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The Need for Area Studies

Our Schools, Our Institutions of Higher Education, and the Public

The need American society has for area studies can not be overemphasized. Understanding world cultures is particularly important during times of war, such as now, and Americans are aware of the need the global economy creates. In addition, Americans’ understanding of cultures outside of America is particularly low in comparison to the rest of the world. The deficit of non-European world regions in our schools’ curricula is a reflection of that. The curriculum needs to include all of the necessary connections and references to world regions. This is for accurate and more precise coverage of all subjects (even mathematics), and it also solves the problem of “world” history classes covering only Europe and America.

Is the problem that schools aren’t receiving the knowledge from universities? Perhaps that is part of it, and Ohio State has developed and is continuing to develop outreach and engagement programs as a response to that. However, universities also aren’t generating enough knowledge based on world areas outside of United States. If colleges do not include world areas in their curriculum, it follows that school teachers won’t either. That is where area studies are beneficial. Universities need area studies programs to make connections between departments and colleges on topics related to various world areas and increase and improve coverage of the world. To be competitive in the world, American scholars need to be aware of the newest developments in other languages and

Letter from the Editor

As this edition of the Middle East Studies Bulletin goes to press, the Middle East Studies Center (MESC) will be inaugurating its seventh consecutive cycle as a Title VI National Resource Center (NRC). MESC is one of the leading NRCs in the country, one of the few consistently funded Middle East NRCs, and one that has been recognized by its peers and by the U.S. Department of Education. We recognize the generosity of the Office of International Affairs, the Graduate School, the College of the Humanities, and the university administration, who also have made our programs possible. Most of all, we remain grateful to our affiliated faculty; without their scholarship this NRC status would not be possible.

All of us, as scholars and teachers, have a unique obligation to share our expertise with others. Just as U.S. leaders became cognizant of the unique challenges brought by the post-WWII era, once again in this new century, the current generation of our leaders has recognized that as the only remaining superpower, the United States is facing even more daunting challenges. To meet these challenges, Americans will have to expand upon their current level of knowledge and understanding about other societies and cultures. It has not been accidental that our succeeding administrations have continued to support programs such as Title VI, USAID, Fulbright-Hays, and U.S. Peace Corps, among others.

In addition to achieving NRC status, the current Title VI grant will bring over $2 million to The Ohio State University. This funding creates many more opportunities and more access to great programs. Over the years, Title VI has been instrumental in this university
Letter from the Director (continued from page 1)

for the seeding of faculty positions, course development, selecting the best graduate students for the FLAS Fellowship, cross-disciplinary scholarly activities, the generation and dissemination of knowledge about the Middle East and the Muslim World, and the robust outreach program of the Middle East Studies Center. As the principle investigator of the Title VI grants and as the director of MESC, I am pleased to say that, by combining efforts with the Near Eastern Languages and Cultures Department, these funds allowed Ohio State to serve as host of the Eastern Consortium in Persian and Turkish for the past three years. The Eastern Consortium summer intensive Persian and Turkish program is unique in the nation, providing graduates, undergraduates, and professionals the chance to form a foundation in those languages. Through this membership in the Eastern Consortium, Ohio State is collaborating with some of the top universities in the United States. Other members include Harvard, Yale, NYU, Columbia, Princeton, Georgetown, the University of Michigan, and the University of Chicago, which will serve as the next host. The summer program at Ohio State had high enrollments—very high considering these are less commonly taught languages—and received great reviews from the participants. In the third year Pashto was added, a rare occasion for that language that is hardly ever offered. I thank the Near Eastern Languages and Cultures Department for their outstanding efforts and leadership in making the program a success.

Currently, we are involved in many projects abroad; forming linkages with foreign institutions is a Title VI priority and one that fits with Ohio State's goals of including more international projects in the university's academic plan. I recently returned from Afghanistan and Turkey where I learned of the progress our educational projects are making in those countries. We have a program with Afghan government, the American Hospital Association, and the Ohio State Medical Center to bring needed supplies, equipment, and books to hospitals and clinics in Afghanistan. Our faculty exchange program with Ataturk University in Erzerum, Turkey, has recently had its funding renewed by the Turkish government. So far, 37 Ataturk professors have come to partner with Ohio State professors on a wide variety of research projects, such as law, agricultural science, animal science, pediatrics, cancer research, and education, to name a few.

In addition to providing information about research and scholarly activity in the field of Middle East Studies at Ohio State and in the region, we will use this bulletin to keep our faculty, students, and members of the community informed about current and future activities of our center.

Alam Payind, Director, Middle East Studies Center

Area Studies (continued from page 1)

other cultures. It can be difficult to do that with area studies programs, which create linkages with foreign universities and help fund and organize international programs for field work, collaborative research (see the letter from the director for a summary of our program with Ataturk University), study abroad, access to foreign research institutions, and others.

Area studies provide many advantages, but they also have weaknesses. The concept of area studies can becomes suspect when it leads to such ideas as the "Middle East expert." Someone can be an expert in his discipline, but it remains an unattainable feat to be a general Middle East expert. Still, if one has studied topics pertaining to the Middle East, he can provide a more educated opinion to the press or other advice-seekers than the layperson could. Scholars have a responsibility now to make themselves available to the press so that a better understanding of the issues can be possible for the American public.

This is another very important function of an area studies center: to answer and field questions about a lesser known area of the world and to help prevent misinformation. Many times, we receive calls from the press asking us to tell them what the latest piece of news from Morocco to Afghanistan, from Turkey to Sudan means. We answer what we can and often help them locate the person they need. Alam Payind, the Middle East Studies Center director, provides many interviews and has become a regular in many journalists' address books. You can hear his interviews on WOSU's show "Open Line with Fred Andrle" (Find an archive of one of his interviews at http://streaming1.osu.edu/wosu/openline/022406aOL.rm). In addition, Voice of America and the BBC call him on a weekly basis.

The need for area studies and for inclusion of other world areas in both university-level and pre-university-level education comes from the fact that there is no natural tendency to provide complete coverage of areas outside of country; the tendency is the opposite. Obviously, economic competition is important, but equally important is scholarly competition and keeping abreast of the scholarship and scientific achievement happening around the world. There is also the public's need. Besides answering questions from the press, scholars need to keep their research and scholarly activities going as normal and cooperate with the outreach programs at the university to publicize and make information more accessible.
Letter from the Editor

As this is the first issue of our newsletter, I would like to give some general information about the Middle East Studies Center (MESC), its function, and its purpose. I hope to provide an accurate picture of who we are and what we do to those who have never heard of us, and to the rest, I think they'll find some new information.

MESC is an area studies center in the Office of International Affairs and a U.S. Department of Education Title VI National Resource Center (NRC). Its first NRC grant was in 1988, and it has been consistently renewed in the 1991, 1994, 1997, 2000, 2003, and 2005 cycles, for a total of 22 years. Priorities of both the university’s academic plan and Title VI programs, such as outreach, student and faculty resources, and multidisciplinary collaboration, are the primary aims and functions of the center. As an office, not an academic department, of The Ohio State University, MESC is situated outside of the colleges and professional schools, which makes it possible to utilize the strongest parts of each of those units. Links with foreign institutions are also an important strategy the center uses to build programs, and often memoranda of understanding are signed in conjunction with one or more of those institutions. The center supports research in collaboration with those units and with the overseas institutions as well as providing a substantial contribution to the Middle East Studies Library every year. Study abroad is continually developed and integrated into the curricula due to the work of our affiliated faculty and the Office of International Education. The center draws on the expertise and experience of 50 faculty members from 23 departments and the library at Ohio State, without which our Title VI funding would not be possible. The center does not yet offer a degree program, though we plan to include a proposal for that in the next Title VI NRC grant competition in 2010. Strengthening the performance-based instruction of less commonly taught modern languages of the Middle East and Central Asia is another high priority of Title VI. As a result, the center helps to fund or provide other forms of support for Arabic, Hebrew, Pashto, Persian, Somali, Turkish, and Urdu instruction.

Thanks to the work of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures faculty, Professor Sabra Webber, who developed the NELC course on Egyptian culture, subsequently taught by Professor Joseph Zeidan, in coordination with the efforts of Sherif Barsoum, assistant director in the Office of International Education, it includes a study abroad trip to Egypt during spring break. This has been successful in attracting students from many departments around campus who may not have been able to fit study abroad into their schedule otherwise. This year, the demand was so high NELC opened another section of the course. We hope to make more study abroad programs available for a wider variety of students over the next grant cycle.

Because of the deficit of knowledge about the world beyond U.S. borders and because of the need for increased interdisciplinary collaboration for tackling global issues, area studies fulfill an important function on U.S. campuses. Though thematic approaches to interdisciplinary scholarship tend to be scholars’ first choice, area studies provide the perfect venue for cross-disciplinary activities, innovative scholarship, and intellectual endeavor. Please see page 4, “Grand Rounds Lecture Focuses on Ibn Sina,” for an example of an area studies program facilitating professional school-humanities collaboration and intellectual exchange. The strength of the area studies approach is the fluidity with which it functions in academic disciplines. This allows area studies programs to draw from many different fields of training and scholarship.

Whether you are a student curious about possibilities for pursuing Middle East studies, a faculty member following opportunities and current events in the field of Middle East Studies, or a member of the community seeking information on the Middle East, there is a wealth of information in this issue. It is our intention that this bulletin will serve as a reference for faculty and students and, more importantly, will be a step toward strengthening the community of those specializing in the Middle East in their studies and research. Pursuing serendipitous connections, the ideas of faculty, students, staff, and participants in our programs have produced good results in our program planning. I welcome your ideas, criticism, and all other forms of feedback.

Melinda Wightman, M.A.,
Assistant Director,
Editor

Faculty Recognized for Their Achievement

Carole Fink, Department of History

The Middle East Studies Center congratulates Carole Fink on receiving the 2005 George Luis Beer Prize for her book, Defending the Rights of Others: The Great Powers, the Jews, and International Minority Protection, 1878–1938 (Cambridge University Press, 2004). Fink was granted the award by the American Historical Association. Through extensive research in 11 countries, Fink tells the story of the struggles of Jews and other minorities living within and between Europe’s emerging nation states, showing how the imperatives of power politics can conflict with the universal principles of human rights.

Carter Findley, Department of History

The Middle East Studies Center would like to congratulate Professor Carter Findley on his achievement of receiving the Distinguished Scholar Award, which recognizes exceptional scholarly accomplishments by senior professors who have compiled a substantial body of research, as well as the work of younger faculty members who have demonstrated great scholarly potential. Findley, a professor in the Department of History, is the reason many of Turkey’s best graduate students come to Ohio State to pursue doctorates in the history of their nation. One of the world’s foremost authorities on the Ottoman Empire, Findley is the author of two widely praised and cited monographs on bureaucratic reform and the social history of civil officialdom in the late Ottoman Empire. At the same time, he has made major contributions to the field of world history, including co-authoring the leading textbook The Twentieth Century World, now in its fourth edition. Currently, Findley is working on a large-scale history of the late Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic. He writes and lectures in English, French, and Turkish. A magna cum laude graduate of Yale, he earned his Ph.D. at Harvard University and has been a member of the Ohio State faculty for 28 years.

Recent Faculty Publications

Peter Hahn, Crisis and Crossfire: The United States and the Middle East Since 1945, Potomac Books, 2005
Area Studies Profile

Area studies are at their best when they provide needed structure and connections to enhance the curriculum in a multidisciplinary way. The lecture we feature below illustrates the academic excellence that can result when an area studies program makes connections between different departments, in this case History, Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, and the Medical School. Her text on the impact of Islamic scientific and philosophical thought and its impact on European philosophy in the seventeenth century, required reading in the Harvard Department of Scientific History, is a cutting-edge work. The fact her lecture was required for medical students shows Ohio State's excellence. That lecture and the public lecture that followed were made possible because of a collaborative relationship MESC has developed with the OSU Medical Center.

We hope to generate interest in our other projects with the Medical Center and support for the future activities that will result. One is a project to send medical supplies and textbooks to Afghan hospitals, clinics, and places of learning. As the result of collaboration between MESC and the Afghan Embassy, the Medical Center will be working with Afghans for Civil Society—an NGO run by Hamid Karzai’s relation Pat Karzai and a program endorsed by the American Hospital Association Global Watch Group—to send and distribute supplies to the appropriate places in Afghanistan. Costs for shipping from the East Coast to Afghanistan is essentially covered, but we may be collecting donations for getting the supplies out of the Medical Center and into shipping containers at the East Coast ports. For more information on these organizations and their activities, visit afghansforcivilsociety.org and www.globalwatchgroup.org.

Grand Rounds Lecture Focuses on Ibn Sina
by Catalina Hunt

The Enduring Legacy of a Physician, Philosopher, and Scientist: Ibn Sina (Avicenna)

A Medical Grand Rounds lecture by Gül Russell
March 9, 2006, Davis Heart Lung Research Institute

A Second Wave of Arabic Transmission and Impact in the Age of the Scientific Revolution: the Seventeenth Century

A lecture by Gül Russell
March 9, 2006, Medical Heritage Center

A new successful collaboration with Ohio State’s College of Medicine and Public Health, specifically with the Graduate Medical Education Department, was made concrete in March when Dr. Gül Russell delivered two lectures for the medical audience. Russell, professor of history, medicine, and humanities at Texas A&M University System Health Science Center, spoke about "The Enduring Legacy of a Physician, Philosopher, and

What’s happening next at MESC?
Find out online at mesc.osu.edu
(Click on Calendar.)
Scientist: Ibn Sina (Avicenna)” and “A ‘Second Wave’ of Arabic Transmission and Impact in the Age of the Scientific Revolution: the Seventeenth Century,” presented mainly in terms of the life and work of Persian philosopher Ibn Sina (Avicenna), emphasizing the usage of Islamic works by Western scientists and philosophers such as John Locke. Russell used her latest research to argue for a significant influence of Islamic scholarship on Western philosophy.

The Grand Rounds lecture was attended by more than 200 people, most of them physicians working with The Ohio State University Medical Center. The question and answer part of Russell’s presentation highlighted the interest of university physicians in the legacy of Ibn Sina especially in medicine and science with emphasis on his significant discoveries on tuberculosis or phthisis (consumption), as named in medical books before the twentieth century. The second lecture was a fresh and exquisite analysis of the impact of Arabic philosophy over the seventeenth century Western scholarship in general and the scholarship of John Locke in particular. Russell presented the audience with her latest approach to this topic, which is the result of a passionate lifetime research on Ibn Sina. She offered valuable insights into the life of John Locke and his constant interest and admiration for the philosophical system of Ibn Sina as synthesized in his tenth century Islamic manuscripts. Russell has published her research on this topic in prestigious European and American journals.

Because of the impact of this joint event with the OSU Medical Center, MESC’s intention is to work with other scholars with interdisciplinary research that can bridge the gap between the humanities and the medical sciences as a whole.

The educational objectives of Russell’s talks were:

1. To bridge the gap between the medical sciences and the humanities by bringing out their interrelationships through history

2. To view history as a means to analyze and gain insight into the following:
   a. what continues (inherited from the past) and what changes in medicine.
   b. the paradox in contemporary medical practice:
      In spite of an unparalled biomedical knowledge and technology, the ideal principles of physician conduct still derive from the Hippocratic physicians who practiced 2,500 years ago.
   c. what constitutes the enduring, defining qualities of a physician:
      Is knowledge enough in itself? If so, what do we mean by “great doctors” in history?

3. To enhance understanding of the contributions of other cultures in the development of science and medicine in the West, in particular, the major role of Islamic civilization through transmission from Arabic into Latin in two waves:
   b. The second wave of transmission and astonishing impact in the seventeenth century—particularly in England with Arabic as a degree requirement at Oxford.


The Summer Institute on Middle Eastern Cultures
Diverse aspects of the Middle East were covered, including language, religion, history, geography, and material culture. Activities included a day-long field trip to a Coptic church, synagogue, and mosque.

June 19 – June 30, 2006, Younkin Success Center
Sponsored by the Middle East Studies Center and held in cooperation with the Near Eastern Languages and Cultures Department

Selected Perspectives on the Horn of Africa
A workshop featuring Ahmad Sikainga, Mohamed Obeid-Salim, and Aklog Biru
February 18, 2006, 271 Mount Hall
Sponsored by the Center for African Studies Center and the Middle East Studies Center. Offered through the Office of Continuing Education

The Kite Runner
The Kite Runner is the popular novel written by Khaled Hosseini depicting the story of the friendship between an Afghan boy and his household servant. Payind gave several lectures about the novel over the past year, including one at Drew University and one at a public library in Cincinnati.

January 15, 2006, Upper Arlington Public Library
Target audience: General public

Understanding Muslim Culture
A panel with Melinda Wightman and Mahjabeen Islam
May 25, 2006, Marathon Petroleum
Target audience: Business
Near Eastern Languages and Cultures Welcomes New Faculty

The Ohio State University has recently received two new faculty members whose work concerns the Middle East. One is Assistant Professor Morgan Liu, a Central Asian anthropologist who is teaching two classes this quarter, one on Middle Eastern culture in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, another on cities and culture jointly under Comparative Studies and International Studies. The other is a visiting professor from Syria, Assem Farris, who is teaching Arabic 205 and Arabic 403. We spoke with them about their backgrounds and their work at Ohio State.

Morgan Liu

**Hometown:** New York City

**Educational Background:** B.S. in Mathematics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; PhD in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Michigan, 2002

Having lived here a few months now, how do you find Columbus, Ohio?

I like it very much. It’s a very livable city. It has the things that a city has, but also you can get to places quickly and things are not very expensive.

Since you’re teaching a 531 Comparatives Studies course on cities and culture, I’d like to ask where you see Columbus in 25 years?

Parts of the city are growing really fast. And I know that because I just bought a house here. But Columbus faces the danger that it will go the route of many midsize American cities where you have subdivision after subdivision added to the city and that just makes commuting more difficult. All that could change for the worse if that trend picks up pace. I don’t know if it will go that route, but that’s my concern.

What was the subject of your doctoral research at the University of Michigan?

I’m a specialist in Central Asia, with a focus on Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. I was studying how ordinary Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan think about political authority and the post-Soviet state. It’s an ethnographic from a view on the ground showing how people imagine what good political authority ought to look like in a state that is independent for less that two decades, after the end of the Soviet Union in 1991.

How do you view Islam’s relationship to these newly independent states?

What’s happening today with Islam in Central Asia is largely a result of 70 years of Soviet rule. During that time, Islam was suppressed by the state. The Soviets killed the Muslim clergy, imprisoned them, or exiled them. They closed down mosques and madrasahs. After the independence of these republics in 1991, there has been a tremendous surge of interest in Islam among several Central Asian groups, notably Uzbeks.

(continued on page 8)
NOTES FROM THE FIELD:

Summer Study Abroad in Syria: The Logic and Illogic of Fear

by Wilson Dizard

Last summer, 14 Ohio State students including myself had the good fortune of traveling to Damascus, Syria, to participate in a two-month intensive Arabic program. The program was administered through the Office of International Education (OIE) and held at the University of Damascus. Beginning on June 10 and ending on August 11, the course was designed to count for 15 credit hours.

It was also a highly recommended course. In the months before my departure, Jeff McKibben, an advisor at OIE, explained that the Damascus program was known for sending students back fluent. To me, a student in Arabic 104 puzzling over broken plurals, the Damascus program seemed an attractive opportunity.

To put it mildly, things did not go as planned last summer. On July 12, Hezbollah, a Shia militia based in southern and eastern Lebanon, captured two Israeli soldiers along the Lebanese-Israeli border. A few days afterward, a war between Israel and Hezbollah began. By the end of the program, only four of the Ohio State students who had gone to Syria for the Damascus Intensive Summer Arabic Program remained.

The story of our program starts a month before the war began. Then, we had been jet-lagged, bleary-eyed newcomers, PhD students and undergrads alike. Shortly after our arrival and with the attentive help of Damascus University, we rented rooms with families. Familiar beds and routines were 6,000 miles away. We had to settle into new rooms and new schedules as well as the rules, habits, and customs of new families who sometimes spoke no English. We were living in the Christian quarter of the Old City of Damascus, whose narrow streets and alleys, constructed for horse and foot traffic but somehow capable of fitting any car, were quite different from the highways, byways, and driveways of back home. I spent most of my first week hopelessly lost.

As for our classes, our program certainly featured the best teachers available at the university. Returning DU Language Center alumni confirmed that the teachers in our program were the best DU had to offer. Indeed, I found the caliber of teaching high and the class time engaging.

Our program was broken into three sections, into which students were arranged depending on a placement test score. The highest level classes focused on expressing complex concepts in Arabic about philosophy, history, and ethics. In level two, my level, classes were carried on in an easygoing, conversational manner. In these classes, we would converse entirely in Arabic with our teacher, and she would explain grammatical concepts as we went along. Level one focused on building the basics of grammar and sentence structure by teaching composition.

As for adjusting to the new environment, I think we all discovered the shortcuts and scenic routes through the Old City. Also, there was a certain consistency between life in the United States and life in Syria, which made adjustment easier. Not only were there many Westerners in Bab Touma who spoke English, but also, oddly enough, we were able to keep in touch with each other using the cell phones we had purchased in Damascus and kept charged with prepaid Syriatel cards.

Last summer’s World Cup made the task of making friends and conversation partners easier. The latest match was always a great conversation starter, especially with other foreigners. I grew to appreciate soccer and the World Cup in Syria, and not only because it was the only TV anybody wanted to watch. A few days after the games ended, the war between Hezbollah and Israel began. The war, of course, was the second act of the summer. In the first act, people were able to speak freely about their thoughts and concerns because they involved only international soccer.

Though there were some instances where the war created bizarre moments, it was pretty terrifying to watch. What was on television sometimes slipped into reality as well, such as when my housemate was trapped in Beirut for three nights more than he intended to stay, having planned to be gone for Tuesday night only and leave the next day. Unfortunately, he chose the wrong Wednesday, but through luck and cash, he was able to take a cab ride out of Beirut and back to Bab Touma.

With Ohio State having sent its students in Damascus an e-mail entitled “Urgent Departure Recommended,” many of us factored the university’s suggestion into our decision, especially its offer to reimburse the flight back home. Weighing various factors together, I left early.

In retrospect, I wished I’d stayed, finished the program, and learned more Arabic. On the day I flew out of Damascus, I realized this while having an incredibly interesting conversation with a cab driver about how God is the only legitimate taker of human life. I wish I’d stayed just to talk to more cab drivers about ethics in Arabic.
What is the overall character of this new interest?

Let me give you a survey of Kyrgyzstan as an example. In the past 15 years, hundreds of mosques have been built. More people with an interest in Islam are going to the Middle East to study the religion. New madrasahs and other institutions of Islamic education have opened. You can find Islamic booklets and pamphlets in the bazaars. Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan, for their part, are studying Islam there in small neighborhood groups. This is happening in Kyrgyzstan because it is a country where there is a relatively high degree of religious freedom. And the interesting thing is that this is a grassroots interest. It isn’t being imposed by any institution or state.

What relationship does Islam have with these states?

Islam is given more independence in a place like Kyrgyzstan or Kazakhstan. The state is more or less hands-off. However, Central Asian governments are worried about so-called Islamic fundamentalism, so they monitor groups suspected of subversion.

The picture in Uzbekistan, however, is very different. Uzbekistan has been very suppressive of Islam since independence. The Uzbekistani government has been running this very much in a Soviet mode, and some say it is more suppressive of Islam. If you’re a man with a beard or a woman with a veil, that’s reason enough for the secret police to follow you and perhaps arrest you. People are known to disappear and never turn up again.

The major reason that this occurs in Uzbekistan is that Islam there is very much under the state’s control. So the state interprets any expression of Islam outside of state sanction as subversion.

On the other end of the scale from Uzbekistan sit Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, where government takes a more hands-off approach to religion.

What do you see as being the consequences for human rights in the region after recent oil discoveries in Kazakhstan? Do you see the potential for Kazakhstan to fall prey to the “resource curse”?

When you’re talking about the “resource curse,” you’re usually talking about oil-rich Arab states, but for Kazakhstan this is a real issue as well. When a country has a resource that is also something that Europe and the United States want, then these consumers of the commodity tend not to lean against the exporting government on issues like human rights or corruption. For instance, there has recently been a highly publicized affair in Kazakhstan in which public monies found their way into private hands.

Do you see this incident as indicative of a larger trend developing?

The answer is yes, unfortunately. Corruption is rife in all of these Central Asian societies. This recent case in Kazakhstan demonstrates that corruption reaches the highest levels, including the president.

Thank you very much for your time, Dr. Liu. My final question is why did you choose NELC at Ohio State?

Because I think it is very important to think about Central Asia in terms of its connections with the Middle East. This connection between regions has become stronger since the independence of the Central Asian republics, as reflected in the post-Soviet revival of Islam in the region. Also, the two regions were well linked for centuries in terms of intellectual, artistic, economic, and political interchanges. Scholarship on Central Asia needs to think through those connections with the Middle East, and other regions as well, since the region really does sit at the center of the Eurasian continent.
light on this significant issue that has raised so many questions in the media lately.

MESC cosponsored a number of conferences such as “Carbon Sequestration (of Soil) in Central Asia,” “Afghan Women Leaders Speak: Conflict Mitigation and Social Reconstruction,” and “Fundamentalism: Race, Truth, and Democracy in a Global World” as well as lectures on “Militarism, Feminism, and Education in Israeli Society” (with Dr. Diana Dolev), “Women’s Advancement in Conservative Societies: The Example of Afghanistan” (with Susanne Schmeidl), “Obstacles to Democratic Legislation in Iran,” “The Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Sources” (with Taner Akcam), “Islam and Nationalism in the Late Ottoman Empire: Perspectives of an Emigrant from the Russian Empire” (with Holly Shissler), and “Women’s Rights, Warlords, and the U.S. Occupation of Afghanistan” (with Malalai Joya).

Encouraging Undergrads to Study Cultures

MESC also contributed to activities involving students such as information sessions and panels about study abroad. MESC staff gave consultations for theater plays like Homebody/Afghanistan by Tony Kushner (University of Toledo, Ohio) and Escuela del Mundo by Catherine Filloux (directed by Kimberly Dachel, The Ohio State University).

In order to reach the student community, MESC Assistant Director Melinda Wightman led a seminar on “Perception of Persons from the Middle East Since 9/11,” which was an opportunity for Middle Eastern and non-Middle Eastern students to launch discussions about their identity and needs in a Western society and about their interrelations.

Outreach Coordinator Catalina Hunt responded to the invitation of the International Affairs Honors and Scholars Department to provide an educational food demonstration for students involved in the Honors and Scholars Program. The event was titled “A Night of Turkish Cuisine” and took place at the Kuhn Honors and Scholars House.

Teaching Cultural Studies to P-12 Students

MESC gives special consideration to outreach activities in schools and for teachers. Catalina Hunt gave six presentations in November and December 2006 to elementary and middle school students from Columbus Public Schools. Turkey was the topic of discussion, and she enriched her presentation with artifacts she collected in Turkey during past field research trips. Students were very interested in acquiring new knowledge about Turkish culture and civilization.

MESC considers this type of activity as a priority on its work agenda and promptly responds to requests for speakers from schools as well as from community members. In the near future, MESC will conduct a study tour for teachers in Turkey and will create an artifact box for use in classrooms.

In March 2006, MESC, in collaboration with the Center for African Studies (CAS), organized an intensive one-day workshop targeting teachers from Central Ohio. “Selective Perspectives on the Horn of Africa” focused on the history and culture of the Horn of Africa countries. The workshop enjoyed a high enrollment of 36, including students and educators. (See description and map at right.)

To respond to teachers’ requests for new perspectives on different regions of the world, MESC participated in the “Global Hotspots Workshop Series for Educators.” Alam Payind, director of MESC, gave a presentation on “Iraq and Afghanistan Today,” which was well received by the 25 pre-collegiate school teachers who attended.

Finally, MESC offered a new workshop for teachers and students, entitled “Arab World Workshop: An Introduction to the Arab World.” Accessible for novices but designed for all levels of knowledge, this workshop introduced participants to the history, language, traditions, and society in Arab lands. Developed in conjunction with Dr. Mahdi Alosh, the Saturday culture workshop received much praise from the participants as it gave a good introduction to the Arab world, its people, cultures, and language. Teacher training is an essential part of MESC’s mission and is a requirement of our Title VI National Resource Center grant, so these workshops are among the highest priorities of our program. Several of the participants were educators, and the rest were interested community members.

MESC will continue to take the initiative in participating in and organizing programs that will reach community members, educators, and academia while remaining open to new ideas regarding methods and means for research and raising awareness about the importance of the Middle East region.

Catalina Hunt, Ph.D., Outreach Coordinator

Selected Perspectives on the Horn of Africa: A Continuing Education Workshop

Columbus is home to many Somalis, Ethiopians, and Eritreans from the Horn of Africa. Media focus on humanitarian crises such as that of Darfur, Sudan, also call attention to the region. This workshop is intended to help ground these initial perceptions in a more substantial context of the regions’ history, geography, and culture. Presentations describe those elements that define the region as a whole, and in particular its ties to the Middle East, as well as the distinct profiles of Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and Somalia. Rather than a comprehensive overview, speakers will focus on one or several current events or cultural trends, detailing historical and cultural background needed to develop a deeper understanding of them. Presenters will also offer practical advice on working with first- or second-generation youth from the region and their parents.
Opportunities in Middle East Studies

The Sonkin-Bergman-Wasserman Families’ Scholarship for International Understanding and Peace

Deadline: April 1
For further information: www.ole ohio-state.edu/internationalstudents/currentstudents/sonkinbergmanwasserman.aspx
Contact: Associate Director Kevin T. Harty
Office of International Education
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Call for Papers on Middle East Studies

The Middle East: Diversity – Variation – Interpretation

September 21-23, 2007, at University of Helsinki

Deadline: March 31, 2007

Images of the Middle East as uniform, violent, and culturally stagnated keep repeating in the media, popular imaginaries, and academic stereotyping. This biased view is strengthened by ever more new conflicts that are presented to the Western audience as proof of the prevalence of only one kind of religious orthodoxy throughout the Middle East with absence of diversity in views or variety in cultural manifestations. Ideas of conflicting civilizations are celebrated by insensitive acts that take as the starting point misconformed images of cultural otherness.

In the Nordic countries, a rich legacy of Middle Eastern studies prevails. These studies represent a variety of disciplines, historical periods, and theoretical perspectives. In the Seventh Nordic Conference on Middle East Studies our aim is to make visible the richness of this scholarly work. The conference continues in the interdisciplinary collaborative vein that started in the first Nordic conference held in 1989 in Uppsala, Sweden. The aim of the conference is to bring together internationally acclaimed scholars as keynote speakers and Nordic scholars of Middle East research. The conference theme, “The Middle East: Diversity – Variation – Interpretation,” calls upon papers from all historical periods discussing the broader Middle East and based on original scholarly work. The conference is open to researchers and students based in Nordic academic environments, as well as guests from other countries. A special session will be devoted to postgraduate students to present their ongoing work.

1. Themes
In academic work on the Middle East, concepts of diversity and variation have increasingly characterized the enquiry in disciplines whether relying on textual, linguistic, historical, ethnographic, or social science methodologies. In movement from monolithic and one-dimensional interpretations on historical formations, institutions, and conceptual notions, studies bring forth the variety and often contradictory nature of discourses and cultural representations. While the notions of diversity and variation call upon focusing on change or on encounters, the multitude of aspects influencing scholarly and other interpretation needs to be made visible, too. In discussing diversity, variation, and interpretation, the presenters are encouraged to bring fore their theoretical reflections as well as methodological approaches used.

2. Format
We welcome individual paper proposals and complete panel and round table proposals on all fields of Middle Eastern studies. Abstracts should not exceed 350 words and should include the main argument, material used and disciplinary discussions the paper involves.

3. Submission guidelines
The conference is hosted by the Institute for Asian and African Studies and the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, both in the University of Helsinki. Abstracts should be sent by March 31, 2007, to Dr. Sylvia Akar, sylvia.akar@helsinki.fi, or Dr. Susanne Dahlgren, susanne.dahlgren@helsinki.fi.

Call for Proposals from the Office of International Affairs

Interdisciplinary Lectures, Seminars, and Conferences on International Themes

The Office of International Affairs is awarding grants of up to $5,000 to support interdisciplinary lectures, seminar series, or conferences on topics relevant to areas of the world outside the United States (but by no means excluding the U.S., as a case for comparative study). These activities may focus on one particular geographical area, or they may involve systematic cross-regional perspectives on themes of global relevance (e.g., democratization, the future of the welfare state, religious fundamentalism, environmental degradation, trends in literature and the arts). Proposals are invited from faculty, interdisciplinary and area study centers, and academic units. Eligibility is contingent upon the commitment of partial counterpart funds from other Ohio State or extramural sources.

Graduate Student Dissertation/MA Thesis Research Travel Grants

The Office of International Affairs will make available funding to support international travel for: (1) pre-dissertation preliminary research; (2) doctoral dissertation research; and (3) research necessary to complete a masters thesis (for students in those units where the masters is typically the terminal degree). Students who are currently enrolled in a graduate degree program at Ohio State are eligible to apply. Grants range from $1,500 to $2,000, with a maximum award of $3,000. These funds are to be used as seed money or to match funds committed by other university or external funding agencies.
New Faculty (continued from page 8)

Assem Farris

Hometown: Aleppo, Syria

Educational Background: B.A. in English from the University of Aleppo 1978, Double PhD in English and Comparative Literature from Indiana University, Bloomington 1992

This year, visiting Professor Assem Farris joins the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at Ohio States as acting director of the Arabic Department. He is a full professor of at the English Department at the University of Aleppo in Syria. Last year, Farris spent nine months in Columbus researching under a Fulbright Scholarship. I sat down with him and spoke with him about his previous research in comparative literature in addition to a wide range of other topics.

How do you like Columbus?

Columbus, is a nice town. In the past, I lived in smaller campus towns. Here, there is big city life. I feel especially good because of the number of the places to talk and learn about Islam there are here.

What was the nature of your Fulbright research last year?

I conducted research on Arabic and English literature. Literature’s disparate components stem from diversified cultural backgrounds. Here, specifically, in the United State immigrations builds cultural diversity.

But in the Arabic literature the Arabs were diverse as well, with many different clans coexisting at one time. The ancient Arab traders used to be very diverse, taking their wealth across Central Asia to China. There was much cultural exchange through this trade. Later, merchants on these same routes would be Islam and the Arabic language and script to these Central Asian areas as well. My research focused on the parallels and divergences between these two types of texts.

What was the topic of your Ph.D. thesis at Indiana University?

The title of my thesis was “Comparative Literature and Intertextuality.” Unlike traditionalist comparative literary studies, intertextuality is a linguistically oriented theory, and this linguistic concept serves as an element that achieves the comparative practice and makes intertextuality as a post structuralist theory. I was influenced by Renee Wallick, who wrote an article called the “Crisis of Comparative Literature.” I started out after reading this thinking about this aspect and started looking for ways these problems can be solved through intertextuality.

Could you elaborate on the specific aspects of post-structuralist theory?

First, the individual is born blank without knowledge. From this, we can say that our ideas and social norms are built by exposure to our cultural surroundings. From this, we can also say that writing and scholarly articles are the product of previous reading. Theses influences, furthermore, are highly diverse, with each individual as a “text” being comprised of multiple sources.

To elaborate, the individual human being is born into cultural norms. The norms of that culture become his norms. Furthermore, since cultures are the equivalent of texts, the more cultures an individual is acquainted with, the more sophisticated his ideas will be.

As for the nature and origin of culture, it is a figment of political geography—without artificial territorial boundaries, the whole world would share one culture, as all texts would be integrated along their intertextual similarities.

Thank you very much, Dr. Farris. My final question concerns the educational systems here and in Syria. Having experience with the educational systems of both Syria and the United States, what would you say are the differences and similarities between the two?

Considering the lack of resources in Syria, I’d say Syrian education does an exemplary job. Having received a B.A. in English from the University of Aleppo and then continued my research at the University of Indiana, I’d say that education is at par to the education received by students here.

Indeed, many Syrian students go on to study in the United States. This is even with classes being taught primarily in Arabic, while the exams they take for placement are given in English. In Syria, the educational system is designed so that will be able to use their education all over the world.

Faculty International Travel Grants

The Office of International Affairs is soliciting applications from faculty who are proposing to (1) collaborate with foreign scholars in preparing a research grant proposal; (2) participate in a faculty-exchange program; (3) develop agreements linking Ohio State to major foreign institutions; or (4) complete a manuscript jointly authored with a foreign-based scholar. Typical grants range from $1,500 to $2,000, with a maximum ceiling of $3,000. With the exception of those faculty members proposing to participate in a university faculty-exchange program, applicants are required to secure counterpart funds from Ohio State or external funding agencies.

The Phyllis Krumm Memorial International Scholarship

The Office of International Affairs will make available up to three awards of $1,000 to deserving graduate students for research or study in a European country or in China. Applicants must be enrolled as a post-baccalaureate student at Ohio State in an academic program of study in any field. Students must demonstrate excellence in scholarship and an appropriate background for research or study in Europe or China (including the mainland, Hong Kong, Macao, and/or Taiwan). Preference is given to U.S. citizens preparing for careers in diplomatic or other governmental international service.
The Ohio State University Foreign Language Center and World Media and Culture Center hosted a landmark videoconference on April 27, in the Kermit L. Hall Videoconference Center in Hagerty Hall. Students in Professor Danielle Marx-Scouras’s French literature class and advanced French students at the University of Damascus, Syria, discussed the famous short story, “L’Hôte,” by Albert Camus. Although apparently a simple tale, this story is fraught with ambiguities and subtleties, making it ideal material for a cross-cultural discussion between students in Syria and the United States.

This event marks the first language-student exchange via videoconference between Ohio State and Syria. Both groups of students read Camus’s work prior to the conference and then discussed it, in French, for one hour, guided by Marx-Scouras and Professor Loubana Mouchaweh, chair of the Department of French at the University of Damascus.

The Ohio State students reported that the videoconference enriched both their interactions with the students in Syria and their understanding of Camus’s story. Melanie Bynum noted that the video connection allowed students to “communicate with hand gestures, facial expressions, and respond in accordance to the body language. It made the experience slightly less technological and more human.”

Adela Lechintan wrote that “The video conference with Damascus made me realize how universal the work of Camus is, being studied in countries with such a different culture. I felt like it was a lesson of generosity and hospitality (if we think about the postcolonial point of view on our topic of discussion, Camus’s “The Guest”) but also objectivity, coming from people whose history was marked by periods of colonization.”

The conference was initiated in Damascus by Professor Sabra Webber (Department of Comparative Studies and the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at Ohio State), who was visiting at the University of Damascus, and coordinated at Ohio State by Dr. Rebecca Bias, Foreign Language Technology integration specialist for the Foreign Language Center. The College of Humanities and the University of Damascus plan to hold two to three such conferences each year.

Further information about the Foreign Language Center is available online at flc.osu.edu.

### Humanities Program Spotlight: Landmark Videoconference Links Language Students from Ohio State and Syria

**Humanities Program Spotlight: Landmark Videoconference Links Language Students from Ohio State and Syria**

**The Construction of Druze Ethnicity: Druze in Israel Between State Policy and Palestinian Arab Nationalism**

**Author:** Kassem, Lina M.

**Degree:** PhD, University of Cincinnati, Arts and Sciences: Political Science, 2005.

**Advisor:** Dr. Laura D. Jenkins

Eric Hobsbawm argues that recently created nations in the Middle East, such as Israel or Jordan, must be novel. In most instances, these new nations and nationalism that goes along with them have been constructed through what Hobsbawm refers to as “invented traditions.” This thesis will build on Hobsbawm’s concept of invented traditions as well as add one additional but essential national building tool especially in the Middle East, which is the military tradition. These traditions are used by the state of Israel to create a sense of shared identity. These invented traditions not only worked to cement together an Israeli Jewish sense of identity, they were also utilized to create a sub-national identity for the Druze. The state of Israel, with the cooperation of the Druze elites, has attempted, with some success, to construct through its policies an ethnic identity for the Druze separate from their Arab identity. The policy of the state of Israel was to encourage the Druze to distinguish themselves by facilitating their imagining of a Druze ethnic identity. Israeli and Druze elites fashioned this identity through distinct military, economic, and cultural policies for the Druze. The need for inventing a sub-national identity for the Druze arose from the state’s interest in dividing the Arabs along sectarian lines in order to facilitate their control. Thus, the Druze were no longer just a different sect but also ethnically differentiated from Arabs. This is an example of a classic strategy that has been used by colonial states to subdue native populations, commonly known as “divide and conquer.” What is perhaps unique to the Israeli situation is how the state tried to simultaneously encourage ethnic nationalism as well as civic nationalism among the Druze in Israel. In other words, the state encouraged Druze ethnic nationalism to thwart Palestinian Arab national aspirations, while cultivating Israeli civic nationalism among the Druze, most notably through their military service. This case study demonstrates that these two nationalism are not necessarily mutually exclusive.
Jews from Konstantiniyye to Islambol: Istanbul Jewry in the 17th Century According to the Accounts of Evliya and Eremya Çelebi

Author: Cakir, Okan
Degree: Master of Arts, Ohio State University, History, 2005.
Advisor: Jane Hathaway

In this study, I analyze the Jewish community of Istanbul in the seventeenth century as reflected in the works of two celebrities, or bureaucrats, namely Evliya Çelebi and Eremya Çelebi. The former was an Ottoman statesman and a traveler in the Ottoman world who is very well known among students of Ottoman history. The latter was a preeminent Armenian scholar within the Armenian community of Istanbul who wrote a number of important works in the seventeenth century, although he is not very well-known by Ottomanists except for some of his works; this is in part because a number of his works are still waiting to be translated into Western languages. I will concentrate on Istanbul Jewry instead of all Jewish communities under the Ottomans, although I will provide the reader with information on other minorities and on other Jewish communities of the empire when necessary. In addition, to some extent, I will include other opinions on Istanbul Jewry: opinions of Jews themselves as reflected in responsa literature and of European travelers and visitors to the Ottoman Empire during this period. In this study, I reconsider the so-called millet system and question the insistence on the term “millet system” by some scholars, even those who acknowledge the incorrect application of this term to the pre-nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire. Then, I suggest a clarification of this issue with reference to works by experts on Ottoman minorities. In addition, I argue that the Seyahatname is a mirror of rising religious conservatism and restoration attempts within the empire, and therefore its timing and contents are also significant as can be seen from the evidences suggested in this work. Furthermore, I also seek answers for the omission of the Sabbatai Sevi episode in the Seyahatname and other Ottoman sources. I also suggest that Eremya Çelebi’s works help us to have a better understanding of the Islamization process in Istanbul—especially in the 1600s—and the social and economic rivalry between the Jews and the Greeks around this time. Eremya’s works also give us invaluable ideas concerning the Sabbatai Sevi episode and how one minority was seen from another minority’s perspective.

A Comparative Study About Learning Styles Preferences of Two Cultures

Author: Kutay, Huban
Degree: Ph.D., Ohio State University, Teaching and Learning, 2006.
Advisor: Barbara S. Thomson

From an anthropologist’s (Maddock, 1981) point of view, “Science and science education are cultural enterprises which form a part of the wider cultural matrix of society and educational considerations concerning science must be made in the light of this wider perspective” (p.10). In addition, Spindler (1987) states that teaching science is considered cultural transmission while, Wolcott (1991) focuses on learning science as culture acquisition. In these statements, culture is defined as “an ordered system of meaning and symbols, in terms of which social interaction takes place” (Geertz, 1973). Thus, learning and culture are a partnership. The purpose of this study is to identify the relationship between students’ learning styles and their culture. Does culture limit or expand the learning of individuals? For this study Turkish students who pursue undergraduate or graduate education in the United States were identified and compared to American college students through learning styles data and anxiety levels as cultural markers. To identify individuals’ learning styles we used the Building Excellence (BE) instrument (Dunn & Rundle, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2000). BE assesses 24 elements covering each person’s perceptual, psychological, environmental, physiological, emotional, and sociological processing preferences and analyzes the learning conditions for students’ individual preferences in these six areas. A two-sample test and regression analysis were used to identify the differences between Turkish and American students by means of their learning style preferences and social anxiety levels. The sample consisted of 67 percent males and 33 percent female. The age of the subjects was relatively young as we expected; 51 percent of them 25 years old and under and 46 percent of them were between the ages of 26 and 35. In terms of academic major areas 38 percent of the students were from the basic science areas and the second most prevalent major category was engineering with 35 percent of the students. Out of a total of 24 elements, eight were identified as being different in these groups. These differences were mostly in the physiological and environmental stimulus that can be explained as cultural habits or practices.

From Essentialism to Hybridity: Fatih Akin’s Gegen Die Wand as Portrayal of Second-Generation Turks in Germany

Author: Johnson, Courtney E.
Degree: Master of Arts (MA), Bowling Green State University, German, 2006.
Advisor: Kristie Foell

Who are the Turks living on German soil? This question is central to many contemporary discussions being waged in the German media. In a country with approximately 2 million residents of Turkish descent, the time has come for this question to finally be addressed and answered. While journalists and politicians grapple with this topic, one director has made significant contributions to the discussion through one film: Gegen die Wand. This thesis explores the struggles that second generation Turks in Germany face when it comes to identity. It will look into the history of the minority Turkish population in Germany and the struggles that the current generation must face. By incorporating the hybridity theory of Homi K. Bhabha, the discussion will be widened to include new ways of approaching the question of identity. The thesis will then focus on Gegen die Wand and show the ways in which this film opens up new opportunities for discussing this very topical issue of second generation minorities in Germany.
**Troubling Parallels: an Analysis of America’s Inability to Overcome the Obstacles that Led to the Defeat of the Red Army in the Soviet-Afghan War**

**Author:** Delgado, Joseph Antonio  
**Degree:** Master of Arts, Ohio State University, Political Science, 2006.  
**Advisor:** Richard Herrmann

The United States is currently fighting a counterinsurgency war in Afghanistan for which there seems to be no end in sight. While much national media attention has been given to America’s war in Iraq, relatively little attention has been paid to the Taliban’s effort to delegitimize and destabilize the newly elected government of Afghan President Hamid Karzai. Since the end of official combat operations in March 2002, the Taliban has reorganized into a guerilla force and is operating out of the tribal areas of Pakistan. In the absence of an effective strategy to root out the Taliban insurgents in Afghanistan and Pakistan, America’s effort to prevent Afghanistan from returning to its former status as a terrorist safe haven is likely to end in failure.

**Communication and Development in Afghanistan: A History of Reforms and Resistance**

**Author:** Noorzai, Roshan  
**Degree:** Master of Arts (MA), Ohio University, Telecommunications (Communication), 2006.  
**Advisor:** Don M. Flournoy

This thesis presents a recent history of development and communication in Afghanistan. The reforms introduced by the state under different rulers and governments since the 1870s, and public reaction to these initiatives, are examined. Whether influenced by global events or socioeconomic and political developments domestically, those attempts at reform were often resisted by the local communities in Afghanistan. This study explores both external and internal factors contributing to the reforms and resistance to those reforms. This thesis seeks to uncover the possible causes of that resistance.

Strategies related to media and communication in the country are explored in terms of the role they have played in attempts to develop the country. Discussed is the use of media, use of traditional communication channels and the use of interpersonal channels for introducing socioeconomic changes in the country.

In modern history, all three of the main approaches to development and communication, modernization, dependency, and liberation perspectives have been used as strategies to bring about developmental change in Afghanistan. The paper describes the principal development events and tries to find out the causes of success or failure of these approaches.

The paper concludes that the involvement and participation of Afghan citizens in the development process is a key determinant in achieving the desired results. It also explains how the social system and values of the population, if taken into account, can support development activities they understand and have helped to bring about.
Why War Is Not Enough: Military Defeat, the Division of Labor, and Military Professionalization

Author: Toronto, Nathan
Degree: Ph.D., Ohio State University, Political Science, 2006.
Advisor: John Mueller

Does war make states? If it does, it does not make professional militaries. Scholars have often linked war and state development, but one important process of state development—military professionalization—does not seem to follow the war makes states logic. There are two reasons for this. First, states are most likely to begin professionalizing the military in response, not to war or the threat of war, but to dire military defeats, which are defeats resulting in the occupation of national territory, abnormally high casualties, and the recognition of military incompetence. The humiliation associated with these dire defeats seems to spur political systems into action. Second, the division of labor tends to concentrate the population in urban centers and increase society’s human capital and the level of resources available to the state. Thus, an advanced division of labor enables long-term military professionalization. The division of labor thus seems to be a necessary condition, and dire military defeats a sufficient condition, for thorough military professionalization. To evaluate these propositions, I use original data on military professionalism—compiled in a data set spanning from 1800 to 2005—and case studies of military professionalization in Prussia, France, Turkey, and Egypt. The findings of this study suggest that we should rethink how states develop professional military institutions in response to war.

Upcoming Programs

The Summer Institute on Middle Eastern Cultures has taken on a different format and will have different parameters than it has had in the past. In 2007 we will offer in two sections: a spring course in the evenings and one week of intensive study in the summer. The sections will be open to teachers in the Columbus Public Schools and offered through the College of Education’s Outreach and Engagement office.

The Turkic World Workshop. A Continuing Education Workshop
April 28, 2007
8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
046 Hagerty Hall
1775 College Road
Columbus, OH 43210

The Middle East Studies Center at The Ohio State University presents an intensive one-day workshop that will focus on the history and culture of the Turkic world countries. Presentations delivered by professors from Ohio State and the University of Wisconsin-Madison will describe those elements that define the region as a whole and its particular countries geographically, historically, linguistically, and culturally. Speakers will focus on issues that will create a better understanding of the contemporary culture and civilization of the Turkic peoples.

Samples of books and other resources for adults and children will be available, and continental breakfast and a lunch featuring Turkish cuisine will be provided. This program is suitable for K-12 teachers and community members who wish to enrich their understanding of the Turkic world and its people, as well as for students.

The workshop will provide seven contact hours of instruction. To register, go to ced.osu.edu. Registration fee is $25. Deadline for registration is April 20, 2007. Any questions regarding the registration process should be directed to the Office of Continuing Education at (614) 292-8571. For information about workshop content, contact Catalina Hunt, Middle East Studies Center, at (614) 688-4406 or hunt.351@osu.edu.

Events on Ottoman History and the Modern Middle East

We hope you will join us for the rest of our lectures in our Ottoman History lecture series this year, organized in conjunction with Professor Jane Hathaway, Department of History. The next event in the series is on April 12 by Walter Andrews, Ottoman Poetry: The Power of Love in the Garden of the World. Please check our web calendar at mesc.osu.edu for updates and further information. Catalina Hunt is the contact for the Ottoman Lecture series, (614) 688-4406 or hunt.351@osu.edu.

On May 24, we will hold a symposium in conjunction with the Center for Interdisciplinary Research on International Themes (CIRIT). It is part of the series Multiple Modernities: Development of Civil Society. Call the Middle East Studies Center at (614) 292-5897 for further information, or check our web calendar at mesc.osu.edu.
Current and Upcoming Activities

Ottoman History Lecture Series
Please call (614) 292-5897 for further information on this series.

Thursday, April 12, noon, 120 Mershon Center, 1501 Neil Ave.

Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe, Marc Baer
Thursday, April 19, 4:30–6:15 p.m., 186 Hagerty Hall, 1775 College Road

Women in Development Lecture Series
Iraqi Women Between Dictatorships, Wars, Sanctions, and Occupation, Nadje al-Ali
Monday, April 9, noon, 120 Mershon Center, 1501 Neil Ave.
This lecture is open to the public. Lunch will be served to students and faculty who RSVP to Ann Powers at powers.108@osu.edu by April 5, 2007.

Series on Multiple Modernities: The Development of Civil Society
Symposium: Shaping the Modern Middle East: History, Literature, and Post-Ottoman Identities
Presenters: Fred Lawson, Mills College; Salim Tamari, Berkeley; Carter Findley and Joseph Zeidan, Ohio State
May 24, venue to be announced
Visit the MESC web calendar for further information and updates: mesc.osu.edu (click on Calendar)

Related course:
International Studies 501: Living Jerusalem: Ethnography and Blogbridging in Disputed Territories, a cooperative course with al-Quds University and Hebrew University. This course is related to the Shaping the Modern Middle East Symposium.