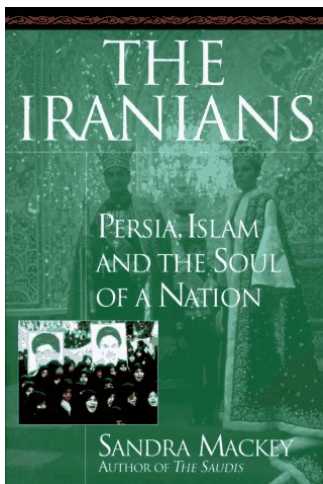


# [PDF] The Iranians: Persia, Islam And The Soul Of A Nation

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## Books Details:

Title: The Iranians: Persia, Islam a

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## Description:

*The Iranians* chronicles the history of the Iranian people, from the "glory days" of Persia to the overthrow of Mohammed Riza Shah and the rise of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Through many centuries, Islamic Iran fell repeatedly to invaders--Turks, Mongols, Afghans, Russians, and the British--only to spring back and reassert its cultural and spiritual autonomy while absorbing elements of other civilizations. But after the 1950s, rapid modernization disturbed every facet of Iranian life. Mackey shows how Iran's pendulum swung from nationalism to monarchism to rigid Shia fundamentalism, while also offering harsh judgment of Western attitudes and policies toward Iran.

**From Publishers Weekly** In an engrossing blend of history and reportage, Middle East expert Mackey (*The Saudis*) portrays a proud, anxious people caught between two interlocking traditions competing for the nation's soul. On the one hand, there is the legacy of ancient Persia, which brought forth Zoroastrianism with its belief in a supreme God, a philosophy of tolerance and justice, and magnificent art; and on the other, there is the predominant Shiite Muslim religion, which mirrors Persian nonconformity in its schismatic break with Sunni orthodoxy, but which also galvanizes the masses with calls for an egalitarian society, retribution against the West and strict adherence to Islamic moral code. Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi, in her analysis, abandoned Islamic traditions and, wrapping himself in the cloak of kingship, pushed a shallow resurrection of the glories of ancient Persia. His fall in 1979 left the U.S. adrift in the crucial Persian Gulf; and contemporary Iran, with its ongoing military buildup, its opposition to the Israel-Arab peace process and its refusal to lift the death edict for Salman Rushdie, reinforces deep-rooted authoritarian traditions. Nevertheless, Mackey strongly urges the U.S. to replace its policy of isolation and embargo with reconciliation toward President Hashemi Rafsanjani and the moderate pragmatists he supposedly represents.

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