

The Institute of Religious Pluralism and Atheism (IPRA), financed through the “Connect Talent” initiative of France’s Pays de la Loire region, seeks to provide resources for scholars, teachers, students and the general public. It is producing a database of primary sources concerning religious pluralism in Europe and the Mediterranean region between the 5th and 21st centuries. The Institute seeks to facilitate contact among scholars in various disciplines as well as between scholars and the general public. IPRA builds on the experiences of the ERC project RELMIN (www.relmin.eu) and the regional network DCIE (<http://dcie.hypotheses.org/>) to lay the foundations of a new multidisciplinary institute, based on the study of sources produced by different legal and religious traditions and on the study of how these traditions are affected by the new technologies of global communication. In order to federate a community of regional, national and international scholars working on religious pluralism, IPRA plans **scientific meetings** (conferences, doctoral seminars, workshops) to encourage and structure innovative interdisciplinary research, **public round-tables and lectures** to give keys to deeper understanding of current issues, and **hands-on training** (continuing education courses, online courses) for students and professionals.

FOCUS ON IPRA LECTURE SERIES : LE LIEU UNIQUE, NANTES

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2015

RELIGION IN QUESTION—THOUGHTS ON THE RESURGENCE OF RELIGIOSITY

This reaffirmation of religious identities puts religion squarely in the public debate. Urgently and with different ways, this raises the question of religious plurality. How, in our societies, can believers of various faiths and non-believers peacefully coexist? How can consequent social tensions or open conflicts be explained? How can they be resolved?

OCTOBER 15th: Round-table “European secularisms” with Jean-Philippe Schreiber, Philippe Gaudin and Silvio Ferrari, chaired by Dominique Avon.

This round-table discussion will raise the question of secularism in Europe and analyze it in a comparative way. 3 instances will be examined: France, Belgium and Italy. The discussion will try to explain how those three countries, which developed their own secularism concepts in very different historical contexts, deal with issues of religious expression and its limits.

NOVEMBER 26th: “Freedom of expression in Islam” with Hamadi Redissi, Professor of Political Science at the University of Tunis, author of numerous books on political Islam: *L'Exception islamique* (2004) ; *Pacte de Najid ou comment l'islam est devenu l'islam* (2007) ; *La tragédie de l'islam moderne* (2011).



UNDER CONSTRUCTION

IPRA's WEB SITE:
www.ipra.eu

Defense doctoral thesis (PhD): Augustin Jomier, July 2nd 2015, University du Maine (Le Mans):

Un réformisme islamique dans l'Algérie coloniale. Oulémas ibadites et société du Mزاب (c. 1800-c. 1970).

Thesis directors: Dominique Avon et Sabrina Mervin. **Jury president:** Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen. **Other jury members:** James McDougall et Sylvie Thénot. **Results:** with highest honors (summa cum laude).

IPRA MEMBERS: CO-DIRECTORS: John Tolan and Dominique Avon.

PERMANENT TEAM: Nicolas Stefanni (project engineer) Diane Moussa (engineering assistant – digital technology) Anna Christophe (engineering assistant – administration).

STEERING COMMITTEE: Didier Boisson, Caroline Julliot, Denis Moreau, Arnauld Leclerc.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE: Isabelle Saint-Martin, Jean-Philippe Schreiber, Silvio Ferrari, Lionel Obadia, Gabor Klaniczay.

CONFERENCE IPRA / IESR

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE FROM DECEMBER 2ND TO 4TH

RELIGION IN TEXTBOOKS FROM PRIMARY SCHOOL TO HIGH SCHOOL AROUND AND BEYOND THE MEDITERRANEAN RIM

This conference will examine how issues related to religion are addressed in schools, through a comparison and analysis of history textbooks from different countries. The conference is

organized in three workshops:

- Textbooks and their contents
- Institutions: issues and rivalries
- Teaching practices



IN PROGRESS:

A FORTHCOMING UNIVERSITY DEGREE : RELIGION AND ATHEISM IN A SECULARISM CONTEXT

In the context of *laïcité*, the French government in principle neither recognizes nor favors any kind of worship. But every kind of worship is allowed to belong to society. This particular situation, relatively new from an historical point of view and linked to a non-linear movement of secularization, sometimes has led political, economic and cultural actors to not regard religious facts as social issues. Those representatives and agents feel helpless, facing situations they hadn't foreseen. The university degree “Religion and atheism in a secularism context” aims at providing them with knowledge necessary to comprehend the role of religion in twenty-first century society and to give them conceptual and methodological tools useful for dealing with these issues professionally.

