



Images of Afghanistan: Exploring Afghan Culture through Art and Literature

Josette McMichael

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Images of Afghanistan provides the first-ever overview of the art and literature of Afghanistan. 32 chapters on art, music, film, proverbs, short stories, poetry, cartoons, and folktales in popular style offer key insights into the complexities of Afghan culture. The book is divided into seven sections. Introductory chapters focus on the history of Afghanistan and understanding culture through art and literature. A Dari Literature section covers classical and modern poetry, short stories, proverbs and children's rhymes. A Pashto Literature section includes traditional poetry, modern poetry, short stories, folktales, proverbs and tappas. The Themes of Culture section analyzes the dynamics of shame and honor in the Persio-Afghan setting, the traditional need for patronage and its modern relevance, the mystical longing for God as reflected in the ghazals of Hafiz, and romantic love in traditional and modern love stories. The Traditional Art section covers calligraphy, woodworking, and ceramics, the unique layout of the traditional city, and archeological heritage. The Performing Arts and Fine Art section explores the development of music, fine art, and film in Afghanistan. A final section called Potpourri features Afghan authors who help span the chasm between east and west, a selection of modern cultural initiatives, the infamous folk character Mullah Nasruddin, the role of women in art and literature, and cartoons and comedy. "This is a book to give all of us a more profound understanding of the rich culture and ancient heritage of a place many only know as a place of war. Images of Afghanistan will change the way you see this country." -Lyse Doucet, Presenter and Correspondent, BBC World News

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