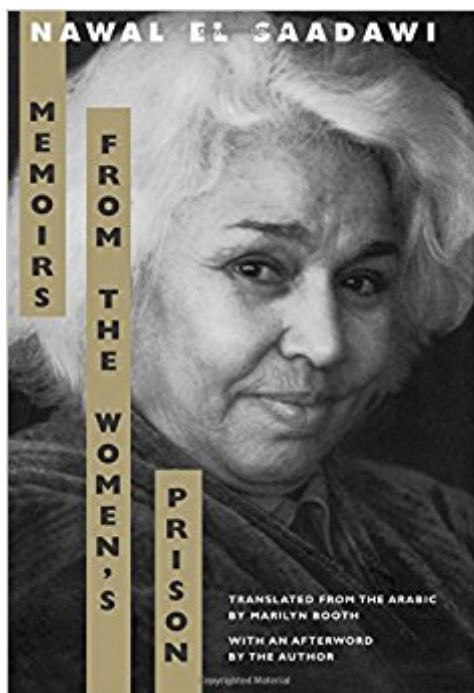


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# Memoirs From The Women's Prison (Literature Of The Middle East)



## Synopsis

Often likened to Rigoberta Menchu and Nadine Gordimer, Nawal El Saadawi is one of the world's leading feminist authors. Director of Health and Education in Cairo, she was summarily dismissed from her post in 1972 for her political writing and activities. In 1981 she was imprisoned by Anwar Sadat for alleged "crimes against the State" and was not released until after his assassination. *Memoirs from the Women's Prison* offers both firsthand witness to women's resistance to state violence and fascinating insights into the formation of women's community. Saadawi describes how political prisoners, both secular intellectuals and Islamic revivalists, forged alliances to demand better conditions and to maintain their sanity in the confines of their cramped cell. Saadawi's haunting prose makes *Memoirs* an important work of twentieth-century literature. Recognized as a classic of prison writing, it touches all who are concerned with political oppression, intellectual freedom, and personal dignity.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In this highly literary, Kafkaesque account, Saadawi, an Egyptian feminist, doctor, activist and author of books on female sexuality, recalls her imprisonment in 1981 for "attack[ing] the ruling system". While her case was investigated, Saadawi spent 22 days in jail, getting out when President Sadat was assassinated. In meticulous detail and understated language, she describes nightmarish experiences in a tomb-like women's cell with other political prisoners—both intellectuals and Islamic fundamentalists. She observes, "Time and the wall have merged into one. The air is motionless.

Nothing moves around me except the cockroaches and rats, as I lie on a thin rubber mattress which gives off the odour of old urine, my empty handbag placed under my head." There is an honest, reflective quality to her writing, and her plight evokes outrage and sympathy. Yet there is a certain paranoia as well, that of someone on the far left who viewed Islamic extremists as allies in the fight for national unity against a government controlled by foreigners, someone who volunteered to fight with Palestinian guerillas in Jordan and saw herself as being victimized because of her opposition to Sadat's policies of peace with Israel. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Lively, touching, and highly readable, making us relive with the author the shock of arrest, the dirt and horror of jail, and the nagging uncertainty about when or whether she would be released."--"The Middle East

This woman is someone worth looking up to. The writing was fantastic, Nawal has very interesting stories about her life I was captivated by this book.

This is one of my favorite books of all time. I had to read it for a class in college, and I will be the first to admit that I was turned off by the cover and the bland title. I'm glad I was forced to give this book a chance. It's an amazing true story of a female doctor in Cairo who is taken away to a prison for her outspoken ideas. The government takes her from her home and forces her to live with several other women with very different backgrounds from one another. However, the situation causes Sadaawi to become somewhat of a "leader," and the women form a strong and unique friendship. It's an amazing and beautiful book and also a fast read - don't pass this up.

Dr. Saadawi relates her prison experience in piercing detail, from the putrid infestations to the commentary on the various women with which she shares her living space. But more importantly, readers see inside her mind just how she was able to get through nearly a month of torturous living conditions and the violent separation with her family and home. Dr. Saadawi gives us an insight into what goes through prisoners minds when they deal with an infinite amount of prison time ahead of them with little chance of release. Her courage and determination in living while still in prison and standing up to the ridiculous circumstances surrounding her imprisonment are brought forth with an emotion one can not help but enjoy.

Nawal El Saddawi is one of the most prolific and poignant writers of our time. Both her fiction and non-fiction writing is beautiful and inspirational. I highly recommend this book.

Although I like Sadawi's feisty, rebellious spirit, I must say that I was HIGHLY disappointed in her work! I rarely come across a book that I don't finish and to tell you the truth, she made me return the book. Her bland and simplistic writing style didn't go well with me. At times, this book even put me to sleep. Anyway, the real significant drawback of this book is that it is written in an extremely narrow perspective! The whole book is about her and her memoirs, you don't even know what the other person is thinking. Hence, if you ask me I would say: SAVE YOUR HARD EARNED CASH!!!

I got the book sooner than I expected, and it was in great condition. I was very satisfied with this purchase.

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