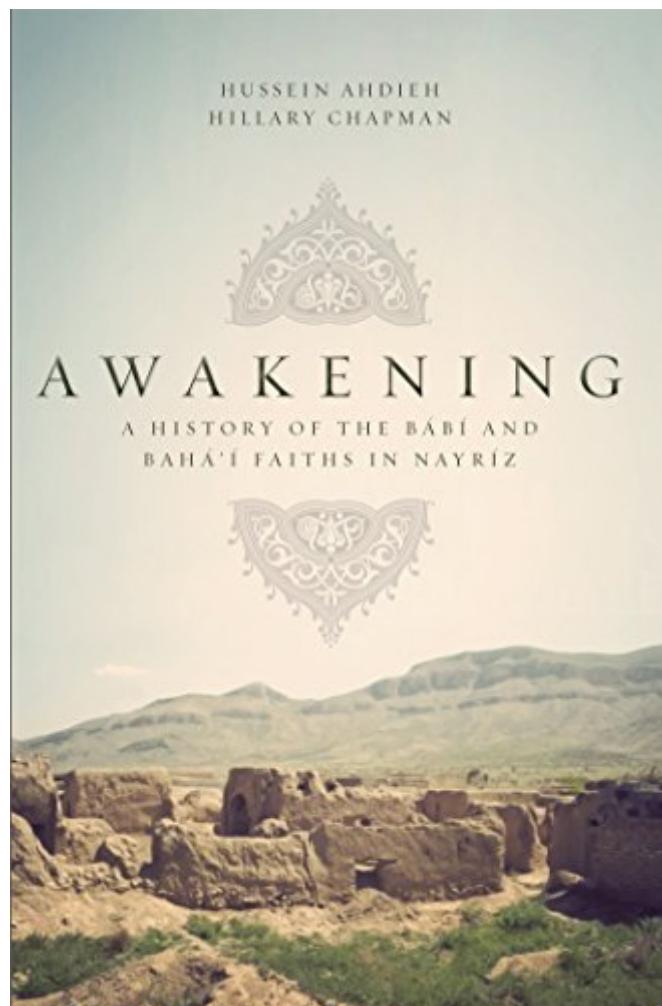


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Awakening: A History Of The Babi And Bahai Faiths In Nayriz



Synopsis

Awakening: A History of the Babi and Bahai Faiths in Nayriz is an inspiring account of the brutal religious persecutions that took place in 1850, 1853, and 1909 in the town of Nayriz, Iran, against its Babi and Bahai residents. During this time, the town's citizens, spurred on by a corrupt Muslim clergy and government, launched several waves of bloodshed against the Babis and later Bahais who lived there. This type of persecution continues today in present-day Iran toward the Bahai's "on a more subtle level" and the history of the Babi and Bahai Faiths in Nayriz serves as a reminder of what can happen when religious fanaticism and paranoia are allowed to replace rational thinking and tolerance. The book gives accounts from survivors, attempts to explain the motives of the persecutors, and tries to provide a context "if any can be found" for the level of brutality that occurred. To any unbiased reader, the accounts of betrayals, tortures, and massacres will be shocking, yet sadly similar to other mass killings that have taken place around the globe.

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Customer Reviews

Awakening is a history of the Babi and Bahai Faiths in Nayriz. Written by Dr. Hussein Ahdieh

and Hillary Chapman, the book's purpose is to bring to life, in words and images, the heroism and suffering of the early believers who resided there and to show the ultimate victories that grew from their sacrifices. Epic histories like the Dawn-Breakers by Nabā'ī and God Passes By by Shoghi Effendi give a summary description of the persecution of the Nayriz Bā'ībā'-s. Awakening puts the reader in the middle of the events and highlights the heroes and villains. Nayriz had three major conflicts. In 1850, Vahā'ī declared the Bā'ībā'-s mission from the pulpit of the Jāmīh Mosque in Nayriz. Many of the people responded to the Announcement by swearing allegiance to the Bā'ībā'- and Vahā'ī. The rest of the town considered them infidels and attacked them. The Bā'ībā'-s under Vahā'ī's leadership took refuge in Fort Khājjih and valiantly defended themselves for four weeks with inadequate arms against the overwhelming forces of the Persian Empire. Like many Nayriz Bahā'ībā'-s, Dr. Ahdieh's ancestors embraced the Bā'ībā'- Faith and fought alongside Vahā'ī and ultimately experienced martyrdom. The author grew up hearing stories of their heroism and sacrifice. His reason for writing Awakening was to make sure that the suffering of the brave Bā'ībā'- and Bahā'ībā'- men and women of Nayriz is not forgotten. In 1853, a new wave of persecutions was unleashed on the surviving Bā'ībā'-s. They took refuge in the mountains and again heroically defended themselves against overpowering forces.

This book has already won many awards, so it is an honor to write a review. I've repeatedly tried to summarize 'Awakening', but it defies every attempt. If it had been written immediately after the events depicted in Persia (Iran) during the mid-19th century and then widely circulated among scholars, government leaders, as well as the general population, today's world would be completely different. Because, 'Awakening' would have warned the world about Islam's rapid devolution, as evidenced by its clerics' violent rejection of higher, more world-embracing ideals and aspirations. In hindsight, these were clear signs of humanity's entrance into a new age, which conflicted with their understanding of Allah (God) and the Holy Qur'an. Seemingly, it still does for many of them. However, as human destiny would have it, this book was written only recently. Iran and the strident voice of Islam began to occupy global thought a few decades ago, which surprised the Western mind. The Middle East has now become an Islamic conflagration and the Iranian government is considered a major threat to global peace, according to many other nations. Nations have had to expend both treasure and blood to counter the murderous ideology of Islam's most radicalized elements; more than likely this will continue. When and HOW will it end? What is the key to restoring Islam to the once progressive and civilization-advancing plateau it attained during its Golden Age (universities, libraries, medicine, science, the concept of 'a nation', etc.)? Is this even

possible?It seems only truth can perform this vital task, a task so complex that only divine Providence could have created its dimensions.

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