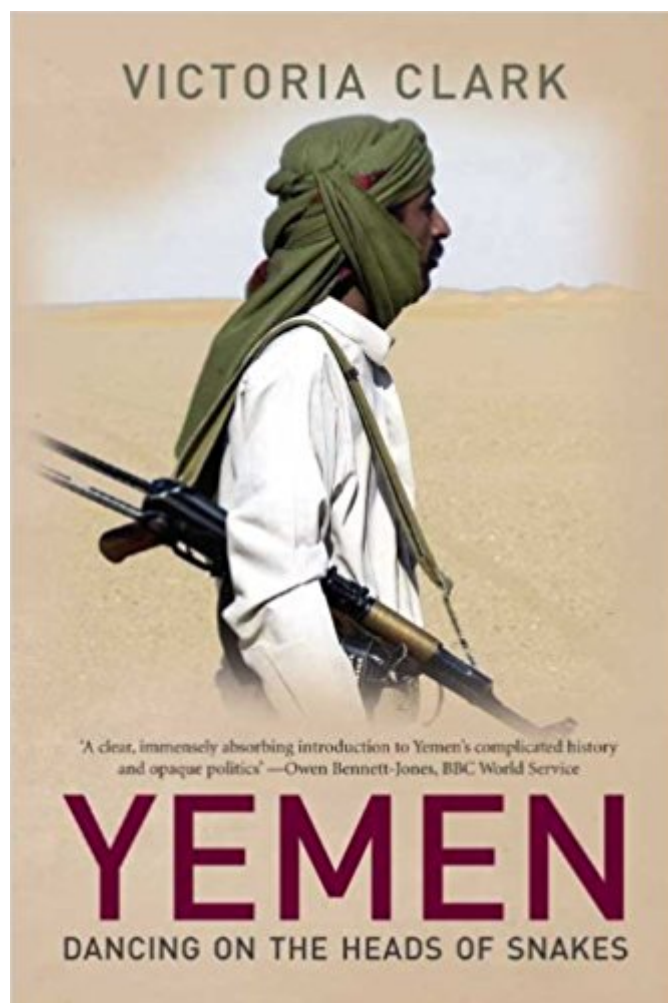


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Yemen: Dancing On The Heads Of Snakes



Synopsis

Yemen is the dark horse of the Middle East. Every so often it enters the headlines for one alarming reason or another—links with al-Qaeda, kidnapped Westerners, explosive population growth—then sinks into obscurity again. But, as Victoria Clark argues in this riveting book, we ignore Yemen at our peril. The poorest state in the Arab world, it is still dominated by its tribal makeup and has become a perfect breeding ground for insurgent and terrorist movements. Clark returns to the country where she was born to discover a perilously fragile state that deserves more of our understanding and attention. On a series of visits to Yemen between 2004 and 2009, she meets politicians, influential tribesmen, oil workers and jihadists as well as ordinary Yemenis. Untangling Yemen's history before examining the country's role in both al-Qaeda and the wider jihadist movement today, Clark presents a lively, clear, and up-to-date account of a little-known state whose chronic instability is increasingly engaging the general reader.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Yemen has sporadically drawn the attention of the West in recent years. While adventurous tourists remember it as the land where the ruins of the Palace of the Queen of Sheba lie and where local men spend a good portion of the day chewing enormous wads of semi-narcotic Qat leaves, it is also

where the USS Cole was attacked by Al Qaeda suicide bombers in the 1990's, claiming the life of 17 American sailors. What we in the West has failed to focus on is that Yemen has long been a violently tribal land that is now running out of natural resources such as water and oil and in its place is becoming an incubator for a new generation of terrorist planning and activity - a third generation of Jihad. And, as importantly, Yemen is geographically poised to wreak havoc two of the most critical aspects of the global economy (namely, Saudi oil and all shipping coming and going through the Suez Canal - which comprises more than 60 percent of all shipping globally). Moreover, it is increasingly clear it is drifting into what foreign policy experts refer to as a "failed state" with remarkable similarities to Afghanistan and even Pakistan in terms of tribal and intra-regional rebellions. In her penetrating and quite fascinating new book, Victoria Clark, offers a number of unique perspectives of this centuries-long troubled land. A former foreign correspondent for the Observer and the daughter of the BBC's former South Arabian Correspondent, the late Noel Clark. She was born in what was Britain's colonial city of Aden, Yemen. Clark divides up the book into several parts, all of which weave into a rich and multifaceted portrait of Yemen.

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