

RELI 427

Advanced Studies in Religious Texts

Part I

READING SUFI TEXTS



SCHOOL OF ART HISTORY, CLASSICS & RELIGIOUS STUDIES

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

2009, Trimester 1

RELI 427**Advanced Studies in Religious Texts****Part I****READING SUFI TEXTS**

Course co-ordinator:	Dr Art Buehler, <i>HU 116, tel: 463 7409</i> art.buehler@vuw.ac.nz
Where and when:	Seminars: Tuesday 2:00-3:50 in the Religious Studies Library (HU 320)
Course Dates:	Commencement, Part I: March 2nd 2009 Mid trimester break: April 13 th – 26 th 2009 End of teaching, Part I: June 5 th 2009 Submission of essay 1: 26 th June 2009 University Examination Period: June 8 th – July 1 st 2009 Mid year break: July 2 nd – 12 th 2009 Commencement, Part II: 13 July 2009 End of teaching, Part II: October 2 nd Submission of Essay 2: 9 th October 2009 Final submission date for course: 23 rd October 2009

Religious Studies is the Hunter building. The programme administrator, Alikali Kalliabetsos, is in Hunter 318 (463 5299). **Notices regarding the course or any information on changes will be posted on the department notice board outside her office.**

Office Hours: The main office is open Monday - Friday, 9.30am – 12 noon and 2:00 - 3.30pm. Dr Buehler usually has office hours on Monday 10-12 am; Friday 12-7 pm; and by appointment. Appointments are highly recommended since these office hours can be interrupted by meetings and other events.

Course outline

1 Sufism, or Islamic mysticism, is a major aspect of the Islamic religious tradition, serving as the principal mode of mediating the divine for at least a half of the world's 1.3 billion Muslims. The near monopoly that "fundamentalists" have claimed on Islamic discourse, naively accepted by most Euro-American journalists, coincides with attacks on Sufism as a "non-Islamic" trend in Islamic societies. Sufism, with its stress on interior experience, in fact constitutes a primary challenge to the dominance of ideological interpretations of Islam. This course introduces the Islamic humanities through reading a variety of sufi texts. A familiarity with Islam is helpful. The first classes will review the basics of Islam to contextualize Sufism in the larger Islamic tradition.

2 The course has four learning objectives:

- Have an exposure to the religious studies methodologies used to formulate questions about and analyse texts.
- Be familiar with the relationship between Islam and Sufism and the tensions between these differing approaches to religiosity.
- Have an appreciation for the multi-valent and multi-cultural aspects of sufi literature.
- Be able to understand the problematics involved in translation of texts.
- Have improved writing and analytical skills.
- Be able to discuss competently (both orally and in writing) various aspects of sufism which have been studied in some depth.

3 Required Readings Reading material will be supplied before the beginning of the seminar; there may be additional reading as the seminar progresses depending on the needs of the class.

4 This course is delivered through regular seminars.

Assessment Requirements. The course is internally assessed by means of the following assignments:

- One essay of 5000 words (**40%** of the entire year's grade) to be submitted by noon on Tuesday 2 June 2009.
- One class presentation @ **10%** worth, discussing your essay topic.

This makes this term's work **50%** of your year's work

The mandatory course requirements are the submission of one essay and giving one class presentation

5 Work-load (Recommendation of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences):
For 400-level 30 points two trimester course, 12 hours per week are recommended. An average student should spend 10 hours per week for preparation, reading and writing in addition to attendance at seminars.

400 – level 2 trimester 30 points 12 hours per week

6 Aegrotat regulations apply to internally assessed courses. Students who cannot submit or complete the course requirements due to illness or some other impairment should visit the Faculty's Student Administration Office, or go to Student Health or Student Counseling who also have the application form and information about aegrotats. To be eligible for an aegrotat the affected items of assessment must be required to be submitted not earlier than three weeks before the day on which lectures cease for the last trimester of the course. Please see Aegrotat policy at <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/fhss/student-administration/aegrotats.aspx>

7 General University Statutes and Policies

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

This website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates.

8 Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. "someone else's work" means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or staff
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the Internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organization or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

- 9 **Use of Turnitin:** Student work provided for assessment in this course *may be* checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <<http://www.turnitin.com>>. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting misreferencing, misquotation, and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. ***At the discretion of the School, handwritten work may be copy typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin.*** You are strongly advised to check with your tutor or the course coordinator if you are uncertain about how to use and cite material from other sources. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

- 10 Student Learning:** Support Services: A range of workshops, drop-ins and other assistance is provided by SLSS, covering such things as study techniques, essay writing, exam preparation and note taking skills. They are at Level 0 Kirk Wing, Hunter Courtyard.
- 11 Manaaki Pihipihinga Maori and Pacific Mentoring programme** (Faculties of Humanities and Social sciences and Commerce and Administration).
Academic Mentoring for Maori and Pacific students studying at all levels in the above schools. Weekly sessions for an hour with a mentor to go over assignments & any questions from tutorials or lectures. Registered students can use the facilities study rooms & computer suite, at any time, at Kelburn & Pipitea.
Mature student and Post grad network
- If you would like to register as a mentor or mentee please contact or pop in & see the coordinator, Melissa Dunlop, Programme Coordinator, 109 D, 463 6015,
Email: Maori-Pacific-Mentoring@vuw.ac.nz, 14 KP: back courtyard
- 12 Taping of lectures:** All students in the School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies are welcome to use audio-tapes to record lectures. If you want to do this, please see your lecturer, tutor or the relevant programme administrator and complete a disclaimer form which advises of copyright and other relevant issues.
- 13 Class representatives:** Class representatives are elected in the first week or two of term. They are supported by the VUW Students' Association, and have a variety of roles, including assistance with grievances and student feedback to staff and VUWSA. Contact details for your class rep will be listed on the Religious Studies notice board.
- 14 Supplementary Materials:** A website of materials related to RELI 427 is being maintained in Blackboard. **However, most of the materials handed out in class will not be on blackboard.** You can find it by visiting <http://blackboard@vuw.ac.nz>. Your user name is the one issued to you by Student Computing Services. Your password is your Student ID Number. If in doubt, please contact the Student Computing Services Help Desk, 463-6666 (extension 6666 from VUW phones) or by email scs-help@vuw.ac.nz
- 15 Evaluation:** This course will be assessed by **UTDC**

Essays

1 **Essays** must be placed in the locked essay box located near the programme administrator's window (HU 318) and students must date and sign the essay register when submitting an essay. **No responsibility will be taken for work pushed under doors, or for which there is no record.** Students should keep a copy of all their work until it is returned.

2 **TIMETABLE:**

17 March Essay topic determined – **Subject, thesis and minimum 12-source bibliography. 500 words + bibliography.**

17 April **2500 words, fairly polished.** Please email.

15 May **Full essay** – still time to be rewritten a couple of times.

Due date: The essay is to be submitted on noon on June 2 (5000 words)

3 **Penalties for late essays / assignments:**

It will be a self-inflicted penalty of getting behind when you cannot ever, ever afford to get behind as an honours student.

4 **On Wikipedia –**

Wikipedia's founder, Jimmy Wales, says he wants to get the message out to college students that they shouldn't use it for class projects or serious research.

Mr. Wales says that he gets about ten e-mail messages a week from students who complain that Wikipedia has gotten them into academic hot water. "They say, 'Please help me. I got an F on my paper because I cited Wikipedia'" and the information turned out to be wrong, he says. But he said he has no sympathy for their plight, noting that he thinks to himself: "For God sake, you're in college; don't cite the encyclopedia."

The sources cited in Wikipedia, however, can be of use – so you can use it as a bibliographic source to lead you to other sources, which you can then critically examine.

Selected Bibliography (you will find many more sources in the BP section for sufism)

Sufism and Anthropological Studies (see area bibliographies below and literature)

- Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani. *The secret of secrets*. Cambridge : The Islamic Texts Society, 1994.
- Addas, Claude. *Quest for the red sulphur : the life of Ibn `Arabi*. Cambridge : Islamic Texts Society, 1993.
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- `Attas, `Abd Allah ibn `Alawi. *The lives of man : a Sufi master explains the human states : before life, in the world, and after death*. Louisville, KY : Fons Vitae, 1998.
- Baldick, J. *Mystical Islam: An Introduction to Sufism*, 1989. Not recommended.
- Bayrak, Tosun. *The Name & the named : the divine attributes of God*. Louisville, KY : Fons Vitae, 2000.
- Bruijn, J. T. P. de. *Persian Sufi poetry : an introduction to the mystical use of classical Persian poems*. Richmond, Surrey : Curzon, 1997.
- Chodkiewicz, Michel. *Seal of the saints : prophethood and sainthood in the doctrine of Ibn `Arabi*. Cambridge : Islamic Texts Society, 1993.
- Corbin, Henry. *Alone with the alone : creative imagination in the Sufism of Ibn `Arabi*. Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 1998.
- Cutsinger, James S. *Paths to the heart : Sufism and the Christian east*. Louisville, Ky: Fons Vitae, 2003.
- Darqawi, Muhammad al-`Arbi ibn Ahmad. *Letters of a Sufi master*. Louisville, KY : Fons Vitae, 1998.
- Eaton, Gai. *Remembering God : reflections on Islam*. Cambridge : Islamic Texts Society, 2000.
- Friedl, Erika. *Women of Deh Koh*.
- Friedlander, Shems. *Rumi : the hidden treasure*. [Louisville, KY] : Fons Vitae, 1998.
- Ghazzali al-. *Deliverance from error : an annotated translation of al-Munqidh min al Dalal*. Louisville, KY : Fons Vitae, 1999.
- _____. *Al-Ghazzali on the manners relating to eating*. Cambridge : Islamic Texts Society, 2000.
- _____. *Invocations & supplications*. Cambridge : Islamic Texts Society, 1996.
- _____. *On disciplining the soul*. Cambridge, UK : Islamic Texts Society, 1995.
- _____. *The ninety-nine beautiful names of God*. Cambridge, UK : Islamic Texts Society, 1995.
- _____. *The remembrance of death and the afterlife*. U.K. : Islamic Texts Society, 1989.
- _____. *Faith in divine unity & trust in divine providence*. Louisville, Ky. : Fons Vitae, 2001.
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- Heer, Nicholas. *Three early Sufi texts*. Louisville, Ky. : Fons Vitae 2003.
- Hoffman, Valerie. *Sufism, Mystics and Saints in Modern Egypt*, 1995.
- Ibn al-`Arabi. *Divine governance of the human kingdom*. Louisville, KY : Fons Vitae, 1997.
- Ibn `Ajibah. *The autobiography of the Moroccan Sufi Ibn Ajiba*. Louisville, KY : Fons Vitae, 1999.
- Legall, Dina. *A culture of Sufism : Naqshbandis in the Ottoman world, 1450-1700*. Albany : State University of New York Press, 2004.
- Lings, Martin. *A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century*, 1973.
- _____. *What is sufism?* Cambridge : Islamic Texts Society, 1993.
- Massignon, Louis. *The passion of Al-Hallaj : mystic and martyr of Islam*. Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Merton, Thomas. *Merton & Sufism : the untold story : a complete compendium*. Louisville, KY : Fons Vitae, 1999.
- Nasr, Sayyed Hossein, (ed). *Islamic Spirituality*, volume I 1987, volume II 1991.
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- Nettler, Ronald L. *Sufi metaphysics and Qur'anic prophets : Ibn `Arabi's thought and method in the Fusus al-hikam*. Cambridge : Islamic Texts Society, 2003.
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- Sadr al-Din Shirazi, Muhammad ibn Ibrahim. *The elixir of the Gnostics*. Provo, Utah : Brigham Young University Press, 2003.
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- Sulami, Muhammad ibn al-Husayn. *Early Sufi women*. Louisville, KY : Fons Vitae, 1999.
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- von Grunebaum, Gustave. *Muhammadan Festivals*, 1951 and reprints.

Literature

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Studies dealing with sufi history and practice in special areas.

- Abu Mannah, Butrus. *Studies on Islam and the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century, 1826-1876*. Istanbul : Isis Press, 2001.
- Bos, Matthijs. *Mystic regimes : Sufism and the state in Iran, from the late Qajar era to the Islamic Republic*. Boston, MA : Brill, 2002.
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