

VEILED CONSTELLATIONS: THE VEIL, CRITICAL THEORY, POLITICS, AND CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY  
YORK UNIVERSITY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
JUNE 3-5 2010

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# BIOGRAPHIES

## Keynote Speaker

**Ellie Ragland**

Professor

University of Missouri-Columbia

Ellie Ragland teaches critical theory, psychoanalytic theory, as well as comparative literature and world literature. She is the author of over 100 articles, has lectured nationally and internationally at over 100 universities and colloquia. She has held an NEH Grant, a Humanities Fellowship at the University of Illinois and has received other honors including the Gold Chalk Award from the University of Missouri for excellence in teaching. She has also been nominated to be listed in *Who's Who in Humanities Higher Education* and is the Frederick A. Middlebush Chair of English. Her books include *Rabelais and Panurge: A Psychological Approach to Literary Character* (Rodopi, 1976), *Jacques Lacan and the Philosophy of Psychoanalysis* (University of Illinois Press, 1985), *Essays on the Pleasures of Death: From Freud to Lacan* (Routledge, 1995), *The Logic of Sexuation: From Aristotle to Lacan* (State University of New York Press, 2004). Her edited and co-edited books include *Lacan and the Subject of Language* (Routledge, 1991), *Critical Essays on Jacques Lacan* (Macmillan 1999), and *Lacan: Topologically Speaking* (Other Press, 2004). She edited the Lacanian journal *Newsletter of the Freudian Field* from 1987 to 1994. She is now the editor of *(Re)-Turn: A Journal of Lacanian Studies*. She reads regularly for journals and presses. She is also finishing a dissertation in psychoanalysis to be granted by The University of Paris where she taught

in the department of psychoanalysis in 1994-1995. She is working on two manuscripts, *The Logic of Structure in Lacan* and *The Structure of Hysteria: Discourse, Fantasy, and Sexuation*.

## Plenary Speakers

### **Reina Lewis**

Professor

London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London

Reina Lewis is Artscom Centenary Professor of Cultural Studies at the London College of Fashion, University of the Arts, London. She is author of *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem*, London: IB Tauris, New York, Rutgers (2004), and *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation*, Routledge (1996). She is editor, with Nancy Micklewright, of *Gender, Modernity and Liberty: Middle Eastern and Western Women's Writings: A Critical Reader*, IB Tauris (2006), with Sara Mills, of *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, Edinburgh University Press (2003), and, with Peter Horne, of *Outlooks: Lesbian and Gay Visual Cultures*, Routledge (1996). Reina Lewis is also series editor with Teresa Heffernan of the book series *Cultures in Dialogue* (Gorgias Press 2007), which brings back into print critical editions of travel writing, memoir and autobiography by Ottoman and Western women travellers and writers from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Her current project on contemporary commodifications of Muslim femininities has most recently been published as 'Veils and Sales: Muslims and the Spaces of Postcolonial Fashion Retail' in *Fashion Theory*, 11:4 December 2007.

### **Jennifer Heath**

Jennifer Heath is an independent scholar, curator, award-winning activist, cultural journalist, and author/editor of eight books of fiction and non-fiction, including *The Veil: Women Writers on Its History, Lore, and Politics* and *The Scimitar and the Veil: Extraordinary Women of Islam*. Her edited volume, *Land of the Unconquerable: Women of Afghanistan in the Post-9/11 Era* is forthcoming from the University of California Press in 2010.

## Speakers (Organized in alphabetical order)

### **Rikke Andreassen**

Associated Professor  
Malmö University

Rikke Andreassen (Ph.D. from University of Toronto; Associate Professor at Malmö University, Sweden) is a researcher, teacher and consultant in communications, addressing racial/ethnic and gender equality issues. She is part of the EU project VEIL, which focuses on European debates concerning head- and body coverings of Muslim women, and participates often in public debates about headscarves/veils.

[www.rikkeandreassen.dk](http://www.rikkeandreassen.dk)

### **Heather Marie Akou**

Assistant Professor  
Indiana University

Heather Marie Akou is an assistant professor of Dress Studies at Indiana University (Bloomington) in the department of Apparel Merchandising and Interior Design. Her research focuses on African (Somali) dress and contemporary Islamic fashion, particularly concerning the role of the Internet in transferring ideas between countries and cultures.

### **Ailya Vajid, Celene Ayat Lizzio, Lulie El-Ashry, and Naila A. Baloch**

Harvard University and Tufts University

**Ailya Vajid** is a Master of Theological Studies candidate at Harvard with a focus on Islamic family law and Shi'i intellectual history. Her work traces the influence of Karbala ritual on the development of medieval Shi'i identity and doctrine. She graduated from Swarthmore College (honours) and is interested in counselling and women's organizing. **Celene Lizzio** is a Presidential Scholar and Master of Divinity candidate at Harvard specializing in Islamic ministry. A graduate of Princeton University (summa) and of the United World Colleges, her published work includes articles in Misbah Magazine and in the forthcoming Multimedia Encyclopaedia of Women in Today's World (Sage). **Lulie El-Ashry**, M.A. is a Master of Theological Studies candidate at Harvard focusing on the role of Muslim women in inter-religious dialogue. A graduate of the American University in Cairo with degrees in International Relations and Professional Development, she works as an Intercultural Dialogue Consultant and

translator for The Italian Islamic Religious Community. **Naila A. Baloch** is a Muslim Chaplain at Tufts University. She has a Master in Theological Studies from Harvard (Islamic Law and Islamic Ministry), and a B.A in Astrophysics from Williams College. She is currently working on a study on religion in the lives of young, urban, Pakistani, Muslim women.

### **Ayse Batur**

Ph.D. Candidate  
University of Western Ontario

I completed my MA degree in Cultural Studies, in Istanbul, and for my dissertation I studied the emergence of the veil debate in Europe. I did my BA degree in Philosophy. My current project is on self-portraiture photography and aims toward a theory of photography which incorporates a psychoanalytic notion of the subject as the viewer and the artist.

### **Valerie Behiery**

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and Concordia University

I have given numerous lectures and university courses on art from the Muslim world and presently have contracts with both the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and Concordia University. An article based on my thesis that examines the veil in contemporary art will appear this year in *Sociologie et Sociétés*.

### **Victoria I. Burke**

Lecturer  
University of Toronto

Dr. Victoria I. Burke has published articles on Hegel, ethics, political philosophy and feminism in *MLN*, *Philosophy Today*, *Dialogue: A Canadian Philosophical Review*, *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature*, *Clio: A Journal for History, Literature and the Philosophy of History*, and *The Philosophical Forum*.

<http://www3.sympatico.ca/viburke/>

### **Daelana Burrell**

Diablo Valley College

Daelana Burrell is an American-born Muslim woman who has been wearing *hijab* for over two years. She is interested in using contemporary art to explore the contradictions and complications of veiling and the intersections between Islam, Islamic societies, female empowerment, visibility and the veil.

### **Ipek A. Celik**

Post-Doctoral Fellow  
Brown University

Ipek Celik (PhD, Comparative Literature, New York University, 2009) is a postdoctoral fellow in Comparative Literature at Brown University. She holds a BA in Political Science, MA in Cultural Studies and PhD in Comparative Literature. Her research explores the ways in which criminality and victimhood inform how migrants and minorities are represented in contemporary European film and literature.

### **Diane Detournay**

Ph.D. Candidate  
University of Minnesota

Diane Detournay is a PhD student in Feminist Studies at the University of Minnesota. Her research interests include postcolonial studies, feminism, and political theory. Her dissertation examines the lineage of liberal feminism from the perspective of the postcolonial, and argues that racial difference is constitutive to the subject of women's rights.

### **Aude Dieudé**

Ph.D. Candidate  
Duke University

Aude Dieudé is a fourth year PhD student at Duke University. She is primarily focused on French, francophone and postcolonial studies. She is particularly passionate about Gustave Flaubert's works, gender and race issues related to the question of the veil, along with African and Black Atlantic literatures.

### **Anicée (Anisseh) Van Engeland**

Reader in International Law  
University of Bedfordshire

Anisseh (Anicée) Van Engeland-Nourai (PhD Islamic World, Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris; LL.M Harvard Law School; Ma Iranian Studies Paris III Sorbonne; Ma International Relations Paris II Assas;) is a Reader in International Law at University of Bedfordshire. She works in the field of international human rights.

### **Melissa Finn**

Ph.D. Candidate  
York University

Melissa Finn is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Political Science at York University in Toronto. Her current research, 'The Sacred Political', seeks to ground political discussions within an ontology of unity and the epistemology of presence. One of the central questions she asks is: what happens when we treat the political, as such, as a sacred responsibility? The implications of this question are investigated in relation to the untenability of suicide bombings as defensive action, and the necessity of a one-state solution in Israel-Palestine.

### **Sana Ghani**

M.A. Candidate  
University of Alberta

Sana Ghani is doing an MA in English at the University of Alberta. Her research interests include the bearing of the post-secular turn in philosophy on poetry, critical theory, and questions of 'tradition'. Currently, she is examining the destruction of the *Haramayn*, which is done in the name of religious purity and ironically coupled with a push to commercial development.

### **Shahla Haeri**

Associate Professor  
Boston University

Shahla Haeri is director of Women's Studies Program and an Associate Professor of cultural Anthropology at Boston University. Trained as a Cultural Anthropologist with specific focus on law and religion she has conducted ethnographic research in Iran, Pakistan, and India. She is the author of *Law of Desire: Temporary Marriage, Mut'a, in Iran* (1989, 2006 4<sup>th</sup> pt.), and *No Shame for the Sun: Lives of Professional Pakistani women* (2002/2004).

### **Anya Hussain**

M.A. Candidate  
Ryerson University

Originally from Montreal, Quebec I am an MA student in the Immigration and Settlement Studies program at Ryerson University. My academic background is in Cultural Studies and Political Science, from Concordia University. My research interests include critical race theory, transnationalism, popular youth culture, neo-colonial theory and politics of identity formation.

### **Celeste Ianniciello**

Ph.D.  
University of Naples L'Orientale

PhD in Anglophone Cultural and Postcolonial Studies at the Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale". She has worked on the relation between I/eye and place, or the relation between focus and locus in female migrant subjectivity. In particular, she is concerned with the visual (auto)biography of female artists coming from the Middle-Eastern and Mediterranean countries.

### **Roshan Jahangeer**

Ph.D. Candidate  
York University

Roshan is a third-year PhD candidate in the department of political science at York University. Her research interests include Islam, feminisms, post-colonialism, and law. She is currently involved with community projects that aim to prevent violence by developing leadership skills in young Muslim women from inner-city high schools around Toronto.

**Elissa Lerner**

M.A. Candidate  
New York University

Elissa Lerner is a playwright and the 2009 Goren Fellow at New York University's Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute, concentrating in Religious Studies. She graduated with honors in Religion and Theater Studies from Duke University, winning the 2008 Reynolds Price playwriting award. Post-baccalaureate, she studied language in Qatar and Israel.

**Christina Lindholm**

Associate Dean  
Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts

Lindholm spent 5 years as head of VCU Qatar and holds degrees in Clothing and Textiles; University of Missouri, a Post Graduate Diploma in Research; University of Brighton, UK and is finishing a PhD; University of Brighton, UK. Her research interests are changing and disappearing textile and clothing traditions.

**Megan MacDonald**

Ph.D. Candidate  
State University of New York (Buffalo)

Megan MacDonald is a PhD candidate at SUNY Buffalo in Comparative Literature. Her research interests include postcolonial theory, French feminism, francophone Maghreb fiction, and the Pakistani novel. In her free time she has a weakness for all things Bollywood.

**Svitlana Matviyenko**

Ph.D. Candidate  
University of Missouri-Columbia

Svitlana Matviyenko is a PhD Candidate from the University of Missouri-Columbia, studying Lacanian psychoanalysis, theories of the body and new media theory. Her dissertation (with Prof. Ellie Ragland) focuses on the Lacanian concept of sexualization and technology.

### **Arshavez Mozafari**

Ph.D. Candidate  
University of Toronto

Arshavez Mozafari is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto. He is one of the two co-organizers of the conference *Veiled Constellations: The Veil, Critical Theory, Politics, and Contemporary Society*.

### **Nima Naghibi**

Associate Professor  
Ryerson University

Nima Naghibi is an Associate Professor of English at Ryerson University, and the author of *Rethinking Global Sisterhood: Western Feminism and Iran* (Minnesota Press, 2007). Her current SSHRC-funded project is on diasporic Iranian women's autobiographical expression in memoirs and documentary film, drawing on the intersecting fields of autobiography, diasporic, cultural memory, nostalgia, and trauma theories.

### **Amber Fatima Riaz**

Ph.D. Candidate  
University of Western Ontario

Amber Fatima Riaz is a Doctoral candidate at the University of Western Ontario. Her research interests include translation theory, feminist theory, architecture theory, veiling and the Muslim woman in South Asia. She is working on her PhD dissertation, entitled: *The Politics of Veiling and the Feminist Gaze in Pakistani Women's Fiction*.

**Jenna D. Rice**

Ph.D. Candidate  
Stanford University

I am a Ph.D. Candidate in Anthropology at Stanford University, and my research interests center around theories of subjectivity, Islamic forms of reasoning, post-coloniality, political theory, language and poetics. I hold a B.A. from UC Berkeley and an International Diploma from Sciences Po, Paris. I am currently in Damascus studying Arabic.

**Stacey Scriver**

Post-Doctoral Researcher  
National University of Ireland

Stacey Scriver is a post-doctoral researcher in the Global Women's Studies Programme at NUI, Galway. Her current research examines the manifestation of the Islamic veil debate in Ireland through the popular media. She has previously published in the *Journal of Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society* and the *Journal of Power*.

**Faegheh Shirazi**

Professor  
The University of Texas at Austin

Faegheh Shirazi (Ph.D., Ohio State University) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Middle Eastern Studies, Islamic Studies Program, at the University of Texas at Austin. Author of *The Veil Unveiled: Hijab in Modern Culture* (2001, & 2003), and *Velvet Jihad: the Quiet Resistance to Islamic Fundamentalism* (2009).

**Kim Shively**

Assistant Professor  
Kutztown University

Kim Shively received a Masters at Harvard Divinity School and a PhD in anthropology at Brandeis University. She is assistant professor of anthropology at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, and has conducted research in Turkey since 1997. She has published various articles on Islam in Turkey in anthropology and women's studies journals.

### **Smriti Singh**

Assistant Professor  
Indian Institute of Technology Patna

Dr. Smriti Singh is an Asst. Prof. in the Dept. of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT Patna. A former Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant, she has been engaged in teaching for the last 8 years. Her areas of interest include contemporary theory particularly feminist studies and postcolonial studies.

### **Maria Stehle**

Assistant Professor  
University of Tennessee Knoxville

Maria Stehle's (PhD, German Studies and Women's Studies, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2005) work focuses on German and European Cultural Studies, Gender and Media Studies, and Cultural Histories of Germany since 1945. Recent publications: "Narrating the Ghetto, Narrating Europe" (*Westminster Papers for Culture and Communication*), and "The whole world is in uproar: Discourses of Fear, Instability, and Global Change in West German Media, 1977-1980," (*German Politics and Society*). She is currently working on a book manuscript entitled "*My World is a Ghetto*": *Cityscapes and Identifications in 21st Century Germany*.

### **Tom Stern**

Lecturer  
University College London

Tom Stern, Ph.D. (University of Cambridge), is a Lecturer in Philosophy and European Social and Political Studies at University College London. He works principally on 19th-century German philosophy and literature.

### **Cory Stockwell**

Ph.D. Candidate  
University of Minnesota

Cory Stockwell is a doctoral candidate in the Comparative Literature Program at the University of Minnesota. His dissertation, "Open Secrets," is a literary and philosophical investigation into the concept of secrecy. He is currently a Teaching Fellow in the Foundation Year Programme at the University of King's College, Halifax, NS.

### **Summer Sutton**

Visiting Assistant Professor  
Texas Tech. University

Ms. Sutton is a graduate of Cornell University with a degree in Architecture with a focus on architecture in the Middle East. She has worked extensively on the heritage project in the United Arab Emirates for the preservation of culturally significant buildings, in association with the Municipality of Sharjah.

### **Mahdi Tourage**

Assistant Professor  
University of Western Ontario

Mahdi Tourage, PhD (2005, University of Toronto), is currently Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and Social Justice and Peace Studies in the Department of Religion and Philosophy, King's University College at the University of Western Ontario. He is also Book Review Editor of the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* (AJISS). His book entitled *Rumi and the Hermeneutics of Eroticism* was published in 2007 (Brill) and his publications have appeared in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East*, and *Iranian Studies*. His areas of interest are Islamic religious thought and Sufism, classical Persian literature, gender and postmodern theories.

[www.mahditourage.com](http://www.mahditourage.com)

## **Amina Triki-Yamani**

Université de Montréal

Amina Triki-Yamani holds a doctorate in Science of Education from l'Université de Paris X. She completed a post doctorate with the Canadian Chair on Education and Ethnic Relations (university of Montreal). She is a member of the team of researchers working on, "*Ethnic Relations and Curriculum Construction: the treatment of the Muslim world in Quebec and Ontario Textbooks*". She is also the author of the report, "Perceptions du traitement de l'islam et du monde musulman par les jeunes musulmans(es) du CEGEP au Québec". She cowrote an article with M. McAndrew on the topic of this report which as been published in *Diversité urbaine* under the direction of Micheline Milot and David Koussens, « Reconnaissance de la diversité religieuse : débats actuels dans les différentes sociétés », *Diversité urbaine*, Vol.9, n°1, pp. 73-94. She is currently writing a book about her thesis « Foulard islamique à l'université : rapport aux savoirs des étudiantes françaises d'origine maghrébine » which will be published by L'Harmattan (Collection Savoir et formation). An article has been already written already published on this subject in the review *Carrefour de l'éducation* : "Conflits internes des savoirs chez les étudiantes musulmanes portant le foulard Islamique" (special issue, January-June, no. 17, Education, Coordinated by MOSCONI (N.), pp. 22-40).

## **Muhammad Velji**

Ph.D. Candidate

University of South Florida

Muhammad Velji received his BA from the University of Toronto. He earned his MA from Carlton University in Ottawa and fell in love with ancient and continental political philosophy. He is now earning his PhD at the University of South Florida. His current interest is using Heidegger, Foucault, Butler and Lipovetsky to look at changes in political and religious practice.

## **Beverly M. Weber**

Assistant Professor

University of Colorado at Boulder

Beverly Weber (PhD, Comparative Literature and Women's Studies, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2006). Research interests include intersections of race, gender, and migration in Germany and

Europe; contemporary German culture; and Islam in Europe. Recent and forthcoming publications include: "Work, Sex, and Socialism: Reading beyond Culture in the Work of Emine Sevgi Özdamar" (*German Life and Letters*), "Muslim Women's Memoirs, Gendered Violence, and Voices for Change in Germany" (*Women in German Yearbook*), and "Germany's Headscarf Debates and the Cultural Politics of Difference" (*German Politics and Society*). Her book manuscript is entitled *Rethinking Violence: Islam, Germany, and the "New Europe"*.

**Naomi Furnish Yamada**

Ph.D. Candidate

University of Hawaii at Manoa

Naomi Yamada is a PhD student in the Anthropology department at the University of Hawaii. She has been an English teacher at Qinghai Normal University (China), a Teacher's Assistant and Lecturer of Anthropology at the University of Hawaii, and a Lecturer at the University of Tsukuba in Japan.