



Iran in World History (New Oxford World History)

Richard Foltz

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Home of one of the world's most ancient and enduring civilizations, Iran has been at the nexus of world history for the past three thousand years. Situated at the crossroads between East and West, it has been marked by its encounters with other cultures and has influenced them with its own. From paradise gardens and Persian carpets to the mystical poetry of Rumi and Hafez, Iran's contributions have earned it a place among history's most refined and sophisticated societies. In this book, Richard Foltz traces the spread of Iranian culture among diverse populations ranging from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean, and along the Silk Roads as far as China, from prehistoric times up to the present day. He emphasizes the range of contributions Iran has made to world history by highlighting the roles of key figures such as the ancient empire-builders Cyrus the Great and Darius I, the medieval polymath Avicenna, and early modern Mughal rulers such as Shah Jahan, who built India's celebrated Taj Mahal.

From the establishment of the Pahlavi dynasty by Reza Shah in 1925 until the 1979 revolution under the charismatic leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini, Iran embarked on a modernization process that led to the spread of literacy and the growth of the women's movement, making it one of the most advanced nations in the developing world. Lack of political freedoms has continued to frustrate many Iranians, however, and the country is often seen as an international pariah in the West. Iran today is rarely treated well in Western news headlines, despite remarkable achievements by individual Iranians in a wide range of fields. Encompassing religion, literature, the arts, and politics, *Iran in World History* offers a comprehensive history of one of the world's most influential civilizations and offers nuanced examples of its continuing role in the world today.

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