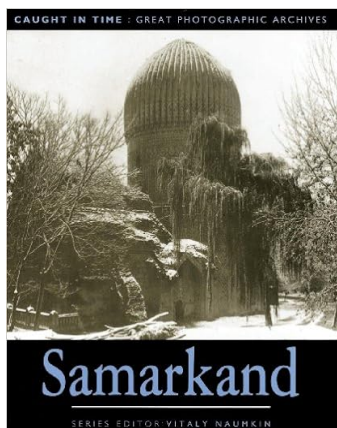


Titel:	Samarkand: Caught In Time
BuchID:	600
Autor:	Sabir Kurbanov
ISBN-10(13):	978-1873938423
Verlag:	Garnet Publishing
Seitenanzahl:	160
Sprache:	English
Bewertung:	
Bild:	



Beschreibung:

(Great Photographic Archives Series)

First settled in the 6th or 7th century BC, Samarkand has known periods of prosperity and decline – its craftsmen traded and settled as far a field as the Chinese borders, and its great military leader Tamerlane fought wars against Persia, Syria and India. Samarkand is best known as a centre of Islamic learning and architecture. The photographs collected here were taken during the key period from 1871 to the 1890s, following the Tsarist conquest of 1868, but before the Soviet rule that resulted in the destruction of many Islamic landmarks.

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