

# IRCPPL

institute for religion, culture, and public life  
at Columbia University in the City of New York



2014-15 Annual Report

# Mission Statement

The revitalization of religion in the last four decades has taken many scholars and analysts by surprise. They believed that modernization, secularization, and the privatization of religion would affect the world globally, leading to overall patterns of religious decline. What has happened is quite different and more complex. While religion has declined in some societies and grown in others, it has also changed and evolved in different ways in a variety of contexts. This transformation of religion, long-standing or novel, impacts our world in key ways. From the rise of religious movements, to the role of religion in politics and to the much more spirited engagement of religion in the public sphere and the public lives of adherents we experience religion in many different ways.

To address this unexpected and rapidly changing situation, the IRCPL brings together scholars and students in religion, cultural anthropology, history, political science, economics, sociology and social psychology, and other allied fields to support multi-disciplinary analysis, reflection, and response to historical and contemporary issues of great significance. Founded in 2008, the Institute also engages in its programs political and economic figures and policy practitioners, as well as religious and cultural leaders. The scope of the Institute encompasses a broad range of phenomena and while seeking to understand the bases of conflict and unrest across and within religions, it also examines beliefs, practices, and historical examples that demonstrate the potential for understanding, tolerance, and ecumenical values within religious traditions, as well as patterns of social institutions that may facilitate coexistence and mutual support. By taking an expansive rather than a restricted view of religious thought and practice, the Institute recasts the traditional opposition between the secular and the religious in ways that promote innovative approaches to familiar problems.

## Contact us

### **Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life**

**80 Claremont Avenue, Room 203, MC 9611**

**New York, NY 10027**

**[ircpl.org](http://ircpl.org)**

**Tel. 212-851-4145 • Fax. 212-851-4126**

**[info@ircpl.org](mailto:info@ircpl.org)**

## Contents

1 - 5	People & Partners
6 - 9	Projects & Centers
10 - 17	Selected Events

# IRCPL

Institute for religion, culture, & public life

## Director



[Karen Barkey](#) is Professor of Sociology and History and Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Sociology Department at Columbia University. Her work is in comparative and historical sociology, focusing particularly on the study of states, empires, and movements of opposition to the state, with special emphasis on their transformation over time. Professor Barkey has written about state society relations with focus on the religious and ethnic groups in the Ottoman empire as well as the rise of nationalism in the Balkans. Professor Barkey's latest work, *Empire of Difference* (Cambridge UP, 2008), is a comparative study of the flexibility and longevity of imperial systems, and was awarded the 2009 Barrington Moore Award from the Comparative Historical Sociology section at American Sociology Association, as well as the 2009 J. David Greenstone Book Prize from the Politics and History section at the Political Science Association. She is co-editor of *Choreography of Sacred Spaces: State, Religion and Conflict Resolution* (Columbia UP, 2014), which explores the history of shared religious spaces in the Balkans, Anatolia, and Palestine/Israel.

## Associate Director



[Josef Sorett](#) is Assistant Professor of Religion and African-American Studies and Associate Director of the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life (IRCPL) at Columbia University. Professor Sorett is also the founding director of the Center on African American Religion, Sexual Politics and Social Justice (CARSS), which is located within Columbia's Institute for Research in African-American Studies (IRAAS). His research has been supported with grants from the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, the Louisville Institute for the Study of American Religion, and the Fund for Theological Education (now the Forum for Theological Exploration). He has published essays and reviews in *Culture and Religion*, *Callaloo*, the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, and *PNEUMA: Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*. His current book project, *Spirit in the Dark: A Religious History of Racial Aesthetics* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2015) illumines how religion has figured in debates about black art and culture. He is also editing an anthology that is tentatively titled *The Sexual Politics of Black Churches*.

## Staff

Assistant Director [Walid Hammam](#) joined the IRCPL in July, 2014. He has worked at American University and UNICEF, and brings to the Institute a background in international affairs and policy analysis.

Program Coordinator [Jessica Lilien](#) has been involved in academic event and media coordination for nearly ten years, including previous experience at Brown University and with the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality at Columbia University.

# Advisory Committee

Courtney Bender is Professor of Religion at Columbia University.

Souleymane Bachir Diagne is Professor of French in the Department of French and Romance Philology.

Elazar Barkan is Professor of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University, Director of SIPA's Human Rights Concentration, and Director of Columbia's Institute for the Study of Human Rights.

Jean Cohen is the Nell and Herbert M. Signer Professor of Contemporary Civilization in the Core Curriculum.

Mamadou Diouf is the Leitner Family Professor of African Studies and the Director of Columbia University's Institute for African Studies.

Ira Katznelson is the Ruggles Professor of Political Science and History and Director of the Social Science Research Council.

Sudipta Kaviraj is Professor of Indian Politics and Intellectual History at Columbia University.

Claudio Lomnitz is the Campbell Family Professor of Anthropology.

Nadia Urbinati is the Kyriakos Tsakopoulos Professor of Political Theory and Hellenic Studies.

# Affiliated Faculty



Rajeev Bhargava is Senior Fellow and Director, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies in Delhi. He is the author of *Individualism in Social Science* (1992 and 2008), editor of *Civil Society, Public Sphere and Citizenship: Dialogues and Perceptions* (2005) and co-editor of *Transforming India* (2000). He has also edited *Secularism and its Critics* (1998) and co-edited *Multiculturalism, Liberalism and Democracy* (1999).



Wayne te Brake is Kempner Distinguished Professor of History at Purchase College, SUNY. He is the author of *Shaping History: Ordinary People in European Politics, 1500-1700* (California, 1998), and *Regents and Rebels: The Revolutionary World of an Eighteenth Century Dutch City* (Blackwell, 1989). The recipient of research grants from the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation and the Ford Foundation, Professor Te Brake is currently completing a book (forthcoming with Cambridge University Press) on Europe's religious wars and their settlements.

# Distinguished Visiting Scholars



George Rupp is Columbia University President Emeritus; senior fellow at the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs; adjunct professor of religion, public health, and international affairs at Columbia University; and a founding principal at NEXT: Transition Advisors. Dr. Rupp served as President of the International Rescue Committee from 2002 to 2013. Before joining the IRC, Dr. Rupp served as President of Columbia University for nine years, where he focused on enhancing undergraduate education, on strengthening campus ties to surrounding communities and New York City as a whole, and on increasing the university's international orientation.



Emad Shahin is Professor of Public Policy at the School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP), the American University in Cairo (AUC) and editor-in-chief of *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Politics*. He is currently a Public Policy Scholar at Woodrow Wilson Center. Before rejoining the AUC faculty in 2012, Shahin was the Henry R. Luce Associate Professor of Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding at the University of Notre Dame's Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies (2009-2012).



## Visiting Research Scholars

[Mona El-Ghobashy](#) is an independent scholar who writes on Egyptian politics and popular movements. Her work has appeared in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, *American Behavioral Scientist*, *Middle East Report*, *Boston Review*, and edited volumes. Supported by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation, she is writing a book on Egyptian citizens' use of street protests and court petitions to reclaim their rights before and after the 2011 uprising.

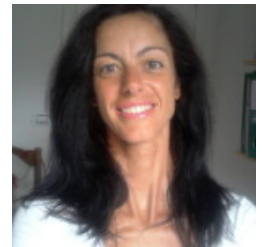
[George Gavrillis](#) recently served as Executive Director of the Hollings Center for International Dialogue (Washington, DC and Istanbul, Turkey). Previously, he was as an International Affairs Fellow with the Council on Foreign Relations and worked with the United Nations on various policy initiatives on Central Asia and Afghanistan. He is author of *The Dynamics of Interstate Boundaries* (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[Khatija Haneef](#) is a graduate student in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Cape Town. Her dissertation explores Nietzsche's influence on Muslim thinkers whose works may have inspired radical Islamism.

[Marthe Hesselmans](#) is a PhD Candidate at Boston University, currently living in New York. Her research investigates religious responses to globalization and diversity. She studies the transition of South Africa's Reformed churches away from the rigid racial segregation they long endorsed. She has been an Earhart Fellow from 2010 to 2014.

[Manjari Mahajan](#) is an Assistant Professor at the International Affairs Program of the New School University. Her research interests are in the history and politics of health, environment, and science in the global South. She is currently working on a book on the AIDS epidemics in India and South Africa.

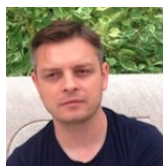
[Debora Tonelli](#) is Researcher at the Bruno Kessler Foundation and Invited Lecturer in Political Philosophy and Theology at Pontifical Athenaeum S. Anselmo and at Gregoriana University. Moving from her background in Political Philosophy and Theology, her current research is focused on the interaction between those two main fields, specifically inside the wider context of interreligious dialogue, with a key focus on the relationship between violence and biblical religion.



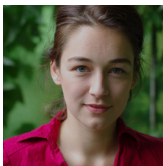
## Post-Doctoral Researchers



[Claudia E. Haupt](#) is a doctoral candidate at Columbia Law School. Her research focuses on constitutional theory, the First Amendment, and comparative constitutional law.



[Dimitris C. Papadopoulos](#) has been a Marie Curie Fellow at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London and a Visiting Scholar at the Program of Hellenic Studies, Columbia University. He teaches cultural anthropology at Lehman College, CUNY. At IRCPL, Dimitris works on tools and approaches towards understanding, mapping, and analyzing historical transformations of mixed and shared sacred sites in the post-Ottoman world.



[Saskia Schäfer](#) completed her doctorate at the Graduate School of Muslim Cultures and Societies at Freie Universität Berlin. Her research interests include political and media discourses on orthodoxy and deviance as well as changes in Islamic and political authority and the relationship between religion and the state in Indonesia and Malaysia. She came to New York as the 2013/2014 Postdoctoral Fellow in Modern Southeast Asian Studies at the Weatherhead East Asian Institute.

## Graduate Researchers

Matthew Ghazarian is a PhD candidate at MESAAS.

Vatsal Naresh is a graduate student in Political Science at Columbia University.

Nathanael Shelley is a PhD candidate in MESAAS.

Jonathan Thumas is an MA student in the Department of Religion at Columbia University.

Callie Wallace is a law student at Columbia University.

## IRCPL Graduate Fellows

John Chen is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at Columbia University. His dissertation, tentatively titled “Re-Orientaion: The Chinese Azharites between Islamic World and Third World, 1931-55,” is a history of a group of Chinese Muslim scholars who studied at Cairo’s Azhar University in the 1930s and 1940s.

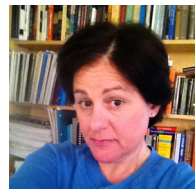
Susanna Ferguson is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at Columbia University. Her research focuses on the social and intellectual history of women and gender in the modern Arab world, Arab feminist thought and practice in the 20th century, and questions about women and gender in modern Islamic movements.

Wendell Hassan Marsh is a doctoral student in the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies and the Institute of Comparative Literature and Society. His research interrogates the Islamic library in Africa as a locus of knowledge production and circulation, and he is particularly interested in milieux associated with the Tijaniyya Sufi brotherhood.

Deborah Shulevitz is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at Columbia University. Her research centers on the intersection between economic development and religious dissent in thirteenth century France and Italy. Her dissertation will address the relationship between the sins of heresy and usury in that period.

## IRCPL/AHDA Human Rights Fellow

Rana Tanveer is the IRCPL / AHDA Human Rights Fellow. He works as a Senior Reporter with The *Express Tribune*, a publishing partner of *International New York Times*. As a journalist, Rana is passionate about covering issues relating to religious minorities and human rights. He has become particularly interested in the Ahmadi religious minority and the discrimination this community faces.



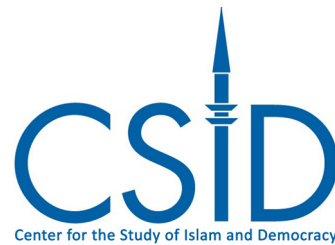
## Event & Office Assistants

Menna Elsayed is a Sociology major at Columbia University.

Rivka Nichols Rappoport is a graduating senior majoring in Film Studies at Columbia University. She has been with the IRCPL for four years.

Megan Elizabeth Stater is third-year Religion major at Columbia University.

# Institutional & Publishing Partners



# Centers & Projects

The Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life is host to a multitude of projects, groups, and centers that bring together scholars, students, policy practitioners, and religious and cultural leaders to explore different facets of the current worldwide resurgence of religion, and to apply careful analysis and constructive criticism to new forms of intolerance as well as to new approaches to tolerance, respect, mutual understanding, and accommodation. These groups produce new scholarship which culminates in conferences, workshops, book and journal publications, documentaries, radio broadcasts, blogs, exhibitions, and more, and endeavor to support activism and social and political progress in a variety of ways.

In 2014, the IRCPL's Center for Democracy, Toleration, and Religion was awarded a three-year grant from the Henry R. Luce Initiative on Religion and International Affairs to continue to examine how societies are rethinking and remodeling ideas and practices of religious accommodation to create more democratic outcomes and more inclusive cultures. The first three projects listed here - Islam, Democracy, and Pluralism; Shared Sacred Spaces and the Politics of Pluralism; and Sufi Islam in 21st Century Politics - were all made possible through this grant, and the continued support of the Henry Luce Foundation.

## Islam, Democracy, and Pluralism

The Islam, Democracy, and Pluralism project works to foster discussion between political leaders, activists, and academics in an attempt to encourage the development of greater moderation and accommodation within political discourse. The work centers on two gatherings that bring together academics and political leaders from India, Senegal, and Indonesia with leaders from Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, and Tunisia to facilitate greater understanding of the different ways countries have successfully (and unsuccessfully) related to pluralism while negotiating with the beliefs and demands of religious populations.



With Reflections on Indonesia, India, & Egypt

Keynote Address (12:00pm Friday):

**Rached Ghannouchi** (Founder of the Ennahdha Party, Tunisia)

Featuring papers, presentations, and discussions from:

Karen Barkey (Columbia University), Hicham Bou Nassif (Carleton College), Nathan Brown (George Washington University), Larissa Chamiak (Centre d'Etudes Maghrébines a Tunis), Nader Hashemi (University of Denver), Donald L. Horowitz (Duke University), Sudipta Kaviraj (Columbia University), Monica Marks (St. Antony's College, Oxford), Bahwan Masmoudi (President, Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, Tunis and Washington DC), Jeremy Menchik (Boston University), Enad Shahin (Georgetown University, American University in Cairo, Columbia University), Alfred Stepan (Columbia University), Carrie Wickham (Emory University)

Free & open to all. No registration required. Closing reception on Saturday, March 28.

Program and full details at:

**IRCPL.org**

The Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life

The Center for Democracy, Toleration, and Religion

The Middle East Institute

The School of International and Public Policy

**Friday, March 27 & 3**

**Saturday, March 28 1 5**

Conference begins at 9:00am both days. Full schedule at [ircpl.org](http://ircpl.org).

International Affairs Building, room 1501

420 West 118th Street (at Amsterdam Ave)

Columbia University

The first meeting, "The Tunisian Democratic Transition in Comparative Perspective: With Reflections on Indonesia, India, and Egypt" was held in March 2015, and brought social, religious, and political leaders to Columbia University to discuss the recent political upheavals in those regions with researchers and activists directly involved in the area. Among other things, we asked how the leaders think about and how they have crafted political ideologies that are inclusive but also respectful of local norms and beliefs.

The second meeting, planned for the spring of 2016, will gather journalists, academics, and politicians from several states that have historically faced the challenge of fashioning democratic institutions in societies with long-standing, pervasive religious traditions. The historical experience and the present institutional conditions in Pakistan, India, Senegal, and Turkey will illuminate the trajectories of secular and religious identities.



## Sufi Islam in 21st Century Politics

With [Sufi Islam in 21st Century Politics](#), we ask what has made Sufism successful and effective at managing religious pluralism and ethnic and regional diversity. We seek to understand the relationship between Sufism and modern Islamic movements, and will explore why Sufism is now seen as an antidote to political Islam.

Project leaders are anchoring the project in a series of workshops: The first, a small closed workshop at Columbia University, convened in September of 2014 to look at the contributions of Sufi thought and practice to understandings of pluralism in the Ottoman Middle East, South Asia, and West Africa. Participants gathered to examine traditions and trajectories of Sufi thought and practices around pluralism and the ways in which Sufis conceptualize state-religion relationships. During the fall of 2015, a second gathering will draw together scholars, journalists, and politically active Sufis to examine how Sufi orders in post-partition India and Pakistan are evolving in response to the challenges of democratization, secularism, and Islamic reformism, focusing on their emergent roles and significance in national and transnational political processes. Finally, this December, we will gather in Dakar, Senegal to look in depth at how Senegalese Sufis, both in Senegal and in the West, have occupied an alternative political space and developed a discourse on democratization and political involvement that is both different from and a response to radical Islam.

## Shared Sacred Spaces

[Shared Sacred Spaces and the Politics of Pluralism](#) explores the places where people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds are able to live with difference, accommodate each other's religious needs, and negotiate otherness in public as positive examples of pluralism and tolerance on the ground. When we hear about shared sites, most of what we hear is about violence and conflict, in places like Babri Masjid in India or the Temple Mount in Israel/Palestine. With this project, we focus on cases of accommodation and coexistence to identify the local discourses and practices that work best in sharing sacred spaces. The work of coexistence is difficult and it does not happen naturally. Thus we intend to examine the conscious decisions arrived at jointly by members of different religious communities to increase common access and decrease conflict in shared sacred sites.

Project leader and IRCPL Director Karen Barkey, with IRCPL Post-Doctoral Researcher Dimitrios Papadopoulos and IRCPL Graduate Researcher Matthew Ghazarian, examine the local, public practices inside and surrounding shared sacred sites to understand how communities that have maintained shared sites for long periods of time reproduce their practices in the midst of forces pushing for national and/or religious homogeneity or cross-communal conflict, focusing on shared sites in the Eastern Mediterranean, where the Ottoman legacy has left hundreds of sanctuaries shared in more or less convivial ways between Christians, Muslims, and Jews.

Project activities include field research, faculty workshops, new university courses, and the continued development of the Sacred Sites page on the IRCPL's website, including interviews, short documentaries, and the expansion of [Visual Hasluck](#), the groundbreaking open and interactive digital online version of F. W. Hasluck's *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*.



## The Arabic Translation Project

The **Arabic Translation Project** is in the midst of translating and publishing a dozen important English-language books on democracy into Arabic for distribution throughout the Middle East and North Africa. The aim of the project is to make more accessible some of the nuanced literature available on varieties of representative government; paths and pitfalls to democratization; and detailed case studies about democratic transitions in countries like Indonesia, Turkey, and Spain. As of fall 2014, the IRCPL, in partnership with All Prints Publishers in Beirut, has distributed over 1,000 copies of our first three books: *Democracies in Danger*, by Alfred Stepan; *On Democracy*, by Robert Dahl; and *Patterns of Democracy*, by Arend Lijphart.

The next books to be published in the series will be: *The Military Transition: Democratic Reform of the Armed Forces*, by Narcis Serra; *Democracy & Islam in Indonesia*, by Mirjam Kunkler and Alfred Stepan; *The Arab Uprisings Explained: New Contentious Politics in the Middle East*, edited by Marc Lynch; and *Democracy: A Reader*, edited by Larry Diamond and Marcus Platner.

In addition to the hard copies available in libraries, schools, and bookstores, all translated books in the series are now also available for digital download. Individual scholarly articles are currently being translated and will be made available digitally - free of cost - via various online scholarly databases.



## The Working Group on Toleration

The Working Group on Toleration has set itself the daunting task of producing works to answer questions on what toleration is and how it has developed and is practiced in various societies, as well as what contributes to its creation and its breakdown. The group's primary focus has been the development of a source book on toleration from different traditions around the world, spanning some two and a half millennia between roughly 400 BC and the modern era. Overall, the volume will be presented as a conversation, organized temporally between various regions and cultures. This conversation will reveal the highly diverse origins of toleration and the different contributions various cultures have made to our understanding of toleration over time. We have confidence that this volume, which has no peer in scale and range, will become a classic. Participating faculty include Alfred Stepan, Karen Barkey, Akeel Bilgrami, Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Ira Katznelson, Sudipta Kaviraj, Claudio Lomnitz, Nadia Urbinati, and Hossein Kamaly, as well as IRCPL Graduate Researcher Jonathan Thumas.

## Religions of Harlem

*Religions of Harlem*, led by Josef Sorett, Associate Director of the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life, seeks to fill in a more comprehensive account of Harlem's religious milieu. In partnership with the New York Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, this project uses archival and ethnographic research, as well as digital media, to provide a unique view of the wide range of religious expressions, leaders, and communities that have been and continue to be central to the cultural worlds of Harlem. Student scholarship built around these materials, as well as from new university courses created through the project, is featured on the Religions of Harlem website.



## Center for the Study of Religion and Sexuality

Now in its second year, the Center for the Study of Religion and Sexuality, led by Katherine Pratt Ewing, Professor of Religion at Columbia University, continues to provide forums and resources for the interdisciplinary study of the rapidly evolving and often troubled intersections of religion and sexuality across the world. The Center, also affiliated with the Institute for Women, Gender, and Sexuality and the Barnard Center for Research on Women, addresses the historical specificity of these intersections of religion and sexuality by considering changing historical perspectives on the place of sexuality within various religious traditions, as well as debates over religious and ethical implications of emerging technological procedures involving the sexual body.



# 2014-2015 Events

The IRCPL hosted and co-sponsored over 50 public events during the 2014-15 academic year, including lectures, conferences, working group meetings, performances, readings, and open workshops. Events were created and produced with a wide array of partner institutions both on-and off-campus; locally, nationally, and internationally. Among these events were continuing series (such as our widely popular Spirit and Sound concerts, which feature both musical performance and academic discussion) as well as a number of new series (such as the Word of God seminars, organized by Sudipta Kaviraj). We also presented the 39th Bampton Lectures in America, with Daniel Boyarin giving a series of four lectures over two weeks.

Below is an edited selection of these events:

## Continuing Event Series

**Spirit and Sound: A Concert Series** presents musical performances from different religious and cultural traditions, paired with conversations between scholars and performers, to look at the ways in which religion, faith, identity, community, and the political intermingle in musical expressions of faith. In the 2014-15 academic year, we looked at traditional music from African-American, Middle Eastern, Indian, and Eastern Orthodox traditions. In 2015, we turned to popular music.

**February 13 - Tomorrow is the Question: Afrofuturism, Sound and Spirit** - Panel including Alexander Weheliye, Northwestern University; Michael Veal, Yale University; Beth Coleman, City as Platform Lab and University of Waterloo; George E. Lewis, Columbia University. Performances by composer and turntablist Val-Inc and DJ Korby Benoit. Curated by Didier Sylvain, Columbia University.

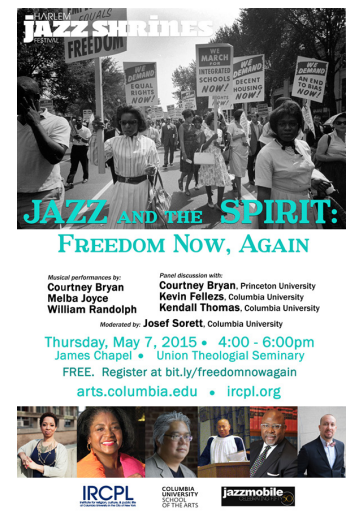
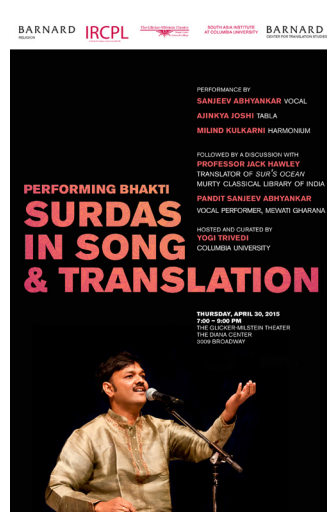
Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by Columbia's Department of Music; Columbia University's Edwin H. Case Chair in American Music; the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality; the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race; and the Department of Africana Studies at Barnard.

**April 30 - Performing Bhakti: Surdas in Song and Translation** - Panel including Jack Hawley, translator of Sur's Ocean and Pandit Sanjeev Abhyankar, acclaimed vocal performer of the Mewati Gharana. Performances by Pandit Sanjeev Abhyankar, Ajinkya Joshi, and Milind Kulkarni. Curated by Yogi Trivedi, Columbia University.

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Barnard Religion Department, the Barnard Center for Translation Studies, and the South Asia Institute at Columbia University

**May 7 - Jazz and the Spirit: Freedom Now, Again** - Panel including Courtney Bryan, Princeton University; Kevin Fellezs, Columbia University; and Kendall Thomas, Columbia Law School. Performances by William Randolph, Jr, Courtney Bryan, and Melba Joyce.

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by Jazzmobile and Columbia University School of the Arts Community Outreach and Education. A part of the Harlem Jazz Shrines Festival.





The [Religion and Politics in American Public Life lecture series](#), co-coordinated for 2014-15 by Professors Courtney Bender, Jean Cohen, Josef Sorett, and John Torpey, is a series of public conversations that explore the often contentious role of religion in American political and public life.

This series is sponsored by the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life; the PhD Program in Sociology at the Graduate Center, CUNY; the Department of Political Science at Columbia University; and the Department of Religion at Columbia University.

- October 6, 2014 - **'Chasin' the Boom': Wildcat Religion, Oil-patch Politics, and the Legacies of Early 20th-century Texas Crude** - Darren Dochuk, Washington University in St Louis
- November 10, 2014 - **The White Church and the Murder of Black Men: A Critique of Christian Whiteness** - Tobin Miller Shearer, University of Montana
- November 17, 2014 - **The African Supplement: Law, Religion, and Race in Early National America** - Sarah Gordon, University of Pennsylvania
- February 9, 2015 - **The Limits of American Secularism: A Perspective from its Early History** - Sam Haselby, Columbia University
- April 27, 2015 - **Saved by a Martyr: Mediation, Evangelical Sanctification, and the 'Persecuted Church'** - Omri Elisha, Queens College, CUNY
- April 8, 2015 - **Race, Religion, and the Political Incorporation of Contemporary Immigrants** - Prema Kurien, Syracuse University

The [Word of God seminar series](#), organized by Sudipta Kaviraj, investigates the origins, forms, and functions of the "word of God" within the traditions of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, and Hinduism, with a variety of scholars and thinkers, including:

- February 4 - **The First Word of God** - Gil Anidjar, Columbia University
- February 13 - **God's Word: Between the Intentional and the Political** - Wael Hallaq, Columbia University
- February 27 - **Word Without a Speaker** - Arindam Chakrabarti, University of Hawai'i, with Gayatri Spivak as Chair
- March 6 - **The Word of God in Translation** - Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Columbia University
- March 25 - **Does God Have Free Will?: Hermeneutics and Theology in Medieval South India** - Lawrence McCrea, Cornell University
- March 27 - **Can a Monotheist God be Multilingual?** - Hamid Dabashi, Columbia University
- April 8 - **Can the Word of God be Ambiguous?** - Hossein Kamaly, Barnard College
- April 15 - **The Word of God Is No Word at All** - Shaul Magid, Indiana University
- April 17 - **Learning the Word of God from Reading the Word of the Buddha** - Charles Hallisey, Harvard University
- April 24 - **Women and the Word(s): Comparative Feminist Approaches to the Word of God** - Jerusha Lamptey, Union Theological Seminary
- April 29 - **Scripture Without a Scriptor: Hermeneutics in Classical India** - Parimal Patil, Harvard University

**WORD OF GOD**

What does it mean for something to be 'the word of God'?  
What are the origins, forms, and functions of the concept?  
What does it mean within the traditions of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, and Hinduism?

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4 Knox Hall, room 509	GIL ANIDJAR COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13 80 Claremont Ave, room 101	WAEEL HALLAQ COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27 10:00am - 12:00pm Schermerhorn Ext, room 754	ARINDAM CHAKRABARTI UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII GAYATRI CHAKRAVORTY SPIVAK, Chair
FRIDAY, MARCH 6 Knox Hall, room 509	SOULEYMANE BACHIR DIAGNE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25 Knox Hall, room 509	LAWRENCE MCCREA CORNELL UNIVERSITY
FRIDAY, MARCH 27 80 Claremont Ave, room 101	HAMID DABASHI COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8 Location TBA	HOSSEIN KAMALY BARNARD COLLEGE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15 Knox Hall, room 509	SHAUL MAGID INDIANA UNIVERSITY
FRIDAY, APRIL 17 Knox Hall, room 509	CHARLES HALLISEY HARVARD UNIVERSITY
FRIDAY, APRIL 24 80 Claremont Ave, room 101	JERUSHA LAMPTEY UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29 Knox Hall, room 509	PARIMAL PATIL HARVARD UNIVERSITY

All talks 4:10 - 6:00pm unless otherwise noted.  
Information on speakers and topics by date at [ircpl.org](http://ircpl.org).  
Sponsored by the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life at Columbia University.

**Ancestral Witnesses: Literature and the African-American Religious Imagination**, organized by IRCPL Associate Director Josef Sorett, explores the intersections of religion and African American literature produced during the social upheavals of the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements and their aftermath. Discussions examine how black writers engaged religion in their efforts to imagine black liberation and human freedom, and how black religions have shaped African American literary visions.

**December 4, 2014 - Ancestral Witnesses: James Baldwin and Audre Lorde**

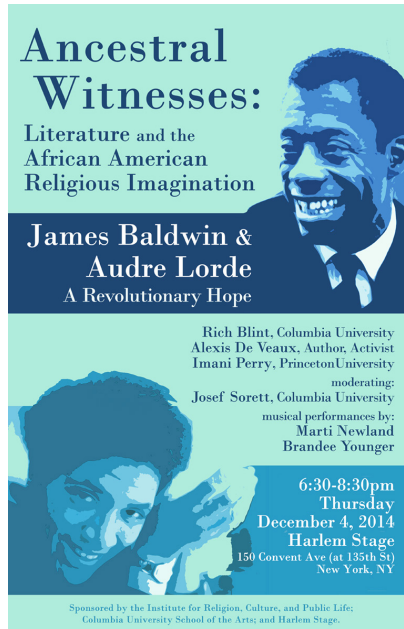
Panel including Rich Blint, Columbia University; Alexis De Veaux, Author & Activist; and Imani Perry, Princeton University. Readings by Sheyenne Brown, Jarvis McInnis, and Marcel Spears. Musical performances by Marti Newland and Brandee Younger.

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by Columbia University School of the Arts and Harlem Stage. Part of the Year of James Baldwin celebration.

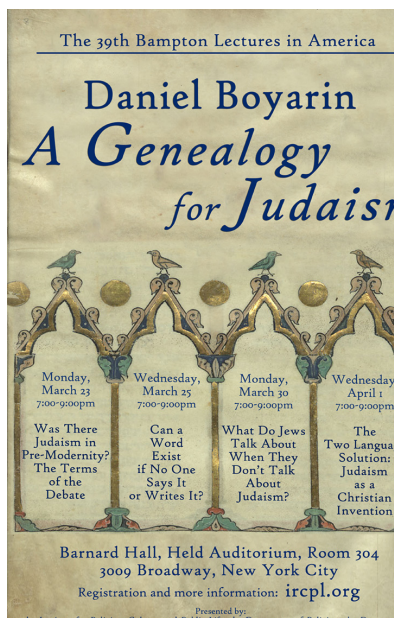
**April 6, 2015 - Ancestral Witnesses: Maya Angelou & Amiri Baraka**

Panel including Elizabeth Alexander, Yale University; Eddie Glaude, Princeton University; Farah Jasmine Griffin, Columbia University; and Obery Hendricks, Columbia University. Readings by Sheyenne Brown and Jarvis McInnis. Musical performance by Imani Uzuri.

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by Columbia University School of the Arts, the Institute for Research in African American Studies, and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.



**The 2015 Bampton Lectures in America**, founded in 1948, are a series of lectures given by prominent scholars in the fields of theology, science, art, and medicine. Established through a bequest from Ada Byron Bampton Tremaine, the Lectures are delivered to a general audience and subsequently published. This year's speaker was **Daniel Boyarin**, Professor of Talmudic Culture in the Departments of Near Eastern Studies and Rhetoric at the University of California at Berkeley, who delivered a series of talks collectively titled: **A Genealogy for Judaism**.



- March 23 - **Was There Judaism in Pre-modernity?: The Terms of the Debate**
- March 25 - **Can a Word Exist if No one Says it or Writes it?**
- March 30 - **What do Jews Talk About When They Don't Talk About Judaism?**
- April 1 - **Can a Concept Exist Without a Word?**

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Department of Religion at Columbia, the Department of Religion at Barnard, the Department of History at Barnard, the Program in Jewish Studies at Barnard, the Office of the University Chaplain, the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, the Department of History at Columbia, and the Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies.



## Selected Conferences and Speakers

September 9, 2014

### The Jesus of History and The Christ of Faith - Reza Aslan

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Muslim Students Association at Columbia.

September 12, 2014

### Pluralism: Sufi Thought and Practice

September 15, 2014

### A World Without Jews - Alon Confino, University of Virginia and Ben Gurion University

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies and the Department of Sociology.

October 1, 2014

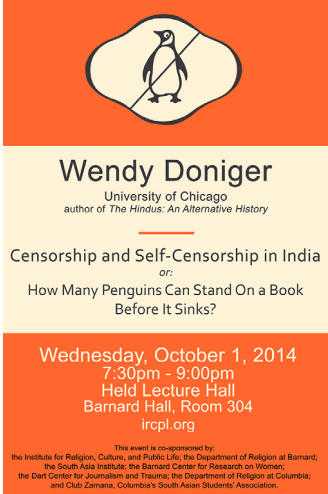
### Islam, Democracy, and the Future of the Muslim World - Rached Ghannouchi

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the World Leaders Forum, the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, and the Middle East Institute.

October 1, 2014

### Censorship and Self-Censorship in India or: How Many Penguins Can Stand On a Book Before It Sinks? - Wendy Doniger, University of Chicago

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Department of Religion at Barnard; the South Asia Institute; the Barnard Center for Research on Women; the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma; the Department of Religion at Columbia; and Club Zamana, Columbia's South Asian Students' Association.



**Wendy Doniger**  
University of Chicago  
author of *The Hindus: An Alternative History*

Censorship and Self-Censorship in India  
or:  
How Many Penguins Can Stand On a Book  
Before It Sinks?

Wednesday, October 1, 2014  
7:30pm - 9:00pm  
Held Lecture Hall  
Barnard Hall, Room 304  
ircpl.org

This event is co-sponsored by:  
the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life; the Department of Religion at Barnard;  
the South Asia Institute; the Barnard Center for Research on Women;  
the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma; the Department of Religion at Columbia;  
and Club Zamana, Columbia's South Asian Students' Association.

October 12, 2014

### Political Debate for the Tunisian Parliamentary Elections

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Organized by TUNESS.

October 17, 2014

**Narratives of Social Protest: Personal & Political** - A two-part event taking place at Columbia University and the New York Public Library. The first part of the event is a panel to discuss the ways in which personal identities are shaped by place and politics, as well as the ways in which protest movements are defined and affected by the personal narratives which emerge from them. Panelists include Phil Bennett, Duke Sanford School of Public Policy;



**Narratives of Social Protest: Personal & Political**  
A meeting of scholars, journalists, and artists  
to discuss what happens when a personal narrative  
becomes a political history.

Featuring:  
**Phil Bennett**  
Director, DeWitt Wallace Center for Media & Democracy and  
Professor of the Practice of Journalism and Public Policy, Duke Sanford School of Public Policy  
**Ganzeer**  
Egyptian street artist and graphic designer  
**James M. Jasper**  
Professor of Sociology, Graduate Center, CUNY  
**Hisham Matar**  
Weiss International Fellow in Literature and the Arts and  
Professor of English, Barnard College  
**Joy Stacey**  
lens-based artist and curator

Friday, October 17, 2014  
2:10 - 4:00pm  
Schermerhorn Hall, Room 501  
Columbia University, Morningside Campus  
1198 Amsterdam Avenue  
ircpl.org

Matt Bors, cartoonist, journalist, and author of *War Is Boring*; James M. Jasper, Graduate Center, CUNY; Hisham Matar, Barnard College; Joy Stacey, lens-based artist and curator; and Joseph Slaughter, Columbia University.

The second part of the event features **Marjane Satrapi**, the illustrator, writer, director, and author of *Persepolis*, joining Paul Holdengräber to discuss the unique challenges and rewards inherent in narratives of social protest, as a part of the **LIVE from the NYPL** series.

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the British Council and the New York Public Library.

This event is the first of two related conversations over the course of the day, collectively co-produced by:  
the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life; the British Council; and the New York Public Library.

The first conversation, at Columbia University, is free and open to the public.

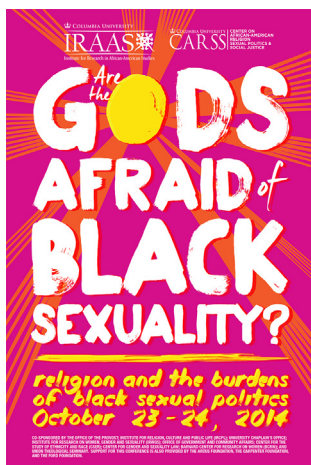
The second conversation, part of the LIVE from the NYPL series, will take place at 8:00pm at the New York Public Library:  
Marjane Satrapi, the Iranian-born illustrator, writer, director, and author of *Persepolis*, will discuss her own work, providing evidence and example of the processes  
discussed at Columbia. For more information on the evening event and to purchase tickets, see [nypl.org](http://nypl.org).

Image credit: film still, *The Tourist* (2013), Joy Stacey

October 22, 2014

## The Book – sculptures by Elisabeth Raphaël

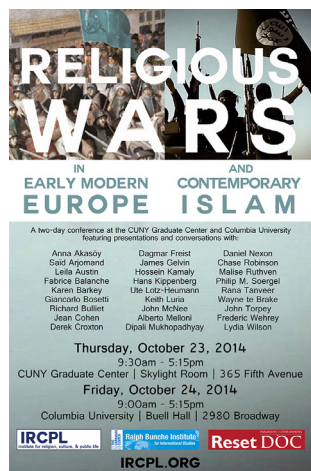
Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Maison Française. Support provided by the Knapp Family Foundation.



October 23, 2014

## Are the Gods Afraid of Black Sexuality? Religion and the Burdens of Black Sexual Politics

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Organized by the Institute for Research in African American Studies in partnership with the Center on African American Religion, Sexual Politics and Social Justice. Co-sponsored by the Office of the Provost; University Chaplain's Office; Institute for Research on Women, Gender and Sexuality; Office of Government and Community Affairs; Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race; Center for Gender and Sexuality Law; Barnard Center for Research on Women; and Union Theological Seminary. Support is also provided by the Arcus Foundation, the Carpenter Foundation, and the Ford Foundation.



October 23, 2014

## Religious Wars in Early Modern Europe and Contemporary Islam: Reflections, Patterns and Comparisons

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by RESET Dialogues on Civilization and the Graduate Center CUNY.

October 27, 2014

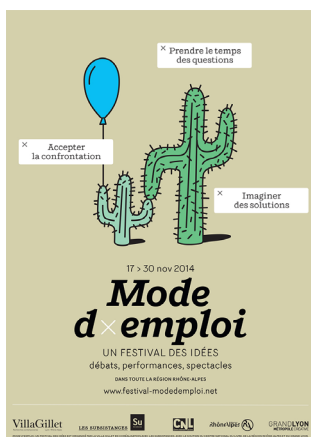
## Philosophy in the Public Square - Peter Catapano and Simon Critchley of the *New York Times* column The Stone

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by Columbia University's Department of Religion.

November 6, 2014

## Local Conflicts as a Global Challenge - George Rupp, Columbia University President Emeritus

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Office of the University Chaplain, the Institute for Human Rights Studies, the Department of Religion, and the Earth Institute, Columbia University.



November 17 - 25, 2014

## Mode d'Emploi – A Festival of Ideas - Villa Gillet, Lyon, France

Among the events in which the IRCPL participated:

- **Public recording of Pierre-Édouard Deldique's radio show "Idées," with Karen Barkey.**
  - **Philosophy, religions, and tolerance - with Adrien Candiard, Souleymane Bachir Diagne, and Sudipta Kaviraj.**
- In partnership with La Maleta de Portbou. In collaboration with les Presses Universitaires de France.
- **The New Multi-Ethnic Spaces - presented by Fabrice Balanche, with Karen Barkey.**
- In collaboration with Université de Lyon.
- **Religious tolerance: a foundation of democracy? - with Karen Barkey and Nadia Urbinati,**

designed in collaboration with a class from the high school Les Chassagnes (Oullins).

- **Living in a plural society: politics, minorities, and religious diversity - presented by Marc Semo, with Karen Barkey, Esther Benbassa, Sudipta Kaviraj, and Nadia Urbinati.**

In partnership with La Maleta de Portbou. In collaboration with Libération.



November 20, 2014

**Feminisms in Southeast Asia - Kristy Kelly, Saskia Schaefer, and Doris Gatmaitan Ramirez**

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by SEADS Columbia.

December 3, 2014

**Tunisian Democratization After the Elections: A Trip Report - Al Stepan, Columbia University**

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Economic and Political Development Concentration at SIPA and the Center for Democracy, Toleration, and Religion.

February 10, 2014

**Fast Fashion: Disposable Society and the Soul - Elizabeth L. Cline, author of *Overdressed: The Shockingly High Cost of Cheap Fashion***

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Department of Religion and the Earth Institute.

February 23, 2015

**Religious Actors in Democratization Processes - Mirjam Kunkler, Princeton University**

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Harriman Institute.

March 5, 2015

**MESAAS Graduate Conference - Keynote by Ann Stoler: Raw Cuts / Other Folds: Palestine, Israel and Colonial Studies**

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, the Middle East Institute, the Institute of African Studies, and the Institute of Israel and Jewish Studies.

March 5, 2015

**Egypt between Untenable Authoritarianism and Thwarted Democratization - Emad Shahin, Georgetown University, and the American University in Cairo**

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies.

March 9, 2015

**The Other Saudis: Shiism, Dissent, and Sectarianism - Toby Matthiesen, University of Cambridge**

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Middle East Institute.

March 10, 2015

**Secular Shadows: African, Immanent, Postcolonial - Matthew Engelke, London School of Economics**

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Department of Religion.

March 11, 2015

**Captivity and Redemption: Conservative Christians and the Politics of Prison Ministry - Tanya Erzen, University of Puget Sound**

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-Sponsored by the Barnard Religion Department.

March 27, 2015

**Columbia University Religion Department Graduate Student Conference - Pedagogy, Transmission, and Technology, with keynote speaker Kathryn Lofton, Yale University**

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Department of Religion; Columbia Journalism's Scripps Howard Program on Religion, Journalism, and the Spiritual Life; the Middle East Institute; and the Graduate Student Advisory Council.

**Tunisian Democratization  
After the Elections**

A trip report from: **Alfred Stepan**

Wallace Sayre Professor of Government &  
Director of the Center for the Study of Democracy, Toleration, and Religion

Wednesday, December 3, 2014

5:10-7:00pm

80 Claremont Ave, Room 101

Free and open to all. Wine and cheese reception.



Sponsored by the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life;  
the Economic and Political Development Concentration at SIPA,  
and the Center for Democracy, Toleration, and Religion.

**Elizabeth L. Cline**

**Fast Fashion:  
Disposable Society  
and the Soul**

**Tuesday, February 10, 2015**  
**4:10 - 6:00pm**  
**80 Claremont Ave, Room 101**

Sponsored by the Department of Religion; co-sponsored by the Earth Institute  
and the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life at Columbia University.

**Secular Shadows:  
African, Immanent, Postcolonial**

**Matthew Engelke**  
London School of Economics

Tuesday, March 10, 2015  
4:10 - 6:00 pm  
International Affairs Building, Room 413  
420 W 118th Street  
ircpl.org

**IRCPL**  
Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life

March 27, 2015

**The Tunisian Democratic Transition in Comparative Perspective: With Reflections on Indonesia, India, and Egypt, with keynote speaker Rached Ghannouchi,** Founder and President of Ennahdha  
Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Center for Democracy, Toleration, and Religion; the Middle East Institute; and the School for International and Public Policy.

Sponsored by Columbia University's Center for Mexican Studies and the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life

### Emergent Forms of Religious Life in Contemporary Mexico

Mexico's democratic transition of the past three decades has caused deep structural change at all levels of society, including religious belief, organization and practice. This two-day seminar explores the emergent religious forms in contemporary Mexican public life.

Free & open to the public. Registration appreciated.  
Program at registration at: [ircpl.org](http://ircpl.org)

José Carlos Aguiar	Leiden University Institute for History
Roberto Biancartero	El Colegio de México
Judi Biskser	Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
R. Andrew Chesnut	Virginia Commonwealth University
Alghia Galvez	Lehman College, CUNY
Carlos Gama	Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Iztapalapa
Cristina Gutiérrez Zúñiga	El Colegio de Jalisco
Claudio Lomnitz	Columbia University
Graciela Mochkofsky	New York University
Kevin O'Neill	University of Toronto
Hugo José Suárez	Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
Renee de la Torre	Universidad de Guadalajara
Carolina Rivera Farfán	Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social

Thursday, April 2, 2015 | Friday, April 3, 2015  
Buell Hall, East Gallery | Knox Hall, Room 509  
515 West 116th Street | New York City | 606 West 122nd St | New York City  
8:30am - 5:00pm each day

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR MEXICAN STUDIES | IRCPL

March 30, 2015

**Marilynne Robinson and Robert Hardies: A Reading and Discussion**

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Heyman Center for the Humanities and the Writing Program of the School of the Arts.

April 2, 2015

**Emergent Forms of Religious Life in Contemporary Mexico**

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Center for Mexican Studies at Columbia University.

April 7, 2015

**The 'New Path' to Peace: Cultivating 'Good Muslim' Masculinities in Southern Thai Counterinsurgency - Ruth Streicher**

Organized and moderated by Saskia Schäfer, Postdoctoral Researcher at the IRCPL. Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Weatherhead East Asian Institute; the SIPA Gender Policy Working Group; and the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality.

April 13, 2015

**Selma Screening and Discussion**

Presented by the Office of University Life. Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Center for American Studies, Center for Intersectionality and Social Policy Studies, Center for Justice, Center for Race, Philosophy and Social Justice, Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, Center for the Study of Law and Culture, Center for the Study of Social Difference, Center on African American Politics and Society, Columbia University Medical Center Diversity Deans Council, Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma, Heyman Center for the Humanities, Institute for Research in African-American Studies, Institute for Research on Women Gender and Sexuality, School of International and Public Affairs Diversity Task Force, Social Intervention Group, and Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture.

April 14, 2015

**The Tragedy of the Egyptian Revolution - Khaled Fahmy**

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Middle East Institute.

April 22, 2015

**Concert Spirituals and the Black Soprano**

Sponsored by the IRCPL. Co-sponsored by the Department of Music, the Music Performance Program, the Institute for Research in African American Studies, the Office of the Core Curriculum, and the Center for Ethnomusicology.

Sponsored by the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life.  
Co-sponsored by the Weatherhead East Asian Institute,  
the SIPA Gender Policy Working Group,  
and the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality.

### The 'New Path' to Peace: Cultivating 'Good Muslim' Masculinities in Southern Thai Counterinsurgency

Ruth Streicher  
University of California, Berkeley  
and Freie Universität Berlin

Moderated by:  
Saskia Schäfer  
Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life  
and Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University

Tuesday, April 7, 2015  
4:00-6:00pm  
IAB, room 918

Please join us for a free screening and discussion of

# SELMA

ONE DREAM CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

MONDAY, APRIL 13, 6:30-9:30 P.M.  
AT MILLER THEATER

A Community Citizenship Series Event

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Office of University Life

1969-1975

**SAMUEL ROBERTS**  
Columbia University Department of African American Studies  
Columbia University, New York, NY

**JAMAL JOSEPH**  
Columbia University School of Arts  
Columbia University, New York, NY

**JUNE CROSS**  
Columbia University School of Arts  
Columbia University, New York, NY

**SUZANNE GOLDBERG**  
Office of University Life and Columbia Law School

**FRANCES NEGRON MUNTANER**  
Office of University Life and Columbia Law School  
Columbia University, New York, NY

**PATRICIA WILLIAMS**  
Columbia University

April 28, 2015

**Untangling Race, Religion, and Ethnicity in South Africa: A Community Effort - Marthe Hesselmans**