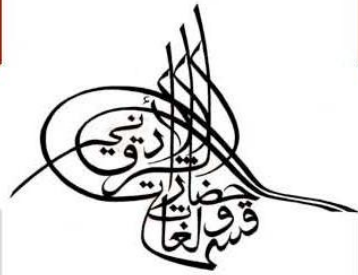


DEPARTMENT OF
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Please Join Us for the Eighth Annual
Victor Danner Memorial Lecture

**“Qurrat al-‘Ayn: Reflections
on Poetry, Mysticism, and
Civilization in the Seventh
Century Hijra”**

Presented by:
Professor Michael Sells
University of Chicago

7:30 p.m.
April 19, 2010
University Club, IMU
Reception to follow

The politically chaotic seventh century witnessed an efflorescence of lyric poetry across the realms of Islamdom and Christendom. Shared currents in poetic taste, mystical theology, and ecstatic utterance appear in the Arabic poetry of Ibn al-Farid, Ibn al-‘Arabi, and Abu al-Hasan al-Shushtari; the Persian of Rumi; the Turkish of Yunus Emre; the Dutch of Hadewijch; and the French of Marguerite Porete, to mention but a few examples. Some of the above-mentioned poets would have known of one another—Ibn al-‘Arabi, Ibn al-Farid, and Rumi, for example, may have met—yet they seem to have gone out of their way to avoid explicit mention of one another. In this address, I will read Ibn al-‘Arabi's love lyric with attention to the erotics of cultural difference, particularly as expressed through the categories of ‘Arab and ‘Ajam (non-Arab or Persian). This poetry not only reflected the coming together of international currents, but placed that intercultural encounter within the lovers' union or *wasl*.