



ISLAMIC SPIRITUALITY (WS-639)

Yahya M. Michot

This course explores the nature and diversity of Sufism by looking at the origins and development of Islamic spiritual thought and practices in history. The course will remain anchored by focusing on important personalities in the mystical traditions of Islam through their literature and poetry, devotional path and/or music.

Class will meet: Monday June 8th to Friday June 12th, 9-12 am & 1-4 pm.

Course Objectives

- 1) Students should be able to find their way around in the major reference works on Sufism.
- 2) They are expected to gain an acquaintance with the spirituality of the most important Sufi masters of classical Islam.
- 3) They should also be able to have an informed opinion on modern Sufi developments.
- 4) They should be able to benefit from the methodological approach adopted in these classes and apply them for their own studies and/or research projects.

Course Requirements

- 1) It is strongly recommended that the student arrive at the first class already having a general knowledge about the religion of Islam, as well as about the history and geography of Muslim peoples. They should also be able to find their way around in the major reference tools for Islamic Studies (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*, *Index Islamicus*...).
- 2) Active class participation (**THE ASSIGNED READINGS ARE ESSENTIAL**) & presentations, regular attendance. If you are unable to attend class, please contact the Professor.

The final grade will be based upon the following:

- 1) Active class participation (50%).
- 2) The oral presentation required in Class VIII (Th. June 11, afternoon, 50%).

Class Schedule

I. MON., JUNE 8, MORNING. *INTRODUCTION: "SUFISM"? "MYSTICISM"? "SPIRITUALITY"?*

Topics: *The Conference of the Birds*. Introduction to the course and its requirements.

General references:

KNYSH, Alexander, *Islamic Mysticism. A Short History* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), xii, 358 p., 90-04-10717-7.

SCHIMMEL, Annemarie, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, [1975]), xxi, 506 p.

RENARD, John, *Islamic Images of Piety, Commitment, and Servanthood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), xx, 346 p., 978-0-52025198-4.

Assignments:

SCHIMMEL, Annemarie, *Mystical dimensions of Islam* — Chapter I, p. 3-22: *What is Sufism?* (BP189.2 .S34 1975)

Copy from the press, magazines, or internet, some article or video exploring the nature of Islamic spirituality, for presentation and discussion in class.

II. MON., JUNE 8, AFTERNOON. *CONTROVERSIAL ORIGINS*

Topics: Non Islamic origins? No *rahbâniyya*. 3 main periods. First developments.

General reference:

KARAMUSTAFA, Ahmet T., *Sufism. The Formative Period* (Berkeley - Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007), xiii, 202 p., 978-0-520-25269-1.

ERNST, Carl W., *The Shambhala Guide to Sufism* (Boston & London: Shambhala, 1997), xxi, 264 p., 1-57062-180-2. Chapter 2: *The Sacred Sources of Sufism*, p. 32-57.

LOSENSKY, Paul, *Farîd ad-Dîn 'Attâr's Memorial of God's friends : lives and sayings of Sufis*. Translated and introduced. Preface by Th. Emil HOMERIN (New York: Paulist Press, 2009).

Reading assignments:

HOMERIN, Th. E., *Ibn Taimîya's Al-Şûfiyyah wa-al-Fuqarâ'*, in *Arabica*, XXXII (Leiden: 1985), p. 219-244. (Reserve)

BALDICK, Julian, *Mystical Islam. An Introduction to Sufism* (London - New York: Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2000 - 2d éd.), 208 p., 1-86064-631-x. — Chapter I: *Sufism's beginnings*, p. 13-33. (BP188.5 .B35 1989)

III. TUE., JUNE 9, MORNING. *AL-HALLÂJ AND BEYOND: CRISIS AND NORMALISATION*

Topics: The early masters. Al-Ḥallâj. The classical treatises. Stations & states.

General references:

SELLS, Michael A., *Early Islamic Mysticism. Sufi, Qur'an, Mi'râj, Poetic and Theological Writings*. Translated, edited and with an Introduction. Preface by Carl W. ERNST (New York - Mahwah: Paulist Press, "The Classics of Western Spirituality", 1996), xi, 398 p., 0-8091-3619-8.

MASSIGNON, Louis, *The Passion of al-Hallâj, Mystic and Martyr of Islâm*. Translated and edited by Herbert MASON. Abridged edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), xxxi, 292 p., 0-691-01919-3.

KALÂBÂDHÎ, Muḥammad ibn Ishâq (AL-, d. 380/990?), *The Doctrine of the Sufis (Kitâb al-Ta'arruf li-madhhab ahl al-taşawwuf)*. Translated from the Arabic by A. J. ARBERRY (Cambridge: CUP, 1977), xviii, 173 p.

QUSHAYRÎ (AL-, d. 1072), *Principles of Sufism (al-Risâlat al-Qushayriyya fî 'ilm al-taşawwuf)*. Transl. from the Arabic by B.R. VON SCHLEGEL, with an introd. by Ḥâmid ALGAR (Berkeley, Calif.: Mizan Press, [1992]), xix, 366 p., 0-933782-20-9.

Reading assignments:

MICHOT, Yahya, *Ibn Taymiyya's Commentary on the Creed of al-Ḥallâj*, in A. SHIHADÉH (ed.), *Sufism and Theology* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007). — P. 123-136. (BP189.3 .S84 2007)

LEVY, Reuben, *A Mirror for Princes. The Qâbûs Nâma by Kai Kâ'ûs Ibn Iskandar, Prince of Gurgân*. Translated from the Persian (London: The Cresset Press, 1951). — Chapter XLIV: *Knight-errantry, the Sufi Path and the Codes of the Craftsmen*, p. 239-262. (Reserve)

IV. TUE., JUNE 9, AFTERNOON. "GOD IS LOVE ('ISHQ), LOVING ('ÂSHIQ), LOVED (MA'SHÛQ)"

Topics: Avicenna's philosophical spirituality and its influence.

General references:

NASR, Seyyed Hossein (ed.), *Islamic Spirituality. II, Manifestations* (London: SCM Press, "World Spirituality, 20",

1991), 0-334-02433-1. — Chapter 22: *Theology, Philosophy, and Spirituality*, p. 395-446.

BELL, Joseph Norment, *Avicenna's Treatise on Love and the Nonphilosophical Muslim Tradition*, in *Der Islam*, 63/1 (Berlin - New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1986), p. 73-89.

Reading assignments:

FACKENHEIM, Emil L., *A Treatise on Love by Ibn Sînâ*, in *Mediaeval Studies* (1945), p. 208-228. Download from: www.muslimphilosophy.com/sina/works/avicenna-love.pdf. (Internet)

AL-GHAZÂLÎ, *The Alchemy of Happiness*. Translated by C. FIELD (1909). — Chapter: *The Love of God*. Download from: http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Alchemy_of_Happiness/The_Love_of_God. (Internet)

V. WED. JUNE 10, MORNING. *A UNIVERSE WITH SEVEN DIMENSIONS, I*

Topics: Gnosticism. Aestheticism. Orders (*turuq*).

General references:

HIRTENSTEIN, Stephen, *The Unlimited Mercifier. The spiritual life and thought of Ibn 'Arabî* (Oxford: Anqa Publ. - Ashland, Oregon: White Cloud Press, 1999), xi, 289 p., 0-9534513-2-1.

The website of the Ibn 'Arabi Society: <http://www.ibnarabisociety.org>.

LEWISOHN Leonard (ed.), *The Legacy of Mediæval Persian Sufism*. Introduction by NASR Seyyed Hossein (London - New York: Khaniqahi Nimatullahi Publications, 1992), xiv, 434 p., 0-933546-47-5.

Reading assignments:

CHITTICK, W. C., *Ibn 'Arabî's Own Summary of the Fusûs*, p. 1-11. PDF downloadable on internet from: <http://www.ibnarabisociety.org/works.html>. (Internet)

SPENCER TRIMINGHAM, J., *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973). — Chapter I: *The Formation of Schools of Mysticism*, p. 1-30. (BP189 .T735)

VI. WED. JUNE 10, AFTERNOON. *A UNIVERSE WITH SEVEN DIMENSIONS, II*

Topics: Muḥammadan piety. Strict obedience. *Qalandariyya*. *Ghâzîs*.

General references:

BELL, J. N., *Love Theory in Later Hanbalite Islam* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 'Studies in Islamic Philosophy and Science', 1979).

KARAMUSTAFA, A., *God's Unruly Friends : Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200-1550* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994).

NASR, Seyyed Hossein (ed.), *Islamic Spirituality. II, Manifestations* — Chapter 15: *Spiritual Chivalry*, p. 304-315.

Reading assignment:

JÎLÂNÎ (AL-), 'Abd al-Qâdir, *Revelations of the Unseen* (Futûh al-Ghayb). A Collection of Seventy-Eight Discourses, Translated from the Arabic by Muhtar HOLLAND (Fort Lauderdale: Al-Baz Publishing, 1999), 1-882216-01-6. — Chapters 60 to 78, p. 144-183. (Reserve)

OR

AL-JÂZÛLÎ, *Dalâ'il al-Khayrât*. Downloadable as *Delail-i Hayrat*, from <http://www.naksibendi.org/books.html>. See also: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dala%27il_al-Khairat. (Internet)

VII. THUR. JUNE 11, MORNING. *DANCING WITH MEVLÂNÂ*

Topics: Rûmî. The *Mathnavî*. The Mevlevis.

General references:

SCHIMMEL, Annemarie, *I am Wind, you are Fire: the Life and Work of Rûmî* (Boston, Mass.: Shambhala, 1992), [5], 214, [2] p.

LEWIS, Franklin D., *Rumi. Past and Present, East and West. The Life, Teaching and Poetry of Jalâl al-Din Rumi* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2000), xvii, 686 p., 1-85168-214-7.

CHITTICK, W. C., *The Sufi Doctrine of Rumi*. Foreword by Seyyed Hossein NASR (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2005), xiv, 103 p., 0-941532-88-7.

HALMAN Talat Sait, AND Metin, Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi and *The Whirling Dervishes, Sufi Philosophy - Whirling Rituals - Poems of Ecstasy - Miniature Paintings* (Istanbul: Dost Yayinlari, 1983), 110 p.

Reading Assignment:

CHITTICK, W. C., *Me & Rumi: The Autobiography of Shams-i Tabrizi*. Translated, Introduced, and Annotated (Louisville: Fons Vitae, 2004), xxv, 410 p., 1-887752-52+8. — P. 68-88: *Following Muhammad*. P. 211-230: *Our companionship*. (Reserve)

VIII. THUR. JUNE 11, AFTERNOON. YOUR SPIRITUAL GUIDE

Topics: Students speak of “their” great master.

References:

SMITH, Margaret, *Râbi‘a the Mystic and her Fellow-Saints in Islam*. Being the Life and Teachings of *Râbi‘a al-‘Adawiyya* al-Qaysiyya of Basra together with some Account of the Place of the Women Saints in Islam (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1984), xxxv, 219 p. (BP80.R3 S6 1984)

‘ABD AL-QÂDIR, ‘Alî Hasan, *The Life, Personality and Writings of al-Junayd*. A Study of a Third/Ninth Century Mystic with an Edition and Translation of his Writings (London: Luzac, 1976). (PJ709 .G62)

FARHADI, Ravan, *‘Abdullâh Ansârî of Herât (1006-1089 C.E.)*. An Early Sûfî Master. (Richmond: Curzon, “Curzon Sufi Series”, 1996), xiv, 158 p., 0-7007-0313-6. (BP80.A59 A59 1996)

CHODKIEWICZ, M., *An Ocean without Shore: Ibn ‘Arabî, the Book, and the Law*. Translated from the French by D. STREIGHT (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), xiii, 184 p., 0-7914-1625-9.

HOMERIN, Th. Emil, *From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint. Ibn al-Fârîd, His Verse, and his Shrine* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, “Studies in Comparative Religion”, 1994), xii, 162 p., 0-87249-980-4.

‘ATTÂR, Farîd al-Dîn, *The Conference of the Birds - Mantîq al-Tayr*. Translated with an introduction by Afkham DARBANDI and Dick DAVIS (Harmondsworth - New York: Penguin Books, 1984). (PK6451.F4 M2813 1984)

IBN AL-JAWZÎ, Abû l-Faraj, *The Devil's Deception*. Talbîs Iblîs, Edited Translation by Abu Ameenah Bilal PHILIPS (Birmingham: Al-Hidaayah Publishing and Distribution, 1417/1996), 72 p., 1-898649-20-0.

IBN ‘ARABÎ, *The Tarjumân al-Ashwâq*. A Collection of Mystical Odes, Edited from 3 manuscripts with a literal version of the text and an abridged translation of the author's commentary thereon by Reynold A. NICHOLSON. New preface by Martin LINGS (London: Theosophical Publishing House Ltd, 1978), 155 p., 0-72295-1345.

IBN QAYYIM AL-JAWZIYYA, *The Magnificent Journey*. Being a Translation of *ar-Risâlat ut-Tabûkiyyah (The Message from Tabûk)*. Translation and Comments by Muhammad AL-JIBALI (Arlington: Al-Qur‘ân was-Sunnah Society of North America, 1995), xvii, 80 p, 1-886451-00-1.

BIRGIVI, Mehmed b. Pîr ‘Alî, *The Path of Muhammad (al-Tariqâh al-Muhammadiyah)*, A Book on Islamic Morals and Ethics, & *The Last Will and Testament (Vasiyyetname)*. Interpreted by Shaykh Tosun BAYRAK al-Jerrahi al-Halveti. Foreword by Shaykh ABDUL MABUD. Introduction by Vincent J. CORNELL (Bloomington: World Wisdom, Inc., 2005), xv, 351 p., 0-941532-68-2.

Assignment: Choosing from among the above references, or from some other monograph or translation, present, and discuss with the class, the life and teachings of “your” Sufi master.

IX. FRI. JUNE 12, MORNING. GOD’S WAYS IN TODAY’S WORLD

Topics: Sufism & Salafism. Jihâd. Alternative Islams?

General references:

NASR, Seyyed Hossein (ed.), *Islamic Spirituality. II, Manifestations* — Chapter 15: *Spiritual Chivalry*, p. 304-315.

DE JONG, Frederick & RADTKE, Bernd (eds.), *Islamic Mysticism Contested: Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics* (Leiden: Brill, “Islamic History and Civilization. Studies and Texts, 29”, 1999), 90-04-11300-2.

SIRRIYEH, E., *Sufis and Anti-Sufis: The Defence, rethinking and Rejection of Sufism in the Modern World* (Richmond: Curzon, 1999), xiii, 188 p., 0-7007-1060-4.

KUGLE, Scott, *Sufis & Saints' Bodies: Mysticism, Corporeality & Sacred Power in Islam*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, "Islamic Civilization & Muslim Networks", 2007), xvi, 345 p., 978-0-8078-5789-2. — Conclusion, p. 265-294: *Corporeality and Sacred Power in Islam*.

Reading assignment:

BIRT, Yahya, *Sufis and Salafis of the West: Discord and the Hope of Unity*. Downloadable from: <http://www.yahyabirt.com/?p=92>. (Internet)

X. FRI. JUNE 12, AFTERNOON. *DEFINING SUFISM?*

Topics: *Sufi Soul*. The spectrum. Beyond Islam (Ex: John of the Cross).

General references:

ASIN PALACIOS, Miguel, *Saint John of the Cross and Islam*. Translated by Howard W. YODER and Elmer H. DOUGLAS (New York: Vantage Press, 1981), xii, 94 p., 533-04625-4.

Reading assignments:

ERNST, Carl W., *The Shambhala Guide to Sufism* (Boston & London: Shambhala, 1997), xxi, 264 p., 1-57062-180-2. — Chapter 1: *What is Sufism*, p. 1-31. (BP188.48 .E76 1997)

JOHN OF THE CROSS, *The Dark Night*. On internet: <http://www.karmel.at/ics/john/dn.html>. (Internet)

—, *The Spiritual Canticle*. On internet: http://www.karmel.at/ics/john/cn_3.html. (Internet)

