



# **Death to the Dictator! : A Young Man Casts a Vote in Iran's 2009 Election and Pays a Devastating Price**

*Afsaneh Moqadam*

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Tehran, June 12, 2009. Mohsen Abbaspour, an ordinary young man in his twenties—not particularly political, or ambitious, or worldly—casts the first vote of his life in Iran's tenth presidential election. Fed up with rising unemployment and inflation, he backs the reformist party and its candidate, Mir-Hossein Mousavi. Mohsen believes his vote will count.

It will not. Almost the instant the polls close, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad will declare himself president by an overwhelming majority. And as the Western world scrambles to make sense of the brazenly fraudulent election, Mohsen, along with his friends and family and neighbors, will experience a sense of utter desolation, and then something else: an increasingly sharper feeling—the beginning of anger. In a matter of weeks, millions of Iranians will flow into the streets, chanting in protest, “Death to the dictator!” Mohsen Abbaspour will be swept up in an uncontrollable and ultimately devastating chain of events.

Like Philip Gourevitch's *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families* and Ryszard Kapuscinski's incisive reportage, *Death to the Dictator!* stuns readers with its heartbreakingly immediate. Our pseudonymous author was a keen eyewitness in Tehran during the summer of 2009 and beyond. In this brave and true book, we see what we are not supposed to see, and learn what we are not supposed to know.

## **Death to the Dictator! : A Young Man Casts a Vote in Iran's 2009 Election and Pays a Devastating Price Details**

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## **From Reader Review Death to the Dictator! : A Young Man Casts a Vote in Iran's 2009 Election and Pays a Devastating Price for online ebook**

### **Greg says**

Great snapshot of the protests in Iran over government elections and accountability. Told from one person's perspective that conveys the isolation, uncertainty, and misinformation that the protesters faced.

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### **Kevin Yeaux says**

Although the accuracy of this book could be questioned, it's a riveting and frightening tale of political activism in a country where you can be prosecuted for such a thing.

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### **Jordan Mosley says**

It was a great depiction of modern politics in the Middle East, specifically in Iran; and, the struggle of trying to gain identity and recognition in global society from their coerced and corrupt leaders.

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### **Jenny says**

3.5 stars. A brief but terrifying glimpse into what living in a real dictatorship is like. Besides the fear, violence and intimidation, the loss of hope is so palpable.

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### **Tyler Nals says**

Not current, but it gives you a look at the real people who live in Iran, and it makes you realize that the media and politicians are your real enemies, not the people.

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### **alexandra says**

This book is the true story of what happened to one of the Green Revolution protesters in Tehran after the fraudulent presidential election in 2009. Although it was a difficult story, I believe it's important for the world to see how the Iranian government is treating its own citizens. The sooner the Islamic Republic becomes a democracy, the better for the people of Persia.

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## **Mike says**

Dystopia!

After reading this short account of the demonstrations which took place in 2009 after Mahmoud Ahmadinejad hijacked the Iranian presidential election, "dystopia" is the best word I can think of to describe Iran.

This little book will show you just what it's like to live in an Orwellian society that is completely controlled by "Big Brother." In fact, having recently finished reading "1984," this story seems like a continuation of the same story or a sequel to it.

Death! Brutal beatings! Brain washing! Whatever it takes to silence the people.

That's what the Iranian regime is all about.

"1984" and "Fahrenheit 451" combined!

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## **Yorkshiresoul says**

The harrowing and depressing story, from a reformist point of view, of how presidential incumbent Mahmoud Ahmadinejad corrupted the 2009 Iranian general election, and the terrible price paid by many Iranians who campaigned and voted for the reformist movement.

The story is told from the point of view of a forward, outward looking young Iranian man. A man who holds the same hopes and dreams as young people in other countries do, to work fairly for a fair wage, to travel to other countries, to be able to think and say and write what he wishes without fear of censure or violent reprisal.

What happens to this happy and profoundly ordinary young man is horrifying and sickening. A powerful read, even if the title is a little misleading.

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## **Doreen Petersen says**

A heart wrenching story about a man who participated in the Green Revolution in Iran and what was done to him.

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## **Tiemu says**

It is a devastating short book and illustrates why there exists a complete disillusion of many of Iran's youth for the Ahmadinejad government, and now probably for Khamanei as well. Told through a disturbing experience of one of many young men who were unfortunate enough to be caught protesting against the government and having his youth and innocence raped in police custody.

Seemingly all books written of Iranian politics are on a macro level. This book's uniqueness comes from being written by a lad who explains his involvement in the campaign of an opposition politician at the grassroots level, and the government's brutal crackdown on all who dared oppose it.

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### **manatee says**

Although this is a very important book that I think everyone should read, I could not give it a higher rating because the style was stilted, sometimes unclear. The author mangled English idioms in ways that were too distracting to the reader and did not make any sense. Still this book does serve as a wake up call and an important introduction to the events of 2009.

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### **Alessandro Argenti says**

Mi aspettavo ben di più da questo libro. Una riflessione (a senso unico) sui brogli elettorali e le manifestazioni di piazza durante il giugno del 2009. Molta contestazione -giustificata, ci mancherebbe- ma nulla di più. Manca un'idea, un pensiero, una motivazione per il rilancio, per superare la delusione, per il futuro: questo l'autore non lo scrive mai. Peccato.

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### **Brian says**

A horrific tale told from the perspective of an Iranian youth who dared to hope for political change in his country. Written under a pseudonym for protection, the narrative tells of the events leading up to and immediately following the 2009 Iranian Presidential election, where a reformist candidate clearly had won the popular vote but the reactionary, right wing Islamist fundamentalists stole the election to allow Ahmadinejad a second term. So it goes.

The week following the stolen vote election saw massive demonstrations that were quickly snuffed with brutality. Iran is no North Korea, and it was impossible for the lying state media to spew its propaganda about the deaths (the murder of Neda Agha-Soltan is a particularly chilling example of how the State's position of her death being caused by unruly mobs was quickly refuted by the video placed on YouTube. WARNING: that video is extremely graphic and soul-suckingly sad).

We are a week away from the next presidential election in Iran. After finishing this book I searched online for as much info as I could find on the candidates. Only those candidates chosen by the six member Muslim council may be considered as candidates, and it looks like this year the Ayatollah Khamenei has been certain to keep all true reformists off the docket and avoid another 2009.

I'm just now finishing Herodotus' "Histories" and I've learned so much about the Persian history; a place rich in culture and a proud heritage. It is sad how much I have been negatively molded by Western media about Iran. I want to read more books like this about the Persian people - and hope that one day they will get their wish of a more fair and representative government that reflects the will of the masses, not the messes.

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## **Michael Gerald says**

Dictators are so paranoid, it would have been really funny if it were not deadly.

For more than thirty years, Iran has been under a dictatorship of mullahs/mafia, led by the capo de tutti capi of the Grand Ayatollah. But they pretend that they have a functioning democracy. So they hold elections and let some vetted candidates run.

In recent years, the "chosen" public face of Iran was Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a fool who styled himself as a world leader who thought he can be a great power by pursuing nuclear energy and denying the Holocaust, and by cavorting on the world stage with his fellow scum Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, and Vladimir Putin of Russia.

"Death to the Dictator" is a slim book written by someone who used a pseudonym (for security reasons). It briefly tells the story of a young man (presumably not the author himself) who decided, along with thousands of his countrymen, that he had had enough of that buffoon of a ruler and campaigned and voted for one of the opposition candidates. But their hopes were dashed when the regime cheated them of their votes and hastily pronounced Ahmadinejad as the winner again.

But instead of swallowing the regime's lies, the people who voted AGAINST it took to the streets and protested the continuing theft by the regime. And the latter responded with the expected brutality: setting thugs known as basijis on the people, beating them, gunning them, and putting them in prisons - and other bad things.

Four years later, the people finally were vindicated, when a seemingly moderate candidate with the name of Hassan Rouhani won the presidency. The Iranian people and the world can only hope that he is a hope for his country. But with the Ayatollah and the mullahs still calling the shots, expectations should be kept low.

One more thing: the author said that children in Iran mock Ahmadinejad because of his resemblance to the monkey figure on Cheetos packs. But the Cheetos figure is a cheetah, not a monkey.

But the point is, comparing a goon like Ahmadinejad to a monkey or a cheetah is undeserved. Cheetahs and monkeys are great creatures of God.

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## **Brian Meadows says**

This was an interesting book of events of a young man who supported Mousavi against Ahmadinejad in the 2009 election. He took part in street protests when the returns were in revealing that Ahmadinejad had won decisively when it was evident living in Iran that the opposition had much more support going into the election. He did pay a dear price with unthinkably abusive torture after being arrested. It confirms the worst of the reports of brutality that is inflicted on anyone questioning the Islamist regime in Iran, even against their own countrymen. The book does not go deeply into the religion and the rationale for the Islamist beliefs

as the author indicated he was not deep into Islam but was rising up along with many others because of the repression of freedom. It is apparent that inside Iran there are divisions and differing opinions that are squelched by the totalitarian Islamist regime. While I did not find the book inspiring, it was a very interesting look at what is going on on the streets of Tehran at this point.

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