



The Fires of Spring: A Post-Arab Spring Journey Through the Turbulent New Middle East

Shelly Culbertson

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The "Arab Spring" all started when a young Tunisian fruit-seller set himself on fire in protest of a government official confiscating his apples without cause and slapping his face. The aftermath of that one personal protest grew to become the Middle East movement known as the Arab Spring – a wave of disparate events that included revolutions, protests, government overthrows, hopeful reform movements, and bloody civil wars.

This book will be the first to bring the post Arab Spring world to light in a holistic context. It is a narrative of the author Shelly Culbertson's journey through six countries of the Middle East, describing countries, historical perspective, and interviews with revolution and government figures.

Culbertson, RAND Middle East analyst and former U.S. State Department officer who has been involved with the Middle East for two decades, is uniquely equipped to analyze the current social, political, economic, and cultural effects of the movement. With honesty, empathy, and expert historical accuracy, Culbertson strives to answer the questions "what led to the Arab Spring," "what is it like there now," and "what trends after the Arab Spring are shaping the future of the Middle East?"

The Fires of Spring tells the story by weaving together a sense of place, history, insight about key issues of our time, and personal stories and adventures. It navigates street life and peers into ministries, mosques, and women's worlds. It delves into what Arab Spring optimism was about, and at the same time sheds light on the pain and dysfunction that continues to plague some parts of the region.

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