The Laney Colloquium in Religion (LCR) is a new forum that fosters interdisciplinary conversation within the GDR and across the university. The colloquium focuses on a rotating two-year theme. The theme for 2015–2017, Global Religious Circuits, features ways in which ideas, practices, persons, institutions, and other phenomena flow among and between cultures to create religious expressions that are both distinctive and cross-culturally recognizable. The co-conveners of this two-year cycle are GDR faculty Bobbi Patterson and Carol Newsom. Programming for Global Religious Circuits includes lectures on the origins of the categories of religious studies in the context of colonial and postcolonial dynamics, the intercultural web of Brazilian Condomblé, the phenomenon of worldwide Pentecostalism, commonalities and differences in iconoclasm in ancient Chinese and ancient Near Eastern cultures, transcultural phenomena in shrine construction, and many other topics.

**FALL 2015 EVENTS**

Open to the Public

October 8, 6:00–8:00 p.m. Documentary Film Screening and Panel
*Yemanja: Wisdom from the African Heart of Brazil.* 208 White Hall. Reception preceding the screening from 5:00–6:00 p.m. in the atrium of Candler School of Theology

This documentary explores the relationship between environmental sustainability and the moral ecology undergirding the Candomblé tradition in Bahia, Brazil. Narrated by Alice Walker, a writer and activist well-known to the Emory community, *Yemanja* reveals an often overlooked dimension of Candomblé, and indeed many other African heritage religions: the tradition’s reverence for nature manifested in its core ritual acts and social obligations. The social struggles and triumphs of Candomblé custodians are unveiled through the voices of elder female leaders, knowledge producers, and ritual experts of African descent. *Yemanja’s* producer, Donna Roberts, and director, Rachel Harding, a well-known scholar of Condomblé, joined the GDR’s Dianne Stewart for a panel discussion following screening of the film. In addition, photographs by the film’s videographer, Gerald Lee Hoffman, were on display before the screening in the atrium of Pitts Theology Library.

November 4, 4:00–5:30 p.m. Lecture
Dario Paulo Barrera Rivera, Universidade Metodista de Sao Paulo, “Pentecostalism in the Brazilian Diaspora.” 360 Candler School of Theology / Pitts Theology Library

November 19, 7:30 p.m. Lecture
Tomoko Masuzawa, author of *The Invention of World Religions,* “Are We There Yet?: Ruminations on the Post-Secular.” 102 Rita Anne Rollins Building

The very notion of “world” religions emerged in a complex context of imperialism, colonization, and the emergence of postcolonial sensibilities. The global phenomenon of religion, the problem of accounting for its variations, the relation among religions, and the genealogy of the privileged European religion of Christianity required new intellectual frameworks that confessional traditions did not provide. Masuzawa’s insightful analysis of this process “reconstructs how religions came to be mapped in relation to supposedly scientific understandings of both racial and language categorizations” and in so doing constructs “a genealogy of the ‘forging of an enormous apparition: the essential identity of the West’” (Patrick Brantlinger).

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GLOBAL RELIGIOUS CIRCUITS FALL 2015 EVENTS—CONTINUED

Student-Focused Events

September 17, 5:15–7:15 p.m. Lecture
Abbas Barzegar, Associate Professor of Religion, Georgia State University and GDR Alumnus, “The Aesthetics of Political Islam: From US Prisons to the Turkish-Syrian Frontier,” 114 Candler Library

The subject of political Islam is often approached as epiphenomenal at best or a product of false consciousness at worst. Barzegar asks, what would a study of political Islam without pathology look like? In America between 1965 and 1985, African American Muslims embodied, embraced, and developed Islam as a liberation theology that could break through the race frame of US society and the civil rights paradigm that sought to reform it. More recently, Muslim activists involved in humanitarian work in Turkey and Syria also have challenged dominant paradigms by redrawing boundaries of community away from the nation state and ethnic nationalism by appealing to a nonsecular humanism. Despite the differences between these Muslim communities—and their challenges—both draw on shared visions of an alternative humanism that unfolds in the global arena of a postcolonial ideological competition. Moreover, their concepts of political community as modern practices of Islamic revival are often constructed through the themes of beauty, transcendence, and human fruition.

November 20, Coffee and Conversation with Tomoko Masuzawa.
A small number of GDR students who have read The Invention of World Religions will be invited for conversation with Tomoko Masuzawa.

Lunch with the Author

Each semester two faculty who have written books on topics related to the LCR theme will be present for an informal lunch conversation with interested students. Light refreshments provided but registration necessary. 212 Candler Library

- September 22, 11:30 a.m. Jim Hoesterey, Rebranding Islam: Piety, Prosperity, and a Self-help Guru
- October 27, 11:30 a.m. Susan Hylen, Christian Women at the Crossroads: Forging Identity in the Multicultural World of the Late Roman Empire

In the Classroom

The two graduate seminars listed below intersect with the LCR theme of Global Religious Circuits, but other seminars also feature units or topics that bear on this theme.

- Bobbi Patterson, Religion and Ecology: Transglobal and American Perspectives
  What do questions of sustainability have to do with ideas and practices of place? And what’s religion got to do with it? What do we mean when we say “place”? What religious, ecological, cultural, and social dynamics constellate place—and how and why do they change? Do our connections and tensions with place reflect, confront, and shape our religious, communal, and ritual practices? Which American religious traditions provide history, information, and models for noting, interacting with, and transmuting place? What ethical and spiritual commitments are necessary for attention to, alliance with and/or rejection of place? Which commitments will we seriously consider for sustainability in our lives and communities?

- Jim Hoesterey, Transnational Religion
  Every religion is a global religion. In this seminar we will explore the religious, political, economic, and social transformations that occur when religious texts, traditions, and people travel across local, national, and regional borders. This seminar will cover multiple religious traditions including Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity. Seminar readings will explore theories of mobility, modernity, mimicry, translation, subjectivity, postcolonial studies, and more.