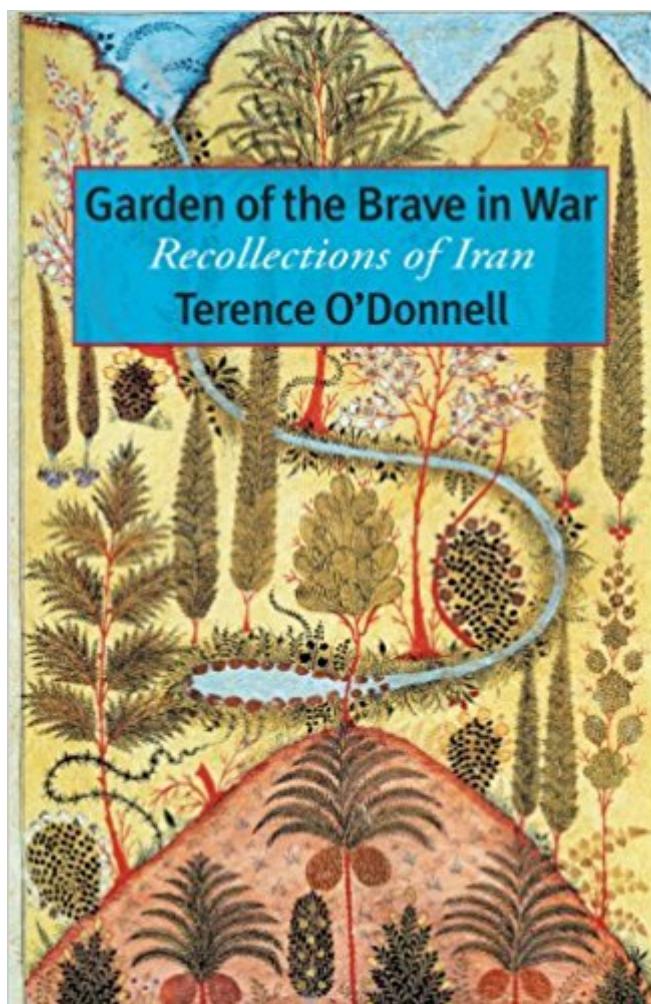


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# Garden Of The Brave In War: Recollections Of Iran



## Synopsis

When Terence O'Donnell, an American who lived in Iran for fifteen years in the 1960s and 1970s, was asked what he was doing there, he replied, "The conviction of all Iranians, of most of my compatriots, and indeed of the Russians, was that I was engaged in intelligence work. I was, and what is more I filed a daily report. My employer was myself and my reports consisted of eight thousand pages of journal. This book was drawn from that material." For ten years, O'Donnell lived on a farm near Shiraz, in southern Iran, where he raised mainly pomegranates, but also quinces, grapes, chickens, and bees. He also made many Iranian friends. His memories of that time have yielded a masterpiece of national portraiture, wonderfully alive to the complexities of the Iranian character-courteous, capricious, deeply religious yet also playful, generous, and poetic. A work of shimmering beauty and sensitivity, *Garden of the Brave in War* will deepen every reader's understanding of the often elusive country that lies behind the headlines.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

During the '60s, O'Donnell lived in southwestern Iran, where he ran a farm and formed close friendships with his neighbors. PW called these "enchanting glimpses of life in the countryside."

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While O'Donnell helped to raise pomegranates, dog roses, apples, sour cherries, quinces, sheep, chickens, and bees, the Iranians (and the Russians) believed that he was also engaged in

intelligence work. The extent of his intelligence work is evident here, a keen observer's daily reports on an enigmatic and exotic culture. Splendidly realized., New York Times --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

This is one of my favorite books about Iran. The book is a collection of the author's journal on his time as a farmer in the Iranian country side. His observations are very detailed without being judgmental. Although he spent the 60ies of the 20ieth century in sural Iran, his observations clarify many of the odd events which happened in Iran during the last 50 years including the islamic revolution, which toppled the last monarchy in Iran. The life of ordinary people has been always intertwined with their understanding of God without being fundamentally religious as Taliban or the wahhabi's of Saudi Arabia are. People pilger to the holy sites in Iran and contrary to pilgrame among christian catholics they look for fun and amusement throughout their pilgrimage. This shows the balance or some might call it contradicition in Iranian society of being pious without neglecting the Dionysian side of life with the pleasures of flesh, that's why up to now no totalitarian ruler has ever managed to control the people in Iran as Saddam or Hitler could in their respective country.

I LOVE this book - poetry in prose!

One of the best books written on Iran in the 60s. O'Donnell's fluency in Persian and his openness to observing and appreciating a culture and a civilization foreign to him is admirable. The author's detached observations about Iranian society, the good, the bad and the ugly are uncanny. He picked up and recounted nuances that native born Iranians often missed and miss. It is refreshing to see read the deep love he had for the people amongst whom he lived yet he did not idolize. Highly recommended book. There were some serious problems with the paperback edition, when the publisher was contacted they send a perfect copy with a thank you note and their apologies.

A near classic journal by an American writer living Iran from 1957 to 1971. The writer, living in a garden outside Shiraz (south of Iran) describes people with passion and precision. And for your attention, this a quote from book (you must read it in context!): " I do not know if Machiavelli has been translated into Iranian, but it would be superfluous to do so, for his subject is one in which the Iranian need no instruction..."

This book is quite an enjoyable and fast read. Mr. O'Donnell, born and raised in Oregon, decided to

go live outside of a small Iranian village for 15 years. He never mentions why he made that decision, but it really is irrelevant since during his stay there, he kept a journal and came away with some very entertaining stories. For someone trying to get a fair-minded and non-political description of rural life in Iran, this would be a great read. The author left Iran to come back to the U.S. before the Islamic Revolution, so he never mentions it or any other other political matter really. A seemingly secular person himself, he nevertheless appears to be able to view and describe all categories of Iranians with objectivity. Overall, a pleasant and informative book for anyone interested in life in Iran.

I lived in Iran for 15 years and have been close to that country and its people/culture all of my life. This is a "must read" for anybody interested in understanding the essence of Iranian culture. Plus, it is a really delightful book to read. David Laylin

Terence O'Donnell does a masterful job of vividly describing the scenery, the people, the lives, the simplicity and the colorful everyday lives of "locals" in the villages and towns he has stayed and visited in Iran. His observations, I found, very insightful and as best as I have experienced them myself, very accurate. I was saddened to know that he has passed away, this would have been a man I would have loved to sit down with and hear his stories, over a hot cup of sweet tea.

Brilliant and heartwarming about life in Iran and how it was.

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