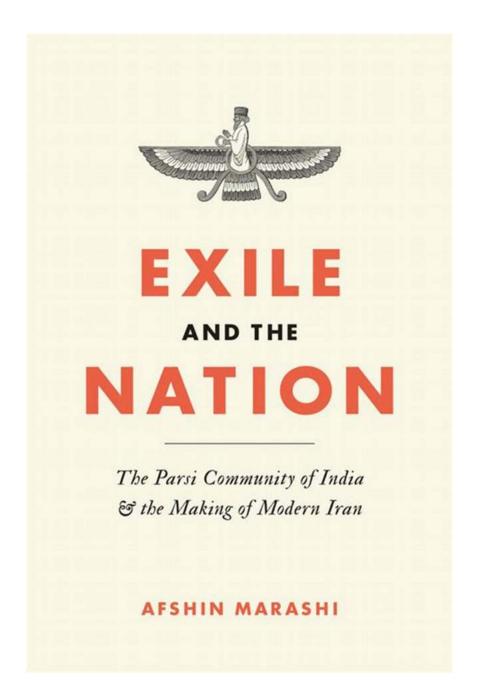
# The Fascinating Influence of the Parsi Community of India on the Formation of Modern Iran

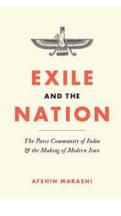
Unlocking the Lesser-known History of the Dynamic Parsi-Iranian Connection



The Parsi community, a distinct group of Zoroastrians who migrated from Persia to India over a thousand years ago, holds an intriguing place in the history of the region. Their story intertwines the rich traditions and contributions of both India and Iran, shaping the development of modern Iran in significant ways.

#### The Arrival of the Parsis in India

The Parsis initially sought refuge in India during the eighth century, escaping religious persecution in Persia (present-day Iran). They settled primarily in the western Indian state of Gujarat, where their community thrived and flourished over time.



# Exile and the Nation: The Parsi Community of India and the Making of Modern Iran

by Afshin Marashi (Kindle Edition)

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Language	: English
File size	: 15566 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Print length	: 400 pages



Despite their small numbers, the Parsis quickly made an indelible mark on the cultural, economic, and intellectual fabric of India. Maintaining their distinctive traditions and language, they embraced the Indian way of life while preserving their Zoroastrian faith.

#### The Role of the Parsis in Modern Iran

Interestingly, the Parsis played a significant role in the making of modern Iran, despite living thousands of miles away from their ancestral homeland. The community acted as a bridge between India and Iran, fostering cultural exchange, economic ties, and intellectual growth between the two nations.

#### **Economic Contributions and Trade**

The Parsis became prominent traders and entrepreneurs in India, establishing successful businesses and contributing to the growth of the Indian economy. As astute businessmen, they formed strong commercial links with Iran, facilitating trade and encouraging economic cooperation between the two regions.

India became a vital market for Persian goods, while Iran benefited from Indian products reaching its shores through Parsi merchants. This exchange of goods and commodities significantly influenced the economic and industrial development of both nations.

#### **Cultural and Intellectual Exchange**

Another crucial dimension of the Parsi-Iranian connection is the cultural and intellectual exchange that transpired over centuries. As patrons of education and the arts, Parsis established educational institutions, libraries, and museums, fostering intellectual growth in India.

These institutions not only preserved Zoroastrian heritage but also became centers of learning and scholarship, attracting students and intellectuals from Iran. Iranian scholars would visit India to study and engage with the thriving intellectual milieu nurtured by the Parsi community.

#### Parsi Contributions to Modern Iran

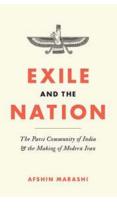
The Parsis played a significant role in the intellectual and cultural development of Iran during its modernization in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Influenced by Indian philosophies and progressive ideas, Parsi reformers advocated for social, educational, and political reforms in Iran.

Their efforts paved the way for the Constitutional Revolution of Iran in 1905-1911, which sought to establish a constitutional monarchy and expand civil rights. Many Parsis actively participated in this movement and played crucial roles in shaping the modern Iranian society and governance.

#### The Legacy of the Parsis

The Parsi contribution to the making of modern Iran is not widely known or acknowledged today, but their legacy lives on. Despite their dwindling numbers, the Parsi community in India continues to thrive, preserving their unique cultural heritage and making significant contributions to various fields.

The strong bond between India and Iran, forged by the Parsis, endures through shared history, language, and cultural practices. The story of the Parsis highlights the power of migration, cultural assimilation, and the far-reaching impact of a small community in shaping the destiny of nations.



#### Exile and the Nation: The Parsi Community of India and the Making of Modern Iran

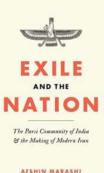
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In the aftermath of the seventh-century Islamic conquest of Iran, Zoroastrians departed for India. Known as the Parsis, they slowly lost contact with their ancestral land until the nineteenth century, when steam-powered sea travel, the increased circulation of Zoroastrian-themed books, and the philanthropic efforts of Parsi benefactors sparked a new era of interaction between the two groups.

Tracing the cultural and intellectual exchange between Iranian nationalists and the Parsi community during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Exile and the Nation shows how this interchange led to the collective reimagining of Parsi and Iranian national identity—and the influence of antiquity on modern Iranian nationalism, which previously rested solely on European forms of thought. Iranian nationalism, Afshin Marashi argues, was also the byproduct of the complex history resulting from the demise of the early modern Persianate cultural system, as well as one of the many cultural heterodoxies produced within the Indian Ocean world. Crossing the boundaries of numerous fields of study, this book reframes Iranian nationalism within the context of the connected, transnational, and global history of the modern era.



# The Fascinating Influence of the Parsi Community of India on the Formation of Modern Iran

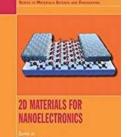
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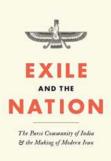
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