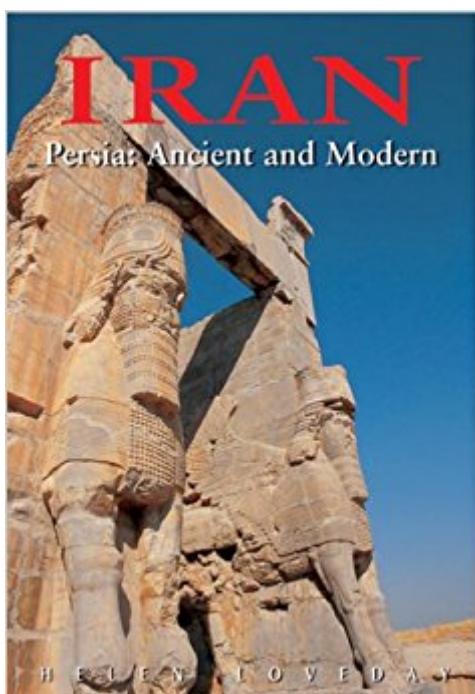


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For more than three millennia Iran, or Persia as it was formerly known, was a melting pot of civilizations. Under Cyrus the Great, Persia was the center of the world's first empire, which stretched from the Mediterranean to modern-day Pakistan. Subsequent

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Born in Switzerland in 1962, Helen Loveday has a BA in Chinese and a PhD in Chinese archaeology from Oxford University. Following time spent in Central Asia, she became attracted by Iran and began studying Farsi, the national language. She is particularly interested in the Islamic architecture of ancient Persia and Sino-Iranian cultural exchanges. She currently lives in Geneva, Switzerland, where she is a curator of the Baur Collection museum.

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