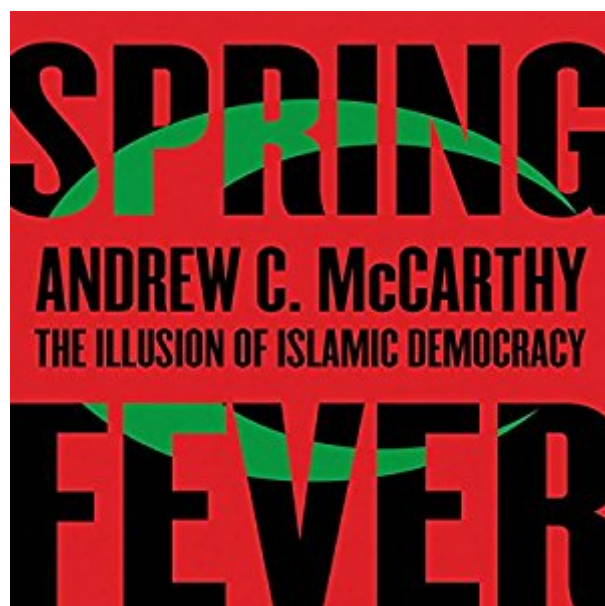


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Spring Fever: The Illusion Of Islamic Democracy



Synopsis

The first fundamental truth about the "Arab Spring" is that there never was one. The salient fact of the Middle East, the only one, is Islam. The Islam that shapes the Middle East inculcates in Muslims the self-perception that they are members of a civilization implacably hostile to the West. The United States is a competitor to be overcome, not the herald of a culture to be embraced. Is this self-perception based on objective truth? Does it reflect an accurate construction of Islam? It is over these questions that American officials and Western intellectuals obsess. Yet the questions are irrelevant. This is not a matter of right or wrong, of some posture or policy whose subtle tweaking or outright reversal would change the facts on the ground. This is simply, starkly, the way it is. Every human heart does not yearn for freedom. In the Islam of the Middle East, "freedom" means something very nearly the opposite of what the concept connotes to Westerners - it is the freedom that lies in total submission to Allah and His law. That law, sharia, is diametrically opposed to core components of freedom as understood in the West - beginning with the very idea that man is free to make law for himself, irrespective of what Allah has ordained. It is thus delusional to believe, as the West's Arab Spring fable insists, that the region teems with Jamal al-Madisons holding aloft the lamp of liberty. Do such revolutionary reformers exist? Of course they do...but in numbers barely enough to weave a fictional cover story. When push came to shove - and worse - the reformers were overwhelmed, swept away by a tide of Islamic supremacism, the dynamic, consequential mass movement that beckons endless winter. That is the real story of the Arab Spring - that, and the Pandora's Box that opens when an American administration aligns with that movement, whose stated goal is to destroy America.

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Customer Reviews

The first and most important point made by McCarthy is this: there never was any such thing as an "Arab Spring." There may have been some deluded intellectuals who thought they were going to get democracy after the revolution, but in fact there was only the "Arab Winter," or whatever you want to call the Islamic resurgence which took place everywhere. As McCarthy accurately (and acidly) notes, the dispositive flavor of Islam right now is Islamic triumphalism -- the belief that Islam will one day rule the world. I first encountered this weird belief in 1969, in Tunisia, where I was a Peace Corps volunteer. My three roommates, all Tunisian men, and teachers like me, agreed to this point as if it was something obvious --- while I was silently realizing that, while I thought I knew these people, I didn't know about this insane belief, as if Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity were just going to throw in the towel in favor of that extremely boring book, the Koran. McCarthy also takes aim at that fairy-tale chimera called "Islamic democracy," there being (of course) no such thing. Even Iraq, now that Obama has left it, is dissolving into Shia-Sunni civil war, and the Lord only knows where the Kurds will wind up. As for myself, when I realized that Hillary and Barack were trying to make FRIENDS with our implacable enemy, the Muslim Brotherhood, I blew my top. I'd seen a lot of strange things coming out of that White House, but this was the strangest. Obama pushed for the Muslim Brotherhood in Tunisia, creating a huge number of enemies who wanted nothing to do with the Ikhwan.

This is a worthy successor to *The Grand Jihad*, Andy McCarthy's previous book. For regular readers of his columns for *National Review*, the author's criticism of the so-called "Arab Spring" is no surprise. Mr. McCarthy has been a skeptic of the democracy project, started during the George W. Bush Administration, because he sees democratic civil government as requiring more than elections and written constitutions. The cultural foundation for a civil society are obvious in American history but largely absent in any country in the Middle East besides Israel. Americans had developed the habits of representative government for over 100 years before the American Revolution. We had freedom of religion throughout the 13 colonies (albeit some more than others) long before the U.S. Constitution and the First Amendment. The Islamic culture does not leave room for a civil society because the Koran, and the Islamic jurisprudence derived from it during Islam's first few centuries, prescribes the rules for every part of a Muslim's existence. Since the Koran is

believed by Muslims to contain the direct communication from Allah to his prophet, it is not open to interpretation and its authority is absolute. That is not the belief system of all Muslims, but it is of the most orthodox and the most powerful elements of every Arab country in the Middle East. A Muslim who advocates a secular government has no place to stand when a more orthodox Muslim accuses him of deviating from the Koran and thus of being an apostate. The penalty for apostasy is death. The difference in Western Civilization becomes obvious when one considers the passage from the Bible, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's."

From Sun Tzu to your favorite sports coach, we learn that the way to win any contest or conflict is to know your opponent, his goals, and favorite tactics for achieving them. Andrew McCarthy provides that information about the Islamic Supremacists that oppose us internationally by both violent and non-violent tactics. If you understand that we are in a clash of civilizations, this book will sharpen your understanding of who our opponents are, how they are aligned, the fault-lines between them, and their playbook. If you don't believe we have any such opponents or enemies, all the more reason to read this book and discover what these folks are saying openly in documents and speeches. This book is very timely and provides essential context and insight into what is happening today in the Mid-East. Consider that a dozen years ago, we thought Turkey was a shining example of a Muslim country embracing secular government and partnering with the Western democracies. It was thought to be a model for our engagements and policy in the Middle East. Spring fever will show you how that secular Kemalist regime was converted in a very few years to an Islamic Supremacist regime under Erdogan. Today, Turkey is an "Islamic Democracy" (which is very different from a "Western Democracy" in purpose and action) in contention to be the leader of a revived "Islamic Caliphate". The same conversion playbook is being followed by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Having and following the wrong model for policy decisions can result in catastrophic policy failure as evidenced by the recent attacks on our embassies and the murder of the American Ambassador to Libya. This book makes a strong case that the current "Arab Spring" is a prelude to an "Islamic Winter".

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