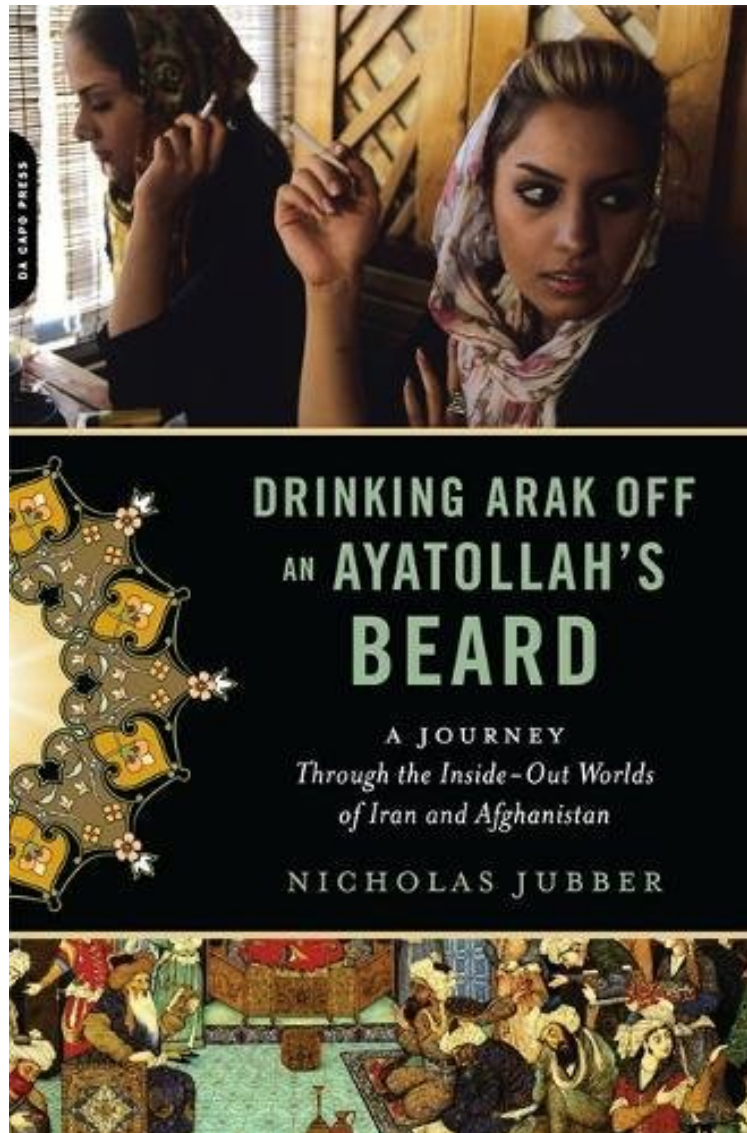


[Free pdf] Drinking Arak Off an Ayatollahs Beard: A Journey Through the Inside-Out Worlds of Iran and Afghanistan

## Drinking Arak Off an Ayatollahs Beard: A Journey Through the Inside-Out Worlds of Iran and Afghanistan

*Nicholas Jubber*

DOC | \*audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#2175314 in Books 2010-05-04 2010-05-04 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x 1.00 x 6.001, .95 #File Name: 0306818841368 pages | File size: 55.Mb

**Nicholas Jubber : Drinking Arak Off an Ayatollahs Beard: A Journey Through the Inside-Out Worlds of Iran and Afghanistan** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Drinking Arak Off an Ayatollahs Beard: A Journey Through the Inside-Out Worlds of Iran and Afghanistan:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Not what I expectedBy Chad NewillThis is sort of a travelogue in Iran and Afghanistan which sounded great and I appreciate that the author dove into the culture but I was bored with the infusion of Shahnameh (Book of Kings) throughout the book.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. What a wonderful travelogue through Iran and AfghanistanBy Older Point-of-viewWhat a wonderful travelogue through Iran and Afghanistan. A great way to gain insight to the history and culture of the area.8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. An interesting readBy Shervin ShambayatiAlthough I agree with the general thrust of this book (understanding Shahnameh goes a long ways towards understanding Iran and Afghanistan) at times I doubt the veracity of the story that Mr. Jubber is saying. Being an Iranian and having read many parts of the Shahnameh in Persian, I doubt if Mr. Jubber's Persian is as good as he claims it is. Some of the names and words that he quotes are misspelled (i.e., the English spellings of them do not sound like the name). Also, he makes some basic errors (Darius the Great was the son-in-law not the grandson of Cyrus the Great as claimed in the book). Nevertheless, the picture that he paints of the Iranian youth is rather accurate: those who are not drunk on religion get drunk on alcohol and they substitute a nihilistic hedonism for active resistance against the regime. Also, I think Mr. Jubber gets the depth of the influence of Shahnameh in the Iranian culture right. Shahnameh is a great book and perhaps the only reason that the modern Persian has survived as a language after conquest, successively, by the Arabs, several Turkish tribes, Chengiz Khan and Tamerlane. I don't know about the Afghanistan and the Central Asia portions of this book as I have not been there and cannot comment on what Mr. Jubber claims to have observed. This is a good book with a good narrative style, although the reader should take some of the material with a grain of salt.

An engrossing blend of travel writing and history, *Drinking Arak off an Ayatollahs Beard* traces one mans adventure-filled journey through todays Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia, and describes his remarkable attempt to make sense of the present by delving into the past. Setting out to gain insight into the lives of Iranians and Afghans today, Nicholas Jubber is surprised to uncover the legacy of a vibrant pre-Islamic Persian culture that has endured even in times of the most fanatic religious fundamentalism. Everywherefrom underground dance parties to religious shrines to opium denshe finds powerful and unbreakable connections to a time when both Iran and Afghanistan were part of the same mighty empire, when the flame of Persian culture lit up the world. Whether through his encounters with poets and cab drivers or run-ins with pleasure daughters and mujahideen, again and again Jubber is drawn back to the eleventh-century Persian epic, the *Shahnameh* (Book of Kings). The poem becomes not only his window into the regions past, but also his link to its tumultuous present, and through it Jubber gains access to an Iran and Afghanistan seldom revealed or depicted: inside-out worlds in which he has tea with a warlord, is taught how to walk like an Afghan, and even discovers, on a night full of bootleg alcohol and dancing, what it means to drink arak off an Ayatollahs beard.

From Publishers WeeklyIn his travelogue-cum-history, Jubber (*The Prester Quest*) recounts his journey into the heart of contemporary Persian culture with the 11th-century poetic epic, *Shahnameh* (The Book of Kings), as his Rosetta stone. Traveling through Iran, Central Asia, and Afghanistan, the author finds that the book is a living, breathing entity; the most accurate account available of the psyche of the Persian-speaking people; its myths, heroes, and villains are daily cultural touch points, from dinnertime conversation to pop song lyrics, in village butcher shops and on city stages. As Jubber becomes better acquainted with the *Shahnameh*, he comes to see that the best way of getting to grips with this strange, secretive [region] might be through the unlikely binoculars of a thousand-year-old epic, and he uses the epic to scaffold his own discoveries. By book's end, having moved from North Tehran villas to rickety Afghan buses, and having encountered kindness and brutality, technological savvy and vestiges of medievalism, Jubber's account offers a full and satisfying panorama of the region with its rich paradoxes and complexities intact. (May) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From BooklistThe mythical Christian king Prester John was the concern of Jubber's first book (*The Prester Quest*, 2006); here, Jubber's occupied by the tenth-century Persian poet Ferdowsi and his epic *Shahnameh*. Translating as *The Book of Kings*, the title enthralls Iranians, though not their despotic theocrats, who are averse to Ferdowsi's pre-Islamic themes. In this literary travelogue of a recent sojourn in Iran and Afghanistan, Jubber discovers sundry aspects of popular admiration for Ferdowsi. Holding a copy of *Shahnameh* invariably provokes a conversation about or a recitation of its verses, which serve Jubber as his open-sesame to social interaction on his journey. That, like *Shahnameh* itself, has a destination: the city of Ghazni, in Afghanistan. There, Jubber recounts, Ferdowsi was humiliated by the sultan to whom he presented his life's work. Recounting Ferdowsi's tribulations amid amusing self-deprecation about his own bungling, Jubber renders a lively portrait of the Iranians and Afghans whom he meets and befriends. Those interested in founts of Iranian cultural pride will be entertainingly informed by the eminently readable and adventuresome Jubber. --Gilbert Taylor Jason Elliot, author of *An Unexpected Light: Travels in Afghanistan and Mirrors of the Unseen: Journeys in Iran* It is impossible not to admire an author who travels to the worlds most notorious destinations, taking a thousand-year-old poet for his guide. From the twinkling navels of Tehrans illicit raves to the war-weary towns of southern Afghanistan, the adventure is brilliantly told: a compendium of humor, insight, and scholarly detail, and an authentic

love affair with Persian culture that outstrips time itself. Publishers Weekly, 3/29/10 [A] travelogue-cum-history Jubber's account offers a full and satisfying panorama of the region with its rich paradoxes and complexities intact. Booklist, 5/15/10 Recounting Ferdowsi's tribulations amid amusing self-deprecation about his own bungling, Jubber renders a lively portrait of the Iranians and Afghanis whom he meets and befriends. Those interested in founts of Iranian cultural pride will be entertainingly informed by the eminently readable and adventuresome Jubber.