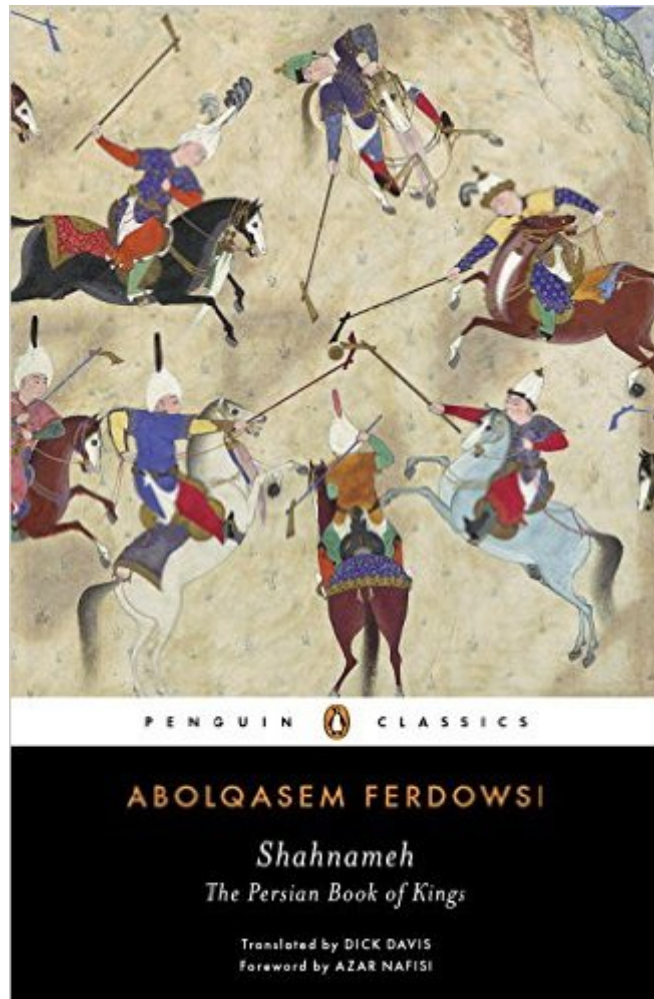


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Shahnameh: The Persian Book Of Kings (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

The definitive translation by Dick Davis of the great national epic of Iran "now newly revised and expanded to be the most complete English-language edition" Dick Davis "our pre-eminent translator from the Persian" (The Washington Post) "has revised and expanded his acclaimed translation of Ferdowsi's masterpiece, adding more than 100 pages of newly translated text. Davis's elegant combination of prose and verse allows the poetry of the Shahnameh to sing its own tales directly, interspersed sparingly with clearly marked explanations to ease along modern readers. Originally composed for the Samanid princes of Khorasan in the tenth century, the Shahnameh is among the greatest works of world literature. This prodigious narrative tells the story of pre-Islamic Persia, from the mythical creation of the world and the dawn of Persian civilization through the seventh-century Arab conquest. The stories of the Shahnameh are deeply embedded in Persian culture and beyond, as attested by their appearance in such works as *The Kite Runner* and the love poems of Rumi and Hafez. For more than sixty-five years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,500 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

Book Information

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Scholarly and Creative Book and Journal Reviews: Pennsylvania Literary Journal: Spring 2016: freely available excerpt: [...]Abolqasem Ferdowsi. Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings. Dick Davis, Translator. New York: Penguin Books, 2016. \$30. ISBN: 978-0-14-310832-0. 996pp.****It is a treat to have received a free copy of this great reference book. I always enjoy researching some of the earliest and most complicating books in human history, and this certainly qualifies as a monumental achievement. Abolqasem Ferdowsi was born in a village in Persia, now Iran, in 940 CE, and rose from this humble beginning in scholarly achievement to be funded by the Samanid dynasty that sponsored his writing of this one single book across the entirety of his long adult life. I love the ending in this book, in which the writer finally takes the first-person voice and complains about the indignities he suffered as a dependent of the kings that he spent his life writing about. After sixty-five years had passed over my head, I toiled ever more diligently and with greater difficulty at my task. I searched out the history of the kings, but my star was a laggard one. Nobles and great men wrote down what I had written without paying me: I watched them from a distance, as if I were a hired servant of theirs. I had nothing from them but their congratulations; my gall bladder was ready to burst with their congratulations! Their purses of hoarded coins remained closed, and my bright heart grew weary at their stinginess. But of the renowned men of my district, Ali Daylami helped me, and that honored man Hosayn Qotayb never asked for my works for nothing. I received food and clothing, silver and gold from him, and it was he who gave me the will to continue.

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