



A Millennium of Classical Persian Poetry

Wheeler M. Thackston

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For a thousand years the classical Persian poetic tradition flourished, continuous and uninterrupted. It began in the great urban centers of Central Asia, Bukhara and Samarkand; and for centuries it dominated the high culture of Central Asia, Iran, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Anatolia, and the whole of the northern part of the Indian subcontinent under the Mughal Empire. It has been composed by saints and roués, kings and beggars. It has been written in gold, poets have had their mouths stuffed with precious gems for an apt line of poetry, and the uncivilized have measured their progress into civilization by their ability to quote Persian poetry. A Millennium Of Classical Persian Poetry is designed to introduce students of Persian to the richness of the classical poetic legacy. The Persian metrical system and poetic forms are explained, and selections are given from the works of all major poets, from Rudaki in the tenth century to Bahar in the twentieth, with annotations of difficult grammatical constructions and unfamiliar allusions. Highlights include poetry by Firdawsi, Farrukhi, Anvari, Khaqani, Nizami, Attar, Rumi, Sa'di, Hafiz, Jami, Sa'ib, and a host of lesser-known poets. A full Persian-English vocabulary is included.

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