



IRCLPL

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

2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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About the Institute

Founded in 2008, the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life (IRCPL) addresses the intersections between religion, secularism, democracy, toleration, and pluralism in various regions around the world, both historically and in the contemporary moment, through scholarship, events, and publications. IRCPL brings together policy practitioners, scholars, artists, politicians, religious and cultural leaders, and students to address the role of religion in public life.

The transformation of religion, long-standing or novel, impacts our world in key ways. Religion is a dynamic societal force, one which shapes the everyday life of individuals. As a result of twentieth-century transformations, the study of religion has become intertwined with arts, culture, and politics. IRCPL seeks to track the evolution of religion in a variety of political and social contexts.

IRCPL tackles questions of difference and identity in both a national and an international context. Through scholarship, events, and publications, IRCPL examines beliefs, practices, and historical examples that demonstrate potential for understanding and tolerance within and between religious traditions.

The scope of IRCPL encompasses a broad range of themes while seeking to understand the bases of conflict and unrest across and within religions. By taking an expansive rather than a restrictive view of religious thought and practice, IRCPL recasts the traditional opposition between the secular and the religious in ways that promote innovative approaches to the problems facing the world today.



A Note from the Director

The global stage is fraught with religious violence, conflict, and political instability. The shift in focus on the narratives and news of violence effaces the fact that in many places where ethnic and religious conflict occurs, there have also been long histories of peace and coexistence. In my three years as the Director of the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life at Columbia University, I have tried to anchor our modern understandings of current events in these histories of toleration and harmony by adding nuance to narrative and fresh perspectives on seemingly primordial divisions. Through an array of programs and publications, IRCPL has grown in the past three years into a hub of critical thought, bringing together scholars, journalists, and policymakers to address the main questions and concerns surrounding religion today.

Since 2013, the IRCPL has attained multiple grants to contribute to the Institute's establishment and growth. With the help of the Henry R. Luce Foundation and the Alliance Grant, IRCPL has developed the pre-existing scholars program (in addition to the many other undergraduate and graduate researchers) to accommodate fourteen visiting scholars in 2016 - increased from four in the past - featuring a breadth of research topics ranging from the intellectual history of Islam to Judaism in Latin America, and from comparative labor unionizing to NYPD surveillance of Muslim communities. IRCPL has also significantly increased the quantity of publications at Columbia University Press, with nineteen books in total published by the CUP series over the past three years. At the same time, the Arabic Translation Project has also translated and published seven works on democracy in partnership with All Prints Publishers in Beirut in order to make nuanced literature accessible on the different varieties of representative government through detailed case studies about democratic transitions in countries like Indonesia, Turkey, and Spain. By making these works available in the Middle East and North African region, IRCPL created a platform for intellectual exchange and cross-national political dialogue. In addition to academic and publication work, IRCPL has hosted upwards of 25 conferences and 350 programs over the past three years, covering a range of themes from religion and democracy to pluralism and toleration, and conflict and violence in regions across the world.

Projects such as Sufi Islam in the 21st century, Democracy and Religious Pluralism, and Shared Sacred Sites have engaged different networks of scholars from around the world, creating new synergies for scholarly and policy-focused research and rethinking. These projects, which have now developed into fully-fledged research initiatives, are continuing under the auspices of various global academic and political institutions and research centers.

The Shared Sacred Sites project in particular has become the platform wherein the themes and ideas tackled by the IRCPL converge. The project aims to show the ways in which shared sacred sites are spaces of negotiated presences and mediated differences in order to provide new perspectives on religious divisions. The sharing of spaces and traditions by multiple religious communities demonstrate the numerous and varied practices and possibilities of accommodation between potentially antagonistic communities, and the study of such sharing provides key insights into characteristics and features crucial to the cultivation of tolerance and understanding.

I am proud and honored to have been a part of a great team of staff, students, and colleagues at IRCPL over the past three years. My involvement in such a vibrant community engaged in issues and ideas at the forefront of academic scholarship and political thought has been a privilege indeed.

Karen Barkey

Director of the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life
Professor of Sociology and History
Columbia University

Advisory Committee

COURTNEY BENDER

*Professor of Religion and Chair of the
Department of Religion*

SOULEYMANE BACHIR DIAGNE

*Professor of French and Romance Philology and of
Philosophy*

ELAZAR BARKAN

*Professor of International and Public Affairs
Director of the Institute for the Study of Human Rights*

JEAN COHEN

*Nell and Herbert M Singer Professor of
Contemporary Civilization in the Core Curriculum*

MAMADOU DIOUF

Director and Leitner Family Professor of African Studies

IRA KATZNELSON

Ruggles Professor of Political Science and History

SUDIPTA KAVIRAJ

Professor of Indian Politics and Intellectual History

CLAUDIO LOMNITZ

William B. Ransford Professor of Anthropology

NADIA URBINATI

*Kyriakos Tsakopoulos Professor of Political Theory and
Hellenic Studies*

Institute Administration

KAREN BARKEY

Director of the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life and Professor of Sociology and History



Karen Barkey has been a member of the board of IRCPL since its founding, was Co-Director with Mark Taylor during the 2012-13 academic year, and has been Director since fall 2013. Her work is in comparative and historical sociology, focusing particularly the study of states, empires, and religion.

Barkey's book *Empire of Difference* is a comparative study of the flexibility and longevity of imperial systems. With this work, Barkey moved toward studying issues of religion, religious legitimacy, and toleration in the context of the Ottoman Empire and, more generally, Islam. A recently published volume of essays, *Choreographies of Shared Sacred Sites: Religion, Politics, and Conflict Resolution*, co-edited with Elazar Barkan, explores the

history of shared religious spaces in the Balkans, Anatolia, and Palestine/Israel, all regions once under Ottoman rule. The project provides the historical antecedents to help understand the accommodation and contention around specific sites in the modern period, tracing comparatively areas and regime changes.

JOSEF SORETT

Associate Director of the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life

Assistant Professor in the Department of Religion and the Institute for Research in African-American Studies



Josef Sorett is 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). He employs primarily historical and literary approaches to the study of religion in black communities and cultures in the United States. He has a special interest in how ideas about religion inform broader conversations about culture and society, and how such ideas emerge and take shape in (discursive and physical) spaces typically assumed to be outside the provenance of "religion."

Sorett's first book, *Spirit in the Dark: A Religious History of Racial Aesthetics* illuminates how religion has figured in debates about black art and culture across the 20th century. His second book - tentatively titled *The Holy Holy Black: The Ironies of an African American Secular* - is also in contract with Oxford University Press. He is also currently editing an anthology, *The Sexual Politics of Black Churches*.

WALID HAMMAM

Assistant Director, Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life

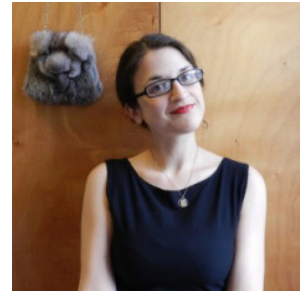
Walid Hammam oversees programs, operations, and finance administration at the IRCPL. He has been involved with program development and management for several years, having worked on capacity building projects, business education and intercultural communication training programs, proposal development, and evaluation projects at a variety of organizations, including the American University and UNICEF. He is interested in international affairs, conflict resolution, and policy-making.



JESSICA LILIEN

Program Coordinator, Events and Media, Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life

Jessica Lilien has been involved in academic programming and event management for nearly ten years, including previous experience at Brown University and at the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality at Columbia University. She manages the IRCPL's marketing and media outreach, and designs Institute advertising, publications, and websites. Her fiction has been published in journals including *Meridian*, the *Chattahoochee Review*, and *Columbia: A Journal of Literature and Art* online; her writing has won the 2016 *Meridian* Editors' Prize, placed in the 2013 *Lumina* Fiction Contest judged by George Saunders, and was nominated for a 2015 Pushcart Prize.



Visiting Research Scholars

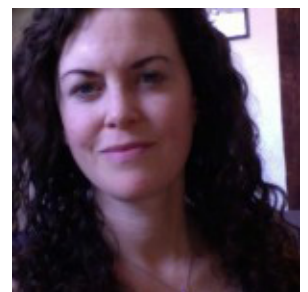
IBRAHIM BECHROURI is a graduate student from the French Institute of Geopolitics of the University of Paris 8. After a research project in 2012 on "Issues and Representations around the United States Foreign Policy in Morocco," he spent time as a visiting scholar at the Center for the Study of Democracy, Toleration, and Religion at Columbia University and led field research on the surveillance of Muslim communities by the New York Police Department. He is presently a Fulbright grantee working on his PhD dissertation, titled *Geopolitical approach of counter-terrorism strategies of the New York Police Department: a multiscale analysis*.



ESRA CAN is a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at Middle East Technical University (METU), in Ankara, Turkey. She holds a B.A. in Sociology with a minor degree in Political Science, as well as an MS in Social Anthropology, from METU. For her prospective dissertation, tentatively titled *Conservatism Among the Urban Lower-Middle Classes in Keçiören, Ankara: Family, Space, and Class in Everyday Life*, she analyzes the conservative social space of lower middle class families in the capital of Turkey. Her research interests include Islam and conservatism in Turkey, urban sociology, and social class analysis.



ROSEMARY R. CORBETT is a Faculty Fellow with the Bard Prison Initiative with a PhD in Religion from Columbia. Her research involves examining how racial and religious minorities navigate US Protestant-derived norms by forming shifting alliances around civic or political issues, and her manuscript - *Muslims in the Middle: Service, Sufism, and "Moderate" American Muslims after 9/11* - is under contract with Stanford University Press. Her publications appear in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (forthcoming, 2015), *Religion, Comparative Islamic Studies*, and the *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* (2004, New Scholar Award).





MONA EL-GHOBASHY 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. She holds a PhD in political science from Columbia University and was previously an assistant professor of political science at Barnard College, where she taught courses on Middle East politics and comparative politics.



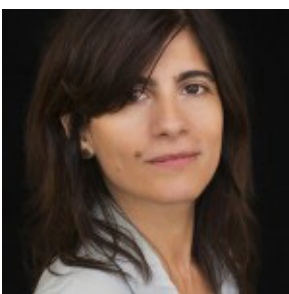
GEORGE GAVRILIS is serving as a senior consultant to the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force this year, and working on initiatives to prevent radicalization that can lead to violent extremism in Central Asia. The project involves strategic partnerships with civil society organizations, governments, and international organizations and aims to empower religious leaders and youth to counter extremist messages. Beyond international policy, George works in the fields of social science research and oral history. He wrote papers on the Ottoman Empire, Eurasia, and the Middle East, including "Can Russia's Peace Plan for Syria Work?" (published online with *PONARS Eurasia*) and co-authored with Karen Barkey, "The Ottoman Millet System: Non-Territorial Autonomy and Its Contemporary Legacy" (in *Ethnopolitics*).



SAM HASELBY is a historian of religion and American political culture. He was a Junior Fellow at the Harvard Society of Fellows and has been a faculty member at the American University of Beirut and the American University in Cairo. His writings on U.S. politics and religion in historical perspective have appeared in the *International Herald Tribune*, the *Guardian*, and the *Boston Globe*. His book, *The Origins of American Religious Nationalism*, shows that Protestantism played the dominant role shaping early nineteenth century US political culture. The *New York Review of Books* called it "impressive and powerfully argued... a book to be reckoned with." He is a Senior Editor at *Aeon*, a digital publication, and is working on a book about Anglo-American missionaries and the opium trade.



MANJARI MAHAJAN is Assistant Professor at the International Affairs Program of the New School University in New York City. Her research interests are in the history and politics of health, environment, and science in the global South. Her work examines how scientific and technical knowledge intersect with public life, and produce new kinds of political, ethical, and legal orders. Her current research is on the emergence of new ethical regimes in global health, the role of philanthropies in shaping norms of accountability in science, and novel understandings of publics and public goods in developing countries. During her sabbatical leave, she will be completing a book on the AIDS epidemics in India and South Africa.



GRACIELA MOCHKOFSKY is an Argentine journalist and author. She has published six books, and is currently working on her seventh, an investigation on an unprecedented wave of massive and unmediated conversions into Judaism throughout Latin America, to be published in the United States by Knopf. Her work was nominated to the Lettre Ulysses Award for Literary Reportage in Berlin in 2004. She was a 2009 fellow at the Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University, a 2014 fellow at the Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers at the New York Public Library, and a 2014-15 Prins Foundation fellow at the Center for Jewish History. She is also a New York University visiting scholar. She holds a Masters degree from Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism.

HOSSEIN RADMARD is Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics in American University of Beirut, where he teaches several courses in economics including Economics of Religion. His research interests are development, political economy, and the role of informal institutions in development process. His dissertation was on the link between entrepreneurship and religiosity in the U.S. counties. Since 2013, when he moved to Lebanon, he has been working on several projects, including a comparative study of political Islam in Egypt, Iran, and Turkey. The focus of this project is the structure and the evolution of constitutions in these three countries.



AARON ROCK-SINGER is a PhD candidate in Princeton's Near Eastern Studies department. His dissertation explores the emergence of the Islamic Revival in Sadat's Egypt (1970-1981) and draws on Islamic magazines, audiocassette sermons, and television programs to chart the key projects and players within this religious shift. By focusing on "public" religious practices, it bridges between intellectual histories that trace the changing ideas of religious elites and social histories that focus on local practice. This close analysis of changing models of public religiosity highlights not only the stakes of religious contestation within 20th century Egypt, but also the interaction of Muslim Brothers, Salafis, state-affiliated scholars, bureaucrats, and middle class Egyptians in this process.



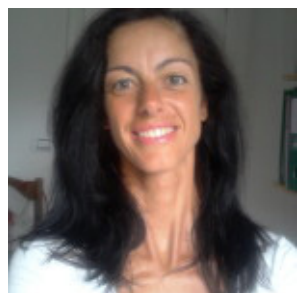
BAHAR TABAKOGLU is a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at the New School For Social Research. In her current dissertation, tentatively titled *Social Constituents of Religious Politics: Islamist Labor Unionism in Turkey and Hindu Labor Unionism in India*, she examines labor unionism in Turkey and India with an eye to filling the gap in the literature on religious politics by analyzing its social constituents, the working class component in particular. Her dissertation has won the support of various grants and fellowships from the New School and she has been a student fellow at the India China Institute of the New School since 2011.



MARIA ACHTON THOMAS is a PhD candidate with the Faculty of Law at National University of Singapore (NUS). Supported by the NUS Graduate Research Scholarship, she is researching to what extent legal regulation of religious freedom can promote religious harmony and integration of religious minorities, using Singapore as a case study. She holds an LLM (Comparative & International Law) from National University of Singapore (2013) and an LB (hons) from London Metropolitan University (2006). Prior to 2012, Maria was a practicing public law lawyer in the United Kingdom, specialising in asylum and human rights law.



DEBORA TONELLI is Researcher at the Bruno Kessler Foundation (Trent, Italy), Department of Religious Studies and Applied Ethics, and Invited Lecturer in Political Philosophy and Theology at Pontifical Athenaeum S. Anselmo and at Gregoriana University (Roma). 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. The influence of literary images in the construction process of religious imagery supporting a violent conception of divinity and justifying violence in the name of God is part of those fundamental political studies.





MARKO VEKOVIC is a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science at University of Belgrade, Serbia. He holds both BA and MA degrees in Political Science from University of Belgrade. He is currently working on his dissertation, titled *Orthodoxy and Democracy: Explaining the Ambivalence of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the Democratization Process of Serbia since 1991*. His latest work has appeared in *Democratization*, as well as in the edited volume *Decentering Discussions on Religion and State*, published by Lexington Books. His research and teaching interests are focused on religion and politics, religion and democratization, political ambivalence of religious actors, and interreligious dialogue.

Graduate Fellows



HANNAH ELMER is a PhD Candidate in the Department of History at Columbia University, where she specializes in the cultural, religious, and intellectual history of later medieval and early modern Central Europe. She is currently conducting research for her dissertation, which examines the practice of emergency resuscitation and baptism of dead infants in Polish- and German-speaking regions. She is seeking to explain why, suddenly in the fifteenth century, thousands of people sought the miraculous reanimation of dead, unbaptized children at particular holy sites across Europe. In addition to changes in theology, liturgy, and popular piety, she is examining changes in conceptions of nature and knowledge-production to understand the emergence and development of this phenomenon. Elmer received an MA in Early Modern History from the Free University of Berlin in 2011, and she graduated summa cum laude from Barnard College in 2006 with a BA in Medieval and Renaissance Studies.



RONNI HENIG is a PhD Candidate in the department of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies and the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society at Columbia University. Her dissertation, tentatively titled *Life of the Non-Living: Nationalization, Language and the Narrative of 'Revival' in Modern Hebrew Literary Discourse*, focuses on the intellectual history of Jewish modernity and offers a critical analysis of the narrative of Hebrew's revival in late 19th and early 20th century Hebrew literature. Her interests include modern Jewish literatures, the critique of nationalism, subjectivity and subjectivation, philosophy of language, and translation theory. Roni completed her MA at Columbia University and earned her BA in Comparative Literature from Tel Aviv University summa cum laude.



NICOLE T. HUGHES is a PhD candidate in the Department of Latin American and Iberian Cultures and the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society. Her research focuses on late medieval Iberia and the early modern Iberian worlds, especially New Spain and Brazil. In 2012 and 2014, she studied Nahuatl in its modern and classical variants at the IDIEZ Institute (Instituto de Docencia e Investigación Etnológica de Zacatecas). She has received grants from the Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut in Berlin and the John Carter Brown Library, as well as a Mellon Humanities International Travel Fellowship. She is currently writing a dissertation titled *A Theater of the Americas: Dramatic Creation and Historical Imagination, 1500-1640*. The dissertation argues that theater was invented in the Americas in a crucial tension between the re-imagination and staging of history on the one hand and the creation of new dramatic forms and languages on the other.

SOHAIB KHAN is a doctoral student in the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies and the Institute of Comparative Literature and Society. He specializes in the study of Islamic commercial law, postcolonial theory, and the anthropology of religion. His research project broadly concerns the shaping of religion and ethics in the cultural and virtual spaces of financial markets. More specifically, he is interested in the translation practices of Muslim jurists and financial engineers that authorize Shari'a replicas of debt-based financial instruments in the institutional context of modern Islamic banking. Sohaib holds an MA in Religion from Duke University and a BSc (Hons) in Economics from the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), where he later taught as a Teaching Fellow in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences.



ANDREW LBOVICH is a PhD student in the Department of History at Columbia University. He holds a BA in History from Dartmouth College, and an MA in History from Columbia University. His research focuses on the historical and contemporary connections between North and West Africa, with a particular emphasis on issues of religious reform, Islamic organizations, and the interaction between religion and politics in Algeria, Morocco, Mali, and Senegal. He has also researched and presented on nationalism and opposition movements in the contemporary Sahara and Sahel.



Post-Doctoral Researchers

DIMITRIS C. PAPADOPOULOS's work centers around socio-cultural space and the politics, practices, and technologies of conceptualizing, imagining, and experiencing it. Using perspectives from the anthropology of place and landscape, material culture, architectural history, and digital humanities, he works on borders and transnational space; sacred, historic, and post-conflict sites; museums, archives, and memory institutions; and different concepts of mapping, mediation, and curation with a regional focus on Greece and the Balkans. He has been a Marie Curie Fellow at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London (2006), and a Visiting Scholar at the Program of Hellenic Studies, Columbia University (2013). He currently teaches cultural anthropology at Lehman College, City University of New York.



NATHANAEL SHELLEY is a cultural historian of the Near East and Antiquity whose research focuses on identity concepts and perceptions of social difference in history, including ideas of ethnicity, race, and alterity; he specializes in the use of cuneiform documents for social research. He received his PhD in 2015 from Columbia University with a dissertation titled *The Concept of Ethnicity in Early Antiquity: Ethno-symbolic Identities in Ancient Greek, Biblical Hebrew, and Middle Babylonian Texts*. He has previously taught Literature Humanities in the Columbia Core; held the Jeremy Black Studentship in Sumerian and Akkadian at Oxford; and studied at Yale, Institut Bourguiba des Langues Vivantes (Tunis), Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology, and the University of Buffalo.



Graduate Researchers



MATTHEW GHAZARIAN is a PhD student in the Department of Middle East, South Asian, and African Studies at Columbia University. His research focuses on the late 19th and early 20th century and the transition from empire to state transitions of the Russian and Ottoman Empires. By engaging with historical narratives from Armenian, Kurdish, Turkish, and English sources, this research raises questions about the roles of this violence in national liberation narratives. At IRCPL, he works on the Shared Sacred Spaces Project, exploring the choreographies of shared churches, mosques, synagogues, and other holy places in former Ottoman lands.



VATSAL NAREESH studies political theory and has degrees in History and Political Science from St. Stephen's College, Delhi and Columbia University. His research focuses on democratic institutions, religious pluralism, and constitution-making. Vatsal was a primary organizer of the Democracy and Religious Pluralism and Perspectives on Constituent Assemblies conferences, and continues to assist Karen Barkey, Sudipta Kaviraj, and Jon Elster in editing the books that spring from those conferences. For the Shared Sacred Sites project, he has conducted field research in India (Ahmedabad) and Greece (Chania and Thessaly). He also wrote and curated the public outreach material on the Shared Sacred Sites website, making the academic tools accessible to a larger public audience. In fall 2016, he will begin his PhD in Political Science at Yale University.

Undergraduate Research Assistants



DARIALIZA AVILA CHEVALIER studies Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies. Her academic interests include studies in race and ethnicity, Middle Eastern politics and society, and post-colonial theory. At IRCPL she works in finance, event programming, and the Shared Sacred Sites project.

MARIAM ELNOZAHY is studying History. On campus, she served as the Chair of the Student Governing Board and as Editor for the *Columbia Journal for Literary Criticism*. At IRCPL, she works in programming, administrative affairs, and research for the Islam, Democracy, and Pluralism and the Shared Sacred Sites projects.



MENNA ELSAYED is studying Sociology. On campus, she is involved with Turath, the undergraduate Arab students association, and the Columbia Chapter of Questbridge, a national scholarship organization that connects high-achieving, low-income students to top colleges and supports them throughout their undergraduate experience. At the IRCPL, she handles event programming, administration, and has conducted research for the Islam, Democracy, and Pluralism and the Shared Sacred Sites projects.

MEGAN STATER is majoring in Philosophy and Religion. She is managing editor of the *Columbia Journal of Literary Criticism* and heads the Community Impact Student Executive Board, a student volunteering organization. Her research focuses on medieval English anchoritism, asceticism, and the relationship between religious figures and the social or political communities of the medieval period. She is also interested in contemporary issues, both legal and philosophical, in the interaction between church and state, or the religious and the secular.



Research Updates

Negotiating Pluralism in Shared Religious Sites

Through a one-year grant from Alliance - an academic joint venture between Columbia University, the École Polytechnique, Sciences Po, and Panthéon-Sorbonne University, created to pursue innovation in education and research between the four institutions - the IRCPL and the Centre de Recherches Internationales (CERI) at Sciences Po launched the research project Negotiating Pluralism in Shared Religious Sites in 2015. This project counters the prevailing narratives in academia and society which focus on religious fundamentalism and violence by examining how different religious groups exercise their faiths in shared religious spaces. The places where people from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds are able to live with difference, accommodate each other's religious needs, and negotiate otherness in public are positive examples of pluralism and tolerance. The lands of the Eastern Mediterranean are home to a large number of these spaces where Christians, Muslims, and Jews come together for prayer. Likewise, there are many spaces in the Indian subcontinent where Hindus and Muslims come together. Through this project, teams of scholars and students were sent to both locations to conduct field research, which has since been - and continues to be - disseminated via workshops, as well as through traditional and new media outlets.

Members of the Negotiating Pluralism team took two research trips in 2015-16. The reports on those trips - to India and to Greece - are below.

INDIA RESEARCH TRIP - JANUARY 2016

This year, an IRCPL/Sciences Po team comprised of Christophe Jaffrelot (Sciences Po), Jusmeet Sihra (Sciences Po), Manpreet Kaur (Columbia University), Mariam Elnozahy (IRCPL), and Vatsal Naresh (IRCPL) traveled to Punjab, Rajasthan, and Gujarat in India to conduct field research. We sought to make preliminary inquiries and interviews as part of the larger project investigating the choreography of shared sacred sites in South Asia.



A faqir at Shah Alam Roza. He comes every Thursday to offer blessings in exchange for a small fee.

Our interest in dargahs as important destinations for practitioners of Islamic, Hindu, and Sikh faiths took us to six major Sufi shrines: the Shah-e-Alam Roza, Qutub-e-Alam Roza, Sarkhej Roza, and Usmanpura Dargah in Ahmedabad, and Taragarh and Dargah Sharif in Ajmer. These sites enabled us to explore themes of negotiated space and collective religious sharing.

The group held a series of informal conversations to learn more about the popular history and contemporary practices at the shrines. For instance, an old man with a henna-dyed beard and a crowd of other dargah veterans that gathered around him spoke of Shah Alam's spiritual prowess, capacity for healing, and popularity among devotees of every faith. Although the dargahs were uncharacteristically quiet as a result of Uttaran (the kite festival), we were able to interact with a wide cross-section of visitors: a "faqir" dressed in black, wielding a staff, said that he had gone to Ajmer (the Dargah Sharif) and received instructions to come to Shah Alam. We also met an auto-rickshaw driver who was an ardent believer in

Qutub-e-Alam's barakat; a Hindu couple who had come to the Dargah to thank the saint for curing the ills of a family member; and Mohaiyuddin Bombaywala, Director of the Hazrat Pirmohammed Shah Library.

We also had the opportunity to examine some of the defining features at these sites: the Kadam-e-Pak tomb (Prophet's feet) inside the Shah-e-Alam complex; the patthar made of iron, stone, gravel and bark in Qutub-e-Alam; and the tanka renowned for its capacity to heal the possessed in Usmanpura.

Ajmer's Dargah Sharif is possibly the best known Sufi shrine in South Asia. The tomb of Moinuddin Chishti, the first of the great Sufi saints in the subcontinent, is the spiritual centrepiece of the complex, and perhaps the town. Jaffrelot, Sihra, and Kaur met with the khadims of the shrine to understand how visitorship at the site varies over the course of the year. They also visited Taragarh, where a shrine to Miran Syed and an in-construction shrine to Imam Husain (a facsimile of the Karbala) are developing an ambiguous relationship.

Manpreet Kaur also received a grant from Alliance to carry out preliminary research in Punjab. Her trip covered Chandigarh and Faridkot. In Chandigarh, she conducted archival work and held interviews with scholars and performers who have studied the region. In Faridkot, preliminary research was conducted in two sites: The first is a shrine where Baba Farid, a 13th century Sufi saint, penanced; the second is the spot where a bundle of his clothes sit in a small shrine.

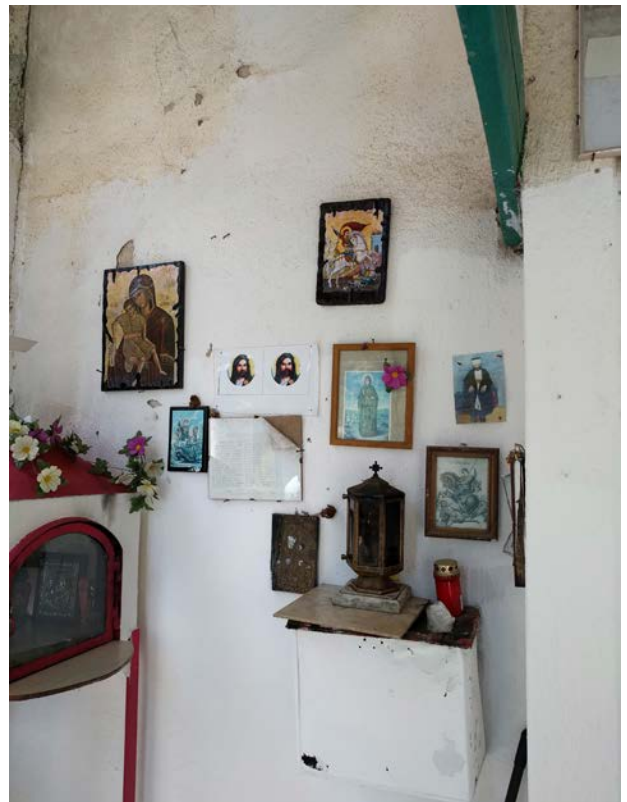
The trip yielded abundant material for further research on the choreographies of coexistence and conflict at these sites.

GREECE RESEARCH TRIP - APRIL-MAY 2016

This spring, Karen Barkey (IRCPL), Dimitrios C. Papadopoulos (IRCPL), Manöel Pénicaud (CNRS), and Vatsal Naresh (IRCPL) travelled to Thessaloniki, Chania, and Thessaly in Greece. The joint IRCPL/CNRS team sought to lay the groundwork for an exhibition on shared sacred sites in Thessaloniki in 2017 and to carry out ethnographic fieldwork in central Greece and Crete.

The team has been working on *Shared Holy Places*, a traveling exhibition on sacred sites shared by Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the Mediterranean, based on Dionigi Albera and Manöel Pénicaud's 2015 exhibition at the MUCEM in Marseille, *Lieux Saints Partages*. The group traveled to Thessaloniki to initiate discussions with local authorities, museums, and art galleries to facilitate bringing the *Shared Holy Places* exhibition to Thessaloniki. Thessaloniki's history of long periods of multi-religious coexistence interrupted by occasional conflict (most notably during Nazi occupation) and its location as an entry point to both the Balkans and the Mediterranean make it a fitting destination for the exhibit.

We had discussions with local officials, curators, and researchers in museums, archives, and cultural institutions. The team visited museums (The Macedonian Museum for Contemporary Art, the Photography Museum) as well as historic sites (the Roman Rotunda, Yeni Cami, Alaca Imaret) that could possibly host the exhibition and amplify the message of historically grounded coexistence.



Religious images on a wall outside of the Durbali Sultan Tekke.

Following our visit, we have begun planning the *Shared Holy Places* exhibition in Thessaloniki for a fall 2017 opening. The exhibition has the support of Thessaloniki's Mayor, Yiannis Boutaris, and will be held in close collaboration with a network of local museums and cultural institutions. The showing in Thessaloniki is envisioned within a sequence of exhibitions or parallel events in the Mediterranean (Tunis 2016, Istanbul 2017) aimed at raising awareness about the rich history of religious coexistence in the region.

In the second part of the trip, the research team carried out collaborative ethnographic fieldwork in two major sites that showcase a legacy of sharing, openness, and religious tolerance: the Etz Hayim Synagogue in Chania, Crete and the Durbali Sultan Tekke near Asprogeia in Thessaly.

The Etz Hayim Synagogue is historically important, as it is the only “living” site of the vanished Jewish community on the island. Largely due to the efforts of Rabbi Nicholas Stavroulakis, the synagogue serves a small but devoted local community and, most importantly, visitors of all faiths and backgrounds. We interviewed Stavroulakis, focusing on the synagogue as a point of sharing and interaction for different groups of people across faiths.

The fieldwork team also traveled to Thessaly to visit Durbali Sultan Tekke, a major center of Bektashism in the Balkans and an Islamic convent with immense historical significance. We were interested in investigating the tekke's reputation as a site revered by both Muslims (Bekdashis) and Greek Orthodox Christians. We spent a full celebration day (the 1st of May) with Bektashi Albanian pilgrims living in Greece. We were able to observe the pilgrimage and the practices associated with it and conducted numerous interviews with participants.

The fieldwork carried out in the Etz Hayim Synagogue and in Durbali Sultan Tekke produced a wealth of valuable ethnographic material that the team intends to use both for publishing new research and as a basis to inform the exhibition in Thessaloniki.



Karen Barkey and Manöel Pénicaud interviewing an employee at the Etz Hayim Synagogue in Thessaloniki, Greece.

Religious Toleration and Plural Democracies

In 2013, the Center for Democracy, Toleration, and Religion (CDTR) and the IRCPL were awarded a three-year grant from the Henry R. Luce Initiative on Religion and International Affairs. The three initiatives spearheaded under the Luce grant include: Sufi Islam in 21st Century Politics; Islam, Democracy, and Pluralism; and Shared Sacred Sites and the Politics of Pluralism.

Sufi Islam in 21st Century Politics

The Sufi Islam in 21st Century Politics project has held three workshops and two conferences, produced multiple papers in at least two languages, and is nearing completion on manuscripts for two edited volumes: one from the conference on Sufism in India and Pakistan, the other from the conference on Islam and World Peace (to be published in English and in French), both held in September of 2015.

As an extension of the work done during the latter conference, the project's PIs, along with Toby Volkman of the Luce Foundation, traveled to Senegal on a research trip this spring. An excerpt from their report on that trip is below; the full report is available at ircpl.org.

During our trip we spent one day in Touba, the Mouride capital of Senegal, and one day in Tivaouane, the center of the Tijaniyyah. We attended and spoke at a conference organized by one of the leaders of the Mouride brotherhood and president of the Al Azhar Institute, Serigne Mame Mor Mbacke, and spent a day of conversation at the West African Research Center (WARC) to discuss toleration, Islam, and the Sufis in Senegal with scholars and religious leaders in Dakar.

This trip was organized as a follow-up to previous events at Columbia University on the question of Sufism in 21st century politics. IRCPL's second conference for this project, Islam & World Peace: Perspectives from African Muslim Nonviolence Traditions, was held in September 2015 in collaboration with Majalis (Scientific Initiative for African Muslim Heritage). This meeting was dedicated to the role of Sufism in non-violence practice and the particular configurations of Sufi thought and practice in Senegal, focusing on the thought of Cheikh Ahmadu Bamba in particular, as well as the sociology and politics of contemporary Senegal. In this conference we broached the topic of education, though less pointedly than we did during our visit to Senegal a few months later.

We followed the initial questions of the project, trying to understand the particular dimension of Sufism in Senegal, its historical emergence as a powerful sociological and political force, the trajectory of engagement that the Senegalese brotherhoods have espoused over the years since independence, and Sufism's role today. The question is around the way that Senegalese political and religious elites maintain their non-violent understandings and traditions of Islam and the peaceful coexistence of various religious denominations, even as the growth of a more violent and extremist global Islam is formed. The political culture of Senegal represents a particular engagement of a democratic understanding, with a religious civil society that is bound by such rules. At first sight, it provides for Alfred Stepan's twin tolerations, where both state and religious institutions bow in the direction of the other. So, on the one hand, the role of the brotherhoods in politics seems to be taken for granted, but on the other, one questions the degree to which religious brotherhoods organized around hierarchical chains of patronage represent a true civil society. Further, the undue influence of brotherhood leaders on political elites was repeatedly brought up as a source of potential conflict.



Toby Volkman and Mamadou Diouf at the West African Research Center (WARC) conference.



Aziz Mbacké of Majalis, Mamadou Diouf, and Souleymane Bachir Diagne in the library at Touba.

Our group generally explored the transmission of knowledge based on Sufi learning and texts that maintain the Sufi religious and moral ethic. There is a strong concern that the particular knowledge that the Sufi tradition imparts - which can be seen as an alternative to the Salafi teachings, which spread very quickly through all kinds of modern technologies, such as the internet - is being sidelined by the inability of the Sufi Cheikhs and educational institutions to inculcate their brand of Islam well and fast enough. In this vein, the kinds of issues that were discussed, especially with the Tijaniyyah community and leadership in Tivaouane, were of the pressing need for the transmission of the knowledge of the tradition that this generation has, but that has not yet been adequately passed on to the next. Others argued that the transmission of knowledge is not enough, that people cite only the great thinkers and that there is much repetition, but not enough analytic work done on the ideas of these founding thinkers and religious figures. The Tijaniyyah leadership is interested in the work of identification, numerization, and cataloguing of the works of the masters of this Sufi tradition, to promote knowledge adding to the existing literature, and opening libraries in order to carry out this work. The library at Tivaouane is being organized now, and books range from the religious to the secular to children's books in French.

was also linked to the practice. In our role as educators, we visited and observed the success of a variety of scholarly institutions led by Serigne Mame Mor Mbacké, the son of Serigne Mourtala Mbacké (son of the founder of the Mourid order). We visited three models: the Centres d'Excellence, the Instituts el-Ahzar, and the University of Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba in Touba, which is currently under construction.

The final aspect of this visit engaged the group in a very different way: That is, the work we did as academics, the thinking and the writing,

The particular attraction of the educational model proposed by Serigne Mame Mor Mbacké lies in the combination of two significant historical and cultural legacies of Senegal to fashion an alternative educational system that works. As such, this model goes beyond the burdened educational traditions of Senegal, the Islamic model as well as the Western French colonial model, and rethinks the strengths of each to combine them. In addition to the recognition of the merits of secular education and training (denounced by Boko Haram), Serigne Mame Mor Mbacké's project is a creative attempt to reconcile it with religious, professional, and academic education and training.

For the students at these schools, their "Arabisant" identity is accepted, but it is seen by their teachers as only one of the identities that they could have. As was discussed in many of these locations and as many emphasized in their conversations with the students: "to be a good Muslim you do not need to stay just in Islam; you need a formation as a citizen of the world." Therefore, the importance of this model is in its acceptance and appreciation of what Islam - especially a Senegalese Islam with its own traditions - can give, rather than a rejection of religion. Religion is not taken out of the educational system; it is seen as a base that needs to be complemented. In this, obviously, the project is far more progressive than in many countries where an Islamic tradition is taking hold. This is clearly the model we want to engage with and understand better in the future.



Karen Barkey with students from the Centres d'Excellence.

Shared Sacred Sites and the Politics of Pluralism

The sharing of spaces, sites, and symbolism by multiple religious communities demonstrates the practical choreographies and social possibilities of cooperation between potentially antagonistic communities, and the study of this sharing provides key insights into characteristics and features crucial to the cultivation of tolerance and understanding. Shared Sacred Sites is a collaborative project that seeks to develop a rubric for the description, classification, analysis, and publication of work relating to spaces and locations used by multiple, disparate communities for religious purposes. The project is composed of several sub-projects that individually address different and particular difficulties in the study of shared sacred sites and that combine to form an important, updated, and modern survey of the unique features, mechanisms, and adaptations of coexistence found in the communities involved with these sites.



A street salesman at the Church of the Mother of God at Vefa.

In the summer of 2013, Karen Barkey, PI of the Shared Sacred Sites project, with assistance from Noah Arjomand, PhD candidate in Sociology at Columbia University, traveled to Istanbul, Turkey to conduct field research at the Church of the Mother of God and the Aghiasma known as Vefa in the Vefa neighborhood, the Church of Aya Demetrios in Kuruçesme, and Saint Anthony of Padua Church in the Beyoglu (Pera) district of Istanbul.

In the spring of 2015, Karen Barkey and Dimitrios Papadopoulos went to Turkey and Greece to continue the research begun in 2013. They worked at Aya Demetrios in Kuruçesme, and at Aya Yorgi in Büyükada, and sites in North Thrace.

In the spring of 2016, Barkey traveled to Thessaloniki, Greece and Chania in Crete with Dimitrios Papadopoulos and Vatsal Naresh. The results of this work, including interviews, photographs, and video footage, are forthcoming on the IRCPL website. As well as her research, Barkey taught two independent study field research courses - one at the graduate level, one undergraduate - and co-taught a seminar class on shared sites.

In addition to the ethnographic field research conducted by the project's scholars and researchers, a large component of the Shared Sacred Sites project has involved the creation of a wider network of students and scholars all contributing to the same goals and knowledge base. One product of this network of thinkers is sharesacredsites.net, which launches in the summer of 2016. [Sharesacredsites.net](http://sharesacredsites.net) gathers together many of the sub-projects the Shared Sacred Sites team has been working on for the past three years, as well as information on work done by other researchers across the globe. The site contains a directory of these scholars, information on their previous

Shared Sacred

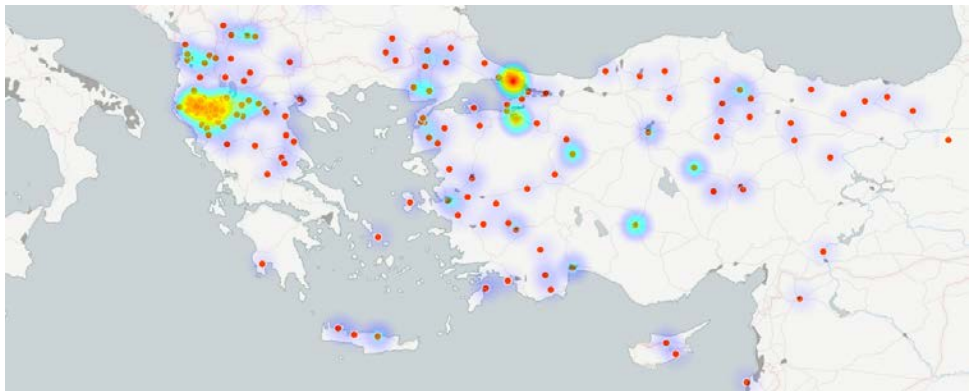
and upcoming research, and an expanding collection of references to bibliographic and multimedia publications on the subject. The site also features a fieldwork archive: a catalog of ethnographic materials on shared sites, including images, audio, video, and field-notes, organized by site, country, and community.

Another component of the Shared Sacred Sites project is Visual Hasluck, a digital mapping and visualization project exploring sacred space in the post-Ottoman world. Visual Hasluck is developing an interactive version of *Christianity and Islam Under the Sultans*, the milestone work by antiquarian and archaeologist F.W. Hasluck (edited and published in 1929 by Margaret Hasluck), as an online resource for the spatial history of sacred sites and religious monuments in regions of the former Ottoman Empire. The project combines a set of different tools, approaches and methodologies (text mining, data visualization, GIS, and digital mapping) to produce a series of visual and interactive resources as spatial stories of shared and mixed religious and cultural practices.

Visual Hasluck aims to capture the richness and diversity of sacred space in historical perspective beyond simplistic or fragmented views by focusing on trajectories, transformations, relations, and interactions. It will also provide a visually engaging resource for exploring mixed and shared sacred sites that will be valuable across disciplinary fields including urban and architectural history, religious studies, Ottoman, Modern Greek, Middle East, and Southeast European Studies.



Interviewing Bektashi Albanian pilgrims at Durbali Sultan Tekke in Thessaly.



Islam, Democracy, and Pluralism

This project attempts to foster a discussion on democracy, liberalism, and pluralism between leaders and academics, in an attempt to encourage the development of greater moderation and accommodation within political discourse. The work centers on bringing together academics and political leaders from India, Senegal, Indonesia, Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, and Tunisia to facilitate greater understanding of different ways countries have successfully (and unsuccessfully) related to pluralism while negotiating with the beliefs and demands of religious populations.

In February of 2016, the IRCPL held a conference titled Democracy and Religious Pluralism. The papers given at the conference inspired a volume of the same name, edited by Karen Barkey and Sudipta Kaviraj, that will further delve into questions of authoritarianism and democracy, sectarianism and religious pluralism, and minority exclusion.

In March of 2015, this project held a conference titled The Tunisian Democratic Transition in Comparative Perspective: With Reflections on Indonesia, India, and Egypt. The participants in the workshop were particularly interested in expanding the understanding of what helps, or hurts, successful democratic transition attempts in countries with large Muslim populations. To more fully explore the question, Al Stepan recently completed editing on a collected volume of work from participants at the conference.

Alfred Stepan has also recently completed an in-depth interview with Souleymane Bachir Diagne on Sufi Islam and politics, which will soon be edited for publication digitally or in print. A preview of that interview is available below:

Alfred Stepan: Bachir, could we begin our conversation about Sufism with the overall question: What is Sufism?

Souleymane Bachir Diagne: That would be okay, for as you know and know well, Sufism is almost impossible to define. But let's try.

AS: Well, it is impossible to define, but I think there are a number of key questions that relate to this that you can talk about, and will at least give us a working definition, if not anything more. The first question would be, obviously, about you. You call yourself a Sufi. What does this mean for you? Forget about the theoretical, philosophical, and historical - what does it mean for Bachir?

SBD: Well, let me give you two different directions that both answer this question. One, the easy way for me to somehow to get rid of the question, would be to say, "Well, I consider myself a Sufi because I belong to a Sufi organization called Tijaniyyah, named after its founder, Ahmad al-Tijani, and I follow the rituals that have been defined as rituals to be followed by the adherents of that Sufi order." But, as I said, this would be a too-easy way of not defining myself, but somehow getting rid of the question. This is too easy because before there is belonging to a particular Sufi organization, Sufism is a certain outlook on both religion - the Islamic religion, religion in general - and the world. I insist on this notion of an outlook, a way of looking at the world and reading in whatever one is seeing signs of God. The world is speaking, things are speaking, and you have to pay attention because of the way in which the world is teaching you something, events are teaching you something. You have to see those teachings, those meanings, as being sent to you by God. So, now that I have pronounced the word God, it takes me closer to what I would consider a definition, which would be to live constantly under the sight of God and to live in this particular direct relation to God. Of course you belong to a religion, and of course a religion is an institution, and an institution has rituals, defines a community and so on and so forth. But this direct, particular relationship that one has with God and one tries to develop and to deepen: that attitude is what defines Sufism and this is why I use that working definition, which is: to be a Sufi is to consider oneself continuously under the sight of God. Which seems very general, defining almost any kind of religious attitude, but I would say that Sufis take that very, very seriously and very literally.

AS: I remember in one of our previous conversations you stressed the importance of remembrance and trying to imagine that you are in the presence of God and knowing that even if you can't quite imagine it, you are.

SBD: Indeed, and what you just said is the definition of a very important concept of God, which is the concept of excellence of character. The prophet of Islam famously defined excellence of character not as any type of content - he did not say that excellence of character was to act like *this*, in other circumstances like *that* - but he said to live and worship God as if you were actually seeing Him, knowing that if you do not see Him, He sees you. While I'm about to do something or even thinking something bad about my fellow human being, just think: Is it worthy of me being in the presence of God, to act or speak or think like this? So you are constantly under your own surveillance, so to say, and you keep being the accountant of yourself. One of the words - because you have many words that are synonymous with Sufism - one word which is synonymous with the Sufism attitude is *hasib*, meaning someone who does the accounting. Before going to bed, you go through your day and you do the math: What have I done, what was my state of mind when I was doing this, what was my spiritual attitude when I was doing this? This continuous notion of bettering yourself, this attitude would define Sufism best.

AS: Let me ask something else. When you say that you're a Sufi, is anything added or subtracted from just saying you are a Muslim?

SBD: That's an excellent question, because actually one should be very hesitant of calling oneself a Sufi, because it does sound like you are adding something to "Muslim," like: "I am a Muslim and a Sufi" or -

AS: Or even a Sufi, but not a Muslim.

SBD: - or, "I am a Muslim, but not a Sufi." It did happen to me that I met once a young woman who told me she was a Sufi without being a Muslim, because her idea of being Sufi was reading Sufi poetry, having some kind of very general sense of spirituality, and admiring me or Ibn Arabi or Attar, and mixing that with some kind of general Oriental spirituality, maybe yoga, spiritual exercises, and so on and so forth. It's probably just good to call oneself Muslim, because you do have many Muslims who would correspond with the very broad definition of Sufi I just gave you, and would not call themselves Sufis. And they would not even belong to any Sufi order. But they would have that outlook.

AS: So a key question is outlook and a form of spirituality to get as close to the divine as possible.

SBD: Exactly. The idea that one has to be educated into that might be a way of defining Sufism.

AS: Educated in?

SBD: Educated in living in a very authentic way, the kind of life dominated by that outlook that I have just described.



Conferences

IRCPL hosts a vibrant and varied lineup of academic programming and events, including public lectures, conferences, musical performances, working groups, and panel discussions. During the past year, the IRCPL has sponsored and co-sponsored 48 events, featuring over 280 speakers. Below are just a few of our conferences and talks.

NEGOTIATING SHARED SACRED SPACES IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THE BALKANS, AND INDIA

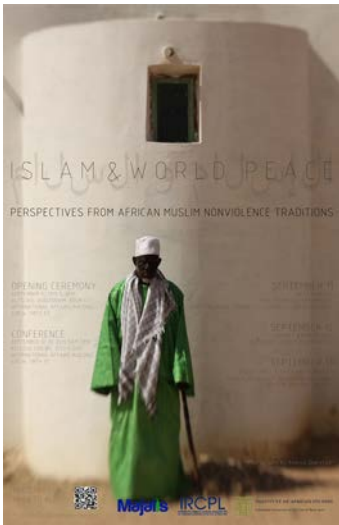
June 15-16, 2015

This two-day focused workshop explored questions of coexistence at shared sacred sites. How people practice their religions, how they understand and communicate their practices, and how their practices impact others at the sites are questions vital to our understanding of how space can be negotiated and shared between two or more potentially antagonistic groups.

Sponsored by IRCPL and the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Sciences Po.

ISLAM & WORLD PEACE: PERSPECTIVES FROM AFRICAN MUSLIM NONVIOLENCE TRADITIONS

September 11-13, 2015



Islam is a source of suspicion and hostility in many societies today. In view of growing violent extremism and the stigmatization of Muslims, the need to understand the legacies of nonviolent leaders is more urgent today than ever before. This conference invited students of religion and Islam around the world to engage in substantive ways the genesis, diffusion, and

teachings of Islamic nonviolence traditions of Sufi leaders and their interpretation and operationalization of the concept of Jihad that unequivocally rejects extremism and intolerance in all forms.

Sponsored by Majalis (Scientific Initiative for African Muslim Heritage), the Institute of African Studies at Columbia University, and the IRCPL.

SUFISM IN INDIA AND PAKISTAN: RETHINKING ISLAM, DEMOCRACY, AND IDENTITY

September 25-26, 2015

This part of the Sufi Islam project, focused on South Asia, sought to increase our understanding of how Sufi groups have positioned themselves politically and socially in the modern world and with what consequences. An interdisciplinary group addressed the impact of local politics, global policy, and scholarly commitments on recent development of Sufism, and placed these within a deeper historical context.



THEOSOPHY AND THE ARTS: TEXTS AND CONTEXTS OF MODERN ENCHANTMENT

October 9-10, 2015

This was the second conference of the international research network Enchanted Modernities: Theosophy, Modernism and the Arts, funded by the Leverhulme Trust. Theosophy was a major source of inspiration and influence for artists in the modern age. We sought to locate that influence within its cultural contexts and to trace the textual practices and philosophical, historical, and cultural traditions that produced and sustained Theosophy.

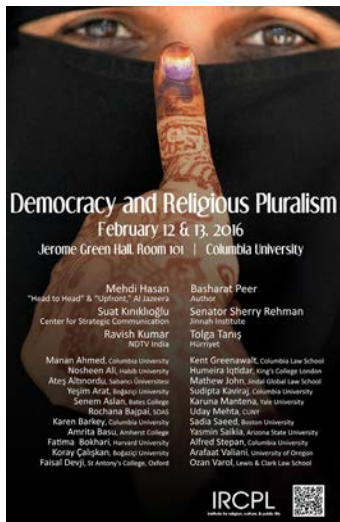
THE RELIGION OF KARL OVE KNAUSGAARD

January 15-16, 2016

The year-by-year translation into English of now the first four of Knausgaard's six-volume novel, *Min Kamp* (*My Struggle*) has become something of a slow-gathering storm. It is not full of meaning per se, but - as confession, meditation, psychological self-portrait, and indeed, as ethnography - Knausgaard's world is certainly full. It presents an irresistible occasion for reflecting on the secular as religion. Public programming based on the work of this closed workshop will follow next year.

DEMOCRACY AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

February 12-13, 2016



This conference brought together academics, politicians, and journalists working on nations that have faced the challenge of fashioning democratic institutions in societies with pluralistic religious traditions, such as India, Pakistan, Turkey, and Senegal. We examined how these nations have negotiated the balance between the claims of religious groups and

modern democratic institutions, and critically examined democratically elected regimes that pose challenges to pluralism and coexistence.

RELIGION: DYNAMICS, PROCESSES, CHANGE

March 4, 2016

This conference brought together IRCPL fellows and researchers to take up the theme of religion from various critical perspectives that engage with democratic processes and ideologies, the making of identities, gender, social class, space, symbols, and meaning. We facilitated an intellectual exchange and provided a comparative understanding of sociopolitical dynamics behind religion in various societies.

DESIGNING FOR LIFE AND DEATH

April 1, 2016

What we do with the remains of our dead reflects the character of the living. The environmental toll of traditional burial and cremation, changing social norms, and spatial limitations within our growing cities demand alternative mortuary designs that change the way we honor our deceased.

Co-sponsored by the IRCPL, DeathLAB at Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture Planning and Preservation, Columbia University Seminar on Death, and the Earth Institute at Columbia University.

PERSPECTIVES ON CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLIES

April 1-2, 2016

The aim of this conference was to promote a comparative, interdisciplinary dialogue on methodological and substantive issues in the study of constituent assemblies

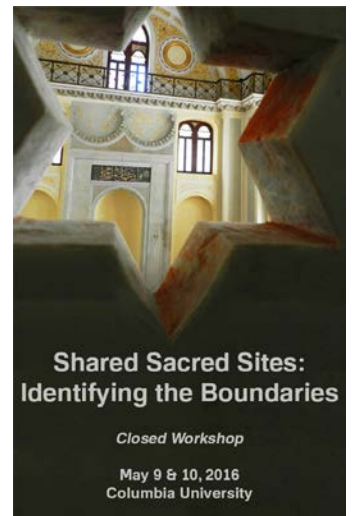
featuring historians, political theorists, legal scholars, sociologists, and politicians from different parts of the world. Our goal was to begin a conversation that is conscious of the breadth of Western and non-Western experiences, and self-reflexively critical of such distinctions.

Sponsored by the IRCPL and the Department of Political Science at the University of Oslo.

IDENTIFYING THE BOUNDARIES

May 9-11, 2016

In recent years, shared sacred sites have gained increased attention as a focus of interdisciplinary study. The concepts involved in shared sacred sites as an analytical category remain flexible and relatively ambiguous, and studies concerning different shared sacred sites can often talk about strikingly different interactions. Different types of sharing are often present at the same site and we must find ways to organize such occurrences. We sought to investigate the viability of shared sacred sites as an analytical category and organized this workshop to identify the boundaries involved in the study of these sites.



This workshop was generously funded by the Alliance Program at Columbia University, the IRCPL, and CERI, Sciences Po.

FORMS OF PLURALISM AND DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTIONALISM

June 17-18, 2016

This event was a two-day conference at Sciences Po, Paris to discuss plausible ways of managing pluralism in a post-sovereign world compatible with democratic constitutionalism. Federalism, status group legal pluralism, corporate group autonomy, and subsidiarity are the four main themes which we examined. We aimed to discuss plausible ways to manage pluralism in a 'post-sovereign' world using these four themes.

This conference was generously sponsored by Alliance, with the Department of Political Science and the IRCPL.

Lectures

AKIN UNVER: “TURKEY’S KURDISH QUESTION”

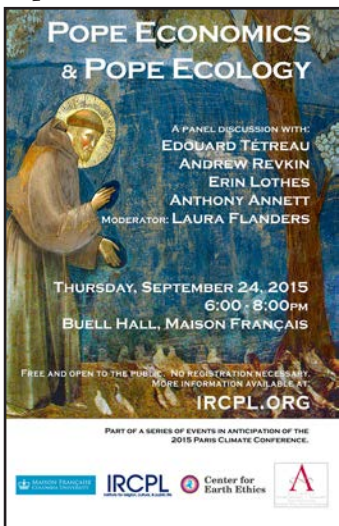
September 17, 2015

The Kurdish question is one of the most complicated and protracted conflicts of the Middle East and will never be resolved unless it is finally defined. The majority of the Kurdish people live in Turkey, giving the country a unique position in the larger Kurdish conundrum. In this talk, Ünver explored how these denial and acknowledgement dynamics often reveal pre-existing political ideology and agenda priorities, themselves becoming political actions.

Co-sponsored by the IRCPL and the Middle East Institute at Columbia University.

POPE ECONOMICS & POPE ECOLOGY

September 24, 2015



This discussion with Edouard Tétreau, Andrew Revkin, Erin Lothes, and Anthony Annett, moderated by Joan Walsh, was part of a series of events in anticipation of the 2015 Paris Climate Conference. Panelists looked at implications of the papal encyclical on climate change and the pope’s call for drastic changes in “lifestyle, production, and

consumption” to more prudent care of “our common home.”

Co-sponsored by the IRCPL, Columbia Maison Française, the Center for Earth Ethics, and Alliance.

RAFIK ABDESSALEM: “COULD ISIS ALLIES DESTABILIZE THE TUNISIAN TRANSITION?”

October 2, 2015

Rafik Abdessalem was the Foreign Minister of the post-revolutionary Tunisian government from 2011-2013 when it was led by the moderate Islamist party, Ennadha. He is now a member of Ennadha’s Executive Committee in charge of External Relations. Al Stepan, moderator, is the Director of the CDTR and Professor of Government in SIPA and Political Science.

CONCERT: THE MALEK JANDALI TRIO: A CONCERT TO SUPPORT SYRIAN CHILDREN

November 5, 2015

A benefit concert with Syrian musician Malek Jandali and the Malek Jandali trio: Abdulrahim Alsaïdi on the oud and cellist Laura Metcalf. Revenues were donated to the Save the Children Syrian Fund, used to support educational infrastructure for refugees and provide needed supplies.

Sponsored by Students Organize for Syria, and co-sponsored by the IRCPL and the Muslim Students Association.

RON SUNY: “THEY CAN LIVE IN THE DESERT BUT NOWHERE ELSE:’ EXPLAINING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE 100 YEARS LATER”

December 7, 2015

Ronald Suny spoke about the controversies over whether the deportations and massacres of Armenians and Assyrians in the late Ottoman Empire constitute a genocide by the Young Turk government. Reviewing the documentation of events and the findings of scholars, Suny considered the conflicting narratives on 1915 and developed his analysis of why a government turned to eliminating several of its subject peoples.

Karen Barkey, Director of the IRCPL, introduced and moderated the event.

AFTER CHARLIE HEBDO: FRENCH LAÏCITÉ AND ISLAM: CAN THE “REPUBLICAN MODEL” HOLD?

November 4, 2015

This panel featured Abdennour Bidar, Patrick Simon, and Ethan Katz, moderated by Souleymane Bachir Diagne, discussing the social integration of Muslims in contemporary France and the consequences of the current debates on secularism

(laïcité) and the “Republican model” for Islamophobia. Co-sponsored by the Columbia Maison Française, the IRCPL, Alliance, the European Institute, the Heyman Center for the Humanities, and the Middle East Institute.



MODE D'EMPLOI: FESTIVAL OF IDEAS

November 16-29, 2015



The “Festival of Ideas” is an annual gathering of meetings, lectures, performances, and conversations which question the world of today. The aim of the festival is to “reverse dogmatism, interrogate the current world, to build hypotheses, and to broaden the scope of knowledge.”

Mode d'Emploi is designed by the Villa Gillet in cooperation with Substances. This year's festival was supported by the Ministry of Culture and Communication, the National Book Centre, the Rhône-Alpes Region and Lyon Metropole. Individual events are co-sponsored with a variety of groups, including the IRCPL.

MICHAEL WALZER: “WHAT HAPPENED TO NATIONAL LIBERATION?”

March 29, 2016

India, Israel, and Algeria are three nations whose founding principles and institutions are under attack from religious revivalists of different kinds. Michael Walzer's book *The Paradox of Liberation* offers a study for discussion on the roots of one of the contemporary world's most serious problems. Participants in the discussion included: Michael Walzer; Mustafa Akyol, journalist; Akeel Bilgrami, Columbia; Nader Hashemi, University of Denver; Jonathan Laurence, Boston College; and Hanna Lerner, Tel Aviv University. Giancarlo Bosetti, Reset DoC, chaired the discussion.

This event was sponsored by the IRCPL and Reset Dialogues on Civilizations.

CONCERT: HEARING THE FEMININE

April 7, 2016

What does focusing on the listener's role, on hearing, tell us about agency? When is hearing the ‘feminine’ culturally determined? What is the relationship between the sacred and secular in music performed by female singers? What is the function of women's voices and women's bodies at the intersection of religion and national politics? What does it mean to silence the feminine? Discussion was followed by a concert of Gurbānī kīrtan, performed by Francesca Cassio, with Parminder Singh Bhamra and Nirvair Kaur Khalsa.

TOWARD THE REFORM OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM: RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES

April 15, 2016

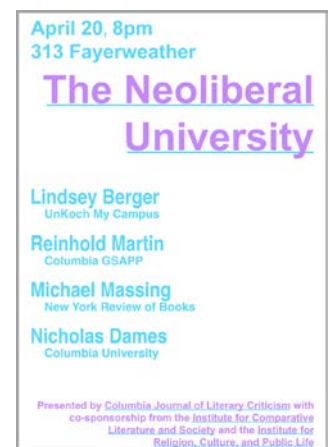
The command given to Abraham in Deuteronomy 16:20, “Tzedek, tzedek tirdof” (“Justice, justice you shall pursue”), is one of the most famous and nebulous of the Hebrew Bible. Could a reassessment of religious traditions help us to illuminate American society's crucial issue of mass incarceration and need for a reform of the criminal justice system? This panel sought to probe the ways in which religion might help or hinder the efforts to promote the reform of this legal institution, and trace and challenge the religious rationale used to justify mass incarceration.

THE NEOLIBERAL UNIVERSITY

April 20, 2016

With unprecedented levels of income inequality, a student debt crisis prompted by exorbitant tuition fees, and the increasing contracting of teaching labor to underpaid adjuncts, concerns over the corporatization of the university are reaching a fever pitch. How did we get here? This discussion brought together speakers from academia, journalism, and activism, including: Lindsey Berger, Grassroots Campaign Activist; Reinhold Martin, Associate Professor at the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation; and Michael Massing, *New York Review of Books*.

Presented by Columbia Journal of Literary Criticism, the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, and the IRCPL.



RUTH BRAUNSTEIN: “PUTTING FAITH IN ACTION IN THE TEA PARTY AND FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY ORGANIZING”

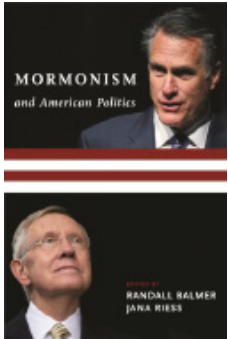
April 28, 2016

Based on ethnographic fieldwork in a Tea Party group and a faith-based community organizing coalition, Braunstein showed that despite their differences, these groups shared a number of political concerns. Part of the Religion and Politics in American Public Life lecture series, sponsored by the IRCPL and the Departments of Political Science and of Religion at Columbia University.

IRCPL/Columbia University Press Book Series

Since 2010, the IRCPL/CUP partnership has yielded the publication of around thirty books, covering a wide range of themes. Over the past year, under the direction of series editor Karen Barkey, nine books were released that focus specifically on religion and pluralism through the examination of a diverse array of topics. Three additional books are currently in the pipeline addressing secularism and religious conflict: David Buckley's *Faithful to Secularism*, Manlio Graziano's *Holy War or Holy Alliance?*, and Murat Akan's *A Politics of Secularism* are all scheduled to be released in the upcoming year.

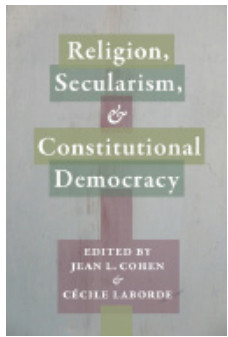
Books released in the 2015-16 academic year include:



MORMONISM AND AMERICAN POLITICS

ed. Randall Balmer and Jana Riess

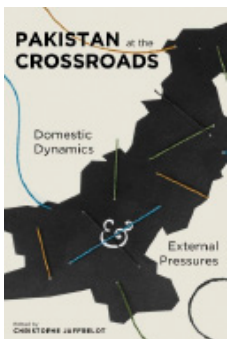
When Joseph Smith ran for president as a radical protest candidate in 1844, Mormons were a deeply distrusted group in American society. When Mitt Romney ran for president as a Republican in 2008 and 2012, the public had come to regard Mormons as consummate Americans: patriotic, family-oriented, and conservative. How did this shift occur? In this collection, prominent scholars of Mormonism, including Claudia L. Bushman, Richard Lyman Bushman, Jan Shipps, and Philip L. Barlow, follow the religion's quest for legitimacy in the United States and its intersection with American politics.



RELIGION, SECULARISM, AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY

ed. Jean L. Cohen and Cécile Laborde

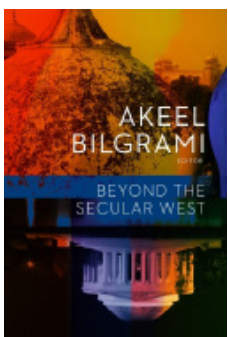
Critically engaging with traditional secularism and religious accommodationism, this collection introduces a constitutional secularism that robustly meets contemporary challenges. It identifies which connections between religion and the state are compatible with the liberal, republican, and democratic principles of constitutional democracy and assesses the success of their implementation in the birthplace of political secularism: the United States and Western Europe.



PAKISTAN AT THE CROSSROADS

Christophe Jaffrelot

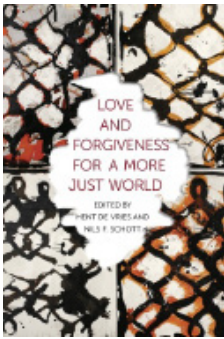
Top international scholars assess Pakistan's politics and economics and the challenges faced by its civil and military leaders domestically and diplomatically. Contributors examine the state's handling of internal threats, tensions between civilians and the military, strategies of political parties, police and law enforcement reform, trends in judicial activism, economic challenges, financial entanglements with foreign powers, and diplomatic relations. This volume is critical to grasping the sophisticated interplay of internal and external forces complicating the country's recent trajectory.



BEYOND THE SECULAR WEST

ed. Akeel Bilgrami

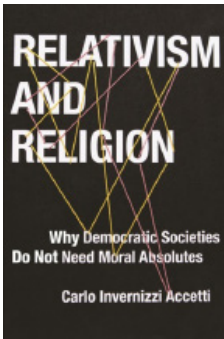
A vital extension of Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age*, in which he exhaustively chronicled the emergence of secularism in Latin Christendom, this anthology applies Taylor's findings to secularism's global migration. Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, Rajeev Bhargava, Akeel Bilgrami, Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Sudipta Kaviraj, Claudio Lomnitz, Alfred Stepan, Charles Taylor, and Peter van der Veer each explore the transformation of Western secularism beyond Europe, and the collection closes with Taylor's response to each essay.



LOVE AND FORGIVENESS FOR A MORE JUST WORLD

ed. Hent de Vries and Nils Schott

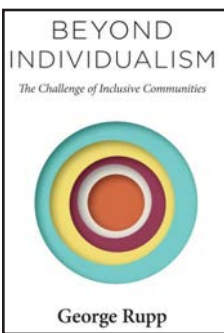
Love and forgiveness follow parallel and largely independent paths, a truth we fail to acknowledge when we pressure others to both love and forgive. Individuals in conflict, warring religious communities, and insecure nations often do not need to pursue love and forgiveness to achieve peace of mind and heart. With contributions by philosophers Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion, the poet Haleh Liza Gafari, and scholars of religion (Leora Batnitzky, Nils F. Schott, Hent de Vries), and psychoanalysis (Albert Mason, Orna Ophir), this anthology reconstructs the historical and conceptual lineage of love and forgiveness and their fraught relationship.



RELATIVISM AND RELIGION

Carlo Invernizzi Accetti

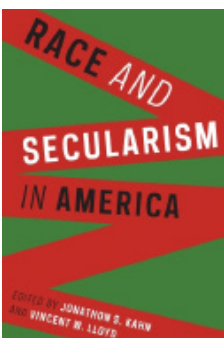
Carlo Invernizzi Accetti traces the roots of contemporary anti-relativist fears to the antimodern rhetoric of the Catholic Church and then rescues a form of philosophical relativism for modern, pluralist societies. In his analyses of the relationship between religious arguments and political authority and the implications of philosophical relativism for democratic theory, Accetti makes a far-ranging contribution to contemporary debates over the revival of religion in politics and the conceptual grounds for a commitment to democracy.



BEYOND INDIVIDUALISM: THE CHALLENGE OF INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

George Rupp

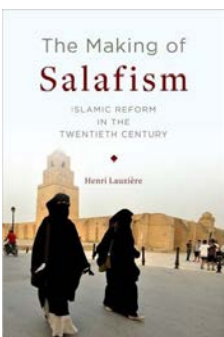
While individualism is a powerful force in Western cultures and a cornerstone of Western foreign policy, it elicits strong resistance in traditional communities. Drawing on decades of research and experience, Rupp pushes modern individualism beyond its foundational beliefs to recognize the place of communal practice in our world. Affirming the value of communities and the productive role religion plays in many lives, he advocates new solutions to such global challenges as conflicts in the developing world, income inequality, climate change, and mass migration.



RACE AND SECULARISM IN AMERICA

ed. Jonathon Kahn and Vincent Lloyd

With the evident resilience of religion in both public and private life, scholars have turned their attention to secularism, the ideology that excludes religious ideas and practices from public life. But discussions of secularism have rarely been inflected by considerations of race, and discussions of race have rarely taken ambient secularism into account. This anthology draws bold comparisons between secularist strategies to contain, privatize, and discipline religion and the treatment of racialized subjects by the American state. Specializing in history, literature, anthropology, theology, religious studies, and political theory, contributors expose secularism's prohibitive practices in all facets of American society and suggest opportunities for change.



THE MAKING OF SALAFISM: ISLAMIC REFORM IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Henri Lauzière

Some Islamic scholars hold that Salafism is an innovative and rationalist effort at Islamic reform that emerged in the late nineteenth century but gradually disappeared in the mid-twentieth. Others argue Salafism is an anti-innovative and antirationalist movement of Islamic purism that dates back to the medieval period. Though they contradict each other, both narratives are considered authoritative, making it hard for outsiders to grasp the history of the ideology and its core beliefs. Introducing a third, empirically based genealogy, this volume understands the concept as a recent phenomenon projected back onto the past, and it sees its purist evolution as a direct result of decolonization.

Arabic Translation Project

In 2012, the Institute partnered with All Prints Publishers in Beirut to translate and publish a dozen English language books on democracy and case studies on democratic transitions 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.

In addition to being available in print form in schools, libraries, and bookstores across the Middle East and North Africa, all books in the Arabic Translation Project are now available in electronic format through ektab.com and Al-Manhal digital platforms, and will become available on the Neel wa Furat and All Prints digital platforms during the summer of 2016.

As of May 2016, the Arabic Translation Project has published seven translations and printed 10,000 copies of those texts. An eighth translation, *Civil Resistance in the Arab Spring: Triumphs and Disasters*, edited by Adam Roberts, Michael J. Willis, Rory McCarthy, and Timothy Garton Ash, is forthcoming.

Books published in the series include:



DEMOCRACIES IN DANGER

ed. Alfred Stepan

New governments established during the third wave of democratization in Latin America, Eastern and Central Europe, Africa, and Asia face increasing threats to stabilization and consolidation. The contributors to this volume identify and analyze three key problems that endanger these democracies: ethno national conflicts, domestic security and the role of police and military, and power sharing in presidential and semi-presidential systems. For each of these issues, essays evaluate promising new policies, advance alternatives, and suggest political reforms that could increase the success of democratic governance.



ON DEMOCRACY

Robert Dahl

Robert Dahl begins with an overview of the early history of democracy. He goes on to discuss differences among democracies, criteria for a democratic process, basic institutions necessary for advancing the goals of democracy, and the social and economic conditions that favor the development and maintenance of these institutions. The book also examines the major problems that democratic countries will face in the twenty-first century: problems that will arise from complexities in the economic order, from internationalization, from cultural diversity, and from the difficulty of achieving an adequate level of citizen competence.



PATTERNS OF DEMOCRACY

Arend Lijphart

In this text, Lijphart arrives at important - and unexpected - conclusions about what type of democracy works best. Arend Lijphart offers a broad and deep analysis of two competing types of democracy: majoritarian or Westminster democracy (a legislature elected by a simple majority of the voters governs, and voters throw the ruling party out if it governs poorly), and consensus democracy (involving far greater compromise and significant minority rights). Examining thirty-six democracies during the period from 1945 to 2010, Lijphart concludes that consensus democracies are superior.



DEMOCRACY & ISLAM IN INDONESIA

ed. Mirjam Kunkler and Alfred Stepan

In this volume, political scientists, religious scholars, legal theorists, and anthropologists examine the theory and practice of Indonesia's democratic transition, as well as its ability to serve as a model for other Muslim countries. Comparing the Indonesian example with similar scenarios in Chile, Spain, India, and Tunisia, as well as with the failed transitions of Yugoslavia, Egypt, and Iran, these essays explore the relationship between religion and politics. The collection concludes with a discussion of Indonesia's emerging "legal pluralism" and of which of its forms are rights-eroding and rights-protecting.



THE ARAB UPRISING EXPLAINED: NEW CONTENTIOUS POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

ed. Marc Lynch

Leading scholars in the field take a sharp look at the causes, dynamics, and effects of the Arab uprisings. This volume offers a fresh rethinking of established theories and presents a new framework through which scholars and general readers can better grasp the fast-developing events remaking the region. These essays not only advance the study of political science in the Middle East but also integrate the subject seamlessly into the wider political science literature.



DEMOCRACY: A READER

ed. Larry Diamond and Marcus Plattner

Since its inception, the *Journal of Democracy* has served as the premier venue for scholarship on democratization. The newest volume in the acclaimed *Journal of Democracy* book series, *Democracy: A Reader*, brings together the seminal works that have appeared in the *Journal of Democracy's* nearly twenty years of publication. Authors address critical discussions on delegative democracy, social capital, constitutional design, federalism, hybrid regimes, competitive authoritarianism, and more. Contributors include: José Antonio Cheibub, Larry Diamond, Francis Fukuyama, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Anwar Ibrahim, Arend Lijphart, Robert D. Putnam, and Al Stepan.



THE MILITARY TRANSITION: DEMOCRATIC REFORM OF THE ARMED FORCES

Narcís Serra

Civilian control of the armed forces is crucial for any country hoping to achieve a successful democratic transition. Narcís Serra, Spanish Minister of Defence from 1982-1991, explains the steps necessary to reduce the powers of armed forces during the process of a democratic transition. Spain's military reform proved a fundamental and necessary element for the consolidation of Spanish democracy, and theirs is often viewed as a paradigmatic case. Using this example, Serra outlines a model of the process and conditions necessary to any democratic military reform.

Institutional Partners

Over the past year, IRCPL has expanded in networking and outreach, adding new affiliates, including Villa Gillet, MuCEM, and Alliance, to the existing network of partners. By extending its affiliations globally, the IRCPL has enabled cross-cultural scholarly engagement and facilitated lasting partnerships in a wide array of projects. The growth in outreach over the past three years allows IRCPL to engage with comparative and cross-regional initiatives in a directed and nuanced fashion that facilitates productive global connections and conversations.



ALL PRINTS

Operating out of Beirut, Lebanon since 1969, All Prints Distributors & Publishers is one of the leading publishing houses in the Arab World and Middle East region.



ALLIANCE

Alliance is an innovative joint venture between Columbia University and three major French institutions: the École Polytechnique, Sciences Po, and Panthéon-Sorbonne University, aiming to pursue innovation in education and research by sharing knowledge, practices, and resources.



THE BRITISH COUNCIL

Founded to create a friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and the wider world, the British Council connect millions of people through programmes and services in the English language, the arts, education, and society.



CENTRE DE RECHERCHES INTERNATIONALES, SCIENCES PO

CERI is the largest of Sciences Po's research units. Established in 1952, it has grown to become the most preeminent research center in France concentrating on both international/transnational relations and regional studies.



CENTRE D'ÉTUDES MAGHRÉBINES À TUNIS

CEMAT is the overseas research center of the American Institute for Maghrib Studies. It offers to AIMS members quiet office space, a specialized library with works primarily in English on the Maghrib and the Middle East, a conference room, and administrative support.



CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY

Founded in 1999, the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (CSID) is a Washington, DC-based organization dedicated to studying Islamic and democratic political thought and merging them into a modern Islamic democratic discourse in the United States and around the world.



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS

CUP seeks to enhance Columbia University's educational and research mission by publishing outstanding original works by scholars and other intellectuals that contribute to an understanding of global human concerns.



EKTAB

eKtab, developed in Jordan in 2010, is the largest and most diverse electronic publications store in the Arabic language, offering international, political, cultural, historical, and literary books. eKtab is building a home for the Arab writer, publisher, and reader, in order to enhance their prominence internationally and establish a worldwide network for an intellectual society.



THE HENRY LUCE FOUNDATION

Established in 1936, the Henry Luce Foundation seeks to bring important ideas to the center of American life, strengthen international understanding, and foster innovation and leadership in academic, policy, religious, and art communities. The Foundation builds upon the vision and values of four generations of the Luce family: broadening knowledge and encouraging the highest standards of service and leadership.



MUSEUM OF EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN CIVILISATIONS

The MuCEM retraces, analyses, and sheds light on, in a single dynamic and a single place, the ancient foundations of this fertile cradle of civilization, as well as the tensions that have been a feature right up to the present day. It is a place of knowledge and exchange centred on the issues of the past, the present and the future.



New York Public Library

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

The NYPL has been an essential provider of free books, information, ideas, and education for all New Yorkers for more than 100 years. Founded in 1895, NYPL is the nation's largest public library system, featuring a unique combination of 88 neighborhood branches and four scholarly research centers.



RESET-DIALOGUES ON CIVILIZATION

Reset-DoC is an Italian non-profit association created in 2004 to promote dialogue and intercultural understanding through the translation of notions and concepts from one into the other universe of understanding in matters of culture, religion, and politics.



THE SCHOMBURG CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN BLACK CULTURE

The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture is a research unit of The New York Public Library system. The Center is recognized as one of the leading institutions focusing exclusively on African-American, African Diaspora, and African experiences.



The Tahir Institute for Middle East Policy

THE TAHIR INSTITUTE FOR MIDDLE EAST POLICY

The Tahir Institute is dedicated to understanding and supporting Middle Eastern countries undergoing democratic transitions and committed to informing US and international policymakers and the public of developments in these countries.



THE VILLA GILLET

Founded in 1987, the Villa Gillet makes the work of exciting contemporary thinkers accessible to the largest audience possible by organizing events throughout the year, as well as during its festivals, including *Mode d'emploi: un festival des idées*, begun in 2012.



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Cover photo: The Sarovar attached to Gurudwara Gudri Sahab, a shrine said to house Baba Farid's (13th CE) bundle of clothes, lit for the annual festival celebrating Farid's arrival in the town of Faridkot.