



# Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia

*From University of California Press*

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**Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia** From University of California Press

This sumptuous book traces the rise and fall of one of the ancient world's largest and richest empires. Encompassing a rich diversity of different peoples and cultures, Persia's Achaeminid Empire flourished between 550 and 331 B.C. The empire originated with Cyrus the Great (559-530 B.C.) and expanded under his successors, who ruled from the royal capitals of Susa and Persepolis, until at its peak it stretched from the Indus Valley to Greece and from the Caspian Sea to Egypt. The Achaeminids acted as a bridge between the earlier Near Eastern cultures and the later Classical world of the Mediterranean and had a profound influence on Greece in political, military, economic, and cultural fields.

*Forgotten Empire* was created in association with the British Museum, which is mounting the most comprehensive exhibit ever staged on the Achaeminids. This book opens a window onto the wealth and splendor of Persian society—its rich palaces, exquisite craftsmanship, and sophisticated learning. Showcasing an unprecedented loan of unique material from the National Museum of Tehran—most of which has never before been presented outside of Iran—this beautifully illustrated and produced book demonstrates why the sculpture, glazed panels, gold vessels, and jewelry of the Achaeminids rank among the finest ever produced.

Because the palace was central to imperial life, remains from the royal sites of Susa and Persepolis are a major focus. *Forgotten Empire* is divided into sections such as the expansion of the Persian Empire, arms and warfare, trade and commerce, writing, luxury dinner services, jewelry, religious and burial customs, and the rediscovery of ancient Persia.

*Copub: British Museum*

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## **Editorial Review**

Review

“Like walking through a museum with expert scholars giving live commentary; this book has all the perks one could ask for.”

*(Theo Philogue Blog 2009-05-19)*

About the Author

**John Curtis** is Keeper of the Ancient Near Eastern department at the British Museum. He has written extensively on Iran, Mesopotamia (Iraq), and the Ancient Near East. **Nigel Tallis** is Special Assistant in the Near Eastern department at the British Museum.

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