

# تصوف

## Islamic Mysticism: Sufism Fall 2017

Course Code: ISLA 330  
Hours: MW 2:35pm-3:55pm  
Classroom: Birks Building Rm. 205

Instructor: Prof. Pasha M. Khan  
pasha.m.khan@mcgill.ca  
Office: Morrice Hall Rm. 312

Office Hours: MW 12:30pm-1:30pm by appointment  
(please [schedule an appointment online](#))

This class will introduce students to the theory, practice, and history of Sufism, often referred to as "mystical" Islam. We will consider the emergence and efflorescence of Sufi orders throughout the world, from the Middle East and Iran to South Asia, China, and South-East Asia, and from Africa to Europe and North America. Poetry by Jalaluddin Rumi, Yunus Emre, Bullhe Shah and Muhammad Iqbal will be read as well as experienced in the form of qawwali and other musical genres. The underpinnings of metaphysics and ontology will be represented by theoretical works on the unity of being and divine self-manifestations by the Andalusian thinker Muhyiuddin Ibn 'Arabi, known as the "Greatest Master" (Shaikh al-Akbar). We will look at distinctive ways of reading the Quran, at divine love, infidelity, and the social deviancy of dervish orders. The perceived danger of Sufi beliefs and practices and the consequences of such antipathies will be discussed and debated, from the martyrdom of Al-Hallaj for his scandalous announcement, "I am the Real," to the bombings of Sufi shrines by militant groups in the present.

### Required Texts:

Ernst, Carl W. *Sufism: An Introduction to the Mystical Tradition of Islam*. Boston: Shambhala, 1997.

Schimmel, Annemarie. *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011.

These texts are available at The Word Bookstore (469 Milton Street between Aylmer and Durocher). Please note that the page numbers of the Schimmel and Ernst readings are

provided on myCourses just to remind you where to look in your book; I have not made these two texts available online!

All other readings (listed in the class schedule) will be made available to you via myCourses. If you do NOT have access to the myCourses page for this class, please notify me A.S.A.P.! Note as well that the list of readings is tentative, and texts may be added or subtracted according to the needs of the course as it develops. Please pay attention to announcements in class and to class emails.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a disability, whether physical or mental (anxiety, depression, etc.) please do not hesitate to let me know in person or via email as soon as you can, and we will plan a course of action. I strongly recommend getting in touch with the Office of Students with Disabilities. Please note that mark-based accommodations can only be made if they are requested via email by you (or via the OSD). Do speak to me in person if you need to, but a follow-up via email will be necessary for accommodations to be made.

**On Technology in Class:** Laptops and tablets (iPads, etc.) are allowed in class, but solely for the purpose of referring to the readings for the day. The use of laptops and tablets should not interfere with your participation in the class discussion; this will obviously cause your participation mark to take a nosedive. Make eye contact and stay away from email, social media, and so on—stick to the readings. Students are discouraged from using mobile phones in class. Fixating on your phone, surreptitious texting and so on will result in a lowered participation mark.

**Grading Scheme:**

Participation

27%

Attendance and participation in class discussions makes up a significant portion of your grade. Please do the readings for each class carefully, come to class (on time), and engage in the discussion. For a better understanding of how participation is graded, see the Participation Rubric (next section). While you will be expected to demonstrate familiarity with the readings, there is no such thing as a "stupid question." Please make a habit of raising your hand.

Presence in class is very important. If you have a legitimate, documented reason for absence you may [request an authorized absence using the online form](#) (a doctor's note is usually required).

Marks will also be given for [completing the Student Questionnaire](#) at the beginning of the course, and for completing or opting out of the course evaluation. You may email me to inform me that you have completed the evaluation, or you are welcome to opt out by indicating this decision to me via email.

		Attendance:	5%
		Participation:	20%
		Student questionnaire:	1%
		Course evaluation:	1%
Discussion Forum	24%	Students should post their brief thoughts on the readings for each class on the myCourses forum. They should be posted by <b>11:59 PM the night before each class</b> . (However, late posts will be marked as well!) These will form some of the basis of the class discussion. Full marks would be given to an exceptionally well-articulated and insightful comment showing critical meditation on at least two of the days' readings (if there is more than one reading for the day).	
Book Review	14%	<b>Due October 20 11:59 PM.</b> Guidelines with a marking rubric and instructions on how to submit the assignment are available on myCourses.	
Preliminary Research Question	5%	<b>By November 3 11:59 PM</b> students must email me a preliminary question that they hope to answer in their research paper. Guidelines with instructions on how to submit the research question are available on myCourses.	
Research Paper	20%	<b>Due December 12 11:59 PM.</b> Guidelines with a marking rubric and instructions on how to submit the assignment are available on myCourses. Because this is due after classes end, McGill treats it as a take-home examination. Don't be alarmed, therefore, if you see ISLA 330 on the central exam schedule—there is no sit-down exam.	
Creative Assignment	10%	<b>Due December 3 11:59 PM.</b> A short poem of around 100-250 words, possibly in the style of one of the poets on the syllabus.	

**In order to ensure timely grading, assignments handed in late or under an extension will not receive written comments. To request extensions, [please use the online form](#).**

### Participation Rubric:

For each class, students receive a participation mark of 0 to 5 on the basis of the following rubric:

0	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Absent.</li></ul>
1	35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Present but disruptive.</li></ul>
2	55%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Present, not disruptive.</li><li>• Tries to respond when called on but does not offer much.</li><li>• Demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion.</li></ul>
3	70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates adequate preparation: knows the readings and the issues, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyse them.</li><li>• Offers straightforward information (e.g. straight from the readings), without elaboration, or does so very infrequently (perhaps once a class).</li><li>• Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on.</li><li>• Demonstrates sporadic involvement.</li></ul>
4	85%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates good preparation: knows reading well, has thought through implications.</li><li>• Offers interpretations and analysis of readings (more than just facts) to class.</li><li>• Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, links own opinions to others', offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion.</li><li>• Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement.</li></ul>
5	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates excellent preparation: has analysed readings exceptionally well, relating it to other readings for the class and other material (e.g., discussions, experiences etc.).</li><li>• Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of readings; for example, puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further.</li><li>• Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative argument-building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material and helps class analyse which approaches are appropriate etc.</li><li>• Demonstrates very active involvement that is ongoing.</li></ul>

## Class Schedule:

September 6

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ

INTRODUCTION

September 11

حلاج

BEGINNINGS

Readings:

- Schimmel. 23-91
- 'Attār, Farīduddin. The Conference of the Birds. 114-115

September 13

شيوخ

“CLASSICAL” SUFISM

Readings:

- Schimmel. 91-97, 294-301, 259-274, 279-286
- Ghazzālī, Abū Hāmid. “Deliverance from Error” in The Faith and Practice of Al-Ghazālī. 54-63

September 18

مغرب

SUFISM WEST I (IRAN, AFRICA)

Readings:

- Schimmel. 287-343
- Moin, Azfar. The Millennial Sovereign. 74-84

- Knysh, Alexander. Islamic Mysticism: A Short History. 251-264
- Hill, Joseph. "Baay Is the Spiritual Leader of the Rappers."

September 20

مشرق

SUFISM EAST I (SOUTH ASIA)

Readings:

- Schimmel. 344-363, 383-402
- Eaton, Richard. The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier. 71-82, 268-290, 301-303
- Ernst, Carl and Tony Stewart. "Syncretism."

September 25

SUFISM EAST II (SOUTHEAST ASIA & CHINA)

Readings:

- Murata, Sachiko. Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light. 13-42.
- Riddell, Peter G. Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World. 101-125

September 27

SUFISM WEST II (TURKEY, EUROPE, NORTH AMERICA)

Readings:

- Schimmel 328-343
- Norris, H. T. "Popular Sufism in Bulgaria and Macedonia."
- Hermansen, Marcia. "South Asian Sufism in America."
- Mercier-Dalphon, Geneviève. "Local Tales of Sufis in Quebec."

October 2

Library Session

October 4

وحد

BEING

Readings:

- Shāh Husain. "Lord, Only You Know My State."
- Chittick, William. "A History of the Term Wahdat al-Wujūd" in In Search of the Lost Heart. 71-77, 83-85
- Jalāluddīn Rūmī. The Masnavi: Book One. 188-190
- Jāmī, 'Abdur-Rahmān and Liu Chih. Gleams. 152-155.

October 9

\*\*THANKSGIVING\*\*

Readings:

•

October 11

ذات و تجليات

ESSENCE & MANIFESTATION

Readings:

- Izutsu, Toshihiko. Sufism and Taoism. Ch. 2-3. 48-65
- Shabistarī, Mahmūd. Garden of Mystery. 32-39
- Jāmī, 'Abdur-Rahmān and Liu Chih. Gleams. 180-183
- Suhrawardī, Abū Hafs 'Umar. The Language of the Ants. 88-89.
- Wang Tai-yü. Great Learning. 89-91

October 16

تشریح و تشبیه

COMPARABILITY/INCOMPARABILITY

Readings:

- Bullhe Shāh. "My Beloved Tells Me Secrets Without End."
- Izutsu, Toshihiko. Sufism and Taoism. Ch. 4. 23-47
- Rūmī, Jalāluddīn. The Masnavi: Book Two. 101-107
- Khwāja Ghulām Farīd. "Real Beauty, Endless Light."

October 18

اسماء

## NAMES

### Readings:

- Ernst. 81-98
- Chittick, William. The Self-Disclosure of God. xxxii-xxxv
- 'Irāqī, Fakhruddīn. Divine Flashes XIII [and commentary]. 95-98, 146-147
- Jāmī, 'Abdur-Rahmān. Gleams. 210-211.

October 23

سماع

## AUDITION

### Readings:

- In-class screening: Sufi Soul

October 25

تعمیر

## INTERPRETATION

### Readings:

- Izutsu, Toshihiko. Sufism and Taoism. Ch. 1. 7-20.
- Recommended: Ibn 'Arabi, Muhyīuddin. "Ringstone of Joseph." The Ringstones of Wisdom. 95-104.

October 30

حقیقت و مجاز

## REALITY & FIGURATION

### Readings:

- Ghazzālī, Abū Hāmid. The Niche of Lights. 3-24.



November 1

## نفس

THE SELF

Readings:

- ‘Attār, Farīduddīn. The Conference of the Birds. 148-153.
- Jalāluddīn Rūmī. The Masnavi: Book One. 86-87.
- Mānerī, Sharafuddīn. The Hundred Letters. 330-347.
- Bullhe Shāh. "You've Studied the Wisdom of Thousands of Books."

November 6

## فنا و بقا

ANNIHILATION/SUBSISTENCE

Readings:

- Bullhe Shah. "Bullha, What Do I Know Who I Am?"
- Schimmel. 142-148
- Hujwerī, ‘Alī bin ‘Usmān. Revealing the Veiled. 242-245.
- ‘Attār, Farīduddīn. The Conference of the Birds. 216-222.

November 8

## انسان

MAN

Readings:

- Iqbāl, Muhammad. "When Love Teaches Them the Ways of Self-Consciousness."
- Schimmel. 187-199, (optional: 213-227).
- Chittick, William. "The Perfect Man as Prototype of the Self in Jāmī." 135-157.
- Kugle, Scott. Sufis and Saints Bodies. Ch. 2
- ‘Attār, Farīduddīn. "Rābi‘a: Her Words and Life in ‘Attar’s Memorial of the Friends of God."

November 13

## ولایت

SAINTHOOD

Readings:

- Ernst. 120-146
- Schimmel. 199-213
- Pemberton, Kelly and Frederick M. Denny. "Women Mystics and Sufi Shrines in India."
- Recommended: Ernst, Carl. Teachings of Sufism. 179-199.

November 15

## ملامت

BLAME

Readings:

- Karamustafa, Ahmet. God's Unruly Friends. 13-84
- Hujweri. Kashf al-Mahjub. 242-245
- Yunus Emre. "O God, If You Would Ever Question Me."

November 20

## کفر

INFIDELITY

Readings:

- Lewisohn, Leonard. Beyond Faith and Infidelity. 268-308
- Shabistarī, Mahmūd. Garden of Mystery. 154-159.
- Iqbal, Muhammad. "The Infidel and the Believer."

November 22

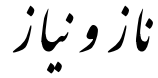


LOVE

Readings:

- Ahmad Ghazzālī, Savanih. 44-63.
- Baqlī, Rūzbihān. "On the Courtesy of the Lover and Beloved." 84-94.
- 'Irāqī, Fakhruddīn. Divine Flashes. 77-84.
- Yunus Emre. "My Heart Burned."

November 27



NEED/INDEPENDENCE

Readings:

- 'Irāqī, Fakhruddīn. Divine Flashes XX-XXV. 111-120.
- Ahmad Ghazzālī, Savanih. 44-63.
- Yunus Emre. "Your Love Has Wrested Me Away from Me."

November 29

SUFIS AND ANTI-SUFIS

Readings:

- Schimmel. 363-373, 403-408.
- Iqbal, Muhammad. The Secrets of Selfhood. Selections
- Buehler, Arthur. "Ahmad Sirhindi: Nationalist Hero, Good Sufi, or Bad Sufi?" in South Asian Sufis. 141-156.
- Knysh, Alexander. "Contextualizing the Salafi-Sufi Conflict." 503-527.
- Sirriyeh, Elizabeth. Sufis and Anti-Sufis. 22-25.

December 4

SUFISM TODAY

Readings:

- Ernst. 199-228

- Muedini, Fait. "The Promotion of Sufism in the Politics of Algeria and Morocco."
- Phillipon, Alix. "Sunnis Against Sunnis."
- Back, Irit. "Sufis and Wahhabis in Senegal and Nigeria."
- Yemelianova, Galina M. "Sufism and Politics in the Northern Caucasus."

December 6

CONCLUSIONS

December 7

CREATIVE ASSIGNMENT PERFORMANCES

*McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information).*

*In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. / Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue).*

*Instructor generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.*

*If you have a disability please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at 514-398-6009 before you do this.*