Caught in the Cross-Publics of the “Muslimwoman”
talk by
Lila Abu-Lughod

Professor Abu-Lughod will reflect on the passionate and polarized after-life of her attempt to intervene in debates about Muslim women and their rights through her book, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* Intended to present alternatives, through ethnography, to the mediated public production of what Miriam Cooke has called “the Muslimwoman,” the work was greeted with silence by the targeted US liberal public. Yet two unanticipated marginalized publics took up the book—one with rage and the other with touching personal affirmation. What does this tell us about anthropology and transnational feminisms?

Lila Abu-Lughod is the Joseph L. Buttenwieser Professor at Columbia University, where she teaches anthropology and gender studies. She is a leading voice in debates about women and gender politics in the Middle East as well as an anthropologist who has focused on the politics of culture and representation. Author of three award-winning ethnographies based on fieldwork in Egypt, beginning with *Veiled Sentiments*, she has also edited books on the anthropology of emotion, the anthropology of media, feminism and modernity in the Middle East, and Palestinian memory. Her most recent book is *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* (Harvard University Press, 2013).