

Jonathan Brack

Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, and Mongols: Religious Encounters and Polemics in Medieval Iran

Guest Lecture

Tuesday, 5 December 2023

6:00-8:00 pm

Language: English

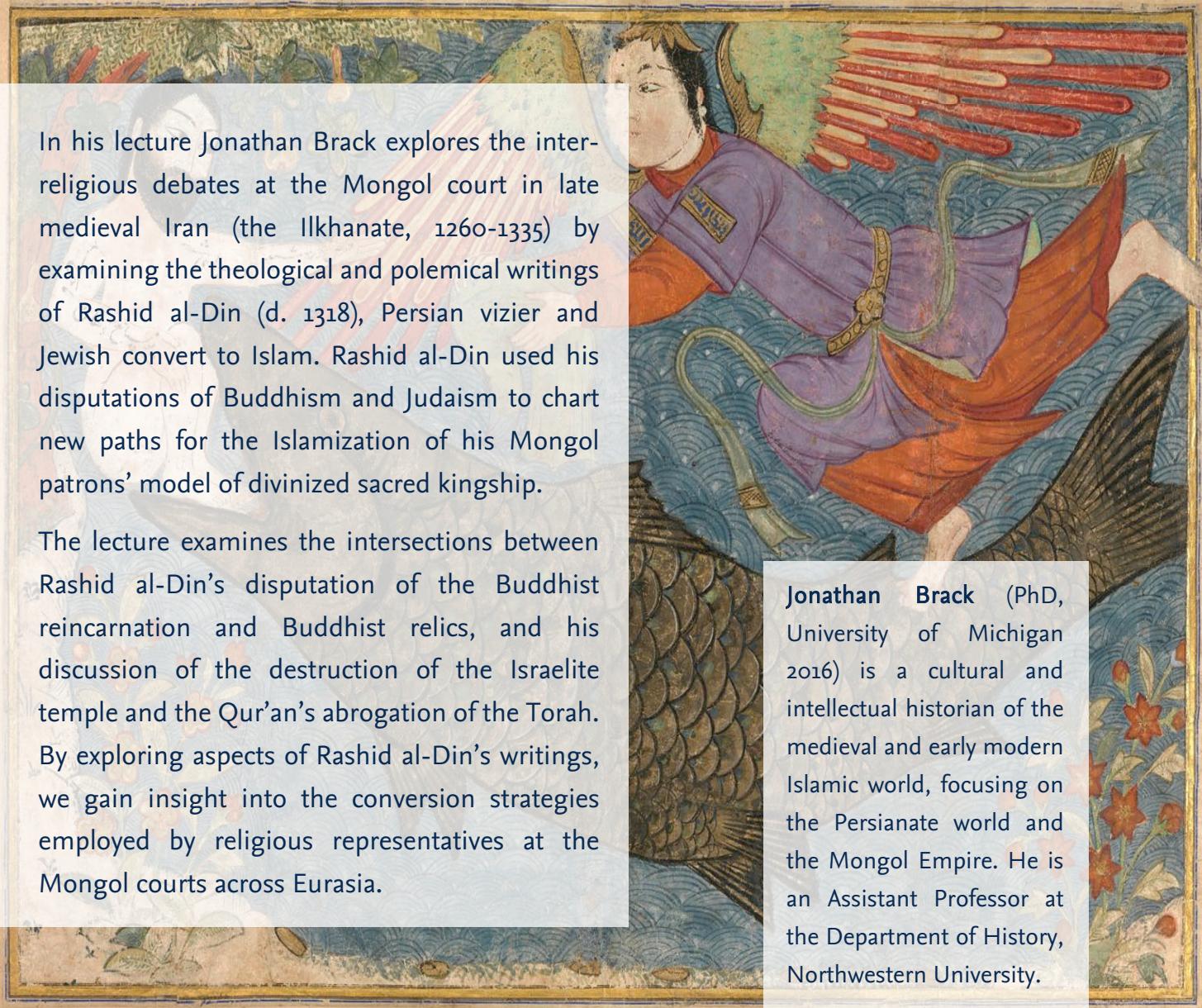
Room 2.2059

Fabeckstr. 23/25

14195 Berlin

In his lecture Jonathan Brack explores the inter-religious debates at the Mongol court in late medieval Iran (the Ilkhanate, 1260-1335) by examining the theological and polemical writings of Rashid al-Din (d. 1318), Persian vizier and Jewish convert to Islam. Rashid al-Din used his disputations of Buddhism and Judaism to chart new paths for the Islamization of his Mongol patrons' model of divinized sacred kingship.

The lecture examines the intersections between Rashid al-Din's disputation of the Buddhist reincarnation and Buddhist relics, and his discussion of the destruction of the Israelite temple and the Qur'an's abrogation of the Torah. By exploring aspects of Rashid al-Din's writings, we gain insight into the conversion strategies employed by religious representatives at the Mongol courts across Eurasia.



Jonathan Brack (PhD, University of Michigan 2016) is a cultural and intellectual historian of the medieval and early modern Islamic world, focusing on the Persianate world and the Mongol Empire. He is an Assistant Professor at the Department of History, Northwestern University.