



Unveiling Sufism: From Manhattan to Mecca

William Rory Dickson, Meena Sharify-Funk

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In contrast to most introductory texts on Sufism, this work begins not with the historical past, but with the contemporary present. Beginning with Sufism as it is lived today, each chapter further unveils the complexities of Sufism, journeying through a variety of historical, political, and cultural contexts, moving deeper into the past, and closer to the origin and heart of Sufism. This geneological framework will enable the reader to understand the patterns of connection between contemporary manifestations of Sufism and past realities. To ensure that the full range of Sufism's varied expressions is taken into account, each chapter is divided into four sections: Politics and Power, Philosophy and Metaphysics, Arts and Culture, and Overview of Historical Developments. Dividing chapters into these four broad categories enables the book to highlight some of the ways in which Sufism has influenced Muslim politics, philosophy, art, and culture in each historical period. In each category the relevant issues are illustrated through detailed case studies, whether of a particular Sufi figure, place, artistic expression, or philosophical view. This allows the reader to develop a genuinely three-dimensional appreciation of Sufism, neither reducing it to a private mystical experience divorced from social expression, nor limiting the tradition to historical names and dates.

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