**Persian Empire**

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The Persian Empire was a series of historical empires that ruled over the [Iranian plateau](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greater_Iran) (*Irān* - "Land of the [Aryans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aryans)") and beyond. Generally, the earliest entity considered a part of the Persian Empire is Persia's [Achaemenid dynasty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Achaemenid_dynasty) (648–330 BC), a united [Aryan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aryan) kingdom that originated in the region now known as [Fars Province](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fars_Province) of [Iran](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran) and was formed under [Cyrus the Great](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrus_the_Great). Successive states in Iran prior to 1935 are collectively called the *Persian Empire* by Western historians.

Name

*Main article:* [*Iran naming dispute*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran_naming_dispute)

*Persia* has long been used by the West to describe the nation of [Iran](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran), its people, and its ancient empires. It derives from the ancient Greek name for Iran's maritime province, called [*Fars*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fars_Province) in the modern [Persian language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persian_language), [*Pars*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fars_Province) in [Middle Persian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Persian) and *Pārsā* in [Old Persian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Persian_language), a word meaning "above reproach". *Persis* is the [Hellenized](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_language) form of Pars, and through the Latinized word [*Persia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persia), the other European nations came to use this word for the region.

This area was the core of the original Persian Empire. Most foreigners referred to the state as *Persia* until [March 21](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/March_21), [1935](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1935), when [Reza Shah Pahlavi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reza_Shah) formally asked the international community to call the country Iran; which was often used by the [Aryan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aryan) tribes who formed the country in the Achaemenid era united the plateau in that region.

History

Achaemenid Empire ([648 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/648_BC)–[330 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/330_BC))

*Main article:* [*Achaemenid Empire*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Achaemenid_Empire)

[Apadana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apadana) Hall, [Persepolis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persepolis): [Angra Mainyu](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angra_Mainyu) kills the primeval bull, whose seed is rescued by [Mah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mah), the moon, as the source for all other animals.

The earliest known record of the Persians comes from an [Assyrian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assyria) inscription from c. 844 BC that calls them the *Parsu* (Parsuash, Parsumash) and mentions them in the region of [Lake Urmia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Urmia) alongside another group, the *Madai* ([Medes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mede)). For the next two centuries, the Persians and Medes were at times tributary to the Assyrians. The region of Parsuash was annexed by Sargon of Assyria around 719 BC. Eventually the Medes came to rule an independent Median Empire, and the Persians were subject to them.

The Achaemenids were the first to create a centralized state in Persia, founded by [Achaemenes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Achaemenes) (*Hakhamanish*), chieftain of the Persians around [700 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/700_BC).

Around [653 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/653_BC), the Medes came under the domination of the [Scythians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scythians), and [Teispes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teispes), the son of Achaemenes, seems to have led the nomadic Persians to settle in southern Iran around this time — eventually establishing the first organized Persian [state](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State) in the important region of [Anshan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anshan_%28Persia%29) as the [Elamite](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elam) kingdom was permanently destroyed by the Assyrian ruler [Ashurbanipal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashurbanipal) (640 BC). The kingdom of Anshan and its successors continued to use [Elamite](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elamite) as an official language for quite some time after this, although the new dynasts spoke Persian, an [Indo-Iranian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indo-Iranian_languages) tongue.

[Darius I of Persia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darius_I_of_Persia).

Teispes' descendants branched off into two lines, one line ruling in Anshan, while the other ruled the rest of Persia. [Cyrus II the Great](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrus_II_the_Great) united the separate kingdoms around [559 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/559_BC). At this time, the Persians were still tributary to the [Median Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medes) ruled by [Astyages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astyages). Cyrus rallied the Persians together, and in [550 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/550_BC) defeated the forces of Astyages, who was then captured by his own nobles and turned over to the triumphant Cyrus, now [Shah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shah) of a unified Persian kingdom. As Persia assumed control over the rest of Media and their large empire, Cyrus led the united Medes and Persians to still more conquest. He took [Lydia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lydia) in [Asia Minor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asia_Minor), and carried his arms eastward into [central Asia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Asia). Finally in [539 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/539_BC), Cyrus marched triumphantly into the ancient city of [Babylon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylon). After this victory, he set the standard of the benevolent conqueror by issuing the [Cyrus Cylinder](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrus_Cylinder). In this declaration, the king promised not to terrorize Babylon nor destroy its institutions and culture. Cyrus was killed during a battle against the [Massagetae](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massagetae) or [Sakas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sakas).

Achaemenid empire at its greatest extent.

Cyrus' son, [Cambyses II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambyses_II), annexed [Egypt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egypt) to the Achaemenid Empire. The empire then reached its greatest extent under [Darius I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darius_I_of_Persia). He led conquering armies into the [Indus River](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indus_River) valley and into [Thrace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thrace) in Europe. His invasion of [Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece) was halted at the [Battle of Marathon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Marathon). His son [Xerxes I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xerxes_I) also tried to subdue the Greeks, but his army was defeated at the [Battle of Plataea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Plataea) [479 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/479_BC).

The Achaemenid Empire was the largest and most powerful empire the world had yet seen. More importantly, it was well managed and organized. Darius divided his realm into about twenty satrapies (provinces) supervised by [satraps](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satrap), or governors, many of whom had personal ties to the Shah. He instituted a systematic tribute to tax each province. He took the advanced [postal system](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postal_system) of the Assyrians and expanded it. Also taken from the Assyrians was the usage of [secret agents](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secret_agent) of the king, known as the [King's Eyes and Ears](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%27s_Eyes_and_Ears), keeping him informed.

Darius built the famous [Royal Road](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Road) by improving ancient trade routes, thereby connecting far reaches of the empire. He moved the administration center from Fars itself to [Susa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Susa), near Babylon and closer to the center of the realm. The Persians allowed local cultures to survive, following the precedent set by Cyrus the Great. This was not only good for the empire's subjects, but ultimately benefited the Achaemenids, since the conquered peoples felt no need to revolt.

During the Achaemenid period, [Zoroastrianism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zoroastrianism) became the religion of the rulers and most of the people of Persia. Its founder [Zoroaster](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zoroaster) had lived around anywhere between 600 BC and 1800 BC, and according to Plato and other Greek sources as early as 7000 BC, making him a candidate as the founder of the earliest religion based on revealed [scripture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scripture). The new religion was a new look at the traditional [Aryan gods](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aryan_gods); it emphasized a [dualist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dualist) struggle between [good and evil](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Good_and_evil) gods and a final battle yet to come in the form of the apocalypse. Zoroastrianism and its [mystic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mysticism) leaders, called [Magi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magi), would become a defining element of Persian culture, and is believed by many scholars to have had a considerable influence on Judeo-Christianity, and as a result the [Western](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_world) culture.

The Achaemenid Empire united people and kingdoms from every major civilization in south west Asia. For the first time in history, people from very different cultures were in contact with one another under one ruler.

[Hellenistic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenistic_period%22%20%5Co%20%22Hellenistic%20period) Persia ([330 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/330_BC)–[150 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/150_BC))

*Main article:* [*Seleucid Empire*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seleucid_Empire)

Bust of Parthian soldier, in Hellenistic style ([Esgh-abad](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashgabat) Museum, [Turkmenistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkmenistan)).

The later years of the Achaemenid dynasty were marked by decay and decadence. The greatest empire of the time collapsed in only eight years, when it fell under the attack of a young [Macedonian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macedon) king, [Alexander the Great](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_the_Great).

The Achaemenid Empire's weakness was exposed to the Greeks in [401 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/401_BC), when the [Satrap](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satrap) of [Sardis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sardis) hired ten thousand Greek mercenaries to help secure his claim to the imperial throne (see [Xenophon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xenophon), [Anabasis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anabasis)). This exposed both the political instability and the military weakness of late Achaemenid State.

[Philip II of Macedon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philip_II_of_Macedon), leader of most of Greece, and his son Alexander decided to take advantage of this weakness. After Philip's death, Alexander looked toward Persia. Alexander's army landed in Asia Minor in [334 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/334_BC). His armies quickly swept through Lydia, Phoenicia, and Egypt, before defeating all the troops of [Darius III](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darius_III) at Issus and capturing the capital at Susa. The last Achaemenid resistance was at the "Persian Gates" near the royal palace at [Persepolis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persepolis). The Achaemenid Empire was now in Alexander's hands.

Map of Alexander's empire.

Along his route of conquest, Alexander founded many colony cities, all named "Alexandria". For the next several centuries, these cities served to greatly extend Greek, or [Hellenistic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenistic), culture in Persia.

Alexander's empire broke up shortly after his death, and Alexander's general, [Seleucus I Nicator](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seleucus_I_Nicator), tried to take control of Persia, Mesopotamia, and later Syria and Asia Minor. His ruling family is known as the [Seleucid Dynasty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seleucid_Dynasty). However he was killed in [281 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/281_BC) by [Ptolemy Keraunos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ptolemy_Keraunos) before he could conquer Greece and Macedonia.

Greek colonization continued until around [250 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/250_BC); Greek language, philosophy, and art came with the colonists. Throughout Alexander's former empire, Greek became the common tongue of diplomacy and literature. Trade with [China](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China) had begun in Achaemenid times along the so-called [Silk Road](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silk_Road); but during the Hellenistic period it began in earnest. The overland trade brought about some fascinating cultural exchanges. [Buddhism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhism) came in from India, while Zoroastrianism traveled west to influence [Judaism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judaism). Incredible statues of the [Buddha](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddha) in classical Greek styles have been found in Persia and Afghanistan, illustrating the mix of cultures that occurred around this time (See [Greco-Buddhism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greco-Buddhism)), although it is possible that Greco-Buddhist art dates from Achaemenid times when Greek artists worked for the Persians.

The Seleucid kingdom began to decline rather quickly. Even during Seleucus' lifetime, the capital was moved from [Seleucia on the Tigris](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seleucia_on_the_Tigris) in Mesopotamia to the more Mediterranean [Antioch on the Orontes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antioch_on_the_Orontes). The eastern provinces of [Bactria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bactria) and [Parthia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthia) broke off from the Seleucid Kingdom in [238 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/238_BC). King [Antiochus III](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antiochus_III)'s military leadership kept Parthia from overrunning Persia itself, but his successes alarmed the burgeoning [Roman Republic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic). Roman legions began to attack the kingdom. At the same time, the Seleucids had to contend with the revolt of the [Maccabees](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maccabees) in Judea and the expansion of the [Kushan Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kushan_Empire) to the east. The empire fell apart and was conquered by Parthia and Rome. iuiou

Parthian Confederacy ([150 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/150_BC)–AD [226](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/226))

*Main article:* [*Parthia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthia)

The Parthian Empire.

Metallic statue of a [Parthian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthia) prince (thought to be [Surena](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Surena)), AD [100](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/100), kept at The National Museum of Iran, [Tehran](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tehran).

Its rulers, the [Arsacid dynasty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arsacid_dynasty), belonged to an Iranian tribe that had settled there during the time of Alexander. They declared their independence from the Seleucids in 238 BC, but their attempts to unify Iran were thwarted until after [Mithridates I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mithridates_I_of_Parthia) advent to the Parthian throne in about [170 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/170_BC).

The Parthian Confederacy shared a border with Rome along the upper Euphrates River. The two polities became major rivals, especially over control of Armenia. Heavily-armored Parthian cavalry ([cataphracts](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cataphract)) supported by mounted archers proved a match for Roman legions, as in the [Battle of Carrhae](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Carrhae) in which the Parthian General [Surena](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Surena) defeated [Marcus Licinius Crassus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Licinius_Crassus) of Rome. Wars were very frequent, with [Mesopotamia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mesopotamia) serving as the battleground.

During the Parthian period, Hellenistic customs partially gave way to a resurgence of Persian culture. However, the empire lacked political unity. The administration was shared between [Seven Parthian clans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_Parthian_clans) who constituted the [Dahae Confederation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dahae_Confederation), each of these clans governed a province of the empire. [Suren-Pahlav Clan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suren-Pahlav_Clan), [Karen-Pahlav Clan](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Karen-Pahlav_Clan&action=edit) and [Mihran Clan](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Mihran_Clan&action=edit) were the most influential ones. By the [1st century BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1st_century_BC), Parthia was decentralized, ruled by [feudal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feudal) nobles. Wars with Rome to the west and the [Kushan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kushan) Empire to the northeast drained the country's resources.

Parthia, now impoverished and without any hope to recover the lost territories, was demoralized. The kings had to give more concessions to the nobility, and the vassal kings sometimes refused to obey. Parthia's last ruler [Artabanus IV](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artabanus_IV_of_Parthia) had an initial success in putting together the crumbling state however the fate of Arsacid Dynasty was doomed when in AD [224](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/224), the Persian vassal king [Ardashir](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ardashir_I_of_Persia) revolted. Two years later, he took [Ctesiphon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ctesiphon), and this time, it meant the end of Parthia. It also meant the beginning of the third Persian Empire, ruled by the Sassanid kings. Sassanids were from the province of Persis, native to the first Persian Empire, the Achaemenids.

Sassanid Empire ([226](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/226)–[651](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/651))

*Main article:* [*Sassanid Empire*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sassanid_Empire)

The Sassanid Empire.

[Ardashir I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ardashir_I), led a rebellion against the Parthian Confederacy in an attempt to revive the glory of the previous empire and to legitimize the Hellenized form of [Zoroastrianism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zoroastrianism) practiced in south western Iran. In two years he was the [Shah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shah) of a new Persian Empire.

The [Sassanid (or Sassanian) dynasty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sassanid_dynasty) (named for Ardashir's grandfather) was the first dynasty native to the Pars province since the Achaemenids; thus they saw themselves as the successors of Darius and Cyrus. They pursued an aggressive expansionist policy. They recovered much of the eastern lands that the Kushans had taken in the Parthian period. The Sassanids continued to make war against Rome; a Persian army even captured the [Roman Emperor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Emperor) [Valerian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valerian_%28emperor%29) in [260](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/260).

The Sassanid Empire, unlike Parthia, was a highly centralized state. The people were rigidly organized into a caste system: Priests, Soldiers, Scribes, and Commoners. Zoroastrianism was finally made the official state religion, and spread outside Persia proper and out into the provinces. There was sporadic persecution of other religions. The [Catholic (Orthodox) Christian church](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orthodox_Christianity) was particularly persecuted, but this was in part due to its ties to the [Roman Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_Empire). The [Nestorian Christian church](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nestorianism) was tolerated and sometimes even favored by the Sassanids.

[Image:ShapurII.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:Upload&wpDestFile=ShapurII.jpg)

Head of king [Shapur II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shapur_II) (Sassanid dynasty 4th century).

The wars and religious control that had fueled The Sassanid empire's early successes eventually contributed to its decline. The eastern regions were conquered by the [White Huns](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_Huns) in the late [5th century](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/5th_century). Adherents of a radical religious sect, the [Mazdakites](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mazdak), revolted around the same time. [Khosrau I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khosrau_I_of_Persia) was able to recover his empire and expand into the Christian countries of [Antioch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antioch) and [Yemen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yemen). Between [605](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/605) and [629](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/629), Sassanids successfully annexed Levant and [Roman Egypt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Egypt) and pushed into Anatolia.

However, a subsequent war with the Romans utterly destroyed the empire. In the course of the protracted conflict, Sassinid armies reached [Constantinople](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantinople), but could not defeat the Byzantines there. Meanwhile, the Byzantine Emperor [Heraclius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heraclius) had successfully outflanked the Persian armies in Asia Minor and attacked the empire from the rear while the main Iranian army along with its top [Eran Spahbods](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eran_Spahbod) were far from battlefields. This resulted in a crushing defeat for Sassanids in Northern Mesopotamia. The Sassanids had to give up all their conquered lands and retreat. This defeat was mentioned in [Qur'an](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qur%27an) as a "victory for believers," referring to the Romans, who were [monotheists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monotheism), in contrast to the [pagan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paganism) Sassinids. (Note: The official religion of the Sassanid empire was [Zoroastrianism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zoroastrianism). While not an Abrahamic/Semitic religion like [Christianity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity) or [Islam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam), it is not strictly speaking "Pagan" (Polytheistic)).

Following the advent of Islam and collapse of [Sassanid Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sassanid_Empire), Persians came under the subjection of Arab rulers for almost two centuries before native Persian dynasties could gradually drive them out. In this period a number of small and numerically inferior Arab tribes migrated to inland Iran.

Also some [Turkic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkic_peoples) tribes settled in Persia between the 9th and 12th centuries.

In time these peoples were integrated into numerous Persian populations and adopted [Persian culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persian_culture) and language while Persians retained their culture with minimal influence from outside.

Islam and Persia ([650](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/650)–[1219](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1219))

*Main articles:* [*Islamic conquest of Persia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_conquest_of_Persia) *and* [*Islamicization in post-conquest Iran*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamicization_in_post-conquest_Iran)

[Gonbad-e Qabus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gonbad-e_Qabus), built in [1006](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1006), Iran, is a reminder of the blossoming of art and architecture in medieval Persia.

The explosive growth of the Arab [Caliphate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caliphate) coincided with the chaos caused by the end of [Sassanid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sassanid) rule. Most of the country was conquered from [643](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/643) to [650](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/650). The last resistance from the remnants of the Sassanid dynasty ended two years later. Persia's conquest by [Islamic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic) [Arab](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab) armies marks the transition into "[medieval](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medieval)" Persia.

[Yazdegerd III](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Yazdegerd_III_of_Iran&action=edit), the last Sasanian King, died ten years after he lost his empire to the newly-formed [Muslim](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muslim) Caliphate. He tried to recover some of what he lost with the help of the Turks and the Tatars, but they were easily defeated by Muslim armies. Then he sought the aid of the Chinese, but they refused to help him. He is believed to have lived on the borders of Islamic Persia. Some historians say that he lived inside Islamic Iran.

The Arab empire, ruled by the [Umayyad Dynasty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Umayyad_Dynasty), was the largest state in history up to that point. It stretched from the [Iberian Peninsula](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iberian_Peninsula) to the [Indus River](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indus_River), from the [Aral Sea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aral_Sea) to the southern tip of the [Arabian Peninsula](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabian_Peninsula). The Umayyads borrowed heavily from Persian and [Byzantine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_aristocracy_and_bureaucracy) administrative systems and moved their capital to [Damascus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Damascus), in the center of their empire. The Umayyads would rule Persia for a hundred years.

The Arab conquest dramatically changed life in Persia. [Arabic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabic_language) became the new [lingua franca](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lingua_franca) and Islam quickly replaced Zoroastrianism; and mosques were built. A new language, religion, and culture were added to the Iranian cultural milieu. During this time and because of the vast reaches of the Arab empire, many Persian (Iranian) scholars had a direct impact on the European [Renaissance](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renaissance) centuries later [(See full list here)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Iranian_scientists).

In [750](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/750) the Umayyads were ousted from power by the [Abbasid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abbasid) family. By that time, Persians had come to play an important role in the bureaucracy of the empire. The caliph [Al-Ma'mun](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Ma%27mun), whose mother was Persian, moved his capital away from Arab lands into [Merv](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merv) in eastern Iran. It was he who later founded the [House of Wisdom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_of_Wisdom) in Baghdad, based on the Iranian [Jondishapour](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jondishapour).

But political unrest continued. In [819](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/819), East-Persia was conquered by the Persian [Samanids](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samanid), the first native rulers after the Arabic conquest. They made [Samarqand](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samarqand), [Bukhara](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bukhara) and [Herat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herat) their capitals and revived the [Persian language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persian_language) and culture. It was approximately during this age, when the poet [Firdawsi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Firdawsi) finished the *Shah Nameh*, an epic poem retelling the history of the Iranian kings; Firdawsi completing the poem in [1008](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1008).

In [913](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/913), Western Persia was conquered by the [Buwayhid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buwayhid), a native Iranian tribal confederation from the shores of the Caspian Sea. They made the Iranian city of [Shiraz](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shiraz%2C_Iran) their capital. The Buwayhids destroyed Islam's former territorial unity. Rather than a province of a united Muslim empire, Iran became one nation in an increasingly diverse and cultured Islamic world.

Turkic Rule ([1037](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1037)–[1219](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1219))

*Main articles:* [*Seljuk Turks*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seljuk_Turks) *and* [*Ghaznavid Empire*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ghaznavid_Empire)

Persian Army- Watercolor by [Haydar Hatemi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haydar_Hatemi)-2002

The Muslim world was shaken again in 1037 with the invasion of the [Seljuk Turks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seljuk_Turks) from the northeast. The Seljuks created a very large Middle Eastern empire and continued in the flowering of medieval Islamic culture. The Seljuks built the fabulous [Friday Mosque](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Friday_Mosque_of_Isfahan&action=edit) in the city of [Isfahan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isfahan_%28city%29). The most famous Persian writer of all time, [Omar Khayyám](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Omar_Khayy%C3%A1m), wrote his *Rubayat* of love poetry during Seljuk times.

In the early [13th century](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/13th_century) the Seljuks lost control of Persia to another group of [Turks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkic_peoples) from [Khwarezmia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khwarezmia), near the [Aral Sea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aral_Sea). The [shahs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shah) of the [Khwarezmid Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khwarezmid_Empire) ruled for only a short while, however, because they had to face the most feared conqueror in history: [Genghis Khan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genghis_Khan).

Persia under the Mongols and their successors ([1219](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1219)–[1500](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1500))

*Main articles:* [*Ilkhanate*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ilkhanate) *and* [*Timurid dynasty*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timurid_dynasty)

Mosques with Persian names and designs in [Tajikistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tajikistan) and [Uzbekistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uzbekistan) illustrate just how far east Persian culture extended due to their conquests. The actual architectural domed design of Mosques were borrowed from the [Sassanid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sassanid) era, which then spilled into the Muslim world.

In [1218](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1218), [Genghis Khan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genghis_Khan) sent ambassadors and merchants to the city of [Otrar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Otrar), on the northeastern confines of the Khwarizm shahdom. The governor of Otrar had these envoys executed. Genghis, out for revenge, sacked Otrar in 1219 and continued on to [Samarkand](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samarkand) and other cities of the northeast.

Genghis' grandson, [Hulagu Khan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hulagu_Khan), finished what Genghis had begun when he conquered Khwarzim Empire, Baghdad, and much of the rest of the [Middle East](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_East) from [1255](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1255) to [1258](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1258). Iran became the [Ilkhanate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ilkhanate), a division of the vast [Mongol Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mongol_Empire).

In [1295](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1295), after Ilkhan [Mahmud Ghazan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahmud_Ghazan) converted to Islam, he renounced all allegiance to the [Emperor Chengzong of Yuan China](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emperor_Chengzong_of_Yuan_China) who had recently succeeded his grandfather [Kublai Khan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kublai_Khan) as Great Khan. The Ilkhans patronized the arts and learning in the fine tradition of Iranian Islam; indeed, they helped to repair much of the damage of the Mongol conquests.

In [1335](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1335), the death of [Abu Sa'id](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abu_Sa%27id_%28Ilkhanid_dynasty%29), the last legitimate Ilkhan, spelled the end of the Ilkhanate. Though [Arpa Ke'un](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arpa_Ke%27un) was declared Ilkhan his authority was disputed and the Ilkhanate was splintered into a number of small states. This left Iran open to still more conquest at the hands of [Timur the Lame](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timur_the_Lame) or Tamerlane, a Central Asian conqueror seeking to revive the Mongol Empire. He invaded Iran beginning around [1370](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1370) and plundered the country until his death in [1405](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1405). Timur was an even bloodier conqueror than Genghis had been. In [Isfahan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isfahan_%28city%29), for instance, he slaughtered 70,000 people so that he could build towers with their skulls. He conquered a wide area and made his own city of Samarkand rich, but he made no effort to forge a lasting empire. Iran was essentially left in ruins.

For the next hundred years Persia was not a unified state. It was ruled for a while by descendants of Timur, called the [Timurid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timurid_Empire) [emirs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emir). Toward the end of the [15th century](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/15th_century), Persia was taken over by the Emirate of the [White Sheep Turkmen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_Sheep_Turkmen) (*Ak Koyunlu*). But there was little unity and none of the sophistication that had defined Iran during the glory days of Islam.

A new Persian empire: the Safavid dynasty([1500](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1500)–[1722](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1722))

Persian art and architecture reached an apex during the reign of the Safavid dynasty.

The [Safavid Dynasty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Safavid_Dynasty) hailed from the town of [Ardabil](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ardabil) in the region of [Azarbaijan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iranian_Azerbaijan). The Safavid Shah [Ismail I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ismail_I) overthrew the White Sheep Turkish rulers of Persia to found a new native Persian empire. Ismail expanded Persia to include all of present-day Azerbaijan, Iran, and Iraq, plus much of [Afghanistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Afghanistan). Ismail's expansion was halted by the [Ottoman Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) at the [Battle of Chaldiran](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Chaldiran) in [1514](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1514), and war with the Ottomans became a fact of life in Safavid Iran.

Safavid Persia was a violent and chaotic state for the next seventy years, but in [1588](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1588) Shah [Abbas I of Safavid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abbas_I_of_Safavid) ascended to the throne and instituted a cultural and political renaissance. He moved his capital to Isfahan, which quickly became one of the most important cultural centers in the Islamic world. He made peace with the Ottomans. He reformed the army, drove the [Uzbeks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uzbeks) out of Iran and into modern-day [Uzbekistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uzbekistan), and recaptured the island of [Hormuz](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hormuz) from the [Portuguese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portugal).

The Safavids were followers of [Shi'a](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shi%27a) Islam, and under them Persia (Iran) became the largest [Shi'a](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shi%27a) country in the Muslim world, a position Iran still holds today.

Under the Safavids Iran enjoyed its last period as a major imperial power. In 1639, a final border was agreed upon with the Ottoman Empire with the Treaty of Qasr-e Shirin; which delineates the border between the Republic of [Turkey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkey) and Iran and also that of between Iraq and Iran, today.

Persia and Europe ([1722](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1722)–[1914](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1914))

An 18th-century Persian [astrolabe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrolabe). Throughout the [Middle Ages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Ages), the [natural philosophy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_philosophy) and [mathematics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mathematics) of [ancient Greeks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greece) were furthered and preserved within the Muslim world. During this period, Persia became a center for the manufacture of [scientific instruments](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Measuring_instrument), retaining its reputation for quality well into the [19th century](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/19th_century).

In 1722, the Safavid state collapsed. That year saw the first European invasion of Persia since the time of Alexander: [Peter the Great](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_I_of_Russia), [Emperor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Russian_rulers) of [Imperial Russia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imperial_Russia), invaded from the northwest as part of a bid to dominate central Asia. To make the situation truly hopeless, Ottoman forces accompanied the Russians, successfully laying siege to Isfahan.

The country was able to weather the invasions; neither the Russians nor the Turks gained any territory. However, the Safavids were severely weakened, and that same year (1722), the empire's [Afghani](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pashtun) subjects launched a bloody revolt in response to the Safavids' attempts to convert them from [Sunni](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunni) to [Shi'a](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shi%27a) Islam by force. The last Safavid shah was executed, and the dynasty came to an end.

The Persian empire experienced a temporary revival under [Nadir Shah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nadir_Shah) in the [1730s](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1730s) and [1740s](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1740s). Nadir drove out the Russians and confined the Afghans to their present home in Afghanistan. He launched many successful campaigns against Persia's old enemies, the nomadic khanates of Central Asia; most of them were destroyed or absorbed into Persia. However, his empire declined after his death. His rule was followed by the weak and short-lived [Zand dynasty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zand_dynasty). Iran was left unprepared for the worldwide expansion of [European colonial empires](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_former_European_colonies) in the late [18th century](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/18th_century) and throughout the [19th century](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/19th_century).

Persia found relative stability in the [Qajar dynasty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qajar_dynasty), ruling from [1779](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1779) to [1925](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1925), but lost hope to compete with the new industrial powers of Europe; Persia found itself sandwiched between the growing Russian Empire in [Central Asia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Asia) and the expanding [British Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Empire) in [India](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India). Each carved out pieces from the Persian empire that became [Bahrain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahrain), [Azerbaijan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Azerbaijan), [Turkmenistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkmenistan), [Uzbekistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uzbekistan), and [Afghanistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Afghanistan) amongst other previous provinces.

Although Persia was never directly invaded, it gradually became economically dependent on [Europe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Europe). The [Anglo-Russian Convention](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglo-Russian_Entente) of [1907](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1907) formalized Russian and British spheres of influence over the north and south of the country, respectively, where Britain and Russia each created a "[sphere of influence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sphere_of_influence)", where the colonial power had the final "say" on economic matters.

At the same time [Mohammad Ali Shah Qajar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohammad_Ali_Shah_Qajar) had granted a concession to [William Knox D'Arcy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Knox_D%27Arcy), later the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, to explore and work the newly-discovered oil fields at [Masjid Soleiman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masjid_Soleiman) in southwest Persia, which started production in [1914](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1914). [Winston Churchill](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winston_Churchill), as First Sea Lord to the British Admiralty, oversaw the conversion of the Royal Navy to oil-fired battleships and partially nationalized it prior to the start of war. A small Anglo-Persian force was garrisoned there to protect the field from some hostile tribal factions.

Persia, World War I and the interbellum ([1914](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1914)–[1935](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1935))

Persia (Iran) was drawn into the periphery of [World War I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I) because of its strategic position between [Afghanistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Afghanistan) and the warring [Ottoman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottoman_Empire), [Russian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imperial_Russia), and [British Empires](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Empire). In [1914](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1914) Britain sent a military force to [Mesopotamia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mesopotamia) to deny access to the Persian oilfields from the Ottomans. The [German Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_Empire) retaliated on behalf of its ally by spreading a rumor that Kaiser [Wilhelm II of Germany](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilhelm_II_of_Germany) had converted to [Islam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam), and sent agents through Iran to attack the oil fields and raise a [Jihad](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jihad) against British rule in [India](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India). Most of those German agents were captured by Persian, British and Russian troops who were sent to patrol the Afghan border, and the rebellion faded away. This was followed by a German attempt, assisted by his mainly [Swedish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedish_people) bodyguard, to abduct and control [Ahmad Shah Qajar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahmad_Shah_Qajar), which was foiled at the last moment.

In [1916](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1916) the fighting between Russian and Ottoman forces to the north of the country had spilt down into Persia; Russia gained the advantage until most of her armies collapsed in the wake of the [Russian Revolution of 1917](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Revolution_of_1917). This left the [Caucasus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caucasus) unprotected, and the Caucasian and Persian civilians starving after years of war and deprivation. In [1918](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1918) a small force of 400 British troops under [General Dunsterville](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General_Dunsterville) moved into the Trans-Caucasus from Persia in a bid to encourage local resistance to German and Ottoman armies who were about to invade the [Baku](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baku) oilfields. Although they later withdrew back into Persia, they did succeed in delaying the Turks access to the oil almost until the [Armistice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armistice). In addition, the expedition’s supplies were used to avert a major famine in the region, and a camp for 30,000 displaced refugees was created near the Mesopotamian frontier.

By World War I, Persia was not the world power it had once been. It had become a tool in the political battles of other empires. In [1919](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1919), northern Persia was occupied by the British General [William Edmund Ironside](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Edmund_Ironside) to enforce the Turkish [Armistice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armistice) conditions and assist General [Dunsterville](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dunsterville) and Colonel [Bicherakhov](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Bicherakhov&action=edit) contain [Bolshevik](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bolshevik) influence (of [Mirza Kuchak Khan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirza_Kuchak_Khan)) in the north. Britain also took tighter control over the increasingly lucrative oil fields.

* In [1925](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1925), [Reza Shah Pahlavi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reza_Shah_Pahlavi) seized power from the Qajars and established the new [Pahlavi dynasty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pahlavi_dynasty), the last Persian monarchy before the establishment of the [Islamic Republic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_Republic). However, Britain and the [Soviet Union](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_Union) remained the influential powers in Persia into the early years of the [Cold War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cold_War).

On [March 21](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/March_21), [1935](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1935), *Iran* was officially accepted as the new name of the country. After Persian scholars' protests to this decision in 1953 Mohammad Reza Shah announced both names "Iran" and "Persia" could be used.

Persia in Fiction

* [Prince of Persia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prince_of_Persia) is an puzzle and action-based video game series set in a mythological version of Ancient Persia.
* The Persian Empire is the seat of power for the sultan [Shahryar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shahryar), husband of [Scheherazade](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scheherazade) in the [1001 Nights](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1001_Nights)--though the tales themselves span from China to the Middle East and even parts of North Africa.

**Timeline**

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**See also**

* [Iran](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran)
* [Greater Iran](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greater_Iran)
* [History of Iran](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Iran)
* [Geography of Iran](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography_of_Iran)
* [Aryan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aryan)
* [Persian people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persian_people)
* [Persian culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persian_culture)
* [Science in Persia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Science_in_Iran)
* [List of kings of Persia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_kings_of_Persia)
* [List of Iranian scientists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Iranian_scientists)
* [List of monarchies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_monarchies)

**Further reading**

* Bailey, Harold (Ed.) "The Cambridge history of Iran", Cambridge University Press 1993, Cambridge. [ISBN 0-521-45148-5](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:Booksources&isbn=0521451485)
* *Ancient Persia* Josef Wiesehofer
* *Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia* J. E Curtis and N. Tallis
* *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire* [Pierre Briant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre_Briant)
* *The Heritage of Persia* Richard N. Frye
* *History of the Persian Empire* A.T. Olmstead
* *The Persian Empire* Lindsay Allen
* *The Persian Empire* J.M. Cook
* *Persian Fire: The First World Empire and the Battle for the West* Tom Holland
* *Pictorial History of Iran: Ancient Persia Before Islam 15000 B.C.-625 A.D.* Amini Sam
* *Timelife Persians: Masters of the Empire (Lost Civilizations)*
* *Houchang Nahavandi, The Last Shah of Iran - Fatal Countdown of a Great Patriot betrayed by the Free World, a Great Country whose fault was Success, Aquilion, 2005,* [ISBN 1-904997-03-1](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:Booksources&isbn=1904997031)

**External links**

* [Persepolis Recreated - Reconstruction of Persepolis](http://iraninfo.dk/php/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=49&Itemid=2)
* [Historical places of Persia](http://www.alihessami.com/photos/index.html)
* [Persian at photo](http://www.aghakhany.com/)
* [Persian Carpet](http://www.alihessami.com/photos/?title=carpet)
* [Iran’s Cultural Heritage News Agency (CHN)](http://www.chn.ir/en)
* [Articles about Ancient Iranian World & Iranian Peoples (CAIS)](http://www.cais-soas.com/Essays.htm)
* [The History of the Ancient Near East](http://ancientneareast.tripod.com/Persia.html)
* [Persia](http://fax.libs.uga.edu/DS272xB4/), by S.G.W. Benjamin, 1891
* [Ancient History Sourcebook: Persia](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook05.html)
* [Iran Cultural Heritage Organization Documentation Center](http://www.ichodoc.ir/) (Persian)
* [Iran Cultural Heritage Organization Technical Office for Preservation and Restoration](http://www.to-miras.ir/) (Persian)
* [Iran Research Center for Conservation of Cultural Relics](http://www.rcccr.org/)
* [Iran Cultural Heritage News Agency](http://www.chn.ir/) (Recommended)
* [Persepolis Official website](http://www.persepolis.ir/)
* [Oriental Institute Photographic Archives](http://oi.uchicago.edu/OI/MUS/PA/IRAN/PAAI/PAAI.html) (Nearly 1,000 archaeological photographs of Persepolis and Ancient Persia)
* [Publication of Old Maps of Persia (Iran) in The Netherlands](http://www.payvand.com/news/06/mar/1212.html)
* [Gooya (UK): Persian Media Resources](http://www.gooya.co.uk/)
* [Iran Travel : Persian Travel Center](http://www.irantravel.biz/)