

articles, continued to spend enormous amounts of time meeting the insatiable demands of the media, taught large numbers of both graduates and undergraduates at Columbia – scores of whom today teach at universities all over the world – and lectured to huge, rapt audiences on every continent.

Edward Said was an extraordinary figure, one who was truly appreciated in the academy and in arenas of cultural and intellectual life the world over. Like Noam Chomsky and very few others, he managed not only to reshape his own field of scholarly endeavor, but to transcend it, influencing other fields and disciplines, and going well beyond the narrow boundaries of the American academy to become a true public intellectual, and a passionate voice for humanistic values and justice in an imperfect world.

Rashid Khalidi
Columbia University

Annemarie Schimmel (1922-2003)

Honorary Fellow of MESA

Annemarie Schimmel, pre-eminent scholar in the study of Sufism, Indo-Muslim culture, Arabic calligraphy, and many other fields of Islamic studies, passed away January 26, 2003 at the age of 80.

Raised in Erfurt, Germany, Schimmel at an early age was attracted to Islamic culture, and when she was fifteen insisted that her parents get her a tutor so that she could learn Arabic. She earned two doctorates from German universities, the first from Berlin in Arabic and Islamic studies at the age of nineteen, and the second, ten years later, from Marburg in the history of religion. Her principal teacher in Islamic studies was Hans Heinrich Schaeder, while in religious studies she was particularly influenced by Friedrich Heiler, a Christian theologian who was fully alive to the experiential dimension of religion. Throughout her career, she combined a rigorous philological approach with the empathetic perspective of comparative religion. She was a master of Arabic (including serving as longtime co-editor of the Arabic journal *Fikrun wa Fann*) as well as Persian, Turkish, and a number of languages of the Indian subcontinent. Her interest in these "non-classical" fields made her a maverick in terms of German Orientalism, though she was fond of tracing the contributions of her predecessors such as Josef Hammer-Purgstall, Ernst Trumpp, Aloys Sprenger, and Friedrich Ruckert. Her commitment to comparative religion was recognized by her election as President of the International Association for the History of Religions (1980-1990). She was herself a poet both in English and German, and her translations of the poetry of Rumi, Iqbal, and even John Donne into German verse won wide recognition.

After an initial appointment teaching in Marburg (1947-54), in 1954 she was offered a position in the Divinity (Ilahiyat) faculty of the University of Ankara, where she taught for five years, lecturing in Turkish. She subsequently taught again at Marburg (1961-67) and then from 1967 to 1992 at Harvard, holding the Ozai-Durrani chair in Indo-Muslim culture. After her retirement, she continued to give seminars and lectures at the University of Bonn, which established a chair in her honor in 1997.

The bibliography of Schimmel's writings touches on most major aspects of Islamic culture, in over eighty books (with forty titles published after her retirement) plus dozens of articles. She first wrote on the Arabic histories of the Mamluk sultans of Egypt, and also translated selections from Ibn Khaldun. Her great love, however, was the Persian poetry of Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi, to whom she devoted many studies. While at Ankara she witnessed first hand the power of the folk tradition of Turkish poetry, which was only the first of many vernacular traditions she would explore. After Rumi, it was probably the Sufi martyr Hallaj who most attracted Schimmel's interest, expressed in several volumes of translations.

In 1958 Schimmel made the first of many visits to Pakistan, where her exposure to Sindhi led to studies on Shah `Abd al-Latif of Bhit, published together with an essay on the Urdu Sufi poet Khwajah Mir Dard, under the punning title *Pain and Grace* (*dard* means "pain," while *latif* means "graceful"). Other writings dealt with the later Naqshbandis, the folk literature of Sind, the Persian poetry of Ghalib, major figures in Punjabi and Siraiki, etc. She wrote the first major study of Muhammad Iqbal's religious thought (*Gabriel's Wing*), *Calligraphy and Islamic Culture*, anthologies of German translations from Persian poetry, Turkish novels, and modern Arabic verse, plus several travel books. Her study of the veneration of the Prophet Muhammad (*And Muhammad is His Messenger*) was a landmark in the appreciation of this important aspect of Islamic religiosity. Her *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, 1976; expanded German version, Freiburg, 1985) at once became the standard handbook on the subject of Sufism, combining careful and wide-ranging scholarship with a direct and approachable style making it an excellent introduction. She consulted frequently with art historians at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, especially on calligraphy and poetic texts. Her scholarship was based on a long historical perspective and careful study of language and style; one notable emphasis in her studies is the tracing of metaphors and motifs through the various Islamicate languages, to reveal the continuity of trends of thought (*A Two-Coloured Brocade: The Imagery of Persian Poetry*). She returned to the history of religions approach in her 1992 Gifford Lectures on Natural Theology, published as *Deciphering the Signs of God: A Phenomenological Approach to Islam* (Edinburgh, 1994). The overall effect of Schimmel's studies is to present a comprehensive view of the integrity of Islamic culture, combined with a strong appreciation of the diversity of regional expressions.

Among the many honorary degrees and awards she received were the University of Tübingen's Lucas Prize for inter-religious understanding, plus Pakistan's highest civilian award; there is also a street in Lahore named after her. Controversy followed the award to her of the Peace Prize (1995) from the German publishing industry, when a number of German intellectuals criticized her for lecturing in Muslim countries with poor human rights records and for disapproving of Salman Rushdie's novel, *The Satanic Verses*. She was honored by two Festschriften: *Gott is schön und Er liebt die Schönheit/God is Beautiful and He Loves Beauty*, ed. Alma Giese and J. Christoph Bürgel (Bern, 1994); and a special issue of the *Journal of Turkish Studies* (vol. 18, 1994), ed. Maria Eva Subtelny (with bibliography). Her autobiography, *Morgenland und Abendland: mein west-östliches Leben*, appeared in 2002.

Annemarie Schimmel was dedicated to creating bridges of understanding through which Europeans and Americans could appreciate the spirituality and aesthetic values of Muslim cultures. Her contributions in this enterprise were extensive, and she also had a major impact on Muslims around the world, who saw her as the example of how a non-Muslim could become a sympathetic interpreter of Islam. Her erudition was combined with an extraordinary generosity that was shared among her many students and colleagues. She left an unforgettable impression on all who knew her, and her many contributions will provide an enduring legacy for the field of Islamic studies.

Carl Ernst
University of North Carolina

John D. Gerhart (1943 – 2003)

It is with deep sorrow that I inform you of the passing of our beloved President Emeritus, John D. Gerhart. He died at home in New York City on July 15, 2003 after a valiant battle with cancer.

John was President of the American University in Cairo from September 1998 to September 2002, when he resigned for reasons of health. As President Emeritus, he remained active in the affairs of AUC, raising funds for the new campus and counseling the university administration and the trustees. Upon his retirement, John was prominently recognized for his exemplary accomplishments. President Hosni Mubarak awarded him Egypt's Decoration of Arts and Science, First Class. Dr. Moufid Shehab, Minister of Higher Education and Minister of State for Scientific Research also presented him with a special award for his contributions to education. And in June 2002, John received an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humane Letters from AUC. His last public function in Cairo was to preside over the official groundbreaking ceremony for AUC's new campus in February 2003, when he introduced the campus design to the distinguished