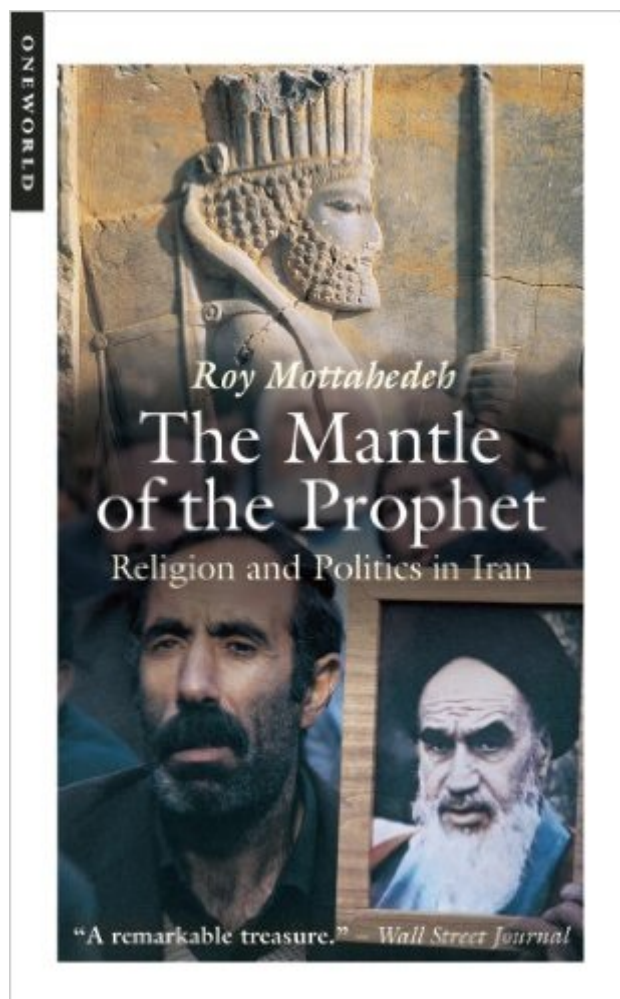


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The Mantle Of The Prophet



Synopsis

Drawn from the first-hand accounts of eyewitnesses, Roy Mottahedeh's gripping account of Islam and Politics in revolutionary Iran is widely regarded as one of the best records of that turbulent time ever written. The true story of a young mullah, his life in the sacred shrine city of Qom, and the dramatic events of the 1979 Revolution, this enthralling account paints a vivid picture of contemporary Iran, while providing a panoramic survey of Muslim, Shi'ite and Persian culture from the Middle Ages to the current day. From the ancient time of Zoroaster to the world of Khomeini, this sweeping saga interweaves biography with history, politics and religion to offer new levels of understanding into Iran's past, present and future. Written with feeling, sympathy and clarity, this revised edition includes a new chronology detailing events in Iran from the revolution right up to the present day and Ahmadinejad's controversial regime.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I read *The Mantle of the Prophet* many years ago. Somehow the Amazon computer knew me well enough to recommend it, and it brought back the impression that this book left me. It is wonderfully written and relates the mix of socio-economic events and the Shi'a culture that coalesced to foment the Islamic Revolution in 1979. However, the sense the reader gets while rapidly going through it, is that the book presents this very thoughtful and clear historical and sociological argument in the manner of a novel, you can't put the book down. This no ordinary academic text and Mottahedeh combines the skills and art of the poet and novelist with the clarity and facts of an academic. I have never read such an interesting and clear - devoid of controversy or criticism - description of what's it

like to study in a Shi'ā Madrasa, to understand the curriculum and the stages that a student must follow to become an Ayatollah. Mottahedeh also offers a simple and brilliant, powerful description of the cultural contrast that existed between the superficially modern and wealthy cosmopolitan Tehran and the countryside, which supplied so many of the clerics that influenced the masses living on the fringe. This book is as invaluable to the specialist, and is an excellent complement to the socio-historical classic text by Ervand Abrahamian "Iran Between two Revolutions", yet it can also be read and enjoyed by the non-specialist just the same. This was, however I look at it, one of the finest books I've ever read in my life

Very comprehensive information about the shia, shia philosophy, development of learned in shia hierarchy and finally Islamic revolution in Iran. The story is written about a certain person as he grows up in Iran, got his education in religious centers and involved in the actions. The history and information are given as the situation requires background about it. It is very nicely written, easy to read entertaining and informative. Sometimes I found names mixed, too many names with too different philosophies to keep up, so it is a fast book to read, time to time you may have to come back and repeat.

Anyone with an interest in history, philosophy, religion, the Middle East, Iran, or human nature, would find this erudite, beautifully written, very readable and sensitive story of one man's life as a religious scholar in Iran, a thoroughly satisfying read. Iran's history from ancient times to the Revolution of 1979 is interwoven with the biography of a Shiah Islamic cleric. The book's strength comes from the author's clarity of expression and his deep and broad understanding of his subject. A wonderful book!

Roy Mottahedeh skillfully weaves together the lives of several people from Iran to present a personal point of view of modern history with a vantage point rarely presented in other modern history texts. He also does not fail to address all the necessary points in history that set the stage for actions in Iran's recent history and give the reader an adequate foundation for understanding Iran's revolution.

This book alternates between historical and analytical background and culturally rooted biography. The focus is on the personal development of Shia clergy in modern Iran. Mottahedeh displays impressive historical learning and insight into a culture much maligned and misunderstood in the

West. A good and informative read on an important subject.

Though deliberate in its pace and what I might call dry in tone, I believe this book, which I read over the summer, masterfully reveals the real Iran as it was in the last two decades of the twentieth-century, and gives the best insights I've yet found into that nation today: a country founded on the principles of a blood-soaked revolution. Forget what you hear on the evening news, read this book and approach Iranian culture with an open mind. I think you'll be startled, as I was, at much of what you learn. If the culture of Iran at the time of the Islamic uprising of 1979 was justifiably viewed by Americans as shocking, then it was also certainly fascinating in all its depth. This book takes us inside Iran from the point of view of a number of its citizens, as the pro-western nation in which they'd grown up retreats 1300 years in an effort to save itself from what it views as destruction from the outside. It is too easy to characterize Islamic fundamentalists as unintelligent and backward, but let us make no mistake, many who take that stance are shrewd, brilliant, and above all proudly committed to their way of life. In *The Mantle of the Prophet*, the reader will meet many of these. This book gives descriptions of all areas of life under the Ayatollahs, from the law courts, to the marketplaces, the army, to the mosques themselves, and introduces us to real people who lived through those frightening times. This book is as important today in the age of nuclear proliferation as it was when first published in 1985. Anyone who wants to learn about life inside fundamentalist Iran would do no better than to add *The Mantle of the Prophet* to her reading list.

Iran is the only majority Muslim country today that still has a conscious connection to its pre-Islamic past. This book is not only about Islam. It also explores what you may call "Iranian Consciousness" rooted in the region's historical experiences with multiple religions and intellectual trends. In the beginning of the book Ali Hashemi's resistance to overtly celebrate the fall of the monarchy brings into mind Khatami's emotionless stare at the Azadi stadium that was captured on television cameras after the Iranian national team scored a goal. It gives you a clue to the mindset of the clerical class in Iran. One also has to add to this the question that was posed to Khomeini as his plane was about to land in Iran: What is your feeling about coming back to Iran? Khomeini replied "NOTHING." Towards the end of the book there is a mention of Imam Hussain and Rustam. Only a few Iranians will take one over the other as a superior hero.

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