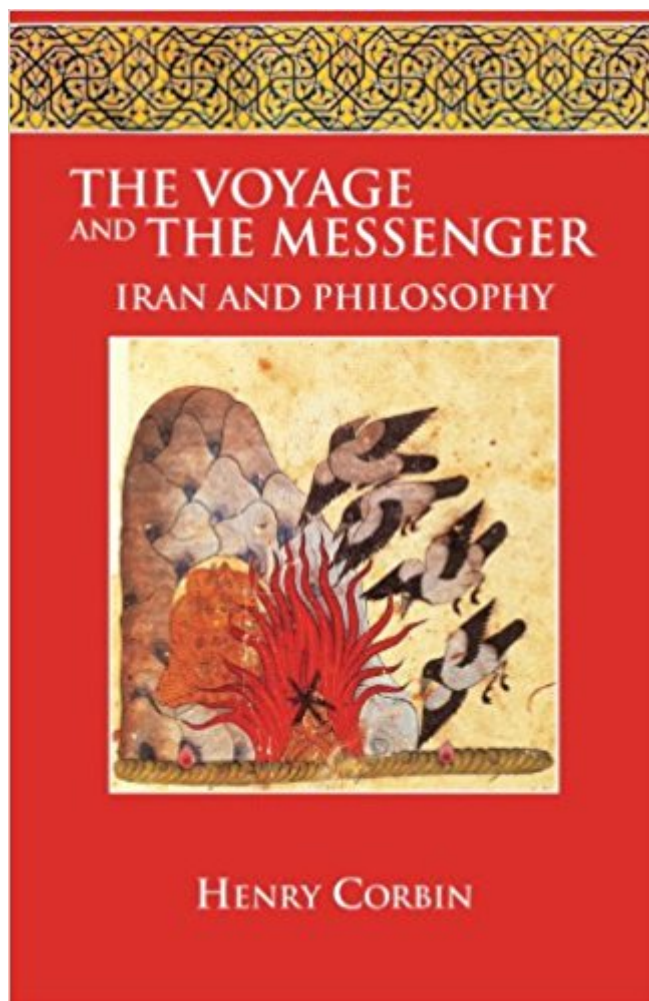


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The Voyage And The Messenger: Iran And Philosophy



Synopsis

This work, incorporating previously unpublished interviews and articles, retraces the quest of Henry Corbin into the imaginal realm of the unseen self, the domains of angels and numinous beings. A study of religious philosophy, exploration of visionary faith, these pages offer a superb meditation of the great themes of Perso-Islamic mysticism—the Sufi theory of knowledge, the voyage within the soul, le rituel de la coupe—and an illuminating glimpse into the philosophic universes of Sohrawardi, Ibn Arabi, and Molla Sarda Shirazi.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"To read Corbin is to learn what it means, at the level of thought, to take the wisdom of the east and the knowledge of the west as the basis of the search for truth."—Jacob Needleman, author of *Time and the Soul*
"Henry Corbin is the best guide our culture has to the metaphysics of the imagination. The publication of these new translations will expand tremendously our access to the treasure house of Corbin's dazzling visionary scholarship."—David Ulansey, M.D., author of *The Origins of the Mitraic Mysteries*

Text: English (translation) Original Language: French

Corbin was a heavy interpreter and synthesizer of Islamic/Ismaeli mysticism, and this book collects various stray essays dealing with the subject. Its good, deep reading and I highly recommend it, for both the beginner and enthusiast.

Amazing discovering. Recommend.

I love all things Corbin, and this book is no exception. Very informative (and slightly poetic, too!) A good read.

Even Henry Corbin's greatest admirers have to admit that he is not an easy read. There are two reasons for this, as I see it. One of them is his adherence to that peculiar French literary convention in non-fiction of assuming that the reader understands more than he or she actually does (the French have a name for this style, although at the moment I can't recall what it is). The other, more important reason is that it requires a considerable amount of unusual intellectual baggage to reach the point where you can begin to understand what Corbin is trying to say. In order to even consider embarking on Corbin's spiritual journey, it is extremely helpful to be familiar with Medieval Scholasticism, Islamic philosophy, Sufism, Shiite theology and Zoroastrianism. It also doesn't hurt to have a nodding acquaintance with Luther, the seventeenth century German mystics and Swedenborg. I don't know anybody who feels completely at home with all those topics; I know that I don't. Which is what makes this book so important for an understanding of Corbin. In fact, Corbin didn't put this book together; it is a compilation of various pieces of his writing. The book starts out with a lengthy intellectual biography of Corbin by Christopher Bamford, which helps considerably to set the stage. This is followed by two essays by Corbin on the development of Iranian studies and the history of Iranian philosophy. Both of these are rather long, and to me at least while I was reading them, they were rather boring. However, in retrospect I must admit that these essays probably do more to introduce Corbin's mindset than anything else that could have been selected. Following this are various, mostly short essays dealing with features of Iranian philosophy and mysticism. The whole scheme of the book is to lead the reader into an appreciation of Corbin's endeavors and an understanding of what he was trying to achieve. I first encountered Corbin about four years ago, when I attempted to read "Man of Light." I gave up after about twelve pages; the material presented was too abstruse for me. After reading this book I realize that Corbin is pure gold, and I'm ready to tackle his work in earnest.

Corbin is one of the foremost interpreters of Iranian, Sufi and Persian gnosticism in the west. This volume is a terrific introduction to his other works as it is a collection of short essays in which he discusses how he grew from being a student of Heidegger to a scholar of Persian mysticism. I

would highly encourage those interested in the imaginal realm to begin their quest here and then take on his other works, especially "Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth" afterward. More people should know of Corbin's work, but unfortunately its audience is largely limited to students of Islam and Sufism. Highly recommended.

The last place I would have looked for a profound spiritualism would have been Iran, but this book proved me wrong. It is amazing and disturbing how much influence cheap media has on our views. After reading this book, I am not surprised that, of all places, Iran should be the country to exhibit such a sharp contrast with modern flashy and shallow philosophies. Obviously these guys know their stuff and can distinguish between real thing and fake ones, something that we in the west need to learn since our spiritualism usually ends up in some sort of sex or money scandal.

This brings into English the insights of one of the great scholars of religious studies. If you are interested in mysticism in general or Sufi in particular then you will find this book an important adjunct to your studies.

I usually don't think much of religious scholars and their books, but have found Mr. Corban and his writings very different and profound. No doubt Corban is an icon for religious scholarship.

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