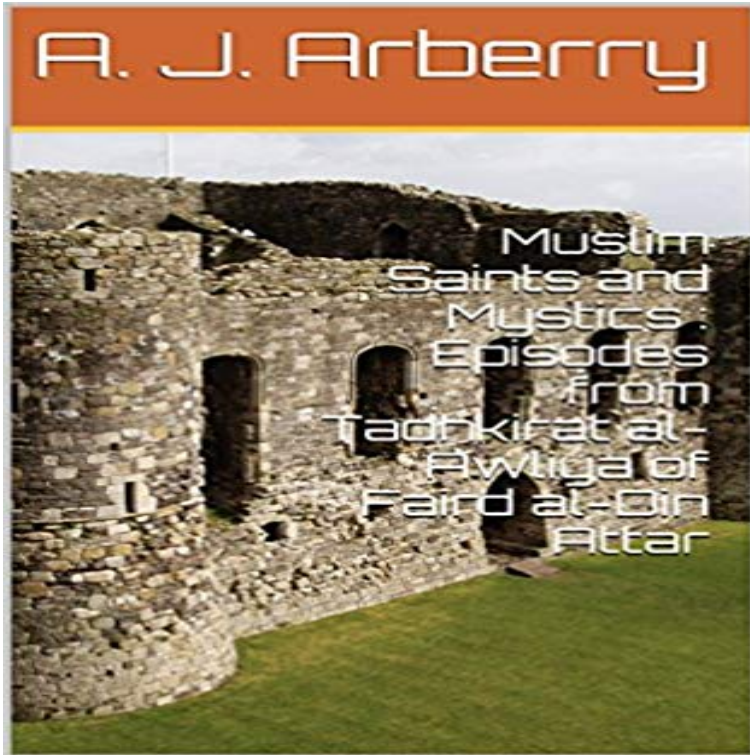


Muslim Saints and Mystics : Episodes from Tadhkirat al-Awliya of Faird al-Din Attar



Other important works of this prolific poet include the Elahi-Nama (Book of God) and the Mosibat-Nama (Book of Adversity), both of which are mystical allegories similar in structure and form to Mantiq al-Tayr the Divan (Collected Poems) and the famous prose work, Muslim Saints And Mystics (Tadhkerat al-Awliya) , an invaluable source of information on the early Sufis (abridged English translation, Muslim Saints and Mystics). From the point of view of ideas, literary themes, and style, Attars influence was strongly felt not only in Persian literature but also in other Islamic literatures. His great prose work comprises the monumental compendium in Persian of biographies of famous Sufis, called Tadhkerat al-Awliya, or Memoirs of the Saints. Attar composed at least 45,000 couplets and many brilliant prose works in six important works of poetry and one major prose work. However, the most important aspect of Attars thought lies in the fact that all of his works are devoted to Sufism (Tasawuf) and throughout all of his genuine collected works, there does not exist even a single verse without a mystical colouring: in fact, Attar dedicated his entire literary existence to Sufism. Farid al-din Attar is considered one of the pre-eminent mystical poets of the Persian literary tradition. The duration of his life is uncertain, though he can be placed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries C.E. born in Nishapur in what is Iran today. According to his own writings, Sufism was meant to be a spiritual search for a union with God. This search throughout history has taken many forms, but for Attar it was quite specific. Parallels may be seen with Dante. According to Attar, the spiritual pilgrimage of man brings him through seven successive valleys. First is The Valley of Quest, where ascetic means are adopted; then follows The Valley of Love, which may be compared to Dantes, earthly paradise; then follows The Valleys of

Knowledge, Detachment, Unity, and Amazement and finally, The Valley of Annihilation of the Self is reached. This is the supreme state of divine union with God. Sufism was meant to be an all-encompassing effort to live in a meaningful, religious frame of mind.

In this book 38 episodes from the above book are added which were translated by A.J. Arberry and in which there are some great achievements of Sufi masters which are not yet known to the public are published and which are mentioned in a very interesting style so for this reason the readers will find great interest and attention in this matter.

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