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Program Coordinator
Sheikha Hoor Al Qasimi is president of the Sharjah Art Foundation (SAF), which supports arts in the Gulf by nurturing artistic opportunities and promoting cultural exchange. She is the director of the Sharjah Biennial, one of the most celebrated cultural events in the region, which showcases the work of local and international artists. Sheikha Al Qasimi is a practicing artist with advanced degrees in painting and curating.

She is chair of the advisory board for the College of Art and Design, University of Sharjah; a member of the advisory board for Khoj International Artists' Association, India; and Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, and serves on the board of directors for MoMA PS1, New York; KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; the International Biennial Association, Gwangju; and Ashkal Alwan, Beirut. Al Qasimi is a visiting lecturer at Slade School of Fine Art, London. She has served on the juries for the Dubai International Film Festival (2013), the Benesse Prize (2013), the Sheikha Manal Young Artist Award (2012), and the selection panel for the Berlin Biennial (2012).

Her recent and upcoming curatorial projects at SAF include In Spite of It All (2012) and Ilya and Emilia Kabakov: A Collective Memory (2013), and in 2014 Ahmed Mater: 100 Found Objects, Abdullah Al Saadi: Al-Toubay, Rasheed Araeen: Before and After Minimalism, Wael Shawky: Horsemen Adore Perfumes and Other Stories, Susan Hefuna: Another Place, and Abdul Hay Mosallam Zarara.

Hoor Al Qasimi has been appointed curator for the National Pavilion United Arab Emirates at the 2015 International Art Exhibition—La Biennale di Venezia. She received her BFA from the Slade School of Fine Art, London (2002), a diploma in painting from the Royal Academy of Arts (2005), and an M.A. in curating contemporary art from the Royal College of Art, London (2008). In 2003 she was appointed curator of Sharjah Biennial 6 and has continued as the Biennial’s Director since that time.
Fall 2014
Film Series

JOHN AKOMFRAH
Filmmaker, Smoking Dogs Films

Panel Discussion and Film Screening: The Stuart Hall Project
Directed by John Akomfrah, 93 min.
Tuesday, November 11, 2014 2:30 p.m.
Africana Studies and Research Center, Multipurpose Room, 310 Triphammer Road

Spring 2015
Lecture Series

VIJAY PRASHAD
George and Martha Kellner Chair in South Asian History; Professor, International Studies, Trinity College

The Futures of Indian Communism
Thursday, April 16, 2015 4:45 p.m.
Kaufmann Auditorium, Goldwin Smith Hall

SEMINAR
Writing about Communism
Friday, April 17, 2015 10:00 a.m.
Toboggan Lodge 38 Forest Home Drive

Fall 2014
Lecture Series

RAYMOND B. CRAIB
Associate Professor, History, Cornell University

Subversive Santiago, 1920
Tuesday, September 9, 2014 4:45 p.m.
Kaufmann Auditorium, Goldwin Smith Hall

Fall 2014
Workshop

Critical Theory and (post) Colonialism 2
A joint workshop with the Institute for German Cultural Studies

Organized by Natalie Melas and Paul Fleming with Nahum Chandler, Grant Farred, Robert Kaufman, Gary Wilder, Haiping Yan, and Xudong Zhang

Saturday, December 6, 2014 10:00 a.m.
A.D. White House 27 East Avenue

Registration for this event is required

Spring 2015
New Conversations Series

MARGO CRAWFORD
Associate Professor, English, Cornell University

This Flesh That We Might Call Diaspora
Monday, March 23, 2015 4:45 p.m.
Toboggan Lodge 38 Forest Home Drive
ICM 2015
ANNUAL
CONFERENCE

SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION

MODERNITY
AND THE MAKING OF
IDENTITY IN SUDAN:
Remembering the Sixties
and Seventies

SHARJAH INSTITUTE FOR THEATRICAL ARTS
AL MUREIJAH, SHARJAH
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
APRIL 10-12, 2015
planned ahead of a major exhibition on Sudanese modern and contemporary art titled *The Khartoum School: the Making of the Modern Art Movement in Sudan*, scheduled for November 2016, the conference is coordinated by Sharjah Art Foundation President and Director Hoor Al Qasimi and Salah M. Hassan, Goldwin Smith Professor of African and African Diaspora Art History and Visual Culture in the Africana Studies and Research Center and the Department of History of Art and Visual Studies, Cornell University.

Funded by the Sharjah Art Foundation, the three-day gathering will begin the afternoon of April 10, 2015, and end the evening of April 12, 2015, with the expectation that new and original papers will be presented by a group of invited participants, who include scholars, literary and art critics, filmmakers, poets, playwrights, novelists, and artists. The conference will offer a platform for these participants to document and provide a critical understanding of the making of modernity in Sudan and the enduring debate on identity in Sudanese cultural and political history. It is hoped that this event will enable an investigation of the modernist movement in Sudan from historical, sociocultural, literary, and artistic perspectives.

The conference will focus on a pivotal moment in Sudan—the 1960s and 1970s—which witnessed the rise of several modernist movements that radically transformed the literary and artistic scenes. This period also witnessed extremely dynamic and creative activities in all fields of cultural and artistic production, from literature, music, and theatre to visual and performing arts. The most influential among these movements were the Khartoum School (Madrasat al Khartoum) in the visual arts and the School of the Bush and the Desert (Madrasat al Ghaba wa al Sahra’) in literature, a movement that also influenced the work of several artists of the Khartoum School who will be included in the upcoming exhibition.

In addition, the question of the identity of Sudan has been central to the debate on modernity, considering what the late Professor Ali Mazrui called the ‘multiple marginality’ of Sudan—a diverse nation that exists on the crossroads of Africa and the Arab/Islamic worlds, and yet is marginal to both.

Despite the importance of the 1960s and 1970s in shaping modernity and the question of identity in Sudan, the scholarship on such an important period remains scarce. With the exception of a few published books, articles, and memoirs, the subject remains largely unaddressed in the academic or literary circles of Sudanese studies. This makes the conference and the expected publication of its proceedings most urgent and very timely.

“Modernity and the Making of Identity in Sudan: Remembering the Sixties and Seventies” represents an effort to bring together some of the major figures who have shaped the literary and artistic scenes of the 1960s and 1970s with younger generations of scholars, artists, and literary and art critics, while providing a platform for documentation and critical investigation of this important period. The subsequent publication will include essays by participants from wide-ranging backgrounds. A comprehensive introduction will provide the historical background and critical reading of the modernist movements and the making of identity in Sudan. The book will also contain reprints of major documents and archival material related to these movements, including foundational essays, manifestos and poems from the 1960s and 1970s.
CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS

Hoor Al Qasimi
Sharjah Art Foundation, President and Director

Salah M. Hassan
Goldwin Smith Professor of African and African Diaspora Art History and Visual Culture, Africana Studies and Research Center; Department of History of Art and Visual Studies, Cornell University

CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

Salah Hassan Abdalla
Artist and Art Critic, Khartoum, Sudan

Wagdi Kamil Abdelsieed
Filmmaker and Producer, Aljazeera, Doha, Qatar

Rogaia M. Abushara
Professor of Anthropology, Georgetown University, Doha, Qatar

Ahmed Ibrahim Abushouk
Professor of History, Qatar University, Doha, Qatar

Talal Afifi
Director, Sudan Film Factory, Khartoum, Sudan

Nahid Mohammed Al Hassan
Writer and Professor of Psychiatry, University of Medical Science and Technology, Khartoum, Sudan

Arwa Alrabeea
Musicologist and Lawyer, Khartoum, Sudan

Yousif Aydabi
Cultural Advisor, Dr. Sultan Al-Qassimi Centre of Gulf Studies, Sharjah, UAE

Alfatih Eltahir Diab
Composer, Music Critic, and Professor of Music, Institute for Music and Drama, Khartoum, Sudan

Rashid Diab
Artist and Art Critic, Khartoum, Sudan

Shawgi Izzeldin Elamin
Director and Playwright, Language Officer, International College of Engineering and Management, Muscat, Oman

Essam Abu El Gaseem
Theatre Critic and Journalist, Department of Culture and Information, Sharjah, UAE

Alaeldin Elgizouli
Artist and Art Critic, Khartoum, Sudan

Kamal Elgizouli
Poet, Writer, and Lawyer, Khartoum, Sudan

Eiman Abbas H. El-Nour
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Poet, Literary Critic, and Publisher, Khartoum, Sudan

Abdullahi Ali Ibrahim
Literary Critic and Professor of History, University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri, USA

Mohammed El Makki Ibrahim
Poet, Literary Critic, and Former Diplomat, Monterey, California, USA

Suleiman Mohamed Ibrahim
Filmmaker and Producer, Khartoum, Sudan

Kamala Ibrahim Ishag
Artist, Khartoum, Sudan

Stella Gaitano
Fiction Writer, Journalist, and Pharmacist, Juba, South Sudan

Abdullahi Gallab
Professor of African and African American Studies, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, USA

Elnour Hamad
Researcher, Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, Doha, Qatar

Mansour Khalid
Author and Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Khartoum, Sudan

Eltayeb Mahdi
Filmmaker and Lecturer, Institute of Music and Drama, Khartoum, Sudan

Jamal Mahjoub
Fiction Writer and Literary Critic, London, UK

Hassan Musa
Artist and Writer, Domessargues, France

Amir Nour
Artist and Sculptor, Chicago, Illinois, USA

Fathi Mohammed Osman
Artist, Writer, and Art Critic, Khartoum, Sudan

Nureldin Satti
Writer, Literary Critic, and Former Diplomat, Khartoum, Sudan

Lemya Shammat
Professor of Languages and Cultural Studies, King Saud Bin Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Ibrahim Mohamed Zein
Professor of Comparative Religion, International Islamic University Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
The rights of immigrants, and arguments for immigration law reforms, are often hotly contested, not least by the states against whom they are asserted. The gradual emergence of an international law of migration has thrown into question presumptions of absolute sovereign prerogative over territorial borders: if national borders are far from open to migrants, they are less presumptively, or more contestedly, closed. Yet the search for an ethics of migration law and policy appears trapped between an apologetic pragmatics of population management on the one hand versus a utopian cosmopolitanism, on the other: what remains is to transcend nationalism while eschewing universalism, through an embrace of the (legal, political and cultural) “stranger.”

**Speaker Biography**

Chantal Thomas is Professor of Law at Cornell Law School, where she also directs the Clarke Initiative for Law and Development in the Middle East and North Africa. Professor Thomas teaches in the areas of Law and Development and International Economic Law. Prior to joining Cornell, Professor Thomas chaired the Law Department of the American University in Cairo, and also served on the University of Minnesota and Fordham University law faculties. She has been a Visiting Professor teaching international economic law at institutions such as the Center for Transnational Legal Studies in London, and Soochow University in China. Professor Thomas has consulted for the USAID Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Affairs, and she currently serves on the Executive Council of the American Society of International Law and the U.S. State Department’s Advisory Committee on International Law. Professor Thomas focuses her scholarship on the relationship between international law, political economy, and global social justice in a variety of contexts. Her recent writings include: *Developing Countries in the WTO Legal System* (with Joel Trachtman, Oxford University Press 2009); “Law and Neoclassical Economic Development: Toward an Institutionalist Critique of Institutionalism,” *Cornell Law Review* 96 (2011): 101; and “Migrant Domestic Workers in Egypt: A Case Study of the Economic Family in Global Context,” *American Journal of Comparative Law* 58 (2010): 987.
The year 2013 marks the tercentennial anniversary of the Treaty of Utrecht, that key agreement giving the British a monopoly on the slave trade in Spanish colonies, and the centenary of the birth of one of slavery's most famous descendants, Aimé Césaire, the Martinican politician, poet and philosopher of négritude. In her talk, Françoise Vergès took these two anniversaries as an occasion to reflect on the way that slavery and freedom become racially and geographically encoded, using the relationship of France and its former colonies, and especially its current overseas territories or "departments," as her prime example.

The lecture traced the fabrication of whiteness as a category in French thinking in the 18th and 19th centuries all the way to the present, linking imperial France with new forms of colonization and insisting on the ways we still, today, live with the legacy of slavery. Following this trajectory, Professor Vergès moved from the brutality of colonial economies—such that the colonies cannot be, as some now are claiming, figured as "sites of exchange"—to the ways in which this kind of economy, focused on domination of the biosphere and the extraction of resources, persists under new headings, such as "development."

In the latter half of the lecture, Professor Vergès spoke about how her work, as an academic and an activist, continues to reveal and undo the occlusion of slavery, both in history (as she did with her 2012 exhibition at the Louvre on The Slave, which traced slavery not in period depictions of slaves themselves but in the products of slavery: tobacco, sugar, certain shades of paint, etc.) and in the present moment (with her interventions in debates about memorialization and remuneration). Looking at the way the French approach questions of nuclear testing, pesticides, illiteracy, and crime, it becomes clear that France continues to hold to a double standard for what is acceptable in the overseas territories and what is acceptable in the hexagon, producing a mutilated cartography—a lasting sign of the legacy of slavery and the production of whiteness.

—Jan Steyn
Department of Comparative Literature, Graduate Student

Speaker Biography
Françoise Vergès grew up on Reunion Island in an anti-colonialist family. In France, she was an activist in feminist and human rights movements before getting her Ph.D. at the University of Berkeley in political theory (1995). She has written on vernacular practices of memories, slavery and the economy of predation, postcolonial psychiatry, postcolonial museography, and the routes of migration and processes of creolization in the Indian Ocean world.

She has also collaborated with filmmakers and artists (Isaac Julien, Yinka Shonibare, Arnaud Ngatcha...), was a project advisor for Documenta 11 and contributed to the 2012 Paris Triennial program The Slave in Le Louvre. She has also been working as a curator on exhibitions about colonial practices.
Philip McMichael
International Professor & Chair, Development Sociology, Cornell University

**Historicizing the Land Grab: The Unfolding, and Unraveling, of the Global Food Regime**

**Monday, February 10, 2014**

This lecture historicized the current land grab through the lens of governance mechanisms overriding the WTO trade rules architecture of the late-20th century food regime. Emergent principles and partnerships of a re-structuring food regime justify an intensifying commodification of land, labor and ecosystems, portending a final enclosure via a ‘rational’ planning of planetary resources in a quest for security. Such neoliberal mechanisms promote private power through public authority, reformulating the state system as an instrument of privatization and redefinition of land and territory in the face of growing counter-movements for food and land sovereignty.

**Speaker Biography**

Trained as a historical sociologist, Professor McMichael’s research examines capitalist modernity through the lens of agrarian questions, food regimes, and agrarian/food sovereignty movements. This work centers the role of agri-food systems in the making of the modern world. He has worked with the Food and Agriculture Organization, most recently as a member of its Civil Society Mechanism, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty, and the international peasant coalition, La Via Campesina. He has authored *Settlers and the Agrarian Question* (1984), *Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective* (2012), and *Food Regimes and Agrarian Questions* (2013), and recently edited *Contesting Development: Critical Struggles for Social Change* (2010).

Abdullahi An-Na’im
Charles Howard Candler Professor of Law, School of Law, Emory University

**LECTURE**

**American Muslims of Imagined and Re-Imagined Communities**

**Wednesday, March 12, 2014**

Professor An-Na’im prefaced his lecture by stating that his talk on the same topic a few months ago would have been very different since his opinion on the matter was constantly being fine-tuned and changing. He then began the first part of his lecture, which focused on the definition of an American Muslim and its relationship to identity. He noted that an American Muslim is an American who happens to be a Muslim, but that religion was only
one of multiple identities. He expressed his position that as a society, the United States should move away from the politics of a majority-minority dichotomy, since the only identity all Americans share is citizenship, and no-one permanently or singularly belongs to any group.

Thus, in his view, there is no permanent minority or majority, whether religious or otherwise, because of our multi-faceted identities. More importantly, the majority-minority lens is reductionist and unproductive. He pointed to the difficulty within such a framework for “minorities” such as himself to identify meaningfully as citizens beyond just naturalization, despite having lived and worked in the USA, and sworn allegiance to the Constitution. The critical question between religion, state, and politics can never be resolved categorically but is rather a process of trial and error. The community aspect of American Muslims as a group is, while not irrelevant, fraught with internal racial and ethnic tensions between different Muslims. An American Muslim may well share more with a non-Muslim than a Muslim, which An-Na’im uses as a reminder of the inadequacy of boxing American Muslims into one group.

**SEMINAR**

**Muslims and the Secular State: The View from Practice**

**Thursday, March 13, 2014**

Segueing from the second part of his lecture, An-Na’im revisited Benedict Anderson’s notion of imagined communities to call on all citizens, Muslims or not, to keep imagining and re-imagining their communal affiliations and the implications of such affiliations to the fundamental rights of all citizens. An-Na’im asks for a revamping of Anderson’s nationalism in the form of re-imagining that draws on personal experience, boundaries, and sources of imagination. In this new re-imagining of community, we are to overcome the impulse of national imaginings in order to get to a human imagining, caring for others beyond those who look like us. This is in some ways a “treason” against our own creed to reach a more global humanity, which ultimately should supersede nation-driven communities. We need to change the status quo by undermining, challenging, and “committing heresies” where and how it matters, beyond just an intellectual exercise, and beyond even a feeling of security and safety. For this reimagining to successfully lead to a meaningful community, we must feel a stake in the outcome.

—Mary-Ann Awada
Cornell Law School, Graduate Student
BRETJIE VAN DER HAAK
Director of Documentaries, VPRO Television
Panel Discussion and Film Screening: DNA Dreams
Thursday, September 26, 2013

What if you were allowed to have only one child and had the option of selecting its genes? Would you choose for a natural or a designer baby? Every day new technologies are bringing us closer a brave new world of enhanced human beings 2.0…. What kind of world will that be?

The documentary DNA Dreams features a new generation of scientists at Beijing Genomics Institute (BGI), China’s leading genomics research institute. The film follows 18-year-old scientist Zhao Bowen, who wants to find the genetic basis of intelligence by analyzing the DNA of 2,000 highly gifted children. At BGI’s cloning lab, 25-year-old Lin Lin produces pigs in all shapes and sizes. Deeply in love with her work, she feels “like a mother” to the piglets that are conceived under her microscope.

This award-winning documentary shows traces of a future that is already here and takes a closer look at data-driven science as a fundamental shift in the global production of knowledge.

Speaker Biography
Bretjje van der Haak is a documentary filmmaker and journalist. Since 1997, she has been directing international documentaries on social change with a focus on urban life and globalization, most recently for the VPRO Backlight series. Her documentaries have been shown on television, in film festivals and in art exhibitions around the world and include Philip Johnson: Two of a Kind (1998), Lagos Wide & Close (2005), Saudi Solutions (2006), Satellite Queens (2007), Grand Paris: The President and the Architects (2009), California Dreaming (2010), Aftermath of a Crisis (2011), and DNA Dreams (2013).

As a documentary director, she has worked on projects in Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark, Egypt, England, France, Gambia, Haiti, Hong Kong, Italy, Indonesia, Latvia, Lebanon, Nigeria, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, and the United Arab Emirates.

As a project director and editor-in-chief for VPRO Television, Van der Haak initiated Creative Commons distribution of public television programming and developed many transmedia and collaborative media projects including Metropolis TV (2008), Urban Century (2009), Aftermath Project (2011), Multiple Journalism, and Atlas of Pentecostalism (both in production, 2013).

Van der Haak studied dance in Paris, political science (M.A. 1990) and law (LL.M. 1992) at the University of Amsterdam and the New School for Social Research in New York and has an M.Sc. degree from the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University (1993).

She is a board member and chair of the international awards committee of the Prince Claus Fund and a board member of the Praemium Erasmianum. She has been a Visiting Associate Professor at the School of Creative Media at the City University of Hong Kong, where she developed a curriculum for ‘Future Creative Television’. She is also a returning visiting scholar at the Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism at USC Los Angeles.
Monks, Texts, and Relics: Towards a Connected History of Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia

Wednesday, November 13, 2013

The history of South and Southeast Asian Buddhism between the sixth and eighteenth centuries CE has been significantly understudied in comparison to the modern era. Anne Blackburn’s lecture investigated new research findings, primary source materials, analytic questions and interpretive problems in the historiography of Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia between the tenth and fifteenth centuries CE. This is an exciting yet challenging subject matter precisely because, as Blackburn made clear in her talk, we actually know very little about this era. Blackburn’s talk represented her initial thoughts as she begins a new research project which documents and rethinks the circulation of Buddhism across the extended maritime world of the Indian Ocean in light of this era’s changing political economy of empire, trade and warfare.

Blackburn began her talk by outlining and explaining the elements of Buddhist culture that the historical record indicates were shared between the Buddhist polities and communities of what is now southern and maritime India, Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand and the Malay Peninsula. These included Pali language scripture and ritual chants, monastic disciplinary rules, dress codes and ordination lineages, biographical and homiletic genres, and devotional and apotropaic ritual practices. Investigating how the increasing circulation of Buddhist texts, rituals, narratives and aesthetic forms in the first half of the second millennium produced an increasingly shared “politico-cultural space” is difficult, however, given the paucity of primary source materials. To this end, Blackburn suggested the value of exploring new textual sources and utilizing new research strategies. Thus, she argued for the saliency of examining specific understudied Pali language histories of the Buddhist dispensation written in the Southeast Asian polities of Pegu, Chiang Mai and Mandalay. These histories highlight the importance of riverine and maritime trade as well as the desirability of contact with Lanka. As polemical, local arguments emerging from diverse monastic worlds yet consciously locating themselves within wider mythic frames and historical relations, such vernacular histories of the Buddhist world writ large serve as ideal points of leverage for unpacking complementary perspectives on the emerging shared cultural space under investigation.
Blackburn argued, however, that the true value of these local histories are best appreciated when placed in dialogue with new and innovative scholarship focused on previously understudied or recently discovered inscriptions, archaeological remains, visual material culture, and vernacular manuscripts. As such, her project in its fullest sense requires collaboration between a great number of scholars, since individually each alone possesses only a portion of the necessary linguistic, disciplinary and regional expertise ultimately required.

Having outlined the broad parameters of her project, Blackburn proceeded to discuss her current analytic strategy which involves reading these local Buddhist world histories alongside histories of trade in the Bay of Bengal and the wider Indian Ocean. In addition to confirming many of the claims found in these vernacular histories, the changing spatial dynamics and political economy of maritime trade established the broad social parameters within which the shared world of South and Southeast Asian Buddhism took root. The rise of the Cola empire in South India in the eleventh century CE and its increasing dominance over trade between India and peninsular and maritime Southeast Asia at the expense of the Srivijayan empire of southern Sumatra resulted in a spatial realignment of trade that placed Lanka closer to the center of mercantile commerce. The subsequent decline of Cola power in the thirteenth century, Blackburn argued, opened up a space for new, ambitious maritime-oriented polities across South and Southeast Asia. These expanding tributary mercantile polities located in what is now Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand seized this opportunity, forging and consolidating in the process mutually beneficial trade and religious relations which had enduring consequences for the horizons of the shared Buddhist world they inhabited.

The historical and archaeological record, Blackburn argued, confirms these expanding trade networks and the circulation of monks, texts and relics into and through the ports of the Coromandel Coast, Burma Delta and the Malay Peninsula. Royally sponsored monastic embassies travelled back and forth along the same routes that enterprising monks and devoted merchants utilized. Scriptures, statuary, relics, and rituals moved across these cultural zones of rival polities, even as royal rulers also strategically requested and exchanged monastic lineages of authoritative discipline and practice. The result was a “Maritime Silk Road” characterized by historically changing configurations of dynastic alliance and conflict. The end result of this intensifying but oscillating cooperation and competition, Blackburn theorized, was an increasingly shared religious culture of imagination, vocabulary, material culture and ritual practice within the Buddhist polities of South and Southeast Asia. As a result, the dominant Southeast Asian polities of Pegu, Chiang Mai and Ayuthaya utilized similar religious idioms in their struggles for regional pre-eminence and political legitimacy even as these same Buddhist configurations of authority flowed down the ligaments of tributary relations to subordinate polities under their influence.

Blackburn closed her talk with tentative reflections on why all of these Southeast Asian polities and empires found it convenient to look to Lanka as the shared authoritative and primal source of the civilizational legitimacy underlying their religio-political competition. It was Lanka’s combination of political distance, military weakness and ideological nearness, Blackburn hypothesized, that made it an ideal point of strategic reference for the various Southeast Asian polities. Relatively mute and unable to practically complicate the military, mercantile and agricultural rivalries and alliances at play in the Southeast Asian region, Lankan Buddhism could be imported and reinvented repeatedly in the service of the varying interests of changing rulers and changing dynasties. The end result of these historical developments, Blackburn argued, is that in the period 1300 to 1500 in South and Southeast Asia there emerged a shared politico-cultural space in a Buddhist idiom which displays both tighter social relations and thicker shared culture without sacrificing institutional plurality and strategic flexibility.

—Erick White

Department of Anthropology, Graduate Student

Speaker Biography

Anne M. Blackburn is Professor of South Asia Studies and Buddhist Studies in the Department of Asian Studies at Cornell University. She received her B.A. from Swarthmore College, and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Chicago.

Blackburn studies Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia, with a special interest in Buddhist monastic culture and Buddhist participation in networks linking Sri Lanka and mainland Southeast Asia before and during colonial presence in the region. Her publications include Buddhist Learning and Textual Practice in Eighteenth-Century Lankan Monastic Culture (Princeton, 2001), Approaching the Dhamma: Buddhist Texts and Practices in South and Southeast Asia, co-edited with Jeffrey Samuels (BPS Pariyatti Editions, 2003), and Locations of Buddhism: Colonialism and Modernity in Sri Lanka (Chicago, 2010).
ENZO TRAVERSO
Susan and Barton Winokur Professor in the
Humanities, Romance Studies, Cornell University

Marxism and Memory: From Teleology to Melancholy
Thursday, April 10, 2014

Professor Enzo Traverso presented a lecture entitled “Marxism and Memory: from Teleology to Melancholy” to an interdisciplinary audience at the ICM’s Toboggan Lodge. Traverso zeroed in on the effects of the “crisis of Marxism” in the 1980s and the paradigmatic shift to memory and historicity across critical analytical frameworks after 1989. Addressing this particular turning point, Traverso contended that a non-teleological historicist paradigm had eclipsed Marxism’s understanding of history as ongoing cycles of revolutions with the end of history as a telos. Drawing on specific examples from Soviet and communist iconography, Traverso traced a shift from a utopian Marxist futurity, based on the remembrance of past revolutions, to a melancholic historicism, premised on not repeating state socialism in its violent, totalitarian incarnations.

The eclipse of this revolutionary futurity was clear in traverso’s temporally broad presentation of artwork, iconography, and films from Europe to Latin America. In 1901 Giuseppe Pellizza da Volpedo painted The Fourth Estate, depicting the forward march of the labor classes on the path from the dark past to the bright, inevitable future of socialism. Another example of this ethos was Sergei Eisenstein’s film October: Ten Days That Shook the World, celebrating the victory of the proletariat in the Russian Revolution a decade earlier. Eisenstein staged a revolutionary scene of workers tearing down a statue of the Czar, physically dismantling the symbolic power of the ruling classes.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the actual collapse of the major state socialist regimes, however, remembrance of the Marxist past took on a more melancholic tone. Highly compelling in Traverso’s presentation was a more recent take on the fall of the “Czar” in Theo Angelopoulos’s 1995 film Le Regard d’Ulysse (Ulysse’s Gaze). Mourners or pilgrims along the banks of the Danube accompany a barge carrying the fragments of a massive Lenin statue. If a future based on past revolutions existed in the early twentieth century, at the turn of the twenty-first century, there was instead a kind of Marxist mourning of the collapse of its separate pieces. In a similar way, Carmen Castillo’s 2007 film Rue Santa Fe presented the mourning of the Latin American revolutions of the 1960s and 1970s through a reflection on the personal effects of violence of Pinochet’s totalitarian regime.

Precisely this shift from teleology and revolution to melancholy and mourning informed title of Traverso’s lecture as well as his tracing of the affinity between Marxist artistic depictions alongside the crisis of Marxism as an analytical framework. In order to differentiate between past Marxist historical materialism and a new Marxism corresponding to dominant notions of historicity, Traverso turned to the work of Walter Benjamin. More specifically, Benjamin conceived of history-writing as chiros, an open and unfinished process that demanded the reconstruction of past history for our present and especially future redemption. This was in stark contrast to the prevailing notion of historicism as chronos, or a kind of mechanical tracking of time as a succession of facts and figures that could serve merely to reinforce the ideology of the victors at any given point.

Having collapsed into the historicist paradigm after the traumatic end of state socialism, Marxism lost its ability to redeem its own history for itself, instead remembering state socialism as a part of twentieth-century totalitarianism, violence, and genocide more generally. With historicist narratives focused on not repeating the past, it became difficult to imagine a
revolutionary Marxist future after 1989. Acknowledging that official mourning of the defeat of communism had been censored, Traverso presented the possibility of past revolutions waiting for redemption through an unfinished process of Marxist mourning. In the lively discussion that followed, Traverso recognized that some of this mourning might already have taken place in the work of a minority of scholars who have rediscovered Benjamin's Marxism after 1989.

—Alexander Brown
Department of German Studies, Graduate Student

**Speaker Biography**

Enzo Traverso studied at the University of Genoa, Italy, and received his Ph.D. from the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris (1989). He specializes in contemporary Europe, focusing on intellectual history and the political ideas of the twentieth century, in a comparative perspective. Before coming to Cornell, he was a professor of political science at the University Jules Verne of Picardy, France, and a member of le Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS). He has also been visiting professor at several European as well as Latin American Universities. His publications, all translated into numerous languages, include more than ten authored and other edited books. Several of his works investigate the impact of political and mass violence on European culture. He is currently preparing a book on representations of the Jewish intellectual in Germany, France and Italy at the turn of the twentieth century.

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**JASBIR K. PUAR**

Associate Professor, Women’s and Gender Studies, Rutgers University; Fellow, Society for the Humanities, Cornell University

**Disabled Diaspora, Rehabilitating State: The Queer Politics of Reproduction in Israel/Palestine**

Tuesday, April 22, 2014

Jasbir Puar’s talk presented research for a new book project concerned with how disability and affect are being transformed by newly globalized frameworks for social regulation—or, “securitization.” The point of departure for Puar’s talk was the contemporary phenomenon of “pinkwashing” (discourses of social legitimation stemming from tolerance for homosexuality) and how it signifies certain permutations in global gay discourses.

Looking specifically at the case of Israel/Palestine, Puar suggests that the process of “pinkwashing” is co-extensive with a preemptive form of securitization. To contextualize the grounds of this claim, Puar cites how the Israeli state’s emphasis on LGTB justice has fostered private-sector successes in gay-friendly tourism, transforming global patterns of consumption in line with neoliberal accommodationism while, simultaneously, deflecting attention away from the occupation of Palestine. In doing so, the state displaces certain ideological indexes for “civilizational superiority” and democracy onto the “homosexual question”—a contemporary problematic that Puar compares to “the woman question” of the nineteenth century.

Noting also the historical coincidence of the First Intifada with the beginning of gay rights and later the Oslo accord, Puar demonstrates how Israel’s tactic of LGTB inclusivity has served to distract from three distinct but related issues: first, Israel’s legal precedents of policing, criminalizing, and otherwise foreclosing sexual relationships between Israelis and Palestinians; second, Israel’s strategic calculus of policies (legal, martial, etc.) that work to regulate and intensify forms of disability in the occupied territories; third, Israel’s innovations in advancing the industry of assisted reproductive technologies (ART) accompanied by laws that facilitate the abortion of fetuses with disabilities or abnormalities—a practice that Puar calls “unapologetically eugenic.”

While terrorism and military conflict already create high-levels of debility, Puar emphasizes that techniques of occupation itself serve to exacerbate the degree of disability by restricting access to medical care. From this, a feedback loop emerges that minoritizes any struggle for disability rights within Israel: disability struggles tend to frame their demands in the language of greater access.
and mobility, yet, in the case of Israel, this would lead unavoidably to highlighting certain larger contradictions, demanding rights to mobility within a space of violently restricted mobility, i.e., occupied Palestine.

Puar’s theoretical method in this project combines Foucault’s lectures on neoliberalism and biopolitics with Deleuzean models of assemblage and his postulate of a historical transition leading from a society of “discipline” to a society of “control.” Using specific instances such as Israel/Palestine, Puar seeks to illuminate and track how disciplinary apparatuses, guided by a second paradigm of “control,” exceed their initial sites of intention, replicating across an unforeseen range of situations. As one example of this process, Puar shows how the situation of Gaza—often called the world’s “largest open air prison”—constitutes a disciplinary situation in the classic Foucauldian sense, while yet being made available to additional regimes of control: techniques such as state-employment of mathematicians to calculate exactly how many calories constitute a survivable minimum for an occupied population.

In Puar’s reading of the co-production of discipline and control, these regimes are intertwined, not teleological. These apparatuses work together, disciplining individuals while also massifying the population. Not only do they demand the policing of identity, they also attempt to regulate social manifestations of affect. Puar’s work joins critical legal scholarship such as Siobhan Somerville’s in showing how struggles for gay rights have had effects within racializing projects. “Pinkwashing,” as Puar argues, is less about the politics of identity than it might first appear; instead, it represents an intricate modulation within the larger global project of homonationalism that Puar’s earlier work has so trenchantly brought to critical attention.

In a broader sense, Puar’s new work urges consideration of which hierarchical binaries are being marshaled at any given historical moment so as to figure that moment’s structures of political oppression. Against binary pairings of disability with death and reproduction with life, Puar proposes that we build solidarity through and across diverse forms of disability, finding ways to “enliven disability” without ceaselessly effacing it under the sign of ability.

—Avery Slater
Department of English, Graduate Student

Speaker Biography
Jasbir K. Puar is Associate Professor of Women’s & Gender Studies at Rutgers University. She has also been a Visiting Lecturer in the Department of Performance Studies at NYU and a Visiting Fellow at the Institute for Cultural Inquiry in Berlin. She received her Ph.D. in ethnic studies from the University of California at Berkeley in 1999 and an M.A. from the University of York, England, in women’s studies in 1993. Her research interests include gender, sexuality, globalization; postcolonial and diaspora studies; South Asian cultural studies; and theories of assemblage and affect. Puar is the author of Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times (Duke University Press 2007), which won the 2007 Cultural Studies Book Award from the Association for Asian American Studies and has also been translated into French as Homonationalisme. Politiques queers après le 11 Septembre, (Editions Amsterdam, 2012). Puar’s edited volumes include “Queer Tourism: Geographies of Globalization” (GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies); and coedited volumes on “Sexuality and Space” (Society and Space); “Interspecies” (Social Text); and “Viral” (Women’s Studies Quarterly). Her articles appear in Gender, Place, and Culture, Radical History Review, Socialist Review, Feminist Legal Studies, Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography, Feminist Studies, and Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society.
GLOBAL BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS

AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AT DAK’ART 2014, THE BIENNALE OF CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN ART, DAKAR

MAY 11–12, 2014
Hôtel Sokhamon, Dakar, Senegal

ORGANIZED BY
INSTITUTE FOR COMPARATIVE MODERNITIES
CORNELL UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

CONVENED BY
MARGO N. CRAWFORD (CORNELL UNIVERSITY)
MANTHIA DJIWARA (NEW YORK UNIVERSITY)
SALAH M. HASSAN (CORNELL UNIVERSITY)
The Institute for Comparative Modernities (Cornell University) and the Institute of African American Affairs (New York University) held the international conference “Global Black Consciousness” on May 11 and 12, 2014, in Dakar, Senegal. The conference was coordinated by Margo Natalie Crawford and Salah Hassan (Cornell University) and Manthia Diawara (NYU). The conference coincided with the opening days of the Dakar Biennale (Dak’Art 2014), which opened on May 9, 2014. The two-day gathering focused on the theme of “Global Black Consciousness,” with invited participants who presented new and unpublished work.

Now that we have such tremendous scholarship on particular identities shaped by the African diaspora (Afro-German, Black British, African American, Afro-Latina/o, Afro-Caribbean, and many more) and tremendous theories of the value and limits of pan-Africanism, Afro-pessimism, and many other “isms,” how do we create a space for the critical and nuanced analysis of global black consciousness as both a citing of diasporic flows and a grounded site of decolonizing movement? This conference explored the confluence between theories of diaspora and theories of decolonization. Moreover, the crisscrossing of visual art, literature, film, and other cultural productions were explored alongside the crosscurrent that shaped the transnational flow of black consciousness.

The 1960s and ’70s were the conference’s pivot point, articulating precursors and legacies of the 1960s and ’70s black freedom struggles. From May 9 to June 8, 2014, Dak’Art, la Biennale de l’Art Africain Contemporain, was held in Dakar allowing conference scholars to revisit major Black and pan-African intellectual movements and festivals (such as the Dakar’s Festival of World Negro Arts of 1966, Algiers of 1969, and FESTAC 1977 in Lagos, Nigeria, among others) in addition to revisiting individual artistic and intellectual work tied to Africa and the African diaspora.

The conference’s papers will be published in a co-edited volume entitled Global Black Consciousness. We aim to gather scholarship that opens up and complicates the key paradigms that have shaped the vibrant work on theories and cultural productions of the African diaspora. This conference aims to push the abundant current scholarship on the African diaspora to another dimension—the edge where we think about both the problem and promise of mobilizing “blackness” as a unifying concept.

**PROGRAM AND ABSTRACTS**

**SUNDAY | MAY 11, 2014**

**10:30–13:00**

**BLACKNESS, PAN-AFRICANISM, AND INTERNATIONALISM**

*Moderator: Joanna Grabski, Warner Professor and Chair, Art History/Visual Culture, Denison University*

**Zita Nunes**

Associate Professor, Department of Comparative Literature, University of Maryland College Park

**The Third Pan-African Conference and Black Internationalism**

The Third Pan-African Congress, organized by W. E. B. Du Bois, was held in Lisbon in 1923. Unlike the earlier congresses held in the major European cities, this one was deemed a failure by Du Bois and by subsequent commentators. My paper examines the response of the black press in Portugal to the Third Pan-African Congress. Their coverage differed completely from that of the United States and, through articles and commentary reprinted from European and African newspapers, staged a conversation among Africans and Afro-descended people that questioned the priorities advanced by the U.S. Americans. I argue that the coverage of the Third Pan-African Congress in the black press of Portugal invites consideration of a significant and understudied archive, the inclusion of a different perspective on diaspora, and a reassessment of the Congress.

**Tsitsi Jaji**

Associate Professor, English Department, University of Pennsylvania

**Of Black Gloss: Reading Bingo Magazine in the Age of Pan-African Festivals**

The large-scale pan-African festivals held in Senegal, Algeria, and Nigeria (1966–77) are recognized as central to forging a transnational repertoire of cultural practices and memories that are the bedrock of a post-independence global black consciousness. However, such festivals necessarily privileged artists and cultural workers with the means and/or governmental and United Nations support to travel. My talk excavates contemporaneous perspectives on transnational black affinities in popular African transnational print magazines by examining selected issues of *Bingo* (based in Paris and Dakar).
and distributed throughout the Francophone world). Unlike more explicitly literary publications like the earlier *Itinéario*, *Transition*, *Horn*, and even the popular hybrid magazine, *Drum*, *Bingo* addressed highly variegated yet explicitly global black audiences. Current political events, short stories, and poetry were juxtaposed alongside celebrity stories (often about African American musicians and actors), music reviews, and advertisements for products including radios, aspirin, shoes, and air tickets. Thus *Bingo* displayed a global black consciousness entangled in aspirational consumption, performances of new national and gender identities, and multiple engagements with media. While the festivals garnered some attention in their pages, examining less elite features (photo-comics, women's pages, music reviews, etc.) in selected issues from the late 1960s offers a window on how these festivals fit into the popular imaginary of Africans with less overt pan-Africanist political and cultural goals and fewer possibilities of international travel. Making sense of such local print transnationalism in this key period adds texture to our understandings of global black consciousness.

**Ahmed Bedjaoui**  
Journalist, Film and Television Producer, Professor, Audio Visual Communication, University of Algiers

**Blackness and Pan Africanism: Le Festival Panafricain d’Alger 1969**

**Discussants**  
Manthia Diawara, Distinguished University Professor, Department of Comparative Literature and Film, New York University

Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Professor, Philosophy and French Department, Columbia University

**14:00–14:30**

**Special Presentation**  
*Melvin Edwards: Journey of a Sculptor and the Poetics of Relations (Melvin Edwards: Parcours d’un sculpteur et poétique de la relation)*  
Lydie Diakhaté, Film Producer, Curator, and Art Critic

**14:30–16:30**

**BLACKNESS AND PAN-AFRICANISM: LITERARY AND VISUAL AESTHETICS**  
Moderator: Kokahvah Zauditu-Selassie, Professor, English, Coppin State University

**Souleymane Bachir Diagne**  
Professor, Philosophy and French Department, Columbia University

**Re-Reading Senghor Today**

In a letter to his American biographer, Janet Vaillant, Senghor speaks about his own contradictions that became “clear and symbiotically organized” only “in the age of maturity.” This presentation is an invitation to take seriously that self-assessment and revisit Senghor’s oeuvre in order to (1) question the rapid identification of Negritude as an essentialism, and a racialism, (2) examine the importance of art and aesthetics in his political philosophy.

**Ugochukwu-Smooth C. Nzewi**  
Curator of African Art, Hood Museum, Dartmouth University

**The Dak’Art Biennial and Global Black Cultural Politics in the 20th Century**

This presentation explores the entangled narrative of global black cultural politics to provide a better understanding of Dak’Art’s more recent pan-African internationalism. The announcement of the creation of the Dak’Art Biennial in 1989 marked a pivotal moment in African and international art scenes. President Abdou Diouf’s government had emerged from the worst part of Senegal’s economic crisis in the 1980s, and was ready to revert to international cultural diplomacy as consequential to national development and economic growth. The mainstream art world began to rearticulate the meaning of internationalism with groundbreaking exhibitions such as *Magicians of the Earth* and *Another Story*. Yet, these events at the twilight of the decade preceding the expansion of the art world and the emergence of new forms of cultural mediation in the 1990s do not fully explain what precipitated Dak’Art. A full picture must include a rigorous engagement with the origins of the cultural politics that inspired and which continue to drive Dak’Art’s geopolitical focus. Throughout the twentieth century, the essence of black cultural politics was the aspiration for institutional, political, and cultural visibility. The tenor of the quest has continued to evolve with changing historical and contemporary conditions. Dak’Art responds to the specifics of contemporary cultural politics, but with the benefit of a complex and often difficult black history. Several pan-African conferences and cultural fora organized between 1900 and 1959 in different locations in the Western world explored racial uplift, and attempted to forge a united political front against racism and colonialism. These events promoted interaction among black people from different countries and provided an initial context for pan-African internationalism to blossom. This particular pan-Africanist spirit culminated in
the black cultural congresses in Europe at the twilight of colonialism, and later manifested in the pan-African cultural festivals in Africa. The early pan-African congresses and festivals, including the International Congress of African Culture in Salisbury (Harare) in 1962, the First World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar in 1966, the First Pan-African Festival in Algiers in 1969, and the Second World Festival of Black and African Arts in Lagos in 1977, made a case for black cultural visibility on a global scale. Significantly, they gave international recognition to modern black and African artists, a role currently championed by Dak’Art for contemporary artists of African descent.

Shannen Hill  
Art Historian, Ph.D.  
Let’s Talk About Consciousness: Black Art in 1970s South Africa

As first voiced in 1969 by the South African Students Organization (SASO), Black Consciousness promoted unity, ancestry, and action among people commonly subject to colonial horrors, an audience that spanned three continents. SASO and its cousin, the Black Peoples’ Convention (BPC, established 1972), which spread Black Consciousness beyond university campuses, unified by refusing to segregate by race as opposition parties once did, located ancestry in resistance to colonialism across a tri-continental span, and advocated action or self-determination. These principles formed the basis of what Steve Biko (1948-1977) called “modern black culture” and as such they underscored a truth seldom recognized: black labor created the modern era and black culture enabled modernity, or a conception of being modern. Borrowing from Negritude philosophy, SASO promoted BC’s cultural components, which centered on the pride, beauty, strength and humanity of black cultures. For instance, the phrase “Black is Beautiful” was adopted, as was James Brown’s anthem “Say it Loud: I’m Black and I’m Proud.” Following Soweto 1976 and Biko’s death in detention nearly one year later, BC’s voice became subtler and its proponents pledged themselves to varied methods of opposing apartheid. But it was not abandoned, nor obsolete, nor did it evolve toward non-racialism, as some have surmised. Many individuals have dedicated time to historicizing South African BC in the years since its founding, with the roles of writers, poets, dramatists, educators, philosophers, doctors, theologians, and activists all coming into view. This paper examines the lives and works of artists living along the Johannesburg-Pretoria axis (mostly) in the 1970s and it gives central place to their political positions. Some are highly acclaimed: David Koloane, Ezrom Legae, Thami Mnyele; some are less well known: Fikele Magadlela, Motlabane Mashiangwako, Lefifi Tladi, Dikobe Martins. Each directly adopted BC’s tenants in their professional lives—the unsung work of teaching, curating, creating networks of exchange and markets of sale—and in the finished works they created. All enjoyed the BC inflected writing of Black Review and Staffrider, literary journals founded on BC principles; some were members of SASO and BPC. And, although the archive holds testimony as to BC’s importance in their lives, both professional and personal, the record is resisted and its history remains underwritten. This paper offers a reading of Black Consciousness in South African art in the first decade of what is now historically four, plus…and counting.

Dagmawi Woubshet  
Associate Professor, English Department, Cornell University  
Encounters with Africa: James Baldwin and the Making of Global Black Consciousness

By the end of the 1970s, James Baldwin’s characterization of Africa had changed significantly. Africa was no longer a metaphor for a void waiting to be filled, as it was in his early essays, most notably “Stranger in the Village” (1955), nor a place to be mediated through Europe, as in essays like “Encounter on the Seine” (1950) and “Princes and Powers” (1957). In Baldwin’s last novel, Just Above My Head (1979), we find instead an Africa that is (pre)occupied, self-reflective, and self-referencing, beyond the purviews of the (white or black) western gaze. After living in Abidjan, Julia, one of the central characters in the novel, declares: “No one has ever discovered Africa. They don’t dare.” What might it mean to dare discover Africa? What might that enterprise look like for a vanguard of global black consciousness like James Baldwin? And, why does Baldwin wait until the late 1970s to begin imagining Africa from within and not without? While Baldwin had made his first trip to Africa in 1962, visiting Senegal, Guinea, Cote d’Ivoire, and Liberia, he waits almost two decades before recasting Africa from within its own continental vantage point—why? Reflecting on these questions and exploring Baldwin’s changing relationship to Africa will help us to illuminate global black consciousness as it took on new forms in the wake of the 1960s.

Discussants:  
Zita Nunes, Associate Professor, Department of Comparative Literature, University of Maryland College Park  
Tsitsi Jaji, Associate Professor, English Department, University of Pennsylvania
Keynote Event/Film Screening

Keynote Address: Présence Africaine and the 1956 First International Congress of Black Writers and Artists
Manthia Diawara, Distinguished University Professor, Department of Comparative Literature and Film, New York University

Edouard Glissant: One World in Relation
(Color, 52 Minutes, French and English, 2010, K’a Yéléma Productions):
In 2009, Manthia Diawara, with his camera, followed Edouard Glissant on the Queen Mary II in a cross-Atlantic journey from South Hampton (UK) to Brooklyn (New York). This poetic meditation continued in Martinique, the native home of Edouard Glissant. The extraordinary voyages resulted in the production of an intellectual biography in which Glissant elaborates on his theory of relation and the concept of tout-monde. Edouard Glissant was one of the most important contemporary thinkers. In the 1980s, his theories of creolization, diversity, and otherness, as elaborated in the book Le Discours Antillais (1981), were considered as seminal texts for the emerging studies of multiculturalism, identity politics, minority literature, and Black Atlanticism. In the 1990s and 2000, he developed a theory he called poétique de la relation, and tout-monde, where the concept of relation is perceived as an autonomous entity, moving between objects and providing them with energy, poesis, and difference. In his book Philosophie de la relation, Glissant used the concept to meditate on the new meanings of globalization, chaos, violence, equality, and justice. The film will be screened and followed by a major lecture by Manthia Diawara entitled “Présence Africaine and the 1956 First International Congress of Black Writers and Artists,” as the KEYNOTE EVENT of the conference.

Moderator: Samba Gadjigo, Professor, French, Mt. Holyoke College

MONDAY | MAY 12, 2014
10:00–12:30

GLOBAL BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS: AESTHETICALLY SPEAKING
Moderator: Selene Wendt, Curator, Founder, The Global Art Project

Shana L. Redmond
Assistant Professor, American Studies and Ethnicity, University of Southern California

Bandung Holograms: The Black Voice as Movement Technology
In 1955 the Asia-Africa Conference of Non-Aligned States met in Bandung, Indonesia. Participants from primarily Asian and African nations gathered in order to advance a platform of solidarity in response to the repressive conditions of continued colonial dominance and Cold War hysteria. During this global event, more than two-dozen (emergent) nations debated their
embraced, rather than closely mimicking West African
art, turned towards cultural allusions to a distinctive
Sahelian sensibility in their forms and chromatics. This
mindset, encapsulated in the name *Sudanesia* (a word
Lois Mailou Jones invented at the time), perfectly de-
scribed Jones's and Love's amalgam of a willed forgetting
of conventional African representations (as in the medi-
tical term *amnesia*) and a geographical focus on this fabled
“land of the blacks” (*bilād as-sūdān*) where wood, cloth,
and soil are transformed into austere materializations of
spiritual and philosophical resolve.

**Penny M. Von Eschen**
Professor, History Department, University of Michigan

**The Collision of African American Modernities at the 1966 World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar**

This paper focuses on the problem of modernity among
African American artists at the Dakar festival. Par-

ticipants included the composer and bandleader Duke
Ellington, the choreographer Alvin Ailey, the gospel
singer Marion Williams, and the writer Langston
Hughes, and William Greaves, an African American
filmmaker who produced a documentary on the fes-
tival. In addition, the anthropologist, choreographer,
and dancer Katherine Dunham was deeply involved in
the festival as an adviser to President Senghor. In 1958,
Duke Ellington wrote that America could *not* be mod-
eren because of racism. Yet by 1963, in the wake of Ken-
dedy's declaration that civil rights was a moral issue that
must be addressed by the nation, Ellington seized on
the opportunity to take the vibrancy of the Civil Rights
Movement to the world stage by touring for the U.S.
State Department. For the State Department, the pres-
ence of such artists as Ellington and Ailey at the Festival
represented the triumph of American liberalism. Yet for
the artists, the U.S. sponsorship led to many ironies and
challenges, including a boycott of the festival and a con-
troversy at the festival over the statements of Katherine
Dunham on the relationship between dance and moder-
nity. The differing involvement of black American art-
ists and the controversies that arose at the festival offer
a window into a moment of crisis in the evolving rela-
tionship between race, modernity and liberalism. This
paper explores these issues by focusing on radio inter-
views with Alvin Ailey, along with the production of the
Greaves film and Dunham's role at the festival. Originally
commissioned by the United States Information Agency
to produce a five-minute news clip on the festival, upon
arriving in Dakar, Greaves immediately realized the
value of a longer piece and he and his cameraman began
shooting as much footage as possible. The resulting for-
ty-minute documentary was largely shot without syn-
chronous sound. Greaves edited the sound and footage
together by structuring the film around the poetry of

**Richard J. Powell**
John Spencer Bassett Professor, Department of Art and
Art History, Duke University

**Sudanesia**

Amidst the many Western paintings and sculptures in-
spired by African art and culture in the 1970s (much of
it a result of expanded African travels and greater access
to traditional arts), two African American artists—paint-
er Lois Mailou Jones (1905–1998) and sculptor Edward
Love (1936–1999)—distinguished themselves with two
exceptional bodies of work, both aesthetically motivated
by the characteristic sculptures and textiles of the contin-
ent's Western Sudanic region. The designs these artists
embraced, rather than closely mimicking West African
Langston Hughes and the music of Duke Ellington, with prominent spots on both artists as well as narrative commentary on the cultural contributions (and especially dance) of numerous new African nations. In the film’s featured spots on African dancers, the influence of the anthropologist and choreographer Katherine Dunham in organizing the festival is evident. Dunham had spent the past three decades studying Afro-diasporic dance bringing these forms to audiences around the world. Dunham herself, however, is a shadowy figure in the film, not identified, but merely shown walking by a group of people and not looking at the camera. This paper explores Dunham’s absent/presence, striking for an artist known for her arresting presence on a stage, in terms of gender politics as well as the controversy over the “modern” that she provoked at the festival. Greaves’s subsequent problems with attaining distribution rights for his film, (which took nearly three decades) further illustrate the limits of modernity within U.S. liberalism.

Discussants
Dagmawi Woubshet, Associate Professor, English Department, Cornell University
Salah M. Hassan, Goldwin Smith Professor, Department of History of Art and Visual Studies and Africana Studies and Research Center, Cornell University

14:00–14:20
Special Presentation
The Photography of Bob Crawford: FESTAC’77
Romi Crawford, Associate Professor, Visual, Critical, and Africana Studies, School of the Art Institute of Chicago

14:30–16:30
GLOBAL BLACKNESS LOCALIZED
Moderator: Amanda Gilvin, Five College Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in African Art and Architecture
Hisham Aidi
Lecturer, Columbia University
Harlem to the Kasbah: Claude McKay, the Jazz Age, and the Gnawa Movement
When the Harlem Renaissance reached France in the 1920s, it would spark Les Années folles and the Negritude movement. The Jazz Age would also percolate down to France’s colonies in North Africa as artists and novelists like Claude McKay and Jesse Faucet visited Morocco and Algeria.

Ahmad Alawad Sikainga
Professor, Department of Humanities, Qatar University
The Representation of Slavery in Literature and Popular Culture in Arabia and the Gulf
Despite the long history of enslavement in Arabia and the Gulf, the subject has received little attention neither in the scholarly literature nor in the public discourse. This “silence” on slavery in the region has been attributed to numerous reasons such as the sense of shame and guilt slavery evokes and the prevailing social norms. Yet despite its obscurity, slavery in Arabia has been represented in a number of literary works by modern authors from the region. These works have not only broken the silence, but have also illuminated the experience of enslavement and its legacy in modern Arabian societies. However, the representation of slavery is not limited to literature, but can also be found in various forms of cultural practices such as songs, music, dance, and rituals. One of the most important religious rituals in Arabia and the Gulf in which the story of slavery remains alive is the zar and tanbura or spirit possession. These African cultural traditions were used to treat mental and physical illnesses and were introduced and popularized in the Gulf by enslaved African slaves. Their lyrics reveal a great deal about enslavement as well as the trauma, the suffering, and the humiliation that are associated with it. Drawing on a number of novels, this paper will discuss the way in which modern authors have discussed and reflected on a subject that has remained a taboo in Arabian societies. The paper will also analyze some spirit possession songs to show how the experience of enslavement was communicated and passed from one generation to another.
Hisham Aidi received his Ph.D. in political science from Columbia University, and has taught at Columbia’s School of International and Public Affairs, and at the Driskell Center for the Study of the African Diaspora at the University of Maryland, College Park. He is the author of *Redeploying the State* (Palgrave 2008), a comparative study of privatization and labor movements in Latin America and the Arab world. He is also coeditor with Manning Marable of a collection of essays titled *Black Routes to Islam* (Palgrave 2009). As a journalist, he has written for various outlets including *Al Jazeera*, *The New African*, *ColorLines*, *Souls*, and *Middle East Report*. Dr. Aidi was named a Carnegie Scholar in 2009, and a Global Fellow at the Open Society Foundation in 2011. He is currently a Lecturer at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs and is author most recently of *Rebel Music: Race, Empire and the New Muslim Youth Culture* (Pantheon 2014).

Ahmed Bedjaoui is a journalist and film and television producer. He is a graduate of L’Institut des hautes études cinématographiques and holds a Ph.D in American literature with a thesis on Scott Fitzgerald and Hollywood in 1983. Since 1969 he has worked as a producer and presenter of cinema programs on Algerian television, and as a programmer and head of Algerian Film Archives between 1966–1971, and advisor to the Director General of the Office of the Algerian Cinema from 1971 to 1977. Ahmed Bedjaoui was one of the organizers of the cinema segment of the first Cultural Pan-African Festival (Algiers 1969) and again deputy curator of the second Pan-African Festival (Algiers 2009). From 1976 to 1985, he served as director of the Department of Film Production at Radio Television of Algeria, leading the production of more than 70 feature films. He produced the first feature film directed by an Arab woman, the famous writer Assia Djebar. He also served as vice president of the National Broadcasting Council from 1987 to 1991, and as an advisor for communication with the Algerian prime minister. He also worked as a consultant for the European Commission, and from 1993 to 2001 as director of REMFOC network organization for the development of the Maghreb journalists. Ahmed Bedjaoui served as advisor of the Algerian Minister of Culture (2001–2012) and was until 2012 the president of the Algerian Film Fund. He is currently a professor of audiovisual communication at the University of Algiers.
KELVYN BELL is a guitarist, composer, producer, and educator with a 35-year legacy as one of New York’s most diverse creative artists. He served as music director for the film Carry Me Home and contributed an original arrangement to the motion picture Black Nativity. He has also made his mark on the New York theater scene, having served as composer-in-residence for the Classical Theatre of Harlem (CTH) from 2001 to 2010 and written original music and arrangements for CTH and others including the Negro Ensemble Company (2012), the Court Theatre of Chicago (2011), and the Florida Studio Theatre (2010). His hardcore Avant-Funk/Jazz ensemble Kelvynator has toured extensively through Europe, the United States, and parts of Asia.

ROMI CRAWFORD is an associate professor of visual, critical, and Africana studies at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She was previously the curator and director of education and public programs at the Studio Museum in Harlem. Her research revolves primarily around ideas of race and ethnicity and their relation to American visual, aesthetic, and popular culture. She has published in Art Journal; Cinema Remixed and Reloaded: Black Women Film and Video Artists (University of Washington, 2008); Black Light/White Noise: Sound and Light in Contemporary Art (Contemporary Art Museum Houston, 2007); Frequency (Studio Museum in Harlem, 2006); Art and Social Justice Education: Culture as Commons (Routledge, 2011); and Service Media (Green Lantern, 2013). She is presently working on a book, Congregation Time, which maps out various ways that American racial and ethnic constituents have historically sought safe, racially supportive, social space in order to orient their relation to art, film, and literary production. She received her M.A. and Ph.D. in English literature, theory, and criticism from the University of Chicago.


LYDIE DIAKHATÉ is an independent film producer, curator, and art critic specializing in the arts and cultures of Africa and its diaspora. She is co-founder and co-director of the annual Real Life Documentary Film Festival in Accra (2006–2011). She received her diploma from L’ Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, Paris (visual anthropology) and her MA (museum studies) from The Graduate School of Arts and Science at New York University. Her recent curatorial projects include Alien Script, Drawings by Walter Mosley, an outdoor exhibition, a series of 18 large-scale drawings from Walter Mosley’s sketchbooks displayed at the NYU/Kimmel Center Windows; the organization and participation at the international conference Black Portraiture: The Black Body in the West (Paris January 17–20, 2013), organized by Harvard University and NYU since 2004; The World of Frédéric Bruly Bouabré at the Kimmel Center NYU, 2012; Stars of Ethiopia, a solo photo exhibition of Chester Higgins, also at the Kimmel Center, NYU, 2011; and Algiers PANAF: 1969 - 2009, a photo and video exhibition (New York/2010, Washington/2011). She has published essays in art journals such as Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art. She is a film producer of films such as Edouard Glissant: One World in Relation (52 min., France/USA, 2010) and Conakry kas (82min., Guinée/France/USA, 2004).

SHANNEN HILL specializes in South African art with research interests in political rhetoric and visual culture, modern and contemporary art, and post-colonial theory. Her forthcoming book, Biko and Black Consciousness in South African Visual Culture (University of Minnesota Press), is scheduled for release in 2015. Her publications include “Trauma and Representation: Imaging Violence in Africa”, a special issue of African Arts that she co-edited and in which her article “Iconic Autopsy: Post-mortem Portraits of Bantu Stephen Biko” appears; and “Minkisi do not die: BaKongo Cosmology in the Christian Rituals of Simon Kimbangu and Simon Mpadi,” a chapter in Undressing Religion: Commitment and Conversion from a Cross-Cultural Perspective (Berg Publishers, 2000). Hill’s research has been supported by the Getty Foundation and the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, among other institutions. She lived and worked in South Africa for three years. She earned her Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2003, and has taught at the University of Denver, where she also served as its gallery director; Witwatersrand University; and at the University of Maryland, College Park. She currently serves as secretary/treasurer of the Arts Council of the African Studies Association.

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RICHARD J. POWELL is the John Spencer Bassett Professor of Art & Art History at Duke University, where he has taught since 1989. Along with teaching courses in American art, the arts of the African diaspora, and contemporary visual studies, he has written extensively on topics ranging from primitivism to postmodernism, including such titles as Homecoming: The Art and Life of William H. Johnson (1991) and Black Art: A Cultural History (1997 & 2002). His latest book is Cutting a Figure: Fashioning Black Portraiture (2008). Powell, a recognized authority on African American art and culture (and a frequent commentator and lecturer on this topic both in the United States and abroad), has also helped organize numerous art exhibitions, most notably The Blues Aesthetic: Black Culture and Modernism (1989); Rhapsodies in Black: Art of the Harlem Renaissance (1997); To Conserve A Legacy: American Art at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (1999); Back to Black: Art, Cinema, and the Racial Imaginary (2005); and Archibald Motley: Jazz Age Modernist (2014). From 2007 until 2010, Powell was editor-in-chief of the Art Bulletin, the world’s leading English language journal in art history. (B.A., Morehouse College, 1975; M.F.A., Howard University, 1977; M.A., Yale University, 1982; M.Phil., Yale University, 1984; & Ph.D., Yale University, 1988)

SHANA L. REDMOND is assistant professor of American studies and ethnicity at the University of Southern California and the author of Anthem: Social Movements and the Sound of Solidarity in the African Diaspora (NYU Press, 2014), which examines the sonic politics performed amongst and between organized Afro-diasporic publics in the twentieth century. The book is accompanied by Anthem: The Mixtape—a collaboration between Redmond and the Dreadstar Movement. Her work has appeared in African and Black Diaspora, Journal of Popular Music Studies, Race & Class, and Black Music Research Journal (forthcoming). She has written for the Feminist Wire as well as the month-long 2013 Sonic Borders Virtual Panel curated by the International Association for the Study of Popular Music-US and Sounding Out! She is currently working on a project detailing the performative regimes of aid music.

AHMAD ALAWAD SIKAINGA is a professor of African history, Department of Humanities, Qatar University. He is also a professor of history at Ohio State University. Ahmad Sikainga’s area of expertise includes African social and economic history, with a focus on slavery, labor, and urban history. The geographical focus of his research is the Sudan, the Nile Valley, and North Africa. His publications include: Sudan Defense Force: Origin and Role, 1925–1955 (1983), Western Bahr al-Ghazal Under British Rule, 1898–1956 (1991), Slaves into Workers: Emancipation and Labor in Colonial Sudan (1996), and City of Steel and Fire: A Social History of Atbara, Sudan’s Railway Town, 1906–1984 (2002). In addition to his numerous articles and book chapters, Sikainga co-edited Civil War in the Sudan, 1983–1989 (1993), and Postconflict Reconstruction in Africa (2006). Professor Sikainga was a Mellon Fellow at Harvard University, a Fulbright Scholar in Morocco, and William Luce Fellow at Durham University in the United Kingdom. His current research examines the role of slavery,
ethnicity, and identity in the development of popular culture in contemporary Sudan. He is also working on a research project that deals with the Islamic legal system and slavery in Morocco in the 19th century. Professor Sikainga teaches courses on the history of Southern Africa, North Africa, Islam in Africa, social change in contemporary Africa, and the African diaspora, B.A. and M.A., Khartoum University, Sudan; Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara.

**QUINCY TROUPE** is the author or co-author of twenty books, including ten volumes of poems. His most recent book of poems is *Errançities*, (2012). Among his other notable books are *Miles: The Autobiography*, in collaboration with Miles Davis, and a memoir, *Miles and Me*. His book *The Architecture of Language* (poems) won the 2007 Paterson Award for Sustained Literary Achievement, and *Transcircularities: New and Selected Poems* won the 2003 Milt Kessler Poetry Award and was selected by *Publisher’s Weekly* as one of the ten best books of poetry in 2002. Troupe has won three American Book Awards (1980 for poetry, 1990 for nonfiction, and a 2010 Lifetime Achievement Award.) In March 2014, he was awarded the Gwendolyn Brooks Award for Poetry. His work has been translated into more than 25 languages. French publisher Castor Astral will publish a translation of his poems titled *Errançities* in the fall of 2015. Quincy Troupe is professor emeritus at the University of California, San Diego and edits the journal *Black Renaissance Noire* at New York University. He lives in Harlem, New York.


**DAGMAWI WOUBSHET** is Associate Professor of English at Cornell University. He is author of *The Calendar of Loss: Race, Sexuality, and Mourning in the Early Era of AIDS* (forthcoming from the Johns Hopkins Press, fall 2014), and coeditor of *Ethiopia: Literature, Art, and Culture*, a special issue of Callaloo 33, no. 1 (2010). His work has also appeared in *Transition, Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art*, *Art South Africa*, and *African Lives: An Anthology of Memoirs and Autobiographies*. In 2010, he was named a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum, and his other honors include a faculty fellowship at the Institute of Ethiopia Studies at Addis Ababa University in 2010–11, and the Robert A. & Donna B. Paul Award for Excellence in Advising in 2012. Last fall, he was named one of “The 10 Best Professors at Cornell” by *Business Insider*. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University and his B.A. from Duke University. An itinerant scholar, he divides his time between Ithaca, New York City, and Addis Ababa.

**ORGANIZERS**


SALAH M. HASSAN is the Goldwin Smith Professor, director of the Institute for Comparative Modernities (ICM), and Professor of African and African Diaspora Art History and Visual Culture in the Africana Studies and Research Center and the Department of History of Art and Visual Studies, Cornell University. He is also a curator and art critic. He is editor and founder of Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art (Duke University Press) and consulting editor for Atlantica and Journal of Curatorial Studies. He authored, edited, and coedited several books including Ibrahim El Salahi: A Visionary Modernist (Museum For African Art and Tate Modern, 2012, 2013); Diaspora, Memory, Place (Prentel 2008); Unpacking Europe (NAi Publishers, 2001); Authenic/Ex-Centric (2001); Gendered Visions: The Art of Contemporary Africana Women Artists (1997); Art and Islamic Literacy among the Hausa of Northern Nigeria (1992); and Darfur and the Crisis of Governance: A Critical Reader (2009), and guest edited a special issue of (SAQ) South Atlantic Quarterly on African Modernism (2010). He has contributed essays to journals, anthologies, and exhibition catalogues of contemporary art. He has curated several international exhibitions including at the 49th Venice Biennale in 2001, and the Dakar Biennale in 2004. He is the recipient of several fellowships such as the J. Paul Getty Postdoctoral Fellowship as well as major grants from the Ford, Rockefeller, Andy Warhol, and Prince Claus Fund foundations.

MODERATORS/DISCUSSANTS

SAMBA GADJIGO is a professor of French at Mount Holyoke College. In addition to his course offerings in the French department, Gadjigo is a member of the African American and African Studies program faculty. His research focuses on French-speaking Africa, particularly the work of the late Senegalese filmmaker Ousmane Sembene. Gadjigo’s writing has appeared in First of the Month, Research in African Literatures, and Contributions in Black Studies. He is the author of Ousmane Sembene: The Making of a Militant Artist (Indiana University Press, 2009), the first major biography of the African filmmaker. He is currently completing a major documentary film on the life and work of Ousmane Sembene.

AMANDA GILVIN is a Five College Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in African art and architecture. She specializes in African art, the taxonomy of art and craft, museum studies, gender studies, and textiles. Amanda Gilvin’s research focuses on museology, textiles, and artistic pedagogies in West Africa. Her book manuscript includes an analysis of the Republic of Niger’s unique national museum, the Musée National Boubou Hama du Niger. In 2009 and 2010, she was a Fulbright-Hays Dissertation Research Abroad Fellow in Niger and France. In addition to more conventional forms of academic research, she learned to weave with Abdoulwahid Gouver, a weaver based at the Musée National Boubou Hama du Niger. She also has conducted research in Ghana, Senegal, Switzerland, Canada, and the United States. At Mount Holyoke College and Smith College, Gilvin teaches courses on diverse arts of Africa and the African Diaspora. Themes of her courses include fashion, museology, and contemporary art. Her publications include Collaborative Futures: Critical Reflections on Publicly Active Graduate Education, co-edited with Georgina M. Roberts and Craig Martin (The Graduate School Press of Syracuse University, 2012), and her articles appeared in Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art 24 (summer 2009); The Global Perspective of Beads and Beadwork: History, Manufacture, Trade, and Adornment (Kadir Has University, 2007); and a forthcoming special issue of African Arts.

JOANNA GRABSKI is the Warner Professor and Chair of Art History/Visual Culture at Denison University. Her research has focused on artists, visual projects, and art institutions in Dakar, Senegal and Brazzaville, Congo. Her essays have appeared in several edited collections and academic journals including Art Journal, African Arts, Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East, Fashion Theory, Nka: Journal of
**Khwezi Gule.** She has written and edited many exhibition sure in South African Contemporary Art, co-curated with A Doll’s House, Beyond Orientalism, including Shirin Neshat, way. She has curated numerous international exhibitions, curator at the Stenersen Museum, both in Oslo, Norway. Onstad Art Center and eight years as director and chief temporary art, including six years as chief curator at Henie Art Through the Eye of the Needle, Para Decir Adios, to name a few. She has curated thematic exhibitions such as Art Through the Eye of the Needle, A Doll’s House, Equatorial Rhythms, and Beauty and Pleasure in South African Contemporary Art, co-curated with Khwezi Gule. She has written and edited many exhibition catalogues and books, including Crispin Gurholt Live Photo II (Skira); Fresh Paint (Charta); and When a Painting Moves...Something Must be Rotten!, co-edited with Paco Barragán (Charta), and she contributes frequently to art magazines and publications worldwide. Her most recent large-scale exhibition, The Storytellers: Narratives in International Contemporary Art, was curated in collaboration with Gerardo Mosquera. The exhibition features international artists whose work is directly inspired by literature, and is accompanied by a Skira publication. An adaptation of the exhibition will travel to MAC Niterói, Brazil in 2015. She is currently working on Jamaican Roots, a large-scale exhibition featuring contemporary art that relates to the history of Jamaican music.

**Elvira Dyangani Ose** is curator international art, supported by Guaranty Trust Bank at Tate Modern, London. Prior to joining the Tate Modern, Dyangani Ose worked as curator at the Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and at the Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo in Seville. She served as guest curator for the Triennial SUD-Salon Urbain de Douala in Douala and is currently director of the Artistic Director of the third edition of Rencontres Picha – Biennale de Lubumbashi 2012/2013. As curator, she has developed numerous interdisciplinary projects, focusing on the politics of representation, social and urban imaginaries, and the role of artists in history making. Her recent curatorial projects include major exhibitions such as Carrie Mae Weems: Social Studies (2010) and Nontsikelelo Veleko: Welcome to Paradise (2009), as well as interdisciplinary collective projects such as Attempt to Exhaust an African Place (2007–8), Africalls? (2007), and Olvida quién soy/ Erase me from who I am (2006). She was general curator of the Arte Invisible program at ARCO Madrid in 2009 and 2010. She is currently completing her Ph.D. in history of art and visual studies at Cornell University, New York. She holds a master’s degree in theory and history of architecture and a B.A. degree in history of art.

**Selene Wendt** is an independent curator and founder of The Global Art Project. With a master’s degree in art history from The University of Chicago, she has extensive experience working with international contemporary art, including six years as chief curator at Henie Onstad Art Center and eight years as director and chief curator at the Stenersen Museum, both in Oslo, Norway. She has curated numerous international exhibitions, including Shirin Neshat, Beyond Orientalism; Ghada Amer, Reading Between the Threads; Liza Lou, Leaves of Glass; and Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons, Mil Maneras Para Decir Adios, to name a few. She has curated thematic exhibitions such as Art Through the Eye of the Needle; A Doll’s House; Equatorial Rhythms, and Beauty and Pleasure in South African Contemporary Art, co-curated with Khwezi Gule. She has written and edited many exhibition catalogues and books, including Crispin Gurholt Live Photo II (Skira); Fresh Paint (Charta); and When a Painting Moves...Something Must be Rotten!, co-edited with Paco Barragán (Charta), and she contributes frequently to art magazines and publications worldwide. Her most recent large-scale exhibition, The Storytellers: Narratives in International Contemporary Art, was curated in collaboration with Gerardo Mosquera. The exhibition features international artists whose work is directly inspired by literature, and is accompanied by a Skira publication. An adaptation of the exhibition will travel to MAC Niterói, Brazil in 2015. She is currently working on Jamaican Roots, a large-scale exhibition featuring contemporary art that relates to the history of Jamaican music.

For the second year of its existence, the Caribbean Theory reading group welcomed new members (from the Department of Romance Studies and the College of Art, Architecture, and Planning) and focused on a new topic: “Strategies of Resistance and Survival.” The project, deliberately broad, allowed us to look at various forms of resistance and survival of the colonial and the postcolonial experience in different areas of the Caribbean literature, art and culture.

How does the strategic use of language, poetry, music, visual arts, and food come to function as a crucial mode of cultural resistance? What role can fictional and poetic representation play in this process? Some theoretical texts supplemented the diverse literary, visual, and cultural materials we chose to study.

Moreover, we pursued our tradition initiated last year and invited three distinguished guest speakers to participate in our discussions and contribute to enlightening our thinking on the topic of survival and resistance.

Following the trajectory outlined in our proposal, one of our first sites of exploration of Caribbean resistance was in the novel. Our text selections included three works written by three different authors, Simone Schwartz-Bart’s *Pluie et vent sur Télumée Miracle*, Edouard Glissant’s *The Overseer’s Cabin*, and Patrick Chamoiseau’s *Texaco*. Despite the varying styles to express themes of folklore and rootedness, we found that an ever-present, unifying theme of resistance manifested itself quite violently through language. The weaving of oral and written language, French and Creole, and even particular names and places in these literary texts reject the idea of a singular and linear narrative and simulate a plurality of voices that echo an actual manifestation, an event of collective resistance that demands to be heard. With such an image in mind, the choice of the novel, thus, can lend itself to a more empirical and affective reading, concretizing the theoretical and analytical approaches of our other texts.

Through the reading of Nick Nesbitt’s *Voicing Memory*, we focused our attention on how through aesthetic practices francophone Caribbean authors resisted the silence imposed on the historical experience of the colonial subject and contributed to a "reconstruction of
historical awareness." To Nesbitt, the 1804 Haitian revolution, represents the will of the people “from the margin of imperialism,” in other words the colonized, to complete the enlightenment project and resolve some of its contradiction by inscribing the universal principles of the French Revolution into this particular historical and local event. In our discussion, we emphasized the ability of Nick Nesbitt to address contradictions without reducing them. For instance in Chapter 3 on Césaire, Nesbitt expounds the necessity and value of the Negritude movement without dismissing its problematic tendency to essentialization and racial naturalization.

Considering the importance of music as a mode of resistance in the African diaspora, we decided to spend a session studying the music of Bob Marley and the discourses surrounding his work. Supporting texts included Horace Campbell’s Rasta and Resistance, which situated Marley in the history of Jamaican Rastafarianism, and Grant Farred’s What’s My Name: Black Vernacular Intellectuals, which helped us think about the intersection between Marley poetics and politics. Additionally, we invited Professor Farred to join us for our discussion, which ranged from an examination of set lists at particular concerts to close readings of specific songs, including “Natural Mystic” and “No Woman No Cry.” This discussion shared a concern with many of our other discussions about postcolonial poetics: to what degree do the ambiguities and ambivalences in work like Marley’s prefigure or even prophesy the complications and failures of postcoloniality?

Regarding films, we chose to watch a fictional movie tied to the Haitian contemporary political context, Moloch Tropical (2009). Created by Raoul Peck of Lumumba fame, the film reflects the corrupting influence of power. It is set almost entirely in the magnificently haunting Citadelle Lafèrrière which sits atop a 3000-foot peak in northern Haiti. The Citadelle was built during the 19th-century reign of King Henry Christophe. Its prominence in the film, which portrays the demise of a despotic Haitian leader, democratically elected but out of touch with the people he governs, insists on a historic framing of the contemporary plot (2004). The interference of Americans, the ruthless destruction of opposition, and the eventual exile of the leader, as well as the presence of a famous American actor about to play the role of Toussaint L’Ouverture in a feature film, all nod to real life issues such as the ousting of Aristide with the assistance of the United States, and the lesser and perhaps more welcome intrusion of Danny Glover’s L’Ouverture. As such, these films allowed us to explore the impact that dyads like self/other have upon our perception, and reopened the debate on the role and meaning of resistance in an increasingly interconnected world.

In our session on food, we met over Skype with Professor Valérie Loichot from Emory University to discuss her book, The Tropics Bite Back: Culinary Coups in the Caribbean, which depicts the imbrications of care and cooking, food and culture, hunger and poverty, as well as cannibalism and (textual) incorporation in the Caribbean imaginary. We discussed concrete Caribbean cooking practices and their reproduction in (gendered) intergenerational memory as well as the metaphors of cooking that enter into the way Caribbean writers construct their texts, including masala creolization and literary cannibalism. Thus, in the tropical context, food and the act of “biting back” appear as privileged sites of cultural resistance that go beyond strategic tactics of survival.

The visit of Françoise Verges to Cornell University was a perfect opportunity to meet an embodied figure of resistance who has a long experience in human rights and feminist movements. Professor at the University of London and research associate at the Collège d'études mondiales in Paris, she was invited by the ICM to give a lecture at Cornell in October 2013, and she generously accepted to meet with our reading group.

It was for us a very inspirational discussion, not only because Françoise Verges is a remarkable scholar in the postcolonial field but also a very engaged person who creates a bridge between research and activism. She shared with us some of her theoretical and academic insights, and also talked about her commitment to projects of art and culture, and with grassroots organizations.

The discussion focused first on the specificity of the creolization processes and practices in La Reunion, a colonized French island turned into an overseas department in the Indian Ocean. She used the term palimpsest to describe the multilayered process of creolization on this unpopulated territory at the crossroads of Africa and Asia. Indeed, colonization brought a diverse population from Europe, the African continent, Madagascar, the Comoros islands, the South of India, Malaysia, and China. Settlers, slaves, and indentured workers carried
with them their own native languages and their own cultures already molded in a long history of conquests and exchanges. Another fascinating aspect she brought to our attention was the gender dimension of the colonization and slave system in La Reunion long known as an “island of men.” Françoise Verges also evoked the difficulties around the questions of memory for people who were once enslaved, then emancipated, but kept colonized by France. The French Republic still fails to integrate the history of slavery and colonialism in its national past and maintain its overseas departments in a marginalized position. French feminism, according to Françoise Verges, followed the same path and has ignored up to nowadays the anti-slavery and anti-colonial struggles, focusing mainly on questions around republican citizenship and domestic violence.

As presented, the scope of our project this year, though broad, has allowed us to delve quite profoundly into the different instances of resistance. Well aware that some questions may remain unanswered and that we have by no means exhausted our sources to discuss this topic, we hope to continue reading and exploring Caribbean and postcolonial materials with continued criticism and open-mindedness.

**Exploring Diasporic Concepts of Blackness through the Arts**

Honey Crawford, Department of Performing and Media Arts
Kanitra Fletcher, Department of History of Art and Visual Studies
Aricka Foreman, Department of English
Mariamma Kambo, College of Art, Architecture, and Planning
Jan Steyn, Department of Comparative Literature
Kimberly Williams, Department of English

Our group set out to explore diasporic concepts of blackness through a range of works from and critical texts on visual, literary, cinematic, and performance arts. In our first meeting, we engaged shifts of identity between diasporic writers and schools, and engaged criticism as a means of complicating the “margins” of canonical work. Whether as art object or sociopolitical critique, we engaged texts by James Baldwin and Amiri Baraka, along with scholarship by Evie Shockley and Adam Shoemaker, to ask: how does a writer situate blackness, given intersections of gender, class, etc.; are these sites of location predicated on allegiance to a specific lineage/history; how does said representation contend with multifaceted representations across the Diaspora? The texts provided doorways in which to consider what is at stake is a malleable inclusion of all Diasporic voices, and bridge between the landscapes in which they exist.

We next considered how the horror genre has a relationship with intersectionality-based movements and response. More specifically, the readings and mediums presented how horror exposes the parallel between contemporary notions of race and its relationship to plantation violence. The presentation started with interrogating the foundations of horror, race-based cinema. This included the following examples: *Off To Bloomingdale Asylum* by Georges Méliès, *Night of the Living Dead* by George Romero, and Ridley Scott’s *Alien* series. In these debates, there was a focus on comparison and inversion—more specifically, how black and brown bodies were positioned by size, placement, and visibility. There was discussion surrounding the history of horror figures to race and colonization such as the vampire and the boo hag. The seminar ended with the analysis of artist Yvonne Buchanan, whose work concerns lynching, sound, and religion (in her work *Strange Tongue*). Scholarly literature concerned sonic horror, British influence, and black objectification.

In the next session, we addressed the construction and transfer of black social identities through various mediums of performance. We specifically investigated the trafficking of blackness as cultural currency while considering quotidian ‘acts’ of blackness through a performance studies lens. Our content included primary works ranging from visual and performance art to ethnographic reenactments, hip-hop aesthetics, and mainstream film. Our readings pulled largely from Harry Elam, Jr. and Kennell Jackson’s 2005 anthology, *Black Cultural Traffic: Crossroads in Global Performance and Popular Culture*. We also included E. Patrick Johnson’s essential voice in the discussion of blackness performed and appropriated in the context of ethnography and performance studies theories. This meeting helped us recognize the elusive nature of the term *blackness* that anchors our study. We complicated preconceptions of what blackness is, who is black, and how we set or renegotiate the value of assuming blackness through performance.

The essays that were selected for the next discussion introduced multiple approaches to the definition of blackness. From Paget Henry’s attempts to construct an Africana philosophy that was separated into its Caribbean and African-American components, to Brent Hayes Edwards’s look at the variety of the words that meant *black*—how they translated across French, English, and Spanish, and how they demarcated different social strata in colonial empires—a variety of avenues were examined. The potency of the image as a tool for self-definition and communication was explored in Deborah Willis’s essay, “The Photographic Portrait: Constructing an Ideal,” while Robert Farris Thompson’s exploration of the life and painting of Jean-Michel Basquiat (the prototypical diasporan black artist), examined the hybrid nature of “black” in the African diaspora, and Greg Tate’s “Fear of a Mutt Palette” brought to light both the reluctance to and inevitability of embracing this aspect of blackness. Stuart Hall used Caribbean cinema to discuss the idea of black Caribbean identity as mutable and unstable, consisting of
the convergence of three distinct “presences” that allow for the possibility of something completely new.

In our last session, we focused on historical visualizations of diaspora and representations of blackness beyond or apart from the body in the visual arts. By looking at examples of Robert Scott Duncanson’s nineteenth century landscapes, one can detect cross-cultural borrowings and representations of black life and histories that have been largely ignored in art historical discourses on the genre. Kobena Mercer’s “Erase and Rewind: When Does Art History in the Black Diaspora Actually Begin?” (along with texts by Michele Wallace and Darby English) provided for a fruitful discussion of the ways in which black artists inscribed black diasporic subjectivity within traditional artistic genres and without the black figure.

Rather than define blackness, the combination of these texts and disciplines illustrated what a range of perspectives, styles, and histories that the term comprises. Each meeting of the group opened our eyes to new approaches to works within each of our own disciplines. The overlaps and contradictions both answered and raised questions for each member, thus ultimately affirming the processual nature of blackness.

From “¡Tierra y Libertad!” to Urbanizacionalidades: Labor, State, and the Stateless in Latin American Urbanization

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Paulo E. Ferreira de Souza Marzionna, School of Industrial and Labor Relations
Kyle Harvey, Department of History
Walter Omar Manky Bonilla, School of Industrial and Labor Relations
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The central thrust of our project has been to consider the place of labor in Latin America over the last century, a century in which Latin America went from being predominantly rural to the most urbanized region in the world. In this context, the dual framework of labor and urbanizacionalidades provided a lens through which to view the changing faces of the state, space, gender, and environment. As a starting point, then, we examined the issue of how to grapple with the traditional perspectives on an increasingly urbanized region that lacks a large industrialized proletariat. In this context, such perspectives have resorted to either considering Latin America to be a deviation from the “norm” or analyzing those elements amenable to North Atlantic frameworks. Over the course of the last few decades, though, scholarship has increasingly broadened its optic to include a multitude of perspectives, from state/urban poor relationships and urbanization spatialities to the workplace and gender dynamics.

The relationship between the state and labor over the course of the twentieth century has hinged on two elements: violence and an incomplete working-class citizenship. This dual relationship between the state and labor reveals the problem with assumptions regarding the state as monolithic. The multi-dimensional state in Latin America has not necessarily been one of diverse strategies of repression and ideology. Rather, institutions—such as the police and the legal system—have often stood at odds with one another. From mid-century, increasingly recognized and contested was a notion of a working-class citizenship. In Argentina and Brazil, for example, Juan Perón and Getúlio Vargas helped develop a relationship between the state and the working class through an explicit recognition of a special working-class citizenship. While to what extent they created this is debatable, the impact has persisted throughout the latter half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. Importantly, the incomplete nature of this working-class citizenship—as evidenced in legal institutions and political struggles—has helped foment a working-class consciousness that hinges on a particular relationship with the state, shaping institutions, politics, and the contours of the state in general.

Perhaps not disconnected from the development of a working-class citizenship—one that complicates liberal conceptions of atomized individual citizens—violence comprises another central element of the relationship between the state(s) and working class(es). In certain respects, the fluidity of national boundaries for members of the working class contrasts with moments of police repression. Alongside the violent bounding of the nation-state stands the “unbounded body,” a concept developed by Teresa Caldeira. In other words, the unbounded, penetrable body, unprotected by consistent rights of the individual, appears most visible at moments of violent state self-bounding.

Spatial and ecological boundaries, in and outside of the city, provide another inlet into power relationships, violence, and the triangulation of state, capital, and labor. Urbanization spatialities demonstrate how space is not merely a passive canvas upon which the state and society interact. Instead, it is an active part of patterns of movement, violence, consumption, and communal imaginaries. Both self-imposed and imposed through power relationships, urban configurations reveal the spatial boundedness that is connected to the unbounded body. Beyond the walls of enclosed communities and the side-walks that represent the relationship between people and state, the metabolic relationship between “nature” and “society” elucidates another aspect of the role of non-human actors. Rather than seeing the production of oil
in Mexico as the mere creation of value, oil production’s impact on ecological developments asks us to consider how the particularities of the environment becomes an active component of not only the relationship between “nature” and “society,” but also between capital and labor, state and capital, and labor and state. Manifested in the place of workers in oil production’s ecology are cultural divisions, political developments, and conceptions of property rights. Ultimately, the development of Latin American working classes must include a serious engagement with the particularities of space and the “environment,” and how the relationships between workers and their surroundings shape an understanding of self and of class.

Ultimately, thinking through Latin American labor necessitates interrogating the regional category. Is it, as José Moya argues, an erroneous, but expedient category? What do we make of the persistence of world-systems and dependency theories in theoretical works? Even if the regional category remains a “convenient” one, the development of labor in the region requires an eye for particularities, from the enclave to the city. Perhaps the point is that these particularities in Latin America elucidate unstable modernities—no more contorted than others—and confute diffusionist narratives.

**Indigenizing Sovereignty:**
**Native Conceptualizations of Modern Thought**

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Daniel Radus, Department of English  
Emily Hong, Department of Anthropology  
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**THEMATIC PLANS**

In forming this reading group, we sought to determine how concepts of sovereignty are deployed and asserted by indigenous populations globally. As an ostensibly modern concept inextricable from legacies of imperial and colonial conquest, sovereignty—as a theoretical construct and as a realized model of governance—often has been denied to indigenous peoples by virtue of their assumed inability to attain the characteristics of modernity as that term has been defined in western contexts—as, that is, anthropocentric, individualist, state-based, and focused on the delineation of strict hierarchies.

How, then, do indigenous people adapt sovereignty to a conception of modernity—that is, to an indigenous modernity—that defines itself against these characteristics? Is the very notion of sovereignty suitable to the premises and practices of modern indigenous governance? What might sovereignty look like when actuated from within global indigenous contexts, and why has sovereignty become the imagined horizon of political thought within those contexts?

Our intention was to consider the malleability of the concept of sovereignty to indigenous contexts; with that in mind, we began our consideration of these questions by examining the classic texts of Western, state-based sovereignty, in order to better understand what indigenous sovereignty claims work with and against. We went on to examine the ways in which indigenous sovereignty is both infringed upon and asserted through the model of state-based sovereignty. Finally, we attempted to assess the viability of the concept for indigenous people, and to think through alternatives proposed by indigenous scholars and activists in comparative contexts from Mexico to Hawaii, Palestine, and Australia.

**OUR FINDINGS**

A major concern emerging from our discussions was related to the appropriateness of the term sovereignty itself in an indigenous context. We started our discussions with Hobbes’s *Leviathan* and were immediately struck by Hobbes’s insistence on fear as the cause for the creation and continuance of society. Wendy Brown, who generously met with us to discuss her most recent book, raised the issue of imagining a *demos* without the *us*/*them* distinction. She suggested that this sort of *demos* is essentially unimaginable in Western thought since Western thought is so deeply rooted in an understanding of the political that is based on Carl Schmitt’s oppositional friend/enemy distinction.

In contrast to politics’ underlying condition of conflict and violence, which is also deeply embedded in common definitions of sovereignty, activist scholar Taiaiake Alfred proposes the complete renunciation of the idea of indigenous sovereignty as a colonial concept and suggests that instead we establish traditionally native ways of government. These forms of authority should be based on plurality, interrelatedness, and kinship and understand “nature” as equally valuable as all other beings (45). One actual alternative to the sovereignty model that we explored is the “rule by obeying” model present in Zapatista forms of government. This mode of organization “draws on the community practices of self-organization through assembly that tendentially disperse power (through a series of mutual obligations, shared responsibilities, and the accountability and recalcitrance of delegates), effectively preventing the accumulation of power that might ensue from delegation” (Reyes and Kaufmann 515–16).

We recognize that the context within which Zapatista movements emerged and what the movement was responding to, namely the emergence of NAFTA, for instance, required the elimination of
organizing socio-cultural, political, ecological, economical, and spiritual positions in indigenous communities through self-determined ways.

**Political Ecologies**

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Darragh Hare, Department of Natural Resources  
Tim McLellan, Department of Anthropology  
Elizabeth Plantan, Department of Government  
Kasia Paprocki, Department of Sociology  
Murodbek Laldjebaev, Department of Natural Resources

The Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Reading Group in Political Ecologies was founded in fall 2012 by a small group of graduate students from natural resources, government, anthropology, and development sociology interested in the relationship between politics, sociology, economics, and ecological change. Over the course of the past year, with the support of the ICM, the group expanded its diverse membership and deepened our discussions. Our first goal in establishing this group was to develop an interdisciplinary forum in which to address political ecology’s central concern: an unraveling of the political forces at work in environmental access, management, and transformation. Our secondary goal was to foster productive relationships with colleagues in multiple departments in order to gain a broader understanding of how the “field” of political ecology is understood in different disciplines and to create a supportive environment to explore new ideas.

Throughout the year, as a result of bi-weekly discussions and engagement with diverse scholarship, we found that the “field” of political ecology is even more open to diverse disciplinary interpretation that we originally thought. Each time we met, a different member of the group selected that session’s readings. This format distinctly reflected our diverse backgrounds and understandings of what political ecology means. During each meeting, we debated the meaning and limits of the “field” of political ecology through the lens of various topics. In the fall semester, we discussed topics as diverse as food sovereignty, environmentalism, feminist political ecology, anthropocentrism, and transnational advocacy. Throughout the spring semester, our topics included forest governance, energy poverty, and climate change. Although these seem disparate topics, we found common themes throughout, leading us to develop a richer understanding of what the diverse “field” of political ecology can encompass.

Ultimately, we continued to grapple with the questions from our initial proposal: How do the sciences, “social” and “natural,” articulate contemporary socio-ecological dilemmas? How do we attend to material realities that shape people’s material lives in a world suf-

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communally owned land so that all “resources” in countries like Mexico are “open” to the invisible hand of the market, posed existential threat to indigenous way of life and governance for indigenous peoples in the Chiapas.

There is a sense among indigenous scholars that mainstream theories of sovereignty rarely engage critically with sovereignty movements and related theorization by indigenous scholars. In indigenous studies, sovereignty seems to be debated two majorly divergent ways. In the first case, it seems an adoption and internalization of a Western conception of sovereignty occurs, and it regards sovereignty strictly as a legalistic approach to political authority and governance. This attitude leads to two basic ways of thinking about viability of sovereignty in indigenous communities and/or as a framework for political governance. The first concerns formation and function of tribal government within settler state’s constitutional structure and argues that political survival of indigenous peoples rests in incorporation of Western/colonial political thought and structure (Marshall 1823, 1831, 1832; Wilkinson and Miklas 1988). In this formulation, the survival of indigenous peoples as polities depends on the negotiated spaces between “traditional” forms of governance and constraints of coloniality. The second position, hold by scholars like Taiaiake Alfred aforementioned, postulates that the legal and territorial assumptions that accompany Western “sovereignty” necessarily work against indigenous rights and survival, and as such argues that sovereignty as a framework needs to be entirely abandoned in favor of a particular form of tribal governance rooted in traditional principles based on indigenous epistemology (Alfred 2001).

A more radical idea of sovereignty emerges in the second case, in which indigenous scholars call for a, to borrow Tuscarora scholar Rickard’s term, “diversified” sovereignty (Rickard 1995). If the first case involves deconstruction and reconstruction of the Western legal-centric concept of sovereignty in relation to tribal governance and community organizing, the second approach treats “sovereignty” as an analytical concept separable from its Western juridical origin. The efforts to decenter and delink sovereignty from its European antecedence opens the gate to new set of “sovereignties” that generate categories such as “visual sovereignty” (Rickard 1995; Reheja 2007; Hearne 2012), “cultural sovereignty” (Singer 2001), “food sovereignty” (Ayres, et al., 2014), and “intellectual sovereignty” (Warrior 1995). Indigenous sovereignty, then, can be understood as grounded in a conception of self-determination “that must take into account multiple patterns of human associations and interdependency” and integrates the political, economical, ecological, and sociocultural (Corntassel 2008: 116). Thus indigenized sovereignty is no longer limited to an internalized sovereignty retaining its Euro-legal conception, but also applies to a particular way of
fused with conversation about, and concern over, eco-
logical crisis? Can critical interdisciplinary scholarship
provide productive directions in which to focus exis-
tent and emerging practical, political energies for socio-
ecological change? In the end, we agreed on a positive
answer to that final question. Our interdisciplinary dis-
cussions often did lead in productive directions for find-
ing practical solutions to socio-ecological change. Over
the course of the year, our understandings of these solu-
tions became more nuanced and multi-faceted. However,
one direction for potential solutions appeared repeatedly
in our discussions: the importance of local knowledge.
We began to question central government or private sec-
tor solutions to environmental protection, and instead
considered local, self-governing approaches to ecosystem
management. In particular, we considered the indigenous
voices that are often unrepresented as we seek solutions
socio-ecological dilemmas. By incorporating these view-
points and understanding the power of local, indigenous
knowledge, we came to appreciate the complex nature
of finding equitable solutions to ecological crisis. These
discussions will no doubt remain with us as we continue
on our own individual paths of scholarship and contrib-
ute to future debates on how to address socio-ecological
change.

Rethinking Multiplicity

Gökhan Kodak, History of Architecture and Urban
Development Program
Maayan Wayn, Department of Performing and Media Arts
Özum Hatipoglu, Department of Performing and Media Arts
Stephen Low, Department of Performing and Media Arts
Wah Guan Lim, Department of Asian Studies
Whitten Overby, History of Architecture and Urban
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Rethinking Multiplicity explored the ways in which the
relationships between built environmental and per-
formance theories and histories could productively
converge to articulate the longstanding philosophical
concept of multiplicity. We chose to first explore con-
temporary discursive formations concerning this issue
and then to move backwards towards its genealogical
roots rather than to start our search for a definition in
its origins: the multiplicity of definitions that emerged
upon examining recent articulations of our central trope
demonstrated the flexibility of what, at first sight, could
seem a less malleable concept.

We hailed from quite different disciplinary back-
grounds and participants researched equally diversi-
tied topics; the often autonomous history and theory
were merged, literally, with performance and media
arts students working on Deleuze coming together with
historians of architecture and urbanism working on
Foucault. These two primary theoretical interlocutors
drove much of the discussion, and their texts fruitfully
suggested why Western European theory’s application
to our primary geographical contexts, America and Tur-
key, can only extend so far. To expand on this notion
we explored anthropological case studies of different
communities within both of these countries, concern-
ing ourselves not with lived experience but rather with
radical specificity. This focus bred the generation of new
theories based upon just happened histories. Returning
to Deleuze and Foucault, three members of the reading
group (Özum Hatipoglu, Gökhan Kodak, & Whitten
Overby) articulated a new theory of the diagrammatic
while describing a recent architectural event, the Cube.

We also found that there were pedagogical rever-
cussions to our examinations. When defined inter-
dependently upon one another, performativity and space
construct an argument for the rhetorical value of teach-
ing interdisciplinarily: this particular discursive forma-
tion suggests where, how, and when architecture and
urbanism enact the persuasive and phenomenologi-
cal (not sensorial) in order to explore the enclosures in
which we exist; by choosing to emphasize this issue in
class, a teacher fosters a hyperawareness of space that
cultivates the political engagement of students.
Anticolonial, Postcolonial, Decolonial: Pasts, Presents, Futures

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Mehmet Ekinci, Department of Science and Technology Studies
Karlie Fox-Knudtsen, Department of Anthropology
Osama Siddiqui, Department of History
Timothy Vasko, Department of Government
Olajumoke Warrity, Department of Sociology

This reading group aims to assess the pasts, presents, and futures of anticolonial, decolonial, and postcolonial scholarship. At a moment when the end of postcolonial thought has been boldly declared in some circles of scholarship committed to challenging and dismantling the histories and structures of colonial modes of government, while other circles aim to study the ongoing contexts of settler colonialism and new imperialisms, a comprehensive and sustained inquiry into what is often broadly called postcolonial theory, third world, or global south scholarship, and the like, seems urgent and necessary. Alongside the aforementioned debates pertaining to the state of studies concerning colonial structures and practices of authority, this group will situate the recent rise to academic prominence of so-called “South-South” studies that track and emphasize the importance of non-metropolitan circuits of archival and cultural connection, diasporic migration and creolization, intellectual traditions, and diplomatic relations between various colonized peoples and territories within the various contexts and strands of earlier anticolonial, decolonial, and postcolonial scholarship. Moreover, this group will aim to track the import, influence, and implications of these traditions on contemporary disciplinary and theoretical developments, including new materialisms, queer studies, postinternational thought, ecological politics, affect theory, and new social movement studies. We aim to not only celebrate an intellectual tradition broadly, but to interrogate its consequences for specific modes of thinking and theorizing the political, the social, the cultural, the historical, and the aesthetic in the present.

The group’s rigorous engagement with the dense archive here broadly defined as anticolonial, postcolonial, and decolonial is loosely organized by three historical moments: early anticolonial discourses, the emergence of “postcolonial” and “decolonial” thought as a field of concern and study, and the contemporary place as well as future horizons of anticolonial, postcolonial, and decolonial studies. As we are taking up the field of anticolonial thought and practice, we are keenly aware of the dangers of offering origin stories, strictly defined canons, and assimilationist engagements with discourses and practices defined according to colonialist epistemologies. The selection and organization of this group’s reading schedule is thus designed to be neither exhaustive nor capacious to strict definitions of when, where, or what mark the beginnings and the ends of the anticolonial, the postcolonial, or the decolonial. Rather, it aims to treat the wide variety of texts selected and categorized by rough geohistorical placements as a unitary, but not unified, field of intervention, response, and challenge to colonialism’s epistemological and structural legacies. The urgency of thought that the anticolonial, the postcolonial, and the decolonial represent are for us neither simple and uniform, nor disaggregated and anarchic intellectual traditions. They are, instead, a singularly fundamental and varied challenge to what our disciplines take as the intellectual traditions that underpin their current stultifying organization as such. Consequently, they also offer an opportunity to rethink what distinct disciplines and
intellectual traditions are for, and how they can be used to analyze political, social, cultural, and historical problems and the futures that these problems might entail.

**Feminist Modernities: Multiple Genealogies of Feminist Thought**

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Youjin Brigitte Chung, Department of Development Sociology
Elena Guzman, Department of Anthropology
Emily Hong, Department of Anthropology
Enongo Lumumba-Kasongo, Department of Science and Technology Studies
Laura Menchaca Ruiz, Department of Anthropology
Natalie Nesvaderani, Department of Anthropology
Tatiana Sverjensky, Department of Comparative Literature

How have the transformations entailed in liberal, neoliberal, and post-neoliberal modernity shaped women's movements and feminist thought across the world? What are the ways in which theories of gender and sexuality help us interrogate the continued hegemony of Western (neo)liberal modernity and open up a space for understanding the multiplicity of historical and emerging modernities in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries? This graduate student reading group will trace the genealogies of feminisms and their global emergence and dispersion to critically consider future directions for analyses of gender. Our readings and discussions will be cross-continental and interdisciplinary, bridging the expansive range of geographical regions represented by the group’s participants: Latin America and the Caribbean (Chile, Hispaniola, Puerto Rico), North America (U.S., Canada), Asia (Burma, China, Thailand), Africa (Tanzania), the Middle East and North Africa (Egypt, Iran, Palestine), and Europe (Sweden). This spatial breadth allows us to consider how the study of feminism, gender, and sexuality emerges in various spaces, as well as how communities in different sociopolitical contexts take up or contest prevailing theories. What commonalities can we identify between women’s movements in the global North and South, and what tensions and debates remain salient? How might classic texts in the history of modern feminism be reread in view of the critiques and challenges lodged by feminists of color in the U.S. and third world feminisms?

Our primary focus will be on feminist epistemologies and how diverse approaches to knowledge and positionality have contributed to and been developed through global women’s struggles. In doing so, the group will explore together what constitutes feminist research and feminist consciousness, and what it means to produce feminist knowledge about the world. Our exhaustive bibliography includes not only classical texts, but also thematic readings that encompass the members’ diverse geographical and political interests.

This reading group originated primarily in response to the lack of graduate seminar offerings at Cornell in general, and the limited classroom engagement with theories produced by feminists of color and third world feminists in particular. In addition to examining what are now classic texts of women-of-color feminism and subaltern studies, including Patricia Hill Collins, Gayatri Spivak, and Trinh T. Minh-ha, our readings will also draw on popular conversations on gender, race, and sexuality in order to interrogate the possibilities and limitations of future feminist theory and praxis.

Through the reading group, we hope to broaden the informal dialogues on feminist, gender, and sexuality studies (FGSS) that we have hitherto been engaging in with faculty members and other graduate students on campus. Several members of the group have initiated conversation with faculty members in Cornell’s FGSS, development sociology, and anthropology programs to discuss the possibility of developing these readings into a syllabus for future graduate seminars on FGSS. Support from the ICM will contribute towards our efforts to foster interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration on feminist scholarship and activism on campus and beyond.

**Hyphens: Asian America Across Time and Space**

Shelley Rao, Cornell Institute for Public Affairs
Mee-Ju Roh, Department of English
Yen Vu, Department of Romance Studies
Diane Wong, Department of Government
Christine “Xine” Yao, Department of English
E. Lily Yu, Department of English
Xing “Sherry” Zhang, Department of Policy Analysis and Management

How did Asian Americans transform from Yellow Peril to model minority? This reading group reads fundamental works of literature and criticism about and by Asian Americans that traces this dubious progression in the cultural imaginary and in lived experience. We are interested in interrogating the historical and present-day category of “Asian American”; while not disavowing the usefulness of identity politics, we wish to critically analyze the diasporic inclusivity of Asian America as well as the perennial issues of exclusivity that can marginalize female, queer, and otherwise disadvantaged voices. Likewise, while we want to be attentive to the complexities of the Asian American experience, our reading list will allow us to consider the positionality of Asian American identity in relation to the fraught schemas of comparative racialization that have attended the ascendance of Asian Americans from abject Orientals to idealized model minorities. Our theme is the spatial and temporal
dimensions of Asian America, both connected and disconnected by hyphens. Through our primary and secondary readings, we will navigate the divisions and bridges between geographical “origins” and “destinations” as well as between generations. Significantly, this reading group is meant to give us perspective on the state of the field and the changes between generations of scholars and writers of Asian America.

Our starting point for criticism is the 1971 *Roots: An Asian American Reader* that was the first book published by the UCLA Asian American Studies Center and reprinted twelve times. In relation to this volume we will examine more recent perspectives on the field, as in the extensive sociological study in Rosalind S. Chou and Joe R. Feagin’s *The Myth of the Model Minority*, as well as the *Dragon Ladies* essay collection that explores different facets of Asian American feminism and activism. Monisha Das Gupta’s *Unruly Immigrants* will allow us to consider the ongoing history of Asians in America as immigrants and the activist push beyond the image of the model minority. As for a focus on literature, Rey Chow’s *Woman and Chinese Modernity: The Politics of Reading Between West and East* will let us combine considerations of gender with the construction of literary history. In terms of theoretical approaches, David Eng’s *Racial Castration* will be an important reference for us in terms of thinking about queerness alongside race, particularly through his discussion of how psychoanalysis bridges sexuality and race. Our final work will be Mel Chen’s 2012 *Animacies* that uses the Asian American cultural archive in order to advance a daring argument that combines queer theory, affect theory, and critical race theory that contextualizes all identities—animal, vegetable, mineral—into a hierarchy of animacy.

We will pair these critical works with a broad range of primary readings, beginning with Frank Chin’s influential 1974 anthology *Aiiiiiiiiieee!* that promoted and recovered Asian American writing but also advanced a problematic heterosexist and masculinist stance. Poetry holds an important place for our group: we will read Li-Young Lee’s classic poetry collection *Rose*, tracing his unfolding of intergenerational connections, death, and desire, and Cathy Park Hong’s recent *Dance Dance Revolution*, a polyglot post-apocalyptic examination of fantasy and personal history in verse. The fantastic opens new ways of imagining Asian American issues: Charles Yu’s novel *How to Live Safely in a Science Fictional Universe* adds the element of time travel to the familiar theme of intergenerational longing. Finally, we hope to add visual mediums to our heterogeneous list of materials: we will watch the Chinese-American lesbian film *Saving Face* as well as the *Linsanity* documentary about the titular phenomenon. We also look forward to Gene Luen Yang’s forthcoming graphic novel *The Shadow Hero* that reimagines the forgotten Asian American comic book superhero the Green Turtle as a story about the immigrant experience.

In our interdisciplinary reading group we will attend to both the classics and the latest works in Asian American criticism and literature. In doing so, we hope to grasp the past of Asian American studies in order to orient ourselves to its future.

**Networks, Assemblages, and Systems**

Diana Garvin, Department of Romance Studies  
Özum Haptipoglu, Department of Performing and Media Arts  
Gökhan Kodalak, History of Architecture and Urban Development  
Stephen Low, Department of Performing and Media Arts  
Whitten Overby, History of Architecture and Urban Development  
Leroy Patterson, Department of Architecture  
Maayan Wayn, Department of Performing and Media Arts

We would like to extend our work from the reading group “Rethinking Multiplicity” to consider some of the more phenomenological, aesthetic, user-based repercussions of French poststructuralist theory as well as to source our theoretical concerns in more concrete examples by adopting an empirical approach and using case studies. We seek to give fleshy, furry form to Deleuze and Spinoza’s concept of the multitude and of multiplicity by examining the relational networks they constitute and construct from an aesthetic perspective. To this end, we are interested in systems aesthetics and relational aesthetics, which overcome the observer (subject) and the observed (object) distinction at the foundation of the construction of scientific knowledge.

Art objects functioning as a system or a network leads us toward an understanding of the convergence of technology, modernity, and science. As a variety of disciplines that analyze the interdependence of science and technology have pointed out, the central role played by emerging technologies in the very practice of doing science shifts the focus from the content of knowledge to the media with which it is created. Therefore, analyzing the so-called systems aesthetics via concrete artworks does not pertain only to the necessity of an integrated approach to the study of science but also identifies the necessity of aesthetic inquiry into new media technologies. The interdependence of science and aesthetics finds its expression in such new media technologies, which both determine and are determined by the confluence of social, economic, and political factors.

Beginning with the foundational text *Ethics*, we will follow a genealogy of the multitude’s relationship to network theory and assemblages, moving into readings as diverse as *Terrorist Assemblages, Digital Performance, Complexity and Postmodernism, Discourse Networks*. 
Taking Thai, American, and German horror films, Chinese, American, and Guatemalan suburbs, Agamben’s camps, and global digital and new media arts as starting places and case studies, we will explore the ways in which network and assemblage theories manifest themselves in particular spaces and times as embodied multitudes of these ideas and more importantly as enactors of them. It is in these moments of action that theory shifts into practice, and where networks most fruitfully express their forms and functions. Careful attention will be paid to what it means to apply French poststructuralism to non-French and non-Western examples: we aim to test the limits of these theories in a globalized intellectual economy. Through considering theory’s boundaries, we hope to expand its horizons and to incorporate the untheoretical into its folds. These are figurative networks of resistance whose more literal analogues we will explore as our genealogy reaches the present day in which they are mounted from Tahrir to Zucotti, Gezi to Athens. By examining these issues, we hope to elucidate how assemblages erect political, social, and economic histories and theories.

**Reclaiming Hegel**

Bret Leraul, Department of Comparative Literature  
Gokhan Kodakal, History of Architecture and Urban Development  
Liron Mor, Department of Comparative Literature  
Nasrin Olla, Department of English Literature  
Gustavo Quintero, Department of Romance Studies  
Adam Schoene, Department of French Studies

> Whether we know it or not, whether we like it or not we are all Hegelians and very orthodox ones at that.—Paul de Man, “Sign and Symbol in Hegel,” Aesthetic Ideology

> Man’s behavior is not only reactional. And there is always resentment in a reaction.—Frantz Fanon, “Hegel and the Negro,” Black Skin, White Masks

The in(ter)vention of this reading group is to begin a consideration of the ways in which the “phenomena” Hegel can be reclaimed and reappropriated for a project of ontological deconstruction from the vantage point of black, queer, and postcolonial studies. Within this group we intend to consider the various ways in which this phenomena has lead to both the most radical thought and the most conservative. In what ways has the specter of Hegel trapped us into politically unproductive conceptions of freedom, oppression, and political change? In what ways has the desiring subject in Hegel lead to some of the most radical theorizing present in contemporary philosophy? As we ask these questions we wish to place ourselves not simply in opposition to Hegel but to quote Fred Moten in “apposition and permeation.” How can we exhaust dialectical thinking? What spaces can we imagine outside of the dialectic?

We are interested in the question of the history of slavery and the lord and bondsman dialectic. In a section entitled “Hegel and the Negro” in Black Skin, White Masks, Fanon writes about the ways in which the “unhappy state” that the lord and bondsman find themselves in does not apply to slavery. In the emancipation of the slave there was never a moment in which two independent forms of consciousness battled for freedom. Fanon writes “the white man, in the capacity of master, said to the Negro, ‘From now on you are free.’” Therefore that freedom and that emancipated life cannot be understood within Hegel’s formulation of the dialectical relationship between the lord and bondsman. We see a trajectory between this Fanonian point and the later work of theorists who claim that “blackness is prior to ontology.” We see an informative tension between de Man’s claim that we are “all Hegelians” and Fanon’s claim that we are not “only (dialectically) reactional.” How is it that we can imagine both the inheritance if the Hegelian formulation of the movement of dialectic (which is inherently reactional) and a consciousness that is not only reactional? How can these two histories be read side by side?

Another strand of thought that will be key to our thinking are contemporary readings—or to use Gayatri Spivak’s wonderful phrase ab-uses—of the universal that we find Susan Buck-Morss and Enrique Dussel. For Dussel reclaiming the universal history that is central to Western modernity is a project that challenges Eurocentrism. In other words, it is necessary to rethink the way in which universal history has been claimed and by whom. Similarly Buck-Morss’s important work asks the question: how can we think of the universal as not simply belonging to the history of Western modernity?

Central to this rethinking is an interdisciplinary mode of reading which will include considerations of diverse sources such as: Mangelo’s globes, Toni Morrison’s fiction and Judith Butler’s dissertation on Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit. The diverse disciplinary training of our participants will facilitate reading these different textual productions in a useful and relevant manner.
GRADUATE READING GROUP

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Call for Proposals—The Institute for Comparative Modernities’ 2015-16 Graduate Reading Groups

The Institute for Comparative Modernities seeks to provide greater opportunities for graduate students from across the campus to engage each other through interdisciplinary and collaborative research working groups. To that end, the Institute provides meeting space as well as seed money for the establishment and the maintenance of a small number of graduate student research working groups each year.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

The Institute for Comparative Modernities invites proposals that include a 500-word statement of intent, a bibliography, and a list of the names and departmental affiliations of the proposed group members, along with the curriculum vitae of each participant. Cross-disciplinarity must be an integral part of both the design of the research proposal and the composition of the group; applications from groups composed of members from a single department will not be approved. We imagine most groups will consist of six to eight members. A minimum of six members is required to be eligible for the subvention. This program, which is announced annually, provides both a subvention of $1,000 that can be used for books, copying, and/or bringing outside speakers to campus, as well as a comfortable, even congenial, meeting space at the ICM, housed in the Toboggan Lodge. We expect the sustained collaboration to culminate in a public presentation (oral or written) at the end of the award year. The subvention covers one year, but renewal may be possible under certain circumstances. It is likely that academic year 2014–15 will see four to five awards.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

Please include all of the following:

• 500-word statement of intent.
• Bibliography.
• List of the names, departmental affiliations, and e-mail addresses of the proposed group members, along with the curriculum vitae of each participant.

Submit proposals to Alexis Boyce, ICM program coordinator: ab449@cornell.edu.

Deadline: Friday, March 27, 2015

Notifications will be sent out the week of April 20, 2015.

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Alexis Boyce is the program coordinator for the Institute for Comparative Modernities. She received her B.A. in British and American literature from Wells College and her M.A. in gender and cultural studies from Simmons College, and continues to take courses in the French and Arabic languages, international relations, and human rights whenever she has the opportunity. She previously worked at Harvard Law School as the International Legal Studies program officer and the Institute for African Development at Cornell University as the outreach and publications coordinator.
The Institute for Comparative Modernities (ICM) addresses a key problem in the study of modern culture and society: the transnational history of modernity and its global scope. A broad range of scholarship over the last few decades has contested and complicated the two primary dimensions of the received narrative of modernity: that it arose strictly within the confines of Europe; and that its extension outside Europe was a matter of simple diffusion and imitation. What is emerging instead is an account of modernity as a global process in which deep and multifarious interconnections have created complementary cultural formations.

The Institute is dedicated to the study of modernity in such a transnational and comparative perspective. Its primary emphasis will fall on neglected or understudied articulations of modernity outside of the historically constituted hegemonic spaces of Europe and the United States, but it will also give serious attention to conflicts and complexities within the West. Inadequate understandings of the complex history of modernity have led to simplistic and untenable positions that unknowingly repeat colonialism’s ideological juxtapositions of “us” and “them,” with modernity (and all the positive connotations of historical progress that accrue to the term) all on one side and inscrutable backwardness all on the other. This results in ghettoized scholarship that is damaging to all.

The standard equation of modernity with the West needs to be problematized and opened up to comparative examination. The Institute hopes to galvanize work in this direction by encouraging cross-disciplinary collaborative research that advances a genuinely global analysis of modernity that is also empirically faithful to geographical and historical specificity. By bringing attention to less frequently studied aesthetic and social practices from non-Western and immigrant communities, the Institute hopes to correct accounts of modernity as primarily Western in origin and dynamics.