

The Parliament of the Birds

The Urth list — 2 messages, 1 voices, 04 May 2000

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/2234>

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Urash, Tom — 04 May 2000, 12:45

The Parliament of the Birds is purportedly of Sufi origin (Persia being for many centuries the most Sufic of all the Islamic world), and the influence of the Sufis, operating under the veil of Islam, was quite profound in Europe despite its rather esoteric workings. Sufism came naturally into Spain with the occupation by and trade with the North African Arabs and again during the Crusades.

Idres Shah's "The Sufis" is a remarkable book and goes into quite a bit of detail concerning Sufi influences on quite a number of Europeans of historical times, several of whom may surprise you. Many of the so called "teaching stories" used by the Sufi masters have found their way into our culture though not always readily recognizable and almost never credited.

I suspect Gene Wolfe, though certainly not to the degree of Doris Lessing, has been influenced by the Sufis and the multi-leveled "meanings" so prevalent in their teaching stories... tom

-----Original Message-----

From: Alice Turner [SMTP:akt at attglobal.net]

Sent: Wednesday, May 03, 2000 10:08 PM

To: urth at lists.best.com

Subject: (urth) Re: Digest urth.v028.n198

From the Kind and Helpful Ratso (what a paradox!!)

"I came upon a Persian parable called _The Parliament of the Birds_, which supplied me with a plot remarkably -- uncannily -- suited to what I had already thought up.

For heavens's sake! Chaucer wrote "The Parliament of Foules" (Fowls) which I read in somewhat cribbed Middle English back when I was an English major in college, but I don't remember (a) it (though if I had the energy I could leap from my seat and consult my old textbook); or (b) that there was a Persian original. Where would Chaucer have got it from? But I'm sure he did. Crowley is quite scrupulous with period details in -The Deep- (as I prove in my essay on the same that so few of you [humiliatingly for me] wish to read).

Urash, Tom — 05 May 2000, 07:46 · follows Urash, Tom

Pardon me if you've received this already...

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