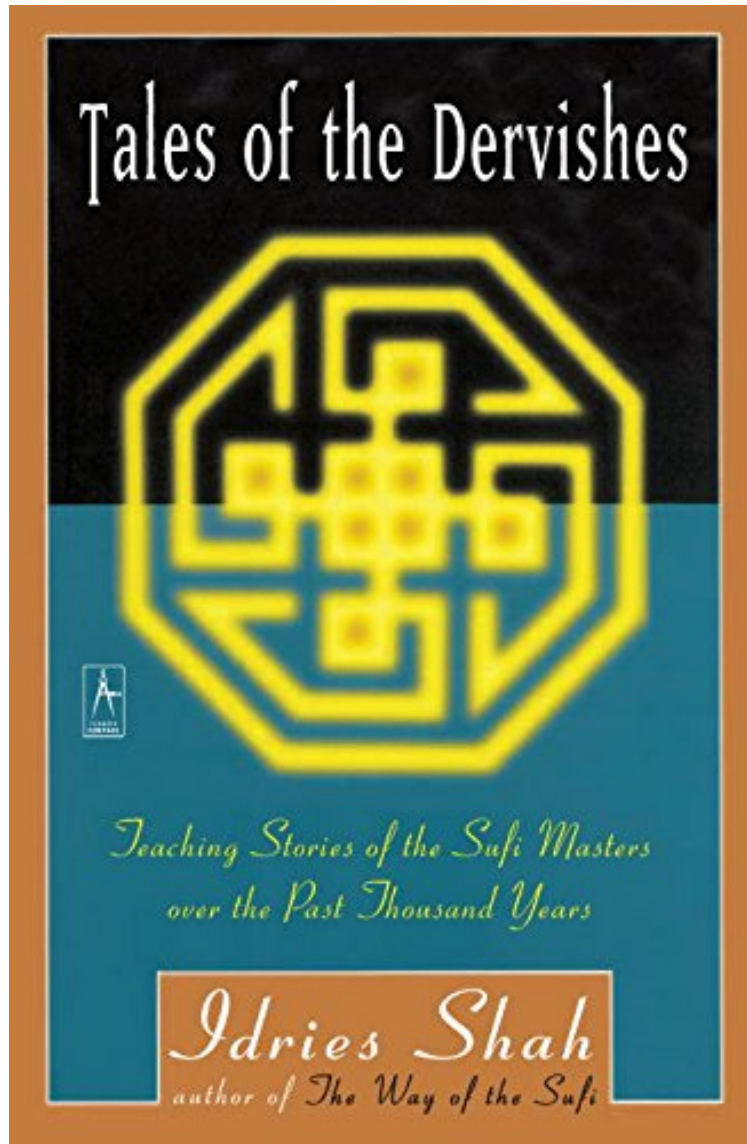


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Tales of the Dervishes: Teaching-Stories of the Sufi Masters over the Past Thousand Years

Idries Shah

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#114319 in Books Idries Shah 1993-10-01 1993-10-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 4.67 x .58 x 5.08l, 2.03 #File Name: 0140193588221 pages Tales of the Dervishes Teaching Stories of the Sufi Masters over the Past Thousand Years | File size: 19.Mb

Idries Shah : Tales of the Dervishes: Teaching-Stories of the Sufi Masters over the Past Thousand Years before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Tales of the Dervishes: Teaching-Stories of the Sufi Masters over the Past Thousand Years:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting collection of Sufi tales
By JustPlainBill
These Sufi tales not only entertain, but contain lessons or meanings underlying the stories (often subtle), giving the reader something to explore afterwards by pondering what has been read. The tales are completely independent of one another, and since only a few are longer than a page or two, an individual tale can be read in a short sitting. Following each tale, the author has added a paragraph or two of commentary containing the provenance of the tale, and perhaps a hint or two of what it is trying to teach or what the reader is intended to think about. As the format lends itself so well to the practice, I have found it works well to read one early each day, and then spend a little time thinking about it. Although the writing style makes this very easy to read, it is not the kind of book one should read cover to cover in a single sitting. The reader will get the most benefit and pleasure from it by taking it a little at a time and then thinking about what has been read. Sufi masters used these tales to teach. Indeed, one of them (The Story of Fire) concludes with the following, which I think lays out this philosophy quite well: You have to learn how to teach, for man does not want to be taught. First of all, you will have to teach people how to learn. And before that you have to teach them that there is still something to be learned. They imagine that they are ready to learn. But they want to learn what they IMAGINE is to be learned, not what they have first to learn. When you have learned all this, then you can devise the way to teach. Knowledge without special capacity to teach is not the same as knowledge and capacity. Most of these tales were completely new to me, but many readers with a Western background may find a couple of them familiar, such as The Blind Ones and the Matter of the Elephant and How to Catch Monkeys. I cannot say what the original source is, but do not find it surprising that a number of folk tales have experienced cultural bleed-through and are now part of more than one cultural tradition. This would be a great addition to your personal library, as many will want to read these tales more than once.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Teaching Stories to Ponder On
By Cheryl A. Stephison
I like this book because it presents the teaching in a way that causes you to think about it indirectly. Sufis are famous for being obscure, and no one is more obscure than Idries Shah. But this book is just tantalizing enough to give the reader a 'hook' to grasp--that there might be another meaning. I would recommend it to Sufi seekers everywhere.

32 of 32 people found the following review helpful. Dare to question everything
By Pablo R. Vitaver
Stories that will shake your assumptions and strict belief in the established, conventional, trusted and safe relationship between cause and effect. These stories, if nothing else, open your mind to a different way of thinking. By doing that, it awakens parts of your brain that normally stay dormant. A fresh look at everyday occurrences, unquestioned practices and established thought-processes. It has an invigorating value. You don't have to 'believe' anything the author says: he is not selling anything, not even ideas. Just read and observe what happens to yourself, since these stories are about you.

Dervish tales are more than fable, legend, or folklore. For centuries dervish masters have instructed their disciples by means of these teaching stories, which are said to increase perception and knowledge and provide a better understanding of man and the world. In wit, construction, and piquancy, they compare with the finest tales of any culture. Idries Shah spent many years traveling through three continents to collect and compare oral versions of these remarkable stories. This anthology, presented in the dervish manner, contains stories drawn from the repertoires of dervish masters over a period of more than a thousand years.

"... a collection of diamonds ... incredibly well-crafted, multifaceted ... likely to endure in the manner of the Koran and the Bible." -- Professor Robert E. Ornstein, Ph.D., Psychology Today, July 1973
"... challenges our intellectual assumptions at almost every point." -- The Observer
"... equal, and sometimes surpass, in relevance, piquancy and humour, the best of the spiritual and ethical teachers of the West ..." -- Kirkus, November 5, 1969
"... some really cracking tales ... full of wit, sophistication, irony and commonsense ... completely absorbing." -- Northern Despatch, October 20, 1967
"... these teaching-tales could become a permanent part of the reader's experience ..." -- Geoffrey Grigson, Country Life, October 26, 1967
"An astonishingly generous and liberating book ... strikingly appropriate for our time and situation ... a jewel flung in the market-place." -- Sunday Times
"Beautifully translated . . . equips men and women to make good use of their lives." -- Professor James Kritzeck, The Nation
"For every decade we live, we will find another meaning in each story." -- Desmond Morris, BBC - The World of Books

About the Author
Idries Shah was an author and teacher in the Sufi tradition who wrote dozens of books on topics ranging from psychology to spirituality to travelogues to other anthropological studies. In his writings, Shah presented Sufism as a universal form of wisdom that predated Islam. Shah is known for The Sufis, The Commanding Self, The Subtleties of the Inimitable Mulla Nasrudin, The Exploits of the Incomparable Mulla Nasrudin, Thinkers of the East, and Learning How to Learn. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

THE IDIOT, THE WISE MAN AND THE JUG
An idiot may be the name given to the ordinary man, who consistently misinterprets what happens to him, what he does, or what is brought about by others. He does this so completely plausibly that - for himself and his peers - large areas of life and thought seem logical and true. An idiot of this kind was sent one day with a pitcher to a wise man, to collect some wine. On the way the idiot, through his own heedlessness, smashed the jar against a rock. When he arrived at the house of the wise man, he presented him with the handle of the pitcher, and said: "So-and-so sent you this pitcher, but a horrid stone stole it from me." Amused and wishing to test his coherence, the wise man asked: "Since the pitcher is

stolen, why do you offer me the handle?" "I am not such a fool as people say," the idiot told him, "and therefore I have brought the handle to prove my story."