

The Sufis Idries Shah

In his writing about Sufism, Idries Shah did some revolutionary things. Critically, and almost alone, he said that it was possible to divorce the essence of Sufi philosophy from what he insisted were secondary accretions of islamic culture and religion.

Considers how Lessing's exposure to a particular aspect of tasawwuf, the classical Sufi Way, has shaped her work. Impresses upon the reader the degree to which Lessing is seriously offering her space-fiction utopias as plausible and even necessary alternatives to our present Western ways of life.

???(1928-),??????????????

These lines by the great teacher and mystic Jalaludin Rumi indicate the many-faceted role of humor in Sufi teaching. Shah writes: "As a shock-applier and tension-releaser and an indicator of false situations, humour, certainly to the Sufi in traditional usage, is one of the most effective instruments and diagnostic aids." Not only are the 60 jokes contained in this volume representative of the type of material used in Sufi development, but their selection, arrangement, and presentation comprise an actual learning experience for the modern reader. Shah weaves contemporary jokes, humorous anecdotes, and stories with skillful commentary. The result is an a entertaining journey which mixes laughter, introspection, and surprise.

Sufism, the mystical aspect of Islam, has had a lasting effect on the literature of that religion. It's teachings aim at perfecting the human mind. This is an anthology of Sufi writings which form an introduction to this body of thought.

In Idries Shah's Wisdom of the Idiots, the 'idiots' are Sufis, called this because their wisdom penetrates to a depth which renders it inaccessible to the merely intelligent or academically-knowledgeable. The exercise-stories of the Sufis are tools prepared for a specific purpose. On this level the movements of the characters in a story portray psychological processes, and the story becomes a working blueprint of those processes. Wisdom of the Idiots has been awarded many prizes, including two gold medals, one for being 'Best Book', in conjunction with UNESCO's World Book Year.

In his writing about Sufism, Idries Shah did some revolutionary things. Critically, and almost alone, he said that it was possible to divorce the essence of Sufi philosophy from what he insisted were secondary accretions of islamic culture and religion. Moreover, he said, in making this material available to the West, you could not only do this, you must do it. This is because, he believed, you can only absorb materials that are designed for your own time and place. Sufism as an essence may be 'truth without form' but, in order to penetrate into the human mind, it must be delivered in a package shaped to fit the receiving culture. 'When something new enters a culture, there is a period where, like a new object being thrown into the chimpanzee pen at a zoo, all the chimps rush over to touch it, throw it on the floor, fight over it and so on,' he once told me. 'We must wait until the dust settles; only then will people be in a position to assess this material.' My father died in 1996 and the dust is settling fast. He leaves a body of work behind and, on this work alone, he believed, he should and would be judged. This anthology is intended to provide a basic sample of his work, an essential reader, to allow people to do exactly what he would have wished them to do: to think for themselves and to make up their own minds. - From the Editor's Note, by Saira Shah

This collection of essays addresses the impact of Sufism in the modern world. Among the topics discussed are Sufism in Eastern religion, therapy and the Sufi, the practice of the Sufi, current study materials, and humor and the Sufi.

A mysterious chest is buried unopened. A wondrous caravan brings fortune to a simple cobbler. An outcast princess creates a new life in the wilderness. Some of the 78 tales in this remarkable book first appeared in print over a thousand years ago; others are medieval classics. Yet each has a special relevance for us at the dawn of the 21st century. All are told with Idries Shah's distinctive wit and grace and the author's own commentary notes. These are teaching stories in the Sufi tradition. Those who probe beyond the surface will find multiple meanings to challenge assumptions and foster new ways of thinking and perceiving. Tales of the Dervishes is essential reading for anyone interested in Sufi thought, the significance and history of tales, or simply superb entertainment.

Here, Hadrat Dervish describes not only journeys in India, Greece, Yemen and the Gulf, but also covers extraordinary experiences and teachings amongst the real Sufis of today.

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Drawn from teachings of more than a hundred sages from three continents, Thinkers of the East is a book of enormous breadth and depth, the impact and vitality of which is characteristic of the Sufi emphasis on experience rather than theory.

The Sufis is the best introduction ever written to the philosophical and mystical school traditionally associated with the Islamic world. Powerful, concise, and intensely thought-provoking, it sums up over a thousand years of Eastern thought - the product of some of the greatest minds humanity has ever produced - into a single work, presenting timeless ideas in a fresh and contemporary style. When the book was originally published in 1964, it launched its author, Idries Shah, on to the international stage, attracting the attention of thinkers and writers such as J. D. Salinger, Doris Lessing, Ted Hughes and Robert Graves. It introduced to the Western world concepts which have subsequently become commonly accepted, varying from the psychological importance of attention and humour, to the use of traditional tales as teaching instruments (what Shah termed 'teaching-stories'), and the historical debt owed by the West to the Middle East in matters scientific, literary and philosophical. As a primer for the many dozens of Sufi books that Shah later produced, it is unsurpassed, offering a clear window onto a community whose system of thought and action has long concerned itself with the advancement of the whole of humankind, and whose ideas about individuals and society, their purpose and direction, need to be understood now more than ever before.

The mystery of the Sufis, in the ancient usage of the word, is the experience of self-realization taught by traditional schools of "mysticism." In English, too, the word "mystery" also stands for an art or craft, a skill; and this sense is also preserved in the Sufic usage of the word "Work," or science of the Sufi: "Knowledge without action is like wax without honey." The Sufi Mystery brings

together writings by Ameer Ali, the Islamic historian; Professor E. G. Browne, the Orientalist; Sir Richard Burton; Robert Graves; Idries Shah; and many others. It deals with authentic and mutated schools and orders and their literature over a very wide area of geography and belief. Sufi theories and practices are examined, visits to Sufi centers are described, the relationships of master and disciple investigated, and links with other systems noted.

As our world continues to shrink, we are being brought headlong into often explosive contact with other cultures and religions. Islam continues to be for many a mysterious and misunderstood force, alien to our own cultural values. Yet, in more ways than expected, Christianity and Islam share common ground. For centuries, Sufi thinkers have been linked to both religions in certain important ideas. But, like the elephant in the dark in Jalaludin Rumi's classic fable, these ideas are not grasped in full by seizing parts of the whole and arguing for or against their supposed Christian or Islamic derivation. From a series of lectures given by Idries Shah at Geneva University, *The Elephant in the Dark* shifts focus to more fruitful ground, tracing documented episodes of cooperation and understanding between Christians and Moslems over the past 1,400 years.

A remarkable conspectus of philosophical contacts between East and West through the ages. This important monograph constitutes the whole text of Idries Shah's Seminar at Sussex University, fully annotated, indexed and with a bibliography and notes. It knits together the available knowledge about Sufi thought and literature in its passage through many deforming influences, such as the development of cults, the misinterpretation by literalist scholars, and the fallacious comparisons of committed "e;specialists"e;.

When it first appeared in 1964, *The Sufis* was welcomed as the decisive work on the subject of Sufi Thought. Rich in scope, author Idries Shah explained clearly the traditions and philosophy of the Sufis to a Western audience for the first time. In the five decades since its release, the book has been translated into more than two dozen languages, and has found a wide readership in both East and West. Containing detailed information on the major Sufi thinkers, and literary characters, such as Nasrudin, it is regarded as a key work on both Sufism and Eastern Philosophy. A text in scores of leading universities around the world for courses on Sufism, Eastern thought and Islamic philosophy, *The Sufis* has been used by psychologists and physicists, by school teachers, lawyers, social workers, and by ordinary members of the public.

This book is an anthology of the extraordinary diversity of Sufi ideas and activities in many countries and cultures today. Nothing approaching this kind of survey has ever been assembled. In addition to first-hand accounts of Sufi learning methods, subjects covered include the Sufi meeting place, avoiding imitators, Sufi work enterprises, the idea of organic enterprises, entry into a Sufi group, the Sufi Adept and the projection of mind, extra-sensory perception, what the Sufis do not want us to know, and more.

The SufisIsh Publishing

100 Conversations with Idries Shah Condensed from over three million words, these conversations involve housewives and cabinet ministers, professors and assembly-line workers, on the subject of how traditional psychology can illuminate current human, social and spiritual problems. More than a hundred tales and extracts from Sufi lore, ranging from the

eighth century Hasan of Basra, to the modern Afghan poet Khalilullah Khalili, are woven into Shah's narratives of how and why the Sufis learn, what they learn: and how spiritual understanding develops and deteriorates in all societies. Used for more than seven hundred years as a teaching story, *The Book of the Book* is one of the most compelling and astonishing texts ever to emerge from the Orient. Its central premise is the simple phrase: 'When you realize the difference between the container and the content, you will have knowledge.' When the book first appeared in English thirty-five years ago, its printers questioned how it could be a book, as did reviewers, scholars, and people who paid money to buy it. *The Book of the Book* is now in its seventh impression, and is studied at university level, appreciated by all for its simple brilliance.

A mixture of primitive and conditioned responses, common to everyone, which inhibits and distorts human progress and understanding.

Using the powerful approach of classical teachers, Shah has crafted a contemporary teaching tool that blends a fastpaced look at today's world with the timeless teachings of the Sufis. The book brings into sharp focus the conditioned behavior and self-deception that are common in Western minds. Far more than a literary tool for breaking loose old mental habits, it is a blueprint for a process of self-development that precludes self-deceit. Truly a book among books, *A Perfumed Scorpion* is treasured the world over for its clarity of wisdom and forcefulness of insight.

Please note that the content of this book primarily consists of articles available from Wikipedia or other free sources online. Pages: 34. Chapters: Inayat Khan, Vilayat Inayat Khan, Ghazali, Idries Shah, International Association of Sufism, Avempace, Lataif-e-sitta, Octagon Press, A. H. Almaas, Javad Nurbakhsh, Eleven Naqshbandi principles, Robert E. Ornstein, Nafs, Arthur J. Deikman, Muhammad Ajmal, Fazal Inayat-Khan, Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee, *The Commanding Self*, *Learning How to Learn: Psychology and Spirituality in the Sufi Way*, *Wisdom of the Idiots*, Robert Frager, *Knowing How to Know*. Excerpt: Idries Shah (16 June, 1924 - 23 November, 1996) (Persian:), also known as Idris Shah, ne Sayed Idries el-Hashimi (Arabic:), was an author and teacher in the Sufi tradition who wrote over three dozen critically acclaimed books on topics ranging from psychology and spirituality to travelogues and culture studies. Born in India, the descendant of a family of Afghan nobles, Shah grew up mainly in England. His early writings centred on magic and witchcraft. In 1960 he established a publishing house, Octagon Press, producing translations of Sufi classics as well as titles of his own. His most seminal work was *The Sufis*, which appeared in 1964 and was well received internationally. In 1965, Shah founded the Institute for Cultural Research, a London-based educational charity devoted to the study of human behaviour and culture. A similar organisation, the Institute for the Study of Human Knowledge (ISHK), exists in the United States, under the directorship of Stanford University psychology professor Robert Ornstein, whom Shah

