

# Human Rights and their Possible Universality

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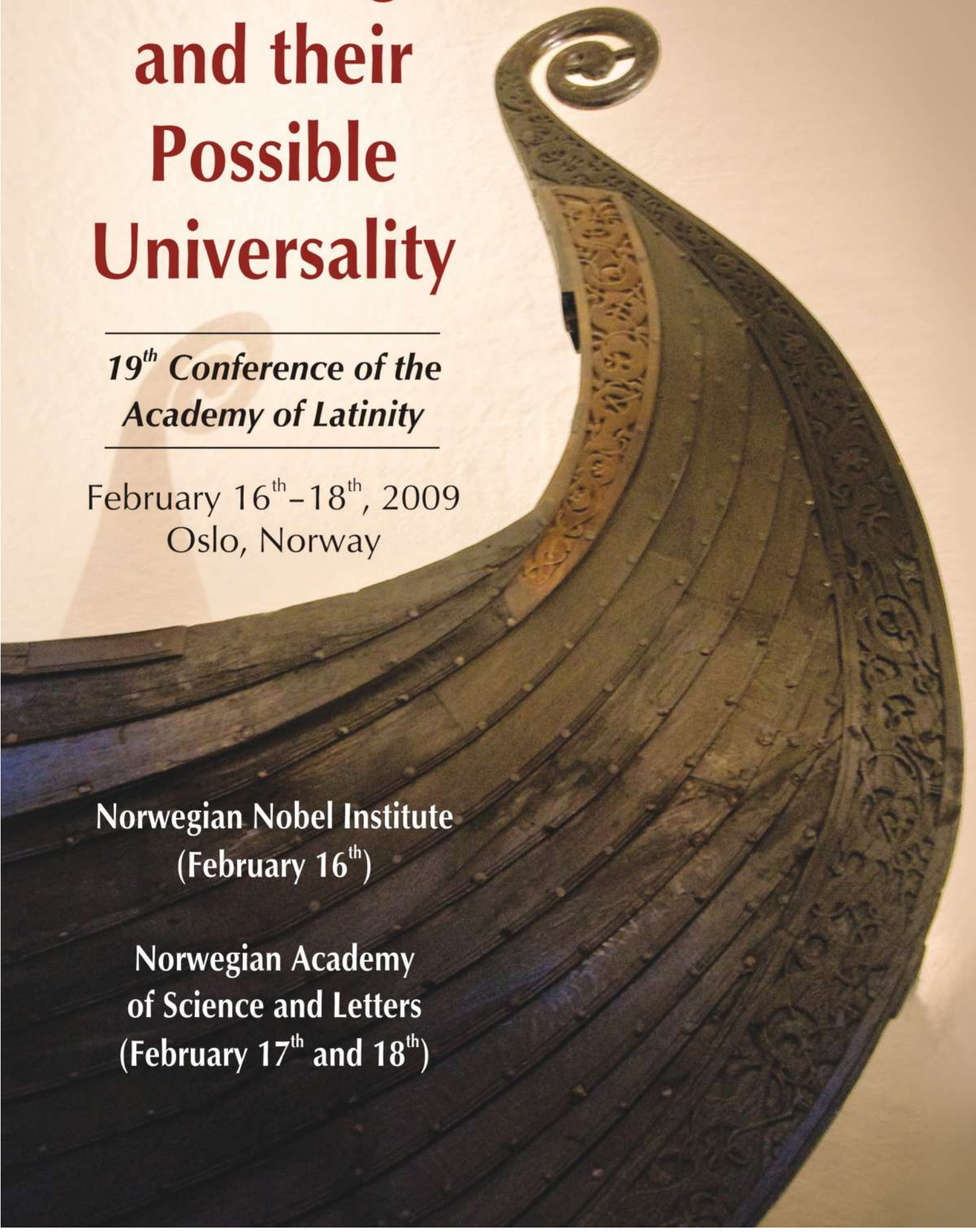
*19<sup>th</sup> Conference of the  
Academy of Latinity*

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February 16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
Oslo, Norway

Norwegian Nobel Institute  
(February 16<sup>th</sup>)

Norwegian Academy  
of Science and Letters  
(February 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>)



# Human Rights

## and their Possible Universality

February 16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Oslo, Norway

### 19<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Academy of Latinity

The Oslo Conference is meant to be at the center of the new dialectics posed by a “civilization of fear,” of its inevitable advent, in pursuit of possible levels of international understanding, able to simultaneously escape the contemporary fundamentalism and the vague universalisms where finally vanishes the idea of a dialogue fostered by ideologies and beliefs in the future of a single world. In the course of the last conferences, the notion of human rights has become the kingpin for updating a possible face to face rallying of our time, on these values of our collective “in itself” [en soi] able of making sure the historical claim for a coexistence in diversity. Such rights, apantage of the western consciousness, are confronted nowadays with the deadlock of a reason reified in all the alibis of the progress. This deadlock of the reason claims for the critical instance of interculturalism as well as the discussion of this specific terrorism of our time, appeared with the September 11. A true revival of the dialectics of recognition of collective subjectivities takes us into the play of genuine “reciprocities of perspective;” reproduction and pretense, amalgamated with the mimesis of authenticity.

This is what simultaneously impels us towards the acceleration of the perplexities of a world of identity irrationalness. Wars of religion are in waiting, just as the Western domination turns to hegemony. To what extent, within the emerging universe of fundamentalisms, can one still find a truce, in search for a “praxis” strengthened by the testimony, by the replacement of the imaginary, or with the self-consciousness victimized by its mimesis, the alterity, with the abandonment of the humanisms in favor of its absolutes, in order to escape the civilizatory pledges? And to what extent the human rights still remain the sign and seal of the last campaign to make of our time the adventure of freedom; or the breakaway from the difference, towards the circuits without return of the simulacra?

### 19<sup>th</sup> International Conference



## Program

### ➤ Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup>

9:00 am – Registration and Coffee

### ➤ 10:00 am – Opening Ceremony

- **Welcome by the Norwegian hosts: Reidun Sirevåg** – Secretary-General of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters
- **Kjell Magne Bondevik** – President of the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights
- **Tarso Genro** – Minister of Justice of Brazil
- **Federico Mayor** – President of the Academy of Latinity
- **Candido Mendes** – Secretary-General of the Academy of Latinity

11:30 am – Coffee Break

### ➤ 12:00 am – Questions and Answers

1:00 pm – Lunch

### ➤ 3:00 pm – First Session – *Towards a Universal Understanding of Human Rights: the Challenges of Reciprocity*

- **Mireille Delmas-Marty** – *Towards a Reciprocal Humanization*
- **François Jullien** – *How to Still Think of an Absolute in Human Rights? The Notion of a Universalizing Factor*

4:30 pm: Coffee Break

- **Cristovam Buarque** – *Education and the Universal of Difference*
- **Gianni Vattimo** – *Is Religion an Enemy of Civilization?*

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19<sup>th</sup> International  
Conference



### Program

#### ▶ Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>

▶ 10:00 am – Welcome Greeting from Øyvind Østerud, President of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters

#### ▶ Second Session – *Collective Subjectivities and Interculturalism*

- **Candido Mendes** – *Difference and the Dialectics of Irrationality*
- **Javier Sanjinés C.** – *Interculturalism and the Nation-State Revised*

11:30 am – Coffee Break

- **Daniel Innerarity** – *A Desynchronized World*
- **Tore Lindholm** – *Plural Justification of Universal Human Rights*

1:00 pm – Lunch

#### ▶ 3:00 pm – Third Session – *The Expropriation of Subjectivity and the Dialectics of the Other*

- **Alain Touraine** – *Universalistic Individualism and Cultural Diversity*
- **Enrique Rodríguez Larreta** – *Human Rights beyond Humanism? Prospects for a World in Transition*

4:30 pm – Coffee Break

- **François L'Yvonnet** – *On "Human-rights-ism"*
- **Dominique Quessada** – *Human Rights Without the Other*

#### ▶ Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>

#### ▶ 10:00 am – Fourth Session – *Emerging Terrorism and Cultural Anomy*

- **Peter van der Veer** – *Transcending the Limits; Searching for the Sublime*
- **César Rojas** – *The Bells of Wrath*

11:30 am – Coffee Break

- **Jean-Michel Blanquer** – *Rule of Law vs. Human Rights*
- **Sergio Eduardo Moreira Lima** – *Human Rights, Democracy, and the Rule of Law in International Relations*

#### ▶ 3:00 pm – Fifth Session – *Hegemony and Islamic Globalization*

- **Susan Buck-Morss** – *The First Global President? the Dialectic of Global Imagination and National Sovereignty*
- **Faisal Devji** – *The Human Factor: Militant Islam and the Question of Universality*

4:30 pm – Coffee Break

- **Mohammed Arkoun** – *The Issue of Human Rights in the Mediterranean Historical Space*
- **Ayça Çubukçu** – *On the Uneven Geography of Islamic Globalization: the Fact of Iraqi Constitution, the Fatalism of Human Rights*

#### ▶ 6:30 pm – Closing Session

## Participants

**Alain Touraine** (France), sociologist and director of research at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS). After various studies on Labor movement, industrial society and social movements, in 1992 he published *Critique de la modernité*, a series of works with the aim of renewing sociological theory. His latest published books are *Un nouveau paradigme* (2005), *Le monde des femmes* (2007) and *Penser autrement* (2007).

**Ayça Çubukçu** (Turkey) is a Postdoctoral Research Scholar with the Committee on Global Thought at Columbia University. In May 2008, she received a Ph.D. with Distinction in political anthropology from Columbia University in May 2008, where she also obtained herand also earned her M.A. and M.Phil. degrees from the same department. She also holds a B.A. in Government in all subjects from Cornell University, University and is currently preparing her book manuscript, "Humanity Must Be Defended", for publication.

**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).

**César Rojas Ríos** (Bolívia), sociologist and journalist. Doctor by the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, he has also a practical training in Social Conflict Resolution at the ICAR—University George Mason. He is co-founder and one of the directors of the Unir Bolívia Foundation. Besides his academic activities in graduate studies programs and his activities as lecturer, he also develops advising activities for the OAS and participates in UN programs. His publications include: *Ideological Offensive and Historical Eclipse* (1989), *The Bell Towers of Wrath* (2001), *Democracy of High Tension* (2007), and *Geography of the Conflict* (2008).

**Cristovam Buarque** (Brazil) holds a PhD in Economics from Sorbonne. He has worked at the Inter-American Development Bank, has been rector of the University of Brasília, governor of Brasília (the federal capital of Brazil), Minister of Education, and is currently senator at the Brazilian National Congress, professor at the University of Brasília, and member of the Unesco Education Institute. He is the author of several books, translated and published in English, including, among others, *The End of Economics?: Ethics and the Disorder of Progress* (1993), *The Gold Curtain: The Shocks of the End Twentieth Century and a Dream for the Twenty-First* (2007), and *Abolishing Poverty: A Proposal for the Eradication of Poverty in Brazil* (2005).

**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).

**Dominique Quessada** (France), philosopher. He has published *Le Dos du Collectionneur* (1999), *Le Nombriil des Femmes* (1999), *La Société de Consommation de Soi* (1999), *L'Esclavement* (2002), *Court Traité d'Altéricide* (2007). He is currently working in the writing of *L'Homme sans Autre*, to be published in 2010.

**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 teaches at The New School for Social Research in New York. He is the author of *Landscapes of the Jihad* (2005), and *The Terrorist in Search of Humanity: Militant Islam and Global Politics* (2008).

**Federico Mayor** (Spain), is former director-general of Unesco, founder and chairman of the Foundation for a Culture of Peace, and co-chairman 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 pie de paz* (2008).

**François Jullien** (France), professor at the Université de Paris VII-Denis Diderot and director at the Institut de la Pensée Contemporaine. He is the author of *Detour and Access: Strategies of Meaning in China and Greece* (2004), *The Propensity of Things: Toward a History of Efficacy in China* (1999), and *In Praise of Blandness: Proceeding from Chinese Thought and Aesthetics* (2004).

**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".

**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. His extensive intellectual production includes, among other works: *Nihilism and Emancipation, the Future of Religion*, with R. Rorty (2006), and *Ecce comu. Come si ri-diventa ciò che si era* (2007).

## Participants

**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 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).

**Kjell Magne Bondevik** (Norway) is president of the Oslo Centre for Peace and Human Rights. He served as Prime Minister of Norway from 1997 to 2000, and from 2001 to 2005, what makes him Norway's longest serving non-Socialist Prime Minister since World War II.

**Mario Soares** (Portugal), former president of the Republic, prime minister and minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal. He has also been a member of the European Parliament. He is currently the Vice-president of the Academy of Latinity, and also dedicates his activities to the Mario Soares Foundation. His works include *Portugal Amordaçado* (1972), *Democratização e Descolonização* (1975) and *Resposta Socialista para o Mundo em Crise* (1983).

**Mireille Delmas-Marty** (France) is a professor at the Collège de France (Chair of Comparative Juridical Studies and the Internationalization of Law). She has published a number of works on criminal law, on the rights of the rights of man, and on the globalization of law, among which: *Le flou du droit* (2004); *Les grands systèmes de politique criminelle* (1992); *Pour un droit commun* (1994); *Vers un droit commun de l'humanité* (2005); *Trois défis pour un droit mondial* (1998), *Les forces imaginantes du droit: (I) Le relatif et l'universel, (II) Le Pluralisme ordonné, (III) La refondation des pouvoirs* (2004-2007); *La Chine et la démocratie* (with Pierre-Étienne Will, 2007). More information on [http://www.college-de-france.fr/default/EN/all/int\\_dro/](http://www.college-de-france.fr/default/EN/all/int_dro/).

**Mohammed Arkoun** (France-Algeria) 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).

**Peter van der Veer** (Netherlands) is professor of Comparative Religion and director of the Religion and Society Research Centre at the University of Amsterdam. He is the editor of the Routledge series "Zones of Religion" and holds editorial positions at several scholarly journals, including *Eastern Anthropologist*, *Public Culture*, *Cultural Dynamics*, *Ethnos*, and *MERA-Journal*. He is the author of *Islam en het "beschaafde" Westen* (2002), *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain* (2001), and *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India* (1994).

**Reidun Sirevåg** (Norway) is secretary-general of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters.

**Sergio Eduardo Moreira Lima** (Brazil) is a carrier diplomat with post-graduation and a Master degree in Diplomacy from the Rio Branco Institute (the Brazilian Diplomatic Academy) and a Law Degree from the University of the State of Rio de Janeiro. He is a licensed member of the Brazilian Bar Association. Has served in the Brazilian Mission to the United Nations in New York, as well as in the Embassies in Washington, Lisbon, London and Israel. He is currently Ambassador in Norway. His publications include *A Time for Change* (2006) and *Imunidade Diplomática, Instrumento de Política Externa* (2004).

**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).

**Tarso Fernando Herz Genro** (Brazil) - Lawyer. Former mayor of the city of Porto Alegre for two mandates, and former Minister of Education and Minister of Institutional Relations under President Lula's administration. Presently, he is the Justice Minister of Brazil.

**Tore Lindholm** (Norway) is associate professor at the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, University of Oslo. He is the chairperson of the Oslo Coalition on Freedom of Religion or Belief and a member of the Church of Norway's Human Rights Committee. His academic discipline is philosophy. His research field is the two-ways traffic between human rights and diverse religions and life stances: freedom of religion or belief and the support for human rights in different religious and non-religious traditions.

