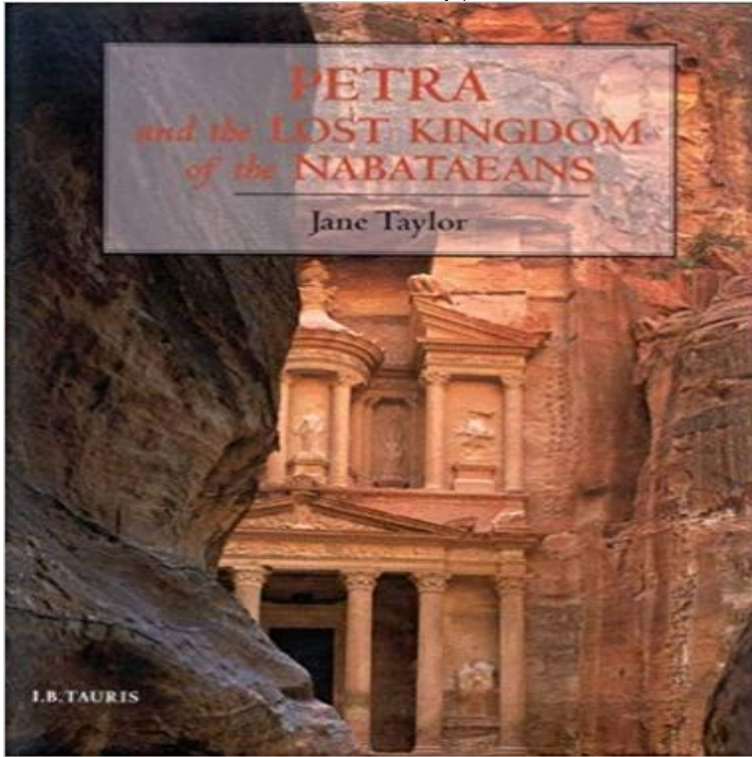


Petra and the Lost Kingdom of the Nabataeans



The Nabataean Arabs, one of the most remarkable peoples of the ancient world, are today known only for their hauntingly beautiful rock-carved capital - Petra. Here, in the wild and grand landscapes of southern Jordan they created some of the most prodigious works of man - an entire city hewn out of the mountains. Although their civilization was ignored and almost lost for 1500 years, the Nabataeans were famous in their day and their power extended over great areas of the Biblical Middle East. Though seen most clearly at Petra, vivid traces of Nabataean creativity and control also appear in the Hejaz region of Arabia, among the wild rock formations of Wadi Rum, along trade and pilgrimage routes in the Sinai, and in towns and temples throughout Jordan and into Syria. The Nabataean flame was snuffed out by the masters of realpolitik of the day - the Romans. But the afterglow of their genius continued to illuminate succeeding generations, long after their name and their kingdom disappeared and Petra ceased to be a major city. This richly illustrated book recounts the story of a remarkable but lost civilization, and the capacity of its people to adapt and diversify their skills as necessity demanded. It tells of their nomadic origins, the development of their multifaceted culture, their relations with their more famous neighbours and the demise of their kings and kingdom. It also looks at their continued, if nameless, survival as Christians and farmers in the Byzantine Empire.

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