



Ferdowsi's *Shahnama*: Millennial Perspectives (Ilex Series)

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Ferdowsi's Shahnama: Millennial Perspectives celebrates the ongoing reception, over the last thousand years, of a masterpiece of classical Persian poetry. The epic of the *Shahnama* or *Book of Kings* glorifies the spectacular achievements of Iranian civilization from its mythologized beginnings all the way to the historical time of the Arab Conquest, when the notionally unbroken sequence of Iranian *shahs* came to an end. The poet Hakim Abu'l-Qasim, who composed this epic, was renamed Ferdowsi or "the man of Paradise" in recognition of his immortalizing artistic accomplishment. Even now, over a thousand years after his death in 1010 CE, the impact of Ferdowsi's epic poetry reverberates in the intellectual and artistic life of Persianate cultures all over the world. *Ferdowsi's Shahnama: Millennial Perspectives* undertakes a new look at the reception of Ferdowsi's poetry, especially in the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries CE. Such a reception, the contributors to this book argue, actively engages the visual as well as the verbal arts of Iranian civilization. The paintings and other art objects illustrating the *Shahnama* over the ages are as vitally relevant as the words of Ferdowsi's poetry.

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