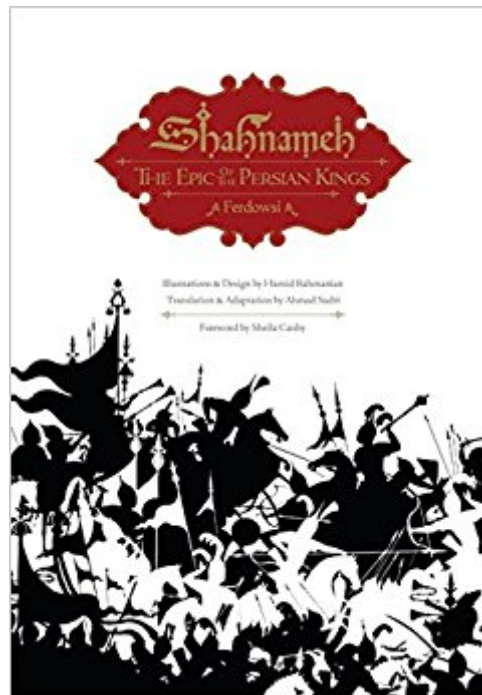




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Shahnameh: The Epic Of The Persian Kings



Synopsis

A new, lushly illustrated edition of the classic work Shahnameh. Ferdowsi's epic poem Shahnameh is part myth, part history—it begins with the legend of the birth of the Persian nation and its tumultuous history. It contains magical birds, and superhuman heroes, and centuries-long battles. Written over 1,000 years ago, it was meant to protect Persian collective memory amidst a turbulent sea of cultural storms. Originally written in couplets, the new translation and adaptation by Ahmad Sadri retells the mythological tales in prose format. The spectacular illustrations in this edition were created from elements culled from thousands of illuminated manuscripts, lithographs, and miniatures dating from the thirteenth through nineteenth centuries, each panel becomes a new work of art, an exquisite collage of traditional forms. 500+ full-color illustrations

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is not a complete translation of the "Shahnameh", in fact, it's hardly a translation at all. If you want to read the epic poem in its entirety, secure Dick Davis's prose translation published by Penguin Press. You won't regret it. Dick Davis is one of the finest scholars of Persian literature today, an inspired translator with a keen sense of poetry. His most recent publication, "Faces of Love", translates Hafez and two other poets of Shiraz and does full justice to these Persian-language poets, unlike others who don't know Persian but claim Hafez visits their dreams! This publication has an entirely different purpose and fulfills that purpose with brilliance and wonder. Countless artists of the Islamic world have illustrated scenes and characters from Ferdowsi's epic.

(Dick Davis's translation contains lithographs from 19th century versions.) For this volume an artist named Hamid Rahmanian took many illustrations and recast them to illuminate the text "with over 500 pages of lavish illustrations", as the publisher puts it. And the result is one of the most magical and uniquely beautiful books in my home library. Every time I look at it, read from it, browse through it I am happy that I bought it. Literally, every page is alive with color and design that illustrates the events of the text. The consistently high quality of these illustrations is breathtaking - there is not a false moment in the whole 572-page book! How many publications can you give such unreserved praise! Now for the text: as I wrote in my opening statement this is not the text of Ferdowsi's epic poem. A writer named Ahmad Sadri wrote a prose summary of the poem which makes up the text.

The Best Shahnameh Translation and Illustration AvailableAs a book collector, I was skeptic about this book and I was wondering if this is yet another insufficient, flawed and graphic-less translation of Shahnameh, until it started climbing the IPC Top 10 Best Sellers Book List. IPC (Iran Politics Club) is the largest Iranian website in English and its best sellers list is let's say the Persian version of the New York Times best sellers book list. This made me curious and next thing you know, I bought the book! Wow, I surely do not regret it! This book reminds me of the very fancy, hardcover, oversized, large deluxe luxury Shahnameh full of colored graphics and paintings in my father's library back in Iran, before 1979 during the reign of the Imperial Iran! I'll never forget that book. That was the ultimate courthouse style Shahnameh (Shahnameh Darbari) and one of the most valuable books in my father's grand library. As a child I had the privilege of having access to this magnificent library. My father was a famous author, journalist, publisher and cabinet minister with this massive library and I basically grew up reading the books in this library. In addition, I had my own library and also had access to my mother's library. That Shahnameh was the most valuable Shahnameh which I have ever seen until now! This Shahnameh, bravely and accurately stated, is the legitimate English version of that Shahnameh. This book is an oversized, hardcover, glossy, well printed, well designed and well translated version of Shahnameh. I can bravely state that this book is the best Shahnameh available in English. So far, I have not seen a better version. As a book collector, author, journalist and publisher, I can surely testify that this book is indeed a literary treasure.

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