefully and rather critically." David Morgan, Times Literary Supplement.

From Publishers Weekly Following the end of colonial rule in the Middle East, the newly independent Arab nations did not become progressive and free: they are despotic; most persecute religious or ethnic minorities; all oppress women; none has participatory institutions. In a scathing and provocative critique, Pryce-Jones (Paris in the Third Reich ; Cyril Connolly) blames these dismal conditions on what he sees as a Muslim reversion to tribal and kinship structures as well as slavish obedience to complex codes of honor and shame that prevent concepts such as open debate, democracy and accountability from taking root. With Islamocentric shortsightedness, Arabs understood Nazism in terms of German revenge for humiliation suffered in World War I. Arab leaders admired both Hitler and Lenin as careerist conspirators who made good. Pryce-Jones sees the same tribal, king-of-the-hill mentality at work today in the Palestine Liberation Organization, a careerist group built around a few audacious personalities who arrogated the right to speak for a whole people. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Reporter Pryce-Jones examines shame-honor ranking as a motivational force in Muslim society vying with Western values, while at the same time tracing the negative impact of Europe on Muslim society. The book facilitates an understanding of the Middle East, and the author has provided copious source notes to support his statements. He cites the diversion of efforts from country and institutional goals to serve personal and tribal religious careerism, and concludes that Arabs don't fit into Western organizing principles. This is an ambitious book that ranges widely over recent Middle Eastern history, but its negativity inspires a sense of futility as to the future, and leaves one wondering whether the conclusions drawn are correct.- Pat Wollter, Sonoma State Univ. Lib., Rohnert Park, Cal . Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. This is definitely a book to be read, if also one to be thought about carefully and rather critically. (David Morgan Times Literary Supplement) Powerful . . . must be considered and appreciated even by those who think they disagree with it. (Amos Elon) A brilliant book. (Hugh Nissenson) A landmark for understanding the politics of the Middle East . . . as brilliant as it is depressing. (Daniel Pipes, director, Middle East Forum; author of Militant Islam Comes to America) Refreshing . . . most stimulating . . . as with the best historical works, The Closed Circle is the

outcome, and the resolution, of a puzzlement. (Elie Kedourie)A brilliant insight into the way Arab societies work. A healthy corrective, a thought-provoking study. (David K. Shipler The New York Times)Excellent. Having lived in Arabia for six years, I can say that this text superbly sets out the historical events that led us to the current situation today and explains many aspects of the culture that are misunderstood. (Daniel Kirk, Macon State College)