



Post-Laicity and Beyond

*XXth Conference of the
Academy of Latinity*

October 25–27, 2009
Cairo, Egypt

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XXth International
Conference



Recent years have just accentuated the increasingly profound ruptures of the dialogues in the perspective of getting together the still radiating civilizations in this beginning of the XXIst century. It is not only the case of verifying to what extent the “religion wars” are, perhaps, the acknowledged outcome of these new stalemates. In fact, the September 11th has been much more than a classic clash in the shock of empires and cultures, a process taken to the point where collective subjectivities have been expropriated of their identities by the domination of the western rationality. One should speak of a death of the soul, so much are the responses able to lead to this terrorism specific of our time. Until the beginning of this century, the modernity believed in a final gain, in an overall domain of the reason, of such laicism as claimed by a final dialectics, where the transcendences would fade away in this search for a *plus être*, pursued as an unending history of freedom. The return to religions would get back this identity surplus as a compensation for the long and sometimes unnoticed disappearance of the identities made prisoners of their simulacra.

Our time implies this more penetrating discussion in order to know to what extent such radical rejection of the other becomes the counterpart of the humanist perspective or, finally, to what extent the secularisms, issued from the sacralization of the Christian West, became the foreseen, and permanent, habitat for the self-assertion of the historic subjects. In base of this fundamental rupture, the modes of coexistence are made of truces, of absolutions, of the utmost perceptions, neither analogical nor recurrent, of who is the enemy in our time.

Program

➤ Sunday, October 25

➤ 10:00 am–1:00 pm

Opening Ceremony

- Jorge Sampaio – UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations
- Federico Mayor – President of the Academy of Latinity
- Boutros Boutros-Ghali – President of the Hague Academy of International Law
- Farouk Hosni – Minister of Culture of Egypt
- Candido Mendes – Secretary-General of the Academy of Latinity

➤ 3:00 pm–6:00 pm

1st Session: Modernization and Religious Reemergence

- Susan Buck-Morss – *The Post-Laic Situation in the Era of Global Unicity*
- François L'Yvonnet – *The Hellenization of the Christian Europe: a Controversy*
- Mohammed Arkoun – *Authority and Power in Islam: Rethinking the Concepts of "Dīn", "Dawla" and "Dunyâ"*
- Edgar Morin – *Towards a Mediterranean Thinking*

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Monday, October 26

10:00 am–1:00 pm

2nd Session: Subjective Expropriation and Religious Counterstanding

- Mia Bloom – *Death Becomes Her: The Changing Nature of Women's Role in Terror*
- Faisal Devji – *The Adventure of Muslim Universality*
- Gil Anidjar – *Religion and the Question of the Enemy*
- José Augusto Lindgren Alves – *Cultural Co-Existence and "Wars of Religion"*

3:00 pm–6:00 pm

3rd Session: Civil Society and the Syndromes of a Collective Self

- Javier Sanjinés C. – *The Arcane in the Post-Colonial Societies*
- Candido Mendes – *Post-Laicity and Plural Time: Beyond the Hegemonic Dialectics*
- Cesario Melantonio Neto – *The Emergence of the Anti-Arabism Phenomenon*
- Michel Wieviorka – *The Paradox of Post-Laicity*

Tuesday, October 27

10:00 am–1:00 pm

4th Session: The Post-Lay Society and the Setback of Social Time

- Fernando Coronil – *Secularization and the Postcolonial Challenges*
- Daniel Innerarity – *The Secularization of Politics*
- Shibley Telhami – *Rethinking the "Muslim World" Paradigm*
- Jean-Michel Blanquer – *Law and the Re-enchantment of the World*

3:00 pm–6:00 pm

5th Session: Post-Laicity in the Present Historic Process

- Craig Calhoun – *Religion as the Preemptive Pluralism in Contradictory Development Societies*
- Gianni Vattimo – *Modernity and Transcendence*
- Nilüfer Göle – *Manifestations of the Religious-Secular Divide: Self, State and the Public Sphere*
- Enrique Rodríguez Larreta – *The Ever Postponed Secularization*

Participants

Boutros Boutros-Ghali (Egypt) is a diplomat who was the sixth Secretary-General of the United Nations from January 1992 to December 1996. He was a Fulbright Research Scholar at Columbia University from 1954 to 1955, Director of the Centre of Research of The Hague Academy of International Law from 1963 to 1964, and Visiting Professor at the Faculty of Law at Paris University from 1967 to 1968. He was appointed Professor of International Law and International Relations at Cairo University and became President of the Centre of Political and Strategic Studies in 1975. He served as President of the African Society of Political Studies in 1980. He served as Egypt's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs from 1977 until early 1991. He then became Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs. Boutros-Ghali has published two memoirs, *Egypt's Road to Jerusalem* and *Unvanquished: A U.S.-U.N. Saga*.

Candido Mendes (Brazil) is the rector of Candido Mendes University; president of the Rio de Janeiro Forum of Rectors, and secretary-general of the Academy of Latinity. He is also the secretary-general of the Brazilian Justice and Peace Commission, president of the International Social Sciences Council, and member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters. Jurist, sociologist, philosopher, researcher in political science. His works include *Nacionalismo e Desenvolvimento* (1963); *Justice, faim de l'Eglise* (1972); *A Democracia Desperdiçada* (1992), *Collor – Anos-Luz, Ano-Zero* (1994), *A Presidência Afortunada* (1999), *O País da Paciência* (2000), *Lula: a Opção mais que o Voto* (2002), *Lula: une gauche qui s'éveille* (2004), *Lula: entre a Impaciência e a Esperança* (2004), *Lula Depois de Lula* (2005), and *Lula apesar de Lula* (2006).

Cesario Melantonio Neto (Brazil) is Ambassador of Brazil to Cairo, Egypt.

Craig Calhoun (USA) has been president of the Social Science Research Council since 1999. He is also University professor of the Social Sciences at New York University. He wrote and published more than twelve books, including *Culture, History and the Challenges of Difference* (1995), *Neither Gods nor Emperors: Students and the Struggle for Democracy in China* (1994), and *Habermas and the Public Sphere, Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought* (1992). His most recent book, *Cosmopolitanism and Belonging*, will be published in 2009.

Daniel Innerarity (Spain) is professor of Philosophy at the University of Zaragoza and guest lecturer at the Institute of Political Studies of the University of Bordeaux IV. Among the books and articles he published (some of them translated in other languages) may be mentioned *Ética de la hospitalidad* (2001), *La transformación de la política* (2002), *La sociedad invisible* (2004), and *El nuevo espacio público* (2006).

Edgar Morin (France) is a philosopher and sociologist. He is president of the European Agency for Culture (UNESCO), president of the Association for Complex Thought (APC) and member of the council of the International Center for Transdisciplinary Research and Studies (CIRET). His Opus Magnus is *The Method* (in five volumes). Several of his books were translated in English: *The Stars* (1960), *The Red and the White: Report from a French Village* (1970), *Method: Towards a Study of Mankind – The Nature of Nature* (1992), *Homeland Earth* (1998), *Seven Complex Lessons in Education for the Future* (1999).

Enrique Rodríguez Larreta (Uruguay) is the director of the Cultural Pluralism Institute of Candido Mendes University. His writings include *Gold is Illusion* (2003), *Gilberto Freyre e a Sociologia Crítica* (2001), *Collective Imagination Limits and Beyond* (2001), *Identity and Difference in the Global Era* (2002), *Reality / Simulacra / Artificial Ontologies of Postmodernity* (2006), and *Subjectivity at the Threshold of the Digital Culture: the Self in Network* (2007). He is co-author, with Guillermo Giucci, of *Gilberto Freyre, uma Biografia Cultural* (2007).

Faisal Devji (Canada) is historian who specializes in studies of Islam, globalization, violence and ethics. His multidisciplinary work grounds empirical historical issues in philosophical questions. He taught at The New School for Social Research in New York until earlier this year. Recently he has been admitted as a professor to the History Faculty of the University of Oxford. He is the author of *Landscapes of the Jihad* (2005), and *The Terrorist in Search of Humanity: Militant Islam and Global Politics* (2008).

Farouk Hosni (Egypt) is Minister of Culture in Egypt.

Federico Mayor (Spain) is former director-general of Unesco, founder and chairman of the Foundation for a Culture of Peace, and cochairman of the High Level Group for the Alliance of Civilizations. President of the Academy of Latinity. Author of *A contraviento* (1985), *Mañana siempre es tarde* (1987), *Aguafuertes* (1991), *Memoria del futuro* (1994), *Science and Power* (1995), *Un mundo nuevo* (1999), *La palabra y la espada* (2002), *La fuerza de la palabra* (2005), *Voz de vida. Voz debida* (2006), *Un diálogo ibérico: en el marco europeo y mundial* (2006), *Alzaré mi voz* (2007), and *En pié de paz* (2008).

Fernando Coronil (Venezuela) has been appointed Presidential Professor of Anthropology. He comes to the Graduate Center from the University of Michigan where he was a professor in the Anthropology Department and the History Department and also directed the Doctoral Program in Anthropology and History and the Center of Latin American Studies. His first book, *The Magical State: Nature, Money and Modernity in Venezuela* (1997) received widespread praise. With Julie Skurski, he recently coedited *States of Violence* (2006).

François L'Yvonnet (France) is professor of Philosophy and editor in Paris. Besides *Cahier de l'Herne* (2005), dedicated to Jean Baudrillard, his works include, among others, *D'un fragment l'autre* (with Jean Baudrillard, 2001); *L'avenir de l'esprit* (with Thierry Gaudin, 2001); *Le Défi de la différence* (with Candido Mendes); and *Simone Weil, le Grand passage*, ed. (2006), all of them published by Albin Michel. In mai 2009: Louis Massignon, *Écrits mémorables* (avec Christian Jambet, François Angelier et Souâd Ayada), two volumes, published by Robert-Laffont, coll. "Bouquins".

Participants

Gianni Vattimo (Italy), professor of aesthetic and theoretical philosophy at the University of Torino, is the vice-chairman of the Academy of Latinity and a former member of the European Parliament wherein he participated of the group of European Socialists. He is also member of the scientific committees of a number of Italian and foreign periodicals. He has been recently named Vicepresident of the Eurolat, the interparliamentary assembly of the European Parliament and of the parliaments of Latin America. His extensive intellectual production includes, among other works: *Nihilism and Emancipation, the Future of Religion*, with R. Rorty (2006), and *Ecce comu. Come si ridiventa ciò che si era* (2007).

Gil Anidjar (France) is an Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature in Columbia University's department of Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures (MEALAC). He is the author of *Our Place in al-Andalus: Kabbalah, Philosophy, Literature in Arab Jewish Letters* (2002), *The Jew, the Arab: A History of the Enemy* (2003), *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature* (2008). He has edited and introduced a collection of essays by Jacques Derrida entitled *Acts of Religion* (2002).

Javier Sanjinés C. (Bolivia) is associate professor of the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan and visiting professor of cultural studies at the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, Quito, Ecuador. He published *Estética y carnaval. Estética y Carnaval. Ensayos de sociología de la cultura* (1984), *Literatura contemporánea y grotesco social en Bolivia* (1992), and *Mestizaje Upside Down: Aesthetic Politics in Modern Bolivia* (2004).

Jean-Michel Blanquer (France) is Rector of the Académie de Créteil since 2007. He was associate professor of public law at the Université de Paris III and director of the Institut des Hautes Études de l'Amérique Latine, in Paris. He is the author of *Descentralización en Colombia. Estudios y propuestas* (1991), *Changer d'ère* (1996), *La responsabilité des gouvernants*, with O. Beaud (1999), *Les défis de l'éducation en Amérique latine*, with H. Trindade (2000), and *Voter dans les Amériques*, with H. Quanquin, W. Sonnleitner, C. Zumello (2003).

Jorge Sampaio is former president of Portugal. He was appointed United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Stop Tuberculosis and UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations.

José Augusto Lindgren Alves (Brazil), a career diplomat, is now National Coordinator for the Alliance of Civilizations and member, on his personal capacity, of the United Nations' Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Besides many articles published abroad, the last of which was "Race and Religion in the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination" (University of San Francisco Law Review, vol. 42, n. 4, Spring 2008), his books, in Portuguese, include *Os Direitos Humanos como Tema Global* ("Human Rights as a Global Issue," 1994 and 2004), and *Os Direitos Humanos na Pós-Modernidade* ("Human Rights in Post-Modernity," 2005).

Mia Bloom is an assistant professor of International Affairs at the University of Georgia in Athens. She is a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations and member of the Council of World Affairs. She is author of *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror* (2005) and *Living Together After Ethnic Killing* (with Roy Licklider, 2006).

Michel Wieviorka (France) is professor at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris) and president of the International Sociological Association (ISA). He was recently elected director of the Foundation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme. He is the author of numerous books, including *L'antisémitisme est-il de retour?* (2008), and *De la séparation des Églises et de l'État à l'avenir de la laïcité. Les entretiens d'Auxerre, avec Jean Bauberot, dir.* (2005).

Mohammed Arkoun (France-Algeria) is a philosopher and historian of Islamic Thought at the Sorbonne (Paris III), founder of the discipline called Applied Islamology. His major publications are: *La Pensée arabe* (2008), *Lectures du Coran* (1982), *Critique de la raison islamique* (1984); *Pour sortir des clôtures dogmatiques* (2007); *The Unthought in Contemporary Islamic Thought* (2002); *Islam: to Reform or to Subvert* (2006); *Humanisme et Islam* (2006); *De Manhattan à Bagdad. Au-delà du bien et du mal* (with Joseph Maïla, 2003); *Histoire de l'islam et des musulmans en France* (2006).

Nilüfer Göle (Turkey) is professor of sociology at the École des Hautes Études in Paris and a leading authority on the political movement of today's educated, urbanized, religious Muslim women. She is the author of *The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling* (1997) and *Interpénétrations: L'Islam et l'Europe* (2005).

Shibley Telhami is the Anwar Sadat Professor for Peace and Development at the University of Maryland, College Park, and a nonresident senior fellow in the Saban Center for Middle East Policy. He is a former advisor to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations and the Iraq Study Group. He is the author of numerous books, including *The Stakes: America and the Middle East* (2003), *Identity and Foreign Policy in the Middle East*, ed. with Michael Barnett (2002), and *Leadership in International Bargaining: The Path to the Camp David Accords* (1990).

Susan Buck-Morss (USA) is professor of political philosophy and social theory at the Department of Government of Cornell University. Her books include *Thinking Past Terror: Islamism and Critical Theory on the Left* (2003), *The Origin of Negative Dialectics: Theodor W. Adorno, Walter Benjamin, and the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School* (1977), *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (1989), *Dreamworld and Catastrophe: The Passing of Mass Utopia in East and West* (2000), and *Islamism and Critical Theory on the Left* (2003).



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