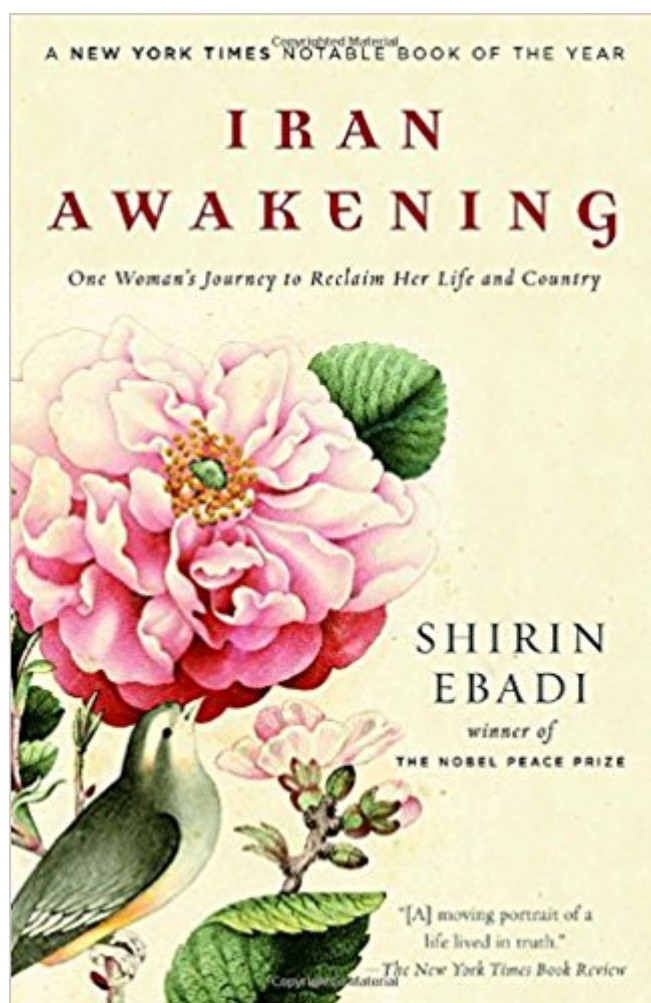


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Iran Awakening: One Woman's Journey To Reclaim Her Life And Country



Synopsis

A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK
The moving, inspiring memoir of one of the great women of our times, Shirin Ebadi, winner of the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize and advocate for the oppressed, whose spirit has remained strong in the face of political persecution and despite the challenges she has faced raising a family while pursuing her work. Best known in this country as the lawyer working tirelessly on behalf of Canadian photojournalist, Zara Kazemi—raped, tortured and murdered in Iran—Dr. Ebadi offers us a vivid picture of the struggles of one woman against the system. The book movingly chronicles her childhood in a loving, untraditional family, her upbringing before the Revolution in 1979 that toppled the Shah, her marriage and her religious faith, as well as her life as a mother and lawyer battling an oppressive regime in the courts while bringing up her girls at home. Outspoken, controversial, Shirin Ebadi is one of the most fascinating women today. She rose quickly to become the first female judge in the country; but when the religious authorities declared women unfit to serve as judges she was demoted to clerk in the courtroom she had once presided over. She eventually fought her way back as a human rights lawyer, defending women and children in politically charged cases that most lawyers were afraid to represent. She has been arrested and been the target of assassination, but through it all has spoken out with quiet bravery on behalf of the victims of injustice and discrimination and become a powerful voice for change, almost universally embraced as a hero. Her memoir is a gripping story—a must-read for anyone interested in Zara Kazemi's case, in the life of a remarkable woman, or in understanding the political and religious upheaval in our world.

Praise for Shirin Ebadi and *Iran Awakening*

“This is the riveting story of an amazing and very brave woman living through some quite turbulent times. And she emerges with head unbowed.”—Archbishop Desmond Tutu

“The safety and freedom of citizens in democracies is irretrievably bound with the safety and freedom of people like Shirin Ebadi who are fighting to reassert the best achievements of mankind: universal human rights. One of the staunchest advocates for human rights in her country and beyond, Ms. Ebadi, herself a devout Muslim, represents hope for many in Muslim societies that Islam and democracy are indeed compatible.”—Azar Nafisi

“A moving portrait of a life lived in truth.”—The New York Times Book Review

“A riveting account of a brave, lonely struggle . . . [Iran Awakening] reads like a police thriller, its drama heightened by Ebadi's determination to keep up the quotidian aspects of her family life.”—The Washington Post Book World

“A must read . . . may be the most important book you could read this year.”—Seattle Post-Intelligencer

“As a testament to how a single, inspired voice can rise above the cacophony . . . the book should be required reading.”
•The Nation “Some of her admirers in Iran call her a woman of steel. Sure, the Iranian human rights champion also has a heart of gold. But it is Shirin Ebadi’s unbending will that explains how she has become the conscience of the Islamic Republic.”
•Time “[Ebadi] has come forward with professional force and unflagging courage, and she has defied any danger to her own safety. She is truly a woman of the people!”
•Ole Danbolt Mjos, chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee
From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

Most Americans date troubles with Iran to the 1979 overthrow of the shah and the 444-day U.S. embassy hostage drama. Iranians date the friction back to 1953, when the U.S. orchestrated a coup that removed beloved Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh. Ebadi recalls that period as the beginning of shifting politics that would erode basic freedoms and notions of human rights in Iran. Raised to believe in gender equality, Ebadi became a judge but was demoted to secretary when the Islamic Revolution under Ayatollah Khomeini demanded subservience of women. Ebadi estimates that five million Iranians, feeling oppressed by the revolution, left the country, draining valuable resources and leaving bitterly separated families. Ebadi lost her profession, her friends, and her country but was determined to stay and speak out against oppression. She eventually returned to public life as a human-rights lawyer taking on the defense of women, children, and dissidents. Ebadi offers a very personal account of her life and her fight for human rights in Iran. Vanessa

Praise for Shirin Ebadi and *Iran Awakening* “This is the riveting story of an amazing and very brave woman living through some quite turbulent times. And she emerges with head unbowed.” •Archbishop Desmond Tutu “The safety and freedom of citizens in democracies is irretrievably bound with the safety and freedom of people like Shirin Ebadi who are fighting to reassert the best achievements of mankind: universal human rights. One of the staunchest advocates for human rights in her country and beyond, Ms. Ebadi, herself a devout Muslim, represents hope for many in Muslim societies that Islam and democracy are indeed compatible.” •Azar Nafisi “A moving portrait of a life lived in truth.” •The New York Times Book Review “A riveting account of a brave, lonely struggle . . . [*Iran Awakening*] reads like a police thriller, its drama heightened by Ebadi’s determination to keep up the quotidian aspects of her family life.” •The Washington Post Book World “A must read . . . may be the most important book you could read this year.” •Seattle Post-Intelligencer “As a testament to how a single, inspired voice can rise above the cacophony . . . the book should be required reading.” •The Nation “Some of her admirers in Iran call her a woman of steel. Sure, the Iranian human rights champion also has a heart of gold. But it is Shirin Ebadi’s unbending will that explains how she has become the conscience of the Islamic Republic.” •Time “[Ebadi] has come forward with professional force and unflagging courage, and she has defied any danger to her own safety. She is truly a woman of the people!” •Ole Danbolt Mjos, chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee “[Ebadi] has risked her freedom and her life to defend democracy, free speech, and the rule of law.” •The Boston Globe

From the Hardcover edition.

Shirin Ebadi, winner of the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize and a multitude of honours from various countries for her courageous and honourable stand for women’s rights in a country notorious for its poor human rights record. Herself, a qualified Judge, was stripped of her right to work in the area for which she was trained and suffered the indignities and frustration of her gender following the Revolution and establishment of the Islamic Republic, where women have been considered second rate citizens for centuries. She has been constantly harassed, jailed on one occasion, as well as being on hit lists, and is currently protected by bodyguards in fear of her life. Her determination to

help create a better Iran for her fellow citizens, all the while respecting her Religious beliefs makes for an incredible and admirable human being. Iran Awakening tells the story of her struggle for the recognition of women and for the rights of normal men and women under a Regime that is steadfast in its beliefs. The book is written without any sensationalism and is a quiet but powerful document on the problems in Iran. Intelligently and clearly written, I would urge anyone interested in world politics to read this book.

I have a Ph.D. in Religious Studies and have found this book to be illuminating about Iranian history from the early 1950's to the present. This covers some very crucial Iranian-American history that both countries need to acknowledge. I can't help but envision a series of meetings between the heads of both countries with Shirin Ebadi present to facilitate and urge both sides towards confession and reconciliation. I don't know how our two countries can possibly talk with each other productively until this mutual history is acknowledged and embraced in all its troublesome detail. Of course this book is a wonderful portrait of a courageous and determined woman who risks everything in the name of human rights and is awarded a Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts. As 2012 moves towards 2013, and as we settle into 4 more years with our newly elected president, and as there's all this sword rattling between America and Iran (with Israel a focal point of it all), this book can inject some reality and sanity into the situation. I think this book is a more important read at this historical moment than when it was first published a few years ago. Please read this and consider.

Kept me reading -- and I feel much better informed. I got the book because I realized I knew almost nothing about Iran, though Iran is very important in world security. I'm lazy about reading straight history, so this memoir was a very good option. It's well written and was a pleasure to read.

Interesting story about the author's life. I appreciated learning more about the view of America from someone who has lived through much of Iran's more recent history. It's a fast easy read but that may have been at the expense of information and details about her life that seemed to be missing from this account. While she touches on the issues of her choice to stay in a country that constantly threatens her and her daughter's lives, I am still left wondering why. Perhaps this is because she doesn't say much positive about her experiences there. The same can be said about her marriage. While her husband figures prominently in the beginning he is nowhere to be found by the end.

This was an assigned reading for my class in Transnational Muslim Feminisms and I thoroughly

enjoyed reading it. It's a memoir so it's written kind of like Ebadi is going through her life and how it has affected the development of her perspective as a Muslim feminist and her narrative during the Iranian Revolution and following after it. It's a great read although I feel like there are many points where Ebadi doesn't necessarily consider her own privileged position.

Great read, learned a lot from such a strong woman. Definitely inspired me in my own life.

An eye opener, very interestingif you are a women concerned with human rights, irrelevant of creed or whatever, see the other side of the coin, read this ! I recommended it to my Book Club !! Talk about a fighter against all odds, this lady is incredible ...brilliant! I purchased it only as I saw she is a Nobel prize winner!

This really informs you on a lot of the history of the past 60 years in Iran. You get a glimpse and a better understanding for what life was like in the 70s to the early 2000s. Books like these are so important for those like myself who need a primer to understand the current situation in countries of controversy. The fact that the book is written by an Iranian only makes it much more credible. Recommended.

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