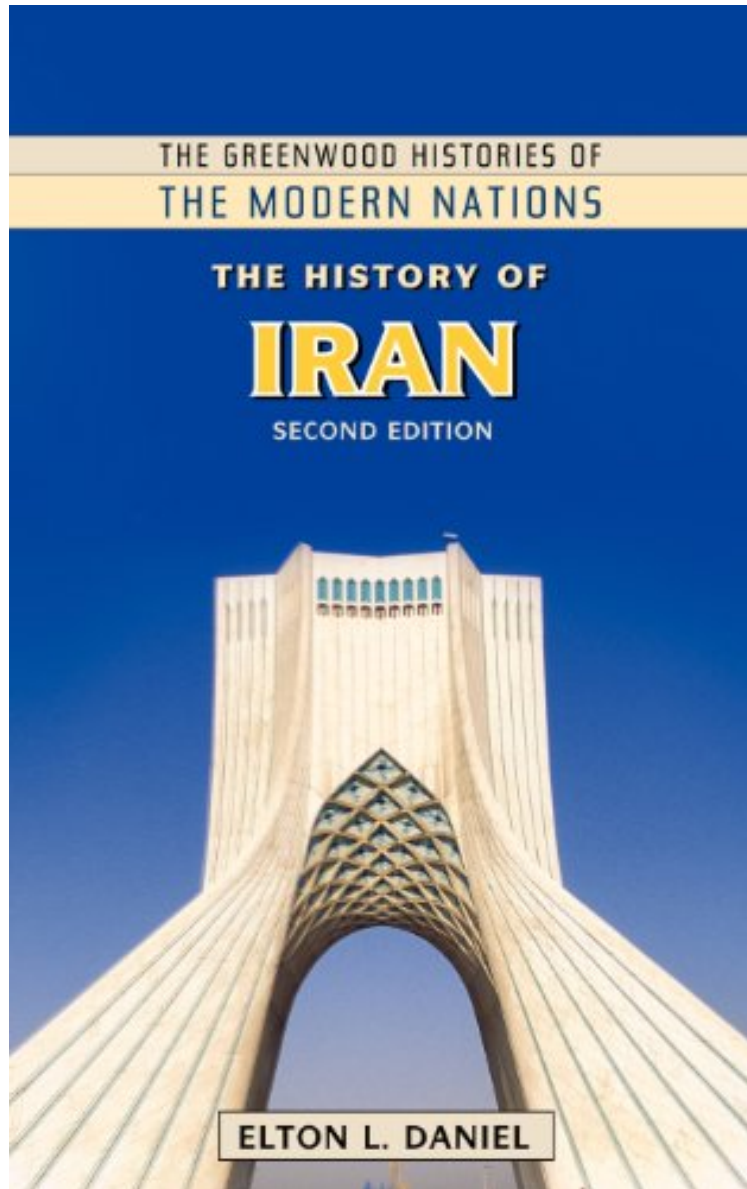


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## The History of Iran, 2nd Edition (The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations)

*Elton L. Daniel*

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**Elton L. Daniel : The History of Iran, 2nd Edition (The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The History of Iran, 2nd Edition (The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A nice overview  
 By Metallurgist This is a nice overview of the history of Iran from Cyrus the Great to about 2000. It has some emphasis on the politics of Iran, especially in the 20th century. In fact, about half the 260 pages of text is devoted to the 20th century, so I would especially recommend this book to anyone interested in the more modern period as opposed to the preceding 2500 years. The book is well written. It contains a timeline of events, a list of notable people, and a glossary as well as a Bibliographical essay and index, but no photographs and only one map. I found the lack of more maps to be an unfortunate deficiency.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Reliable but lacking  
 By James R. Maclean Prof. Daniel's history of Iran deserves high marks for accuracy and balance. While reading this, I followed along with several specialized reference books, including Frye's History of Ancient Iran and Encyclopaedia Iranica, and found no mistakes. He mostly explains what is known to have occurred, although occasionally taking controversial stands on more recent events (e.g., Operation AJAX, where I think he does a very good job explaining the significance of MI-6 CIA interventions). What I found lacking was the overall structure of the book. Nearly all book-length national histories give greater detail to more recent events, and in the case of Iran, it's impossible to do otherwise: Iran has been a major nation for 25 centuries. But this book takes it to extremes, with 25 pages for the period 2700 to 330 BCE, another 30 pages for the period 155 BCE to 1507 CE, compared to 21 pages for the 12 month period from February 1979 to January 1980. Some readers might feel I'm being unreasonable in proclaiming a *fatwa* against a book that purports to cover the history of Iran in 261 pages of narrative. But in this case, the editorial demands are just too much. Even the account of the 1979 Revolution is savagely truncated, while the 2000 years after Darius are like a tour of the Louvre on the Millennium Falcon. Compressed to this degree, there's simply no point in so cursory an historical survey; the historical events cannot be adequately described, but Daniel tries anyway. So the result is a completely irrelevant preface to an account of the last 35 years in Iran, which is itself too brisk to suffice for a magazine article. Unsurprisingly, the book does not age well at all. And Daniel's editorial focus on the president of the Islamic Republic--Mohammad Khatami--is a bad choice, wasting precious paragraphs on a figurehead. A mere dozen years after publication, it seems to climax in a meaningless election no one remembers at all. Assuming the limits on length were imposed by *force majeure*, the work needs to shift toward charts, maps, and outline format. As a quick reference, 260 pages listing major dates and key events could be very helpful. But as a narrative, it's so drastically restricted there's frequently nothing meaningful to say in the 30-page chapters. Readers interested in the history of Iran need to consider why they're interested in the first place: is it Iran's place in the modern world? Then try Hamid Dabashi or Said Amir Arjomand. Or its magnificent ancient art? Try *Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia*? Or the luminous Islamic art? Try *Design and Color in Islamic Architecture*, or many others. If you want to understand the past, a stencil of it just won't do.

9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Excellent  
 By J. Zabinski This book excels in its intention: to provide a useful history of Iran. It guides without browbeating, informs the reader without opining the reader with extra epithets, and just generally equips the reader to understand the context of modern developments in Iran. Now I understand what it means when I read that Aminejad is an unknown but conservative backer of the Islamic Revolution, and that is something that I would not have without this book. If you want to understand Iran, this is an excellent tool.

This comprehensive survey of Iran's historical development covers everything from its origins in ancient empires to its status as a modern nation-state. Provides a chronological survey of key events in Iranian history up to the present day  
 An annotated bibliography surveys historical literature on Iran, including web resources

"As part of the Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations series, the update offers general readers a comprehensive, analytical look at some of the most important nations in the contemporary world. . . . This work is highly recommended." - ARBA  
 "This second edition of *The History of Iran* from the Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations series contributes further to this fine series for students and the general public. . . . This work will be helpful to the nonspecialist researcher in public and academic libraries." - Booklist  
 About the Author Elton L. Daniel, PhD, is professor of history at the University of Hawaii, Manoa, Honolulu, HI.