



Spring Fever: The Illusion of Islamic Democracy

Andrew C McCarthy

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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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