



Logos and Revelation: Ibn 'Arabi, Meister Eckhart, and Mystical Hermeneutics

Robert Dobie

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What is "mysticism" and, most importantly, how do the great mystical writers understand it? *Logos and Revelation* seeks to answer this question by looking closely at the writings of two of the most prominent medieval mystical writers: the Muslim, Ibn 'Arabi (1165-1240) and the Christian Meister Eckhart (1260-1328).

Through his careful examination of the writings of these men, Robert J. Dobie discovers that mystical reflection and experience are intrinsically and essentially tied to the "mystical" or "hidden sense" of the sacred text. Mystical reflection and experience are, therefore, at their roots interpretive or hermeneutical: the attempt by the mystical exegete to uncover through "imaginative reading" or philosophical analysis the inner meaning of revelation. What emerges is a theology of the Word (logos, verbum, ratio, kalima) in which it is the task of the mystical exegete to appropriate inwardly the divine Word that speaks in and through both the sacred text and all creation. What the mystical writer discovers is an increasingly fitting harmony between the text of revelation, properly interpreted and understood, and the inner dynamic of the soul's reaching out beyond itself toward the transcendent.

In contrast to modern notions of the phenomenon, Dobie argues that mystical reading is not about cultivating extraordinary personal experiences. Nor does it take readers doctrinally outside of, or beyond, religious traditions. Rather, mystical reading and listening should take us deeper into the sacred text and sacred tradition.

Most strikingly, strong analogies emerge between how Christians and Muslims appropriate inwardly this divine Word, which forms a real and solid basis for interfaith dialogue founded on a mutual listening to the divine logos.

Robert J. Dobie is associate professor of philosophy at LaSalle University. His specialized areas of interest are medieval Christian, Jewish, and Islamic philosophy; comparative philosophy; and metaphysics.

Praise for the Book:

"There is simply no book-length comparative work on these two axial figures, nor one which compares with this book for its thorough grasp of each figure. Dobie has mastered the texts of each, doing so with admirable clarity."?David Burrell, C.S.C., Hesburgh Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and Theology, University of Notre Dame

"*Logos and Revelation* is a rich, exhilarating book on two notoriously difficult and elusive thinkers. It is also a daring venture into the treacherous field of comparative mysticism. It succeeds on all counts. It is a major contribution."?Donald F. Duclow, professor of philosophy, Gwynedd-Mercy College

"No book-length comparative work on these two axial figures matches this one for thorough grasp of each

figure and for clarity of presentation. Dobie has mastered the texts of each, as well as the relevant secondary literature, with a teacher's touch for expressing recondite matters with admirable clarity. From a scholarly viewpoint, all is in order, yet presented in a reader-friendly manner that will offer a model for the work of others. . . . Dobie has a special way, however, of combing interpretive skills with stunning theological and philosophical sophistication, all in a remarkably modest manner which accounts for his clarity of expression." ?David Burrell, C.S.C., *Thomist*

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