

Lahore University of Management Sciences

REL 215: Sufism: Key Texts and Cultural Practices

Summer 2024

Instructor	Baqar Hassan Syed
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COURSE BASICS				
Credit Hours	4			
Lecture(s)	Nbr of Lec(s) Per Week	4	Duration	Two Hours
Recitation/Lab (per week)	Nbr of Lec(s) Per Week	--	Duration	--
Tutorial (per week)	Nbr of Lec(s) Per Week	--	Duration	--

COURSE DISTRIBUTION	
Core	No
Elective	Free elective
Open for Student Category	All
Close for Student Category	None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to Sufi thought and practice, from its historical beginnings down to the present day. We shall begin by reflecting on the problematic category of “Sufism” as a catch-all term used to describe a broad range of mystical ideas and practices. Next, we study Classical Sufi texts that helped to shape later Sufi traditions, focusing on the emergence of competing strands of Sufi thought and practice and their reconciliation in works of synthesis after the tenth century. These topics will be covered in the first two modules.

The third and fourth modules of the course examine Sufi texts and practices that have enjoyed wide popularity throughout the Muslim world since the thirteenth century. These include the theosophical ideas of Ibn al-‘Arabī, the poetry of ‘Aṭṭār and Rumi, and the broader themes of Sufi dance, music, ritual practices and community life. The fourth module will specifically highlight the creative translation, expansion, and application of Sufi ideas and practices in new cultural settings, with readings from South Asian Sufi poetry serving to illustrate these developments.

The course will conclude with discussions on the historical significance of Sufi thought and practice in Islamic culture, as well as contemporary controversies surrounding their religious legitimacy.

COURSE PREREQUISITE(S)

●	None
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COURSE OBJECTIVES

●	To familiarize students with the historical significance of Sufi ideas and practices
●	To enable students to engage with ideas from the past with academic rigor, perhaps as resources for present concerns
●	To enable students to critically appreciate and navigate contemporary debates on diverse, competing and controversial Sufi ideas and practices

LEARNING OUTCOMES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ● ● 	<p>Students who take REL 215 should</p> <p>Appreciate the historical and contemporary cultural significance of Sufi ideas and practices</p> <p>Understand and explain key Sufi ideas and practices</p> <p>Develop informed views on contested Sufi ideas and practices</p>
GRADING BREAKUP AND POLICY	
<p>Attendance</p> <p>Quizzes (surprise)</p> <p>Assignments (two)</p> <p>Midterm Exam</p> <p>Final Exam</p>	<p>10%</p> <p>20%</p> <p>10%</p> <p>30%</p> <p>30%</p>
<p><i>For Summer 2024, the course will be taught in person.</i></p> <p><i>MGSHSS, LUMS and particularly this class, is a harassment free zone. There is absolutely zero tolerance for any behaviour that is intended or has the expected result of making anyone uncomfortable and negatively impacts the class environment, or any individual's ability to work to the best of their potential.</i></p> <p><i>If you think that you may be a victim of harassment, or if you have observed any harassment occurring in the purview of this class, please reach out and speak to me. If you are a victim, I strongly encourage you to reach out to the Office of Accessibility and Inclusion at oai@lums.edu.pk or the sexual harassment inquiry committee at harassment@lums.edu.pk for any queries, clarifications, or advice. You may choose to file an informal or a formal complaint to put an end of offending behaviour.</i></p>	

EXAMINATION DETAIL	
Midterm Exam	<p>Yes/No: Yes</p> <p>Combine Separate:</p> <p>Duration:</p> <p>Preferred Date:</p>

	Exam Specifications:
Final Exam	<p>Yes/No: Yes</p> <p>Combine Separate:</p> <p>Duration:</p> <p>Exam Specifications:</p>

READINGS

- Most of the assigned primary texts are from Michael A. Sells, *Early Islamic Mysticism: Sufi, Qur'an, Mi'raj, Poetic and Theological Writings*. Lahore: Suhail Academy, 2004.
- Further reading is indicated below in the course overview.

COURSE OVERVIEW

1	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key issues of interest - Course rules 	
	Module 1: Origins	
2	The Problematic Category of "Sufism" 1/2	<p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schimmel, "What is Sufism?" in <i>Mystical Dimensions of Islam</i> <p><u>Optional reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Khalil and Sheikh, "Sufism in Western Historiography"
3	The Problematic Category of "Sufism" 2/2	<p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ernst, <i>Sufism</i>, Chapter 1 <p><u>Optional reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Green, "Emerging Approaches to the Sufi

		Traditions of South Asia: Between Texts, Territories and the Transcendent”
4	Early Mysticism in Islam	<p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from the Qur’an and aḥādīth in Sells, <i>Early Islamic Mysticism</i>, 35–56 - Schimmel, “Historical Outlines of Classical Sufism: Formation” in <i>Mystical Dimensions of Islam</i>, 23–31 <p><u>Optional reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sells, <i>Early Islamic Mysticism</i>, 75–89
5	The Earliest Sufis 1/3	<p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Karamustafa, <i>Sufism</i>, 1–7 - Selections from ‘Aṭṭār’s <i>Tadhkirat-ul-awliya’</i> on al-Rābi‘ah in Sells, <i>Early Islamic Mysticism</i>, 151–171
6	The Earliest Sufis 2/3	<p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from al-Muḥāsibī’s <i>Kitāb al-ri‘āyah li-ḥuqūq allāh</i> in Sells, <i>Early Islamic Mysticism</i>, 171–183 - Selections from al-Tustarī’s <i>Tafsīr al-qur’ān al-‘aẓīm</i> in Sells, <i>Early Islamic Mysticism</i>, 89–96 <p><u>Optional reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Karamustafa, <i>Sufism</i>, 7–37
7	The Earliest Sufis 3/3	<p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schimmel, “Historical Outlines of Classical Sufism” in <i>Mystical Dimensions of Islam</i>, 32–62
	Module 2: Formation	
8	al-Bisṭāmī	<p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from reports about al-Bisṭāmī recorded by al-Sarrāj, al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī in Sells, <i>Early Islamic Mysticism</i>, 212–250
9	al-Ḥallāj	<p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from al-Ḥallāj’s <i>Ṭāwāṣīm</i> in Sells, <i>Early Islamic Mysticism</i>, 266–280 - Schimmel, “Historical Outlines of Classical Sufism” in <i>Mystical Dimensions of Islam</i>, 62–77

10	al-Sarrāj	<u>Required reading:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from the <i>Kitāb al-luma'</i> in Sells, <i>Early Islamic Mysticism</i>, 196–211
11	al-Hujwīrī	<u>Required reading:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from al-Hujwīrī's <i>Kashf al-Mahjūb</i>, tr. Reynold Nicholson, 30–44, 62–69, 363–366
12	al-Ghazālī	<u>Required reading:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from al-Ghazālī's <i>al-Munqidh min al-dalāl</i>, tr. Richard McCarthy, 18–32 - Schimmel, "The Period of Consolidation: From Shiblī to Ghazzālī" in <i>Mystical Dimensions of Islam</i>, 77–97 <u>Optional reading:</u> Alexander Treiger, "Monism and Monotheism in al-Ghazālī's <i>Mishkāt al-anwār</i> ," in <i>Journal of Quranic Studies</i> , 9.1 (2007), 1–27
	Module 3: Consolidation	
13	Midterm Exam; Discussion on al-Ghazālī	
14	‘Attār 1/2	<u>Required reading:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from <i>Mantiq al-ṭayr</i>, tr. Darbandy and Davis, lines 616–1212, 4005–4455
15	‘Attār 2/2	<u>Required reading:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schimmel, "The Rose and Nightingale: Persian and Turkish Mystical Poetry" in <i>Mystical Dimensions of Islam</i>, 287–309
16	Theosophical Sufism: Ibn al-‘Arabī 1/2	<u>Required reading:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Naqsh al-fusus</i>, tr. William Chittick as <i>Ibn ‘Arabī's Own Summary of the Fusūs</i>, sections 1–11 - Mohammed Rustom, "Is Ibn al-'Arabī's Ontology Pantheistic?" <i>Journal of Islamic Philosophy</i> 2 (2006), 53–67
17	Theosophical Sufism: Ibn al-‘Arabī 2/2	<u>Required reading:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schimmel, "Theosophical Sufism" in <i>Mystical Dimensions of Islam</i>, 259–286
18	Rumi 1/2	<u>Required reading:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The "Nay nāmih" from Rumi's <i>Mathnawī</i>, tr.

		<p>Reynold Nicholson as “The Song of the Reed”, Book 1, 3–6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schimmel, “Maulānā Jalāluddīn Rūmī” in <i>Mystical Dimensions of Islam</i>, 309–328
19	Rumi 2/2	<p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from miscellaneous works, tr. William Chittick in <i>The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi</i>, 194–231
	Module 4: Vernacularization	
20	Sufi Ritual Practices and Institutions	<p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ernst, <i>Sufism</i>, chapter 5 - Papas, Alexandre, “Khānaqāh”, in <i>Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE</i>, ed. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas and Everett Rowson (published online, 2020) - Schimmel, “Sufi Order and Fraternities” in <i>Mystical Dimensions of Islam</i>, 228–258
21	Sufi Dance and Music	<p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ernst, <i>Sufism</i>, chapter 7 - Chittick, <i>Sufism</i>, chapter 7
22	South Asian Sufi Poetry 1/2	<p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from Ghaffaar, trans. <i>Baaba Fareed Ganjshakar</i> - Selections from Ghaffaar, trans. <i>Bulleh Shah</i> - Selections from Ghaffaar, trans. <i>Khawaja Ghulam Farid</i> - Schimmel, “Mystical Poetry in the Regional Languages—Sindhi, Panjabi, Pashto” in <i>Mystical Dimensions of Islam</i>, 383–389
23	<p>South Asian Sufi Poetry 2/2; Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sufism and the Spread of Islam - Final Debate: Is Sufism “Islamic”? 	<p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from Waris Shah’s <i>Heer</i> - Selections from Agha, trans. <i>Shah Jo Risalo</i> - Schimmel, “Mystical Poetry in the Regional Languages—Sindhi, Panjabi, Pashto” in <i>Mystical Dimensions of Islam</i>, 389–402 <p><u>Optional reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eaton, “The Literati and Their Popular Literature” and “The Literati and the Expansion of Islam” in <i>Sufis of Bijapur, 1300–1700</i>, 155–174.