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Messianic Hopes and Mystical Visions: The Nurbakhshiya Between Medieval and Modern Islam (Studies in Comparative Religion (Hardcover))

Associate Professor Shahzad Bashir

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Messianic Hopes and Mystical Visions tells the story of the Nurbakhshiya, an Islamic messianic movement that originated in fifteenth-century central Asia and Iran and survives to the present in Pakistan and India. In the first full-length study of the sect, Shahzad Bashir illumines the significance of messianism as an Islamic religious paradigm and illustrates its centrality to any discussion of Islamic sectarianism. By tracing Nurbakhshi activity in the Middle East and central and southern Asia through more than five centuries, Bashir brings to view the continuities and disruptions within Islamic civilization across regions and over time. Bashir effectively captures the way Nurbakhshis have understood and debated the meaning of their tradition in various geographical and temporal contexts. Bashir provides a detailed biography of the movement's founder, Muhammad Nurbakhsh (d. 1464). Born to a Twelver Shi'i family, Nurbakhsh declared himself the mahdi, or the Muslim messiah, as an adept of the Kubravi Sufi order under the influence of the teachings of the great Sufi master Ibn al-'Arabi (d. 1240). Nurbakhsh's religious worldview, which Bashir treats in depth in this volume, offers a

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