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# The brutal crackdowns only make Iran's women stronger

The protest movement is now a year old – but the feminists at its helm can look back on decades of courageous activism



**Shirin Ebadi**  
guardian.co.uk, Tuesday 8 June 2010 20.30 BST

This weekend one year will have gone by since the Iranian people took to the streets in droves to [protest at the fraudulent elections](#) that returned Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to the presidency. These peaceful demonstrations were met with extreme violence carried out by the Iranian regime. Since that day, the people have not backed down and continue to fight peacefully for basic human rights. Meanwhile, the government continues its crackdown on any opposition or dissent with ever increasing brutality.

Just a few weeks ago, on 9 May, the lengths to which the regime will go to crush its opponents came to light. [Five political prisoners were executed](#) in secret. Not even their families or their lawyers were notified.

[Shirin Alam Holi](#), a 28-year-old Kurdish woman, was executed along with four men. In letters from Evin prison, Shirin wrote of being tortured to confess to charges of terrorism. She refused to confess, sealing her fate. At least 25 other men and women await the same fate on death row.

However, as we see time and time again, the harsher the repression, the stronger the movement grows. And as the story of Shirin Alam Holi demonstrates, women are at the forefront of the struggle for human rights in Iran.

But it is interesting to observe that this powerful feminist movement was not born out of the elections. It has been gaining strength and momentum since the Islamic revolution of 1979 – when the regime began imposing laws that were discriminatory against women – and even predates the revolution. Women in Iran have enjoyed the right to vote for nearly 50 years, [since 1963](#). Today, under an even more repressive regime, they are flooding the ranks of doctors, professors and chief executives. Women now constitute more than 63% of university students. Is it any wonder that they refuse to stand idly by and accept that their lives are not worth as much as that of a man?

With no leader or central office, for 31 years the women's movement has resided in every Iranian household that cares about human rights. In the past year, the now famous Green movement has emerged and modelled itself on this seemingly unstoppable force. With women's rights activists at the helm, the Green network of groups and people is consistent in its demands for democracy and human rights.

Take the [Mourning Mothers](#). Every week since June 2009, mothers whose children are in prison, are missing, or have lost their lives in state-sanctioned violence, gather in Laleh Park in Tehran. Dressed all in black, they carry photos of their loved ones and are surrounded by other women who wish to support and protect them.

Every Saturday they gather peacefully and every Saturday the police attack, beat, and

arrest them. This excessive violence and repression by the government has sadly become routine in Iran – but has not deterred the Mourning Mothers. Courageously, they are defending their human rights and, ultimately, those of women everywhere.

In December, a wave of arrests and violence followed peaceful protests taking place on the Shia Muslim holy day of Ashura. Dozens of women journalists and human rights activists were targeted, and I was no exception. In an attempt to stop me from doing my work from abroad, the government arrested my sister, Dr [Noushin Ebadi](#). She has never been politically active or participated in any rallies or demonstrations, but was arrested and detained for three weeks solely because of my work fighting for human rights.

This brave group of women will not stop. They prove that there is no end to the creative ways that Iranian women will fight back. The One Million Signatures campaign has been working since before last year's election to collect signatures from Iranian men and women who oppose discriminatory laws and practices. On 11 March the [Change for Equality website](#), which promotes the campaign, was awarded the first ever [Netizen prize by Reporters Without Borders](#). The next day – ironically the World Day Against Cyber-Censorship – Iranian authorities shut down the website for the 23rd time since it was launched in 2006. It was up and running again just hours later.

The struggle for human rights and gender equality continues in Iran as we mark the anniversary of the disputed elections. This global day of action has united activists, students, NGOs and concerned citizens worldwide to spotlight the horrific human rights abuses that have become all too common.

Women will be at the forefront of this weekend's peaceful activities, as they were today and will be tomorrow. Mark my words, it will be women who will bring democracy to Iran.

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**WeAreTheWorld**

8 Jun 2010, 8:36PM

I wish all feminists and people fighting for gay rights such as yourself all the best.

Thank you for this.

[Recommend?](#) (36)

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**Achilleso200**

8 Jun 2010, 8:37PM

"Women will be at the forefront of this weekend's peaceful activities, as they were today and will be tomorrow. Mark my words, it will be women who will bring democracy to Iran."

And I wish them the very best, One day not only they but all the Iranian people will secure the rights that are taken for granted in true democracies.

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**tapout**

8 Jun 2010, 8:41PM

Hopefully that dreadful regime will crumble sooner rather than later. It's truly shameful to think this goes on today.

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**pete999**

8 Jun 2010, 8:47PM

Good luck to them.

[Recommend?](#) (21)

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**VoxAC30**

8 Jun 2010, 8:48PM

Its a pity they failed.

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**sarka**

8 Jun 2010, 8:52PM

It will be a long hard struggle.

But all honour to you.

[Recommend?](#) (17)

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[Clip](#) |[Link](#)**usini**

8 Jun 2010, 8:56PM

I can only express my admiration for you and your friends.

[Recommend?](#) (23)[Report abuse](#)[Clip](#) |[Link](#)**johntosh7**

8 Jun 2010, 8:56PM

Iran has the potential to be a really strong, go-ahead country with the influence to forge peace and progress in the Middle East.

They have to get rid of that mental regime somehow.

[Recommend?](#) (25)[Report abuse](#)[Clip](#) |[Link](#)**colombianlover**

8 Jun 2010, 9:09PM

Great article Sherin. The Iranian Women struggle for equality has my moral support!!!

I very much hope that one day that horrendous regime will be down and that women along side progressisive men will build a fair er society in Iran. I hope that one day, women in Iran and many other parts of the world where women and the poor are always abused and discriminated against. One of those places is beautiful Colombia where there is a so-called democracy plagued of human rights abuses, corruption, nepotism,etc. The Colombian judiciary has been bullied for now 8 years so that they don't do their job properly and bring to justice the government corrupt officials involved in paramilitarism and corruption-including the president Mr. Uribe. Saddy the country has been ruled by a mafia.

[Recommend?](#) (22)[Report abuse](#)[Clip](#) |[Link](#)**Steve2000**

8 Jun 2010, 9:16PM

The Iranian people have suffered long enough. The sooner the war-monger Ahmedinejad and his brutal regime are brought down the better.

Iran under the mullahs has become a major exporter of terror and a destabilizing influence on the Middle East. With its nuclear ambitions it has become a danger to the rest of the world too.

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**usini**

8 Jun 2010, 9:45PM

@steve2000 I don't really think the writer is asking for foreign military intervention.

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**NadionPulse**

8 Jun 2010, 9:48PM

I look forward to a future where Iran is a secular democracy, governed by a lady president!

[Recommend?](#) (12)

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**VictorPurinton**

8 Jun 2010, 9:53PM

If Iranians want to live free, they'll have to rise up en masse, suffer the vast slaughter that will be meted out by the regime of thugs, liars and pigs, and hope that someone within the military decides that they can no longer tolerate Iranian civilians being gunned down in the streets and turns on the regime.

But read carefully: We're not going to lift a finger for you. If your oppression and misery last another 50 years, so be it. We just don't care.

We don't want to meddle, after all.

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**Arshavinslittlelegs**

8 Jun 2010, 10:16PM

I fully support the struggle by Iranians, within Iran, for Social justice and equality.

Many nations that have progressed have done so through natural social evolution within society.

What I do not support is the intervention of outside powers with vested interests in the guise of human rights or any other self-righteous rhetoric. Let us not forget that under Mossadeq Iran was on its way to becoming a progressive, independent nation. What happened in 1979 was ultimately a violent reaction of the people to the interference of certain powers.

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**Aaron1234**

8 Jun 2010, 10:16PM

The election backlash shows the real feeling in Iran. No country can last keeping people in line with threats and violence Iran will be free, and the sooner the better!

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**bittersweet**

8 Jun 2010, 10:21PM

The bravery and strength of Iranian feminists is greatly impressive. Good luck to all who are working for fairness in Iran.

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**findempire03**

8 Jun 2010, 10:22PM

I don't get how Mousavi supporters can complain about Ahmadinejad beating them up when their own guy Mousavi, as well as his mentor Rafsanjani, used to hang the people they didn't like in the thousands:

Iran's prisons were full of students sentenced for protesting against Ayatollah Khomeini in the early 1980s. . . The regime decided they should be eradicated so they would not trouble the postwar government . . .

Revolutionary guards descended on the prisons . . . where they were hanged six at a time.

Ali Rafsanjani, still a powerful political player, was then the commander of the Revolutionary Guard, who were ordered to carry out the killings. Then there is the man who in 1988 was Iran's prime minister – Mir Hussein Mousavi, today's reform movement leader.

The hypocrisy of the Iranian "color revolutionaries" is breathtaking but at the same time, only to be expected, considering how other "color revolutions" turned out: Saakashvili going from freedom champion to mass-murderer and the Orange crowd falling out like thieves.

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**nuisverige**

8 Jun 2010, 10:51PM

Iran needs feminism like a fish needs a bicycle.

Iran needs humanity, democracy, fairness, justice and many things like this, but feminism will just serve to entrench traditional yet moderate Muslims, many of whom will seek refuge from extreme and unpleasant ideologies like feminism in their faith.

Iran needs democrats, not feminists.

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[Link](#)**imnosuperman**

8 Jun 2010, 10:53PM

Shirin,

As the mother of four very strong minded feminist daughters, who are Anglo-Kurdish-Iranian, one of whom which was lucky enough to be the first to benefit from the 'Neda Soltan' scholarship in Oxford, I salute you in your struggle, and assure you that our support for those suffering heinous human rights abuses in Iran could not be more heartfelt, especially the women of Iran, subjected to daily humiliations not only by the regime but those who actively support such a patriarchal regime.

For the outside world looking in, and comparing Iran with other middle-eastern nations, it is all too easy to assume that the women of Iran are merely subservient followers of their male counterparts, yet nothing could be further from the truth, with a large number of women in Iran, as you have already mentioned, highly educated, and politically active.

Hopefully the name of Shirin Alam Holi will become as much a figurehead for women's struggles in Iran as Neda Soltan.

We fight and campaign for you as best we can here in the UK.

Much love and respect always.

X

[Recommend?](#) (24)[Report abuse](#)[Clip](#) |[Link](#)**OneWorldGovernment**

8 Jun 2010, 11:05PM

Let us not forget that under Mossadeq Iran was on its way to becoming a progressive, independent nation.

Ha! Utter simplistic black/white world view bullshit. Mosaddegh was a power hungry fool who was on borrowed time anyways. Once he started losing support of the working class (which happened when Ayatollah Kashani withdrew his support in early of '53 due to Mosaddegh wanted to extend his unlimited powers), Mosaddegh resorted to typical tinpot dictator status. Winning elections with 99.9% of the vote, dismissing Parliament so he can extend emergency powers, and etc. The U.S. kicked the Soviets out of occupying Iran in '46 and the Soviets were making a comeback through the Tudeh party, which was the only base that Mosaddegh still had in tact in late '53. No way were we going to left Mosaddegh hand over the country back to the communists and put Iran back under Soviet influence right after kicking them out seven years earlier.

[Recommend?](#) (1)[Report abuse](#)[Clip](#) |[Link](#)**imnosuperman**

8 Jun 2010, 11:08PM

**nuisverige**

Feminism is not an unpleasant ideology, it is simply about women struggling to gain

equal rights, and actually there is such a thing as 'Muslim feminists', because there are plenty of Muslim women out there who are fighting for their rights, perhaps not singing from exactly the same hymn sheet as women in the west, but feminism isn't just about western women, it embraces all women, regardless of faith or background. And of course Iranian politics needs women, just as it needs men, because we are people, and people make politics.

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**[Nihilistoffhismeds92](#)**

8 Jun 2010, 11:15PM

Thank you for your article.

I admire the courage of you and your fellow dissidents. I can't imagine what it is like to live under the shadow of such a repressive regime.

Thank you for showing me the power of courage and conviction. It is an example I will attempt to follow in my own life.

Heymat the Uplifted One.

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**[Arshavinslittlelegs](#)**

8 Jun 2010, 11:33PM

OneWorldGovernment

8 Jun 2010, 11:05PM

No way were we going to left Mosaddegh hand over the country back to the communists and put Iran back under Soviet influence right after kicking them out seven years earlier.

Of course. You sit on your backside and dictate what happens to the lives of millions, on the other side of the globe. Mossadeq nationalised the oil companies. That was the only reason he was replaced. He detested the Communists just as much as he detested the US and British interventionism in his country.

Did the imperialists succeed in 1953? No. You face the results of your actions and your arrogance today when your meddling is used as a rallying cry by the Iranian people.

Get this - No one, not those in the green movement or Islamic movement within Iran forgets what role the US and Britain did in unleashing the murderous Shah.

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**[Mihandoost](#)**

8 Jun 2010, 11:44PM

Shirin,

1) The election were not fraudulent. This is just a blind assertion. It shows how deluded you and your supporters are.

2) Shirin Alam Holi was a member of **PJAK**, a group listed as a terrorist organisation

even by the United States. PJAK has killed Iranian soldiers and civilians - but you don't seem to care. What about the rights of these people to justice?

3) You admit that women make up 63% of university students and participate in all sectors of society: So why are they being "repressed" in your opinion?

4) Even the Green movement admits that at most 107 people are dead or missing as a result of the political violence over the past year. That same number was killed in a single day in the Kyrgyzstan revolution earlier this year.

You also seem oblivious to the fact that the Green movement has not been exclusively peaceful - we all have seen the footage of green shirts burning buses, attacking police and looting banks. What about public rights?

Are you suggesting the authorities in Iran, not excusing any human rights abuses carried out, should have done nothing at all in the face of such riotous behaviour?

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**saywhatusee**

8 Jun 2010, 11:57PM

were on cif it wasn't a brutal suppression of Iranians but foreign insurgents who were paid and directed by the uk, us and israel.

get it right

[Recommend?](#) (4)

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**Prince009**

9 Jun 2010, 12:11AM

Im sorry to say Shirin Ebadi has got her info wrong.

Iran is successfully running the country backed by its people, and governed by the laws of Islam . The west view the women as oppressed and under the control of men, but this is plain wrong. The women have been given certain obligations in islam, and so have the men. Muslims believe that these obligations are what create a healthy society where the women and men can live in peace. Men and women have equal status in islam. At a time when the rest of the world, from Greece and Rome to India and China, considered women as no better than children or even slaves, with no rights whatsoever, Islam acknowledged women's equality with men in a great many respects. The Quran states:

"And among His signs is this: that He created mates for you from yourselves that you may find rest and peace of mind in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy. Certainly, herein indeed are signs for people who reflect." [Noble Quran 30:21]

Islam is a social system and a successful political order which has proven to work.

What the west fail to understand today is the delicate role played both by the men and women and how they both can be put together to contribute to a society that in which they bring about this harmony.

When the west throw accusations at the role of women in islam, it is purely out of ignorance or lack of knowledge. Islam gives a woman freedom and uplifts them from the many psychological and physiological problems faced by many modern states, even today. Economic prosperity has not necessarily increased well being in society.

Women in islam are not oppressed and certainly do not need to adopt a feminist

attitude which does not bring about any real sense of well being, honour or respect.

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**[TheShermanator](#)**

9 Jun 2010, 12:36AM

@ Prince009

*Islam is a social system and a successful political order which has proven to work.*

Huh?

Please provide everyone with information comparing the annual number of emigrants from Muslim majority countries with immigrants to Muslim majority countries.

Which fantasy world do you live in?

[Recommend?](#) (13)

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**[CanWeNotKnockIt](#)**

9 Jun 2010, 12:37AM

Nice try Prince009 but when you resort to locking up women for wearing the wrong clothes you've already lost any claim to humanity, legitimacy or plain old common sense.

Don't pretend it's about giving women freedom, it's rubbish and it's oppression pure and simple.

And thanks for the article Shirin. All power to everyone fighting for human rights in Iran.

[Recommend?](#) (14)

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**[Shreen](#)**

9 Jun 2010, 12:41AM

Iran is successfully running the country backed by its people

My first coffee-spluttering moment of the day, thankyou.

[Recommend?](#) (12)

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**[ellis](#)**

9 Jun 2010, 12:45AM

Every day, with metronomic regularity, we have another broadside directed against the Iranian government.

Is this because The Guardian has suddenly discovered new charges? No, it is because the US is launching a major international PR campaign for sanctions. At the same time

it is escalating its terrorist attacks within Iran.

In short, war is approaching, a war in which Iranian women will suffer enormously, just as they did in the Iraq-Iran war which was actually a proxy war launched and paid for by the United States and its allies. A million Iranians died then.

The current threat of war against Iran is what lies behind these articles: they are intended to cue public opinion up for the coming Mass Hatred exercise, against a regime which will last just as long as the Iranian people want it to.

If they want this sort of government who are we to complain? Is it our business? Are our governments, a category which must logically include the governments that we support, arm and finance (Ethiopia, Morocco, Egypt, Georgia to choose from a very long list) any better?

The answer is No.

This propaganda campaign is frog-marching the world into barbarism; the lights are going out again. And the first victims will be marked by the crocodile tears splashed over them by writers like this.

In the name of humanity, stop this propaganda!

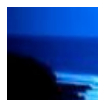
Restore some balance and fairness to your coverage of this vital matter. Lives are at stake, just as they were when the media was playing the same game in the run up to the disastrous war in Iraq.

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[Link](#)



**Bluecten**

9 Jun 2010, 12:51AM

Shirin Ebadi,

Persians and Jews have a lot in common, both are ancient and proud civilizations. You and other peace-loving Iranians have my admiration.

I wish someone like you had real power in Iran to change things in time.

[Recommend?](#) (11)

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[Link](#)



**itsnotsobadisit2**

9 Jun 2010, 1:01AM

This comment has been removed by a moderator. Replies may also be deleted.



**itsnotsobadisit2**

9 Jun 2010, 1:04AM

This comment has been removed by a moderator. Replies may also be deleted.



**itsnotsobadisit2**

9 Jun 2010, 1:06AM

women were the worst kapo leaders in WWII I would be very cautious engaging with women in a fascist regime.

[Recommend?](#) (0)

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[Clip](#) |[Link](#)**PersianModesty**

9 Jun 2010, 1:07AM

**Mr. Mossadegh, circa 1953 Iran;**

There is a tired, old and worn out narrative still flying around every now and then, to the effect that P.M. Mossadegh was somehow "removed" from power with the help of CIA/MI6 because he "*Nationalised Iran's Oil Industry*".

This conspiracy theory, perpetrated mostly by the the ex Iranian Marxists and Communists of the time, is simply not true.

Remember that Iran's northern parts were still in occupation of the Soviets up to 1950. As such their influence amongst the so called *new intellectuals* of Iran ran rampant. This group of political (non) thinkers acted as a live conduit for Soviet influence in Iran for decades.

Mr. Mossadegh himself was an ex Qajari prince (the dynasty that lost the monarch throne to the Pahlavis back in mid 1920s.

**NATIONALIZATION OF IRAN'S OIL WAS NOT MOSSADEGH'S PERSONAL INVENTION.**

Successive governments of Iran, had already planned the road map to nationalization of Iranian Oil, soon after the end of WWII.

Mossadegh came along and fueled a nationalistic fervor claiming the nationalization program as his own to get votes. Then he promptly went on to attempt a coup against his own government threatening to turn Iran into a military rule.

He failed and sentenced to death for treason and later pardoned by the {democratically elected} government of the time.

This whole affair has had nothing to do with a CIA/MI6 involvement (they both wish). Mossadegh's ousting was a Made In Iran affair.

**Ms. Ebadi;**

As always, all the best.

[Recommend?](#) (5)[Report abuse](#)[Clip](#) |[Link](#)**Lasant**

9 Jun 2010, 1:17AM

Ellis deserves the highest accolades for nailing the canard squarely on its head. I wish there were more like him, who know evil when they see it. Good on you Ellis!! I have nothing more to add to the eloquence and accuracy of his analysis...Brilliant!!

[Recommend?](#) (4)[Report abuse](#)[Clip](#) |[Link](#)**Bikhair**

9 Jun 2010, 1:18AM

Ms. Shirin

Nice to have you around. Do you support choice for Muslim women or do you support another state sanctioned orthodoxy hostile to their religious views?

[Recommend?](#) (1)[Report abuse](#)[Clip](#) |[Link](#)**PersianModesty**

9 Jun 2010, 1:22AM

Ammentdemt;

*This whole affair has had nothing to do with a CIA/MI6 involvement (they both wish). Mossadegh's ousting was a Made In Iran affair.*

In contrast, the support of the Ayatollah establishment and Shiasm in Persia has historically been a European speciality (mainly Europe's virulently demented left). See Iran's brutal Safavid era of Shah Abbas, circa 1501-1722 and the reckless islamist Qajar era circa Iran, 1794-1929.

The suffering of women in Iran, stems from a systemic elimination of 50% of the population from political and economic dissent against the establishment.,

In a way, women of Iran, have the European left to thank for their current plight.

[Recommend?](#) (1)[Report abuse](#)[Clip](#) |[Link](#)**Bikhair**

9 Jun 2010, 1:23AM

CanweNotKnockIt

"Nice try Prince009 but when you resort to locking up women for wearing the wrong clothes you've already lost any claim to humanity, legitimacy or plain old common sense."

Sarkozy?

[Recommend?](#) (3)[Report abuse](#)[Clip](#) |[Link](#)**Bikhair**

9 Jun 2010, 1:26AM

In any event, good luck to all well meaning Iranians who want to live in peace, security and stability for all peoples.

[Recommend?](#) (3)[Report abuse](#)[Clip](#) |[Link](#)**mickeybee**

9 Jun 2010, 1:53AM

The MOURNING MOTHERS meet every Saturday for one hour in the place where NADA AGHA-SOLTAN was shot dead almost a year ago. This poem is for her, and the youtube video is well worth seeing also. She is becoming a major symbol of our century. I think her life is important for more than just Iran.

Video link:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F48SinuEHlk&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F48SinuEHlk&feature=player_embedded)

TO NEDA

on the first anniversary of her death, June 20th 2009

They cannot bear beauty.

They know its power one day

will bring them down,

and therefore they wage war against it

every chance they get.

In every country

young men and women aspire towards the sacred dream of freedom.

What freedom is

is felt and only dimly known.

Often those who seek it

get things wrong, all wrong.

But still it draws them.

The idea of freedom

draws them on.

Neda – it could have been another girl;

it could have been one of many hundreds of thousands of girls –

but it was you.

You are the one we watch.

We sit there safely in our homes,

far from the shouting and the shots,

and watch your heart's blood streaming out upon the ground.

No fear is in your eyes,

no pain.

It is as if you are aware that we are watching.

We hear your friend call,

“Neda, please!

Stay with us, Neda!

Do not go!”

But there was nothing you could do, and it was time to go.

A year has passed; it is my temperament

to see things not just from an Iranian point of view.

For, Neda, you were not just an Iranian woman; you are a woman of our time.

The bullet that struck you

is found in other countries too.

Bullets of hate and ignorance precede the murderer's bullet.

There in your country they took Allah, the compassionate and merciful,

and turned him into a beast of vengeance

that no normal young woman with a lust for life could ever love.

And they've done this

with my God too.

For you and me are lovers of a God of Love,

while those who rule are liegemen to a twisted thing

of malice and possessiveness,

so very far

from what is in our hearts –

the God that we feel close to

every time we love.

Neda, how can you be killed?

You are not just a woman, you are a force of humanity.

You are not just a woman, you are the voice of our humanity.  
You are that in all of us  
which will not bow before injustice  
and will resist oppression  
till its inevitable demise.  
You lay there, Neda, at your hasty funeral  
so beautiful,  
as beautiful as you had been in life.  
You are not dead.  
It is the ones whose way of thought has run its course  
who now are dead.  
And, seeing you, I have this premonition  
of the death of what must die.  
The old order  
has been given a little time upon the earth,  
but you and ones to come like you shall wrench from them the world.  
Your beauty, Neda, that the crumbling order fears,  
shall save the world.

[Recommend?](#) (5)

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**[waterbarbarian](#)**

9 Jun 2010, 2:37AM

Iran, is one of the more open nations among all the Middle East muslim nations, comparing many others. Say, Saudi, Jordan, and etc. Yet, it is the most hateful nations at least in the west. I just wonder why this happens.

[Recommend?](#) (3)

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**[afancdogge](#)**

9 Jun 2010, 2:51AM

Shirin

i admire the strong women of Iran and believe they will bring about change from within,  
there are many sad memories of loss , of anger and violence but the Iranian women - and men - are strong in their resolve. Oppression cannot last forever- people have always opposed it and won.

I wish the Iranian people well in their struggle for freedom.

Leni

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**[lapsed](#)**

9 Jun 2010, 5:48AM

Good luck.

Just don't expect any support from the European left. Ellis has his faults but he's dead right about how 'liberal' politics works over here. Cif might give you a platform but don't expect anything in the way of actual support from the Guardian or the Independent should they be forced to choose between publicising crimes against humanity in Tehran over the Gaza blockade.

See here, how scant the attention paid to your piece. It's got none of the villains the left loves to hate you see.

Now, write a piece attacking Iran for its deliberate attempt to provoke warfare and mass bloodshed in the Middle East, include a passage showing how its cynical manipulation of Palestinians is part of the policy and then call for the west to do something about it and wait for the howling rage.

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**Teacup**

9 Jun 2010, 6:37AM

Ms Ebadi,

Much respect to you and to the women of Iran. I hope that your country will see positive reform soon and that it happens peacefully, without internal repression or external aggression.

Yes, Iranian women have much to be proud of.

Thank you for this article.

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**Teacup**

9 Jun 2010, 7:01AM

Ellis,

Sorry, but this article-does not come across as part of a war-mongering strategy. I think that the Afghan situation has made it clear that you can't force the liberation of women at gun point. Many women have been "un-liberated" in Basra after that silly, futile intervention.

Imposition hasn't worked in two other countries, why should it work here?

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**brianrouth**

9 Jun 2010, 7:15AM

I wish more power to women everywhere.....here in the west, specifically UK women have rights and the vote thanks to women who gave their lives to make it possible and sadly a lot of women don't exercise their right to vote or the power that is at their fingertips and instead play the man's game with his rules and allow men to push them around.....ultimately I see women as having potentially a lot of power if only they

would use it. It's great that women are gaining strength in Iran and hopefully they will be free.....getting rid of islam will be an important step as it is by it's nature a religion of oppression (like ALL religions) I personally think if you choose to believe in such a thing as a god then that should be a private matter that you keep to yourself and it definitely should not be mixed with politics.....of course corruption is usually based in greed and religion and they are both somehow connected through absolute power.....

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**StrangerThenRedz**

9 Jun 2010, 7:30AM

if there was proof what shirin ebadi isthen this article proves it

if you were in europe youd be marginalised

instead the west use you cynically to promote you for there agenda in the middle east

instead of the rightwing trolls [trying writing ur opinion on the daily mail] and the

reasons you've stated

what has executions of prisoners criminals and pkk and you convinently mentioned

she must have been tortured from her claims when in iran torture is not common

[considering in the west every escuse and unthinkable approach by the media is taken

that it can be done by there government completly] unrelated to the political

movement have got to do with women and political movment genrally

you yourself state as common facts how much women are involved in all proffesions is

that proof of womens progress instead you rant they will not stand idealy by except

they lives are not worth as men well what is that but rant by a feminist loon that just

pointed out that she is wrong

and the rest of the article is just your loony idealism

try putting this across about the exploited women in the west and image society that

we have see how u get marginalised just like the rest of the feminist like you in this

society only because your in iran and the western media and political groups who want

hagemony over the middle east use you as a tool

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**FreedomFirst**

9 Jun 2010, 7:31AM

Execution is an immoral act. Even Charles Manson was not executed. Even England

(the country with the bloodiest history during the industrial revolution) doesn't have

the death penalty anymore.

I could care less who runs which country - but the executions should stop. Put your

prisoners to work for heavens' sake. What's wrong with that? You give me any PJAK or

member of any so called "terror group," and I'll have them dig a tunnel or a sewer line

while I sit and eat my sandwich watching them. Why execute anyone???

We have dogs pull our sled in the arctic, our burrows and cows plow our fields and

carry huge loads. Why not keep any one bound for jail and put them to work for free,

eh?

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**StrangerThenRedz**

9 Jun 2010, 7:39AM

youve pointed something out across countries is the level of women in higher education outnumber men, in the uk like iran its over 60% something the government needs to address

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