**Sufi Teachings**  NEJS 194b  
**Fall 2014**  
**Monday, Wednesday 2–3:20**

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*There is in the human being a clump of flesh; when it is pure the whole body is pure; when it is corrupt the whole body is corrupt. Verily, it is the heart.*  
—The Prophet Muhammad

This course is an examination of the teachings and practices of the Islamic Sufi Tradition that will explore the origins of Sufism, its relation to other dimensions of Islam, its development in the Medieval period, and some of the debates regarding Sufism in the classical and modern periods.

Sufism is often referred to as Islamic mysticism. For most Sufis it is believed to be the inward dimension of Islam. While law and theology provide the sciences that pertain to conduct and belief, Sufism provides a ‘science’ of the heart that is believed to purify it from passion and avarice so that it can be focused upon God alone.

In addition to a brief historical outline, this course will examine the Sufi understanding of the human condition and the techniques the Sufis have developed for its ultimate purification. We will examine the manner in which Sufis draw upon the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. Our main focus will, however, be upon the actual teachings of Sufism. We will discuss these teachings in detail, not only as an academic investigation, but to see if they have anything to say to us about the nature of existence and our place within it.

**Evaluation:**
Evaluation will be based upon class participation (15%), two short writing assignments (25%: 12.5% each), one research paper (12–15 pages) (30%), and a take home final exam (30%). Students will be evaluated based upon their ability to grasp the central concepts of the Sufi tradition and their relation to other aspects of Islam.

**Course Procedure:** This course meets two times a week, on Monday and Wednesday.  
**Attendance is mandatory. Your grade will be automatically docked once you have missed three classes. You will automatically fail if you miss seven classes.**

Reading assignments are given for each week, and students are required to complete the reading assignment listed for each particular week before the time of class.
We will discuss issues related to the reading on the assumption that the reading has been completed prior to class, and I will expect all students to be prepared to contribute to discussions of the reading material.

**Lectures and Reading:** You are required to complete the reading and attend the lectures. The books are available at the bookstore. Other readings will be distributed in class and made available on Latte. The lectures will expand upon and complement the readings, they will not outline of paraphrase them. You are responsible for demonstrating familiarity with both.

Books Available in the Bookstore:
William Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Love*
Carl Ernst, *The Shambala Guide to Sufism*
Ahmet Karamustafa, *Sufism: The Early Period*

**Class Participation:** All students are expected to have the reading completed by the due date and be ready to respond from the text itself in class discussion. Regular participation (which presumes attendance) is essential. Participation means that the student shows clear evidence of having prepared the reading and an attempt to discuss broad ideas suggested by the text. Mere physical presence does not count. Mental presence is required.

**Academic Integrity:** You must complete all assignments alone. In your writing you must follow rules of attribution, meaning that you must cite all sources consulted in preparing your papers. As stated in the Student Handbook, “Every member of the University community is expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. A student shall not receive credit for work that is not the product of the student’s own effort.” Examples of penalties for a student found responsible for an infringement of academic honesty are no credit for the work in question, failure in the course, and the traditional range of conduct sanctions from disciplinary warning through permanent dismissal from the University.

**Students with documented disabilities:** Students with disabilities certified by the Coordinator of Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities in the Office of Undergraduate Academic Affairs and First Year Services will be given reasonable accommodations to complete required assignments. Disabilities that are not documented and approved by the Office of Academic Affairs will not be given accommodations. If you have a condition that may affect your performance, please see me ASAP so that we can make the proper arrangements.

**Policy on Incompletes and Late Papers:**
Late papers will be docked one third of a letter grade for every day that they are late. If you foresee a problem or if one arises, discuss it with me at the earliest possible moment.
Provisional Course Outline

September 3
— Introduction
— What is Mysticism?
— Outline of Sufism
   Ernst, Shambala Guide to Sufism, chapter 1.

September 8–10
— Sources of Sufism
— Quran, Hadīth, Miʿrāj
   Martin Lings, “The Book” & “The Messenger” from What is Sufism?
   Michael Sells, “The Miʿraj (Sacred Cosmology and Mystical Orientation), from Early Islamic Mysticism, 47–56.

September 15–17
— Continue with Source of Sufism
— The Quran in Sufism
— Sufi Quran Commentary, outline
   Ingrid Mattson, “Listening for God’”

September 22–24
Direct readings in Sufi Quran Commentaries
Readings: Readings from the commentary of Ruzbihan Baqli and Sahl al-Tustari Ahmed Ibn ‘Ajibah, Selections from The Immense Ocean.

*For additional information on Sufi exegesis of the Quran see http://www.uga.edu/islam/sufismtafsir.html
* For a Sufi interpretation of the Opening chapter of the Quran see www.arches.uga.edu/~godlas/ruzguide.html

September 29–October 1
— The Sufi Conception of the Divine
— The Cosmos as Divine Self-Disclosure
   Lings: A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century, 121–147.
   Chittick, Imaginal Worlds, 14–29.
October 6–8

First paper Due Monday at the beginning of class
— Continuation of Cosmos as Self-Disclosure

October 15
— The Universal Human Being
Chittick, Imaginal Worlds, 31–64.
Ernst, Chapter 3.

October 20–22
— Prophets, Prophecy, Sanctity and Saints
— The Sufi Science of the Soul
— Spiritual States and Stations
Readings: Ernst, Chapter 5.
Chittick, The Sufi Path of Love, Chittick, 119–147
Sarrāj, “The Seven Stations” from Kitāb al-Luma' (The Book of Flashes), excerpt from Michael Sells, Early Islamic Mysticism, 196–211.
Selections from al-Qushayrī, excerpt from Michael Sells, Early Islamic Mysticism.

October 27–29
— Sufi Practice
— Meditation, contemplation, and invocation
— The Role of the Spiritual Master
Readings: Ernst, Ch. 4
Lumbard, “The Function of Dhikrullāh in Sufi Psychology”

November 3–5
— Communal and Individual Practices
— Forms of Music and Dance
Readings: Ernst, Chapter 7
Chittick, “The Never Ending Dance” from Sufism: A Short Introduction

November 10–12
— The Sufi Path of Love
Readings: Chittick, “The Way of Love” from Sufism: A Short Introduction
Chittick, The Sufi Path of Love,
Ahmad al-Ghazālī, Selections from Sawānīh.

November 17–19
— Sufism in History
— The Rise of the Sufi Orders
— Sufism and Islamic Society
Readings: Ahmet T. Karamustafa, Sufism, The Formative Period, chs. 1–3
Sells, "Hallāj" 266–80 and 302–3; "Junayd" 251–65
Selections from Sufi Poetry
November 24
  Second short paper due
  Movie: *Rumi, The Wings of Love*

December 1–3
  — Sufism in the Modern World
  Readings: Ernst, ch. 8.
  Shah Kazemi, “The Reality of the One and Dialogue with the Other,” 75–139
  Nasr, “Modern Man Between the Rim and the Axis”

December 8
  — Research Papers due on last day of classes