



Seminar

ANTHONY LAPPIN

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*Christian Views of Islam at the End of the Middle Ages:
How the Qur'an was Understood by Neo-Platonists and Philo-Kabbalists*

Thursday, 5 March, 4:15 p.m.

In the Thunberg Lecture Hall
SCAS, Linneanum, Thunbergsvägen 2, Uppsala
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S W E D I S H
C O L L E G I U M
for ADVANCED STUDY

ABOUT ANTHONY LAPPIN

Anthony John Lappin studied at Magdalen College, University of Oxford, where he gained his D.Phil. After a Junior Research Fellowship and a Temporary Lectureship at The Queen's College, University of Oxford, he was employed as a lecturer in the Department of Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies at the University of Manchester, followed by a period as Professor of Spanish at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. He is currently on the monographs' board of *Medium Ævum*, having served as the Society's president for the last five years.

Lappin's research has focused upon medieval religious history and literature, with a particular interest in hagiography, monasticism and especially Christian–Muslim relations.

A recent Leverhulme Trust Award allowed him to begin work on the earliest Latin translation of the *Qur'an*, the *Alchoran latinus* from, carried out by Robert of Ketton and Herman of Dalmatia at the behest of Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny. The translation was enormously popular in the Middle Ages and early modern period, and two editions of different states of the text have been published: *Alchoran Latinus, I: Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal ms. 1142* and *III: Editiones Theodori Bibliandri* (Rome: Aracne, 2012–2013). Whilst at SCAS, Lappin will be working towards an edition of the numerous marginal annotations to the text, with particular attention to those that originated in neo-Platonist and philo-Kabbalistic circles towards the end of the fifteenth century.

Previous publications include studies of hagiography (*Berceo's 'Vida de Santa Oria'* [Legenda, 2000] and *The Medieval Cult of Saint Dominic of Silos* [Maney Publishing, MHRA Texts and Dissertations, 2002]), medieval poetry (*Gonzalo de Berceo: The Poet and His Verses* [Tamesis, 2008]) and articles on the development of monasticism and on various authors (e.g. Gil Vicente, Cervantes, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz) between the medieval and baroque periods.

ABSTRACT

The first Latin translation of the *Qur'an* was completed in 1143 and published from Cluny some time after that. Despite the existence of other translations of the *Qur'an* into Latin by the fifteenth century, it became the translation of choice amongst theologians and philosophers in, primarily, Italy. Part of the new-found interest in Islamic doctrine and belief was manifested in a new set of glosses, or marginal annotations, that were circulated with a new edition of the translation, and were eventually separated from it, circulating in manuscript and then in a printed (and commented) version in the middle of the sixteenth century. These and other annotations evidence a serious philosophical enquiry into metaphysical questions raised by the text and its elevation into something approaching a “deutero-canonical” authority. I will contrast this approach with the growing anti-Islamic and apocalyptic literature which dealt with the Islamic, and more usually, Ottoman, menace as experienced in the Mediterranean world and into newly-Protestant Germany.