

Richard McGregor
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Associate Professor of Islamic Studies and Religion
Department of Religious Studies

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Education:

PhD 2001 *McGill University* (Islamic Studies)
1995-96 *American University in Cairo* (Intensive Arabic language study)
MA 1993 *McGill University* (Islamic Studies)
BA 1990 *University of Toronto* (Religious Studies & Middle East Studies)

Monographs and editions:

Sufism in the Ottoman Era (16th-18th C.) / Le soufisme à l'époque ottmane (XVIe-XVIIIe siècle) editors R. Chih, C. Mayeur-Jaouen, D. Gril, and R. McGregor (Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale Press, 2010) (442 pages)

Rasa'il Ikhwan al-Safa': The Case of the Animals versus Man before the King of the Jinn Critical Arabic edition and English translation, with Lenn E. Goodman (Oxford University Press, 2009) (696 pages). Paperback English-only edition in 2012 (432 pages).

The Development of Sufism in Mamluk Egypt editor with A. Sabra (Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale Press, 2006) (385 pages)

Sanctity and Mysticism in Medieval Egypt: the Wafa' Sufi Order and the Legacy of Ibn 'Arabi (State University of New York Press, 2004) (246 pages)

Current Projects: *Seeing Religion in Islamic Egypt* (monograph)
Gems of Gnosis from the Breath of the Merciful; Muhammad Wafa' (d. 1363) Critical Arabic edition, English translation, and study (180 pages)

Employment:

Sept. 2010-
Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Vanderbilt University (Nashville, TN)

Sept. 2003-2010
Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Vanderbilt University (Nashville, TN)

Sept. 2001-2003
National Postdoctoral Research Fellow (Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council of Canada) (Egypt)

July 2002 & 2003
Lecturer in Religious Studies, Summer Sessions, McMaster University (Hamilton, ON)

July 2001
Lecturer in Religious Studies, Summer Session, McGill University (Montreal, QC)

Awards and scholarships:

- 2012-13 Research fellowship at Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, *Institute of Oriental and Asian Studies, Annemarie-Schimmel-Kolleg* : "History and Society during the Mamluk Era, 1250-1517" (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft funding)
- 2008 Malone Fellowship (Study program, Yemen) *National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations, Washington DC* (declined)
- 2006-07 Robert Penn Warren fellowship (Vanderbilt University) for *Between Word and Image*; project entitled "Recovering Islamic Aesthetics"
- 2006 Summer Fellowship from *Getty Foundation* "Constructing the Past in the Middle East" Istanbul, Turkey
- 2004 Venture Fund Grant from *Dean's Office, Arts and Science, Vanderbilt University* to develop course "Religious Architecture, Art and the Experience of Beauty"
- 2003 Collaborative Research Assistance Grant from the *American Academy of Religion*
- 2002 *American Research Center in Egypt* grants in support of conference: *Le développement du soufisme en Égypte à l'époque mamlouke*, May 2003
- 2001-03 National Postdoctoral Fellowship (2 years) from *Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council of Canada*
- 1999 Dissertation research grant from *Ministère de l'éducation nationale, de la recherche et de la technologie* (France)
- 1998 Graduate Student Travel Grant from *Canadian Committee of the Middle East Studies Association*
- 1997-98 Thesis Research Grant from *Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council of Canada* (Sponsored Graduate Student)
- 1996 American University in Cairo, Arabic Language Institute: winner of "Semester Writing Contest (Arabic Language)"
- 1995-97 McGill Major Fellowship -- *McConnell Memorial Fellowship*
- 1993 & 2001 MA and PhD graduations with distinction, Dean's List
- 1992-94 Institute of Islamic Studies Departmental Fellowship -- *Rockefeller Foundation awards*

Articles and chapters:

21. "Sufi Iconoclasm and the Problem of Comparative Religion" to appear in *Les mystiques juives, chrétiennes et musulmanes dans le Proche Orient médiéval* S. Pagani, M. Loubet and G. Cecere eds.
20. "Intertext and Artworks – Reading Islamic Hagiography" *Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses* (Spring, 2012)
19. "Sufis and Soldiers in Mamluk Cairo; Parading the Aesthetics of Agency" to appear in *The Exercise of Power in the Age of the Sultanates* I. Bierman and S. Denoix eds.
18. "Is this the End of Medieval Sufism? Strategies of *Transversal Affiliation* in Ottoman Egypt" in *Sufism in the Ottoman Era (16th-18th C.) / Le soufisme à l'époque ottomane* R. Chih, D. Gril, C. Mayeur-Jaouen, R. McGregor eds., (IFAO, 2010) (pp. 83-100)
17. "The Problem of Sufism" *Mamluk Studies Review* 13.2 (2009) (pp. 69-84)

16. "Dressing the Ka'ba from Cairo: the aesthetics of pilgrimage to Mecca" in *Religion and Material Culture: The Matter of Belief* D. Morgan ed. (Routledge, 2009) (pp. 247-261)
15. "The Wafa'iyya of Cairo" in *Tales of God's Friends: Islamic Hagiography in Translation* J. Renard ed. (University of California Press, 2009) (pp. 63-75)
14. "Ikhwan al-Safa" with Lenn E. Goodman, Chapter 5 of *An Anthology of Ismaili Literature – literary traditions in Islam* K. Kassam, H. Landolt, S. Sheikh eds. (I.B. Tauris, 2008) (pp. 113-119)
13. "A Fourteenth Century Inheritance of Ibn 'Arabi's Hermeneutics -- the *Nafa'is al-'Irfan* of Muhammad Wafa'" in *Symbolisme et herméneutique dans la pensée d'Ibn 'Arabi* B. Aladdin ed. (Damascus: IFPO, 2007) (pp. 163-174)
12. "Conceptions of the Ultimate Saint in Mamluk Egypt" in *The Development of Sufism in Egypt of the Mamluk Period -- Le développement du soufisme en Égypte à l'époque mamelouke* (IFAO, 2006) (pp. 178-188)
11. "Akbarian Thought in a Branch of the Egyptian Shadhiliyya" in *Une voie soufi dans le monde: la Shâdhiliyya* E. Geoffroy ed. (Maisonneuve & Larose, 2005) (pp. 107-116)
10. "Notes on the Transmission of Mystical Philosophy: Ibn 'Arabî according to 'Abd al-Wahhâb al-Sha'rânî" in *Reason and Inspiration in Islam; Theology, Philosophy and Mysticism in Muslim Thought*, B.T. Lawson ed. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) (pp. 380-392)
9. "The Existential Dimension of the Spiritual Guide in the Thought of 'Alî Wafâ' (d.807/1404)" *Annales Islamologiques* 37 (2003) (pp. 315-327)
8. "A Medieval Saint on Sainthood" *Studia Islamica* 95 (2002) (pp. 95-108)
7. "Being and Knowing According to a 14th century Cairene Mystic" *Annales Islamologiques* 36 (2002) (pp. 177-196)
6. "New Sources for the Study of Sufism in Mamluk Egypt" *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 65,2 (2002) (pp. 300-322)
5. "From Virtue to Apocalypse: the understanding of sainthood in a medieval sufi order" *Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses* (Spring, 2002) (pp. 167-178)
4. "The Development of the Islamic Understanding of Sanctity" *Religious Studies and Theology* (Fall, 2001) (pp. 51-80)
3. "The Concept of Sainthood According to Ibn Bâkhila; a Shâdhili Shaykh of the 8th/14th Century" in *Le saint et son milieu ou comment lire les sources hagiographiques?* R. Chih et D. Gril eds. (IFAO, 2000) (pp. 33-49)
2. "The Experience of Miracle and Metaphor in the Qur'an" in *The Qur'an and Philosophical Reflections* Indonesian Academic Society XXI (Yogyakarta: Titian Ilahi, 1998) (pp. 29-39)
1. "A Sufi Legacy in Tunis: Prayer and the Shâdhiliyya" *The International Journal of Middle East Studies* (May, 1997) (pp. 255-277)

Conference papers and talks:

38. "Images and Others: Sufi Iconoclasm and the Problem of Comparative Religion" at *American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting* (national), San Francisco CA, Nov. 2011
37. "Sufis and Soldiers in Mamluk Cairo" at *Annual Meeting of The American Research Center in Egypt*, Chicago IL, Apr. 2011
36. "Wahhabism and the 'secular' Museum of what Egypt shall not be" at *Provincializing Secularism: Minorities and the Regulation of Religion*, Vanderbilt University, Feb. 2011
35. "Images and Others: Sufi Iconoclasm and the Problem of Comparative Religion" at *Les mystiques juives, chrétiennes et musulmanes dans le Proche Orient médiéval*, Cairo, Egypt, Nov. 2010

34. "The Implications of 'Comparative Religion' in *Essay Twenty-Two* of the Ikhwan al-Safa (10th Cent. Iraq)" at *American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting* (national), Chicago IL, Nov. 2008
33. "Sufism and Censure in Medieval Egypt – a methodological challenge" at *Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion (AAR regional)*, Atlanta GA, Mar. 2008
32. "Visual Culture and the Problem of Shi'ism in Sunni Sufism" at *Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting*, Montreal QC, Nov. 2007
31. "Sufism and the State: Aesthetics and the Ritual Assertion of Power" at *Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion (AAR regional)*, Nashville TN, Mar. 2007
30. "Is this the end of Medieval Sufism? " at *Sufism in Egypt and the Islamic World in the Ottoman Era (16th-18th C.)*, Cairo, Egypt, Jan. 2007
29. "Sufi Elites and the Discourses of Power: problems of definition and category" at *Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting*, Boston MA, Nov. 2006
28. "The Shaykhs of the Wafa'iyya in Mamluk Cairo: Aesthetics of a Rival Power" at *The Exercise of Power in the Age of the Sultanates / L'exercice du pouvoir à l'âge des sultanats. Production, manifestation, réception*, Cairo, Egypt, March 2006
27. "Sufism as a Problem in Social History" at *Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting*, Washington DC, Nov. 2005
26. "A 14th Century Inheritance of Ibn 'Arabi's Hermeneutics -- the *Nafa'is al-'irfan* of Muhammad Wafa'" at *Symbolisme et herméneutique dans la pensée d'Ibn 'Arabi*, Damascus, Syria, July 2005
25. "The Ontology of the Master-Disciple Relationship: the shaykhs of the Wafa'iyya" at *American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting* (national), San Antonio TX, Nov. 2004
24. "The Cairo of Maimonides" at *Maimonides and His Milieu*, Vanderbilt University, Nov. 2004
23. "Spiritual Discipline and Union according to Muhammad Wafa' (d. 1363)" at *Muhyiddin ibn 'Arabi Society 17th annual USA symposium*, Bellevue WA, Oct. 2004
22. "Alī Wafā (d.807/1404) on the Ultimate Saint" at *Le développement du soufisme en Égypte à l'époque mamelouke*, Cairo, Egypt, May 2003
21. "Strategies for Sanctification: the building activities of the Sadat al-Wafa'iyya in their Medieval Context" at *Spaces and Places of Virtue: The Dynamics of Sanctification*, Los Angeles CA, May 2003
20. "La présence Akbarienne dans une branche égyptienne de la Shādhiliyya" at *Une école spirituelle soufi dans le monde: la Shadhiliyya*, Alexandria, Egypt, April 2003
19. "The Sufi Intellectual Tradition of Medieval Cairo" at *Canadian Embassy*, Cairo, Egypt, Jan. 2003
18. "The Mystical Tradition of Islam" at *Brock University*, St.Catharines ON, Nov. 2002
17. "The Appropriation of Apocalyptic Themes in the Medieval Shadhiliyya Order" at *World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies*, (J.A.M.E.S.) Mainz, Germany, Sept. 2002
16. "Social Criticism and Sufi Ritual in 14th and 15th Century Cairo" at *Les pratiques culturelles dans la société égyptienne*, Cairo, Egypt, June 2002
15. "New Sources for the Study of Sufism in Mamluk Egypt" at the *American Research Centre in Egypt*, Cairo, Egypt, Jan. 2002.
14. "Le concept de "sainteté" au Caire à l'époque médiévale" *Séminaire de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale*, Cairo, Egypt, Nov. 2001
13. "Islamic Sainthood: from Virtue to Apocalypse" at *Canadian Society for the Study of Religion (C.S.S.H.)*, Quebec City QC, May 2001
12. "Islamic Prayer Recitations: Text, Performance and Sanctity" at *American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting* (Eastern regional) Ithaca NY, March 2001

11. "An Egyptian Inheritor of the Akbarian Tradition: Muhammad Wafa" at *American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting* (national), Nashville TN, Nov. 2000
10. "A Renovator of Religion at the Turn of Each Century -- A Sufi Theory of Cyclical Time" at *American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting* (Eastern regional) Syracuse NY, April 2000
9. "The Islamic Understanding of Sainthood" at *Saints and the Sacred* St. Michael's College, University of Toronto, Toronto ON, Feb. 2000
8. "La sainteté dans la pensée d'Ibn Bâkhlî: un grand maître shâdhilî du 8è/14è siècle" at round-table: *Le saint et son milieu: ou comment lire les sources hagiographiques?* Cairo, Egypt, April 1999
7. "Spiritual Authority in Medieval Egypt: the Seal of Sainthood and the Wafa'iyya" at *Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting*, Chicago IL, Dec. 1998
6. "Sha'rani as Popularizer of Ibn 'Arabi: a second look at a medieval editor" at *American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting* (Eastern regional), Toronto ON, April 1998
5. "Function and Authority in Islamic Prayer Compositions" at *Avoda and Ibada: Liturgy and Ritual in Islamic and Judaic Traditions*, University of Denver; Center for Judaic Studies, Denver CO, March 1998
4. "The Presence of "Neo-Sufism" in Traditional Sufi Theory" at Society of Islamic Philosophy and Science / I.G.C.S., Binghamton NY, Oct. 1996
3. "Commentary on a Sufi Prayer: the structure of Shah Wali Allah's Hawami' (Sharh Hizb al-Bahr)" at the *American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting* (national), Chicago IL, Nov. 1994
2. "The Experience of Miracle and Metaphor in the Qur'an" at Society of Islamic Philosophy and Science / I.G.C.S., Binghamton NY, Oct. 1994
1. "Intertextuality and the Prayers of the Shadhiliyya" at the *Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting*, Research Park Triangle NC, Oct. 1993

Entries:

- "Ali ibn Muhammad Wafa" (983 words), "Al-Ansari, Abu Zakariyya" (1006 words), "Dardir, Ahmad" (876 words) in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (3rd ed.)
- "Mysticism in Islam" in the *Encyclopedia of Sciences and Religions* ed. N. Azari (503 words)
- "Myth" in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity* ed. D. Patte (362 words)
- Gabriel, Israfil, Preserved Tablet, Angels, Remembrance, Tawakkul, and Dhakara in *The Qur'an: an Encyclopedia* O. Leaman ed. (Oxon: Routledge, 2006) (5218 words)
- "Wafa'iyya" in *Chicago On-Line Encyclopedia of Mamluk Studies* January 2005, B. Craig editor (1168 words)
- "Mysticism, Islamic" entry in *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas* (NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2004) (1021 words)
- "Ibn al-Arabi" entry in *Reference Guide to World Literature* (Detroit: St. James Press 2003) (1433 words)

Book reviews and notes:

21. "The Prophet's Ascension: cross-cultural encounters with the Islamic *mi'raj* tales" in *Review of Middle East Studies* 44.2, 2010 (727 words)
20. "Objects in Translation: material culture and Medieval 'Hindu-Muslim' Encounter, F.B. Flood" in *Material Religion: the Journal of Objects, Art, and Belief* 6.3, 2009 (877 words)
19. "Spiritual Wayfarers, Leaders in Piety: Sufis and the Dissemination of Islam in Medieval Palestine, D. Ephrat" in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 36, 2009 (1481 words)
18. "Defining Islam: a Reader, Andrew Rippin" in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 2008 (1443 words)

17. "Islamisches Biderverbot vom Mittel- bis ins Digitalzeitalter, Almir Ibric" in *Philosophy East and West* 58.2 April, 2008 (875 words)
16. "In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the life of Muhammad, Tariq Ramadan" in *The Christian Century* May, 2007 (943 words)
15. "Ahmad Subhi Mansur's *al-'Aqa'id al-diniyya fi Misr al-Mamlukiyya; bayn al-Islam wa al-Tasawwuf*" in *Mamluk Studies Review* vol. 11, no.1, January 2007 (924 words)
14. "Islam and Global Dialogue: Religious Pluralism and the Pursuit of Peace" Book note in *Religious Studies Review*. 2007 (165 words)
13. "A Prayer for Spiritual Elevation and Protection; *al-Dawr al-a'la*, S. Taji-Farouki" *Journal of the Muhy al-Din Ibn Arabi Society* 42, 2007 (584 words)
12. "Struggle for the Soul of Islam: Anxious Muslims" Review essay in *The Christian Century* Nov. 2006 (3100 words)
11. "Helena Hallenberg's *Ibrahim Dasuqi (1255-1296); a saint invented*" in *Mamluk Studies Review* vol. 10, 2006 (1004 words)
10. "Love is all you need... al-Qaysari on Ibn al-Farid's Wine Ode" (review of Th. Emil Homerin ed. and trans. *The Wine of Love and Life: Ibn al-Farid's al-Khamriyah and al-Qaysari's Quest for Meaning*) in *The Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 41, 2004 (412 words)
9. "A pillar of fire is over his grave -- Saints and Shrines in Medieval Syria" (review of J. Meri's *The Cult of Saints among Muslims and Jews in Medieval Syria*) on *H-Net, Humanities and Social Sciences OnLine*, May 2004 (1337 words)
8. "Representations of the Divine in Arabic Poetry, G. Borg ed." in *Religious Studies Review*, 2004 (430 words)
7. "A Rumi for All Seasons" (review of F. Lewis's *Rumi; Past and Present, East and West*) on *H-Net, Humanities and Social Sciences OnLine*, Aug. 2003 (1191 words)
6. "The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: custodians of change, M. Zaman" *Islamic Studies*, 42.2, 2003 (1225 words)
5. "Zwei Mystische Schriften des 'Ammar al-Bidlisi, E. Badeen ed." *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin* 36.1, 2002 (512 words)
4. "Consciousness and Reality: studies in memory of Toshihiko Izutsu, J. Ashtiyani et al eds." *MESA Bulletin* 36.1, 2002 (808 words)
3. "The Medium and the Light: reflections on religion, Marshall McLuhan" *Religious Studies Review* 28.1, 2002 (221 words)
2. "The Way of Abu Madyan, V. Cornell" and "Ibn 'Ata Allah, The Key to Salvation, M. Danner trans." *JUSUR, the U.C.L.A. Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 1997 (1529 words)
1. "The Seal of the Saints, M. Chodkiewicz" *JUSUR* 1996 (2671 words)

Professional Activities:

- * Collegium Phaenomenologicum participant (Philosophy, Truth, and the Claims of Art) Città di Castello, Umbria, Italy, July 11-29, 2011.
- * Facilitator for *Contesting Iconoclasm: Bodies and Violence as Problems for Comparative Religion*, a round-table discussion; one of eight discussion groups in the "Rethinking Islamic Studies Workshop: Gender, Sexuality, and Bodies in the Text" AAR national meeting, Nov. 2011

Conference Organizing:

- * *Le soufisme en Égypte et dans le monde musulman à l'époque ottomane (16e-18e siècles)*
(Cairo, Egypt. Final Colloquium 15-18th of January 2007)
- * *Exercising Power in the Age of the Sultanates / L'exercice du pouvoir à l'âge des sultanats*
(Cairo, Egypt. Final Colloquium 24, 25th of March 2006)
The project linked French, American, and Egyptian scholars through two research centers in Cairo, the American Research Center in Egypt and the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale. Funded by grants from the Department of Education (USA) and the Ministry of Education (France), this project elaborated a new periodization in the history of the Islamic world derived from its own sources. A two-volume work, edited by Bierman and Denoix is forthcoming.
- * *Le développement du soufisme en Égypte à l'époque mamelouke: colloque international*
(Cairo, Egypt. Final Colloquium 26-29 of May 2003)
- * *Les pratiques culturelles dans la société égyptienne (13e-18e s.)*
(Cairo, Egypt. 2001-2002)

Language proficiency:

Good command of classical Arabic; good command of Egyptian dialect; reading ability in Persian; fluent in French; reading proficiency in German. Have also studied modern Turkish and Spanish.