Dear Readers,

I would like to discuss Title VI of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and its role in internationalizing our nation’s universities. Our center, as a Title VI National Resource Center, can provide a unique perspective on what Title VI has accomplished and what it may accomplish in the future. I can also speak to the subject, as I have been involved with Title VI and international programs related to Title VI for years. I served as director general of International Programs at Kabul University and director of the International House at Indiana University and was involved in several other internationally oriented organizations until I became director of the Middle East Studies Center (MESC) at Ohio State in 1987.

The idea behind Title VI as a component of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958 has been that the defense and security of the United States are inseparably bound with education. In passing the NDEA, congress recognized that Americans need to become better acquainted with foreign cultures and languages and improve their cultural competence in order to make informed decisions and make the United States and the world more secure, and to keep American business competitive in the global economy. Title VI programs were designed to establish a partnership between the federal government and institutions of higher education. Title VI plays an important role in “international knowledge production,” and the centers and programs of Title VI provide a model for “the strategy of building synergistic networks on centers of strength” in order to build knowledge and create a larger pool of experts on transnational and global subjects across the disciplines (Holzer, Harmon, 1998).

The Office of Postsecondary Education within the U.S. Department of Education administers Title VI programs, which include: American Overseas Research Centers; Business and International Education; Centers for International Business Education; Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships; Fulbright-Hays Training Grants–Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad; Fulbright-Hays Training Grants–Faculty Research Abroad; Fulbright-Hays Training Grants–Group Projects Abroad; Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad–Bilateral Projects; Institute for International Public Policy; International Research and Studies; Language Resource Centers; National Resource Centers; Technological Innovation

* A number of placements in intelligence and government agencies remain unknown due to nondisclosure.

Middle East Studies Center
322 Oxley Hall
1712 Neil Ave.
Columbus, OH 43210
(614) 292-5897 • mesc@osu.edu


- private sector (11%)
- higher education (15%)
- primary education (3%)
- government (1%)
- military (1%)
- nonprofit (3%)
- enrolled in graduate school (26%)
- information unavailable (40%)*

What's happening next at MESC?
Find out online at mesc.osu.edu
(Click on calendar.)
Title VI goals coincide with key items in the university’s Academic Plan, and with its goals for diversity. While maintaining the purpose and mandates of Title VI in its programs, MESC strives according to Ohio State’s academic goals, as well as to help build a strong international profile. Title VI grants help us do that by allowing us to create about a dozen and a half graduate fellowships in less commonly taught languages every year; support the intensive summer institute on Persian and Turkish; support the summer institute on Middle Eastern Cultures; seed positions; fund courses related to the Middle East; increase the number and levels of Middle East languages taught; sponsor between 15-20 foreign and American guest scholars every year; strengthen the Middle East Studies library; offer instructional resources for secondary and postsecondary educators; facilitate academic and educational activities on campus; provide consultations for the media, business, and private citizens; organize, teach, or co-sponsor a number of teacher training programs and courses; and conduct or arrange numerous outreach activities. Obviously, Title VI grant authorities and university entities are important stakeholders we take into account for decisions on our programs.

With requirements of the above two authorities upheld, the stakeholder held in highest regard is the student, who truly lies at the intersection between those two agencies, and who remains the target of both of their missions. If the student benefits from our programs, that is the most important indicator of success. Teachers in secondary and postsecondary institutions are also a beneficiary of the highest priority. It is hoped that teachers will pass on the benefits of their knowledge and training and create an ever more internationally competent pool of applicants to our universities. Therefore, the measures of impact we choose to rely on are closely tied to those stakeholders—we look towards quantifiable improvements, such as increased enrollments, increased graduation rates among students pursuing a Middle East–related track, and increased postgraduate studies or employment (see chart on page 1), as a way to show our programs are making a difference.

In addition, we rely on the qualitative information we receive from students and other participants through surveys and unsolicited comments.

It is harder to quantify the difference we are making through K-12 outreach and teacher training, but it is clear they are using our services and are benefiting from them. Our own educator resources have been borrowed 29 times over the past academic year, for a total of 72 items. We maintain the Middle East resources on Ohio State professor Merry Merryfield’s TeachGlobalEd.net web site, which she uses in her Global Education courses. MESC staff, or students recruited and trained by MESC staff, go into classrooms several times a year to teach about aspects of Middle Eastern cultures. I am involved in several teachers’ institutes for pre-collegiate and collegiate level teachers, including our own institute for teachers. We receive positive feedback and many teachers in the area have come to rely on the International Affairs “Global School Bus” program, the speaker’s bureau we work through in order to reach many of these schools.

To give a clearer picture of what the Middle East Studies Center is accomplishing, how it is functioning, and how it is using its resources, it is useful to look at how we are spending Title VI funding. The vast majority of funds go to support FLAS Fellowships, while the remaining categories are relatively equal in funding levels (see chart at left). The second largest portion, after FLAS Fellowships, goes to courses, which also directly affects students. Many of our activities do not require many funds, such as outreach and teacher training conducted by center staff, or we receive co-sponsorship and reduce the cost that way. There is virtually no activity that does not receive co-sponsorship or benefit from partnership with other university units. The center also has one of the least staffing compositions of any NRC in the country, falling well below the benchmarks in terms of number of personnel and full-time equivalent percentages. The FLAS Fellowship, proficiency tests for fellows, the many fiscal transactions and balancing the budget, travel arrangements, program planning, organizing academic and educational activities, course preparation and instruction, outreach, training, media questions and interviews, collaborative projects, proposal writing and major reports to Title VI authorities and to the university, help with delegations and guests to the university, consultations, and a myriad of items too numerous to mention keep all of us at the center working at full capacity and often more. All Title VI NRCs depend heavily on the quality and hard work of their language and area studies faculty. Their presence is one of the most important prerequisites for obtaining NRC status.

Because of our staffing situation, and the need to provide access to specialized knowledge, the center relies on faculty support to make its academic activities accessible. Faculty interest and support are important and crucial to our success. Achieving excellence in academic programming requires teamwork with faculty members in organizing activities, and we look forward to further progress based on such partnerships. We look forward to our next faculty lunch where we will host this important group. Of course, even if faculty members are not involved with the center, their mere presence at our university helps us because it makes Middle East–related academics stronger and improves our proposal for Title VI. This is why seeding positions is another important strategy for both university goals and Title VI goals.

It is difficult to quantify every measure of success. However, aside from survey results and the other indicators mentioned above, there is another important aspect that one can point to in terms of concrete results. That is the aggregate and long-term effect of Title VI. The establishment of less commonly taught languages, active teacher training programs, and the reputation of universities with NRCs are all
Letter from the Editor

The original plan for this letter included a summary of recent events, a discussion of what was coming up, pieces of news. I began writing it during my two-week tenure as a juror for the Common Pleas Court of Franklin County. However, as I was fulfilling my jury duty—mainly by waiting—I had plenty of time to reconsider its content. So, here I will share my reflections on the American legal system and certain comparative aspects of legal traditions from the Middle East.

Citizens of all walks of life gather in the jurors’ waiting room, many in spite of considerable hardship. Fellow jurors told me about the work they were doing at three o’clock in the morning in order to keep up with deadlines during their time away from the office, the complicated arrangements they had to make for child care (these two weeks happened to fall when many schools were on spring break), the difficulties with finding parking, and the struggle to fight traffic during the day’s rush hours, among many other difficulties. One gets the impression that most Americans are juggling obligations and dealing with unmovable deadlines. Still, everyone accepted their temporary job at the courts—and they enjoyed the time off work, or at least, the change of pace. I kept several things going while away from the center—the FLAS Fellowship award process, this bulletin, and, ironically, communication about ideas we are exploring with the Moritz College of Law in relation to Jewish and Islamic law.

At the same time I was discussing ideas about the Islamic and Jewish legal systems, both based on religious frameworks, I was living through experiences with the American legal system, a supposedly secular system. I found that the conceptions of one’s national identity and the fundamental values at the core of a culture are brought to light by the legal process. My interest in these ideas became more profound as I considered different systems of justice and the cultural bases on which they rest. I often encountered the idea that our system of government is more advanced than those in the Middle East, particularly due to its secular nature. I understand that point of view; however, the need for better understanding of the legal traditions in the Middle East is apparent to me during these discussions—people are not aware of the highly sophisticated nature of Islamic law. Even in academia, ethnocentric conceptions of Middle Eastern legal systems remain persistent.

The first lecture in our Ottoman History lecture series (see page 19) was about this topic: “Why did Emine go to court? Kadi Justice between History and Anthropology,” presented by Bogaç Ergene, a graduate of The Ohio State University teaching at the University of Vermont. In his summary of the state of the field, he explained a dominant perception in the literature that the Ottoman legal system was “irrational.”

Legal systems in the Middle East, even those under a secular government, are influenced to a greater degree by Islamic law, or the Shar’ia. In Islamic jurisprudence, or fiqh, two of the primary sources for legal interpretation, or usul, are based on scriptural sources: the Qur’an and the Sunna. Religious texts may seem inappropriate as sources of law from an American perspective. However, when there is group consensus on their authority, it is understandable how they could become essential sources for a society’s legal system. It is important to remember that the current church/state separation in America is a result of developments that occurred gradually over long periods of time. Even today, when the separation of church and state is taken for granted, it is interesting how often they intersect in the legal process. My court experience demonstrated to me how difficult it is to separate culture from religion. Here are three examples:

1. Jurors must promise to uphold their obligation to honesty and impartiality by swearing. They don’t have to say “I swear”—they have the option of saying “I affirm”—but many of them do swear to it, and in any case, the act is imprinted by a religious mold.
2. God is invoked by jurors when they are being questioned. This happened during my jury duty on a couple of occasions. A juror’s integrity is being questioned, and, in the juror’s mind, aspects of his or her integrity rest on religious convictions.
3. One of the judges, showing sensitivity to cultural norms, asked if we needed to take Friday afternoon off because it was Good Friday. In referring to Good Friday, however, he never mentioned it by name. I would like to know if it would be illegal for him to mention it, or if it was his personal preference to maintain the separation in his courtroom as far as possible. In any case, he acknowledged that religion and its observances are a part of the greater society.

There is nothing like a court experience to make the basic tenants of American law—such as the right to representation, the prosecution’s burden of proof, and the presumption of innocence—become vivid. I noticed that these tenants, and the fundamental values that support them, sparked feelings of national pride in the personnel of the court at every level. The commissioners, the bailiffs, the attorneys, and the judges during their announcements would make statements such as “this is the best legal system in the world” and “I would not want to be a part of any other legal...

Sources Cited:
Office of Postsecondary Education, International Education Programs web site (ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/iegps/index.html).

Best wishes,

Alam Payind
system in the world.” I did feel lucky to be an American when I put myself in the defendants’ shoes and realized that if I were ever put on trial, the burden of proof would be on the prosecution, and that I would be presumed innocent until proven guilty. However, I wouldn’t necessarily say that our judicial system would be the most appropriate one for any other group of people. Laws must be bound by cultural norms.

Before closing, there are items worth your attention and interest that speak to the increased coverage of the Middle East at Ohio State. In the following pages, find out about: a study abroad course that took place in Jerusalem (page 12); Ohio State’s expansion of Central Asian Studies (page 4); exciting fieldwork conducted by our faculty (see Margaret Mills, page 10); top scholars who have visited our campus (pages 5, 7, 8, 19); and events of the local community and beyond (page 5). The most exciting piece of news is that we have hired a new outreach coordinator, Cory Driver (see his article on page 6), who recently completed his tenure as a Peace Corps volunteer in Morocco.

Best regards,
Melinda Wightman

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Institutional Development

Ohio State Strengthens Study of Central Asia

The importance of Central Asia has grown immensely in the post-Cold War, post-9/11 world because the region resides at the nexus between Russia, China, the Middle East, and South Asia. Behind the iron curtain for most of the 20th century, Central Asia has undergone rapid post-socialist democratic reforms and economic liberalizations since the collapse of the Soviet Union. The region is of current interest to world superpowers because of its large underdeveloped reserve of hydrocarbons. Ohio State is positioning itself as a leader in the study of Central Asia by teaching languages specific to Central Asian culture, by hiring faculty who specialize in the region, and by utilizing the resources of three Area Studies Centers: the Center for Slavic and East European Studies, the East Asian Studies Center, and the Middle East Studies Center.

“The five newly independent countries of Central Asia—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—are situated on the confluence of past empires, current ethnic and religious tensions, and geopolitical competition among regional and outside powers,” explains Alam Payind, director of the Middle East Studies Center and a political scientist who examines Central Asia in his courses. “Ohio State faculty teach the three major languages spoken in Central Asia (Turkish, Persian, and Russian), as well as less commonly taught languages such as Uzbek.” Uzbek language instruction at Ohio State is collaboratively funded by the Center for Slavic and East European Studies, the Middle East Studies Center, and the East Asian Studies Center.

In addition to language training, Ohio State now features scholars who specialize in Central Asian research and teaching that spans a broad range of disciplines. Professors performing research and teaching courses in art history, political science, history, and anthropology are increasing the opportunities for students to learn about the history of Central Asia. Cultural anthropologist Morgan Liu and folklorist Margaret Mills are faculty members in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Culture who specialize in Central Asian research. Islamic historian Steven Dale specializes in and teaches courses on the history of the eastern Islamic world and Central Asia. The Department of History has also recently hired Scott Levi, a scholar who specializes in the history of the Greater Islamic World and will begin teaching in fall 2008.

As Title VI National Resource Centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education to strengthen and maintain U.S. capacity in foreign languages, three Ohio State Area Studies Centers are actively promoting Central Asia. “We make presentations to groups in the Columbus community about the importance of Central Asia in today’s world,” explains Lance Erickson, assistant director of the Slavic center. “We also maintain a video library of more than 1,700 titles presented in the local language with subtitles. We sponsor an advanced Russian language table with several weeks dedicated to Central Asian topics and are working with CIBER from the Fisher College of Business on a future Emerging Markets course focusing on Central Asian markets that will include a spring break study abroad experience to the region.”

“The East Asian Studies Center has been involved in enriching the study of Inner and Central Asia in a variety of ways,” states Patricia Sieber, director of the center. “An East Asian Studies Center postdoctoral scholar taught a course on China and Inner Asia to make students aware of the historic and contemporary importance of political, cultural, and economic ties between these regions. Also our “Rethinking China” lecture series has featured world-renowned speakers such as Professors Liu Yingsheng and Wang Binghua who have addressed facets of Islamic cultures in the region.”

“Ohio State is now positioned to add Central Asian studies into its portfolio of strengths. If Ohio State were to become known for its Central Asian studies, it could contribute valuable knowledge about this increasingly important region of the world,” explains Dr. Liu. “The breadth of Central Asia topics taught and studied at Ohio State allows students and scholars special insight into this complex collection of cultures, economies, and religious beliefs.”

Victor van Buchem
Public Relations Coordinator
Office of International Affairs
Recent Program Highlights

Somali Studies
The Somali Studies Association Conference was organized by the Center for African studies and co-sponsored by the Middle East Studies Center. It took place over four days, August 16 through 19, 2007, with over 250 participants coming from as far away as Somalia, Sweden, Russia, Kenya, Japan, and South Africa. There were over six plenary and 50 concurrent sessions. While many discussions focused on the situation in Somalia and the Horn of Africa itself, and on issues of geopolitical and macroeconomic importance, much of the conference was designed to address the increasingly complex issues affecting the Somali Diaspora, in particular in the sphere of education. With this in mind, Friday, August 17, was designed to host an all-day Teachers’ Workshop, as well as a concentration of community development sessions. The Middle East Studies Center is also a major supporter of the Somali language program.

The teachers’ workshops hosted about 20 persons and included representatives from Columbus City Schools; St. Paul’s Public Schools; Licking Heights (Licking County) Public Schools; Voice of America High School, Minneapolis; San Diego Unified School District; Toronto School District; and International Academies of Ohio.

Hebrew Poetry from Muslim and Christian Spain
The Middle East Studies Center, partnering with the Near Eastern Languages and Cultures department, the Melton Center for Jewish Studies, and the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies hosted, “The Dream of the Poem: Hebrew Poetry from Muslim and Christian Spain 950–1492.” This event, held October 2, 2007, showcased world-renowned author Peter Cole, as well as Dr. Adena Tennenbaum, a faculty member of the NELC department. Mr. Cole read selections from his book of the same name. Over 25 people were in attendance.

Oil in the Global Economy
On November 13, 2007, the Middle East Studies Center partnered with the Center for Latin American Studies and the Center for International Business Education Research (CIBER) to host a lecture, “The Global Political Economy of Oil and ‘The New Nationalism’.” See the full article about this event on page 7. Thirty people attended.

Business Collaboration
Dr. Alam Payind, director of the Middle East Studies Center, spoke to a graduate class in the College of Business about Turkey as part of the college’s Emerging Markets course. In Dr. Payind’s lecture, “Turkey as an Emerging Market,” he not only addressed the economic situation, but also explained the relevant Turkish history and the related social, political, ethnic, and religious factors. Dr. Payind provided insights into how a multitude of factors affect business in the Turkish Republic. This event was attended by 25 students and three faculty members.

Current Events Coverage
The Middle East Studies Center, partnering with the Mershon Center for International Security Studies, presented a symposium on Iraq and Afghanistan on February 13, 2008. The symposium featured two distinguished scholars, Dr. Alam Payind and Dr. Tahir al-Bakaa, who gave their views on the current situations in Afghanistan and Iraq, respectively. The full recording of the symposium is available online at http://streaming1.osu.edu/ramgen/media2/intlstds/021308.rm.

Arts and Performance Film
“Shadow of Afghanistan,” a documentary by Jim Burroughs and Suzanne Bauman, was shown in the Drexel Gateway Theater on Thursday, November 15, 2007. The Middle East Studies Center partnered with The Free Press to host this documentary about the political landscape of Afghanistan over the past 50 years. A discussion of the events depicted in the film immediately followed. Dr. Alam Payind, Bob Fitrikis, and Suzanne Patzer provided commentary and moderated questions and comments from the audience. Approximately 90 people attended, with 20 educators among them.

Stand-Up Comedy: Aiding Cultural Understanding
On February 12, 2008, Hillel at Ohio State, the Columbus Jewish Federation, and the Middle East Studies Center collaborated to host the Israeli-Palestinian Comedy Tour. The audience, which numbered more than 400, laughed hysterically, but were also challenged by somewhat edgy performances by all the comedians who addressed issues of conversion, immigration/emigration, Orthodox Judaism, and Palestinian statehood. The insights provided by the comedians, whose points of view gave the audience new ways of understanding the issues, were delivered with humor and a level of candor that only comedy can allow. The attendees spoke very highly of this event, and many spoke of having preconceptions changed and/or challenged.

Government Collaboration
The Columbus Division of Police held an East African Conference on Tuesday, March 25, 2008, to educate about the refugee communities in Columbus, which number over 30,000 people. As part of this conference, Dr. Alam Payind gave a lecture, “Insights for Law Enforcement: A Guide to Islam.” Dr. Payind not only discussed several topics on Islam, including practices law enforcement officers should be aware of, but also talked about Somali religious, social, and cultural practices in particular. We have already received unsolicited positive feedback and thanks for Dr. Payind’s lecture. The audience numbered over 300, most of whom were municipal or state government employees.

P-12 Outreach
Presenting Global Perspectives
During every academic year, the Middle East Studies Center provides volunteer training for the “Global School Bus” program, which provides schools with presenters who teach a short unit on the Middle East. A sampling of the schools that benefited from the project are Emerson Immersion Elementary, Westerville South High School, Bexley Middle School, Gahanna Lincoln High School, and Darby High School. Topics for discussion include, but are not limited to, Turkey in Modernity, Islam and Cultural Practices, and Somali Culture. Participation in this project is based on the number of requests received from schools during the academic year independently and through the P-12 Outreach office of OIA.

Scholarly Outreach
MESC staff, besides training outreach volunteers, does P-12 outreach directly. Dr. Alam Payind and Dr. Merry Merryfield gave a lecture at Bexley High School on February 19, 2008, on the history of relations between Iraq and the West. The lecture was co-sponsored with the College of Education and Human Ecology at Ohio State. About 200 people attended the lecture. More than 20 of them were educators. On January 7, Melinda Wightman gave a lecture at Bexley High School about the Ayatollah Khamenei and the role of religion in Iranian society. Fourteen students were in attendance.

(continued on page 6)
**Recent Program Highlights** (continued from page 5)

**Teacher Training**

Dr. Merry Merryfield, in the College of Education and Human Ecology, with the support of the Middle East Studies Center and other Title VI NRCs, maintains a database of web sites containing educational material on world cultures, issues, and primary sources from other parts of the world: teachglobalized.net. The site provides links to sites on geography, media, history, embassies, fine arts, and country specific information, as well as lesson plans. The Middle East Studies Center identifies online resources related to the Middle East and reviews them for the site, as well as producing its own. All of the resources are vetted by Title VI National Resource Centers at Ohio State and other NRCs in the country.

**Somali Studies**

As part of the Somali Studies Association Conference (August 16-19, 2007), the Center for African Studies organized a teacher training workshop (see page 5 for details).

**Community Development**

**Interfaith Dialogue**

On September 9, 2007, leaders of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish organizations gathered for the Interfaith Community Dinner at Saint Andrew’s Catholic Church in Columbus. The Middle East Studies Center sponsored a roundtable discussion in which the director, Dr. Alam Payind, took part. It was a lively and fruitful discussion that exposed many faith practitioners to adherents of other creeds, as well as scholarly analysis of modern events and ancient texts. Of the 60 people in attendance, over 15 were educators in P-12, university, or religious institutions.

**Community Groups**

As part of the continuing effort to reach out to the community and provide scholarly information to community groups, Dr. Payind gave a lecture at St. Elizabeth Church in Columbus on Islam and the Bible. He spoke about the many similarities in subject matters, as well as the subtle and important differences between the scriptures. The small, but interested, crowd of 16 thanked Dr. Payind profusely.

**Media**

Dr. Payind regularly conducts interviews for radio programs including, but not limited to, Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, and the BBC. Some examples of his interviews have been:

- Civilian Casualties and Middle East Reaction: 10/14/2007
- The U.S. Primaries: A Perspective: 1/5/2008
- President Bush’s Trip to the Middle East: 1/7/2008
- The Results of Parliamentary Elections in Pakistan and the Implications: 2/20/2008
- U.S. Foreign Policy in Iraq and Iran with Comments on Ahamaninejad’s Visit to Iraq: 3/1/2008
- U.S. Presidential Primaries’ Implications for America’s Middle Eastern Policies: 3/5/2008

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**Middle East Studies Center Outreach and Curriculum Enhancement**

**Here is a note from Cory on his experiences over the past four-and-a-half months:**

I joined The Middle East Studies Center in December 2007 as the new outreach coordinator and I have rapidly become part of the MESC operations. I came to Ohio State from Morocco where I spent over two years facilitating small business development projects and researching mixed-ethnic communities in the High Atlas Mountains of Morocco’s southeast. I am keen to continue my research and to that end I am pursuing a master’s in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at Ohio State.

Since I was hired, I have coordinated or played a key role in the large number of events that have taken place. Among them are P-12 outreach, assisting the director in his outreach activities, coordinating proficiency tests, and facilitating lecture series held on campus. I also play an important role in the evaluation process of the center’s programs and track key outcomes and indicators for every activity.

One of my favorite projects so far was the Iraq and Afghanistan Symposium. I liked that I was able to be involved in every aspect of the entire life of the project, from conceptualization to arranging speakers, the venue, lodging, food, advertising, recording, and reporting. I look forward to continuing this process for many events to come.

Another of my favorite aspects of being an outreach coordinator is building relationships with a multitude of departments, centers, associations, and groups around campus and around Ohio. Working with other groups in and around Ohio State happens in two ways and both are really exciting. The first is by including others in programming we designed that may be of interest in but do not have the abilities or means to do themselves. The second is the reverse—when we partner with other groups, to come alongside them and provide resources so that they can realize more of what they seek to accomplish while at the same time realizing MESC goals.

I have been assisting Melinda Wightman with the FLAS Fellowship and proficiency test administration, and I acted as a liaison among the decision committee, students, and MESC. I feel that it is an extremely interesting time to be involved in Middle Eastern language and culture studies because there is tremendous interest from students. The FLAS applications reflect the high quality of scholarship in which the students are engaging.

I am especially pleased to be the new outreach coordinator for the Middle East Studies Center, and I look forward to many opportunities to facilitate the spreading of contextual knowledge about this fascinating region.

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**New Outreach Coordinator**

We are pleased to announce the appointment of a new outreach coordinator at the center, Cory Driver. We are happy to have Cory on board and to benefit from his expertise as a former Peace Corps volunteer. He has hit the ground running—coordinating a number of programs including the Symposium on Iraq and Afghanistan included in the Symposium on Islam and the Bible. Our former outreach coordinator, Catalina Hunt, was a dedicated member of our team and we will miss her very much. The high-quality service she provided in both outreach to schools and to the community and the academic activities she organized on campus were a great benefit to us and to Ohio State. We are happy to inform you that she is now pursuing her PhD full-time in the Department of History and is a FLAS Fellow.
On November 13, 2007, the Middle East Studies Center partnered with the Center for Latin American Studies and the Center for International Business Education Research (CIBER) to host a lecture, “The Global Political Economy of Oil and The New Nationalism,” by Tom O’Donnell, professor at The New School in New York City and Fulbright Scholar. He spoke about the implications of 67% of oil being sold out of the Middle East. He further spoke about Iran’s current situation vis-à-vis oil production and the series of events that have led to its diminished capacity. The “New Nationalism” refers to certain policies and actions within Iranian politics that stand in opposition to American and European objections to their behavior, particularly in regard to oil production and nuclear development. Thirty people attended.

The last successful embargo was in 1973 when OPEC cut off world oil supplies. One may wonder why another successful embargo attempt has not been made. The situation in 1973 was quite different because Henry Kissinger had not yet orchestrated world efforts to put away oil reserves. He called together 1st-world countries and asked them to put 90 days of their total imports underground. Within a year, every 1st-world country joined and created a world oil supply that was large enough to counter any further oil embargo attempts. This world cooperation constituted the creation of the International Energy Agency (IEA – ieaa.org). Currently, there are two billion barrels in storage—enough for four years if any of the Persian Gulf states tried to cut off oil.

A projection based on 2006 data from the IEA shows that oil will continue to be a main source of energy in the world until 2030 and further into the future. This is also true according to the American Information Agency. Forty percent of all energy is from oil. Ninety-five percent of transport in the world is fueled by oil distillates. Even with radical energy policy changes worldwide, it would take decades to remove oil as a major energy source. And it will also take a long time for oil to run out. The amount of oil remaining in proven oil reserves is still more than has already been consumed (U.S. Geological Survey), not to mention the unproven, undiscovered, and difficult-to-obtain sources of oil.

While it is certain the world will be dependant on oil for the foreseeable future, it is also true that most oil comes from the Middle East (see Proven World Oil Reserves chart). For example, Iran alone has more oil than any continent except North America. In 1979 the revolution took Iran offline, and the Iran-Iraq war continued to keep it offline. The nation started to recover from the wars but needed to put the structures in place to be able to produce and sell oil. When Rafsanjani was president (1989-1997), he convinced the majlis (the Iranian parliament) that it needed foreign investment in order to make the oil production viable again. Conoco Phillips was planning to build a facility off-shore. President Bill Clinton put sanctions on Iran immediately to the objection of European countries and the Chinese, who took the issue up with the World Trade Organization (WTO – wto.org). Their argument was that in the colonial days it would have been called extraterritoriality, a situation in which one country’s laws are applied to another country. As a result, Clinton promised to ease the restrictions. However, soon after, this attempt was rendered futile when congress passed the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (Clinton signed into law August 1996). The act has been reinstated by an overwhelming majority every five years since. Currently, Iran is producing only two-thirds of what it was producing under Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi’s regime before the Iranian Revolution.

The question is: Do the Iranians have an oil weapon? To learn about the answer to that question, and more about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, please listen to Dr. O’Donnell’s lecture on the MESC web site (see this event on the calendar—11/13/07—and follow the links).

**Sources:**

“The Global Political Economy of Oil and The New Nationalism,” Lecture by Tom O’Donnell at The Ohio State University, November 13, 2007, recording and PowerPoint available on the MESC web site (see this event on the calendar—11/13/07—and follow the links). See also Professor O’Donnell’s web site: TomOD.com.

“Clinton signs Iran-Libya sanctions act,” CNN online, cnn.com/US/9608/05/clinton/, August 5, 1996.

Recent Academic Activity

Symposium on Iraq and Afghanistan

The Middle East Studies Center, partnering with the Mershon Center for International Security Studies, presented a symposium on Iraq and Afghanistan on February 13, 2008. The symposium featured two distinguished scholars, Dr. Alam Payind and Dr. Tahir al-Bakaa, who gave their views on the current situations in Afghanistan and Iraq, respectively. The scholars, who continue to be influential in their countries, provided a picture of the way recent events have been seen from insiders’ points of view, and the way that they see their countries’ histories.

Both scholars’ life experiences have taken place during tumultuous times. In the case of Dr. al-Bakaa, he has lived in Iraq under King Faysal II, during and after the coup of 1958, and later under Saddam Hussein, and finally under U.S. occupation. Dr. Payind has seen Afghanistan under King Zahir Shah, President Dawud, the 10-year Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the Mujahiddin regime, followed by the Taliban regime, the U.S.-led invasion of the country, and subsequent Karzai government. Dr. Payind has been back to Afghanistan six times since the establishment of the Karzai government. Having lived these experiences, each speaker was uniquely qualified to give the cultural, historical, and current social context for recent events.

Dr. Payind, director of MESC, served in the Afghan government as the director general of Cultural and Foreign Relations and was a professor at Kabul University before the Soviet invasion in 1979 forced him to seek refuge in the United States. During the symposium, he gave the relevant historic background for understanding contemporary conditions and spoke about the current situation and its context. He also provided a list of positive accomplishments and delineated the challenges Afghanistan has been facing, particularly in the post-9/11 era. In particular, security, poverty, and the struggle for the central government to maintain control are major and interrelated concerns. For example, poppy production is at the intersection of those three factors: poor farmers grow it out of desperation; the police forces are not able to enforce laws against it; and the war lords who still retain power ensure its continuation. Other aspects he discussed include the ethnic makeup of Afghanistan, the complexity of the society, and how those factor into Afghan identity. He also explained why the situation in Afghanistan may be the worst invasion in its history, and the resulting consequences that led to the situation now (see timeline below).

Dr. al-Bakaa was the minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research and the president of Mustansiriya University before many threats on his life forced him to leave the country and come to the United States. During the symposium, he spoke about the simultaneous unity and diversity of Iraq prior to the U.S. invasion and the current sectarianism, which is worsening. He focused on the effects of de-Ba’athification and the current religious and ethnic quotas in place under the provisional authority, which have exacerbated the fracturing of the country and sectarian conflict. He said that Iraqis were hopeful for positive change when America invaded, but that America made some critical mistakes in the time after the overthrowing of the regime. Unfortunately, since the borders were left unprotected and the military and police dissolved, oppositional groups were able to enter the country. Iraq was left without a government for too long and with de-Ba’athification and other factors increasing the unemployment rate and the instability and number of unoccupied and hopeless people also increasing, a condition conducive to insurrection was created. Dr. al-Bakaa pointed out an irony in regard to the level of cooperation found among various Iraqi populations. At first the southern provinces showed resistance to U.S. occupation, but the northern ones cooperated. Now the opposite is true—the states that were the most easily taken over during the invasion are the ones that show the most resistance now.

Professor Richard Herrmann, director of the Mershon Center, introduced the scholars and provided insights on U.S. foreign policy, which he gained from listening to their discourses. The event was well attended by scores of students, at least 18 faculty members, staff, and at least four representatives of the Department of Homeland Security.

The focus of the symposium remained within the framework of 20th- and early 21st-century history, but a chronology of shared invasions dating back to 550 BC was provided by Dr. Payind at the beginning of his talk:

- 550 BC – Akhemenian Persians occupied what is now Iraq and Afghanistan.
- 320s BC – Alexander the Great’s armies occupied what is now Iraq and Afghanistan.
- 637 AD – When Arab Muslims defeated the Sassanian Empire, of which both Iraq and Afghanistan were outposts.
- 1220 AD – Genghis Khan invaded Afghanistan.
- 1258 – Hulagu Khan invaded Baghdad.
- 1840s, 1870s, and 1920s – Britain occupied Afghanistan.
- 1919 – Britain occupied Iraq and Iraq became a British mandate.

A full video of the event is available online at http://streaming1.osu.edu/ramgen/media2/intlstds/021308.rm.
Summer Study Abroad
Opportunities

Ohio State Programs

Ohio State’s Office of International Affairs offers several study abroad programs in the Middle East. Among these are opportunities to study in Egypt and Turkey. Ohio State students should make an appointment with the Office of International Affairs as soon as they begin making plans to study abroad, whether through an Ohio State program or a non-Ohio State program.

Address:
The Ohio State University
100 Oxley Hall
1712 Neil Avenue
Columbus, OH 43210-1219, USA
E-mail: oia@osu.edu
Telephone: (614) 292-6101
Fax: (614) 292-4725
Web: oia.osu.edu

Non-Ohio State Programs

Arabic

Yarmouk University in Irbid, Jordan, through the University of Virginia
June 10 – August 9, 2008
Intensive Arabic program, complete immersion
virginia.edu/arabic/YarmoukInformation.html

Al Akhawayn University, Ifrane, Morocco
June 2 – July 25, 2008, in two sessions:
June 2 – 27 and June 30 – July 25, 2008
Intensive Arabic language and North African studies
aranas@alakjawayan.ma

American University in Cairo
A number of summer courses in Intensive Arabic and Arab Studies can be found at aucegypt.edu/academics/all/intensive/Pages/Summer.aspx.

Retraction:
The Fast-Track Intensive Arabic Program in Amman, sponsored by the University of Arizona’s Center for Middle Eastern Studies and the National Middle Eastern Language Resource Center, previously endorsed by MESC, will not be taking place.

Hebrew

Rothberg International School, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Ulpan
The Jerusalem Ulpan is an intensive Hebrew language course designed for visitors with an academic background who are interested in learning Hebrew through the Jerusalem experience.

June 24 – July 31, 2008
Application Deadline: May 15, 2008
Coordinator: Hodaya Kahana Ariel

University of Haifa
Summer Ulpans – July 7 – July 30 and August 4 – August 28, 2008
Contact: overseas.haifa.ac.il/page.asp?id=72&a=a3&b=b4

Turkish

The American Research Institute in Turkey in cooperation with Princeton University
June 23 – August 13, 2008
Summer program in advanced Turkish language at Bogaziçi University in Istanbul
Contact: ccat.sas.upenn.edu/ARIT/ARITSummerLanguageProgram.htm
Application: princeton.edu/~turkish/ARIT’08.html

Bogazici University in Turkey
The Language Center, School of Arts and Sciences
June 23 – August 13, 2008
Intensive course in Turkish language and Culture
Contact: tlc@boun.edu.tr or boun.edu.tr/special/web.html

Azerbaijani

Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center Program in Baku, Azerbaijan
The Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center and the Department of Central Eurasian Studies at Indiana University, along with our on-site partner, the Azerbaijan University of Languages, are pleased to announce an intensive summer program for the Azerbaijani language in Baku, Azerbaijan. Pending approval by the IU Office of Overseas Study, the program will provide 160 hours of advanced language training, four hours each morning, five days a week for eight weeks, as well as supplemental cultural events in the afternoons and evenings and several weekend trips to nearby historical sites.
Notes from the Field:

Professor Margaret Mills on Her Oral History and Other Projects in Afghanistan

Professor Margaret Mills of the Near Eastern Languages and Cultures Department returned in November 2007 from Afghanistan where she went to follow up with individuals she had worked with on various collaborative projects since 2003. One of her projects is the research she does with women activists in the country. Just over two years ago, she and Professor Sally Kitch, then of the Department of Women’s Studies, convened the conference, “Afghan Women Leaders Speak” at Ohio State (see the publication online at muse.jhu.edu/journals/nwsa_journal/v018/18.3mills.html), in which seven activist women from Afghanistan, and still others based in the United States, came to share their experiences working to improve conditions for women and Afghan society as a whole. The five women she was able to meet again in Kabul remembered the conference with pleasure. Some of them are in their same positions in NGOs and other organizations, while others had changed to different positions. They all continue to lead remarkable lives, however, some traveling to provincial project sites, others based in Kabul.

A young male colleague now researching oral history in Kabul neighborhoods for the Aga Khan Fund for Culture, Khadim Hussein Ruhany, had previously trained as an oral historian during an undergraduate training project at Kabul University funded by the George Soros Foundation under which students conducted oral history research in Kabul and other parts of Afghanistan. Each of the students was from a different region, so he or she could go back to his or her respective home site and collect data from the people there. The study produced a collection of recordings and transcripts that are now housed in the Afghanistan Studies section in the Kabul University Library. They are kept safe there until there is an opportunity to study them further.

Mr. Ruhany got in touch by e-mail before Dr. Mills’ last visit, asking to discuss oral history research methods, a conversation that evolved into a two-day workshop offered for history, archeology, and anthropology students at Kabul U., which she team-taught with Mr. Ruhany. The American Institute for Afghanistan Studies supported the event. Mr. Ruhany had found some good sources on the Web—a University of North Carolina web site (unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/oral_history.html) provided some good advice for laypersons on doing oral history research—but he also wanted to examine the connections and distinctions between oral history and folklore studies, specifically as applied to Afghanistan. As they discussed the Afghan context further, a workshop for other interested university students became a clear necessity. Many of the 30 or so attending students came from the history department, where oral history is not otherwise taught at this time. The students designed research topics and practiced interviewing each other as part of the learning exercises. Their choices of research topics were themselves interesting, reflecting the challenges they feel as young educated Afghans who understand the urgency of rebuilding their country.

The workshop presented three different types of data—personal experience narratives, oral histories, and oral traditions. Personal experience narratives focus on one person’s own memories of events from his or her life. Oral history is the second degree of narrative collection because it is based on the recollections of other individuals’ experiences—so memories and stories of parents or relatives are often the topic. Oral traditions include stories passed down through many generations, going back further in time. Oral verbal art and oral memory still predominate in Afghan cultural life over written literature, given the current literacy rates (estimated at 40% for men and perhaps 15% for women).

In the workshop, the 30 students formed five teams to develop a team research topic for which they devised open-ended interview questions in Dari Persian language, aimed at uncovering the interviewees’ thoughts on a particular topic. The goal was to have the interviewees speak as freely as possible and shape their responses in their own ways. In each group, they chose roles, one student being the interviewee, one the lead interviewer, one taking notes, and others acting as observers/coaches. The groups chose topics such as history of education, marriage customs and strategies (a matter of direct interest to these young, mostly unmarried students), and trauma narratives, including women’s suicide. Some students within the groups already had direct experience with their chosen topics and served as interviewees.

Even though it was a short workshop, students were able to practice interviewing and begin the process of post-interview write-ups. The students expressed interest in the workshop’s being turned into a full course on doing oral history research. Professor Mills shares their sense of urgency in documenting Afghanistan’s difficult recent history, though the painful aspects and potential political vulnerability of such work were also not lost on the students. Professor Mills is engaged in her own long-term oral history project, with a family she has known in Herat, in western Afghanistan, since the 1970s.

The workshop covered different disciplinary approaches to oral history collection and the various disciplinary angles researchers come from. Historians look for data to develop a historical narrative, ideally using oral data that can be correlated to answer, at least provisionally, the questions, “What happened?” “What are the facts?” They seek multiple perspectives on a situation for a multidimensional view. Conflict resolution, as supported by post-conflict truth and reconciliation investigations, also relies heavily on oral histories with an emphasis on verifying particular events. These sorts of investigations are not, at present, a priority for Afghan civil society activists, however. Past abuses are still too fresh—in fact, not even past, making for some apprehension over the uses of oral history research.

Among other disciplines directly engaged in oral history research, social anthropologists may seek information about general social patterns and/or social structure as it changes. Folklorists and other ethnographers of speech, on the other hand, may stress the conceptual and rhetorical organization of people’s narratives, less concerned with “the truth” as such, or with generalized social or historical patterns, but rather with how someone perceived or interpreted a situation or event. Thus, folklorists engage in oral history collection stressing a different aspect: the point of view of the interviewee or witness. Folklorists are looking for the shape of the story, so the witness’s style of expression and all of the details in
the telling of the story are important. Today folklorists are generally dedicated to discourse study and not necessarily concerned with corroboration, except as a community does it for its own purposes. Folklorists focus on detailed textual analysis—for that reason, a record of a respondent’s verbal performance, including non-verbal information, is necessary. A folklore transcript tries to represent everything that happened in the telling, beyond words or even body language. Every speed change, every cough or sigh, every pregnant pause is potential data. The person’s perspective, feelings, and point of view are what folklorists are trying to get at, as well as the culturally appropriate means they have developed to express these things. The most gratifying part of collecting oral histories for a folklorist is the opportunity it gives one to understand an individual’s point of view. For oral historians of all disciplines, the effort to understand, to really pay attention, can build a rapport that can be personally satisfying, and that can also facilitate collaboration over a long period of time.

Such work raises ethical concerns. Because of the personal nature of the interviews, it is important that witnesses have complete control over material. In Afghanistan, where few things are put in writing, signing a formal “use permission sheet” or “release” such as Western researchers normally use for transcripts headed for an archive is not really practicable. Yet it is important for Afghans as well to have the freedom to edit the transcript after an interview, to remove things that might prove harmful, or change it to better present their views. This is necessary for protection of sources and for maintaining their trust. It is also a goal of the researcher that the subject benefits from the interview, not just the researcher. While security of data may be in the interviewee’s interest, it is equally possible that what the interviewee wants is recognition, for having knowledge or experience. Sometimes, a time restriction on public use of the data can both allow the interviewee to gain credit for knowledge, in the long run, and control for any immediate threats to privacy or safety. How personal information can be damaging to Afghans, when revealed widely to the public, is dramatically illustrated by two recent books that received much attention in the West—The Bookseller of Kabul and Kabul Beauty School—or even by the recent feature film version of The Kiterunner, which was banned in Afghanistan. Both books significantly damaged the reputations of Afghan families and individuals who cooperated with the authors and are portrayed in the books. The young boys who acted in the movie were personally damaged by the scenes of exploitation and violence in it.

Professor Mills obviously enjoys her work and thinks about going to Afghanistan as “coming home” in many ways. She thinks about the long-term impact of research on the people with whom she works in Afghanistan. She said that when she conducts a research project, she asks herself, “What will I give back? How will I equip people to do what they want to do? How will I ensure that I do no harm?”
Transnational Exchanges and Linkages
(continued from page 11)

Gender and Emancipation Project
A graduate student organization on campus is working in conjunction with Ohio State faculty to facilitate transnational discussions on the diverse cultural conceptions of women’s rights. It started when two activists and scholars, Ilka Eickhof (of Germany) and Naazneen Diwan (Ohio State, president of the organization) were working together in Damascus with grassroots women’s rights organizations tackling local issues of legal and social disparities. They noticed during the course of their work that, although contemporary feminisms purported to celebrate and include a global perspective, in practical ways transnational feminism remained a dream yet to be achieved. Thus, the project Gender and Emancipation – Perspectives from “East” and “West” was conceived with a view to meet the need for a genuine transnational and intercultural exchange on gender issues.

The project has brought together students from four countries and continents—Syria, Sudan, U.S.A., and Germany—that are engaged in questions of emancipation and gender. Currently, they are conducting discussions online while holding local seminars focusing on the same texts. In August, all of the participants will meet in Berlin, Germany, for a conference based on the discussions.

Visit the Gender and Emancipation website at genderandemancipation.org.ohio-state.edu/index.html.

Ohio State’s Jerusalem Project: The Study Abroad Experience
Dr. Amy Horowitz, International Studies lecturer and adjunct faculty for Comparative Studies and Folklore, recently took a group of students to Jerusalem for a mini-study tour. There were two teams who organized the itinerary for the students, one Israeli, one Palestinian. One of Dr. Horowitz’s chief interests is how dialogue and cultural exchanges can create understanding around contentious issues. In the 1990s she was curator for the Jerusalem Project at the Smithsonian Institution and directed a multi-year ethnographic project in Jerusalem with Israeli and Palestinian teams. Since coming to Ohio State, she has received grants from BETHA and Outreach and Engagement to expand the activities of the Jerusalem Project. One activity, the “Salaam, Shalom, Peace Project,” brought together fifth-grade students at local Jewish, Muslim, and Catholic schools. She also hosted a working conference of Palestinian, Israeli, and U.S. Jerusalem Project participants who gathered at Ohio State to complete work on an anthology of essays of the cultures, histories, and politics of this complex city. The group also laid the groundwork for a cooperative undergraduate course on Jerusalem.

Dr. Horowitz taught International Studies 501: Living Jerusalem: Ethnography and Blogbridging in Disputed Territories in spring quarter 2007. Ohio State students met with Israeli and Palestinian students at Al Quds University and Hebrew University through videoconferences and weblogs. The Jerusalem study tour was the follow-up to this course.

The course included discussion among Israeli, Palestinian, and U.S. students on readings and media approaching the topic of Jerusalem from multiple perspectives. Students shared their responses to the texts via individual and class-wide blogs and videoconference. The blogs served as a place to reflect on readings and to practice mutually respectful responses to each other’s positions. In the blogs, students challenged one another and offered suggestions for further discussion and reading. The blogs were administered through Blogger so they could reside in neutral territory and not be located within one particular university. Students developed a vocabulary section in which unfamiliar or charged terminology was discussed. Guest speakers were invited to share their expertise on political, religious, and cultural topics.

From the outset, Dr. Horowitz realized that the students in her Ohio State classroom were a courageous and unusual group of undergraduates. For many of the Muslim, Jewish, and Christian students, this was the first opportunity to sit at the table with “the other” and study difficult issues together. Throughout the quarter, they continued to demonstrate compassion, intelligence, and a willingness to face their preconceptions. Dr. Horowitz was enthusiastic about the prospects of leading this group on a brief tour of the city they had spent the quarter studying. She received support and assistance from the Mershon Center, the Office of International Affairs, the Federation of the Colleges of the Arts and Sciences, the Battelle Memorial Institute, the Outreach and Engagement office, the Melton Center for Jewish Studies, and the Middle East Studies Center—but not before filing a petition to have the Ohio State travel ban (due to State Department travel warnings) temporarily lifted.

The tour lasted six days and was designed to bring the students into Palestinian and Israeli daily life, rather than to focus only on famous sites. Upon arrival it was immediately clear that the students’ time in Jerusalem would be much different from the U.S. classroom experience. The rapport and equality felt in the Ohio State classroom was contrasted at the airport when several students went right through security, while the students with Arab names were detained for questioning. They stayed in the Jerusalem YMCA, a site traditionally associated with peace overtures and dialogue.

The students were hosted by Israeli and Palestinian teams who, in consultation with one another, set up three days of programming each. They were invited to dinners at the homes of Palestinian and Israeli families. They spent one very moving evening at the home of Israeli Jews from Muslim countries, or Mizrachi Jews, and were greeted at the door in Hebrew and Arabic. They visited a recording studio where Said Murad, the founder of a Palestinian band, Sabreen, shared the history of his group. He invited his dear friend, Israeli musician David Broza, and they sang a song they jointly composed about Jerusalem. The students also visited a tent city set up for homeless Jerusalemites, and community centers and were treated to a number of walking tours of the city led by Israeli and Palestinian historians, archeologists, and folklorists. They visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial, the Palestine-Israel Journal, and the new Prisoners Museum at Al Quds University. They also visited a refugee camp that is within the city limits of Jerusalem, a check point, and a memorial for victims of suicide bombers. Students met with their Israeli and Palestinian counterparts at Hebrew University where they had a roundtable feedback session regarding the spring class. Though the main focus of the tour was not famous sites, the students were awed and moved when visiting Western Wall, the Tomb of the Holy Sepulcher, and the Dome of the Rock. After all this, the Palestinian and Israeli students joined the Ohio State students to meet with conflict-resolution workers, not only to understand the work they do, but also to provide an opportunity for students to process their experience on the tour with one another.
Dr. Horowitz was the curator for an exhibit in the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in 1991, based on ethnographies from Jerusalem. She created two self-determined teams, Israeli and Palestinian, to conduct the interviews of Jerusalemites in order to ensure that multiple viewpoints would be represented. The teams ensured that each could determine its own representations of the city. This was during the Oslo peace negotiations, which were secret at the time, so Dr. Horowitz did not find out until later that several of the academics involved in the ethnographic work were part of that process.

The Israeli and Palestinian teams successfully completed ethnographic data collection from everyday people such as cooks, storytellers, religious professionals, musicians, architects, etc. Unfortunately, after all the work they had put into it, the exhibit was cancelled. After, “the festival that wasn’t” as she calls it, Dr. Horowitz used the ethnographic material that was collected to produce a video, Jerusalem: Gates to the City. She considers it to be a study tool and a way to learn about the daily existence of people in Jerusalem. The interviews that provided material for the video are now kept at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Al-Quds University, The Ohio State University, and the Smithsonian Institution.

Six months later
Dialogue and dealing with tough issues goes very much to the heart of the trip and the heart of the class, and Dr. Horowitz feels six months later there has been an impact on the students’ lives. She receives gratifying e-mails from the students as they continue to digest their experiences. She points out that although, “progress happens in incremental steps that are less than perceptible,” still progress was made. The students report that their understanding of the power of language has changed. Dr. Horowitz adds that some of what she had hoped for has been realized: “The willingness to listen is a first step, and gaining skills to read texts on contentious topics critically—especially those texts that seem to justify one’s own position.”

Dr. Horowitz hopes to raise money to bring students from Jerusalem to Columbus for the remaining half of the cultural exchange.
States that End Nuclear Weapons Programs: Implications for Iran

Author: Freeman, Shauna Marie
Degree: Master of Public Administration (MPA), Bowling Green State University, Public Administration, 2007
Advisor: Marc Simon

This thesis seeks to identify factors that cause countries to discontinue their nuclear weapons programs using the qualitative case study method. Regime change, regional threats and/or tensions, economic sanctions, and U.S. influence were found to be the most significant factors in states' decisions to discontinue their nuclear weapons programs. Chapter One provides an overview of the study. Chapter Two discusses regime theory, the nonproliferation regime, and the current threats to the nonproliferation regime. Chapter Three provides case studies in which states sought nuclear weapon programs but later decided to discontinue the programs. Countries included in the case studies are Argentina, Brazil, Libya, North Korea, South Africa, and South Korea. Factors that contributed to each country's decision to end its nuclear weapons program are identified. Chapter Four provides an analysis of the factors identified in Chapter Three. Chapter Five discusses Iran's nuclear weapon program, and then considers whether any of the factors identified in Chapter Four can help us find solutions to an ongoing proliferation case. This thesis is concluded with recommendations for the nonproliferation regime and suggestions for further research.

Effects of Teachers' Assessment Practices on Ninth Grade Students' Perceptions of Classroom Assessment Environment and Achievement Goal Orientations in Muscat Science Classrooms in the Sultanate of Oman

Author: Al Kharusi, Hussain A.
Degree: PhD, Kent State University, College of Education, Health, and Human Services / Department of Educational Foundations and Special Services, 2007
Advisor: Rafa A. Kasim

Classroom assessment is a continual activity for teachers to improve the quality of instruction and motivate students to learn (Brookhart, 1999; Gronlund, 2006). Although there is a great deal of research on teachers' classroom assessment practices, few empirical research attempts have been made to link these practices to students' perceptions of classroom assessment environment and motivation defined in terms of achievement goal orientations. This study examined teachers' assessment practices within the framework of classroom assessment literature and achievement goal theory. More specifically, the purposes of this study were to identify the underlying dimensions of students' perceptions of classroom assessment environment and achievement goal orientations and to investigate the possible effects of certain student-level and class-level characteristics on perceived classroom assessment environment and achievement goal orientations. The participants were 1,636 ninth grade students and their corresponding 83 science teachers enrolled in public schools within Muscat educational region in Oman during the spring semester 2007. Two questionnaires were developed and used, one for students and one for teachers. The student's questionnaire focused on students' perceived classroom assessment environment, achievement goal orientations, and academic self-efficacy. The teacher's questionnaire focused on teachers' frequent uses of traditional assessments, alternative assessments, and classroom assessment practices recommended by experts of educational measurement and assessment. Principal components/exploratory factor analyses (PCA/EFA) were conducted to identify the underlying dimensions of students' perceptions of classroom assessment environment and achievement goal orientations. Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) analyses were employed to examine the effects of certain student-level and class-level characteristics on students' perceptions of classroom assessment environment and achievement goal orientations. Results of the PCA/EFA revealed three dimensions of perceived classroom assessment environment: learning-, harsh-, and public-oriented assessment environments; and three dimensions of achievement goal orientations: mastery, performance-approach, and performance-avoidance goals. Results of the HLM showed that class contextual features and a teacher's teaching experience and assessment practices interacted significantly with student characteristics in influencing students' perceptions of classroom assessment environment and achievement goal orientations. The findings were compared with findings from previous studies related to classroom assessment environment and achievement goal orientations. Recommendations, implications, and suggestions for future research were discussed.

Geodynamical Analysis of the Iranian Plateau and Surrounding Regions

Author: Asgharzadeh, Mohammad Forman
Degree: PhD, The Ohio State University, Geological Sciences, 2007
Advisor: Ralph R.B. von Frese

The Middle East is a tectonically active region where the interaction between crustal units produces devastating earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. The region holds within its boundaries the Tethyside Orogeny and is limited to the north by the Intermediate Orogeny. The Iranian Plateau sets within the Tethyside collage and has been affected by the closure of Paleo- and Neo-Tethys Oceans during the Mesozoic and Cenozoic. For instance, large oil and gas fields have formed along the sutures of these two former oceans in northeastern Iran, the Persian Gulf, and the Zagros Mountains. This dissertation involves analyzing the geodynamical processes of the Iranian Plateau by studying surface, airborne, and satellite gravity and magnetic data collected across the Plateau and its surrounding regions. To provide a basis for a more accurate analysis of the region's lithospheric stresses, a high-resolution crustal thickness model is developed using spectral correlation analysis and gravity inversion. The results of this modeling suggest a thickened crust beneath the Anatolian Plateau, Sistan, and Zagros Mountains, plus the Caspian Sea. Next, a regional scale morpho-tectonic interpretation of Iran's aeromagnetic data is developed that characterizes the magnetic anomalies of the country. The results of this analysis suggest that the crust of Iran is divided into a number of small plates, with boundaries that are characterized by strong positive magnetic anomalies. Large magmatic assemblages in northern and western Iran are characterized by strong negative magnetic anomalies. In support of the objectives of the pending GOCE gravity and SWARM magnetic low-Earth orbiting satellite missions, the theory for numerically estimating the full gravity and magnetic scalar, vector, and tensor fields of the spherical prism is summarized. As an application, the gravity and magnetic fields that the GOCE satellite and SWARM constellation of satellites may observe over the tectonically active region of the Middle East, roughly centered on Iran, are estimated.

Constructing Education in a Stateless Society: The Case of Somalia

Author: Abdinoor, Abdullahi Sheikh
Degree: PhD, Ohio University, Cultural Studies in Education

Foundations and Special Services, 2007
The study investigated: (1) how Muslim girls interpret their school experiences in terms of interactions with teachers and their peers, including American and students from their own countries and race, gender, religion, and their immigrant status, (2) how Muslim girls interpret the social studies curriculum, especially U.S. history, and (3) the instructional decisions the social studies teachers made in relation to their students who are Muslim girls. In this section, I discuss the rationale for selecting the naturalistic inquiry for this study. This study employed naturalistic inquiry methods to collect data. The research data were collected via multiple data collection methods, including participant observation and interviews. The data were collected between March 2006 and May 2006. The analysis was done according to constant comparative method as well as general qualitative data analysis methods. Analysis of the data for this study suggested four main findings: First, social studies classrooms are found as places in which Muslim female participants of the study find themselves more comfortable compared to other classrooms. The second major finding of the study regarded how Muslim girls interpreted the social studies curriculum. The findings of the study have implications for teachers, teacher education programs, policies, and future research. Findings also suggested that further studies are needed for understanding the phenomenon in-depth.

Lords of the Auspicious

Conjunction: Turco-Mongol

Imperial Identity on the Subcontinent

Author: Balabanlilar, Lisa Ann
Degree: PhD, The Ohio State University, History, 2007
Advisor: Stephen F. Dale

Contemporary studies of the Mughal dynasty in India have long been dominated by nationalist, sectarian, and ideological agendas that typically present the empire of the Mughals as an exclusively Indian phenomenon, politically and culturally isolated on the subcontinent. Cross disciplinary scholarship on the Middle East and Islamic Central Asia assigns to the Mughals a position on the periphery. Omitting reference to a Central Asian legacy, scholars instead link the Mughals to the preceding nearly one thousand years of Muslim colonization in India. This study radically re-evaluates the scholarly and intellectual isolation with which the Mughals have traditionally been treated and argues that the Mughals must be recognized as the primary inheritors of the Central Asian Turco-Persian legacy of their ancestor Timur (known in the West as Tamerlane). Driven from their homeland in Central Asia, the Timurid refugee community, newly settled in South Asia, meticulously maintained and asserted the universally recognized charisma of their imperial lineage and inherited cultural personality. The imperial success of the Mughals lay in their ability to identify and reproduce in the Indian context potent symbols of Islamic and Timurid legitimacy which allowed them to affirm their imperial role and develop a meaningful dynastic identity on the subcontinent. Specific institutions and traditions of the Turco-Mongol Timurids—succession patterns, interpretations of Islamic law, the facilitation of migrating Sufi orders, the role of women, and Persianate literary culture—can be identified and traced from the centers of Timurid culture in Transoxiana to India, where they were manipulated and adopted by Timur's descendants. The shaping and defining of the imperial identity of the Mughals in India, through the conscious manipulation of the Central Asian legacy of Timur, can be seen as a case study of the movement and migration of symbols of legitimacy and the reproduction of identity by a refugee community in permanent exile.

Mustafa Ali's Epic Deeds of Artists: A Study on the Earliest

Ottoman Text about the Calligraphers and Painters of the Islamic world

Author: Akin, Esra
Degree: PhD, The Ohio State University, History of Art, 2007
Advisor: Howard Crane

In contrast to scholars of Western art who can make use of numerous handbooks on aesthetics and technical manuals such as those of Vitruvius, Alberti, or Palladio, scholars of Islamic art have available to them only a limited number of pre-19th-century vernacular sources in translation. Of these, perhaps the three most important are *The Rose-garden of Art* (c. 1606), a treatise on calligraphers and painters by the Safavid scholar Qadi Ahmed, the preface (1544) by the court painter Dost Muhammad to an album of calligraphy and painting prepared for the Safavid prince Bahram Mirza, and an Ottoman text, *Epic Deeds of Artists* (1587), a historical and biographical study of calligraphers and painters by the Ottoman scholar-bureaucrat Âli. For historians of Islamic art, these three texts are key sources for an understanding of not only the artistic techniques and principles used by the artists of the age, but also the art-historical, social, and cultural contexts that produced the great artists of the Ottoman, Turkmen, Timurid, and Safavid periods. Based on the content and structure of the text, I am arguing in my dissertation that inasmuch as it was a guide to artists, Âli’s treatise was also an

Understanding Muslim girls’

experiences in Midwestern

school settings: negotiating

their cultural and interpreting

the social studies curriculum

Author: Gunel, Elvan
Degree: PhD, The Ohio State University, Educational Theory and Practice, 2007
Advisor: Merry M. Merryfield
intellectual’s response to the changing conditions in the art market. In fact, it was an attempt to bring to the ruling Sultan’s attention the perceived corruption and decadence that was prevailing in his Empire. Whereas Dost Muhammad’s and Qadi Ahmed’s works have both received scholarly attention in the form of published translations with critical apparatus (Harvard University and the Smithsonian Institution, respectively), studies on Ali’s work are limited to a single 1982 abridged transcription in modern Turkish. In an attempt to make accessible this critically important text, therefore, the purpose of my dissertation is twofold: to explore the text’s socio-historical context and to provide an annotated English translation.

**The Sistani Cycle of Epics**

**Author:** Gazerani, Ameneh  
**Degree:** PhD, The Ohio State University, History, 2007  
**Advisor:** Stephen Dale

This dissertation is concerned with the study of the Sistani Cycle of Epics (SCE), a body of literature produced in its extant form from 11-13th centuries in Iran. It was during the same period that Iran’s grand epic, the Shahnameh, was composed. Although Ferdowsi, the composer of the Shahnameh, has included some of the most famous stories of the SCE into his work, most of the Sistani stories were excluded from Ferdowsi’s work. Modern scholarship dismissed the SCE as secondary to the Shahnameh, therefore, neglecting to examine it. In this study, first I examine the connection between the epics and the province of Sistan, their birthplace. I postulate that during the pre-Islamic period, especially from the Parthian period onward, the epics played a role in constructing a specifically Sistani identity. Therefore, in the first three chapters I examine the way in which the epics helped shape a distinctly Sistani identity by examining the region’s topography, political history, and historiographical production. Arguing that up until the medieval period the epics were regarded as reflecting historical reality, in the following chapter I examine the genre for the ways in which it accommodated the historical narration, whose referents were past events. Instead of separating fact from fiction, I examine the ways in which the heroic discourse, by certain modification of the generic requirements, allows for the recounting of such historical episodes. The two areas where the reference to past events is apparent are most prevalent in depictions of Sistan’s relationship to the land of India and the reflections of episodes of Parthian history. Next, I shift the focus of the study to medieval literary milieu, which produced the extant form of the epics. I postulate that during the medieval period the epics were used in order to create another identity, i.e. a distinct Iranian identity. As a result of this endeavor to create or to revive the Iranian identity, the two bodies of epics contain divergent stories, and I scrutinize some of these stories and speculate about the reasons for the existence of such drastically different narrations.

**Domestic Summer Language Program Opportunities**

**Ohio State Programs**
Ohio State’s Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures (NELC) offers summer language study options. Summer course offerings may be consulted on the NELC website, nekc.osu.edu.

**Non-Ohio State Programs**
Domestic foreign language study can be funded by the Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships, particularly for those who have not yet achieved intermediate or advanced levels. Summer courses must have at least 140 hours of actual classroom instruction to be eligible for funding.

**Arabic**

**Georgetown University**
This language institute is designed to help participants acquire skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking in Modern Standard Arabic, Egyptian Arabic, Levantine Arabic, Iraqi Arabic, and Persian.

- **June 2 – August 8, 2008**  
- **Contact:** summerschool.georgetown.edu/courses/arab.html  
- **Assistant director:** Sarah Monsell, (202) 687-2735

**Columbia University**
Modern Standard Arabic intensive instruction in the Arabic language through texts, multimedia materials, and activities designed to situate the language in the context of cultures in which it is spoken.

- **Two five-week sessions:** June 2 – July 3 and July 7 – August 8, 2008  
- **Contact:** Dr. Taoufik Ben-Amor, (734) 764-8571, tb46@columbia.edu

**Beloit College**
Intensive intermediate summer language program for modern Standard Arabic
- **June 14 – August 8, 2008**  
- **Modern Standard Arabic**

**University of Michigan**
Intensive intermediate summer language program for modern Standard Arabic
- **June 2 – August 8, 2008**  
- **Deadline:** March 31, 2008  
- **Contact:** li.umich.edu/sli/appmaterial, um.sli@umich.edu, (734) 764-8571

**Modern Hebrew**
Jewish Theological Seminary Intensive Hebrew Language Program
- **Sessions:** May 19 – June 6;
Opportunities in Middle East Studies

Visual Representations of Iran
Presented by the Institute for Iranian Studies and the Centre for Film Studies of the University of St. Andrews

A four-day program will investigate the innovative qualities of Iranian cinema and the ambiguous place Iran occupies in the imagination of the West within the context of a conference, film season, and photographic exhibition.

Fife, Scotland, June 13 – 16, 2008
For further information: st-andrews.ac.uk/anthropologyiran
Contact: Dr. Pedram Khosronejad, pedram.khosronejad@st-andrews.ac.uk

Cognitive Grammar and Foreign Language Teaching
The four-day workshop, to be held on the UC Davis campus, will feature presentations on cognitive analysis of grammatical structures common to many languages. Afternoon sessions will be devoted to language specific understanding of the grammatical structures and the development of materials to implement the innovative cognitive method effectively in the classroom. The materials are compatible with any textbook in any language.

Davis, California, June 28 – July 1, 2008
Sponsored by UC Davis
For further information: uccllt.ucdavis.edu
Contact: Robert Blake, rjblake@ucdavis.edu

University of Chicago 2008

Eastern Consortium in Persian, Turkish

Intensive instruction in both introductory (Novice Low to Novice High) and intermediate (Intermediate Low to Intermediate High) Persian and Turkish.

Summer Program, June 23 – August 22
Application Deadline: April 1, 2008
Contact: cmes.uchicago.edu/easternConsortAnnounce.shtml

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Arabic & Persian Immersion Program
An intensive language learning environment in which participants are encouraged to challenge themselves and must sign a language contract agreeing to communicate in only Arabic or Persian during the entire length of the eight-week course.

June 14 – August 8, 2008
Contact: global.wisc.edu/apip/index.htm, apip@global.wisc.edu
Study Abroad: Minority Recruitment

The Middle East Studies Center has been developing a program to promote study abroad to young people, particularly African Americans, called “Study Abroad: Opportunities That Will Change You.” Allen Coleman of Ohio State’s Web Media Collective has been instrumental in creating the program and is the lead speaker and moderator. Most recently, he presented his experiences abroad and how they changed his life to the Young Scholars Program of the Office of Minority Affairs. Melinda Wightman, assistant director of the Middle East Studies Center, took part in the program by providing information and answering questions on various study abroad programs at Ohio State, particularly the Egypt Spring Break program. A surprising number of students indicated they were already planning on going abroad at some point during their academic career.

The rationale for the program is that there is a need to change students’ aspirations—that is, cause them to want to go abroad—and a need to shift students’ attitudes toward the view that study abroad is an important part of one’s personal and professional development. Study abroad is presented as a rite of passage into adulthood, requiring maturity, cultural awareness, and self-knowledge. Study abroad gives the opportunity to understand and appreciate the unique opportunities of American life, as well as the chance to cultivate interest and respect for the cultures of places visited. Learning about different cultural points of view allows students to learn about themselves and develop life skills that go beyond a specific profession. Providing role models—successful adults who share their experiences abroad, how it changed them, and how it changed the way they view the world—is a way to reach students at a personal level.

So far, the target group has been early college students, freshmen and sophomores. The intervention at that stage in college is intended to cause students to prepare and plan earlier, and increase their chances of participation in study abroad programs. While “Study Abroad: Opportunities That Will Change You” reinforces their intentions and provides the practical advice they need to get them on the right track, focusing on these students exclusively will limit the ability of the program to make a major difference. That is why the next step needs to be a presentation program for high school students, and possibly even younger students. We are planning a presentation that focuses on study abroad as a part of college recruitment. This program is tentatively titled “Beyond the Block,” a term coined by Shakeer Abdullah, another frequent presenter in the program who has been involved from the start. The idea is to raise awareness of the world beyond students’ immediate environment and to engender the desire to learn more about other cultures and ways of life. Brief descriptions of both “Opportunities That Will Change You” and “Beyond the Block” follow.

Study Abroad: Opportunities That Will Change You

A panel of three presenters at different stages of their careers talk about their study abroad experiences and the way those experiences shaped their lives. They share personal stories, anecdotes, journal entries, and poetry written while abroad, as well as pictures from their trips. Staff of the study abroad offices or area studies centers are there to answer questions after the presentation and give information on financial aid.

Desired outcomes:

- Increase African American participation in study abroad programs at Ohio State
- Public speaking skills development for student presenters

Beyond the Block

Single presenters or groups of two or three go to P-12 schools and present on selected aspects of countries they visited. They share their experiences with the students and inculcate a sense of study abroad as a path to knowing one’s self and the world better. Global issues may be discussed in order to generate classroom discussion.

Desired outcomes:

- Increase African American enrollment in college and aspirations to study abroad
- Public speaking skills development for student presenters

By reaching out to students and causing them to focus on study abroad, and the positive results it has had in someone else’s life, we hope to change students’ aspirations and make them more likely to plan on studying abroad. The eventual impact of the program will be assessed by tracking the long-term outcomes, including statistics from the office of study abroad showing an increase in African American and minority participation; subsequent study abroad among students who participated in the program; increase in the number of students who aspire to study abroad in college; and solicited and unsolicited feedback from participants. If you are interested in volunteering in this program, please contact the Middle East Studies Center at mesc@osu.edu. We welcome your interest and ideas.
Current and Upcoming Programs

Arts and Performance
An evening of Middle Eastern Poetry and music, in conjunction with the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, is planned for fall quarter. The event will address the use of poetry in expressing dissent and protesting government practices. We are currently accepting poetry submissions from faculty and students. Please send a maximum of three poems to mesc@osu.edu for consideration.

Ottoman History Lecture Series and Islam and Democracy Lecture Series
Spring will see two lectures series come to Ohio State related to the Middle East. The first will be the Spring Lecture Series on Ottoman History designed by history department faculty member, Professor Carter Findley. The series is co-sponsored by the Middle East Studies Center, the Department of History, and the Mershon Center for International Security Studies. Information for each event follows. (For further details, go to the MESC website: mesc.osu.edu, and click on Calendar.)

•  Bogaç Ergene: University of Vermont
Why Did Emine Go to Court? Kadi Justice between History and Anthropology
April 2, 2008

•  Jens Hanssen: University of Toronto
Fin de Siècle Beirut: The Making of an Ottoman Pro vincial Capital
April 9, 2008

•  Ussama Makdisi: Rice University
Anti-Americanism in the Arab World: A Brief History
April 16, 2008

The Two Deaths of As'ad Shidyaq: The Story of the First American Missionary Encounter with the Ottoman Arab World
April 16, 2008

•  Lily Frierson: University of Cincinnati
Broken Home: Istanbul/Constantinople during World War I
April 23, 2008

Islam and Democracy Lecture Series
The second lecture series this spring focuses on Islam and Democracy, sponsored by MESC, the Mershon Center for International Security Studies, and the Department of Political Science. Fawaz Gerges of Sarah Lawrence College spoke about the future of Islamic militancy on April 3, Shireen Hunter of the Center for Strategic & International Studies spoke about Islam and Democracy on April 8, Fred Lawson of Mills College spoke about the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria on May 1, and Amaney Jamal of Princeton University will speak about barriers to democracy in Palestine and the Arab world on May 15. Additional details and biographical information about the speakers are available on the Mershon Center’s website: mershoncenter.osu.edu (click on Events).

Events Focusing on Iran and Central Asia
Special events on Iran and Central Asia that provide insiders’ views on the current situations are also slated for spring quarter.

On April 25, Jason Athanasiadis, a journalist with many years of experience in Iran, shared his photos and discussed the role of elites in Iranian society (see photo on back cover for a sample of his work).

There will be a symposium on Central Asia on May 23, featuring Ohio State scholars Alam Payind, director of the Middle East Studies Center, presenting on Afghanistan, and Kamalodin Abdullah, presenting on Tajikistan. These and other events will provide knowledge and information for a better understanding of media sources that only skim the surface. Check our website for updates and additional information (mesc.osu.edu, click on Calendar) or get in touch by e-mail: mesc@osu.edu.

Learn about Islamic Art: Arabic Calligraphy Workshop
There will be an opportunity on May 16 to learn about one of the most fundamental artistic forms in the Muslim world: Arabic calligraphy. Arabic calligraphy scholar and practitioner, Dr. Nihad Dukhan, will visit Ohio State to teach about the history, development, and techniques through demonstrations and visual presentation. The workshop is co-sponsored by the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, the Arabic Language and Culture Club at Ohio State, and the Middle East Studies Center.

To obtain further information or to register for this workshop, please get in touch with the Middle East Studies Center at mesc@osu.edu or call 292-5897.
A female Dervish performs the Sufi Samaa dance before a mixed-sex audience at a private house in northern Tehran. Women are not allowed to dance in public, and Sufi mysticism is strongly discouraged by the authorities.

Photo credit: Iason Athanasiadis. This photo was included in his presentation “Sleepless in Tehran” on April 25, 2008, at The Ohio State University (see page 19 for further information).