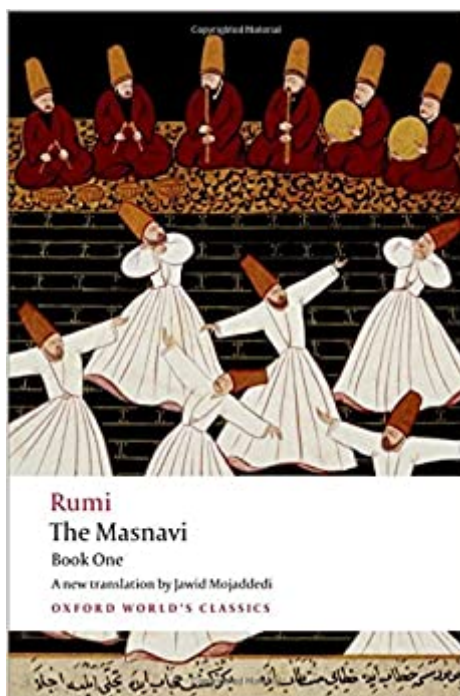


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The Masnavi, Book One (Oxford World's Classics) (Bk. 1)



Synopsis

Rumi's Masnavi is widely recognized as the greatest Sufi poem ever written, and has been called "the Koran in Persian." The thirteenth-century Muslim mystic Rumi composed his work for the benefit of his disciples in the Sufi order named after him, better known as the whirling dervishes. In order to convey his message of divine love and unity he threaded together entertaining stories and penetrating homilies. Drawing from folk tales as well as sacred history, Rumi's poem is often funny as well as spiritually profound. Jawid Mojaddedi's sparkling new verse translation of Book One is consistent with the aims of the original work in presenting Rumi's most mature mystical teachings in simple and attractive rhyming couplets. About the Series: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the broadest spectrum of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, voluminous notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Mojaddedi's is the most faithful verse translation now available... the reader without Persian comes as close as possible to the original." PN Review (May -June 2006)

Jawid Mojaddedi is a native of Afghanistan, and read Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Manchester. He has taught Arabic and Islamic Studies at the Universities of Manchester and Exeter,

and served as an editor of Encyclopaedia Iranica at the Center for Iranian Studies, Columbia University. His most recent publication is *Beyond Dogma: Rumi's Teachings on Friendship with God and Early Sufi Theories* (OUP, 2012). Mr. Mojaddedi was also made a National Endowment for the Arts Literature Translation Fellow for 2014-2015.

If you visit Konya, and see Rumi's tomb, with his father and son and other family members buried nearby, in a gorgeously illuminated mausoleum-mosque, with its supernal light and its electric energy of peace and vastness, you see Rumi is no pop-figure but drenched in traditions of Islamic Sufism that brings out its deepest and most original heart, the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) true teaching... compassion, love, and adherence to God's world above and beyond this one through right action and sincerity, wild daring, discipline and spiritual transformation. Rumi's *Masnavi* is a true companion on this Path, and Rumi a true indicator of this Path, and for those without Persian, we've relied on the Victorian (though unrhymed and much interpolated) masterpiece of Nicholson (and later revisions by Arberry) and the rather haphazard fragments either "translated" or "rendered" in new, modern versions by contemporary poet-scholars. With this new translation by Jawid Mojaddedi we have a sensational new take on Rumi, whose original (as indicated by its title) is in rhymed couplets (*Masnavi* means "rhymed couplets"), and which ranges from praise-poetry to stories, both high and low, to long stretches of ecstatic gnostic realization and "revelation" filled with light. This new translation keeps it all, and in a flowing smoothness that is truly remarkable, drenched (as in the original) in remembrance of Allah (the same One God of us all). It's eminently readable, and you feel you're getting closer (by the fidelity and sincerity of the translator, direct from Persian this time!) to Rumi's actual tone and intention. I'm a cheerleader for this translation (and have no qualms calling it this, since it is), it's a sweet gift to us, and attests to Rumi's saintliness after all these centuries. He's reached us in our mire, and now in a voice that sings in poetic tune to lift us from it (from mineral to plant, from plant to animal, from animal to angel)! May our intrepid and courageous translator be given strength and inspiration to continue until all six books of this world treasure, this rare compendium of spiritual truths, are as superbly translated and made available.

This is a highly readable, authentic translation of Rumi's *Masnavi*, the beloved collection of mystical and metaphysical poems of many Persian speaking people around the globe. It is beautifully rendered into English; but following the original rhyme pattern, it too is written in couplet verses. At times, this effort seems a bit strained. Otherwise, this review would have scored five stars...

I really wanted to like this. Bought almost immediately after I heard the story on NPR. Added to a large collection of Rumi/Hafez that I have acquired over the years, which includes all the typical translations you'd, including Arberry, Nicholson and of course lots of Barks. The introduction to this volume is good, and touches on stuff you might not find elsewhere. And the author is commended for trying to keep the Koranic references in the text. However, just 30 pages in, I am ready to puke with the iambic pentameter. Far too sing-song, with forced rhymes and practically lifeless imagery. I would take any of the perhaps less accurate translations over this any day. Given that there are several more volumes of this translation to come (the 4th to be out in early 2017), I am torn between getting them all to have a complete collection - for reference only - or stopping now. I'd prefer to actually read them of course, but do not feel compelled to like I have with other translations. It's a shame really. Even Nicholson's OCR-error laden version is more fun to read.

This was a gift for my Dad. Rumi is a very special and adored poet of our heritage, and we both love him and his work, deep and complex as it may be. The scholars say it takes decades to come to fully appreciate and understand his work. Well, I am looking forward to a deeper understanding for sure but for now, I appreciate it, whether I follow him all the way or not. This is not a book you sit and read through, but rather one you open to any page and read one or two passages from. It seems to be a decent translation of Rumi's poetry from the original language of Farsi. Our favorite one is about the reed, called The Song of the Reed. It is sad, complex and beautiful.

The most Beautiful translation of Rumi poetry.

The translation is clunky. I appreciate that the author was trying to capture the verse structure of the original, but the result is that finished product is hard to read. This fault made it hard for this reader to get close to the soul of Rumi. The introductory essay is good, so I appreciate the volume for that reason.

Superb translation. Preface not as thorough as other translations. A truly marvelous work when read in conjunction with the Qur'an.

Very good but you must be well versed in Rumi to be able to understand it. Fusun Dulger Charles

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