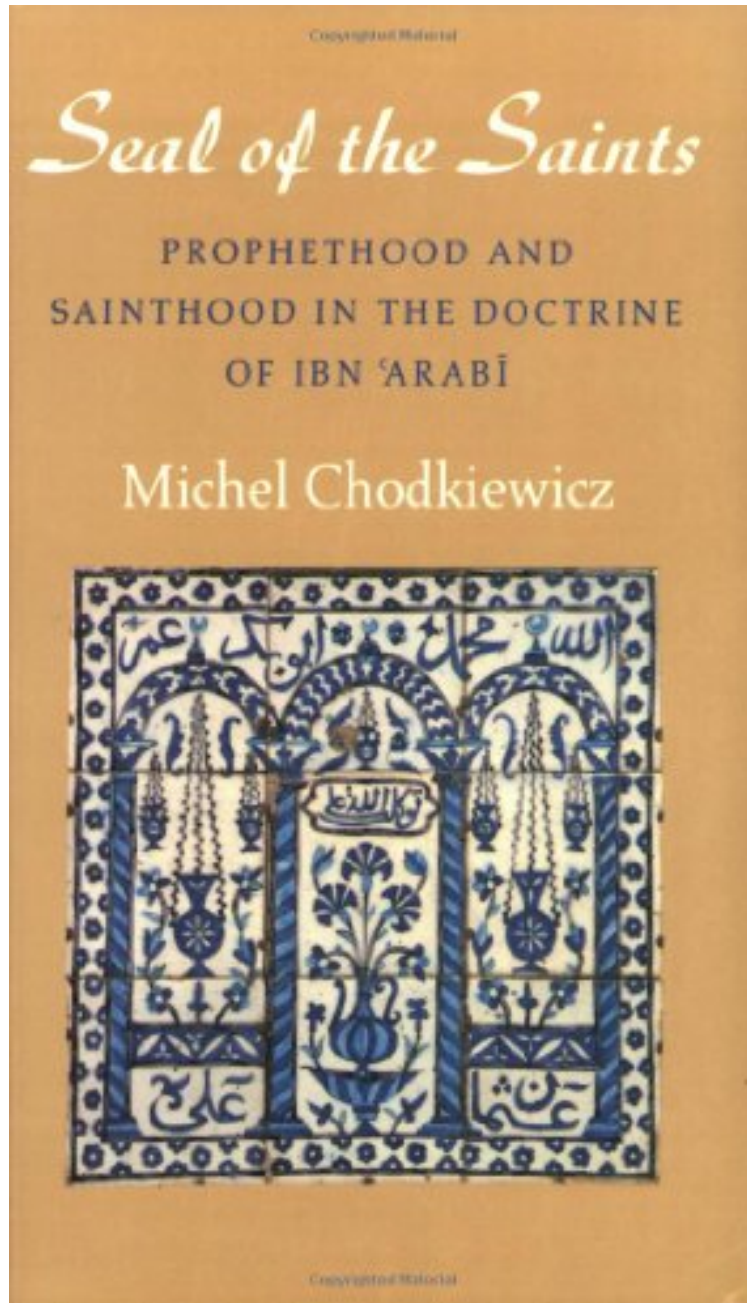


[Ebook free] The Seal of the Saints: Prophethood and Sainthood in the Doctrine of Ibn Arabi (Golden Palm S)

The Seal of the Saints: Prophethood and Sainthood in the Doctrine of Ibn Arabi (Golden Palm S)

Michel Chodkiewicz

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Michel Chodkiewicz : The Seal of the Saints: Prophethood and Sainthood in the Doctrine of Ibn Arabi (Golden Palm S) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *The Seal of the Saints: Prophethood and Sainthood in the Doctrine of Ibn Arabi (Golden Palm S)*:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An introduction to Ibn Arabi's thought. By Gogol Ibn Arabi to anyone who does not know is one of the most controversial figures in Islamic history. It may be fair to say Hallaj is perhaps the most controversial Sufi (due to him saying "Ana al-Haqq" or "I am the truth") but Ibn Arabi is by far more reaching due to his wide influence on Sufism and Islam both during and after his death. The Mamluks were supporters of Ibn Arabi, it is said that after Sultan Selim the Ottoman conquered Syria he had an elaborate mausoleum built over the resting place of Ibn Arabi. He was read by Abdul Qadir Jaziri (a man who is a hero to one and all in Algeria regardless of religious adherence or lack of it) whose book *Mawaqif* is based upon the teachings of Ibn Arabi, Naqshbandis, Rifa'i's, Khalwatis and Qadiris all read the books of Ibn Arabi throughout the Ottoman empire and it was only in correspondence to the rise of Wahhabi thought that the teachings of Ibn Arabi declined. Ibn Arabi was popular amongst all both Sunni and Shia and perhaps it is the universalism of Sufism that made it such a threat to the extreme Sunni and Shia alike. In the past 40 years the works of Ibn Arabi have become of interest to Western academics especially those who are keen to gain a greater understanding of the cultural life of the Middle East up until World War I. Chodkiewicz, is one of those scholars who have made a sterling effort to provide us the Western reader with that greater understanding. This book deals with issues of prophethood in Islam as Ibn Arabi interpreted it. Ibn Arabi took what some may see as a unique outlook of the world but in reality saw it as the true essence of Islam. That Islam was the descendant of all religions, a sort of ocean of which all streams and rivers lead. For Ibn Arabi diversity was not a challenge or something to fear but rather something to learn from and understand. It is no wonder then that Ibn Arabi has come to such attention in the West. Chodkiewicz provides us with an introduction to Ibn Arabi, the numerous books that have been published on him over the years in the West and how our ideas of him have changed over time. The author then goes on to explain the complex concepts that Ibn Arabi introduced to the world in regards to theology. Issues of prophethood are discussed, though it must be added within the understanding of Islam. Issues of sainthood, its interpretation in Islam, Ibn Arabi's interpretation and its development. The author quotes from other Sufis such as Balqi and Rumi (who was greatly influenced by Ibn Arabi) and discusses the levels of sainthood. The author attempts to provide the reader with some comparisons and examples that can be found in for example Catholicism but to say this book is not one that can be just picked up and read on a Sunday afternoon would be an understatement. A worthwhile read but I would strongly recommend to anyone if they wished to begin reading Ibn Arabi; start with the book "Sufis of Andalusia" move on to "Quest for the red sulphur" "Wisdom of the Prophets" before you begin on this book as you may find yourself greatly confused.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Why? By ZMy dear readers, friends, and brothers and sisters, why are we such hard-liners of our own? Let there be a thousand, or even a million interpretations and theological discussions on Ibn Arabi, when in today's world practically everyone is writing and publishing something, and if not that, everyone has their own columns, blogs, websites, and on and on. Perhaps, we should pay closer attention to our own responsibilities as readers, and stop pointing the finger at others. Why not consider the implications of so much negative criticism of our own? Please, be gentle, be kind, be good, and follow a few of the good examples of the man and woman of God, including the Prophets, be they any. Ibn Arabi was a great man, and no matter how many people write about him, in however many different languages and tongues, with however many interpretations, it is still not enough. How could he have walked the lands of the greatest, be they Muslims, Christians, or whatever, and how could he have been advisor to the greatest, and how could he have displayed such measures of poverty, patience, charity, and everything that every Muslim longs for, had he not been a great? I take a look at myself and I look at him. I am ashamed of myself before such a man. He is a true mirror, a great mirror for us to look at ourselves in, and indeed Shekhol Akbar -The Great Master. If I make it three steps in his footsteps, in the very beginning of his path, Allah will be eternally pleased. Also consider, the author is not Ibn Arabi, he is only one of many serious readers and scholars. With deep respect to all who practice their faith and religion with a clear conscience.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Superb By C. King Khidr This is an excellent monograph on Ibn Arabi's doctrine of sainthood. Chodkiewicz lucidly presents the stages comprising the Sufi path culminating in the Beatific Vision and the subsequent return via the double-ladder to the world of the senses: "Earthly as well as heavenly," writes Chodkiewicz, "the saint is he who brings together the high and the low...like the Muhammadan Reality...he forms the 'isthmus' of the two seas". Apart from enumerating the stages-on-the-way, Chodkiewicz explains the important role sainthood plays in Sufi metaphysics, paying particular attention to the hierarchy of saints which reaches its apex in the Gnostic invested with the station of the "pole" (qutb). The presence of such a belief in Ibn Arabi led some to argue that the Shaikh simply reconstructed the Shiite doctrine of the Imams mutating it into a Sufi-Sunni doctrine of sainthood. The fallacy of such a contention is like arguing that the Muslims usurped Divine Unity from the Jews, or the Jews from the ancient Egyptians, because a universal reality -- precisely because of its universality -- is independently accessible. Although hasty historicist speculations are expected from

those who deny the existence of a supraphenomenal realm, the alam al-ghaib (the world of the unseen), it is a bit strange when it comes from purported believers in a spiritual domain, irregardless of their religious persuasion. To say that Ibn Arabi -- and by extension the sufis -- copied from the shiites is to deny the possibility that they both "drank from the same waters" -- Muhammadan waters that existed prior to both the sufis and the shi'ites, attested to by the Prophet's words: "I was a Prophet when Adam was between spirit and flesh". Chodkiewicz has comprehensively covered a large terrain comprising the world of the batin or unseen as seen through the eyes of one of Islam's greatest mystical philosophers.

Ibn Arabi born in 1165 in Andalusia and died in 1240 in Damascus was recognised in his lifetime as al-Shaykh al-Akbar, the supreme spiritual Master. Over a period of eight centuries he has exerted a profound influence on Islamic mysticism. In recent years a number of important studies have helped acquaint the Western reader with Ibn Arabi's metaphysics and this process is now greatly enhanced by the present volume in which Michael Chodkiewicz explores for the first time, the Master's 'hagiology' or teaching on sainthood. Founded on a careful analysis of the relevant texts, Chodkiewicz's work examines this essential aspect of Ibn Arabi's doctrine of sainthood, defining the nature and function of sainthood, while also specifying the criteria for a typology of saints based on the notion of prophetic inheritance.

'This is by far the best available explanation of the central importance of sanctity for understanding both the practical and the theoretical teachings of Sufism.' William Chittick; 'An extraordinarily good book about an extremely difficult thinker...Chodkiewicz not only knows the texts remarkably well, but also avoids and rejects certain errors of perspective common among other scholars.' TLS. About the Author Michel Chodkiewicz is Director of Studies at l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris.