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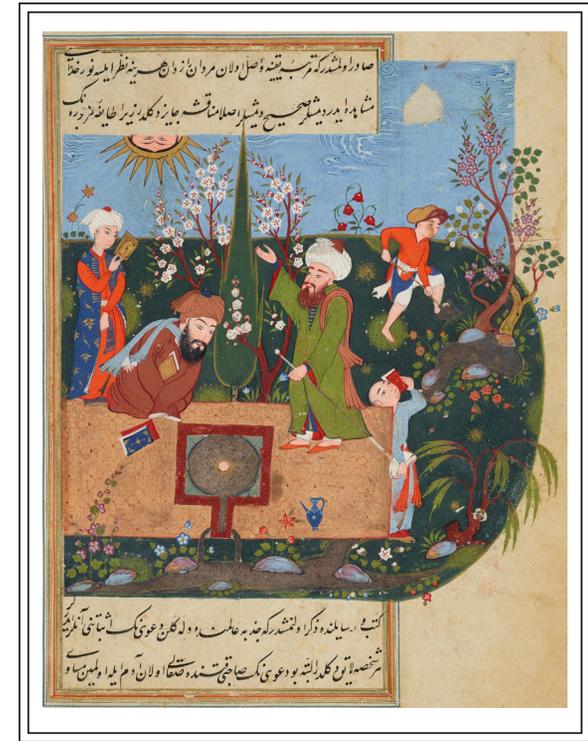
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MEDIEVAL MYSTICS AND MASTERS



SPRING LECTURE SERIES 2014
APRIL 28–MAY 1

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
INSTITUTE FOR MEDIEVAL STUDIES



THURSDAY, MAY 1, 7:15 P.M.

“Rumi and Medieval Sufism”

Jawid Mojaddedi, Rutgers University

Jalal al-Din Rumi (d. 1273) is the best-known Sufi across the world today, through his best-selling poetry and the touring Whirling Dervishes, whose spinning ceremony originates with the order of Sufism founded by Rumi's students. Rumi is representative of Sufis of his epoch, and his life and writings conveniently highlight many aspects of Sufism which distinguish it from other forms of mysticism. Rumi's primary concern in his poetry is closeness or “friendship” with God (*walaya*). He expresses his visionary experience of this through a celebration of the continual arrival of divine communication, most famously through sound. His vision of unity between the divine and the physical realm furthermore extends to unity between people, despite distinctions such as language and religious school, which are treated as superficial by Rumi. In this lecture, Professor Mojaddedi will discuss Rumi's didactic poetry as an introduction to the main preoccupations of the medieval Sufi tradition, while also exploring Rumi's idiosyncrasies and their influence in making him the most popular of all Sufi poets.

Jawid Mojaddedi is Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Religion at Rutgers University. Born in Afghanistan, he was educated in England, receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Manchester. His primary area of research is early and medieval Sufism. Since the publication of his verse translation of Book One of Rumi's classic, *The Masnavi*, which was awarded the 2006 Lois Roth Prize, Professor Mojaddedi has been working towards completing the six books of Rumi's *magnum opus*. He has already published in the same Oxford World's Classics Series a translation of the second and third books, in 2007 and 2013, respectively. In addition to his translations of Rumi's poetry, he has published the monograph *Beyond Dogma: Rumi's Teachings on Friendship with God and Early Sufi Theories* (Oxford University Press, 2012). Previous books include *The Biographical Tradition in Sufism: The tabaqat Genre from al-Sulami to Jami* (RoutledgeCurzon, 2001), and, as co-editor and co-translator with Norman Calder and Andrew Rippin, *Classical Islam: A Sourcebook of Religious Literature* (Routledge, 2003; expanded second edition, 2012).

2014 LECTURE SCHEDULE

Monday, April 28, 7:15 p.m.

**“Two Twelfth-Century Visionary Mystics:
Hildegard of Bingen and Joachim of Fiore”**

Bernard McGinn, University of Chicago Divinity School

Tuesday, April 29, 5:15 p.m.

“Two Muslim Masters: al-Farabi and Avicenna”

Lenn E. Goodman, Vanderbilt University

Tuesday, April 29, 7:15 p.m.

**“Yeshe Tsogyal, the Great Bliss Queen:
Meditation and Transmission in ‘Heart Essence’ Traditions of Tibet”**

Anne C. Klein, Rice University

Wednesday, April 30, 5:15 p.m.

“Meister Eckhart: The Man from Whom God Hid Nothing”

Bernard McGinn

Wednesday, April 30, 7:15 p.m.

“Moses Maimonides: How Does His *Guide* Unperplex?”

Lenn E. Goodman

Thursday, May 1, 5:15 p.m.

Concert of *Oud* Music

Rahim AlHaj

Thursday, May 1, 7:15 p.m.

“Rumi and Medieval Sufism”

Jawid Mojaddedi, Rutgers University

All lectures will take place in Woodward Hall, Room 101. The concert by Rahim AlHaj will take place in Keller Hall (opposite Popejoy Hall in the UNM Center for the Arts)

TUESDAY, APRIL 29, 7:15 P.M.

“Yeshe Tsogyal, the Great Bliss Queen: Meditation and Transmission in ‘Heart Essence’ Traditions of Tibet”

Anne C. Klein, Rice University

Yeshe Tsogyal is a central figure in the most ancient school of Tibetan Buddhism. She is at once mythical and historical—the consort of Padma Sambhava (who brought Buddhism to Tibet in the eighth century), an iconic student, and an enlightened being in her own right. And she is central to the furthering of wisdom. This is indicated by her name, which means “Queen of Wisdom’s Ocean.” She is famous for her own wisdom and for preserving a powerful wisdom literature that is still active and growing today. She is also central, iconographically and philosophically, to meditation practices preserved since the eighth century. Professor Klein’s illustrated talk will introduce the contemplative and philosophical significance of Yeshe Tsogyal’s iconography and symbolism, and her appearance in the eighteenth century in the form of the Great Bliss Queen.

Anne C. Klein (Rigzin Drolma) is Professor of Religious Studies at Rice University and a founding director and resident teacher of Dawn Mountain, a center for contemplative study and practice in Houston, Texas. Dr. Klein received her M.A. in Indian Studies from the University of Wisconsin and her Ph.D. in Religious Studies from the University of Virginia. She lectures and leads retreats widely on contemplative practice as well as on the Buddhist texts and theories of knowing that support that practice. She writes and teaches primarily from the Tibetan tradition, translating classic texts and oral commentary on them. Her books include *Knowledge and Liberation* (1986), on Buddhist distinctions between cognitive and sensory knowing; *Path to the Middle: The Spoken Scholarship of Kensur Yeshey Tupden* (1994), on preparing to meet the Ultimate; *Meeting the Great Bliss Queen* (1995), contrasting Buddhist and feminist understandings of self; *Heart Essence of the Vast Expanse: A Story of Transmission* (2010), which provides chantable translations of traditional Tibetan liturgies; and, with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, *Unbounded Wholeness* (2006), which discusses a text from the Bon-Buddhist tradition.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 5:15 P.M.

“Meister Eckhart: The Man from Whom God Hid Nothing”

Bernard McGinn

The German Dominican, Meister Eckhart (ca. 1260–1328), was a noted teacher at the University of Paris, and also a powerful mystical preacher in his native Germany. Eckhart was the first person in the history of medieval mysticism to combine the learned theology of the schools (i.e., Scholasticism) with the emerging vernacular theology of the mystics who were preaching and writing in the developing vernacular languages of late medieval Europe. Late in his life Eckhart was accused of heresy, and, after a papal trial, some of his teachings (but not his person) were condemned by Pope John XXI in the Bull “In agro dominico” of March 27, 1329. In this lecture Bernard McGinn will give an account of Eckhart’s life and times, delineating the main lines of his mystical teaching and preaching and exploring why Eckhart became a controversial figure.

Bernard McGinn is the Naomi Shenstone Donnelley Professor Emeritus of Historical Theology and the History of Christianity at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, where he taught from 1969 to 2003. Educated at the Gregorian University in Rome and at Brandeis University, Professor McGinn specializes in the history of Christian theology in the patristic and medieval periods. He is the author of many books and articles, especially on apocalypticism and the history of Christian spirituality and mysticism. His major project is a seven-volume history of Christian mysticism under the general title *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism*, of which five volumes have appeared to date—most recently, *The Varieties of Vernacular Mysticism 1350–1500* (2012). Professor McGinn’s study of *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart* appeared in 2001. Professor McGinn is a former President of the Medieval Academy of America and a Fellow of the Medieval Academy, as well as of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is also the Editor-in-Chief of the *Classics of Western Spirituality* Series published by Paulist Press, with 127 volumes in print.

MONDAY, APRIL 28, 7:15 P.M.

“Two Twelfth-Century Mystical Visionaries: Hildegard of Bingen and Joachim of Fiore”

Bernard McGinn, University of Chicago Divinity School

Twelfth-century Europe saw an explosion of accounts of visions and visionaries of an unusual variety compared to the Early Middle Ages, when most visions centered on journeys to heaven and/or hell. Among the most important visionaries were the German abbess, Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179), and the Calabrian abbot, Joachim of Fiore (1135–1202). These two monastic figures, although not personally acquainted, show remarkable similarities in their rich images of the mysteries of salvation. They not only left accounts of their visions, but also commissioned the visions to be illustrated. Hildegard and Joachim are major representatives of the new visionary theology of the twelfth century. In this illustrated lecture Bernard McGinn will discuss the nature of medieval visionary theology through a comparison of Hildegard and Joachim on select issues, including their understanding of the Trinity.

Bernard McGinn is the Naomi Shenstone Donnelley Professor Emeritus of Historical Theology and the History of Christianity at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, where he taught from 1969 to 2003. Educated at the Gregorian University in Rome and at Brandeis University, Professor McGinn specializes in the history of Christian theology in the patristic and medieval periods. He is the author of many books and articles, especially on apocalypticism and the history of Christian spirituality and mysticism. His major project is a seven-volume history of Christian mysticism under the general title *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism*, of which five volumes have appeared to date—most recently, *The Varieties of Vernacular Mysticism 1350–1500* (2012). Professor McGinn’s study of *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart* appeared in 2001. Professor McGinn is a former President of the Medieval Academy of America and a Fellow of the Medieval Academy, as well as of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is also the Editor-in-Chief of the *Classics of Western Spirituality* Series published by Paulist Press, with 127 volumes in print.

THURSDAY, MAY 1, 5:15 P.M.

Concert of Oud Music

Rahim AlHaj

In this concert Rahim AlHaj will perform both traditional Iraqi *maqamat* as well as original compositions of his own. A *maqam* is the equivalent of the Western musical “mode,” although not “even-tempered” like the Western chromatic scale, but utilizing distinct tunings and microtonal variations. Performances are noted for the interpretation and improvisation around each *maqam*’s mood or characteristic. The roots of *maqam* date back some 1,200 years. Rahim AlHaj’s compositions deftly combine traditional Iraqi *maqamat* with contemporary stylings and influences. His compositions evoke the experience of exile from his homeland and of new beginnings in his adopted country. His pieces establish new concepts without altering the foundation of the traditional “Iraqi School of *Oud*.” Communicating with a compelling immediacy that bypasses cultural obstacles, his music speaks irresistibly to the heart in a universal language of compassion. Mr. AlHaj will perform solo on the *oud* (a short-necked fretless stringed instrument related to the lute), an instrument that has a written history that spans over 5,000 years and is said to have been invented by Lamech, the sixth-generation descendant of Adam. The concert will include the original compositions *Dance of the Palms*, *Dream*, and *Horses*, and the traditional *Maqam Nahawand*, *Maqam Rast*, *Maqam Saba*, and *Maqam Segah*.

Rahim AlHaj was born in Baghdad and began playing the *oud* at age nine. He studied under the renowned Munir Bashir, considered by many to be the greatest *oud* player of all time, and Salim Abdul Kareem at the Baghdad Institute of Music. He holds a degree in Arabic literature from Mustansiriyah University in Baghdad. In 1991, after the first Gulf War, Mr. AlHaj was forced to leave Iraq because of his activism against the regime of Saddam Hussein. He lived in Jordan and Syria before moving to the U.S. in 2000 and settling in Albuquerque. Mr. AlHaj has performed around the world and is considered one of the finest contemporary exponents of the *oud*. He has twice been nominated for Grammy awards. Among his CDs are *The Second Baghdad* (2002), *Iraqi Music in a Time of War* (2003), and *When the Soul is Settled: Music of Iraq* (2006). In 2009 he received the prestigious USA Fellow award from United States Artists.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 7:15 P.M.

“Moses Maimonides: How Does His ‘Guide’ Unperplex?”

Lenn E. Goodman

Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, called “The Rambam” (1138–1204), was born in Cordova but exiled to Egypt in the Almohad persecutions. An accomplished physician whose all but canonical code of Jewish law rests on philosophical footings, Maimonides wrote the *Guide to the Perplexed* in Arabic, aiming to reconcile Neoplatonic Aristotelian philosophy with biblical profundities and rabbinic insights. Under classic rubrics named for the narratives of Genesis and Ezekiel’s chariot vision he grouped questions of theophany and creation, providence and the problem of evil, divine knowledge of individuals and human knowledge of God. How can we finite creatures know an infinite God? How does God reach, let alone govern or create, a world of frail, physical things? The philosophical challenges are compounded pedagogically by the indirection of biblical poetry and by rabbinic cautions marking off creation and theophany as dangerous terrain. Chary of pushing the unready out of their depth, Maimonides too turns to indirection. He uses his survey of biblical anthropomorphisms to orient prepared readers to an intellectualist ontology/axiology that will steady their gaze, giving substance and direction to the austere negative theology that transcendence seems to demand. Minds become God’s link to nature, and humanity’s link to God.

Lenn E. Goodman is Professor of Philosophy and Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities at Vanderbilt University. A specialist in Jewish and Islamic philosophy and their creative interactions, and an active philosopher in metaphysics and ethics, Professor Goodman is the author of numerous books, including *Creation and Evolution; Islamic Humanism; In Defense of Truth: A Pluralistic Approach; Jewish and Islamic Philosophy: Cross-Pollinations in the Classic Age; Judaism, Human Rights and Human Values*; and his Gifford lectures, *Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself*. His most recent book is *Coming to Mind: The Soul and its Body* (co-authored with D. G. Caramenico); forthcoming is *Religious Pluralism and Values in the Public Sphere*. Professor Goodman has also translated several Arabic works, including *The Case of the Animals vs. Man before the King of the Jinn*, a tenth-century ecological fable by the Brethren of Purity. He is currently preparing (with his colleague Philip Liebermann) a new translation and commentary of Moses Maimonides’ *Guide to the Perplexed*. Professor Goodman has received the American Philosophical Association’s Baumgardt Memorial Prize and is a Fellow of the Academy for Jewish Philosophy.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29, 5:15 P.M.

“Two Muslim Masters: al-Farabi and Avicenna”

Lenn E. Goodman, Vanderbilt University

The writings of al-Farabi (d. 950) and Avicenna (980–1037) reveal good examples of progress in philosophy. Philosophers of the Megarian school had used the law of the excluded middle to challenge Aristotle’s idea of contingency. Any true prediction, they argued, exposes the necessity of events. For truths must match what they describe. But that, Aristotle answered, would render planning otiose and choices meaningless. Farabi agreed but found Aristotle’s defenses flabby—dialectical, as he put it. Wouldn’t orthodox Ash’arite theologians welcome the implications Aristotle shunned? Granted the facts must match the truth about them, implications don’t necessitate events. Only causes (including human choices) can. Z may or may not travel tomorrow. But the necessity of the disjunction can’t make either outcome necessary. God’s knowledge, or any truth about the future, *does* imply what it foresees. But God can’t know what Z will decide if God’s knowledge rather than Z’s decision is what brings the outcome. Contingency, then, is safe. The future is open, not fixed by the fact that there are facts. Avicenna, having learned from al-Farabi what it is that metaphysics is about, builds his account of being on Farabi’s understanding of the difference between hypothetical and categorical necessities.

Lenn E. Goodman is Professor of Philosophy and Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities at Vanderbilt University. A specialist in Jewish and Islamic philosophy and their creative interactions, and an active philosopher in metaphysics and ethics, Professor Goodman is the author of numerous books, including *Creation and Evolution; Islamic Humanism; In Defense of Truth: A Pluralistic Approach; Jewish and Islamic Philosophy: Cross-Pollinations in the Classic Age; Judaism, Human Rights and Human Values*; and his Gifford lectures, *Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself*. His most recent book is *Coming to Mind: The Soul and its Body* (co-authored with D. G. Caramenico); forthcoming is *Religious Pluralism and Values in the Public Sphere*. Professor Goodman has also translated several Arabic works, including *The Case of the Animals vs. Man before the King of the Jinn*, a tenth-century ecological fable by the Brethren of Purity. He is currently preparing (with his colleague Philip Liebermann) a new translation and commentary of Moses Maimonides’ *Guide to the Perplexed*. Professor Goodman has received the American Philosophical Association’s Baumgardt Memorial Prize and is a Fellow of the Academy for Jewish Philosophy.