Great Thinkers of the Muslim World, 600-1300

Over the past 1400 years, numerous Muslims have contributed to the rich intellectual traditions of Islam. These thinkers explored theology, philosophy, mysticism, and science. Yet few of them today are known by educated Americans. The goal of this seminar is to introduce a range of sophisticated Muslim thinkers from the first seven centuries of Islam in the region known today as the Middle East and North Africa. Seminarians will have the chance to read selections in translation of these thinkers’ writings, along with selected secondary works, in order to facilitate an appreciation for the diversity and quality of classical Islamic thought.

This is a 10-week seminar.

Required Books:

**September 27: Islamic Thought—An overview**
Saeed, *Islamic Thought*, Chapters 1, 2, 5.

**October 4: Imam ‘Ali, as recounted by al-Sharif al-Radi**
Saeed, *Islamic Thought*, Ch. 4

**October 11: Muhammad b. Isma’il al-Bukhari and Muhyi al-Din al-Nawawi: Masters of the Prophet Muhammad’s teachings (hadith)**
Saeed, *Islamic Thought*, Ch.3
al-Nawawi’s Forty Hadith: https://sunnah.com/nawawi40
October 18: al-Tabari and al-Zamakhshari: Qur’anic Exegesis

October 25: Ibn Sina (Avicenna) & Miskawayh: Philosophy and ethics
Saeed, *Islamic Thought*, Ch.8
Miskawayh, *Refinement of Character*, translated Constantine Zurayk, pp. 155-196 (Sixth Discourse: The Health of the Soul)

November 1: Ibn Hazm: An Iconoclastic Scholar from Muslim Spain

November 8: al-Ghazali: Reviver of the religious sciences
R.J. McCarthy, *Al-Ghazali: Deliverance from Error* (Fons Vitae edition), pp. 53-98 (pp. 99-123 notes on the translation)

November 15: Rumi: Poet of the Heart
Annemarie Schimmel, *Rumi’s World*, pp. 73-89 (NOTE: Maulana = Rumi)

November 22: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Eve)
November 29: Ibn al-Haytham, al-Biruni, and Nasir al-Din al-Tusi: Natural scientists
   Jim Al-Khalili, The House of Wisdom, Chapters 11, 12, 14

December 6: Ibn Rushd & Ibn ‘Arabi: Philosophy and mysticism from Muslim Spain
   Ibn Rushd, The Decisive Treatise, Concerning what the Connection is Between Philosophy and Religion, translated George Hourani, pp. 163-186.