



## The Age of the Seljuqs: The Idea of Iran

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From their ancestral heartland by the shores of the Aral Sea, the medieval Oghuz Turks marched westwards in search of dominion. Their conquests led to control of a Muslim empire that united the territories of the eastern Islamic world, melded Turkic and Persian influences and transported Persian culture to Anatolia. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the new Turkic-Persian symbiosis that had earlier emerged under the Samanids, Ghaznavids and Qara-Khanids came to fruition in a period that, under the enlightened rule of the Seljuq dynasty, combined imperial grandeur with remarkable artistic achievement. This latest volume in The Idea of Iran series focuses on a system of government based on Turkic 'men of the sword' and Persian 'men of the pen' that the Seljuqs (famous foes of the Crusader Frankish knights) consolidated in a form that endured for centuries. The book further explores key topics relating to the innovative Seljuq era, including: conflicted Sunni-Shi'a relations between the Sunni Seljuq empire and Ismaili Fatimid caliphate; art, culture and ceramics; and poetry and architecture.

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