Letter from the Director

Once again, I am pleased to report that our Middle East Studies Center (MESC) has been designated for the 8th consecutive cycle as a National Resource Center (NRC) under the Title VI program of the United States Department of Education. This grant which will provided over 2.28 million dollars in funding from 2010 to 2014, comes at a time when most major universities are struggling to save their foreign language and area studies programs. Fortunately, with a combination of institutional and federal funding, our Center will be able to help maintain the university’s current level of academic excellence, and improve language support, academic outreach and cultural activities related to the Middle East in the coming academic years.

The combined funding for FLAS Fellowships and Center activities, in the amount of approximately $562,079 for each academic year in the four year grant cycle, will continue the level and quality of activities we have been providing for the university community and the community at large for the past 23 years, as well as expanding some key areas. These areas of expansion include: government
Letter from the Director (continued)

and military outreach (p. 22, 31), outreach to community colleges and historically black colleges and universities, engaging K-12 and undergraduate students regarding aspects of linguistic, intercultural, and area expertise for their future careers, and exploring poetry of the Middle East with students and faculty on a regular basis.

The grant also will continue funding for the Foreign Language and Area Studies Program (FLAS), which supports foreign language acquisition. Middle East Studies Center (MESC) FLAS recipients focus on four critical languages – Arabic, Hebrew, Persian and Turkish. As a result of these increases, and with the provision of tuition and fee authorizations from the Graduate School, MESC will be able to grant 13 academic year and approximately 8 summer FLAS fellowships. Total funding for the year brings MESC to a level exceeding most comprehensive national resource centers, a major achievement for an undergraduate center and its affiliated faculty members.

The Middle East Library will also receive over $60,000 for acquisitions of Middle East materials, and $40,000 has been allocated for the annual Summer Institutes on Middle Eastern Cultures for teachers, a collaboration between MESC and the College of Education.

As Principle Investigator of the NRC grant and as the Director of the Middle East Studies Center, I believe that our accomplishments are attributed, not only to the strength of OSU as an institution and to the strength of our application, but also to the dedication and scholarship of our faculty (p. 17). Our faculty focus their efforts on key aspects of our curricular and co-curricular programs, such as the Ottoman History Lecture Series, the Islam and Democracy Lecture Series, the conferences coming up in Fall of 2011 on al-Ghazali (p. 7) and Central Asian Studies (p. 7). I would like to acknowledge the importance of the support and encouragement we receive from the Office of Academic Affairs, the Office of International Affairs, the College of the Humanities, the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, the Undergraduate International Studies Program, the Mershon Center, and all of the other academic departments and administrative units which made our proposal stronger by demonstrating the strength of our institutional support. In particular, I would also like to thank William I. Brustein, Vice Provost for Global Strategies & International Affairs, Dieter Wanner, Associate Provost for Global Strategies and International Affairs, and Joseph Steinmetz, Executive Dean and Vice Provost for The College of Arts and Sciences. All of these contributions are in perfect alignment with OSU’s academic, outreach, and engagement mission, to the multidisciplinary initiative in the Academic Plan, and to the MESC commitment to support, organize and disseminate the academic outreach accomplishments of our faculty, staff, and students.

In looking to the future, there are many signs of positive change at OSU in the realm of internationalization. In addition to bringing external funding to the university, the area studies centers cultivate resources and linkages with countries of their world areas, and the university leverages those to provide more global content to its students, faculty, and the community at large in Ohio. We will continue to fund faculty lines in History and Anthropology and to support the languages of Near Eastern Languages and cultures in order to maintain continuity in programs dedicated to studying the Middle East. These cover a wide range of disciplines, including Law, Sociology, Comparative Studies, Education, and many others. We support efforts to strengthen coverage and increase enrollment by organizing academic activities around faculty and student interests. For example, in addition to the lecture series and conferences mentioned above, we plan to hold a symposium in conjunction with the Moritz College of Law on Jewish and Islamic Law in Autumn Quarter 2011.

With the aim of strengthening international linkages, I recently took a trip to the United Arab Emirates and Afghanistan. I focused on ties we have to universities in both places. I met with some faculty members and visited the offices of international education at the American University in Dubai and the American University in Sharjah to discuss the arrangement of a study tour for K-12 teachers who have participated in our summer institutes on Middle Eastern cultures and other workshops and seminars for teachers. MESC has already received the approval of Title VI Managers in Washington D.C. to partially fund this study tour – which will combine the classroom education acquired in the Summer Institute with a field trip in one or two Middle Eastern countries.
In Afghanistan, I had a very busy schedule. In addition to meeting with the president and faculty members of Kabul University, and giving 2 seminars on US-Afghanistan relations, I had the opportunity to meet with President Hamid Karzai in the presidential palace to discuss security and other pressing topics. Among other issues, we discussed: current U.S.-led counter-insurgency operations in Helmand and Kandahar; US-Afghanistan strategic partnership; recent parliamentary elections and the findings of some recent opinion polls* indicating that Afghans have been losing confidence in the abilities of the United States and its allies to provide security; and challenges of the counter-insurgency operations in Afghanistan. After one of the seminars I conducted in Kabul, I was asked to recite some of my poetry. I shared the poem that was published in this bulletin in the Spring 2009 (p. 16), entitled “My Soul is Like an Eagle Soaring High.”

*A 2010 survey conducted by the Asia foundation on security, development, economy, government, corruption, and women’s issues to assess the mood and direction of the country (see table). Full report here: http://asiafoundation.org/country/afghanistan/2010-poll.php

A UN poll in 2009 showed that Afghans are concerned with corruption more than other issues. Article by BBC: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8468783.stm ABC 2009 poll showing hopes are rising, although critique of US involvement still poignant: http://abcnews.go.com/PollingUnit/afghanistan-abc-news-national-survey-poll-show-support/story?id=9511961
It has been a long journey through a time of much transition since we last published the Bulletin. As editor, I take this opportunity to apologize for the delay! I can also say that we will be back on schedule with our renewed funding and now that the Center’s reformulated staff have almost all been hired (p. 5). MESC Office Associate, Mary Beth Benecke, retired in 2009, after 12 years of service to the Center, and 18 years of service to OSU. Her contributions are missed! We were very fortunate, however, in the hiring of Jenny Swain, who worked in the same position at the Center for six months. Her enthusiasm and ability to learn OSU’s labyrinth of administration very quickly were veritable Godsends. She got us through the remainder of the previous grant cycle. Cory Driver, the Center’s Outreach Coordinator since 2007, has moved on to focus on research, and will be in Israel for the next year on a Melton Fellowship (p. 5). Liosliath Manner has been the Center’s intern since June and will remain during Fall quarter. She has provided critical support to the Center during a time with limited staff, including the coordination of this bulletin! With the beginning of the new grant cycle, the new full-time position of Fiscal Associate was created, and we are very happy to welcome Danielle Cooke (p. 6) to the team. We also look forward to hiring a part-time outreach and events coordinator very soon.

While the Center’s 64 affiliated faculty members are not present in day-to-day office life, their presence is certainly felt and appreciated, and when they depart their presence is missed. The Center has lost a great friend in Professor Emeritus Michael Zwettler, who passed away on January 25, 2010 (p. 22). He was my advisor when I was a graduate student in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, and it was through his teaching and mentorship that I gained an awareness of culture in its implications for translation. His classes took us into the world of 7th century Arabian Peninsula, emphasizing cultural context, and specifically elements of intertextuality in great works of classical Arabic. Without understanding the literary cannon (qanun 2) of the time, including oral literature, it is not possible to fully comprehend the meaning of such texts. What a rich and exciting way to learn about a different place and time. He also said that each word does not have to be translated, but each word’s meaning must be taken into account – advice I return to frequently as a guiding principal in understanding and translating texts. He left the imprint of a great teacher in my work and my life.

The Michael J. Zwettler Foundation (MJZ foundation) will be formed to protect, preserve, and perpetuate Michael’s memory and legacy. Among the projects that the Foundation will fund are completing Michael’s book on the Namarari inscription and a student scholarship fund. Donations to the Foundation can be sent to:

Artz, Dewhirst and Wheeler, LLP
560 E. Town Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Attn: Brian Artz/MJZ Foundation

Phone: (614) 221-0944
bartz@adllp.com

Please make donations payable to: Michael J. Zwettler Trust

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1 His definition of intertextuality:

(1) encountering, reading, construing, interpreting, presenting, representing, positioning, or generally somehow dealing with

(2) a certain text (usually so-called “literary” text), body of texts, or authorial figure

(3) as a re-(or perhaps de-) construction of, or with reference to, or in the context of, or in confrontation with, or with some kind of cognizance of an apparent hierarchy of phenomena – which are also textual (though the sense of “textual” is sometimes stretched well beyond its ordinary acceptation).


2 Qanun – Arabic for “Law,” or “Cannon.”
Mary Beth Benecke
MESC Office Associate, Mary Beth Benecke, retired in 2009, after 12 years of service to the Center, and 18 years of service to OSU. Among her many administrative responsibilities, she was in charge of the Center’s lending library. Not only did she keep on top of all of the lending activity and remain vigilant in obtaining items which needed to be returned, she stayed knowledgeable about the collection, reading our books, watching the AV materials and writing brief pieces about our holdings which we featured in this Bulletin. One thing many people did not know about her was that she is a poet herself, who had won awards for her poetry. Having a great team and building our team by treating everyone as a family member has always made MESC strong and we miss this member!

Cory Driver
Cory has been working as our outreach coordinator since December of 2007. He is a wonderful presence for the classroom and for multiple venues in the community that have come to rely on us for educational programs and consulta-

From Cory:
Some of my favorite activities at the Middle East Studies Center have been the summer institutes for teachers. Each year, the Middle East Studies Center has hosted a number of experts in the fields of politics to poetry, and religion to youth culture for a group of public school teachers. I was very fortunate to be able to help lead several discussions with the teachers to help them process what they were seeing and hearing. Often, they remarked it felt like they were drinking from the fire hose, but during the breakout sessions, they were able to break down, assimilate and process the information from the speakers and I was able to help them synthesize it into lesson plans for their classrooms. To know that several groups of students would benefitting from the knowledge subject area experts gave to the teachers because helped make it accessible was very satisfying.

Of course, my favorite part of my job was the outreach. Whether it was talking to 73 3rd graders at Kay Avenue Elementary about North Africa, teaching 150 children of parents serving with the Army National Guard in Iraq about the places their parents were deployed, talking with 45 incoming OSU freshmen about the language opportunities at Ohio State, helping Dr. Payind with outreach to 300 Marines or talking with 30 senior citizens at the Dublin retirement center about Israeli-Palestinian relations, I deeply enjoyed bringing my knowledge and the University’s expertise outside its borders and giving access to great scholarship on the Middle East to the larger community.
Danielle Cooke

Announcement

Danielle Cooke recently joined the Office of International Affairs as the Middle East Studies Center Fiscal Associate. Already part of the Ohio State community, she comes to us from the Office of Minority Affairs, where she has worked for the past three years as an office associate. Danielle earned a bachelor’s degree in marketing, as well as an associate’s degree in business administration, from Franklin University. She has a strong background in sales, human resources, and handling of sizeable program budgets.

Danielle’s major responsibilities will be to provide fiscal, administrative, and program support for the Middle East Studies Center. Danielle’s office is in 321 Oxley Hall, and she can be reached at 688-3212 or cooke.71@osu.edu.

From Danielle:

In regard to what I look forward to about working in OIA, it would have to be the fact that we are making it possible for students to study abroad. It is only by immersing one’s self in another country, culture, religion, and/or language, that one can truly understand and appreciate the differences in all of us. Sadly, as a people, we are still largely intolerant. I think that such opportunities are incredibly invaluable because it teaches us so much, and has such a significant impact on our lives.

Now that I am done with undergrad, I have moved on to studying for the GMAT. I would really like to return to school to work on my MBA in the near future. I spend a lot of time with my family and friends. I’m an avid reader; anything will do – suspense/mystery, romance, comedy, drama...the list goes on.
Al-Ghazali

Islam and Rationality: The Impact of al-Ghazālī International Conference, Autumn 2011

One of the most important Muslim thinkers that worked on bringing Islam and rationality together is Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī (1058-1111) who was of Persian origin, lived and worked in Baghdad and other intellectual centers of the Muslim world of the 11th and 12th centuries. Besides his teaching activity al-Ghazālī wrote on an enormous variety of subjects, which primarily include theology, law, philosophy, mysticism, and epistemology. However, a central issue of his thought remains the question of how to develop an Islamic approach to God that is not irrational, but can rather integrate religious rationality in a productive way. In general, the discourse on rationality, as accepted by orthodox Islam, has largely been established, articulated, and solidified by al-Ghazālī. Many of his ideas are still present in one form or another in attitudes toward education in Muslim conservative societies.

On the occasion of his 900th anniversary, we plan to organize an international conference dedicated to the various aspects of al-Ghazālī’s thought and its impact on later Islamic as well Christian and Jewish thought. Focusing on al-Ghazālī’s work, a part of the presentation should also deal with the relationship between Islam and rationality in past and present. We will further explore the place of his ideas in modern discourses of Islamic Jurisprudence (fiqh), Sufism and fundamentalism. The papers will be edited in a volume.

Prof. Georges Tamer
M.S. Sofia Chair in Arabic Studies

Central Asian Studies Conference

Central Eurasian Studies Society
Annual Conference, Autumn 2011

Geographically, Central Eurasia is defined as the vast interior of Asia, a region that exists on the frontiers of Russia, China, the Middle East and South Asia. For reasons relating to recurrent political instability, national security, military strategy, energy resources and more, it is also a region whose importance has grown immensely in the post-Cold War, post-9/11 world.

Next autumn, approximately 300 specialists in all aspects of Central Eurasian Studies from across the globe will converge on the OSU campus to participate in the annual conference of the Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS). https://www.cess.muohio.edu/

Past CESS conferences have been held at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (2002), Harvard University (2003), Indiana University, Bloomington (2004), Boston University (2005), the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (2006), the University of Washington, Seattle (2007), Georgetown University (2008) and the University of Toronto (2009). Hosting the conference in Columbus will showcase OSU’s already-substantial and growing interdisciplinary strength in Central Eurasian studies.

The conference will be held the weekend of September 15–18, 2011. It is being brought to OSU through an initiative spearheaded by Dr. Morgan Liu (NELC) and Dr. Scott Levi (History), and it is sponsored in part by the Middle East Studies Center and The Center for Slavic and East European Studies.

Carpet in Kabul, Afghanistan. Photo by Carl Montgomery
Teachers’ Perspectives and Attitudes towards Integrating Students with Learning Disabilities in Regular Saudi Public Schools.
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Ohio University, Curriculum and Instruction Special Education (Education), 2009.
Al-Ahmadi, Nsreen A.
http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi?acc_num=ohiou1241556018

The Potential of Implementing Online Professional Training Development for Faculty in the College of Education at King Saud University
Master of Education (MEd), Ohio University, Computer Education and Technology (Education), 2009.
Alsadoon, Elham A.
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Alliance in Flux: Turkey’s Alliance Behavior, from the Cold War to the Present, 1947-2010
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Aydemir, Ilhan
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Blom, John David
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The Crisis of Translation in the Western Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis of al-Qaeda Communiqués Doctor of Philosophy, Ohio State University, ED Teaching and Learning (Columbus campus), 2009.
Clark, Allen Stanley
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A Study of Faculty Attitudes toward Internet-Based Distance Education: A Survey of Two Jordanian Public Universities Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Ohio University, Curriculum and Instructional Technology (Education), 2009.
Gasaymeh, Al-Mothana M.
http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi?acc_num=ohiou1253908636

Gok, Ozkan
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Between Hope and Despair: The UN Observer Missions of ONUCA and MINURSO Master of Arts (MA), Ohio University, Political Science (Arts and Sciences), 2009.
Hama, Ayumi
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Gender Politics: A Case Study of Feminism in Iran Master of Arts (MA), Wright State University, International and Comparative Politics, 2009.
Hoff, Sara A.
http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi?acc_num=wright1246370248

Jayne, Dusti R.
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Let Me Be Veiled: Deconstructing Gender in Iran and the United States Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA), Ohio University Honors Tutorial College, Theater, 2010.
Johanson, Rachel
http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi?acc_num=ouhonors1275596670

The Relationship of L2 Attitudes to L3 Attitudes and Learning: A Study of Moroccan University Students Master of Arts (MA), Ohio University, Linguistics (Arts and Sciences), 2010.
Kachoub, Bouchra
http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi?acc_num=ohiou1275666405
La France au carrefour des cultures divergentes Master of Arts, University of Toledo, Foreign Languages - French, 2010.
Kern, Mary Elizabeth
http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi?acc_num=toledo1270566971

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Lev, Eimi
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Lowenberg, Benjamin J.
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Prus, Erin S.
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Sadvari, Joshua W.
http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi?acc_num=osu1243794803

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Saliba, Janine M.
http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi?acc_num=muhonors1272483157

Sarfati, Yusuf
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Unal, Mehmet
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Van Melle, Jonathan Herny
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Winer, Emily R.
http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi?acc_num=miami1272313345

Yelkenci, Guler Irem
http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi?acc_num=ucin1243315593

Turkish Students’ Scientific Literacy Scores: A Multilevel Analysis of Data from Program for International Student Assessment Doctor of Philosophy, Ohio State University, ED Policy and Leadership, 2009.
Yilmaz, Haci Bayram
http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi?acc_num=osu1259620839
Michael Ewers: Fulbright-Hays dissertation research in the United Arab Emirates

Michael Ewers, a PhD Candidate in the Department of Geography, was awarded a Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Abroad Grant from the U.S. Department of Education. In August he returned from 11 months of dissertation fieldwork in the United Arab Emirates. His wife, Cheryl, and two and a half year old daughter, Eleanor, accompanied him to the UAE. He was affiliated with UAE University in Al Ain, but conducted most of his research in the cities of Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

My research interest in the UAE is driven by the interaction of four key facts about the country: First, the UAE is small, both in size and population. It is the geographic size of South Carolina and has a population of approximately 5.5 million. Secondly, the country is mostly populated by foreigners. These are almost entirely temporary guest workers and their families who cannot obtain citizenship. Only about 20% of its total population and 10% of its workforce is comprised of Emirati citizens. Thirdly, it is rich. Despite its small geographic size and population, the country holds approximately 10% of the world’s known oil reserves. The UAE is the second richest country in the world per capita – surpassed only by its Gulf neighbor, Qatar. Lastly, the UAE’s development is both recent and spectacular. The federation of seven emirates was established in its current form in 1972. Its rapid transition into a modern economic power since has been driven by two oil price booms, from 1973-86 and from 1998-2008. What has always interested me most about the combination of these four factors is what role they play in the country’s efforts to create a future for its people after oil. In particular, the UAE is pouring money into creating diversified, non-oil economies, best exemplified by the spectacular growth of Dubai. The country is also trying to educate its local population so that the country can be less dependent on skilled, foreign workers. Yet, the country’s diversification efforts have actually stimulated new inflows of expatriates. In the UAE, large oil reserves and small (local) populations have reduced incentives to create local human capital, instead promoting a dependence on foreign workers. In order to study this dynamic, I conducted an em-
ployment and human capital survey with over 300 companies. I also conducted key informant interviews with representatives of dozens of companies throughout the country. Before spending this year in the UAE, I had taken a number of much shorter research trips to the country and the region. What really made this trip stand out, in addition to the length of time, was that I brought along my wife and daughter. The Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad grant is one of the few funding sources that provide additional allowance for a spouse and/or child. In most cases it is very difficult for a graduate student to bring their family along for extended overseas dissertation fieldwork. This was a great opportunity for my family to spend time together and for my daughter to learn about peoples and cultures outside of Ohio. I did not expect that having my family with me would change my research, but it really did. Most significantly, I had a much greater level of interaction with Emirati citizens than I had experienced during previous trips. During all of my past trips throughout the Middle East I have always noted the importance that people in the region place on their families, children and hospitality. It was a truly incredible opportunity to experience this first hand.
Lebanese Student Organization

Photos of some events including: Taste of OSU, annual Arabic Karaoke night, annual Lebanese Turkish party

A Cedar tree, the national symbol of Lebanon, was planted at the OSU Chadwick Arboretum.

LSO started a Dabke troupe in 2009.

The LSO at OSU was the only Lebanese club from Ohio. We gave a short presentation about our events and achievements in the past year, and introduced the community to our members and executive committee.

The Cedar tree’s dedication ceremony took place on the 22nd of Oct, 2009 where LSO members and friends chanted the Lebanese national anthem surrounding the newly planted Cedar tree.

The LCN hosted the Lebanese clubs in the MI and OH area.

The troupe has been very active and successful. We performed on several occasions on campus and we even participated in off campus events such as the Lebanese festival in Dayton.
The Middle East Studies Center is pleased to announce that we have awarded FLAS Fellowships to the following graduate and undergraduate students at Ohio State:

### Graduate Awardees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Academic Year/Summer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Scharfe</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Academic Year and Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Marvel</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Persian and Turkish</td>
<td>Academic Year and Summer</td>
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<td>Trisha Myers</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>Turkish and Arabic</td>
<td>Academic Year and Summer</td>
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<td>Joseph Lewis</td>
<td>NELC</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Academic Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dana Moss</td>
<td>NELC</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Academic Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Beardslee</td>
<td>Musicology</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Academic Year and Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carron White</td>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Academic Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hanan Kashou</td>
<td>NELC</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Academic Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Megan Cairns</td>
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<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Summer</td>
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<td>Heather Sweetser</td>
<td>NELC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tami Newberry</td>
<td>NELC</td>
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<td>Andrew Woodmansee</td>
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### Undergraduate Awardees

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<tr>
<td>Christian Jaramillo-Villada</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Academic Year</td>
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<td>Stephanie Sobek</td>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Academic Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor Smith</td>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Summer/Academic Year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summer Language Programs

**Domestic Options**

**OSU – Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, Summer Arabic**
The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures (NELC) successfully offered Intensive Arabic courses for the second time. In Summer 2009, elementary intensive Arabic was offered, while in Summer 2010, both elementary and intermediate Arabic were options for OSU students. Hassan Al Kharrat, one of the professors for the summer program, stated “The Intensive Arabic program is a great program for students who want to accelerate their education.” NELC is planning on continuing to offer intensive courses in the future.

**Summer Intensive Courses in Hebrew**
**Rothberg International School, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem** (Classes are available both in Jerusalem and New York City), the **Brandeis Hebrew Language Program**, and the **Jewish Theological Seminary**.

**The Eastern Consortium in Persian and Turkish, Summer Program**
The Eastern Consortium in Persian and Turkish (ECPT) is a cooperative arrangement of universities with Middle East National Resource Centers, intended to provide intensive, one-year equivalent instruction in both first- and second-year Persian and Turkish language during the summer session. MESC has been an active member in the Eastern Consortium for Persian and Turkish since its inception in 1984, and OSU’s Near Eastern Languages and Cultures Department hosted the summer programs of ’90, ’96, ’97, ’98, ‘04, ‘05, and ‘06. The Consortium provides intensive (i.e. minimum of 140 contact hours per summer term) Persian and Turkish at several levels of instruction. It is a great option for beginning students who would like to gain a good foundation before they attempt integrating the language study with their other course work, or more advanced intensive programs. Member institutions are: Boston University; The University of Chicago; Columbia; Georgetown; Harvard; Michigan; NYU; The Ohio State University; The University of Pennsylvania; Princeton; The University of Minnesota; The University of Wisconsin; and Yale University. Indiana University is a contributing institution. The summer program was hosted at the University of Wisconsin during Summer 2010, to be hosted by the University of Boston, Summer 2011 (http://www.bu.edu/summer - click on “courses,” search keyword “Persian”).

**Options abroad**
Further information for OSU students: http://oia.osu.edu/programs/by-region/middle-east.html

Advanced Arabic Language at Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) - Jordan
Arabic Language and Culture at Alif - Morocco
Intensive Arabic at Hebrew University of Jerusalem - Israel
Hebrew Language at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Hebrew Language at Hebrew University – Jerusalem
Hebrew Language at Tel Aviv University
Hebrew Language at University of Haifa

If you would like to utilize an overseas program as part of your FLAS fellowship (restrictions apply), please see the FLAS guidelines and Application, and see the FLAS study abroad checklist at http://mesc.osu.edu/FLASProcedures.php
Summer courses must have at least 140 hours of actual classroom instruction to be eligible for funding, and need to be an OSU program, or selected from the following list. Each FLAS Fellow’s study abroad program proposal (as presented on the Study Abroad Program Form in the Application) is subject to Department of Education final approval.

**Arabic:**
Center for Arabic Study Abroad (CASA)
http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/casa/
Center for Arabic Study Abroad (CASA)
University of Texas at Austin
1 University Station, F9400
Austin, TX 78712-0527
phone: (512) 471-3513
UTcasa@austin.utexas.edu

Qasid Institute for Classical and Modern Standard Arabic
http://www.qasid.com/
PO Box 961329
c/o Qasid Institute Sports City
Amman, Jordan, 11196
info@qasid.com
Tel: +962 6 515 4364
**Turkish:**
The American Research Institute in Turkey Summer Intensive Turkish Program  
**Deadline:** February 4, 2011  
**Dates:** 22 June through 11 August, 2011

The ARIT and Princeton University offer fellowships for intensive advanced Turkish language study in Istanbul Turkey. For summer 2011, the American Research Institute in Turkey will offer fellowships for up to 15 advanced students for participation in the summer program in intensive advanced Turkish language at Bogaziçi University in Istanbul. This intensive program offers the equivalent of one full academic year of study in Turkish at the college level.

Further information: [http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/ARIT/ARITSummerLanguageProgram.html](http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/ARIT/ARITSummerLanguageProgram.html)

**Multiple Offerings:**
American Councils for International Education  

The American Councils Eurasian Regional Language program provides graduate students, advanced undergraduates, scholars, and professionals intensive individualized instruction in the languages of Eurasia. Participants may in enroll in semester, academic year, or summer programs. All courses are conducted by expert faculty from leading local universities and educational institutions.

After climbing K2 in 1993 to honor his sister’s memory, he recovered from the climb in a village called Korphe. While there, he met a group of children sitting in the dirt writing with sticks in the sand, and made a promise to help them build a school.

Mortenson kept his promise, and dedicated his life to promoting education, especially for girls, in remote regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

As of 2009, Mortenson has established or significantly supports 131 schools in rural and often volatile regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan, which provide education to over 58,000 children, including 44,000 girls, where few education opportunities existed before.

Mortenson has gained the trust of Islamic leaders, military commanders, government officials and tribal chiefs from his tireless effort to champion education, especially for girls.

Since “Three Cups of Tea” was required reading for OSU freshmen, the office of First Year Experience sponsored a followup presentation on October 5th by Melinda McClimans, Assistant Director of the Middle East Studies Center. The theme of McClimans’ presentation was on success in diverse global contexts. She focused on four critical areas for success: local context, openness, participation, and area knowledge.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty News Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Sanson, <em>Philosophy</em></td>
<td>David Sanson, Philosophy, co-authored “The Early Arabic Liar: The Liar Paradox in the Islamic World from the Mid-Ninth to the Mid-Thirteenth Centuries CE,” Vivarium, January 2009.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane Hathaway, <em>History</em></td>
<td>Jane Hathaway, History, was awarded the Turkish Studies Association’s 2008 M. Fuat Köprülü Book Prize for her book <em>The Arab Lands under Ottoman Rule, 1516-1800</em>, at the TSA’s business meeting, in conjunction with the Middle East Studies Association Conference, Washington, DC, Nov. 23.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katherine Meyer, <em>Sociology</em></td>
<td>Katharine Meyer, Sociology, along with Craig Jenkins, Sociology, Hassan Aly, Economics, and Ola Ahlqvist, Geography, have received a second three-year grant from the National Science Foundation to study civil conflict in the Middle East.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty News Name</td>
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<td>Magda El-Sherbini</td>
<td>Magda El-Sherbini, associate professor at the Ohio State University Libraries, has been awarded a Lecturing/Research Grant by the Binational Fulbright Commission in Egypt and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board for 2010-11. El-Sherbini plans to visit the Bibliotheca Alexandrina to study and evaluate the Arabic name authority file union catalog that the library is developing and compare it to the international name authority. She also will conduct a series of seminars on key topics in librarianship in an effort to share expertise and knowledge of current trends in international librarianship with colleagues in Alexandria.</td>
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<td>Peter Mansoor</td>
<td>Peter Mansoor, History, was recognized at the Arts and Sciences Spring Recognition Reception as an Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teaching Award finalist.</td>
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<td>Peter Mansoor</td>
<td>Published a chapter on “Army Operations” in Understanding Counter-insurgency, eds. Thomas Rid and Thomas A. Keaney (Routledge, April 2010).</td>
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<td>Peter Mansoor</td>
<td>Organized a conference on “Hybrid Warfare: The Struggle of Military Forces to Adapt to Complex Opponents from the Ancient World to the Present” at the Mershon Center for International Security Studies in May 2010. The keynote speaker was Gen. James Mattis, the new head of U.S. Central Command.</td>
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<td>Peter Mansoor</td>
<td>Appeared on CNN, Fox News, MSNBC, Al Jazeera English, Charlie Rose, NPR, BBC, WNYC, and WOSU All Sides with Ann Fisher in June 2010 regarding the issues surrounding the relief of Gen. McChrystal and the ongoing war in Afghanistan.</td>
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<td>Sultana Nahar</td>
<td>Sultana Nahar, Astronomy, successfully facilitated the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Ohio State University and Cairo University. Professor Nahar has been actively collaborating with faculty at Cairo University and recently participated in conferences on Ultra Fast Laser Applications held in Cairo, including a key note address.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard Herrmann</td>
<td>Richard Herrmann, Political Science, is the 2010 Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teaching Award recipient from the College of Arts and Sciences Student Council. Herrmann was recognized at the Arts and Sciences Spring Recognition Reception and will receive a $1,000 grant in support of his academic work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sabra Webber</td>
<td>Sabra Webber, a cultural anthropologist and folklorist in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures and Comparative Studies in the Humanities, was awarded a 2009-2010 three month research grant for field research in Tunisia from the American Institute of Maghribi Studies.</td>
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<td>Sabra Webber</td>
<td>Sabra Webber was awarded $5,000 from Arts and Humanities to continue work on her book, Folklore and the Disciplines.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sabra Webber</td>
<td>For the summer of 2010, Dr. Webber was appointed academic director by Amideast of the “Tunisia Learn and Serve” program, a program that brings U.S. college and university students to Tunisia for six weeks to study Tunisian Arabic and the history and culture of Tunisia while they also serve as English language partners for the top ten per cent of Tunisian university students who are in their third year of English study.</td>
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<td>Stephen Dale</td>
<td>Stephen Dale, History, was the recipient of a 2009 Distinguished Scholar Award, supported by the OSU Office of Research.</td>
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</table>
Her recent sabbatical included a sojourn through US, Europe, and Middle Eastern universities to discuss ideas in her new book and monograph. Cities visited for conferences and presentation: New York City (Columbia), Washington DC (U Maryland), Irvine (U Cal), Edinbugh (U St. Andrews), Paris, and Jerusalem.

Her book, “Decline and Fall of the Sasanian Empire: The Sasanian-Parthian Confederacy and the Arab Conquest of Iran”, was published a second time in June, 2009. This allowed a buzz to be generated about it by the time her sabbatical started Autumn quarter. The monograph of important source material for the book came out subsequently in 2010, translation and commentary on “The Akhbar al-Hiwal of Abu Hanifa Dinawari” (see inset). After several invited lectures and conferences in New York City (Columbia), Washington DC (U Maryland), Irvine (U Cal), Edinbugh (U St. Andrews), Paris, Jerusalem, and beyond, she was also interviewed by BBC radio, and television in addition to other media requests.

The fervor her book is creating is attributable to the fundamental paradigm shifts that the book posits regarding the history of Islam and the history of Iran. For example, in the title itself, the way the Arab conquests of Iran are viewed in light of Islamic history; usually being called Islamic conquests, rather than Arab conquests. Another interesting paradigm shift is the view of Iranian history which has traditionally created separate places on the timeline for Parthian and Sasanian civilizations, but which she sees as being contemporary with each other, or overlapping on the timeline to a great extent. She also points out that the Sasanians were not very centralized, as it is assumed, but rather the Shah en Shah (King of Kings) oversaw a confederation of local principalities. To put it in Pourshariati’s words, “Parthian families, who had their own kingdoms, ruled side by side with the Sasanians.” In addition, networks of trade were largely responsible for the Arab migrations into Sasanian-Parthian territory, rather than for the spreading of religion – another common assumption challenged by her book.

Among numerous academic exchanges she was engaged in from 2009 to the present (see list below) she organized a five panel mini-conference within the Middle East Studies Association conference on “Late Antique Iran.” Prominent scholar, Richard Fry, was one of the 20 scholars who attended, indicating the immediate attention and interest her book has generated. The Middle East Studies Center greatly appreciates her work which strengthens Iranian studies at OSU and we look forward to future collaborations to further Persian Studies.

Dr. Pourshariati’s Academic Exchanges 2009-2011

- “Kufa/Basra, the Trade Nexus and ‘Sunni/Shi’i’ Divide” in Late Sasanian and Early Islamic Iraq, Oxford, May 14, 2011. Invited participant.
- Organized a four-panel conference at the Middle East Studies Association conference on “Recent Trends in Late Antique Iranian Studies,” with the participation of Richard Bulliet (Columbia U), Matthew Canepa (The College of Charleston), Ghazzal Dabiri (Columbia U), Touraj Daryaee (U of California/Irvine), Yaakov Elman (Harvard U), Haleh Emrani, Hossein Kamali (Columbia U), Hugh Kennedy (SOAS), Asef Khordani (Independent Scholar), Maria Macuch (U Berlin), Richard Payne (Princeton U), Khodadad Rezakhani (U California/LA), Abolala Soudavar (Independent Scholar), Joel Walker (U of Washington), Parvaneh Pourshariati (OSU), Michale Morony (UCLA). Boston, Nov. 21-24, 2009.
- “Sasanian-Parthian Confederacy and the Arab Conquest of Iran,” in the Iran Seminar of the Center for Iranian Studies, Columbia University, NY, May 13, 09.
- “Sasanian Ideology” in Sasanian Historiography and Iranian


Recent publications:

Books & Monographs:


Articles:


DINAVARĪ, ABŪ HANĪFA AHMAD

b. Dāwūd b. Vanand (d. between 894 and 903), grammarian, lexicographer, astronomer, mathematician, and Islamic traditionist of Persian origin, who lived at Dinavar and in several cities in Iraq in the 9th century.

Source:
MILITARY OUTREACH

Soldiers learn about Afghan culture

One hundred and fifty marines from the 3rd Battalion, 25th Lima Company, based at Rickenbacker Airport, are now more familiar with Afghan history and culture as well as Islam. Ohio State’s Middle East Studies Center conducted the workshop to give the Marines an insider’s perspective about the Afghan lifestyle and culture should they be deployed to Afghanistan.

Alam Payind, director of the Middle East Studies Center, and former faculty member of Kabul University, spoke about Afghan history and the history of conflicts in Afghanistan over the past 2,500 years. There were also sessions on cultural theory, how to negotiate terms of cultural differences, and information about the Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek and other ethnic and linguistic groups in Afghanistan.

“The soldiers asked a lot of good questions and they were hungry for details about how the culture governs their way of life,” said Cory Driver, outreach coordinator for the Middle East Studies Center.

The Marines expressed much interest in knowing about how cultural norms and mores would affect interactions between Afghans and Americans serving in Afghanistan. The workshop helped teach the soldiers how to reconcile being sensitive and understanding of other cultures while maintaining their own culture; and as a result of increased interaction with and comfort level of Afghan women, female American soldiers were asked to make it known that they are women either by removing their helmets when safe to do so, or by displaying their hair or face.

The Middle East Studies Center has presented other workshops for members of the National Guard, military engineers and medics. Dr. Payind took part in two major military conferences organized by the Army, one on “Social Organizations in the Operational Environment,” and the “Fort Drum Forum on Iraq and Afghanistan for Trainers of Trainers.” Feedback after these workshops has been very positive, and Dr. Payind continues to provide consultations and work with contacts he made there to improve their cultural training.

IN MEMORIAM: MICHAEL J. ZWETTLER

Michael J. Zwettler
1940-2010

Michael J. Zwettler, associate professor emeritus at Ohio State University, died of cancer on January 25, 2010. He was a well-loved member of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures (and its earlier incarnations, beginning with “Department of Romance Languages – Arabic Section”) where he taught Arabic language and literature for thirty-five years.

Michael was perhaps best known for his monograph The Oral Tradition of Classical Arabic Poetry: Its Character and Implications (1978), in which he applied the Parry-Lord theory of formulaic composition and rendition to early Arabic poetry. In doing so he covered a much wider range of material than might be expected, with the result that the book remains essential reading for anyone concerned not only with early poetry but with the development of the Arabic language.

Scholars have debated at length the question of the language of this poetry: was it the everyday language of the Bedouin, as tradition claimed? Michael argued no, it was a special idiom reserved strictly for formal occasions utilizing various dialectal features and archaisms (of which the iʿrāb, the system of case and mood markings, was one), and his arguments have become a standard component of the discussion on the history of Arabic.
The Oral Tradition of Classical Arabic Poetry remains a fixture on PhD reading lists for its important treatment of poetic and linguistic topics, and if not everyone was convinced of the suitability of applying oral-formulaic theory to Arabic poetry, there was nonetheless near-unanimity that the exercise was an especially stimulating one, in the best intellectual sense. It is a mark of his scholarly integrity that he was fond of recommending, unprompted, to colleagues and students the annotated translation of Gregor Schoeler’s articles, The Oral and the Written in Early Islam (2006), even though one of the chapters is devoted to a harsh critique of Michael’s book. Asked about this, he said, “It’s very intelligent criticism, and I have no problem with that, in fact I appreciate it.” (Of course, he did add, when prompted, that he hoped to respond to Schoeler someday.)

Michael was clear about his scholarly interests. Not for him the vulgarities of the modern period, which seemed in his view to begin sometime in the late-Abbasid era (“anything after the Mongols,” he loved to say, “you can read about in the newspapers”). He was drawn further and further back in time, in a quest to reveal more about the period (and the language) that captivated him. His last great project was an extensive study of the oldest substantial example of written Arabic, the Namara inscription, found in southern Syria and dated to the early fourth century CE. This required a massive amount of training and familiarity with Roman and early Sasanian history, various forms of Aramaic, Epigraphic South (as well as North) Arabian studies and the genealogy and tribal history of the pre-Islamic Arabs, among other topics. All this Michael undertook with the remarkable blend of avid enthusiasm and meticulous attention to detail that characterized everything he did. Several articles from this project have been published, and Professor Linda Jones Hall of St. Mary’s College in Maryland will be leading an effort to bring his nearly-completed typescript to completion and to see it through publication.

His perfectionism made the prospect of submitting something to print an agonizing one. The downside of this was that his list of publications is not long; the upside was, as he liked to point out, that he had absolutely no qualms or regrets about what he had written, and he was justly proud of whatever appeared under his name. One of Michael’s most singular qualities was the pleasure he took in having such high standards and expectations. He clearly enjoyed playing the pedant, never happier than when simmering with indignation at some linguistic impropriety or crime against philology. But below the simmering indignation there was a grin and an admission that although he took such things seriously, he didn’t really take them that seriously… He never laughed at others, but he constantly made fun of himself. Seldom bien pensant, always bon vivant, he let his conversation reflect his enthusiasms and his generosity: “You really must eat at Chez Fulan and tell me what you think, and when will someone do a proper investigation of the origins of Arabic prose, and why is there no expanded English translation of Reckendorf’s Arabische Syntax and wouldn’t that be a good project for you, and would you like these tickets to Tosca tonight because due to a scheduling conflict I’ll be at a lute concert…”

He is survived by his partner Eugene Meyers and his sister Rebecca Zwettler. Michael did not want a funeral or memorial service. He asked instead that his friends gather in the springtime and hold a party in his memory and this we did. There was not much discussion of Michael’s academic achievements and erudition that day. Although his death is a great loss to scholarship, those who knew him will feel even more deeply the absence of his wit, his good cheer and his kindness.

Bruce Fudge
Ohio State University

Printed with permission of The Middle East Studies Association To Appear in Review of Middle East Studies 44:2 (Winter 2010).
The Arts: FOCUS ON THEATRE

Photo Credit: Rene Vasquez
The Arts: FOCUS ON THEATRE

“House of Flesh”

The Middle East Studies Center, along with Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, the Department of Theatre, and Whistling in the Dark Theatre Productions sponsored “House of Flesh,” based on the short story by Yussef Idris, adapted for theatre by Rasha Khairy, and translated into English by Amany Seleem and Melinda Mc Climans. The play was performed in both Arabic and English throughout the month of September – the songs in the English version were performed in Arabic, however. Audiences gave very positive feedback, including the chair of the OSU Theatre department, Dan Gray, who called it “a powerful and moving production.” The home life of three very poor girls, who live with their mother after their father’s death, is the immediate context for the play, situated within the larger context of Egyptian culture.

As stated in the program, “Plays such as House of Flesh, with social themes, and which address critical issues people face in daily life around the world (poverty, struggles due to social class and gender), provide ideal opportunities for cultural exchange and initiating dialogue.” Indeed, the play stimulated much thought and discussion about particular and universal phenomena explored in the play. However, it isn’t obvious when reading the above description, that it is highly entertaining as well as thought-provoking. Assem Ngaty, the director, designed the movement and timing of the scenes in an elegant flow of story-building which conveyed realities of daily life in a devastatingly real, and often hilarious, way.

The girls (delightfully portrayed by Amany Seleem, Aziel Dunklin, and Razan Mustafa) fight with each other through out, evoking universal themes of coming of age, womanhood, and sibling rivalry. The mother of the girls (brought to life by the powerful acting of Alison Vasquez) presented the audience with a complex character, caught between her daughters’ desire for marriage, society’s expectations for single women, and her own yearning for happiness.

Aeschylus’s play “The Persians”

A conference on Aeschylus’s play “The Persians,” the oldest surviving play in the world took place on OSU campus November 19-20, 2010, entitled “Tragedy, Translation, Ethnicity, and Imperialism.” Professor Stratos Constantinidis, Theatre, translated the play into English and organized the conference. MESC was pleased to host one of the speakers for the conference, Dr. Ali Mousavi, of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, whose lecture was “What Did the Greeks Know of the Capital Cities of the Achaemenid Empire? An Archaeologist’s Perspective from the Homeland.” In addition, OSU Professor of Greek and Latin, Dr. Anthony Kaldellis facilitated the panel on Herodotus, with guest speaker from Ohio Wesleyan University, Professor Donald Lateiner. Sponsors included The Department of Theatre, The Department of Classics, The Department of English, and The Middle East Studies Center at The Ohio State University.

Photo Credit: Liosliath Manner
mesc.osu.edu • 25
Recruiting:

The Ohio State University’s Area Studies Centers (ASCs) advance knowledge and awareness of international cultures and world regions on campus and in the community by organizing international career-building events, extending OSU’s language offerings, supporting students’ language and study abroad experiences, and conducting outreach programs. At recent events, we have been recruiting for our MA programs in East Asian Studies, Latin American Studies, and Slavic and East European Studies, sharing information on our scholarship and fellowship opportunities in the previously-mentioned areas as well as in Middle East Studies, and offering advice to students interested in building a career with an international dimension.

Elementary schools, secondary schools:

Every summer the Middle East Studies Center offers an intensive workshop on Middle East Cultures for teachers. The Institute includes a field trip to a mosque, a synagogue, a Coptic church and an Eastern Orthodox church.

MESC’s teacher training program also includes institutes for teachers coordinated through OIA, such as the summer Global Institute which benefits from partnerships with the Ohio Dept. of Education, Kent State U, and Ohio U.

The Wexner Center for the Arts partners with MESC to select, show and promote films related to Middle Eastern cultures and educate K-12 students. On February 28th, they will collaborate on Wexner’s Worldview program which will feature the documentary “Afghan Star.” 200 students are expected, and a day of activities surrounding Afghan cultural values and musical traditions will ensue.

Image Courtesy of Zeitgeist Films
MESC has partnered with the K-12 Africentric school and the K-12 International School to expand its Beyond the Block program over the next grant cycle, as well. This is an extension of the recruitment efforts described above, focusing on K-12 students. On April 29, 2010, Assistant Director Melinda McClimans visited the K-12 Africentric school in Columbus and spoke to three classes with 30 students each about the benefits of intercultural experience and study abroad, both academically and professionally. MESC also works with college prep programs such as TRiO, Upward Bound and OSU’s Life Sports program to promote study abroad and international careers to traditionally underrepresented students. On June 25, 2009, Melinda McClimans and Allen Coleman spoke to more than 100 students through the LiFE program for minority high-school students. They led a discussion on cultural differences and the possibilities for personal and professional development offered by study abroad. This typifies the kind of discussion which takes place within Beyond the Block.

**Pre-collegiate and Undergraduate Students:**

MESC organizes activities for First Year Experience (FYE), a required program for all incoming freshmen at OSU. Topics include Opportunities in Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs), Understanding Islam, Cultures of the ME, and Career Development for International Fields. This year, three such events had attendance numbers of over 50 each, and received excellent ratings. The presentation on cultures of the ME, received an average rating of 4.3 out of 5, putting it among the top 20% highest-rated events for FYE. MESC recruits African Americans, other minorities and students of color to college, study abroad and international careers through its programs Opportunities that will Change You (freshmen), and Beyond the Block (K-12 – see above). MESC engages OSU and regional students through this program. Students and successful professionals of diverse backgrounds share their study abroad experiences and show international experience provides an edge in the job market. International Career Week provides MESC with additional opportunities to engage students of all backgrounds about international careers in fields such as academia, NGO’s, business, and others. MESC presents on why to take ME LCTLs and the FLAS Fellowship at the TA orientation session of the College of Education.

**General Public & Business:**

Engagement extends to the local community, region and nation. In AY 2009, the director gave 8 post-secondary lectures with a combined audience of 1275. These included: the commencement address and Dewald Honors Lecture at Mount Union College in Alliance Ohio (attendance: 775 and 180, respectively); a lecture on Afghan music at Indiana U (attendance > 150); a lecture on current issues in the ME at Lakeland Community College in Willoughby, OH, (attendance 75); and a lecture at a conference on Diaspora Cultures and Communities at California State University East Bay (attendance: 150). MESC has key community college partners in the region and is a member in the Midwest Institute for Intercultural/International Education which trains regional community college
instructors from Ohio in the East to North Dakota in the West. MESC speakers for the summer institutes address poverty, water shortages, and ethnic and religious issues. Most recently, MESC/Mershon co-sponsored a public panel called “Afghanistan: The Choices”, 300 were in attendance.

MESC builds on community partnerships to strengthen its outreach programs. Community partners include Tifareth Israel, Noor Islamic Center, The Islamic Foundation of Central Ohio, Scioto Educational Foundation, the Ohio Center for Law-related Education, and others. Over the past year, MESC collaborated with the Islamic foundation of Central Ohio and Tifareth Israel to present a conference on the relationships between Muslims and Jews, entitled, “Muslims and Jews: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, Together”, on Sunday, December 6, 2009. Co-sponsors included: the Ohio Humanities Council, the National Endowment for Humanities, Noor Islamic Cultural Center, and the Interfaith Association of Central Ohio. 93 were in attendance, including 10 students and 34 educators.

Business partners include CIBER, and Rotary Clubs. Another long-standing partner is the Columbus Council on World Affairs (CCWA), with whom OIA collaborates on the “Great Decisions” lecture series and other events on world affairs. Cory Driver spoke at one such event on June 28, 2010 at the Dublin retirement Center. 50 residents came to hear his talk on Israeli-Palestinian Relations which was co-sponsored by MESC and the CCWA. Last year when the Council organized lectures by John Esposito, MESC and OIA provided seats for faculty, graduate and undergraduate students. The Ohio Center for Law-related Education sought the assistance of MESC for its annual Law and Citizenship conference for educating teachers and other community members about law. MESC’s Director keynoted this year, and has been a presenter or a keynote speaker for the past 5 years. He holds follow-up sessions to ensure that educators have a chance to discuss legal developments in Iraq and Afghanistan. The conference this year is scheduled for September 26 and 27.

Center staff and affiliated faculty members are in high demand by local, regional and national educational organizations. The director regularly speaks to numerous interfaith groups including the Interfaith Association of Central Ohio, churches, synagogues, and mosques. In Dec. 2009 MESC partnered with these organizations to host an interfaith dialogue featuring distinguished scholars from around the world; Dr. Payind chaired the panel “Muslims and Jews in the Past and Present” (120 in attendance). Thus MESC is providing opportunities for learning about the cultures and peoples of the ME via the current events lecture series and annual symposium; the Islam and Democracy lecture series; film festivals, music performances and other cultural events; and others.

Media:
Media relations are maintained through interviews with radio and television programs, submissions and press releases. The Center director alone has given more than 50 interviews to media outlets during AY 09, including Voice of America in English, Pashto and Persian, BBC in English, Pashto and Persian, CNN, Al-Jazeera, NPR, Radio Jamaica, Radio Free Europe, and others.
Examples include:

3/17/2010: “Situation in Afghanistan” NPR
4/2/2010: “President Obama’s Midnight Trip to Afghanistan” Voice of Afghans in Germany
4/6/2010: “U.S. Nuclear position vis-à-vis Iran & North Korea” Voice of America - Pashto

The OIA Communications Office maintains media relations and keeps networks informed of MESC’s activities.

Military:
MESC has been participating in numerous military and government events since Sept. 11, 2001. As a pioneer in military and law enforcement outreach, MESC provides regular consultations to government and law enforcement agencies. Over the past year, MESC has filled a critical need with the military’s focus on Afghanistan. In April, 2009 the director conducted a workshop on Afghanistan for 30 members of the Ohio National Guard, and with Dawood Azami, a senior journalist and producer at the BBC World Service, he facilitated a 2-day workshop on Afghan culture attended by trainers in the armed forces and Ohio government. Similar activities are done for 150 Marines preparing for deployment to Afghanistan (8/22/09). Dr. Payind also led a workshop on Iraq for 20 officers from the com-
bined armed forces on May 28, 2010. Finally, on July 13 and 14, 2010, Dr. Payind visited Fort Drum Army Base to give two lectures to 150 officers, mostly generals and colonels, on “Afghanistan Cultural Knowledge for Trainers.”

The Naval Graduate School, The Defense Language Institute, and TRADOC (which deals with cultural training for the Army), have all contacted MESC for cultural information on Afghanistan. The director has accepted an invitation to share his expertise as a panelist at the Culture Education and Training Summit of the US Army Intelligence Center at Fort Huachuca. The Director of MESC, as a native speaker of Pashto and Dari, tutors a select number of students and officials. MESC will partner with Texas and U Penn to reach more military trainers in the nation. Combining the expertise of historians, anthropologists, political scientists, scholars in adult education and journalists who are in the field, this enterprise will be able to address both the Iraqi and Afghan context, and tailor the information for soldiers and personnel in the field.
Location: Samarkand