The book *Isfahan* was written by Lutf Allah Hunarfar, under the direction of Ali Islami Nadushan, with the aim of familiarising young people with the culture and civilisation of Iran. According to the author, however, the five chapter book may be appropriate for a broader general audience.

The first chapter describes the nature, geography, and changes in the steppe climate throughout the ages. More than anything, the book relies on travelogues. The end of the chapter is devoted to discussing wildlife, mining, and districts.

The second chapter begins with a description of the city of Gabae or Gay, which was the name of the city during the Achaemenid period, and proceeds with a brief description of each dynasty until the end of the Safavid era.

In chapter three, a total of ninety-two of Isfahan’s historical relics and monuments are catalogued. In addition to describing buildings and structures, the author discusses some of...
the customs carried out in these locations (such as the celebration of “water sprinkling” in the court of Shah Abbas Safavid).

The chapter dedicated to the contemporary period, covers the Pahlavi years, when this book was written. The Qajar era is barely allotted three pages, and most of that is devoted to describing failures. The author describes the urban design and architecture of the Pahlavi era as being both modern and harmonious with the fabric of the city. He then provides a list of the professions and industries of the city of Isfahan.

The final chapter introduces some of the celebrities, philosophers, scholars and historians of Isfahan.

Iradj Esmailpour Ghouchani

Translated by Niki Akhavan