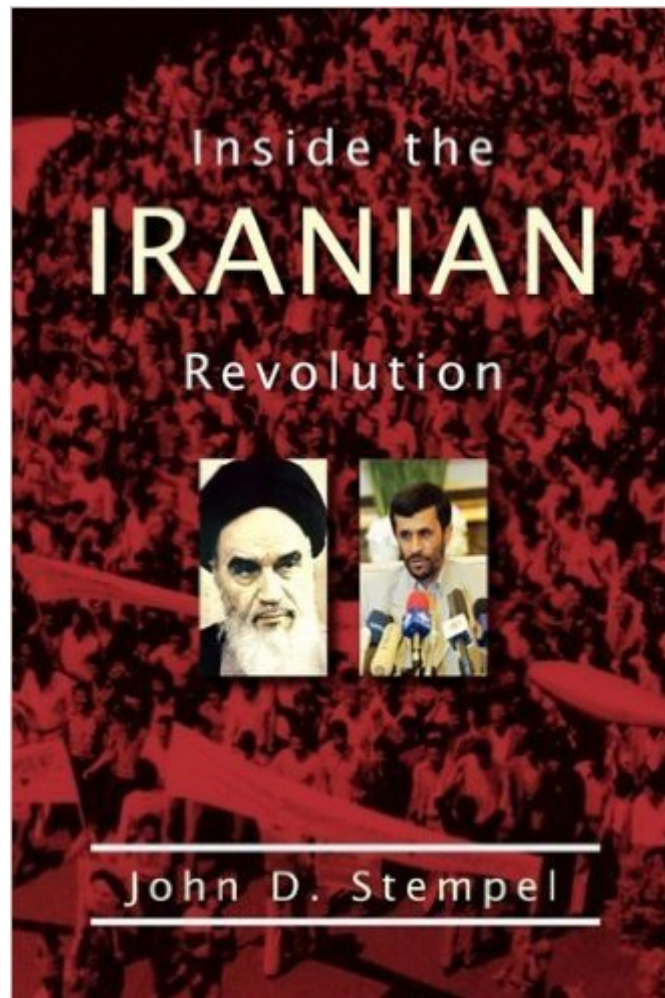


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Inside The Iranian Revolution



Synopsis

In this Second Edition of *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, first published in 1981, author John Stempel describes his experience and insight as a U.S. Foreign Service Officer in Tehran from 1975-1979. He then continues with an updated chapters to describe what we can draw from the experiences of three decades ago and apply to the current diplomatic relationship between the U.S. and Iran. "John Stempel is a Foreign Service officer who was stationed in Tehran through the early stages of the Iranian revolution; he left four months before the hostages were taken. Mr. Stempel explains the strength and weaknesses that accumulated through the Shah's reign. Among the latter, he says, was the Shah's alternating between attempts to build genuine political support for his regime and reliance on the repressive tactics of his secret police. Mr. Stempel's concluding chapters are effective. He suggests that the Shah might have survived by being simultaneously more liberal and more ruthless-by offering more than a token of political participation to opposition groups, but then punishing those who would not support the liberalized regime. On the American side, Mr. Stempel points out the slowness to develop intelligence sources among opposition groups and the contradictory signals sent to the Shah. Mr. Stempel also implies that, once the hostage situation reached deadlock, the United States should have come more quickly to the recognition that military force was necessary." *New York Times Book Review* --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

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Customer Reviews

Stempel's *Inside the Iranian Revolution* should be understood to be read for the time period in which it was written, and with the limited scope of sources that were allowable. For obvious reasons, an all-encompassing work on the Iranian revolution cannot simply be produced within two to three

years of the revolution itself. Therefore, the aims of Stempel's work are broadly based upon the religious, economic, and Western interferences which brought about the revolution. The topic, for its relatively short time between the revolution and the work's publication, is worthy of historical inquiry, because as historians study the Iranian revolution nearly thirty-five years later the historiography has changed, along with the American narratives of the revolution, due to the influx of Iranian national emigrants. By delving into works of modern revisionism and older, sometimes less informed works, one is able to benefit from having a double perspective of the Iranian revolution. Some of the questions Stempel asks are how much more or less significant the roles of religion, economic instability, and Western intervention are when weighted against one another. These are difficult questions to be answered in a single volume with so few sources to work with. However, as difficult they may be, they are realistic and significant to identifying the level of importance each had upon the revolution, and upon the three determining factors of revolution, as Stempel argues. In the Preface, Stempel also argues that in 1981 the revolution is continuing, two years after the formal regime change in 1979. His continued revolution theory is biased and revealed through the personal fear of living as an American in a post-revolution Iran.

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