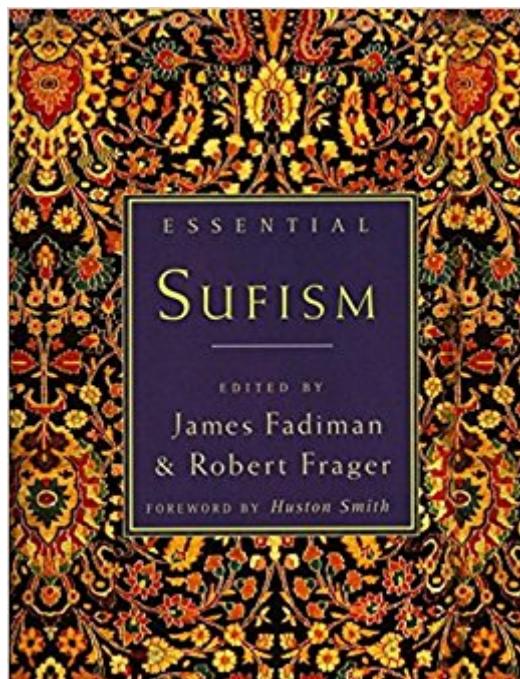


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Essential Sufism



Synopsis

The definitive compendium of Sufi wisdom, 'Essential Sufism' draws together more than three hundred fables, poems and prayers that reveal the luminous spirit of Islamic mysticism. Embracing all eras and highlighting the many faces of Sufism, this colle

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Customer Reviews

Sufis are celebrated in the West for their joy, humor, and devoted worship. Two students of Sufism, James Fadiman and Robert Frager, have collected some of the jewels of Sufic literature, polished them up a bit, and organized them for ready contemplation. Rumi's poems, Attar's stories, Mohammed's terse sayings, and even some moving pieces from contemporary Western devotees make Essential Sufism a treasury of Sufic literature. The extensive introduction provides practical context, and preambles to each section set the tone for what's to come. If you haven't encountered the wisdom of Sufi mysticism, the material in this book is a good place to start; if you have, it's a comfortable place for return. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A welcome addition to the literature on Islam, this small volume offers sayings, religious quotes, poems, aphorisms, and prayers from many Sufi masters. Reading through the many entries, one gets a feeling for the beauty and deep wisdom of the Sufis, the mystics of Islam. The book includes the necessary discussions of the major Sufi teachers, history, culture, and beliefs to aid the reader in understanding the vitalness of the sayings and meditations but is not meant as a fully encompassing investigation of Sufism. Instead, it is a wonderful appetizer that tantalizes the reader to seek other works that further celebrate and elucidate the relatively obscure world of Sufism.

Recommended for all libraries. ?Glenn Masuchika, Chaminade Univ. Lib., Honolulu Copyright 1997
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I have had a hard copy of this book for years and recently bought the kindle edition as well--giving me access to it any time and anywhere. That is how vital its contents are to me. For anyone who is new to Sufism or who is steeped in the Sufi way of life (or anywhere in between), this is a rich and beautiful compendium of Sufi literature. Frager does a wonderful job of arranging the Sufi writings (spanning many centuries and continents) into thematic chapters, such as prayer, love, etc. I highly recommend this book, which I use the way others might use their bible--for comfort and/or inspiration.

Just started reading this book. I want to learn more about Sufism since it is a theme echoed over and over by Gibran, Pamuk and of course its founder the great poet Rumi. I love the concept of becoming "One with the Beloved". In my opinion Pamuk corrupts Sufism and Mystics. Orhan Pamuk's books present a distorted view of Dervishes and Sufis, especially the novel, My Name is Red. He reduces these holy men to their baser instincts. Of course as a Christian my ultimate Spiritual Goal is to become one with Jesus Christ. Over the years as I think back I believe I have found elements of Sufism in the writings of Deepak Chopra, the Dalai Lama and I'm sure that as I read more of Dr. Edward Said I will find it there also. Perhaps it is also in Buddhism, I must look at my Buddhist scriptures. The theme of Being One with the Beloved resonates with me as a Christian because you find this concept in the Bible. Jesus spoke that He and the Father were One. The Epistles constantly speak about being reunited with God, being more like the Father, losing yourself in Him. I'm the type of Christian who believes one can incorporate the best of other faiths without losing or rejecting one's own belief system. As I get older I lean towards the Gospel of Inclusion. Besides on Judgement Day we will all answer to God no matter what our faith or belief. Saturday, May 30, 2009 The aphorisms in this book remind me very much of the Book of Proverbs in the Bible. Proverbs is known as the book of Wisdom. I keep referring to the Bible because this is my faith and my frame of reference. As I read about the Sufis and Dervishes I think about Jesus disciples and how he sent them out to preach the gospel and heal the sick. Jesus told them to take nothing with them except the clothes on their back. I believe the scripture states that the workman is worthy of his hire. They went from town to town, house to house spreading the Good News. Whoever had ears to hear received it, those who did not Jesus told them to shake the dust off their sandals as they left that particular village. I am just speculating but maybe Rumi and other Sufis were inspired by Jesus,

his disciples and the apostles. Another similarity I found was the mention of the Redemptive Names of God. Christians also have this. _____ Eight

Redemptive Names of God JEHOVAH-JIREH "The Lord our provider" - This is also the name Abraham gave to the place where the Lord provided a sacrifice in place of Isaac. (Gen. 22:14). JEHOVAH-NISSI "Our banner, a banner of love and protection" - Also the name Moses gave to the altar he built after defeating the Amalekites (Ex. 17:15). JEHOVAH-SHALOM "Our perfect peace" - Also the name Gideon gave to the altar he built at Ophrah (Judges 6:24). JEHOVAH-TSID-KENU "The Lord is our righteousness" - The name is applied to a future Davidic king who would lead his people to do what is right and thus bring peace (Jeremiah 23:6) and to the restored city of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 33:16). The name is possibly a play on the name of Zedekiah ("Righteous [is:] the Lord") who reigned from 597 to 587 B.C.. JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH "The One Who is with us everywhere for He is Omnipresent" - The Jerusalem of Ezekiel's vision (see Ezekiel 48:35 margin) was known by this name. Compare text at Isaiah 60:19-20 and Revelation 21:3. JEHOVAH-SABAOTH "The Lord of Hosts, our Protector." C.H. Spurgeon said this about the phrase "The Lord of Hosts: The Lord rules the angels, the stars, the elements, and all the hosts of Heaven; and the Heaven of heavens is under His sway... [the Lord:] is on our side -- our august Ally; woe unto those who fight against Him, for they shall flee like smoke before the wind when He gives the word to scatter them." See text at Psalm 46:7. JEHOVAH-RAAH "Our Shepherd Who tenderly leads us, loves us and will keep us safe." - the famous Psalm 23 tells us that "The Lord is our Shepherd and we shall not want...." Being illustrated as a shepherd implies a relationship with His sheep (His believers). The term shepherd appears approximately 80 times in the Scriptures, denoting meanings of: feeder, keeper, companion, friend, pastor and herdsman. JEHOVAH RAPHA "I am the Lord Your Physician or I am the Lord Your Healer - this name especially was a Name God prophetically spoke about Himself, not one that someone gave Him. Exodus 15:26

Sunday, May 31, 2009 Just wanted to add that some of them echo the Song of Solomon which contrasts romantic love between Solomon and his Ethiopian wife to his Love and search for God. Also in regards to mystics whether Sufi or Christian, "One cannot be so Heavenly bound that you are no earthly good". Props to my former Pastor, Rev. A.R. Bernard!! The Mystic experience can also be found heavily in the Catholic Church. There are many famous Catholic Mystics; St. Teresa of Avila, Hildegard of Bingen, Francis of Assisi, Julian of Norwich, Catherine of Siena, etc... Many Catholic Mystics have had the experience of Stigmata, actually having the wounds of Christ on their physical bodies. Some have actually a type of ecstasy something similar to an out of body experience, perhaps a suspension of natural time where one is present with the Lord. In my brief

study of Eastern and Western Mysticism the Path Chooses the Believer not the Believer the Path. I think ones personality also lends itself to a mystical experience

Amazing. Well laid out. And some great wisdoms and learnings shared, all around. Beautiful and easy read. Great way to start the day!

This is a very insightful book. The quotes and anecdotes are also engaging. I never knew how much went into Sufism.

This book contains many quotes and stories from the Sufi tradition and a rich introduction by the author, who is a student of Sufism. I was first introduced to the tradition about 20 or so years ago through Rumi's poetry, which inspired me and impressed me with the emphasis on love of God. This is an ecstatic tradition that doesn't seek to explain anything but rather to connect one with an open heart and facilitate falling in love with God, immanent and transcendent. Reading this book is a wonderful experience.

This book is a collection of quotes and a variety of statements from a multitude of sources. The real power of the book is in the introduction, which describes the essential Sufi perspective and defines the Sufi as non-sectarian, even as the tradition of Islam bears its roots. I have studied with an Iraqi Sufi Master for over 35 years and find a kindred spirit in this book.

Words can not explain my love for this book. It gives you such a strong sense of love and emotion from the minute you open it. It had me in tears within the first few pages.

I have loved Sufi poetry for the way it expresses what I have found to be Real. After many years of being lost in the world there was an experience that came about, revealing the illusion and uncovering the Real. When I read Essential Sufism I hear the song of what has been uncovered. The Unseen Reality of What Is.

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