intersections

News Item

5/14/25 – Notes from the Field: Studying the Nexus of Religion, Gender, and Populism from a Global Perspective | SSRC and the Berkley Center

June 24, 2025

Wednesday, May 14, 2025

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. EDT

Location: Online Zoom Webinar

This webinar explored the intersection of religion, gender, and populism in contemporary political and social landscapes. Populist movements frequently invoke religious and gendered narratives to define national identity, mobilize support, and justify exclusionary policies. From Christian nationalism in the United States to right-wing populism in Europe and Latin America, these movements often use traditional gender norms to bolster their legitimacy.

A global comparative approach is essential to understanding how these dynamics operate across different political and cultural contexts. Populist actors often borrow tactics from one another, and religious-nationalist discourses are increasingly transnational, influencing policies on gender, sexuality, and religious freedom beyond national borders.

In this webinar, scholars shared notes from the field based on their research in diverse settings, offering grounded insights into how religious and gendered narratives function within populist movements. By bringing together perspectives from multiple regions, this discussion illuminated both broader patterns and local specificities of religious populism, offering insights relevant for scholars, policymakers, and civil society actors worldwide.

The webinar was moderated by Berkley Center Senior Fellow Jocelyne Cesari, with an introduction by Molly Laas, program director at the Social Science Research Council. The discussion featured distinguished scholars Didem Unal Abaday, Ruth Braunstein, Tatiana Vargas Maia, and Elżbieta Korolczuk.

This webinar was co-sponsored by the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University and the Social Science Research Council.