



## The Magic Doe: Qutban Suhravardi's Mirigavati

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*Mirigavati* or *The Magic Doe* is the work of Shaikh Qutban Suhrawardi, an Indian Sufi master who was also an expert poet and storyteller attached to the glittering court-in-exile of Sultan Husain Shah Sharqi of Jaunpur. Composed in 1503 as an introduction to mystical practice for disciples, this powerful Hindavi or early Hindi Sufi romance is a richly layered and sophisticated text, simultaneously a spiritual enigma and an exciting love story full of adventures. The *Mirigavati* is both an excellent introduction to Sufism and one of the true literary classics of pre-modern India, a story that draws freely on the large pool of Indian, Islamic, and European narrative motifs in its distinctive telling of a mystical quest and its resolution. Adventures from the *Odyssey* and the voyages of *Sindbad the Sailor*--sea voyages, encounters with monstrous serpents, damsels in distress, flying demons and cannibals in caves, among others--surface in Suhrawardi's rollicking tale, marking it as first-rate entertainment for its time and, in private sessions in Sufi shrines, a narrative that shaped the interior journey for novices. Before his untimely death in 2009, Aditya Behl had finished this complete blank verse translation of the critical edition of the *Mirigavati*, an epic romance that is also the symbolic key to a secret Sufi mystical tradition and a gem of Indian and world literature.

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