



# Historical Dictionary of Sufism (Historical Dictionaries of Religions, Philosophies, and Movements Series)

*John Renard*

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The most broadly accepted explanation of Sufism is the etymological derivation of the term from the Arabic for “wool,” *ʿanf*, associating practitioners with a preference for poor, rough clothing. This explanation clearly identifies Sufism with ascetical practice and the importance of manifesting spiritual poverty through material poverty. In fact, some of the earliest “Western” descriptions of individuals now widely associated with the larger phenomenon of Sufism identified them with the Arabic term *faqīr*, mendicant, or its most common Persian equivalent, *darwīsh*. Sufism, as presented here embraces a host of features including the ritual, institutional, psychological, hermeneutical, artistic, literary, ethical, and epistemological.

This second edition of *Historical Dictionary of Sufism* contains a chronology, an introduction, a glossary, and an extensive bibliography. The dictionary section has over 1,000 cross-referenced entries on important personalities, major historical figures and movements, practices, economy, foreign relations, religion, and culture. This book is an excellent access point for students, researchers, and anyone wanting to know more about Sufism.

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