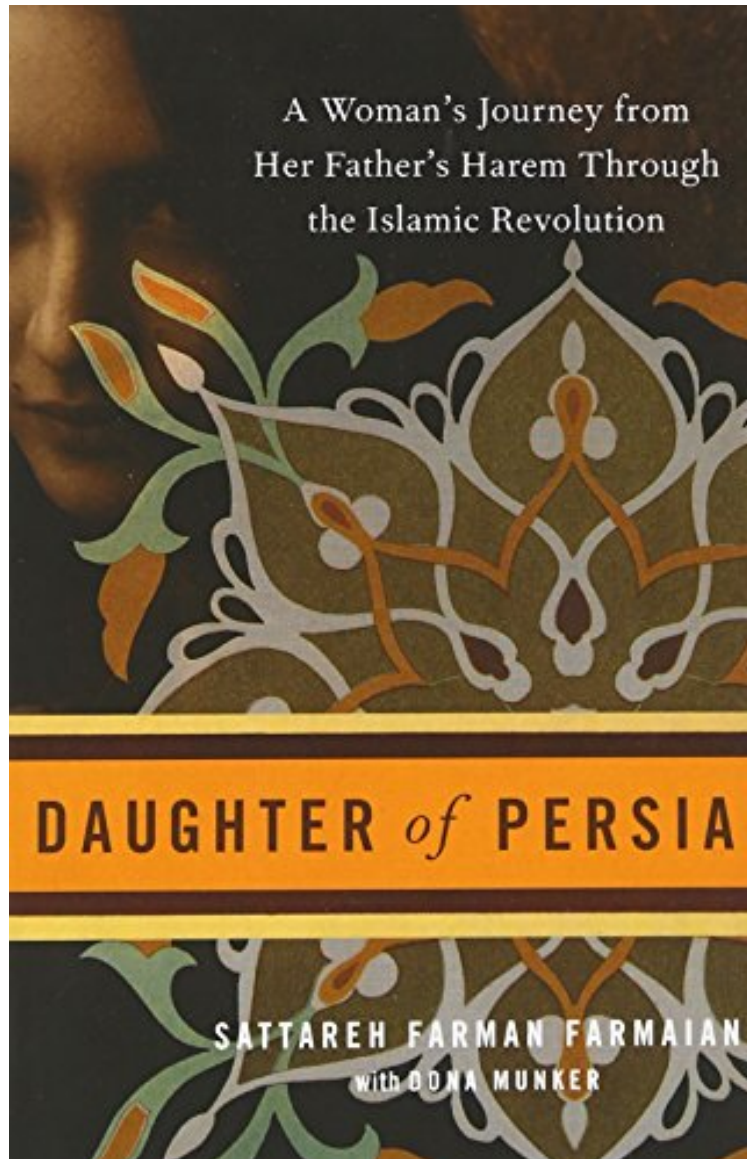


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Daughter of Persia: A Woman's Journey from Her Father's Harem Through the Islamic Revolution

Sattareh Farman Farmaian, Dona Munker

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Sattareh Farman Farmaian, Dona Munker : Daughter of Persia: A Woman's Journey from Her Father's Harem Through the Islamic Revolution before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Daughter of Persia: A Woman's Journey from Her Father's Harem Through the Islamic Revolution:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. There is a scene where she is on an American vessel and is dumbfounded by the amount of food that she sees wasted. As a general rule, Americans truly do not understand what it is like to go hungry. It again made me feel grateful to live in such a blessed and abundant country. Also I realized that democracy works (of course not perfectly) in America because it is founded on Christian principles. Other countries that try democracy but without such moral principles as a base, tend to fail again and again because self interest ends up ruling the day.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Life of an Amazing Woman By J. V. Simson This is an eye-opening story of a very brave Iranian woman who manages to cope with unbelievable obstacles in pursuing a life that is significant both for herself and her country. She was born in a harem, saw a revolution and the displacement of her aristocratic family from a position of power and prestige, took an amazing solo journey to the United States to study Social Work, experienced personal harassment while trying to improve the lot of her fellow Iranians, and lived through another revolution in which religious authorities seized power from the Shah. She exhibits extraordinary determination and flexibility in the face of obstacles and disappointment. Her life is an inspiration (and a cautionary tale) for women in male-dominated societies.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Insightful and inspiring By JDEI read this years ago and plan to reread it. It provides great insight into the modern history of Iran. She is a very inspiring and appealing narrator. I understood that history much better in light of her personal experiences.

"A riveting memoir about an inspiring Iranian woman and her country's road to revolution." "A lesson about the value of personal freedom and what happens to a nation when its people are denied the right to direct their own destiny. This is a book Americans should read." --Washington Post

The fifteenth of thirty-six children, Sattareh Farman Farmaian was born in Iran in 1921 to a wealthy and powerful shazdeh, or prince, and spent a happy childhood in her father's Tehran harem. Inspired and empowered by his ardent belief in education, she defied tradition by traveling alone at the age of twenty-three to the United States to study at the University of Southern California. Ten years later, she returned to Tehran and founded the first school of social work in Iran. Intertwined with Sattareh's personal story is her unique perspective on the Iranian political and social upheaval that have rocked Iran throughout the twentieth century, from the 1953 American-backed coup that toppled democratic premier Mossadegh to the brutal regime of the Shah and Ayatollah Khomeini's fanatic and anti-Western Islamic Republic. In 1979, after two decades of tirelessly serving Iran's neediest, Sattareh was arrested as a counterrevolutionary and branded an imperialist by Ayatollah Khomeini's radical students. *Daughter of Persia* is the remarkable story of a woman and a nation in the grip of profound change.

From Publishers Weekly As founder in 1958 of the Tehran School of Social Work, Sattareh naively believed, "If one only avoided politics, one could achieve something constructive." After two decades of humanitarian efforts in Iranian family planning, day care, vocational programs and aid to the poor and prisoners' families, she was arrested in 1979 by Khomeini's machine-gun-toting teenage minions. Branded an "imperialist," she narrowly escaped execution and now lives in the U.S. The 15th of 36 children, Sattareh revered and feared her "all-powerful" father, a prince and governor. This dramatic if restrained autobiography, written with freelancer Munker, describes her patriarchal upbringing and her education at UCLA. She belatedly realized that "keeping our mouths shut let the Shah do what he wanted." Her memoir is actually most effective as a political document. She powerfully condemns the Eisenhower-backed coup that toppled democratic premier Mossadegh and installed ruthless dictator Reza Shah Pahlavi, whose fascist secret police were trained and financed by the CIA. The Shah's corrupt, unjust regime, she graphically demonstrates, fueled explosive resentment that found an outlet in Khomeini's fanaticism. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal In this poignant autobiography, Farman Farmaian brings Persian history and culture alive. Born in 1921 into the powerful, aristocratic Qajar family, her life spans nearly a century of tremendous change in Iran: from a sheltered childhood in her father's harem (there was an extended family of four wives and over 30 children) through her studies at the University of Southern California where she was the first Iranian student to attend to her return to Iran to found and direct the Tehran School of Social Work from 1958 until 1979 when radical students took over the school and forced her into exile. Intertwined with her personal account is the political history of Iran from the constitutional monarchy of the Qajars through the Western-oriented but brutal Reza Khan and his son Reza Shah to the virulent anti-Western Islamic Republic of Ayatollah Khomeini. This is also a cultural history of a highly adaptable people who learned centuries ago--in order to survive--to trust no one outside one's own family. Highly recommended for all libraries. --Ruth K. Baacke, Bellingham P.L., Wash. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Kirkus An exotic, absorbing, rather odd life saga played out against the volatile politics of Iran. "Dispossessed of her Persian heritage," Farmaian (b. 1921) fondly recalls her harem childhood as the 15th of 36 children, the third-born to

her 16-year-old mother, who was the third of her father's eight wives. Here, the author idealizes her father for his ability to recollect his children's names on Friday inspections and for teaching them to be "obedient" and grateful, to value education and service, and "never to accept a bribe." Discouraged--as a woman she had "no value"--from pursuing her own education, Farmaian nonetheless went to America in 1943, where she acquired a master's in social work, an Indian husband who abandoned her, and a daughter who, to her great consternation, was an American citizen. Returning to Iran in 1954, she began, with the Shah's approval, her school of social work, all the while condemning the US government for supporting the Shah, whose corruption she especially denounces here with her own particular form of snobbery: the Shah, she says, made people rich "whose fathers no one had ever heard of." But Farmaian objects equally to the Khomeini revolution, its excesses and injustices: her recounting of her arrest, her defiant response to her interrogators, and her escape is the best reading in the book. Throughout, many of Farmaian's attitudes no doubt will offend the "American friends" for whom, along with her grandchildren, she says she is writing, in order to warn them against "well-meaning efforts to remake the world in their image." Rejecting Western democracy, the constitutional monarchy of the Shah, and the religious state of the Ayatollah, the author seems to prefer the landed aristocracy of her father. A seemingly naive but fascinating psychological document, then, with occasional lyric moments: "My country is a kingdom of fire, a carpet of sand and stone." (Eight-page bw photo insert- -not seen.) -- Copyright 1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.