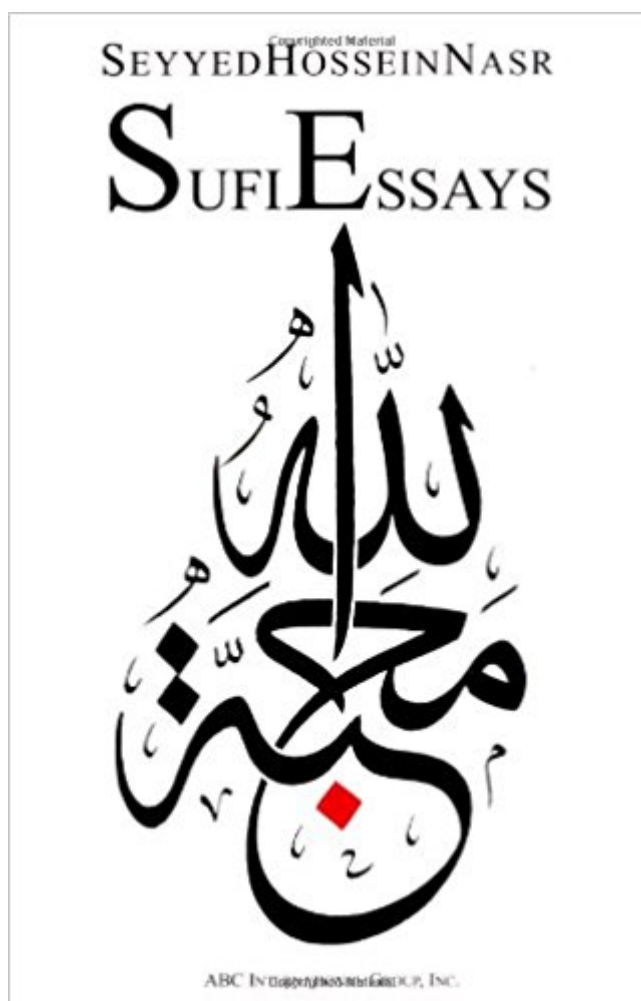


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Sufi Essays



Synopsis

The author combines his research into Sufi doctrine and history with a rich account of the spiritual and metaphysical significance of Sufism as a living tradition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I truly enjoyed reading this book. Having read another excellent book by Corbin " Alone with the Alone", I was curious to see what relation is there, if any, between Shiism and Sufis, this book answered my questions in an honest non-political way.

The majority of the books written on Sufism are from authors who have not "tasted" it, and that is the reason they are insufficient, if not misleading. To explain Sufism, or tasawwuf, as a bundle of foreign influences outside Islam is ridiculous. If one wants to borrow, or has the need to borrow, then they would go to the source; be it from Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism and so forth. They would simply become Christians or Hindus. Sufism is the kernel of Islam, the very center of its circle. Have there ever been non-genuine Sufi/Muslim practices? Of course, and nowadays more than ever. But that tells us about the condition of people, and their grasp (or lack of) of the core teachings of Islam, not of Islam, and Sufism itself. If one encounters some books written in bad taste does that mean that we should write literature off? That we should boycott masterpieces? That is what some legalism-obsessed fellas seem to suggest nowadays. That is one of the many points touched. There is further elucidation of the meaning of the mystic quest; the relation between revelation, intellect and reason; description of the spiritual states; the encounter of Islam with other

religions; excellent explanation of the root of environmental crisis, and more. This is a source to learn from if one is a serious seeker, or genuinely interested in knowing something about the reality of Sufism.

I read this book a few years ago and was thoroughly amazed. Nasr's exposition of Sufism is excellent. He plunges into history and literature to and brings out profound insight into some of the aspects of Sufism. His essay on the Sufi Shaykh is wonderful. Nevertheless the book has its flaw. The insertion of perennial thought and propagation of the Universal Validity of Religions is dogmatic in certain essays. The author simply goes and concludes that Sufi thought stresses the Universal Validity of Religions. Such a statement is false and goes against the Islamic texts and their explanation. In essence the book is wonderful and contains beneficial knowledge, but at the end the perennial taint leaves a bitter taste in the mouth. Overall good read but one should take caution about the above mentioned mistake.

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