

## The Sufis Idries Shah

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### Caravan of Dreams

Contemporary esoteric systems almost always play on the desire of mankind to seek or acquire knowledge. All but universally neglected in such systems are the - often unrecognized - barriers which prevent knowledge and understanding. Before learning can take place, certain conditions and basic factors must be in place; in the individual or the group. Building on the foundations laid in Learning How to Learn and The Commanding Self, Idries Shah in Knowing How to Know illuminates those factors.

Like an ultra-violet light shone onto the petals of flowers, it reveals concealed patterns, normally invisible to our customary modes of thought.

### **The World of the Sufi**

'Perhaps the best introduction to the body of Shah's work, the most comprehensively informative. And one is immediately forced to use one's mind in a new way.' - The New York Times When it first appeared in 1964, *The Sufis* was welcomed as the decisive work on the subject: rich in scope, clearly explaining 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 dozens of languages, and has found a wide readership in both East and West. It is used as a text in scores of leading universities around the world, and the material contained within it has been applied by psychologists and physicists, by school teachers, lawyers, social workers, and by ordinary members of the public. Ted Hughes wrote of it: 'An astonishing book. The Sufis must be the biggest society of sensible men on earth'; and Nobel laureate Doris Lessing said of it: 'I had waited my entire life to read this book.'

### **The Commanding Self**

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 entertaining journey which mixes laughter, introspection, and surprise.

### **Reflections**

### **Sufi Thought and Action**

Originally published in 1950. Thinkers such as Ghazali and Ibn `Arabi, poets such as Ibn al-Farid, Rumi, Hafiz and Jami were greatly inspired by the lives and sayings of the early Sufis. This book was the first short history of Sufism to be published in any language, illustrating the development of its doctrines with numerous quotations from literature.

### **The Sufis**

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

### **Special Illumination**

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

### **Seeker After Truth**

Here, the subtleties of the inimitable Mulla Nasrudin's anecdotes are paralleled with the workings of the mind and designed to amuse the tea-house audience. At the same time they are intended to reach other levels.

### **Tales of the Dervishes**

Oriental Magic is recognized as a brilliant study of how, what and why people think, in territories extending from North Africa to Japan. Profusely illustrated, the book is the product of years of research and field-work in a dozen different cultural regions.

### **The Sufis**

No ordinary collection of tales, this anthology was the result of extensive research that led Shah to conclude that there is a certain basic fund of human fictions which recur again and again throughout the world and never seem to lose their compelling attraction. This special paperback version of World Tales concentrates on the essentials, the text of the stories, and omits the illustrations which were part of a previous edition.

## **The Sufis**

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## **The Subtleties of the Inimitable Mulla Nasrudin**

### **The Way of the Sufi**

Here, Nasrudin's anecdotes are seen to be parallel to the mind's working, designed to amuse the tea-house, but also intended for use on other levels.

## **The Sufis**

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.

### **Western Sufism**

This pocket-size collection of sayings and stories from real life, and from the author's observations of our mental processes, is a perfect gift book. It's contemporary, fun to read-like a splash of icewater for the mind.

### **Los Sufis**

### **Learning How to Learn**

This beautiful collection of stories is one of Shah's best-selling books, and a stirring example of the Sufi system of development at work in the world today. The Magic Monastery was the first book to include stories written by Shah, along with traditional tales-mostly unpublished-illustrating the instructional methods employed by Middle Eastern sages during

the last thousand years.

## **Special Problems in the Study of Sufi Ideas**

Thinkers of the East is a collection of anecdotes and 'parables in action' illustrating the eminently practical and lucid approach of Eastern Dervish teachers. Distilled from the teachings of more than one hundred sages in three continents, this material stresses the experimental rather than the theoretical - and it is that characteristic of Sufi study which provides its impact and vitality. The emphasis of Thinkers of the East contrasts sharply with the Western concept of the East as a place of theory without practice, or thought without action. The book's author, Idries Shah, says 'Without direct experience of such teaching, or at least a direct recording of it, I cannot see how Eastern thought can ever be understood'.

## **The Way of the Sufi**

Stories of Mulla Nasrudin appear in oral traditions and literature from the Middle East to Greece, Russia to China. Many nations claim Nasrudin as a native son, but nobody really knows who he was or where he came from. Whether the stories are studied for their humour or hidden wisdom, they help us understand our world and ourselves.

## **The Pleasantries of the Incredible Mulla Nasrudin**

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.

### **World Tales**

Assembled by Idries Shah, *The World of the Sufi* is a comprehensive collection of learned essays and papers on the subject of Sufi thought. One of the book's attractions is the way that it considers central questions and areas of study from different angles. Sufi literature, the use of humour, and Sufi communities in various cultural settings, are some of the many subjects discussed. In addition, experts in their fields comment on areas such as Sufism and Psychiatry, Indian Thought and the Sufis, and Therapy and the Sufi. Among the book's contributors are Idries Shah, Doris Lessing, Peter Brent and Dr. Arthur J. Deikman.

## **Learning how to Learn**

This work offers coverage of the spiritual and psychological tradition of Sufism. It shows that Sufism is not the preserve of ecstatic religionists, but has a contribution to make to human culture and philosophy.

## **Thinkers of the East (Pocket Edition)**

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.

## **The Magic Monastery**

The Commanding Self, in Sufic terminology, is that mixture of the primitive and conditioned responses, common to everyone, which inhibits and distorts human progress and understanding. This book was described by Shah as the key to understanding his entire corpus of work. While complete in itself as an anthology of hitherto unpublished work, it serves to illustrate and amplify Idries Shah's preceding books

on the Sufi Way. In its introduction, he writes, 'Thousands of books and monographs have been written on Sufism and the Sufis, almost all of them from the point of view of other ways of thinking. The result has been chaos in the literature, and confusion in the reader. Over the centuries, some of the world's most eminent scholars have fallen into the trap of trying to examine, access or consider the Sufi phenomenon through a set of culture-bound preconceptions.'

### **The Dermis Probe**

When it first appeared in 1964, *The Sufis* was welcomed as the decisive work on the subject: rich in scope, clearly explaining the traditions and philosophy of the Sufis to a Western audience for the first time.

### **Idries Shah's Sufi Paradigm**

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.

### **Index to Idries Shah's *The Sufis***

## **Wisdom of the Idiots**

Learning How to Learn contains the authentic material from the Sufi stand-point, written in response to more than 70,000 questions received from government leaders, housewives, philosophy professors, and factory workers around the world. The lively question-answer format provides readers a direct experience of a Sufi learning situation. Shah draws from diverse sources, ranging from 8th-century Sufi narratives to today's newspapers, giving us insight into how Sufis learn, what they learn, and how spiritual understanding can be developed.

## **A Perfumed Scorpion**

## **The Elephant in the Dark**

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.

### **Sufi Psychology**

### **The Sufi Mystery**

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 appointed as his deputy in the U.S. In his writings, Shah presented Sufism as a universal form of wisdom that predated Islam. Emphasizing that Sufism was not static but always adapted itself to the current time, place and people, he framed his teaching in Western psychological terms. Shah made extensive use of traditional

### **Listening to Idries Shah**

Cuando apareció por primera vez en 1964, *Los Sufis* fue acogido como la obra decisiva sobre la materia. Rico en su alcance, explica por primera vez a un público occidental las tradiciones y la filosofía de los Sufis de un modo claro y didáctico. Durante las cinco décadas posteriores a su lanzamiento, el libro fue traducido a una docena de idiomas y ha encontrado una amplia variedad de lectores tanto en Oriente como Occidente. Es utilizado como libro de referencia en muchísimas universidades de todo el mundo, y el material que contiene ha venido siendo aplicado por psicólogos, científicos, maestros de escuela, abogados, trabajadores sociales e integrantes de la sociedad en general. Acaso la mejor introducción al corpus de Shah, y sin dudas la más exhaustivamente informativa. Al instante uno se ve forzado a usar la

propia mente de un modo novedoso. - The New York Times

## **Sufism**

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.

## **The Hundred Tales of Wisdom (Pocket Edition)**

## **The World of Nasrudin**

Western Sufism is sometimes dismissed as a relatively recent "new age" phenomenon, but in this book Mark Sedgwick argues that it has deep roots, both in the Muslim world and in the West. In fact,

although the first significant Western Sufi organization was not established until 1915, the first Western discussion of Sufism was printed in 1480, and Western interest in Sufi thought goes back to the thirteenth century. Sedgwick starts with the earliest origins of Western Sufism in late antique Neoplatonism and early Arab philosophy, and traces later origins in repeated intercultural transfers from the Muslim world to the West, in the thought of the European Renaissance and Enlightenment, and in the intellectual and religious ferment of the nineteenth century. He then follows the development of organized Sufism in the West from 1915 until 1968, the year in which the first Western Sufi order based on purely Islamic models was founded. Western Sufism shows the influence of these origins, of thought both familiar and less familiar: Neoplatonic emanationism, perennialism, pantheism, universalism, and esotericism. Western Sufism is the product not of the new age but of Islam, the ancient world, and centuries of Western religious and intellectual history. Using sources from antiquity to the internet, Sedgwick demonstrates that the phenomenon of Western Sufism draws on centuries of intercultural transfers and is part of a long-established relationship between Western thought and Islam.

### **The Commanding Self**

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.

### **The Sufis (Large Print Edition)**

Traditionally known as The Hundred Tales of Wisdom, this collection comprises excerpts from the life, teachings and miracles of the Sufi teacher Jalaluddin Rumi, together with certain important stories from his works. As well as being part of the bedrock of classical Persian literature, these tales, anecdotes and narratives are believed, by Sufis, to aid in the development of insights beyond ordinary perceptions. Here, they are translated and presented by Idries Shah.

### **Knowing How to Know**

### **Oriental Magic**

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.

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