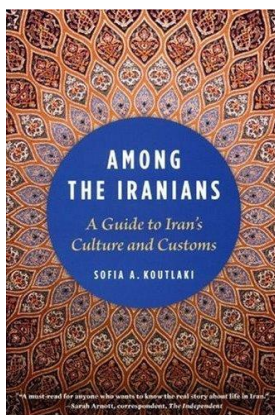


Koutlaki, Sofia, *Among the Iranians: A Guide to Iran's Culture and Customs*

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Reviewed by Dr. George Simons at www.diversophy.com



At a time when public awareness of Iran seems limited to political ranting over its nuclear ambitions, *Among the Iranians* is a welcome insight into the rich history, customs and peoples of this both ancient and contemporary land.

Sofia Koutlaki's work is the kind of book I hope to write some day, a combination of intensely personal experiences and stories as well as cultural historical, demographic and geographical perspectives scrutinized and presented in context in a digestible and useful fashion. One has the feeling of having been invited to a magnificent buffet of delicious facts, of both distinct and colorful dishes, rightly seasoned with the sauce of the chef's comprehension that makes them both appetizing and digestible. The preparation of this tasteful cultural repast is no

doubt due in a great deal to Koutlaki's experience as outsider and insider, observer and participant in Iran and its society. Like an elegant banquet, one begs for the time to fully taste and enjoy it. This is not a book to be rushed through in a sitting or two, but savored in bits and pieces and frequently set down and returned to when one is ready for another course.