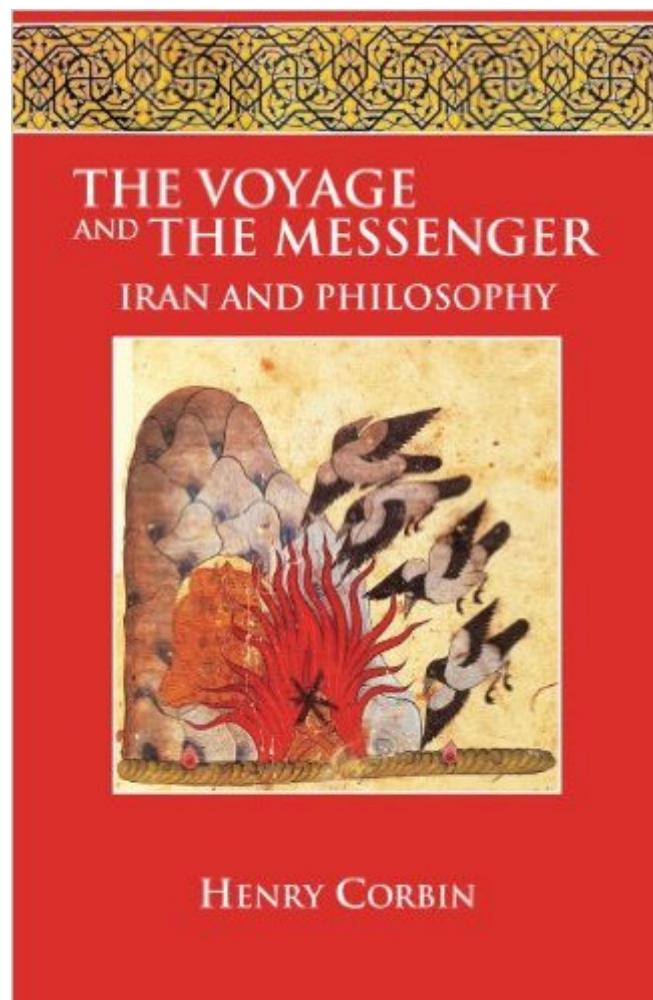


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The Voyage And The Messenger: Iran And Philosophy



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This work, incorporating previously unpublished interviews and articles, retraces the quest of Henry Corbin into the imaginal realm of the unseen self, the domains of angels and numinous beings.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 mysticismâ "the Sufi theory of knowledge, the voyage within the soul, le rituel de la coupeâ "and an illuminating glimpse into the philosophic universes of Sohravardi, Ibn Arabi, and Molla Sarda Shirazi.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

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.

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