

## **Iran**

A Very Short Introduction

By Ali M Ansari

### **Questions for Thought and Discussion**

- How can we interpret Iran?
- Is Iran best understood as a civilization?
- What role do myth and history play in the development of the idea of Iran?
- How is the identity of modern Iran shaped by its historical inheritance?
- Assess the impact of religion on the identity of Iran.
- Can Iranian identity be understood in ethnic terms?
- What difference, if any, is there between Iran and Persia?
- Is Persia part of the Western imagination?
- To what extent was the Islamic conquest a watershed in Iranian history and identity?
- Assess the influence of the Mongol conquest and its aftermath.
- How has political instability affected social behavior?
- Evaluate the myth of the saviour on Iranian politics
- Did the rise of the West necessitate the decline of Iran?
- How did modern Iranian nationalists reimagine the idea of Iran
- Is the West part of the Iranian imagination?

### **Other books by the author**

*The Politics of Nationalism in Modern Iran* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012)

*Confronting Iran: the failure of American foreign policy and the roots of mistrust* (London, Hurst, 2006)

### **Further Reading**

A. Amanat and F. Vejdani (eds.) *Iran Facing Others: Identity boundaries in historical perspective* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012)

M. Axworthy, *Empire of the Mind: a history from Zoroaster to the present day* (London, Penguin, 2008)

A. Ferdowsi, *The Shahnameh*, translated, edited and abridged by Dick Davis, (NY Penguin, 2006)

J. Malcolm, *Sketches of Persia* (London, Longman, 1827)

R. Mottahedeh, *The Mantle of the Prophet: Religion and Politics in Iran* (London, Oneworld, 2008)