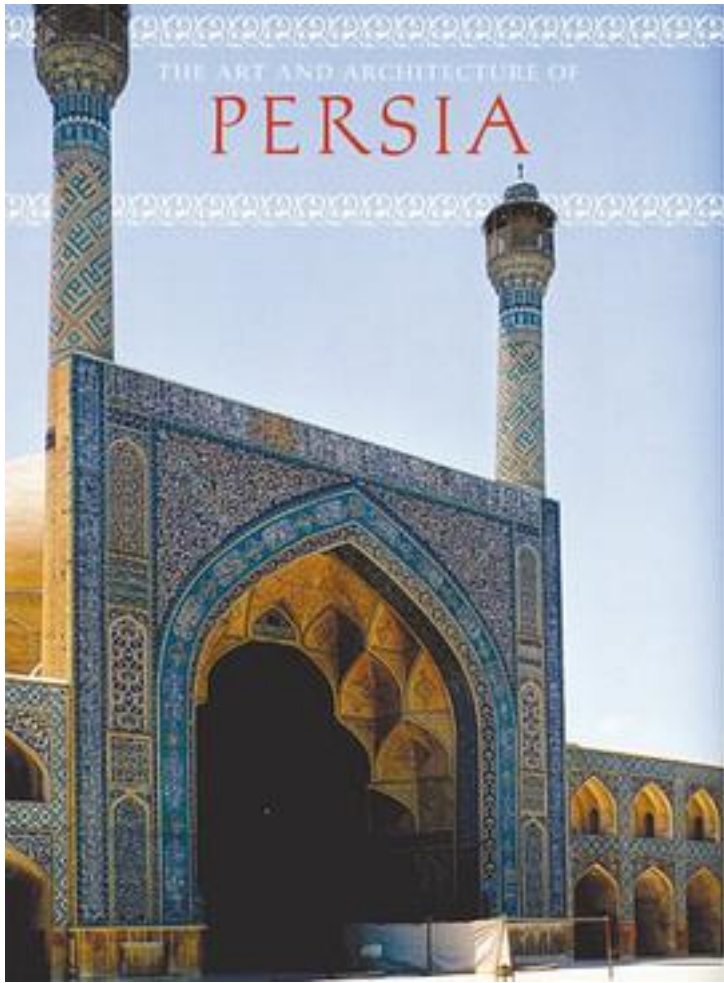


The Art and Architecture of Persia



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The history of the area now known as Iran, but often still referred to as Persia, spans millennia, boasting a rich and complex artistic and cultural legacy. Populated since

prehistoric times--thus making it one of the most animated and lively areas of Islamic civilization--this region was home to the first powerful empire (lead by Cyrus the Great during the Achaemenid dynasty) and influenced the aesthetic grammar of a large portion of central Asia, including Armenia, Georgia, and India. Beginning with ancient Iranian civilizations in 500 BC, through the Islamic period, and on to modern-day Iran, *The Art and Architecture of Persia* explores the common characteristics and thematic threads running through Persian art. The book presents its readers with archaeological landscapes, monuments, sculptures, carpets, and dazzling ornaments and art objects from this stunning artistic milieu. The text takes as its subject the most fascinating and unusual facets of the Persian artistic experience in all its phases, with a particular focus on post-Hellenic culture, namely late antiquity and the Middle Ages. *The Art and Architecture of Persia* investigates how the examined regions were incubators of specific artistic developments and identifies how the Iranian passage along the Silk Route acted as a bridge between distant lands for trade and also facilitated the dissemination of religious and material culture. The two authors, Giovanni Curatola and Gianroberto Scarcia, write in an engaging, refreshingly accessible manner, catering to both the specialist and the novice wishing to immerse themselves in this captivating region and its art. Author Scarcia helms the first part of the book, covering the era from the Achaemenids to the Sassanids, examining the great architecture from Persepolis onward, while also addressing the powerful metalwork produced by these cultures. The second part, by Curatola, explores the Islamic period, when architectural decoration moved into the forefront with brilliant chromatic effects etched onto massive built works. The same colors bloom throughout the other arts, including carpets and miniature paintings. Dynamic and absorbing, the text and its more than 200 color photos will take readers on a virtual tour of this region and the art it has produced over the millennia.

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