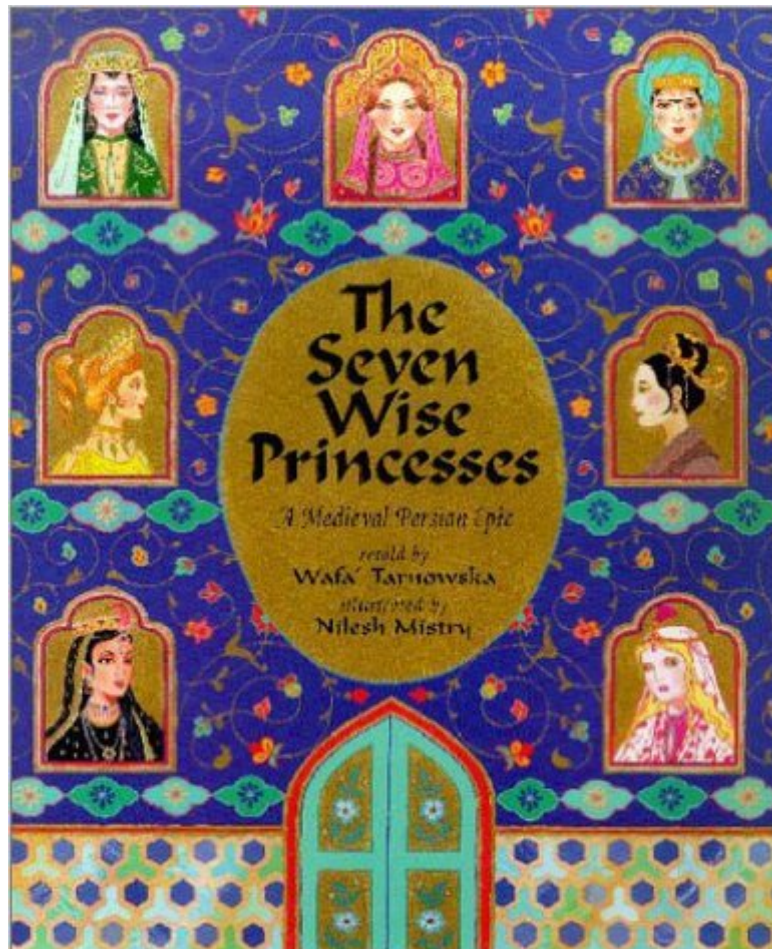


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# The Seven Wise Princesses: A Medieval Persian Epic



## Synopsis

This captivating classic of Persian literature tells of a legendary prince, Shah Bahram, and of the ways in which he learns about leadership from the stories he is told by seven visiting princesses. The first English language translation for children of the great Sufi poet Nizami's twelfth-century masterpiece, Haft Paykar, it also offers a powerfully relevant message for our times, emphasizing that personal virtue and wisdom are necessary prerequisites for just rule. --This text refers to an alternate Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 96 pages

Publisher: Barefoot Books; Complete Numbers Starting with 1, 1st Ed edition (October 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1841480223

ISBN-13: 978-1841480220

Product Dimensions: 10.6 x 8.8 x 0.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (10 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,305,928 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #94 in [Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Asian](#) #5485 in [Books > Children's Books > Classics](#)

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

This book is about a prince who finds pictures of seven princesses in his palace, and determines to meet them. He brings them to his kingdom and hosts them in seven pavilions of different colors and corresponding to different astrological bodies. He then meets them in turn and they tell him stories that explain why they chose to stay in the color of the pavilion they did. The colors, astrological bodies, and order in which the princesses' stories are told are all symbolic. The story is based on the Persian epic poem "Haft Pakyar" written in the 12th century by Nizami Ganjavi (there is an entry on this story in Wikipedia if you are interested in a short introduction to the original). Unlike the original, this children's adaptation focuses almost exclusively on the princesses' wise tales, and deals very little with the prince himself. I will say three things about this book. First, it is definitely medieval. It is comparable in violence and frightening ghouls to European medieval stories and fables. There are scenes of frightening demons, eyes being torn out, and threats of death to suitors

that can't scale the palace walls, within these stories. This is not a gift for the very sensitive child. Second, it is very Persian. I noticed that the reviews suggested that the stories within a story, and stories within the stories within a story, were "convoluted". Perhaps to the modern reader, but Persians and others from narrative cultures will be very pleased by these stories that can be understood on so many different levels. It is complex but not difficult for people accustomed to reading literature. The moral lessons told reflect universal ideals from a uniquely medieval Persian standpoint. Being both medieval and Persian, the lessons are blunt.

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