



Practical Mysticism in Islam and Christianity: A Comparative Study of Jalal al-Din Rumi and Meister Eckhart (Routledge Sufi Series)

By Saeed Zarrabi-Zadeh

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Practical Mysticism in Islam and Christianity offers a comparative study of the works of the Sufi-poet Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207-1273) and the practical teachings of the German Dominican, Meister Eckhart (c1260-1327/8).

Rumi has remained an influential figure in Islamic mystical discourse since the thirteenth century, while also extending his impact to the Western spiritual arena. However, his ideas have frequently been interpreted within the framework of other mystical, philosophical, or religious systems. Through its novel approach, this book aims to reformulate Rumi's practical mysticism by employing four methodological principles: a) mysticism is a coherent structure with mutual interconnection between its parts; b) the imposition of alien structures to interpret any particular mysticism damages its inward coherency; c) practical mysticism consists of two main parts, namely practices and stages; and d) the proper use of comparative methodology enables a deeper understanding of each juxtaposed system. Eckhart's speculative mysticism, which differs from and enjoys similarities with the love-based mysticism of Rumi, provides a "mirror" that highlights the special features of Rumi's practical mysticism. Such comparison also allows a deeper comprehension of Eckhart's practical thought.

Offering a critical examination of practical mysticism, this book is a valuable resource for students and scholars of Islamic studies, comparative mysticism, and the intellectual history of Islam.

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Review

"A comparative study of Rumi and Eckhart requires overcoming a number of difficulties, ranging from linguistic issues... to different intellectual systems. The author's mastery of these challenges is impressive.... I recommend this book to all readers with an interest in a meticulous comparative approach to questions of mysticism."

Dietmar Mieth, Vice President of Meister-Eckhart-Gesellschaft

"The comparison of Eckhart's and Rumi's mystical systems... is a unique and refreshing endeavor... Zarrabi-Zadeh has been able to produce a work that conveys the critical nuances of different practices of mysticism ... [and] has helped the conversation move a welcome step forward."

Zahra Moeini Meybodi, University of Chicago, Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society

About the Author

Saeed Zarrabi-Zadeh is assistant professor of Islamic Studies at the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Erfurt, Germany. His research interests cover Islamic and comparative mysticism, Sufism in the modern Western context, mystical ethics, and Persian literature

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