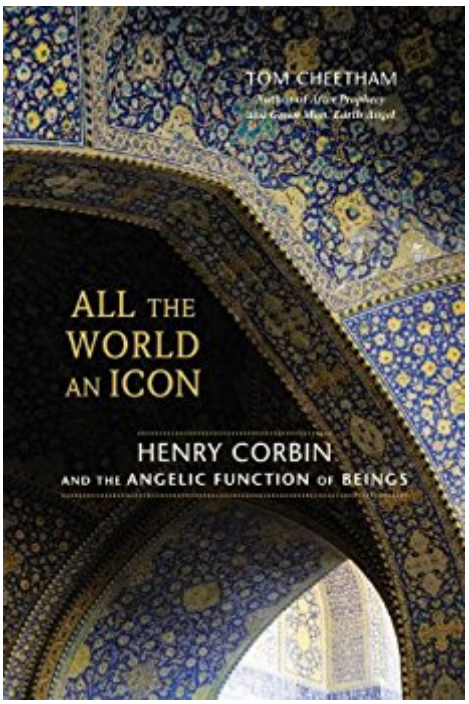
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All The World An Icon: Henry Corbin And The Angelic Function Of Beings



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Synopsis

All the World an Icon is the fourth book in an informal "quartet" of works by Tom Cheetham on the spirituality of Henry Corbin, a major twentieth-century scholar of Sufism and colleague of C. G. Jung, whose influence on contemporary religion and the humanities is beginning to become clear. Cheetham's books have helped spark a renewed interest in the work of this important, creative religious thinker.Henry Corbin (1903-1978) was professor of Islamic religion at the Sorbonne in Paris and director of the department of Iranic studies at the Institut Franco-Iranien in Teheran. His wide-ranging work includes the first translations of Heidegger into French, studies in Swedenborg and Boehme, writings on the Grail and angelology, and definitive translations of Persian Islamic and Sufi texts. He introduced such seminal terms as "the imaginal realm" and "theophany" into Western thought, and his use of the Shi'ite idea of ta'wil or "spiritual interpretation" influenced psychologist James Hillman and the literary critic Harold Bloom. His books were read by a broad range of poets including Charles Olson and Robert Duncan, and his impact on American poetry, says Cheetham, has yet to be fully appreciated. His published titles in English include Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn Arabi, Avicenna and the Visionary Recital, and The Man of Light in Iranian Sufism.As the religions of the Book place the divine Word at the center of creation, the importance of hermaneutics, the theory and practice of interpretation, cannot be overstated. In the theology and spirituality of Henry Corbin, the mystical heart of this tradition is to be found in the creative, active imagination; the alchemy of spiritual development is best understood as a story of the soul's search for the Lost Speech. Cheetham eloquently demonstrates Corbin's view that the living interpretation of texts, whether divine or humanÃ¢â ¬â •or, indeed, of the world itself seen as the Text of CreationÃ¢â ¬â •is the primary task of spiritual life.In his first three books on Corbin, Cheetham explores different aspects of Corbin's work, but has saved for this book his final analysis of what Corbin meant by the Arabic term ta'wilÃ¢â ¬â •perhaps the most important concept in his entire oeuvre. "Any consideration of how Corbin's ideas were adapted by others has to begin with a clear idea of what Corbin himself intended," writes Cheetham; "his own intellectual and spiritual cosmos is already highly complex and eclectic and a knowledge of his particular philosophical project is crucial for understanding the range and implications of his work." Cheetham lays out the implications of ta'wil as well as the use of language as integral part of any artistic or spiritual practice, with the view that the creative imagination is a fundamentally linguistic phenomenon for the Abrahamic religions, and, as Corbin tells us, prayer is the supreme form of creative imagination.

Book Information

File Size: 3407 KB

Print Length: 305 pages

Publisher: North Atlantic Books (July 3, 2012)

Publication Date: July 3, 2012

Sold by:Ã Â Penguin Random House Publisher Services

Language: English

ASIN: B005UFCPKS

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #429,899 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #46 inÃ Â Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Religion & Spirituality > Islam > Sufism #236 inÃ Â Books > Religion & Spirituality > Islam > Sufism #247 inÃ Â Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Religion & Spirituality > Other Religions, Practices & Sacred Texts > Mysticism

Customer Reviews

An extraordinary and unique book. Tom Cheetham’s four volume work on Henry Corbin provides perspectives and insights that effectively establish Cheetham as a philosopher in his own right. But not your typical philosopher. Cheetham’s works shed not only new and enlightening perspectives on Corbin, but they creatively explore themes in philosophy, depth psychology, theosophy, and the ontology of art in extraordinary unique ways. A scholarly work (the four volumes) that should launch Cheetham as an original think run his own right. Must reads.

We read this in a Spirituality Book Group. It is hard to read. Terms are used that are not defined. Unless you’re an academic in the field, you’re left up the creek. Some mystifying things are explained in future chapters--too late to matter. There are good ideas; we enjoyed learning about Henry Corbin. It could have been written more clearly.

What an amazing affirmation to the singular importance of the imagination looking for God in all creation! The hermeneutics of love reaching into and beyond what is seen and experienced.

Tom Cheetham has interpreted a complex man and his theology for us all. He introduces us to the divine Person in us all through Henry Corbin's brilliant message.

Brilliant book making Henri Corbin more accessible for me.

This is suppose to be Tom Cheetham's last book in his Henri Corbin series (a final coda to the trilogy?) but I have a feeling there may be more coming. (At least, I hope so.) The book is a brilliant distillation of Tom's understanding of Corbin's work and will be of particular interest to those interested in exploring the relationship between Jung, Corbin and James Hillman and the formation and founding of the lineage of Archetypal Psychology.

Mr Cheetham seems out-of-his-depth in his interpretations of Corbin's writings. Having studied more scholarly, and enlightened, translations of other works by Henry Corbin (by other translators), I was very disappointed by this book..

i received my book today and eveything is fine.

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