First Word: From the Director
Salah M. Hassan

With this academic year 2010-2011, the ICM enters its fourth year as part of Cornell’s intellectual life and as a space where new ideas and discourses about modernity from a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives have been and will continue to be discussed and critiqued. So far, we are proud to say, we have mounted three years of successful programming ranging across public lectures delivered by notable scholars from within and outside Cornell University, a “New Conversations” series built around works-in-progress, and two great annual conferences; we have also continued sup-

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Ibrahim El-Salahi, Enter It with Peace, 1976, pen and ink on paper, 11 1/4 by 7 inches. Courtesy of the artist, detail
port for a diverse body of graduate students as part of our Graduate Reading groups program. Each cohort of the graduate groups has organized around the issue of modernity and modernism from comparative perspectives, with themes and sub-themes that have proven to be enriching to a new generation of scholars across the humanities.

As we welcome the new academic year, I wish to bid farewell to our former Program Coordinator, Liz Tait, and to thank her for her dedicated service to the ICM. Liz's leadership, vision, and steadfast commitment to the ICM have ensured a smooth transition and the continued growth of our program. Her contributions have been invaluable, and her legacy will be remembered with great appreciation.

With the passage of a year since the untimely death of the renowned Sudanese poet and artist Ibrahim El-Salahi, we continue to honor his remarkable life and the memoirs he is writing. El-Salahi's prolific career is one of constant experimentation with different techniques, styles, and approaches. His diverse figures in the field of contemporary African art.

Ibrahim El-Salahi is truly one of the most impressive figures in the field of contemporary African art. He is an artist whose productivity has grown even more since his appointment as the ICM's artist-in-residence two years ago, several self-organized groups of Cornell graduate students met to reflect on El-Salahi's life and the volume of correspondence are due to be published in the coming months. While writing and editing, El-Salahi's prolific career is one of constant experimentation with different techniques, symbolic, languages, and visions. His diverse body of work is not bound within one style or one cultural context.

El-Salahi's powerful and innovative work challenges the early parameters of modern African visual art. His paintings reflect a life of struggle, migration, and resilience. In modern African visual art, El-Salahi's career has inspired generations of artists with his meditative approach to imagery. A major traveling exhibition of his career entitled Ibrahim El-Salahi: A Visionary Modernist is in planning for The Museum for African Art in New York in early 2023. The comprehensive trace El-Salahi's journey from Sudan, his studies at the Slade, his periods of travel and residency in the United States, Mexico, and Brazil, his self-imposed exile in the United Kingdom and Qatar, and, most recently, the United States.
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Lisa Baker, Program Coordinator

EVENTS SCHEDULE

ICM FALL 2010 LECTURE SERIES

TARIQ ALI
Acclaimed author, novelist, filmmaker, political activist

The Birth of Modern Europe and the Expulsion of Muslims and Jews from Spain
September 22, 2010, 4:45 - 6:15 pm
Kaufmann Auditorium, Goldwin Smith Hall

Panel Discussion and Film Screening:
Islam in Spain: The Final Solution
Directed by Tariq Ali, 40 min.
September 23, 2010, 5:15 - 7:00 pm
Herbert F. Johnson Art Museum, 6th Floor

TIMOTHY MURRAY
Director, Society for the Humanities
Professor, Comparative Literature and English, Cornell University

Imaging Sound in New Media Art:
Asia Acoustics, Distributed
October 14, 2010, 4:45 - 6:15 pm
Kaufmann Auditorium, Goldwin Smith Hall

DEPARTMENT OF ART FALL 2010 LECTURE SERIES

CAROLYN CHRISTOV-BAKARGIEV
Writer and Curator

Entanglement: Notes Towards dOCUMENTA (13)
October 15, 2010, 5:15
Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art

BERNI SEARLE
South African Artist

New Conversation Series
November 10, 2010, 5:00 pm
Carl Becker House

Recent Work
November 11, 2010, 5:15 pm
Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art

ICM SPRING 2011 LECTURE SERIES

PETER KATZENSTEIN
Walter S. Carpenter Jr. Professor of International Studies, Government, Cornell University

Civilizational Politics in World Politics
February 22, 2011, 4:45 - 6:15 pm
Kaufmann Auditorium, Goldwin Smith Hall

SEMINAR
February 23, 2011, 10:00 - 12:00 pm
Toboggan Lodge

AAMIR MUFTI
Associate Professor, Comparative Literature, UCLA

The Missing Homeland of Edward Said
March 8, 2011, 4:45 - 6:15 pm
Kaufmann Auditorium, Goldwin Smith Hall

SEMINAR
March 9, 2011, 10:00 - 12:00 pm
Toboggan Lodge

ICM 2011 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

SIGHTING TECHNOLOGY IN MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY LATIN AMERICAN ART
May 13-14, 2011
Location tba

Maria Fernández, Conference Organizer
Associate Professor, History of Art and Visual Studies, Cornell University

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

Society for the Humanities at Cornell University and Mellon Central New York Humanities Corridor present:

Global Aesthetics:
Theory and Practice in the Networked Age
October 15 - 16, 2010
A. D. White House
TARIQ ALI
Acclaimed author, novelist, filmmaker, political activist

The Birth of Modern Europe and the Expulsion of Muslims and Jews from Spain
September 22, 2010, 4:45 - 6:15 pm
Kaufmann Auditorium, Goldwin Smith Hall
Reception to follow at History of Art Gallery

The fall of the Kingdom of Granada in 1492 coincided with the expulsion of Jews from Catholic Spain, while the Muslims were expelled in 1526. With these ethnic cleansings and forced conversions in place, a single-identity Europe was created. Virtually everything witnessed in twentieth-century Europe: the secret police, inquisitions, burning of heretics, Jews, so-called “gypsies,” had all been experienced in late medieval Spain and Portugal. How does all this refract on contemporary Europe with large Muslim minorities numbering twenty-four million across the continent?

PANEL DISCUSSION AND FILM SCREENING:
Islam in Spain: The Final Solution
Directed by Tariq Ali, 40 min.
September 23, 2010, 5:15 - 7:00 pm
Herbert F. Johnson Art Museum, 6th Floor

Panelists:
Benedict Anderson, Aaron L. Binenkorb Professor Emeritus of International Studies, Government and Asian Studies, Cornell University
Martin Bernal, Professor Emeritus of Government, Cornell University
Simone Pinet, Associate Professor, Spanish and Medieval Studies
Cynthia Robinson, Associate Professor, History of Art and Visual Studies, Cornell University

Islam in Spain: The Final Solution examines the relationship between Spanish Christianity, Judaism and Islam in tenth- to fifteenth-century Spain. The writers Juan Goytisolo and Antonio Munoz Molina discuss the cultural impact on Spain and ask whether “European” culture can be said to have an Arabic root.

Tariq Ali is one of the important critical thinkers of our time. He is also a novelist and filmmaker, and a long-time political activist. He has written more than two dozen books on world history and politics, as well as novels (translated into over a dozen languages), as well as scripts for the stage and screen. Besides seven novels (translated into over a dozen languages), as well as a single-identity Europe was created. Virtually everything witnessed in twentieth-century Europe: the secret police, inquisitions, burning of heretics, Jews, so-called “gypsies,” had all been experienced in late medieval Spain and Portugal. How does all this refract on contemporary Europe with large Muslim minorities numbering twenty-four million across the continent?

TIMOTHY MURRAY
Director, Society for the Humanities
Professor, Comparative Literature and English, Cornell University

Imaging Sound in New Media Art: Asia Acoustics, Distributed
October 14, 2010, 4:45 - 6:15 pm
Kaufmann Auditorium, Goldwin Smith Hall

The lecture will propose a psycho-philosophical approach to international experiments in new media arts by reflecting on the contact zones of Asian sound art and their dialogue with European legacies of immateriality. An array of audiovisual examples will illustrate how the experimental importance of Asia Acoustics lies at the heart of any philosophical consideration (East or West) of current developments in imaging sound and its multimedia installation. Ranging from creative socio-cultural appropriations of “noise,” “the aesthetics of failure,” and “distributed aesthetics,” Asia Acoustics performs a shift away from the modernist remnants of humanist visions of subjectivity, cultural mysticism, and cinematic “projection” toward a rhizomatic model of the “folds” of intersubjective knowledge and cross-cultural archives. The deployment of the errancy of Asia Acoustics will be said to conjoin the artistic projects of Asia new media installations with the play of the electric data field.

CAROLYN CHRISTOV-BAKARGIEV
Writer and Curator

Entanglement: Notes Towards dOCUMENTA (13)
October 15, 2010, 5:15 pm
Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art

Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev is a writer and curator based in Rome, Turin, and New York City. She has written extensively on the 1960s Arte Povera movement and is interested in the relationships between historical avant-gardes and contemporary art. She is currently chief curator at the Castello di Rivoli Museum of Contemporary Art in Italy and has been named artistic director of dOCUMENTA 13, a premiment exhibition of modern and contemporary art. dOCUMENTA 13 will take place in Kassel, Germany during the summer of 2012. Previously she was an independent curator in Europe; senior curator at PS.1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City; and artistic director of the 2008 Sydney Biennale. At PS.1 she co-curated Greater New York, a collaboration with New York’s Museum of Modern Art that documented the emergence of a new generation of artists in the city.

Department of Art Fall 2010 Lecture Series
Cosponsored by the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, the Department of History of Art, and the Institute for Comparative Modernities

BERNI SEARLE
South African Artist

Recent Work
November 11, 2010, 5:15 pm
Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art

Berni Searle is a South African artist working in South Africa and internationally. His work explores ideas of identity, community, and resistance, with a focus on the politics of sport and its social implications. He has exhibited extensively in South Africa and internationally, and his work is held in numerous collections, including the Johannesburg Art Gallery, the University of the Witwatersrand, and the South African National Gallery.

Department of Art Fall 2010 Lecture Series
Cosponsored by the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, the Department of History of Art, and the Institute for Comparative Modernities
What is the significance, the status, of Palestine in the writings of Edward Said? This paper argues that the various threads of Said’s preoccupation with the question of Palestine do not constitute a "placeless" cosmopolitanism. It calls instead for a distinct form of habitation of exile. Said’s exilic form of consciousness does not imply a “placeless” cosmopolitanism as an exilic form of consciousness does not imply a “placeless” cosmopolitanism. He edited Critical Secularism, a special issue of the journal boundary 2, and has also co-edited Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation, and Postcolonial Perspectives (University of Minnesota Press, 1997). His work has appeared in such periodicals as Social Text, Critical Inquiry, Subaltern Studies, boundary 2, Journal of Palestine Studies, Theory and Event, and the Village Voice.

Maria Fernández received her Ph.D. in Art History from Columbia University in 1993. Her research interests include the history and theory of digital art, postcolonial studies, Latin American art and architecture and the intersections of these fields. She has published essays in multiple journals, including Art Journal, Third Text, npaрапародон, Architectural Design, Fuse and Mute. Her work appears in A Companion of Contemporary Art Since 1945, edited by Amelia Jones (Blackwell 2006)., and At a Distance: Precursors to Art and Activism on the Internet, edited by Annamarie Chandler and Norie Neumark (MIT Press, 2005). With Faith Wilding and Michelle Wright she edited the anthology Domain Errors: Cyberfeminist Practices (Autonomedia, 2002). Fernández has recently completed Cosmopolitanism in Mexican Visual Culture (University of Texas Press, forthcoming), and is working on a book on the British cybernetician Gordon Pask, focusing on his contributions to theater, art and architecture in investigating parallels among his theories, artificial life and materialist philosophy.

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Biodun Jeyifo is currently professor in the Departments of African and African American Studies and of Comparative Literature at Harvard University. He is author most recently of Inside and Outside the African Postcolony (Cambridge University Press, 2004), winner of the American Library Association's 2004 Outstanding Academic Title Award. His forthcoming book project, Generative Afropessimism: Nollywood and the Time-Space of Modernity and Global Hierarchies, explores the complex connections between literature, critical theory, and radical humanities scholarship.

Professor Jeyifo’s lecture was concerned with the newly emergent cinema in Nigeria, nicknamed Nollywood, which is currently the third largest film industry in the world, behind only the United States and India. What sets Nollywood apart from any other. Arguing that Nollywood represents a “polycentric cultural space, contrasted with both the hegemony and corporatism of any other. What sets Nollywood apart from other postcolonial theory has sought to recover both the active agency of and Eurocentric understanding of the origins and dynamics of historical significance of Nollywood was of a piece with the promise of digital modernity’s geopolitical and cultural dominance. This relationship has normally been understood in terms of a growing antagonism between a world-time of capitalist modernity and heterogeneous places and times not yet drawn into that world, and hence defined as non-modern. Abstracted from nature and emptied of experience, superimposed on the infinite plurality of local times and hence defined as non-modern. Abstracted from nature and emptied of experience, superimposed on the infinite plurality of local times and spaces.

Biodun Jeyifo
Professor, Department of African and African American Studies
Harvard University

March 30, 2009

Contemporary debates about alternative or multiple modernities can be situated among a number of new ways of understanding the relationship between historical time and global social hierarchies. This relationship has normally been understood in terms of a growing antagonism between a world-time of capitalist modernity and heterogeneous places and times not yet drawn into that world, and hence defined as non-modern. Abstracted from nature and emptied of cultural meaning, world time was elaborated into an overarching temporal ideology of history, and in the context of the colonial experience, superimposed on the infinite plurality of local times and places, distributing them into a hierarchy that legitimated capitalist modernity’s geopolitical and cultural dominance. Recent years have witnessed a virtual paradigm shift that has begun to unsettle and displace this predominantly unilinear and Eurocentric understanding of the origins and dynamics of historical well beyond the era of capitalist industrialization. Simultaneously, a major revival of world history studies has significantly revised our understanding of the “rise of the West” itself, relocating it in a wider interactive narrative of the birth of the modern world. In addition, postcolonial theory has sought to recover both the active agency of subaltern subjects at the height of European imperialism, and the “alternative” and “multiple modernities” which have subsequently come to hybridize the nature of the contemporary world.

Yet while all these approaches illuminate the play of difference, polarity, and inequality across the political multiplicity of modernity, arguably none has yet constituted that multiplicity itself as an explicit object of theory. We find dynamic theorizations of internal change over historical time and comparative theorizations of external difference across cultural space. What we do not find is a drawing together of these dynamic and comparative moments in order to theorize a specifically multilinear and interactive dimension of social and cultural change.

In May of 2009, the ICM sponsored a three-day multidisciplinary conference to examine various facets of this theme. Conceived as a workshop structured around a set of pre-circulated papers, the conference brought together a group of distinguished scholars from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. Our intention was to explore the points of integration and innovation for the historical sociology/world history/postcolonial literatures mentioned above, and to examine ways of rearticulating a range of issues that have become locked into a series of unhelpful binaries: internal/external, modern/traditional, West/non-West. The innovative format of the workshop made possible lively and critical exchanges, and we have plans to eventually publish the proceedings.

ICM ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2009 IN REVIEW

Conference PARTICIPANTS
Gurminder K. Bhambra teaches in the Department of Sociology at Warwick University. She is the author of Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and the Sociological Imagination (Palgrave, 2007), which won the 2008 British Sociological Association Philip Abrams Memorial Prize and, with Robbie Shilliam, co-editor of Silencing Human Rights: Critical Engagements with a Contexted Project (Palgrave, 2009).


Fouad Makki is Assistant Professor in the Department of Development Sociology at Cornell University and a member of the graduate field of Africana Studies. He has published essays on colonial nativism and anti-colonialism. In addition to his work on colonial inequality and the development framework, he is the author of several essays including, “The Empire of Capital and the Remaking of Center-Periphery Relations,” “Imperial Fantasies, Colonial Realities: Contesting Culture and Power in Italian Eritrea,” “The Aporias of Radical Nationalism,” and “Nationalism, State Formation, and the Public Sphere.”

Kamran Matin is Lecturer in International Relations at Sussex University. He is the author of several essays including, “The Ideological Alchemists of the Iranian Revolution: The International Historical Sociology of Ali Shariati’s ‘Revolutionary Islam’;” and “Uneven and Combined Development in World History: The International Relations of State-Formation in Premodern Iran.”


Naoki Sakai teaches in the Departments of Asian Studies and Comparative Literature, and is a member of the graduate field of History at Cornell University. He has published in a number of languages in the fields of comparative literature and intellectual history and has led the project of TRACES, a multilingual series in four languages whose editorial office is located at Cornell and of which he was the founding editor. Sakai serves on the editorial board of various international journals including, Cultural Critique, Post-colonial Studies, Tomkang Review, International Dictionary of Intellectual History, Modern Japanese Cultural History, ASPECTS, and Multitudes.


Elef Varikas is Professor of Political Theory and Gender Studies at the Université de Paris VIII. She has published on gender in political theory, the history of feminism, citizenship and the construction of otherness in modern universalistic systems, and the theoretical statuses of experience and subjectivity in social and political analysis. Her most recent books are Penser le sexe et le genre (2006); Les rébus du monde binaire du Paris 2007. Her current research includes a comparative study of postcolonial citizenship and a project on the rhetoric of modernity in the debates surrounding the Islamic headscarf in Europe.

Sunn Shelley Wong is Associate Professor of English and Asian American Studies at Cornell. She received her B.A. and M.A. degrees in English from Simon Fraser University, and her doctorate in Ethnic Studies from the University of California at Berkeley. She has published articles on twentieth-century American poetry, as well as Asian American and African American prose fiction. She is presently working on two book projects—one on the subject of race and time in relation to Asian American and African American literature entitled The Waiting Room; and the second, a collaborative project with Cornell colleagues Natalie Melas and Viranjini Munasinghe on the subject of race and comparison in an interdisciplinary frame.
More specifically, Sakai traced the cultivation of an image of Japanese identity that posits “cultural,” “traditional,” and “civilizational” superiority over other East Asian identities back to what he called a “post-colonial complex.”

Actively manipulated by nationalist projects in Japan today, this post-colonial complex sustains and perpetuates the disavowal of the collective colonial guilt. Sakai identified the controversy regarding “comfort women,” that is, the form of sexual slavery perpetrated by the Japanese army during the Second World War and the North Korean abductions of Japanese citizens during the seventies as the most conspicuous manifestations of this post-colonial complex. While the emphatic denial of the army’s active involvement in the construction of “comfort stations” is an unambiguous expression of the fear of confronting the past in its demythicized concreteness, the enthusiasm regarding North Korean official acknowledgement of the abductions reflects a nuanced structural necessity generated by the post-colonial complex: namely, the creation of opportunities that enable identification with the position of “the victim” (in this particular instance, “the abductee”) in order to affirm the otherwise problematic aspects of the images, all critics are set up as extremists or as people that do not understand the real danger of the reactions.

Mahmood’s lecture was a continuation of the work she began with her article, “Religious Reason and Secular Affect: An Incommeasurable Divide?” (Critical Inquiry 35, Summer 2009). The primary question addressed in both the article and the lecture is how to understand the discourse surrounding the publication of the Danish cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, published first in 2005 then widely reprinted in 2008 as a call for free speech. Her larger concern in this discourse is what currently constitutes religion and the modern religious subject, which affects how one defines both extremism and religious freedom. Notably little thought, Mahmood argued, has gone into considering what constitutes moral injury today and, how, in turn, to deal with the repercussions. The thread of discourse espousing incomprehension over the scope and depth of the reactions to the cartoons views these reactions as an incorrect reading practice, one that mistakenly reads power in images, when signs and symbols are in fact arbitrary. However, Mahmood pointed out, this reading comes out of a prior normative understanding of what religion should be, based on Protestant semiotic ideology. In contrast, the primary reaction of personal loss upon seeing or hearing about the images arises out of a differing assumptive modality of relation—what Mahmood termed schema—to conductive Muslims to Muhammad.

After her discussion of the lived experience of the relationship to Muhammad, Mahmood turned to a discussion of the legislation of free speech in Europe. Laws are created to maintain public order and are therefore grounded in the interests of the majority population. The laws also include a liberal secular normative understanding of the role of religion in contemporary life. The recourse to European laws on hate crimes also brings up debates about whether this can be understood as racism. Many critics say that it cannot be seen as such because, they argue, religion is both less material than race and, moreover, a choice, while skin color is not. Mahmood then asserted that this legal debate has been framed as a threat to both the essence of European civilization as well as the security of the state, because the discourse has situated Islamic terrorism and open debate as the only available poles. By ignoring the performative aspects of the images, all critics are set up as extremists or as people that do not understand the real danger of the reactions. Mahmood closed her lecture by maintaining that the mechanisms of the law are not neutral. Her call for the return to the ethical tradition, which she situated within movements for social mobilization to change normative notions of the subject, was heavily discussed in the question and answer section. It is in opposition to the immediate turn on both sides of the debate to the state and juridical systems to implement each position. Mahmood argued that in this debate particularly, there are performative structural aspects of the presuppositions of law that transform subjects in their engagements with these mechanisms.

Eric Cheyfitz is Ernest I. White Professor of American Studies and Humane Letters in the Department of English at Cornell. He is also the director of Cornell’s American Indian Program. Cheyfitz teaches in areas of American literature, American Indian literature, and also in Federal Indian law. He has published numerous essays and articles on American Indian issues and has done work directly on the Navajo reservation. He also operates largely outside of the realm of academics and directly engages in important political struggles around him, such as his testimony for fired University of Colorado professor Ward Churchill and testimonies in court on behalf of indigenous peoples.

Last week, Professor Cheyfitz argued that American Studies, as a discipline, might learn from traditional indigenous knowledge. Specifically he argued that historic Navajo gender norms might help
Cheyfitz began his talk by questioning modernity and what he considers its “dialectical correlate,” post-modernity—both of which he believes exercise “hegemony” in American studies and the humanities. He puts the concept of modernity as it relates to indigenous peoples at the center of his talk. For one thing, Cheyfitz argued modernity has associated itself with official record keeping, writing history (as fact), and distancing itself from the “pre-modern,” that is, myths and the process of myth making. Put differently, modernity separates fact from fiction and history from myth.

Using an essay by Arnold Krupat, Cheyfitz showed that this formulation is significantly different from that of many indigenous epistemologies, epistemologies that separate history and myth in temporal rather than in factual ways. This means that some indigenous peoples see mythology as describing accurately events from long ago, whereas history describes events from the more recent past. This is different from the modernization epistemology which considers history fact and mythology fiction. This point is important because Cheyfitz used sections from the Navajo creation story to show how identity formation through kinship terms continues to resist colonialism. Understanding how cosmology is more than fiction for Navajo people is important in making this point.

Cheyfitz then used Paul Zolbrod’s compilation of Navajo origin narratives, Diné bahane’, to show how different historic Navajo understandings of gender roles is from that of the colonizing West. It’s here that Cheyfitz made his central point about the Navajo stories as they relate to identity. He argued that the Navajo have historically believed in multiple genders (different from the binary in Western cultures) and that Navajo people put women at the center of their social organization through kinship (k’e) relations.

Maintaining balance (hózhó), Cheyfitz demonstrated, was exercised socially by respecting kinship. “Gender balance” is maintained through the “performance of kinship.” This all contributes to an identity formation for Navajo people that is in many ways antithetical to the ontology of the West and, therefore, resists continued colonization. Cheyfitz concluded his talk by examining a “performance” of this difference found in recent debates on the Navajo reservation regarding gay marriage. Cheyfitz illustrated how arguments from this debate showed clearly that historical Navajo concepts about gender and identity are fundamentally different from Western understandings of these terms. As Cheyfitz summarized, this indigenous philosophy demonstrates that “thinking in terms of ‘modernity,’” which seeks to replace Navajo gender norms with patriarchy, “may be entirely regressive.”

Andrew Curley
Department of Development Sociology, Graduate Student

The Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish, born 1941, died on August 9, 2008. He was and is one of the most important contemporary Arab poets. His poems are known throughout the Arab world and internationally. Darwish published more than thirty poetry and prose collections, which have been translated into thirty-five languages. He received several awards for his work, including the 1969 Lotus Prize of the Union of Afro-Asian Writers, the Lenin Peace Prize in 1983, France’s Knighthood of Arts and Belles Lettres in 1997, the Lannan Prize for Cultural Freedom in 2001, and the Prince Claus Fund Prize in 2004.

In September 2009, with the passage of a year, the Institute for Comparative Modernities remembered Mahmoud Darwish’s work and its significance in an informal setting at the A.D. White House.

To begin the evening the Cornell Middle Eastern and Mediterranean Ensemble performed pieces from Marcel Khalife’s collection of musical settings of Mahmoud Darwish’s work. Iraqi poet, novelist, and translator Sinan Antoon delivered a keynote address on Mahmoud Darwish’s life and work. To conclude the occasion, Professor Salah Hassan, Professor Natalie Melas, Professor Deborah Starr, Reem Fadda, and Ramez Elias delivered readings of Darwish’s poetry both in English and Arabic.
Central to this framework is the forensic analysis of the "judicial decision text," the principal device of the corrupt judge and in itself the main crime scene, abounding in evidence.

The alternative framework proposed in the talk critiqued anti-corruption activities by the World Bank, the United Nations, Transparency International, Mo Ibrahim Foundation, and Civil Society Organizations.

Dr. Khalil also discussed the comparative constructions, in the U.S. and in the Muslim Arab world, of the "corrupt judge" as possessed by the devil and as captured by evil.

**IBRAHIM M. EL-SALAHII**

**Project Memoir**

**October 19, 2009**

El-Salahi reflected on the importance of his forthcoming memoir based on his life's collection of personal diaries, which he began at the age of twenty one. El-Salahi shared in detail his experiences of living in Sudan and working for the Ministry of Culture and Information. It was at that time that he was whisked away from his office and placed in prison for reasons he did not understand. Of his time in prison, he said, "it changes you." On a lighter note El-Salahi discussed his education and career as an educator at The School of Fine and Applied Art in Sudan. El-Salahi brought a lot of humor to the evening while sharing stories of his travels that took him outside of Sudan. The evening ended with a brief presentation of El-Salahi’s artwork that was inspired by memories of his past.

**MARTIN BERNAL**

**Before Black Athena: an Intellectual Itinerary**

**February 9, 2010**

In the conversation held at the Toboggan Lodge, Martin Bernal reflected upon the winding personal and academic path that led him to writing his immensely influential work, *Black Athena*. Bernal is in the midst of writing his memoir, currently titled, "Geography of a Life." In the memoir, as in the ICM conversation, he is attempting to show the many influences that shaped his work as a public intellectual. For the ICM, he began with a discussion of his parents. Saying that the essence of Black Athena is hybridity, he pointed out the hybrid nature of his background. Part of the British upper class, he was still cut out of the influence of his mother, Bernal identified his general line of symmetry as an "under-doctor." Bernal pointed to 1938 as the crucial year of his life. In the midst of the optimism of communism's reformation, a more moderate path seemed possible, but this belief fell apart with the Suez crisis of 1956. Bernal concluded that although he was uncomfortable with the repercussions of his work on the 'Jewish race,' he realized that he found deconstructing Eurocentrism a "sweat delight."

**USHARI KHALIL**

**Devil in the Judiciary: Corruption in the Hybrid Islamic-Common Law Courts of Sudan**

**October 6, 2009**

Dr. Khalil presented an alternative framework for the definition, location, and understanding of judicial corruption in the hybrid Islamic-Common Law courts of Sudan and of Arab countries.

During Fall 2009, ICM began a new series of public events called New Conversations. The goal of the New Conversations series is to invite a scholar from the community to present her or his current work-in-progress in an informal gathering for reflection and discussion among interested individuals. The series takes place at the Toboggan Lodge. On October 6, 2009, Ushari Khalil, PhD in Sociolinguistics from Georgetown University and a visiting scholar at Africana Studies and Research Center at Cornell University, started off the new series, followed by ICM’s Artist-in-Residence Ibrahim Mohammed El-Salahi on October 19, 2009. The series continued in spring 2010 with Martin Bernal, Professor Emeritus of Government at Cornell, on February 9, 2010, and Ruth Mas, Assistant Professor of Critical Theory and Contemporary Islam at the University of Colorado-Boulder, on March 4, 2010.

**RUTH MAS**

**Islam in Secular Time**

**March 4, 2010**

Ruth Mas is Assistant Professor of Critical Theory and Contemporary Islam in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Colorado-Boulder. She also is a 2009-10 Fellow at the Society for the Humanities. Her lecture explored the articulation of Islamic discourse in contemporary France and is part of a larger project entitled “Margins of Tawhid: Liberalism and the Discourse of Plurality in Contemporary Islamic Thought.” Mas focused on the intellectual work of prominent Franco-Maghrebi scholars of Islam in order to consider the constitutive power of secular time, which she defines as a particular representation of history that naturalizes the modern imperial project. Mas discussed how public intellectuals, such as Mahdi Chouki, Dalil Boubakeur, and Mezri Haddad position "secular Islam" as a field of practice in the French public sphere to counter Eurocentric ideas that Islam is "out of time." She located his discussion of the discursive and governing power of "secular" by considering recent disputes over the extent to which religiosity is permitted to operate as an organizing principle of community in a state that envisions itself as a secular society. In post-September 11 France, public debates have focused on the nation’s colonial history and controversies over whether “religious symbols” (really meaning the hijab in the French public imaginary) are undermining the principles of French secularism. She powerfully argued that the accommodation of Islam to secular time within the colonial and postcolonial nation-state of France necessarily produces “secular Islam.” Her work therefore asks fundamental questions about how this relates to the historical sedimentation of power. Does it resist and/or give force to the authority of French governance?

Prita Meier
Assistant Professor, Department of Art and Art History
Wayne State University
modernism helped invent and produce a fixed colonial subject, and ultimately participated in the violent alienation of colonial governmentality. Ultimately, what was urgent for the writer of late colonization was this status as still colonized, a status that necessitated the construction of nationalist narratives. Drawing on Frantz Fanon’s writings on decolonization, Gikandi outlined the importance of a narrative as a corrective to alienating colonial discourse. Against the distortions of colonial modernism, Fanon’s mimetic mandate anticipated, through these realist narratives, the colonized’s epiphanic coming into consciousness as autonomous subjects. Finally confronted with representations that, in reproducing the real, would give form to the violence and oppression of colonization, this new subject would be empowered to claim and seize independence. However, Gikandi points out that both such realism and its counterpart in modernism fell short of the decolonizing imperative. Modernism was dangerously burdened with the episteme of colonial dominance and violence, and the “blockage” of the colonial library offered no occasion for the knowing and rewriting of modernist epistemologies. Meanwhile, realism was also problematic for the very reason that it was indispensable: its excesses of violence, oppression, and alienation precluded a unifying affective relation to the lived space that would become the nation. Drawing on Dipesh Chakrabarty’s challenge to Indian nationalism, he asks: how, among the objectively represented failures of colonial reality, can the colonial narrative make the nation lovable? Decolonization was made impotent without that necessary desiring aspect to the nationalist imaginary. Here, interrupting the modernist–realist debate, enters romance. Rabindranath Tagore’s strategy in India would divide the writer’s work between the love-inspiring poet and the prose writer who focuses on reality. Gikandi’s alternative discovery, in Africa, is that of the romanité. As with Thomas Thwaits’s Zule novel Chaka, romance was inserted into historical narratives of resistance. The racIALIZED subject—needed for an imaginary of desire was considered so crucial. Against the “phantom objectivity” of a realism that could not reproduce the refusal of the refusal of the racialized body, the colonized, the aesthetic strategy of romanticism transcended the saturated colonial realm. It, as Gikandi notes, “escapes the reality while still containing it.” Ultimately, the function of the romance, Gikandi observed, was obviated by increased access to educational systems and libraries which equipped such writers as Chinua Achebe to exploit the modernist stylistic apparatus for their postcolonial narratives. Romance, unable to provide a diachronic representation of colonial space as modernism can, was extripated from the decolonizing imagination. Romance’s synchronic identity ultimately corresponded too well to colonial governmentality, and sacrificed too much of the mobilizing power of the real. Taking account of its importance in that decolonizing moment, however, helps to illuminate what ultimately became the dominant postcolonial style. This “half-modernism,” as Gikandi called it, exploits modernist temporalities while holding on to the imperative of the reality effect, a half-named representational mode for the half-reality of colonial hybridity.

Kavita Asiana Singh
Department of Comparative Literature, Graduate Student

**COLIN DAYAN**
Extraneous Persons, Stigmatized Properties
April 13, 2010

Colin Dayan, Robert Penn Warren Professor in the Humanities at Vanderbilt University, articulated in her lecture “Extraneous Persons, Stigmatized Properties” a perspective on legal reality beyond that of the lodge of lawyers, giving life to the “dry bones of law.” The choice of words is not accidental, as Dayan identified law as a macabre domain that hosts the transmutation of ghosts, spirits, and bodies, a domain where legal fictions haunt the living and reduce them to legal corpses. At the core of Dayan’s presentation was the argument that law, the putative field of reasonableness par excellence, in fact lives off repeated irrational appropriations that sometimes border on the superstitious or absurd. A vacant house, for example, as in Stanislawsky’s Aadye, can be legally sanctioned as “still occupied” by the spirits that haunt it. If the reconfiguration of the “ruins of an irrational past” as acceptable legal realities were restricted to such mildly amusing cases, there would be no cause for concern. However, Dayan maintained, the traffic between the real and the fantastic in the field of law also underlies the making and unmaking of legal persons whereby law becomes “unjust to the dead and dangerous to the living.” Today law constitutes a “zombie code” insidiously as it always holds open a shifting place of civil death, which reduces those people captured in it to legal corpses, stripped of all rights, abjectified, and projected beyond the pale of reason and reason. The bodies that populate the shadowy spaces of Guantanamo and the supermax cells bear the mark of a legal form of exorcism, a legal burlesque of disposal without due process, which expunges personhood and leaves behind the empty shell of a human body. The uncanny parallels between legal depersonalization and “spirit thievery,” and between the extralegal use of law and “witchcraft,” while relocating law in the domain of the fantastic and irrational, do not erode its material effectuality. The ghosts of law may lack corporeality and prove impenetrable to common sense, yet they are tangible in their violent effects. Jeremy Bentham, for instance, passionately denounced the English common law as an obscure and ambiguous cobweb of legal fictions, whose concrete effects nonetheless constantly haunted him; the English common law, Dayan remarked, was “world gone spectral.” Similarly, the patent absurdity of such categories as “enemy combatants,” “detainees,” and “enhanced interrogation techniques” cannot dissolve the connection between their constitutional status and the literal hold they have on the bodies of suspected terrorists.” Indefinite detention is replaced by “prolonged detention,” and terrorism suspects continue to be captured and taken outside international law. Perhaps more suggestively, Dayan interpreted the suppression of the recent hunger strikes in Guantanamo as an act of denying the captives the option of dying as persons with the power to decide over their lives. The prisoners were therefore disallowed to “choose death over a murderous fate,” and forced (literally through “force feeding”) to maintain their existence as animated corpses, as zombies. In a similar vein, Dayan maintained that the appellation “dangerous” attached to certain prisoners in supermax prisons marked the ritual space where they are stripped of liberty, extinguished as life, and undone as persons.

As for the purpose of legal rituals of exclusion and ostracism, Dayan singled out social control. While abjectified bodies are placed beyond the bounds of civil society, confined in shadowy spaces, and isolated from the rest of the “citizens,” the force of law that performs this depersonalization and civil death hovers above the heads of the citizens, reminding them of the fate that awaits them if they fall off the edge of the political map. The absence of depersonalized bodies is matched by the ever-presence of the force that produces them. Some people are reduced to legal corpses and expelled so that the rest of us can live in “reasonable consensus,” a consensus partly sustained by the legal spectacles of expulsion that shape and discipline our habits of thought.

Dayan concluded her lecture by emphasizing the racialized genealogy of the legal reconfigurations of the archive. The racialized body remains the constant target of repeated visits of the force of law, reappearing in the figure of the slave, the prisoner, the illegal immigrant, and the terrorist. It is the bodies stigmatized by race that constitute the substance of legal ghost stories, bodies that legal fictions of depersonalization live off, bodies whose personhood is exercised. Far from localizing the force of law, the phenomenological marks of racial distinction render depersonalization all the more spectral. The stigmatized body becomes the vortex around which the ghastly threat of civil death swirls.

Oumar Ulas Ince
Department of Government, Graduate Student

**Who Gets To Be Wanted?**
Seminar with Colin Dayan
April 14, 2010

This seminar, regrettably, had to be cancelled.
CORNELL PRISON EDUCATION PROGRAM

Two of the ICM’s founding members, Fouad Makki and Barry Maxwell, find scope for their activist sides in their involvement as board members on the Cornell Prison Education Program.

The Cornell Prison Education Program was established to provide college courses to inmates at a maximum and medium security prison in upstate New York, and to engage Cornell faculty, staff, and students with the vital issue of the country’s burgeoning incarcerated population. Impressing more than two million people, both the highest absolute number and the highest rate per 100,000 residents (762) of any nation in world history, and with another five million people under the supervision of probation and parole agencies, the U.S. carceral regime crisis outs for humane change. In the mid-1990s when an act of Congress and subsequent state legislation caused the collapse of taxpayer-funded college programs in most state prisons—a move undertaken despite ample evidence that education reduces recidivism by more than 60%—a few faculty members, led by Professor Pete Werhbee (English), undertook a program to offer a handful of classes on a volunteer basis in Auburn Correctional Facility. This program, known as Prison Education Program, has grown significantly. In 2009, with a two-year seed grant from the Sunshine Lady Foundation and additional support from the Provost’s office, Cornell has now greatly expanded the program, offering twelve courses each semester. The classes are taught by volunteer faculty, and by graduate students who receive a small stipend. The classes are also supported by an exceptional group of thirty undergraduate tutors/teaching assistants. This year, for the first time, the Program will offer corrections staff a course called “American Legal Systems,” as part of an initiative to broaden their access to higher education and exposure to the curriculum rigorously mindful of our own tendencies to prioritize practice. T o name a crisis invokes a state of normalcy crisis, underwritten by typically under-scru-
of epistemological change. Experience, and alteration of these axes over time constitutes evidence.

To explore these questions, we will begin with classic readings in liberalism (Locke) and move to critiques that historicize liberal thought in the context of empire (Arendt, Melhem). From there, we will consider the implications of indigenous proposals that have been variously addressed by liberal thinkers (Kymlicka, Taylor). We will examine indigenous responses to liberalism (Turner) and alternatives to liberal conceptions (such as sovereignty (Alfred, Bratton, Brison)). We will also examine how indigenous citizenship and multiculturalism have been imagined in different states and historical moments (Povinelli, Hall, Yashar).

Similarly, we approach the study of social movements with questions of collective rights, citizenship, and the challenges inherent in new forms of political action (Mohanty). However, we also wish to consider how indigenous and social movement critiques of liberalism are not only linked to questions of identity and recognition, but also how they are rooted in issues of ecological and local knowledge(s). How do claims to local and indigenous forms of knowledge unsettle liberalism’s universalizing project? What kinds of knowledge resist generalization? We will try to correlate the consequences of such resistance for social movements! We will read recent works that address these questions, both theoretically and with ethnographic case studies (Behar and the imaging of the “other”; Ophir, the bright line between indigenous groups and colonialism and demonstrate how liberal discourses are being reconstituted in different ways in this era of climate change.

The second goal is to focus on some of the ways in which indigenous peoples are responding to environmental change and, more specifically, environmental governance. The ways in which indigenous groups respond to states and state-building have bearing on the question of indigeneous discourses to liberalism initiated in our first year’s reading group.

Our third goal is to account for some of the ways in which indigenous peoples are responding to environmental change and, more specifically, environmental governance. The ways in which indigenous groups respond to states and state-building have bearing on the question of indigenous responses to liberalism initiated in our first year’s reading group.

Our fourth goal is to bring the following three insights into discourses on development and its discourses. The colonial en-counter and subjugation of indigenous peoples has been re-imagined and proved much more efficient through “development” projects. Development is how capitalism and colonial processes of subjugation and exploitation originally began under the rhetoric of liberalism and is how they largely continue today.

As is shown in this proposal, extending our understanding of indigenous responses to liberalism must address the new ways and the new forms in which liberalism and indigenousness continue to encounter one another. Through examination of these four topic areas, we will show how indigenousness and colonialism are mutually constituting but at the same time in opposition to one another.


Our third goal is to stress the shifting nature of identity formation in these areas. Through strategic deployment of identity or “strategic essentialism” indigenous peoples have created new tools for addressing contextual colonialism.

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The impetus of this reading group is a desire to find new categories for labeling which is distinctive about modernity and to gauge the conditions of the possibility of the modern beyond inherently homogeneous definitions predicated on specific political and economic changes. In keeping with the Kantian analysis, we hope to identify the characteristic features of modernity as shifts from the colonial through the postcolonial periods in South and Southeast Asia through the changing human perceptions of space and time. Invoking diverse disciplinary perspectives, we will explore the manifestation of modernity in an array of “texts,” from the historiographic to the literary, from the texts of visual culture to the very spaces we inhabit. We will employ various methodologies across our respective disciplines to examine how chronology, space, and time are key sites for the production of multiple expressions of modernity.

The following are the three principal areas that we wish to investigate: Landscapes, Historical Narratives, and Beliefs Systems.

Landscapes

A particular focus of our group is the production of space, both symbolic and physical, and its connection to the mapping of geographies and histories. Our focus on space implies that the space of modernity is not limited to simply the rural and urban landscapes that have accrued shifting meanings through time. Rather, we recognize the importance of imagining space and time in the analysis of our “texts,” whether we read topographies as texts or historiographical writings as spatial structures. In regard to physical landscapes, we plan to look at how their embedded meanings have been reimagined as their topographies have been shaped by economic, social, and political processes during key moments of modernization.

Historical Narratives

Exploring the conceptual features of modernity involves an incursion into the intellectual sphere, where the mind imposes order—however uneven and fragmented—on the flux of the social and material world. The hope of identifying specifically modern aspects of a new human experience in the world with respect to the perception of time and space relies on our gaining access to the privileged confines of mental life. We plan to pursue these elemental changes, the shifting scales of space and time perception, in diverse narrative forms, such as literary, historiographical, and even pedagogical texts. Such texts are plotted against the spatial and temporal axes of an author’s sphere of experience, and alteration of these axes over time constitutes evidence of epistemological change.

Belief Systems

From the colonial encounter to the era of nationalism and internal col-
subjective constitution with respect to affect, sense and life via—a via the political realm. In shifting our focus from the problem of the nation to that of the state, we are also prompted to ask how indeed to approach the critical or symptomatic value of culture within this framework.

Latin America and the Utopian Imaginary
The foundational role of Spanish and Portuguese imperialism in the conception of European modernization of Latin America, the historical function of Latin America in its imaginary. Conversely, we are also interested in the constitution of community in neoliberal and networked societies, as well as in the different and various kinds of political forms that it assumes. We seek to interrogate the political horizons and notions of community to which such projects give rise as well as the globalizing legal regime through which they function. Such new political projects thus also force us to ask both if and how to address such experiences through the framework of national or regional particularity and thus to question the inmanence of Latin America to the articulation of late capitalism.

WHO MAKES MODERNITY? UNDERSTANDING AGENCY IN THE FORMATION OF THE MODERN

Group Members:
Christopher Ahn, Department of Asian Studies
Akiko Ishii, Department of History
Suman Seth, Assistant Professor, Department of Science and Technology Studies

We approach modernity through examining authorities’ and people’s desires and demands for making society intelligible. Such phenomena appeared as the categorization of people and material at home and abroad—an experience common to East and Southeast Asian and American societies as each attempted to re-organize their domestic social order, as well as the political, colonial, and cold war frameworks of thought through which they could imagine this order. In investigating such transnational attempts at constructing modernity, we raise a simple question: who makes modernity? This inquiry is indeed not new. Earlier studies have raised the question, stressing the roles of the West, elites, and states in making modernity. By revisiting this theme, we hope to go beyond this standard formula by emphasizing a broader set of actors—everyday people who create popular discourses of modernity. Each member of the group is looking at local actors and conditions that have been undertheorized in some way, especially in analyses of modernity, which often focus more generally on distinctions between the “West” and the “Rest.” Our focus is not on diffusion or inheritance of a singular style. Rather, we investigate the simultaneous materialization of modernity in multiple locations and the way in which this modernity spread and took hold through the agency of local actors. That is, local manifestations of what it means to be modern formed the basis of a shared experience of modernity in Western, as well as in Asian societies.

If our first theme is a critique of the West-to-East diffusion model, our second is a reassessment of an elite-led, top-to-bottom diffusion model. While earlier studies have emphasized the role played by elites and states—with emphasis on education, propaganda, and censorship—we hope to complicate this understanding by examining more diverse forms, cultural, political truth-making processes through which not only authorities but also people collaboratively and inseparably sought to make society visible, orderly, administrable, and controllable. The group’s members, thus, look into how elites, experts, engineers, occults, and ordinary people in multiple locations have visualized and materialized varieties of modernity.

While inquiring into “who makes modernity” however, we are not ascribing to confirm the traditional binaries of West/East and state/civil society. Rather, our interest has more to do with whether the inclusion of “new” sets of actors and conditions will have important consequences on how we theorize the formation of modernity. How have we recognized or erased certain actors who participate in the construction of modernity? In a sense, our question concerning modernity is from the outset methodological. Our expertise with various kinds of primary materials in our respective dissertation research projects in a variety of fields—from government documents, census reports, technical reports, public health statistics, to investigative reports of rumors, as well as local newspapers, cartoons, fictions, theater, street performance, and people’s letters—will be extremely useful in providing reference points while discussing our readings, and in revealing various specific experiences of modernity and its remarkable simultaneity.

Aiming “who makes modernity” opens up an important new endeavor in the study of modernity. By suggesting an on-going and conflictual process that includes—and, perhaps sometimes is even driven by—non-state actors, including ordinary people, we are hoping to explore another dimension of modernity that may shed light on the popular formation of modernity, attempts that go beyond the existing, dominant understanding of what it means to be modern.

GROUP 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 different disciplines will not be accepted. We imagine that most groups will comprise six to eight members (a minimum of six members is required to be eligible for the subvention). This program, which will be announced annually, will provide a subvention of $3,000 for books and copying, and a comfortable and even communal meeting space at the ICM (housed in the Toboggan Lodge). We expect the sustained collaboration to culminate with a public presentation (oral or written) at the end of the award year. The subvention would be for one year, but renewal may be possible under certain circumstances. It is likely that academic year 2011-12 will see three awards.

Proposal submission process:
• 500-word statement of intent.
• Bibliography.
• List of the names, departmental affiliations, email addresses of the proposed group members, along with the curriculum vitae of each participant.

Deadline: March 15, 2011
Notifications will be sent out the week of April 11, 2011. Proposals can be emailed to Lisa Baker, ICM Program Coordinator (lkb52@cornell.edu)

Program Coordinator
Lisa Baker is the new Program Coordinator for the Institute for Comparative Modernities. She brings to the position a varied background in teaching, library administration, program management and Slavic Languages and Literatures. She has a Master’s degree in Russian Literature and in Library Science, and a Certificate in Russian Translation.

Her previous positions included Program Manager of the Open World Program in Moscow, where she planned and administered educational exchanges for Russian professionals, and Assistant Director for Public Services at the University of Houston — Downtown Library.

http://www.icm.arts.cornell.edu
lkb52@cornell.edu
Recent Publications by ICM Members

Iftikhar Dadi, Member of the ICM Board of Directors

Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, Spring 2010).

Informated by postcolonial theory and globalization studies, this book traces the emergence of modernism by selected artists associated with Pakistan over the course of the twentieth century. It traces one influential genealogical trajectory—the emergence of artistic subjectivity—framed by nationalism, modernism, cosmopolitanism, and "tradition." To address quandaries of self and society, artists drew selectively from broader Persianate and Islamicate cultural legacies, contributing to the development of transnational modernism in the postcolonial era. More broadly, this study offers a new way of writing histories of nonwestern modern art by situating modernism as transnational, rather than located primarily within a national art history.


"Necratization and Pakistani Popular Culture since 1948," in South Asian Cultures of the Bomb: Atomic Publics and the State in India and Karachi's Public Sphere, in Comparative Literature 109, no. 3.

Salah Hassan, Executive Director of the ICM


The ongoing conflict in the western Sudanese region of Darfur has received unprecedented attention from the international media and human rights organizations, and it has captured the attention of millions of people around the world. Those seeking to learn about the conflict, as well as those who have reported on it, often rely on information produced by the various organizations that are addressing the humanitarian crises spawned by the conflict. In turn, most coverage of the Darfur crisis provides only a cursory understanding of the historical, economic, political, sociological, and environmental factors that contribute to the conflict. Moreover, the perspectives of the people of Darfur and the Sudan have not been adequately heard. As a result, Sudanese civil society's active engagement in resolving the country's problems goes unrecognized.

As comparative literature researches itself into today's day-to-day, it is essential for students and teachers to look deeply into the discipline's history and its present possibilities. The Princeton Sourcebook in Comparative Literature is a wide-ranging anthology of classics and important recent statements on the mission and methods of comparative literary studies. This pioneering collection brings together thirty-two pieces from foundational statements by Herder, Madame de Stael, and Nietzsche to work by a range of the most influential comparatists writing today, including Lawrence Venuti, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and Franco Moretti. Gathered here are manifestos and counterarguments, essays in definition, and debates on method by scholars and critics from the United States, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, giving a unique overview of comparative study in the words of some of its most important practitioners. With selections extending from the beginning of comparative study through the years of intensive theoretical inquiry and on to today's hotly debating discussions of the world's literatures, The Princeton Sourcebook in Comparative Literature helps readers navigate a rapidly evolving discipline in a dramatically changing world.

Dreamland, Real Land: Créolité and Its Diasporas in Aftermath: Exile, Migration and Diaspora (Johannes Blobel and Peter Park, eds. (Rutgers University Press, 2008) 103-133.


Natalie Melas, Member of the ICM Board of Directors


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The intersection between history and anthropology is more varied now than it has ever been—a look at the shelves of bookstores and libraries proves this. Historians have increasingly looked to the methodologies of anthropologists to explain inequalities of power, problems of voicelessness, and conceptions of social change from an inside perspective. Ethnographers have increasingly relied on longitudinal visions of their subjects, inquiries framed by the lens of history rather than purely structuralist, culturalist, or functionalist visions of behavior. The contributors have dealt with the problems and possibilities of the blending of these boundaries in different and exciting ways. They provide further fodder for a cross-disciplinary experiment that is already well under way, describing peoples and their cultures in a world where boundaries are everywhere but where we all are alarmingly attuned to the cataloguing and marking of national, ethnic, racial, and religious differences.

Naoki Sakai, ICM Advisory Board Member


Timothy Mitchell, ICM Advisory Board Member


Susan Buck-Morss, ICM Advisory Board Member


In this path-breaking work, Susan Buck-Morss draws new connections between history, inequality, social conflict, and human emancipation. Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History offers a fundamental reevaluation of Hegel’s History of Philosophy’s slave dialectic and points to a way forward to free critical theoretical practice from the prison-house of its own debates. Historicizing the thought of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and the actions taken in the Haitian Revolution, Buck-Morss examines the startling connections between the two and challenges us to

Salah M. Hassan served as guest editor for the special issue of SAQ: South Atlantic Quarterly (Summer 2010), vol. 109, no. 3. SAQ is a leading scholarly journal in the areas of critical thought, public culture, and emergent social and political issues. The issue, which focused on "African Modernism," featured commissioned essays by a number of innovative scholars in the field of African and African diaspora art history and visual culture. The essays covered a diverse array of critical issues related to the concept of African modernism, with specific case studies of artistic and intellectual movements from a broad range of geographic areas including Egypt, Sudan, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa, among others. Contributors include Iftikhar Dadi, Okwui Enwezor, Elizabeth Harney, Salah Hassan, Chika Okeke-Agulu, Nada Shahbout, and Avisan Shalemi. The issue also featured a commissioned visual essay by South African conceptualist Berni Searle featuring a series of her works on new African diasporas and migrations.

Vranjini Munasinghe, Member of the ICM Board of Directors


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widens the boundaries of our historical imagination. He finds that it is in the discontinuities of historical flow, the edges of human experience, and the unexpected linkages between cultures that the possibility to transcend limits is discovered. It is these flashes of clarity that open the potential for understanding in spite of cultural differences. What Buck-Morss proposes amounts to a “new humanism,” one that goes beyond the usual ideological implications of such a phrase to embrace a radical neutrality that insists on the permeability of the space between opposing sides as it reaches for a common humanity.

Brett de Bary, ICM Advisory Board Member


In the world of English-language academic publishing, the future of the university has increasingly attracted the attention of critical theorists in the humanities. Yet these provocative works have restricted their focus to the North American university, as if oblivious to how powerful interests of global capital have converged on the restructuring of higher education. Comparative analysis of globalization and the university has been left to educational policy experts. This volume breaks new ground in making university research on the restructuring of higher education. Comparative analysis of modernity and its global scope. A broad range of scholarship over the last few decades has contested and complicated the standard equation of modernity with the West. Benedict Anderson considers the complex intellectual interactions of these young Filipinos with the new “science” of anthropology in Germany and Austro-Hungary, and with post-Communard experimentalists in Paris, against a background of militant anarchism in Spain, France, Italy, and the Americas, José Martí’s armed uprising in Cuba, and anti-imperialist protests in China and Japan. In doing so, he depicts the dense intertwining of anarchist internationalism and radical anti-colonialism.

ICM’s INTELLECTUAL VISION AND OBJECTIVES

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 on one side and inscrutable backwardness all on the other. This re-organization of labor dissolving distinctions between the “mental” and “manual.”

Benedict Anderson, ICM Advisory Board Member


In this sparkling new work, Benedict Anderson provides a radical recasting of themes from *Imagined Communities*, his classic book on nationalism, through an exploration of fin-de-siècle politics and culture that spans the Caribbean, Imperial Europe, and the South China Sea.

A jewelled pomegranate packed with nitroglycerine is primed to blow away Manila’s nineteenth-century colonial elite at the climax of *El Fílibusterismo*, whose author, the great political novelist José Rizal, was executed in 1896 by the Spanish authorities in the Philippines at the age of 35. Anderson explores the impact of avant-garde European literature and politics on Rizal and his contemporary, the pioneering folklorist Isabelo de los Reyes, who was imprisoned in Manila after the violent uprisings of 1896 and later incarcerated, together with Catalan anarchists, in the prison fortress of Montjuich in Barcelona. On his return to the Philippines, by now under American occupation, Isabelo formed the first militant trade unions under the influence of Malatesta and Bakunin.

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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.