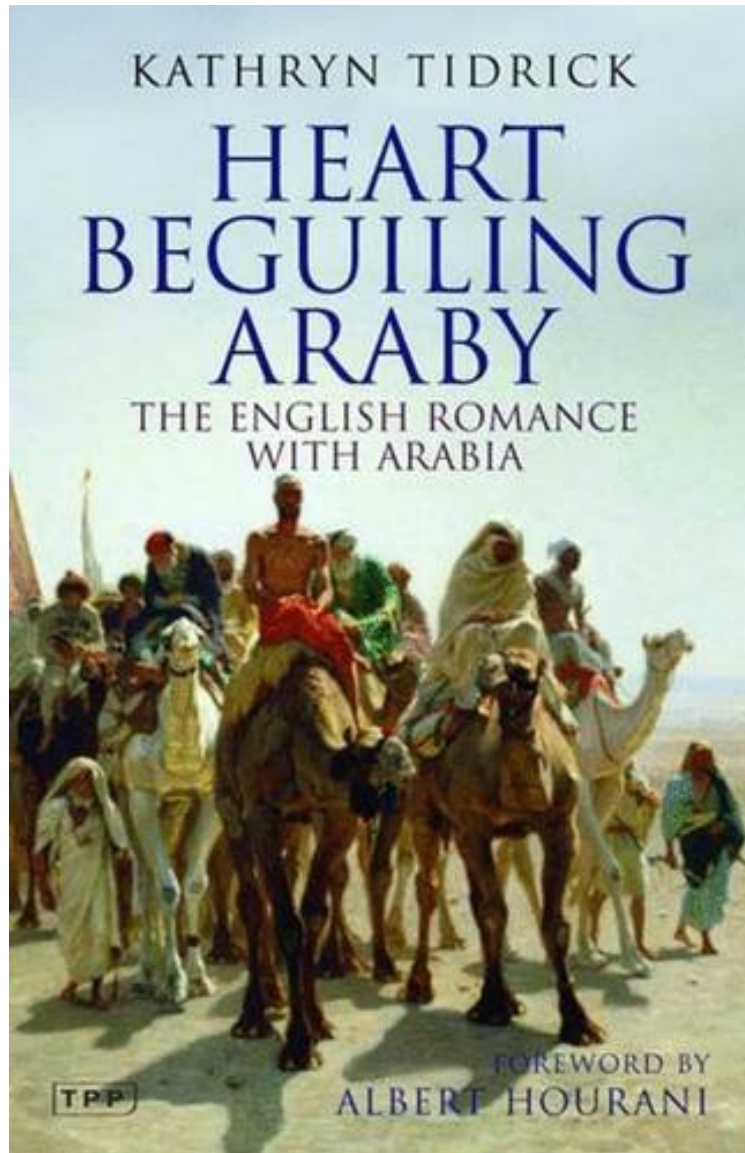


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## Heart Beguiling Araby: The English Romance with Arabia (Tauris Parke Paperbacks)

*Kathryn Tidrick*

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**Kathryn Tidrick : Heart Beguiling Araby: The English Romance with Arabia (Tauris Parke Paperbacks)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Heart Beguiling Araby: The English Romance with Arabia (Tauris Parke Paperbacks):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. glad to see this is back in printBy CaraculiambroWonderful book.

Highly readable. For the longest time it was totally out of print. I liked it so much that after reading my library's copy, I had no choice but to xerox and bind the entire thing because it was so worth having on my shelf. Fortunately thanks to Tauris Parke, such extremes are no longer necessary. It's basically a survey of the madness of the Arabist: the recurrent theme in English culture that Arabia is a place of stark beauty, sensuality, arcane mysteries, austere manliness, etc. Tidrick doesn't exactly set out to "disprove" any of that: that's not the angle of the book. Instead, it's just a look at the crazy ideas of poets, novelist, and statesmen about Arabia. But it is about the English, not about the Arabs at all, really. I found it very enjoyable. Note: this book is not exactly for the general reader. While not scholarly, the book does assume you're familiar with Middle Eastern history, English history, and English literature. For example, if it has to be explained to you who Cromer and Philby were, you're going to have a tough time with this book. If perchance you have a friend who is an Arabist and doesn't know about this book, it will make the perfect gift. First published 1981. Doesn't go further than Gertrude Bell, by the way.

What is it about Arabia and her people that has exercised such a powerful allure on generations of English travellers and explorers? "'A land whose name could evoke haunting echoes of the unconscious ... a country of the mind more real than any place on a map'" had, by the Victorian era, become a deep and lasting obsession for some of the greatest writers and explorers of the time. Here are the stories of some of those men, iconic figures like T.E. Lawrence and Richard Burton, whose extraordinary relationships with and explorations of Arabia changed the way we now perceive the Arab world and formed the basis of the West's understanding of the region. Riveting and beautifully-portrayed, *Heart Beguiling Araby* reveals how these ultimately lonely figures pushed themselves to the limits of physical and mental endurance, surviving and prevailing in a land that had captivated them, thus binding their legends to its sweeping deserts and ancient tribes for generations to come.

'A captivating analysis of the Englishmen whose writings on the inhabitants of the Arabian desert enhanced what the author rightly terms a 'powerful imperial myth'. Her analysis of where reality failed to match up to fantasy is cool and compelling.' - *The Economist*; 'Entertaining and well written.' - Malise Ruthven, *London of Books*; 'The attraction of the Middle East for the English upper-middle-class is carefully - and amusingly - analysed.' - Richard Trench, *The Middle East*; 'A book of remarkable readability, of understanding and interpretation without cynicism.' - Geoffrey Grigson, *Country Life*; 'Teems with ideas, expressed in a firm muscular style that never once lets her down... develops her themes with skill, perception and considerable élan.' - John Julius Norwich, *Punch*; 'An outstanding study on the myth of England's special relationship with the Arabs.' - Robert Harbinson, *Irish Press*; '...superlative, subtle and profoundly illuminating...written in a wonderfully lucid, jargon-free style, proving that good, clear, elegant English can still be a vehicle for new perceptions, new approaches and new discoveries.' - Christopher J. Walker, *Middle East International*; 'Kathryn Tidrick's entertaining and well-written study provides ample support for [Edward] Said's argument that 'knowledge equals power' and can be made to serve its ends.' - *London*; 'This is a lively well-written and stimulating book and deserves a place on the library shelf of anyone interested in Britain's moment in the Middle East.' - Molly Izzard, *Arabia Islamic World*; 'For the reader interested in the relationship between the British and the Arabs, Tidrick's book is just the work to read. It is a fascinating story and she tells it elegantly.' - *The Jerusalem Post Magazine*  
About the Author Kathryn Tidrick is the author of *Empire and the English Character: The Illusion of Authority* and *Gandhi: A Political and Spiritual Life* (both published by I.B.Tauris). She was born and grew up in Britain and has a Ph.D. in psychology from London University. She has lived in the United States, Jamaica, Tanzania, Kenya, South Africa and India and now makes Scotland her home.