

# International Agenda

Publication of the Schoolcraft College International Institute (SCII) Volume 9, Number 2 September 2010

## The Middle East: *Conflict and Hope*



A militiaman at the Sāba'a Nīsān ("Seventh of April") water treatment plant beside the Tigris River in Baghdad in February 2003, a month before the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

Photo: Christiaan Briggs/ Wikimedia Commons

Coverage of Schoolcraft's Focus Middle East project begins on page 5.

## International Agenda

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Archives are available at the SCII website,  
<http://www.schoolcraft.edu/scii/publications.asp>

## SCII Meeting Schedule

International Institute meetings are open to all who want to learn or to help out. New folks are always welcome. Meetings are generally on Fridays at 12 – 2 pm in the Liberal Arts Building (room LA-200). Upcoming meetings are as follows:

- September, 17, 2010
- October 15, 2010
- November 19, 2010.

## New Focus Regions Named

At its meeting on May 7, the Schoolcraft College International Institute discussed and selected new Focus Regions for the next three years, as follows:

- 2011: North America
- 2012: Latin America
- 2013: Russia and its neighbors.

The theme chosen for next year will encourage instructors and students to explore the multicultural societies and the intertwined histories of the United States, Canada, and Mexico. These are also the three signatory countries of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

## International Institute (SCII)

Schoolcraft College  
18600 Haggerty Road  
Livonia, MI 48152-2696  
<http://www.schoolcraft.edu/scii>

The mission of the Schoolcraft College International Institute is to coordinate cross-cultural learning opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and the community. The Institute strives to enhance the international content of coursework, programs, and other College activities so participants better appreciate both the diversities and commonalities among world cultures, and better understand the global forces shaping people's lives.

### SCII Administrative Director:

Assoc. Dean Cheryl Hawkins (Liberal Arts Divn.)

### SCII Faculty Co-Chairs:

Josselyn Moore (Anthropology/ Sociology Depts.)

Helen Ditouras Gordy (English Dept.)

### Focus Series Coordinator:

Linda Vesely-Gutierrez (Sociology Dept.)

### Representative to CCSCA (College Consortium for Socio-Cultural Awareness):

Sam Hays (English Dept.)

### GlobalEYEzers Coordinators:

Anna Maheshwari (English Dept.)

Sandy Roney-Hays (Anthropology/ Sociology Depts.)

### Review Committee for International Course Designation:

Christa Cipparone (Learning Support Services)

Sam Hays (English Dept.)

Laura Leshok (Counseling Dept.)

Diane O'Connell (Geography Dept.)

Sandy Roney-Hays (Anthropology/ Sociology Depts.)

### Global Endorsement Assessment Task Force:

Chair: Robert Oxley (Philosophy/ Political Science Depts.)

Sumita Chaudhery (English Dept.)

Helen Ditouras Gordy (English Dept.)

Sandy Roney-Hays (Anthropology/ Sociology Depts.)

Faye Schuett (English Dept.)

Karen Schaumann-Beltrán (Sociology Dept.)

**GlobalEYEzers**, a group affiliated with SCII, invites instructors, staff, and students to participate in lunchtime discussions about current events in a global context, with ethnic food provided. Meetings are generally on Fridays at 12 – 2 pm in the Liberal Arts Building. Upcoming meetings are as follows:

- September 24, 2010 in LA-440
- November 12, 2010 in LA-200.

For more information, contact Anna Maheshwari at [amaheshw@schoolcraft.edu](mailto:amaheshw@schoolcraft.edu) or 734-462-4400 x5296.

# Global Endorsement Enhances Schoolcraft College Degree

by Robert Oxley (Philosophy and Political Science),  
Josselyn Moore (Anthropology and Sociology),  
and Helen Ditouras (English)

The competition for job opportunities is heating up internationally. The days when applicants for a job were strictly localized are vanishing. College graduates from all over the world are now applying for jobs outside of their respective home countries. The current pace of technological development in communications has enabled prospective applicants to offer their area of expertise to potential employers without regard to their physical location. Some job opportunities might not even require relocation of the applicant. Teleconferencing from a home-based computer is replacing physical air travel to remote locations for a meeting. If these trends continue, then what factor could provide a job applicant with a competitive edge toward securing the desired employment position?

Schoolcraft College has an answer. As an enhancement to a majority of its degree offerings, since 2006 the College has offered a Global Endorsement as a student option. Prospective employers could view this endorsement, coupled with the completed prescribed degree program, as the deciding factor in awarding a position to a Schoolcraft student over an otherwise equally-qualified applicant from the U.S. or another country. This is because the endorsement represents evidence that the student has completed coursework to appreciate different world cultures and to understand forces that are acting on an international level. Such appreciation and understanding makes a graduate better prepared to succeed in the globalized and multicultural world of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Benefiting from collaboration among staff from many different departments across campus, the Global Endorsement was conceived and formally proposed by the Schoolcraft College International Institute (SCII). It was approved by the Schoolcraft College Board of Trustees for launch in the Fall 2006 semester.

Participating students enroll in designated *international courses*, each of which contains at least two weeks of global and/or multicultural content. The Schoolcraft College *Term Class Schedule* identifies these courses for student selection. The student must complete a minimum of 15 credit hours of such international courses to earn a Global Endorsement as part of their degree.

A committee within the SCII reviews instructors' formal requests for courses to receive the international designation. With expansion of this project, there are now

82 approved international courses distributed over 21 disciplines. There has been an impressive ground-swell of support by faculty, as evidenced in the Winter 2009 semester when 181 sections of these international courses were offered, meaning that several thousand students were receiving significant cross-cultural instruction that semester. As of the Winter 2010 semester, a total of more than 1,000 students have earned a Global Endorsement to complement their degree from the College.

The Global Endorsement focus has truly helped to internationalize the Schoolcraft College campus. It makes available a more global learning environment that encourages an understanding of the uniqueness of the world's countries and their respective cultures, an understanding that will enhance the students' ability to function within a culturally diverse working environment. As mobility and communication continue to make the world more interconnected, it is essential to understand the unique cultural traits of fellow employees and prospective customers, as well as the international context within which companies are now operating. But the world of work is only one of the arenas in which such global literacy is beneficial. This knowledge and understanding has broader applications, allowing students to navigate the new multicultural realities in their communities and their broader lives and to become well-rounded citizens.

The SCII has been promoting international and multicultural education since its inception in 1994 as a participant in the Midwest Institute consortium based in Kalamazoo. From the beginning, the SCII has organized programming designed to foster international and multicultural awareness on campus. In addition to the Global Endorsement, these programs include the annual Multicultural Fair, Focus Speaker Series, International Film Festival, cultural performances, GlobalEYEzers discussion group, and Bridging Barriers. Further, the annual Global Roundtables Symposium has enabled students to get involved in public presentations regarding global issues, including their own multimedia projects and face-to-face dialog. As a spinoff from these activities, the SCII has formed partnerships with more than a dozen organizations and departments on campus, such as the Student Activities Office, Learning Support Services, and the Pageturners reading group. This expanding network collaborates to regularly co-sponsor a rich array of speakers, performances, films, exhibits, and other events. With the encouragement of the College administration and faculty, the SCII has expanded from its humble roots into a major force for international education on campus and in the community. •

# Kudos

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Congratulations to several colleagues for securing grants from the **Schoolcraft College Foundation** in support of the following international and multicultural education projects for this school year: **Linda Gutierrez** (Sociology) for SCII's Focus Series and International Film Festival this Fall and next Winter; **Todd Stowell** (Student Activities) and **Stacey Stover** (Transition Center) for the Navratri Celebration this October; **Helen Ditousas** (English) and **Elizabeth Grace** (Child and Family Services) for Bridging Barriers events on MLK Day next January; **Deborah Daiek** (Learning Support Services) and **Sandy Roney-Hays** (Anthropology and Sociology) for the Global Roundtables Symposium next March; and **Josselyn Moore** (Anthropology and Sociology) for the Multicultural Fair next April.

**Theresa Hapsburg**, who taught Native Studies for the Brighton, MI School District for many years and is the mother of Schoolcraft College student **Allison Lysz**, made a generous donation of Native American education materials to the SC Anthropology Department. **Jessica Worden-Ballard** (Anthropology), who made the connection that led to the donation, accepted the items, which had been created or used in the Brighton schools to teach Native students about their heritage.

**Marjorie Nanian** (Political Science) won second prize in the 2009 GENEii Family History Writing Contest (Southern California Genealogical Society) for her article "The Pasha", which tells the story of her grandfather's survival during the Armenian Genocide. In addition, Marjorie wrote, and submitted to two different Armenian-American newspapers, a review of the novel *Motown Burning* by Armenian-American writer **John Jeffire**, who read from that work in a Pageturners event held here at Schoolcraft this past March.

"Tackling Middle Eastern Misconceptions" was a panel discussion that drew a crowd of about 80 people here on February 8. The five student panelists, including a Russian Jew and a Palestinian Muslim, engaged the audience with their honest dialog and heart-to-heart discussion, helping to dispel widely-held public misconceptions and stereotypes about the peoples of the region. The event was organized by the **Schoolcraft Peace Alliance**, spearheaded by **Polly Burnette-Egan** (President) and **Sandy Roney-Hays** (Faculty Advisor).

Several instructors helped organize events that were part of the Women's History Month celebrations held on campus from early March to early April. **Karen Schaumann** (Sociology) and **Lisa Jackson** (Psychology) organized a Global Women's Tea focusing on women who have won the Nobel Peace Prize. **Sandy Roney-Hays** (Anthropology and Sociology) and the students of the **Schoolcraft Peace Alliance** organized a poster presentation featuring women who have had an impact on the global peace movement. Students of **Steven Berg** (History and English) created poster displays around the themes "Celebrating Women: A Cross-Cultural Perspective" and "Women in the Ancient World".

**Helen Ditousas** (English), **Sam Hays** (English), **Sandy Roney-Hays** (Anthropology and Sociology), and **Yovana Veerasamy** (French and Political Science) participated in the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Midwest Institute for International/ Intercultural Education (MIIE), held March 26-27 in Springfield, IL. Their report appears on pp. 24-25.

**Helen Ditousas** (English) participated in a week-long workshop on Languages, Global Communication & Exchanges, held at Kalamazoo Valley Community College (Kalamazoo, MI) on August 2-6. The workshop was one of three offered this Summer by MIIE, which provides each participant with support, mentoring, and access to electronic and other resources in order to begin developing an instructional module for infusion in one of the courses they teach. As a result of this workshop, Helen will be developing a module on Global Film and will present it at the annual MIIE conference in 2011. Similarly, **Yovana Veerasamy** (French and Political Science) participated in last year's workshop on Southeast Asia, held on Aug. 17-21, 2009, and she presented her resulting module at this year's conference. For information on future workshops, visit <http://www.miiie.org>.

The 9<sup>th</sup> annual Multicultural Fair held on campus last April 1 was a resounding success. A record-breaking 3,187 visitors toured 27 country display tables, enjoyed 9 cultural performances, and munched on a variety of ethnic snacks provided by 8 area restaurants. An article and photos appeared in the April 4 *Observer-Eccentric* newspaper. The organizing committee for the event consisted of **Josselyn Moore** and **Helen Ditousas** (SCII), **Laura Leshok** (Counseling), and **Todd Stowell** (Student Activities).

Two Schoolcraft instructors took groups on study-abroad trips this past Spring:

- **Anita Süess Kaushik** (Foreign Languages) organized a Discover China tour that traversed that country in late May. A report by participant **Faye Schuett** (English) appears on pp. 22-23. This was the third overseas study tour led by Dr. Süess.
- In early June, **James Nissen** (Humanities) led his HUM 204 class (Art and Music in Western Civilization: Field Study - Spain) on a 10-day trip to Spain, including visits to Madrid, Toledo, Segovia, El Escorial, and other sites. This was the 12<sup>th</sup> such tour that Jim has led to Europe. Next year's trip will be to Italy; for information, contact Dr. Nissen at extension 5719.

**Randy Schwartz** (Mathematics) presented a talk, "Al-qibla and the New Spherical Trigonometry: The Examples of al-Bīrūnī and al-Marrākushī", at the 10<sup>th</sup> Maghrebian Colloquium on the History of Arab Mathematics, held in Tunis, Tunisia on May 29-31. The talk detailed ways in which medieval Muslim scientists developed mathematical techniques for calculating the correct prayer direction to Mecca from any point on the earth's surface.

**Nancy Paton** (Humanities and Art & Design) is curator for the forthcoming exhibit, "Common Threads that Unite the World's Religious Traditions", running Oct. 8 – Nov. 8 at Madonna University (see calendar, page 26). Among the factors that inspired the idea were Peter Bisanz's recent PBS documentary "Beyond Our Differences" and the Dalai Lama's work to promote religious and cultural diversity.

# The Middle East: Conflict and Hope

No other part of the world can generate such intense feelings as the Middle East. Throughout history it's been a cradle and crossroads of civilizations, and its importance is undeniable— today more than ever. The protracted armed conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine, Sudan, and elsewhere raise burning questions, not only about the military and political situations in these countries but about the whole culture and history of this region, as well as the seeming “clash between East and West”. The future of the planet may well hinge on how these conflicts are resolved.

Throughout 2010, students, instructors, and staff at Schoolcraft College are taking steps to better understand this part of the world. In 2004, when our institute began to organize campus-wide, year-long programming on selected cultural regions, the Middle East was our very first focus of attention. Since then, we have devoted other focus years to Latin America, Africa, Europe, East Asia, and South Asia. Returning to the Middle East six years later is a tribute to the region's continued importance in world affairs.

## Ripped from the Headlines

Three major events this Summer—the sacking of Gen. McChrystal, the Freedom Flotilla, and the “mosque at Ground Zero”— highlighted not only the central importance of the

Middle East but also the crying need for all Americans to become more knowledgeable about this region and its culture.

When Gen. McChrystal was relieved of his command in Afghanistan, it showed that grave setbacks to the U.S. war effort there have led to deep tensions and fissures. Officials in Washington believe they must “stabilize” Afghanistan in order to keep al-Qa’ida and its allies out of that country, but their Western-style vision of nation-building— relying mostly on aerial bombardments and democratic elections— isn’t exactly winning the hearts and minds of the Afghani people. In a front-page article in the *New York Times* (July 18), it came out that only hours before he was fired, McChrystal was exchanging e-mail messages with Greg Mortenson, the pacifist whose Pennies for Peace campaign came to Schoolcraft College last year. As one U.S. colonel put it, Mortenson and his Afghan partner were the American high command’s main vehicle for trying to connect with “tribal elders” and other people outside the “Kabul bubble”. The fact that the brass were hoping that an American pacifist could help them find someone to talk to in the country reveals just how out of touch they are with the region’s social terrain.

Israel’s raid on the Turkish ship *Mavi Marmara*, one of the boats trying to break the blockade of Gaza, underlined how tightly interconnected this whole region is, not only between

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U. S. Army Cpl. Michael Good, of B Company, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division, moves along a path overlooking the mountainside village of Aranas while on patrol in the Nuristan province of Afghanistan in August 2008.

Photo: Spc. Eric Jungels/ soldiersmediacenter/ Wikimedia Commons

**Asia is a living body,  
and Afghanistan its heart.**

**In the ruin of the heart  
lies the ruin of the body.**

**So long as the heart is free,  
the body remains free.**

**If not, it becomes a straw  
adrift in the wind.**

— Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), a Muslim poet, scholar, lawyer, and political leader in Punjab, now part of Pakistan

## Education: The Genie in a Bottle

The state of education in the Middle East is a study in contrasts—especially the contrast between yesterday and today.

The old colonial powers in the region had de-emphasized public schooling, and made almost no efforts to develop higher education in the countries they ruled. The business of drilling oil didn't require much training or research anyway, and quality education was essentially a privilege of the upper crust. Even after independence, educational systems were hampered by their lack of funds and their own lack of emphasis on independent, critical thinking.

Now there are signs of change. In Egypt, for example, the rate at which young people finish basic schooling has increased over the last two decades from barely more than 50% to over 85%, and the country hopes to achieve 90% literacy within a generation. In Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and several Gulf states, literacy has already reached 85-95%.

Perhaps the strongest developments have been in higher education. Funds have opened up, and dozens of new schools and universities have been established recently. Examples:

- In September 2004, our SCII sponsored a talk by Dr. Haifa Jamal Al-Lail, Dean of Effat College in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, which was founded in 1999 as one of two private, non-profit colleges for women in that country. More recently, the institution added engineering and business schools, and last year it was officially inaugurated as a university, still all-women.
- Another jewel on the Red Sea is the new King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST), which opened in Thuwal, Saudi Arabia in September 2009. KAUST, with one of the largest academic endowments in the world, is a prestigious co-ed research university limited to some 2,000 top-notch graduate students. Classes are in English. Featuring an interdisciplinary approach, in its first year KAUST developed 18 new technologies in desalination, nanotechnology, bioremediation, and solar energy.
- Four more universities have been founded in Saudi Arabia in 2010 alone.
- The Red Sea Institute of Cinematic Arts opened in Aqaba, Jordan in 2008, reportedly the first Middle Eastern institution offering an MFA degree in cinema.
- Hamdan Bin Mohammed e-University opened in 2009 as the first e-University in the UAE.
- The two-year Community College of Qatar, modeled after such schools in the U.S., was established earlier this year.

While some have questioned whether it's appropriate to inject Western educational practices into Middle Eastern culture, this trend has been carried even further in the phenomenon of American university branch campuses. These have begun to sprout up on the Arabian Peninsula like mushrooms. The students at these schools are recruited from throughout the region, but also from around the world, including the U.S. itself. Classes are generally in English, and educational standards are more or less copied from the West. The students who attend



**In October 2008, Iraqi schoolchildren in Najmi, Muthanna province, tried out new computers provided by the non-profit organization One Laptop per Child.**

**Photo: Aaron D. Snipe (U.S. Embassy Iraq) / Wikimedia Commons**

New York University's branch campus in Abu Dhabi, the UAE capital, have higher average entrance credentials than those at the home campus, and nearly 90% are bilingual. The branch campus especially seeks out applicants who are intent on helping society. Outside the capital, in the city of Dubai, Michigan State University established a branch campus in 2008. All degrees there are equivalent to those in East Lansing, and programs are offered in the same variety of formats including traditional classroom instruction, on-line classes, seminars, symposia, internships, and study abroad. At a nearby facility in Ras al Khaimah City, UAE, Madonna University, our neighbor here in Livonia, offers online bachelor's and master's degree programs, primarily in international business and accounting. Meanwhile, about 200 miles to the west—on the outskirts of Doha, the capital of Qatar—Education City is the 2500-acre home for the branch campuses of six other American universities. That makes it the largest such conglomeration in the Middle East and perhaps anywhere outside the U.S.

For colorful features on colleges and universities in the region:

- Tom Verde, "Houses of Wisdom", *Saudi Aramco World* 61:3 (May-June 2010), pp. 24-37, [http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/201003/houses\\_of\\_wisdom.htm](http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/201003/houses_of_wisdom.htm).
- The Spring 2009 issue of *IIE Networker* was a theme issue on "International Education in the Middle East", <http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/naylor/IIEB0109/#/0>.

## Middle East

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different countries but between different spheres of life—political, military, economic, and cultural. The falling-out between Israel and Turkey, a NATO member and one of Israel's longstanding moderate-Muslim allies, was a symptom of, and further accelerated, Turkey's turning away from the West and toward the East. Turkey's bid to join the European Union, which it has pursued since 1987, was rebuffed in December 2006, prompting the country to expand its commercial ties instead with Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Russia. The Western allies fear the growing regional influence of regimes like that of Iran, a country they've accused of pursuing a nuclear weapons development program.

The outcry against the planned Islamic center near Ground Zero in Manhattan reflects how much of the American public and officialdom dangerously lack any understanding of the wide differences and divisions among world Muslims. Tarrred as an extremist provocateur, Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf is the exact opposite, a moderate Sufi Muslim who has promoted interfaith dialog for years and who has been sent on religious outreach trips to the Middle East by the Bush and Obama administrations. Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich lashed out at the center and claimed its sponsor, the Cordoba Institute, is "named for a city in Spain where a conquering Muslim army replaced a church with a mosque. This name is a very direct historical indication that the Ground Zero mosque is all about conquest and thus an assertion of Islamist triumphalism which we should not tolerate." Actually, the center aims to foster not triumphalism and conquest, but tolerance and interchange among Muslims, Christians, and Jews, a *convivencia* that Cordoba symbolized for centuries under Moorish rule. The historian William Dalrymple, commenting on the mosque controversy, concluded that "many of our leaders have a tendency to see the Islamic world as a single, terrifying monolith", a mistake that he says goes far in explaining recent foreign-policy blunders by the U.S.

At a teachable moment like this, it would be downright criminal *not* to seize the chance to educate ourselves and our students about what is happening in the Middle East and about the cultural and historical factors underlying this.

### New Dynamism

While the Middle East as a whole remains one of the most underdeveloped and strife-torn regions on the planet, in recent years it has benefited from some economic dynamism, thanks in large measure to reinvestments of petroleum wealth.

In our last issue, we called attention to the towering skyscrapers and other structures going up on the shores of the Gulf states, reflecting advances in service industries such as shipping, retailing, tourism, real estate, and finance. There are also signs of emerging knowledge-based enterprise in the Middle East, including the funding of new universities, research centers and libraries (see boxes on pages 6 and 17) and the growth of high-tech industries. Some examples that might surprise you—

- Iran—portrayed only as a backward theocracy in the Western media—has become one of the world's leading funders of stem-cell research. It was the first

nation in the Middle East to establish a human embryonic stem-cell line; the cells were sourced from embryos left over from *in vitro* fertilizations.

- Morocco is planning a \$9 billion, 10-year effort to build a network of solar power plants producing 2 gigawatts of electricity. The effort is part of Desertec, an envisioned vast North African network of solar, wind, and other renewable-energy plants that would supply 15% of Europe's power needs by 2050.
- Qatar Telecom (Qtel) has become a global leader in cellular, wireless broadband, and IT services, with over 60 million customers and a presence in 17 nations. A higher percentage of people in the Middle East are Web users than in Europe.
- The UAE has established an international media-industry zone called twofour54 (referring to the latitude and longitude of its location in the capital, Abu Dhabi). Domestic and overseas companies have set up facilities there and are producing films, music, print, and digital media content, as well as training young people for careers in the media industry.

This burgeoning activity is another reason that the region's importance is not going away in the future. Its petroleum wealth, crossroads geographic location, and history of intellectual and scientific pre-eminence are being leveraged to bring new things into being that will directly affect the lives and careers of our students.

### How *You* Can Participate

Instructors and their classes can participate in Focus Middle East in a variety of ways.

Focus Series Coordinator Linda Gutierrez has played the lead role in organizing a year-long series of campus speakers and films touching on a variety of topics related to the region. The entire faculty is urged to commend this series to students as an excellent way to gather insight and information about the Middle East. Some instructors might want to require an entire class to attend a given talk; others might want to fold these talks into extra-credit opportunities for their students. Contact Linda (734-462-4400 extn. 5067, [lgutierr@schoolcraft.edu](mailto:lgutierr@schoolcraft.edu)) to arrange to bring your whole class. Friends, family, and members of the community are also cordially invited to attend.

The presentations this Fall (see Schedule on next page) get underway on Sep. 13, when Michigan Peace Team member Nicole Rohrkemper discusses her group's efforts to learn about the conflicts in the Middle East and other regions and to promote just resolutions. Later in the semester, we are honored to bring the renowned Iraqi-born imam Hassan Al-Qazwini from Dearborn to our campus for a talk and reception; he has been an advocate for the place of moderate and open-minded Islam in pluralistic societies. Other parts of the series include presentations on such topics as Arab and Chaldean culture, the hidden history of Islam in mathematics, plus feature films on tensions between Israelis and Palestinians. More-detailed schedules are available in dropboxes around campus, and are also being sent to faculty mailboxes and emailboxes.

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**Middle East** *continued from page 7*

Instructors can also directly integrate topics relevant to the Middle East into their coursework. Be creative in developing ideas and materials for classroom presentations, course readings and assignments, student projects, etc. Topics related to the Middle East can be incorporated into courses in disciplines as diverse as anthropology, art, business, English, history, mathematics, music, etc. Many instructional resources are available right on campus:

- Bradner Library has a wide variety of published sources on the Middle East. The staff will be happy to introduce you and your students to them.
- Bradner Librarian Wayne Pricer has compiled webliographies under such headings as “Afghanistan”, “Iraq War”, “Middle East Resources”, and “War on Terrorism 9-11”, available on the Internet at <http://www.schoolcraft.edu/library/webliographies/>.
- Instructional ideas and classroom resources related to the Middle East, on topics ranging from politics to mathema-

tics to culinary arts, have been compiled by our International Institute. These are available on the campus server in the following folder: U:\International\Focus\_Series\Focus\_Middle\_East\_2010\Middle\_East\_Resources\_for\_Faculty.

- The items in this issue of *IA* should also stimulate your thinking, as will the articles and book recommendations in our three earlier issues focused on this region (Jan. 2004, Sep. 2004, and Jan. 2010), available on the Internet at <http://www.schoolcraft.edu/scii/publications.asp>.

And, as in the past, the GlobalEYEzers group invites instructors, staff, and students to participate in lunchtime discussions about current events in a global context, with ethnic food provided. See page 2 for details.

Let us know how you and your colleagues bring some global perspective into your coursework this year!

<b>Winter 2010 Schedule</b>	
Tues., Jan. 26 9:30 - 11 am MC-200	Talk, “U.S. Policy Toward Afghanistan” Frederic Pearson, Dir., WSU Center for Peace and Conflict Studies
Mon., Feb. 8 11 am - 12:30 MC-200 AC	Talk, “Islamic Art: Historical Development, Visual Presentation, and Iconography” Hashim M. Al-Tawil, HFCC Dept. of Art History
Mon., Feb. 15 10 - 11:30 am LA-200	Talk, “Comparative Analysis; Western Individualistic Societies and Middle Eastern Collectivist Societies” Padmaja Nandigam, SC Dept. of Psychology
Tues., Feb. 23 1 - 2:30 pm LA-200	Talk, “The Armenian Genocide and its Impact on the World Today” Marjorie K. Nanian, SC Dept. of Political Science
Wed., Mar. 17 10 - 11:30 am MC-200	Talk, “Cultivating Double Vision: Teaching and Learning with Arab and Arab American Students” Michael Daher, Dir., HFCC Arab Cultural Studies Program
Tues., Mar. 30 1 - 4 pm F-530	Film, “Paradise Now” (2005) Two young Palestinians in Nablus are recruited for suicide attacks in Israel. After a final night with friends and family, they begin to have second thoughts. Why might they accept such a drastic, tragic fate?
Thur., Apr. 8 9 - 10:30 am LA-200	Talk, “Challenges of Managing Transboundary Rivers: Conflict or Agreement?” Diane O’Connell, SC Dept. of Geography
Tues. Apr. 12 1 - 4 pm F-530	Film, “To Die in Jerusalem” (2007) A compelling documentary about Israeli teen Rachel Levy, victim of a Palestinian suicide bomber— a schoolgirl, Ayat, who bore an uncanny resemblance to Rachel. Culminates in a heartrending meeting of the girls’ mothers.
Thurs. Apr. 15 6 - 10 pm MC-200 B	Festival of short films, “The Middle East: Inside Out” Films selected for Prof. Steven Berg’s section of English 200 (Introduction to Film)

<b>Fall 2010 Schedule</b>	
Mon., Sep. 13 1 - 2:30 pm MC-200	Talk, “Seeking a Just World Grounded in Nonviolence” Nicole Rohrkemper, Michigan Peace Team
Wed., Sep. 22 1 - 2:30 pm MC-200	Talk on Arab Americans and Chaldeans Haifa Fakhouri, President and CEO, Arab American Chaldean Council
book discussions: • Mon., Sep. 27, 6:30-7:30 pm, L-105 • Tues., Sep. 28, 1-2:30 pm, L-105 • Thur., Sep. 30, 4-5 pm, RC-645	Pageturners campus read, <i>Finding Nouf</i> (2008) Beginning with the disappearance of a prominent family’s 16-year-old daughter, Zoë Ferraris’s taut psychological suspense novel is a window into the lives of Saudi men and women.
Wed., Oct. 6 11:30 am-1 pm MC-200	Film, “Munich” (2006) Steven Spielberg’s explosive thriller about an Israeli hit squad that tracks down Palestinian militants thought to be responsible for Black September’s gunning down of 11 Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games.
Wed., Oct. 13 12 - 2 pm MC-200	Talk, “Cinematic Pedagogies: Teaching ‘Munich’ as a Global, Interdisciplinary Text” Helen Ditouras, SC Dept. of English
Tues., Oct. 19 11 am - 12 VT-550  Reception 12 - 1 pm VT-425	Talk on Islam in a pluralistic society Imam Hassan Al-Qazwini, Islamic Center of America, Dearborn
Tues., Nov. 2 3 - 4:30 pm MC-200	Talk, “Islam and Mathematics: A Hidden History” Randy Schwartz, SC Dept. of Mathematics
Thur., Dec. 2 9:30 -11 am MC-200	Film, “For My Father” (2010) Tarek, a Palestinian sent on a suicide mission, ends up living among the very people he was planning to kill and falls in love with Keren, a girl from an Orthodox Jewish family.



# Teaching the Middle East: Controversy and Common Ground

by Michael Swope (History)

In geology, a fault zone is an area where tectonic plates meet, causing great disruptions on the Earth's surface when the stresses from those plate borders get released. In many ways the Middle East is one of humanity's most important fault zones, marked by the borders between (and within) religions and cultures. It is the area where history (as the written record) and the type of society known as civilization evolved. It is the region where several major religions have been born and ventured on to various fates, whether to fade to oblivion over time, to be subsumed into more aggressive cultures, or being transplanted around the globe.

The Middle East is a region that can both fascinate and horrify many people because many of the conflicts between (and again, within) religions and cultures are based upon issues that cut close to the hearts of most people. Religious and ethnic affiliations are two of the most dominant factors by which most humans identify themselves. There really should be no surprise that when religion and ethnicity are involved in conflicts, individuals are drawn to those conflicts by very intense factors of core identification.

So many facets of our existence trace to the Middle East. The three Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) have billions of adherents around the globe. The alphabet letters you are reading now had ancestors in Mesopotamia. A music class cannot talk about classical Spanish and Latin American guitar without acknowledging the cultural linkage to Muslim conquerors of Iberia centuries ago. Many common star names in astronomy are Arabic in origin. A fresh controversy in mathematics and history has emerged about the number system used worldwide, the "Arabic numbers", with one camp saying the numbers aren't Arabic at all but instead are Indian and were borrowed by medieval Arab scholars.

Even the term "Middle East" draws controversy. Cultural-relativist critics of the term say it is a product of a Westernized standpoint, since it only makes geographic sense for observers in the West. Then there is the question of where exactly one is talking about in terms of the extent of the "Middle East". The eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea is usually included, along with Mesopotamia, but what else? Does it include Asia Minor and the modern Republic of Turkey? Does it include Egypt, with its millennia-old ties to the lands up the Mediterranean coast? Does it include Iran, with its own powerful Persian heritage?

Does the term include the entirety of the Arabian Peninsula? Does the term Middle East shift with the period, so that we would include the full Ottoman Turkish empire that included so many Arabic-speaking lands generations ago, but not the Republic of Turkey of today?

Each conversation about the Middle East seems to have its own boundaries. Along the shifting lines of cultures and tremors of conflict, an instructor has to manage their classes. Each faculty member has to choose their own method of addressing this very problematic area when they have classes that cover the region. For some, the choice is to deal with Middle Eastern topics as objectively as possible. For others, the choice is to embrace the many conflicts by inviting students to share their perspectives in hope of finding common ground.

Regardless of the manner in which we teach about the region, by teaching forthrightly we can make light of the nature of the area's conflicts that draw such visceral reactions, with the hope that we can shift such reactions more to reason. Blind reaction almost always guarantees conflict at every level of human interaction, whereas contemplation of facts tempers responses.

As instructors, we never know when we will have a person in our class who might go on to do important things far away. Did professors at the Milwaukee State Normal School (now the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) have any idea 94 years ago that they were teaching a woman who would become the head of government of a Jewish nation in the Middle East? It's highly unlikely Golda Meir's college professors had any inkling that she would achieve that, yet their teachings undoubtedly shaped what she did later. That is an example of why instructors should try to be at their best whenever possible. What we do in a classroom lasts for generations beyond us.

For the foreseeable future, the Middle East will continue to be a maelstrom of clashes between the many peoples of the region. And for that foreseeable future it will be a good idea to be aware of the many issues by learning through programs such as Focus Middle East. Some of us, faculty and students both, may be sent to deal with some of the area's problems. The many divisions in the region are only intractable if the people involved want them to be. And until those involved decide they no longer want the divisions of the region to be intractable, the region and its cultural fault zones will continue to cause quakes of violence that threaten the entire world. •

# Arab *Un*American: The Struggle for Inclusion in the Wake of 9/11

by Holly Arida

*Holly Arida is the Global Programs Coordinator at Cranbrook Schools in Bloomfield Hills, MI, where she also teaches history. She holds a BA degree from the University of Michigan-Dearborn, and an MA in Middle East and North African Studies from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She serves as an advisor to the Arab American National Museum, with whom she also collaborated in producing a book, Etching Our Own Image: Voices from Within the Arab American Art Movement (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007). Holly's previous article for International Agenda was "Getting to the Five C's: Strategies for Cross-Cultural Competence, Connectedness, and Collaboration" (Sep. 2007). At Schoolcraft she presented a talk last October about her Five C's educational approach, and in March she led discussions about ethnocentrism in conjunction with the Global Roundtables initiative here.*

Through all the sorrow of the Sorrow Songs  
there breathes a hope—a faith in the ultimate  
justice of things.

— W. E. B. Du Bois, as quoted in  
*Homeland Insecurity*, p. 268

Arab Americans. Just how “American” are “they?” Two books, both published last year by the Russell Sage Foundation, address dimensions of this question:

- *Citizenship and Crisis: Arab Detroit After 9/11* is a report from the Detroit Arab American Study Team, a collaboration of mostly Detroit-area professors who compare results from their social scientific study of 1,016 interviews of Arab Americans (Christian and Muslim) to 508 interviews conducted with the general population in the Greater Detroit area in 2003.
- In *Homeland Insecurity: The Arab American and Muslim American Experience After 9/11*, Marquette University Professor Louise Cainkar bases her analysis on a sociological and ethnographical study of 102 Arab and Muslim Americans interviewed in metropolitan Chicago during 2002-2005, along with five oral histories taken of eight individuals in 2008.

Both of these studies are highly nuanced and careful to treat the Arab American population in all of its complexity. Both address the common theme of inclusiveness of Arabs and Muslims living in American society, which emanates from the post-9/11 attention focused on Arab and Muslim Americans that ranged from curiosity to suspicion. These books point out that the general population commonly perceived Arab and Muslim Americans either as a “fifth column” who actively or silently supported anti-American terrorism<sup>1</sup>, or as “outsiders who threaten the cultural unity of the nation.”<sup>2</sup> Although Cainkar and



**Hassan Al-Abdul, a chef at the Iraqi  
Kabab Restaurant in Dearborn.**

Photo: Robin Buckson / The Detroit News, 2003.

the Detroit Arab American Study Team explain these negative attitudes toward Arab Americans in very distinct ways, the survey responses by Arab Americans in both of the highly concentrated metro areas of Detroit and Chicago reflect an increased sense of marginalization, as these perceptions challenged their “American-ness”. Arab Americans responded with new strategies to reaffirm their sense of belonging in the post- 9/11 period.

Cainkar’s title *Homeland Insecurity* is a play on words in more ways than one because it reflects her finding that after 9/11, government policies to increase security in the homeland had the effect of making Americans of Arab descent and origin lose their sense of security. Sometimes the insecurity that Arab and Muslim Americans felt derived from the fear of individuals lashing out at them, but government policies collectively targeting Arab and Muslim Americans in response to 9/11 had the most chilling effect. Cainkar outlines the collection of these governmental domestic security policies including mass arrests, FBI interviews, the USA PATRIOT Act, border security profiling Arabs, visa holds, and several waves of the Special Registration Program.<sup>3</sup> The seeming “arbitrariness” of these policies was, for one Palestinian-born Arab American, reminiscent of the American internment of Japanese during WW2, as he complains:

I suffered, physically no, but mentally and psychologically yes. And I would say, not because I'm Palestinian born. Primarily because I'm an American citizen, — i.e. this is the land of the free, rule of the law, democracy, etc. and suddenly it became a police state. Human rights, laws, individual protections, and so on, are out of the window. Everybody becomes a target, for whatever reason the government decides...<sup>4</sup>

Being American-born did not seem to matter, as a Muslim woman of Arab descent concurs:

The Attitude and outlook was always there, it was just exaggerated, making you feel like you're the enemy, that you're the bad one, and you're definitely a foreigner and do not belong in this country, when I was born and raised in this country, and I'm just as much an American as anyone else. I feel like maybe I need to get the hell out of this country because something bad is going to happen to our people here. It is a horrible feeling.<sup>5</sup>

Although some non-Arab activists rallied against these targeted policies, the general public condoned what Cainkar calls the government's "security spotlight" cast on Arab Americans.<sup>6</sup>

Cainkar keenly dissects the impact on the everyday life of Arab Americans who were suspected of very *UnAmerican* activities. The false association between the Arab and Muslim American communities, on the one hand, and the 9/11 attackers, on the other hand, sometimes resulted in overt acts of discrimination by fellow Americans. In fact, 53% of Cainkar's interviewees reported experience of some form of discrimination following 9/11, with 39% responding that this harassment took place on the job. More often, though, the air of suspicion manifested itself in ways that were off the radar, in what Arab American cultural historian Nadine Naber termed "internment of the psyche"<sup>7</sup>. Cainkar categorizes the subtle actions that made for this "climate of harassment" as follows:

**Consulting the Collective Arab/Muslim Mind**— collectively implicated in 9/11, Arab Americans are asked to explain the actions of the terrorists.

**Knowledge Tales**— drawing from the unreliable source of pop culture, everyday Americans argue with Arab Americans or experts about aspects of Arab culture that they know little about.

**Gestures of Contempt**— non-verbal communication such as contemptuous looks given to intimidate Arab Americans.<sup>8</sup>

In the section on "Living in Fear", Cainkar outlines how Arab Americans in the study felt that their actions were being monitored by the government through wiretapping and other covert means, and the resultant "compliance behaviors" that Arab Americans undertook in response to this climate.<sup>9</sup> One respondent explains: "...when I go to the bookstores, I'm really conscious now. Are they watching what I'm reading? What I'm buying and what I'm not? Is it my Internet that is slow now, slower, or is somebody really monitoring what I'm reading and

what I'm not?"<sup>10</sup> The everyday practices of Arab and Muslim Americans changed when "flying while Arab" became too risky because of potential harassment and delays, giving to Muslim charities could potentially be criminalized, and praying at the mosque could be monitored and scrutinized.<sup>11</sup> During this period of pervasive fear and arbitrariness, the routine innocent behaviors of Arab Americans were altered, along with their sense of belonging securely and at home in America.

The Detroit Arab American Study (DAAS) that is the basis for *Citizenship and Crisis* reveals that in the highly visible population of Greater Detroit, Arab Americans were subjected to similar types of treatment during the 9/11 backlash but at comparatively lesser rates than the national averages, as shown below<sup>12</sup>:

	Metro Detroit	National
<b>Foreign-born Arab Americans reporting bad experiences</b>	14%	29%
<b>U.S.-born Arab Americans reporting bad experiences</b>	19%	19%
<b>Arab Americans who have greater worries about their future in the U.S.</b>	43%	66%

DAAS Team authors Sally Howell and Amaney Jamal attribute this difference to the contrast between the level of support that Arabs received locally and nationally. For example, in response to President George W. Bush's famous edict on being either "with us or with the terrorists", local Detroit leaders rallied to the community in a show of solidarity, whereas at the national level, federal government and mass media were less inclined to give Arab Americans the benefit of the doubt.<sup>13</sup> Howell and Jamal are careful not to paint Detroit's "exceptionalism" with too broad a brush, clarifying that it is not "either proof of the American dream— of egalitarianism, the rule of law, and tolerance— or proof of the American nightmare— of discrimination, violence and bigotry" but rather, represents both.<sup>14</sup> In metro Detroit, longstanding Arab ethnic community organizations are deeply ingrained in the local political economy and society. Ultimately, they say, "Arab Detroit is exceptional... because of the power of a local community— with its own local history and political culture— to insulate itself from a national public culture that sees Arabs (and Muslims) as a problem and has a difficulty separating 'good' Arabs from 'bad.'"<sup>15</sup> So that while hate crimes and fear punctuated Arab American life in Detroit during the post-9/11 period, support from within the metro community countered with a sense of inclusion and belonging.

Themes of Citizenship and "Differentness"

Cainkar and the DAAS Team analyzed the results of their studies from very different perspectives but arrive at some similar conclusions.

The DAAS Team situates their inquiry along two themes of modern citizenship. The "rights theme" assesses the extent to which the citizenship of Arab Americans transcends the basic territorial definition to also include civil, political, and social

*continued on next page*

## Arab UnAmerican *continued from page 11*

rights. In his chapter on “Civil Liberties”, researcher Ronald Stockton brilliantly analyzes the attitudes of Arabs and non-Arabs around rights and liberties in the Detroit area. In Stockton’s chapter on “Foreign Policy”, he dissects the impact of American foreign policy and the sometimes distinct views of Arab Americans.

Even more relevant here, though, is Wayne Baker and Andrew Shryock’s “multiculturalism theme”, which considers the degree to which Arab Americans are integrating into the American melting pot by adapting mainstream norms and values, or their so-called “cultural citizenship”.<sup>16</sup> This trope is particularly important when in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, the mantra “United We Stand” became a rallying cry as Americans experienced a heightened sense of patriotism and the need to pull together to defend common values and identity. This was a time when the cultural membership of Arab Americans was called into question. In looking to various categories of cultural membership, DAAS researchers Wayne Baker and Amaney Jamal mapped data relating to two dimensions of values that are calibrated from: 1) survival (safety and security) to self-expression (spiritual, self-actualization) and 2) traditional to secular views.<sup>17</sup> Their analyses concluded that Arab Americans’ values trend toward survival and traditional, rather than self-expressive and secular, making them far closer to those in the Arab World than to those in the general population in Detroit or in mainstream America.<sup>18</sup> This is true for Arab Americans, regardless of whether they are Christian or Muslim, citizens or non-citizens, although the length of stay in America did influence Arab Americans toward greater values of self-expression.<sup>19</sup> By comparing survey results from Arab Americans with those of the general population, this study asks the question: how do you reconcile cultural diversity with national unity, particularly in a period of national crisis like the post-9/11 period?<sup>20</sup>

Along the same theme of “differentness”, Cainkar unpacks the social constructions, fortified long before the events of 9/11, that allowed for the widely held views toward Arab and Muslim Americans as outsiders and potential sleeper-cell type terrorists.<sup>21</sup> From a sociological perspective, Cainkar asserts that like many American subgroups, Arab (and Muslim) Americans have been “racialized” and accorded a particular social status based on specific characteristics— hair and skin color, attire, written script, type of name— that marked them for negative treatment in the post-9/11 period.<sup>22</sup> Racial identification among Arab Americans varies according to the limited categories of race; however, as Cainkar quotes DAAS researcher Andrew Shryock, “the racialization paradigm allows us to talk about ‘the growing rift between ‘Arab’ and ‘white identities’.”<sup>23</sup>

Because of their cultural propensity toward higher education and entrepreneurship, Arab Americans have circumvented racialization’s more commonplace negative impact: economic marginalization. However, political exclusion and barriers to activism have characterized the Arab American experience, since the outcome of the 1967 war between Arab states and Israel, when Arab Americans galvanized as a group for the first time to work to influence American foreign policy in the region. Since then, Arab Americans and their institutions were on occasion monitored and targeted for special attention by the U.S.

government, setting a precedent for what came after 9/11.<sup>24</sup> In addition, the uniformly negative stereotypic depictions of Arabs in American popular culture, as well as in the news media, had already fortified social constructions that marked Arab Americans for “otherness”. Cainkar explains:

Pre-9/11 social constructions that had proffered the existence of a collective value set and orientation shared by Arabs and Muslims, including a propensity to violence, a disposition to terrorism, and an entrenched hatred of America, had set the stage for these propositions to gain wide public support. Arabs and Muslims in the United States thus had experiences that were similar in sequencing to those of Japanese Americans before and during World War II.<sup>25</sup>

Caught in the vortex of social constructions that in Cainkar’s terms “otherized” and “racialized” them, and the cultural “differentness” from mainstream America as identified in DAAS, Arab Americans were therefore easy targets for the collective blame, treatment and suspicion that ensued after 9/11. Arab Americans would need to find new ways to struggle for inclusion in American society as the pervasive fear that swept the country left them vulnerable and questioned their belonging.

Not surprisingly, the struggle for inclusion in America revolved around Arab Americans engaging in what may be considered very essential aspects of American society: building relationships with individual Americans who expressed solidarity, and civic engagement whereby Arab Americans and their organizations formed alliances with non-Arab organizations and institutions, government agencies, and sponsors. Arab Americans in both studies widely reported that they received meaningful expressions of kindness from their non-Arab/non-Muslim fellow Americans. As a Palestinian immigrant living in the Greater Chicago area reported:

I have to admit, I have a lot of good American friends that I like and love. They were there for me. Especially some Jewish Americans have called to say that if I felt threatened or you don’t feel safe and want to come and stay at our place, you’re welcome. We’re inviting them over or they’re inviting me to their places. Before, we never used to go out. So maybe it’s a blessing in disguise. So that’s the other side of America too. It has brought the best out of this country in spite of some ugly, random acts.<sup>26</sup>

According to the DAAS, expressions of solidarity from non-Arabs were widespread but correspond to their level of civic engagement<sup>27</sup>:

**Arab Americans reported support from non-Arabs:**  
**Among those unassociated with ethnic organization** 27%  
**Among those associated with ethnic organization** 43%

In both Greater Detroit and metropolitan Chicago, the extent to which Arab Americans and their organizations engaged in dialogue and alliances made all of the difference. Cainkar demonstrates this in her comparison of the experiences of Arab Americans in the southwest section of Chicago itself with those in the southwest suburbs of the city. In southwest Chicago, local

coalitions created a virtual wall of protection around Arab institutions, whereas in the absence of such coalitions in the southwest suburbs, anti-Arab hostility and tensions between Arabs and non-Arabs went largely unchecked.<sup>28</sup> At the institutional level, organizations like ADC (American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee) and CAIR (Council on American Islamic Relations) worked in conjunction with non-Arab/Muslim civil rights and legal advocacy groups, often with ethnic associations, to organize protest against unfair government policies that targeted Arab/Muslim Americans.<sup>29</sup>

In metro Detroit, a “damper against discrimination” formed through the unprecedented level of cooperation between Arab American organizations like ACCESS (Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services) and the American Arab Chamber of Commerce with government agencies, or through corporate sponsorship to help build institutions like the Arab American National Museum in Dearborn.<sup>30</sup> The curiosity about the Arab World that grew among Americans after 9/11 is also evidenced in the positive response in the academic community that provided funding for such scholarly work as the DAAS itself, as well as efforts like those at Schoolcraft College, whose International Institute launched a yearlong focus on the Middle East in 2004 and again in 2010. All of this is in keeping with Cainkar’s participants who identified two positive outcomes from 9/11: “a thirst for knowledge” among non-Arab Americans who wanted to learn more about the Arab/Muslim World and “a wakeup call” for Arab and Muslim Americans to engage and make a difference in the way they were perceived and treated in the aftermath of the crisis.<sup>31</sup>

Based in two of the four highest concentrations of Arab Americans in the country, the data and analysis in Louise Cainkar’s highly readable *Homeland Insecurity* and the comprehensive Detroit Arab American Study Team’s *Citizenship in Crisis* provide a panoramic view of both the challenges faced by Arab Americans and the affirmation of their own belonging. While their “American-ness” was challenged in the climate of suspicion that ensued after 9/11, Arab Americans asserted themselves into the way America dealt with the crisis by building alliances, coalitions, and personal relationships.

In other words, the backlash was negative, but less so because of civic engagement and political and social action taken by Arab Americans and their allies. These are Arab Americans who have hailed from various countries in the Arab World, who vary between immigrant or citizenship status, length of stay in America, religion and socio-economic background, and yet, the Arab American respondents clearly speak to their desire to be American, through their high levels of application for citizenship and confidence in the American system. Despite the backlash and their sometimes opposition to American foreign policy in the Arab/Muslim World, 86% of Arab Americans in DAAS reported “feeling at home in America”; furthermore, 91% of the non-citizens and 94% of the U.S. citizens said they were “proud to be American”.<sup>32</sup> The surveys in Detroit and Chicago show by and large that Arab Americans have risen to the challenge to struggle for their rights, just as many ethnic or other minorities in America have done before them. As Americans, they have maintained a faith in the ultimate justice of things. •

## Endnotes

1. Louise Cainkar, *Homeland Insecurity* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2009), p. 64.
2. Wayne Baker and Amaney Jamal, “Values and Cultural Membership”, in *Citizenship and Crisis* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2009), p. 136.
3. Cainkar, pp. 118-139.
4. *Ibid*, p. 117.
5. *Ibid*, p. 117.
6. *Ibid*, p. 153.
7. *Ibid*, p. 157. This is conceptualized in Nadine Naber, “The Rules of Forced Engagement: Race, Gender and the Culture of Fear Among Arab Immigrants in San Francisco Post-9/11”, *Cultural Dynamics* 18:3 (2006), pp. 235-267.
8. *Ibid*, pp. 158-169.
9. *Ibid*, p. 169.
10. *Ibid*, p. 171.
11. *Ibid*, pp. 181-185.
12. Amaney Jamal and Sally Howell, “The Aftermath of the 9/11 Attacks”, in *Citizenship and Crisis*, pp. 78-79.
13. *Ibid*, p. 70. Amaney and Howell quote this from George W. Bush, Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People, United States Capitol, September 20, 2001.
14. *Ibid*, p. 71.
15. *Ibid*.
16. Wayne Baker and Andrew Shryock, “Citizenship and Crisis”, in *Citizenship and Crisis*, pp. 7-10.
17. Baker and Jamal, pp. 137-159.
18. *Ibid*, p. 158.
19. *Ibid*, pp. 149-150.
20. *Ibid*, p. 136.
21. Cainkar, p. 64.
22. *Ibid*, p. 65.
23. *Ibid*, p. 67. Cainkar quotes from Andrew Shryock, “The Moral Analogies of Race: Arab American Identity, Color Politics, and the Limits of Racialized Citizenship”, in Amaney Jamal and Nadine Naber, eds., *Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2008).
24. Cainkar, pp. 93-94.
25. *Ibid*, p. 64.
26. *Ibid*, p. 187.
27. Jamal and Howell, p. 81.
28. Cainkar, pp. 216-221.
29. *Ibid*, p. 147.
30. Jamal and Howell, pp. 87-88.
31. Cainkar, p. 157.
32. Andrew Shryock and Ann Chih Lin, “The Limits of Citizenship”, in *Citizenship and Crisis*, p. 269.

# Episodes from Islam for the Mathematics Classroom

by Randy Schwartz (Mathematics)

Students of Arab, Indian, and Chinese heritage constitute the three largest distinct ethnic and cultural minority groups in the classes that I teach at Schoolcraft. Such rich diversity heightens both the necessity and the opportunity to explore the global history of science and other human endeavors, a history in which knowledge has been interwoven from many cultural strands.

Unfortunately, the cultural horizons of a classroom don't automatically expand just because there are students from diverse backgrounds. For example, even though immigrants have played a key role in driving American industrial and scientific enterprise, the scientific contributions made by non-Western peoples are scarcely acknowledged in our curricula (Joseph 1987). The typical North American college student will pass through entire course sequences of math and science and emerge with the impression that everything they learned was developed in the Western world!

The fact that Islam calls on believers to study nature as a way to understand God has had world-historic significance, yet it remains unknown to most people living in the West. Arab mathematicians, in particular, have been dismissed as mere copyists:

The Arabs made no significant advance in mathematics. What they did was absorb Greek and Hindu mathematics, preserve it, and [...] transmit it to Europe. (Kline 1972, p. 197)

Although few writers nowadays would state views as backward as this one from decades ago, the same underlying approach is often still at work, albeit more subtly. For instance, in David Burton's widely used textbook on the history of mathematics, the discussion of medieval Islamic (as well as Chinese) contributions is relegated to the chapter, "The Twilight of Greek Mathematics: Diophantus" (Burton 2007).

Far from simply preserving and transmitting ancient knowledge, Arab and Muslim scholars tremendously enriched mathematics and other sciences, breaking whole new ground. These examples give a small taste of how the culture of Islam shaped the development of mathematics:

- In order to calculate *zakāh* (alms taxes) and *farā'id* (distribution of inheritances) in accord with the rules laid out in the Qur'ān, Muslim scholars developed new techniques in arithmetic and algebra, especially simpler ways to calculate with fractions.
- They put plane and solid geometry to work— including in intense studies of symmetric tessellations and stalactite vaults and domes— for the design and ornamentation of mosques and of palaces such as the Alhambra (Granada, Spain).
- Because the earth and sky are spheres, they devised whole new approaches in spherical trigonometry in order to accurately calculate the *qibla* (the sacred direction facing

Mecca), the times for *salāh* (the five daily prayers), and the dates for *sawm* (fasting) and other holy days on the lunar calendar.

Most of these breakthroughs were incorporated into European mathematics centuries ago— affecting everyone from Columbus to Copernicus— while others can and should be revived for classroom use today.

The practical needs of Islam, reflected in the above list, were among the reasons that the spread of this faith stimulated mathematical work in the Middle Ages. Even more fundamental was the impact of its central doctrine of *al-tawhīd*, variously translated as "oneness", "unification", or "unity in multiplicity". According to this doctrine, all phenomena of nature and society are manifestations of a single spirit that permeates everything. Each particular thing, no matter how tiny, was seen as a potential key to understanding the cosmos. Scholars were thus expected to be adept at grasping the relation between the particular and the general, between the concrete and the abstract, between the practical and the theoretical. *Al-tawhīd* encouraged a sweeping embrace of all knowledge and all people as the best way to know God and to submit to God's design and will (Schwartz 2001).

## Creating Classroom Activities

The presence and interests of my culturally diverse students prompted me to find ways to learn and to teach about the mathematical contributions of Arab and other non-European peoples. In my classes, I infused the standard curriculum with a small number of historical and cross-cultural activities closely linked to traditional topics. The activities, which I developed and have used since the Winter 2001 semester, take the form of written, self-paced lessons, or "modules". The students begin the activity in class, working either individually or in small groups for about 30 minutes. They take the work home to complete it, and later submit it to me for grading and comments.

Each activity focuses on a mathematical technique used in the medieval Arab or Islamic world. My students look at the cultural and historical context of the technique and its links to related discoveries from China, India, and Europe. They explore the theory behind the technique, and they see how it is used to solve problems, often including the type of problem that prompted its discovery.

The major goals of these activities are:

1. to encourage students to appreciate the contributions of many cultures and peoples
2. to enhance the appeal of mathematics lessons
3. to foster the understanding that mathematics is not merely a collection of abstract ideas, but is a product of people trying to solve real-world problems
4. to round out students' technical skills, and other skills and attitudes important for functioning in an interdependent world
5. to compensate for the Eurocentric bias of the standard mathematics curriculum.

Creating new instructional materials along these lines is challenging, because it requires that information be translated across cultures, languages, and eras. Most of my students are very practical-minded young people who are training for positions in the business, health, and engineering professions. My approach has been to recast information so that it is comprehensible and appealing to them, while preserving the basic integrity of the mathematics and the context from which it was drawn. When I embarked on this project, I sensed that the more I learned broadly about Islamic culture and history, the more equipped I would be to understand its contributions to mathematics. For just this reason, in the late 1990's I studied the Arabic language at the University of Michigan for a few years while continuing my regular teaching work at the College.

Based on my experience, I have formulated a five-point strategy for developing cross-cultural activities in the sciences:

1. Select interesting and appropriate applications.
2. Streamline the discussion and modernize the notation found in the original sources.
3. Explore each concept from a number of different perspectives.
4. Guide the students from easier to more difficult tasks.
5. Compare and contrast examples drawn from different cultures.

Over the past decade I have also forwarded these modules to several colleagues at Schoolcraft and at a few other schools here and abroad for use in their own courses. Now, just last month, the modules have been published online by the Mathematical Association of America (Schwartz 2010). This makes it possible for instructors everywhere to make use of the materials.

Guided by the five pointers above, instructors can also create lessons and activities of their own. Excluding the above-criticized works by Burton and Kline, the English-language resources listed at the end of this article are those that I have found most helpful. Our own Bradner Library owns editions of the books by Ifrah, Joseph, and Katz. The FSTC Muslim Heritage website is a major resource, with articles helpfully organized into categories not only in the sciences but in such fields as art, music, literature, philosophy, and economics.

### Tassels of Colored Silk

To give a sense of what's involved in the materials that I created, I will describe two of them in some detail here.

I found that a Moorish problem dealing with colored threads of silk makes a great starting point for learning about certain relationships in **combinatorics**. The latter is an important set of techniques for counting how many ways there are to select and combine items— such as letters and digits for a license plate, or co-workers for a team. I use this module in Math 122 (Elementary Statistics) and Math 135 (Finite Mathematics) once we've covered the basic facts about combinatorics from the standard course syllabi.

The silk problem was posed by Ibn Mun'im (d. 1228), a physician and mathematician born in Spain and who lived much of his life in Marrakech (during this period, what is now Spain and Morocco were united under the Almohad dynasty). This was

a major silk-producing region, and Ibn Mun'im began by making a list of 10 colors that were available for dyed silk thread. He then asked: in how many different ways can threads in 3 of the 10 colors be combined to form a silk tassel? Breaking the possibilities down into mutually exclusive cases, Ibn Mun'im reasoned that one could select either the 3<sup>rd</sup> color in the list together with both of the colors above it; or the 4<sup>th</sup> color in the list together with any 2 of the 3 colors above it; or the 5<sup>th</sup> color together with any 2 of the 4 colors above it; and so on, up to the 10<sup>th</sup> color together with any 2 of the 9 colors above it.

In this way, Ibn Mun'im was able to express the number of combinations of colors taken 3 at a time as a sum of combinations of colors taken only 2 at a time, for which he had already derived the formula. The students go on to learn how Ibn Mun'im extended this pattern into a general rule, by which he could express any given combination problem in terms of similar problems of lower order. To facilitate the use of this rule, he organized the results on successive rows of an arithmetical triangle that the students examine and use.

The tassel problem captures the interest of students, and its concreteness aids them in understanding the concepts involved. Going through this problem allows them to grasp the resulting pattern more durably than if it were derived— or simply stated— as an abstract formula. To test and solidify their grasp of Ibn Mun'im's rule, I follow up with a series of exercises in which the students must interpret and use it in a variety of ways: numerical, verbal, graphical, and with algebraic symbols. The use of such multiple perspective leads to a sturdier understanding, appeals to different learning styles, and is also intrinsically interesting.

A surprising range of problems are most efficiently solved by using Ibn Mun'im's insight. Some fun examples that students tackle for additional practice in this module involve:

- counting the number of different possible sequences of wins and losses in the baseball World Series
- counting the total number of gifts exchanged in the traditional song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas".

The students go on to compare Ibn Mun'im's arithmetical triangle with later ones from Chu Shi-Chieh (China, 1303) and Blaise Pascal (France, 1665). Interestingly, for Pascal and others in Europe investigating combinatorics, the major stimulus was to answer questions arising from games of dice. By contrast, in the medieval Muslim world such games were rarely played because Islam disapproves of wagering and other kinds of financial speculation. Instead, combinatorial research among Muslims was driven by their interest in Arabic, which they considered sacred because it is the language of the Qur'an. Their goal was to count the number of ways that Arabic letters and sounds can be combined into words; this was, in fact, the larger project for which Ibn Mun'im developed his arithmetical triangle. In medieval India, combinatorics came to be of special interest to mathematicians of the Jaina religion, who studied combinations of senses, of philosophical categories, etc. All of these applications provide wonderful raw material for student activities. Comparing such examples allows us to impart to our students the lesson that mathematics takes diverse forms in different parts of the world because it is shaped by culture.

*continue on next page*

## Islam and Mathematics *continued from page 15*

### A Hospital Ward in Baghdad

The tassel problem discussed above was more or less directly suited for classroom use. In other cases, problems from cross-cultural sources need to be recast first.

Such recasting presented a fun challenge for me in Math 145 (Calculus for Business and Social Science). I found that a breakthrough made in Baghdad in the year 1209 by the Persian-born mathematician Sharaf al-Dīn al-Tūsī was an ideal introduction to optimization, one of the major topics in the course. Al-Tūsī's work was stimulated by a problem from ancient Greek geometry that Archimedes had studied but had been unable to solve.

The problem was how to cut a given line segment into two pieces such that the square of the first piece, times the second piece, equals a given volume. Al-Tūsī not only solved the problem but took things further by asking: what is the largest such volume that can be formed from a given line segment? In writing the module, I devised a story that helps make the problem concrete and contemporary:

Sami is a maintenance worker at a hospital in Baghdad. He has been asked to curtain off the area around a patient bed for privacy. The bed is in a corner of one ward, so the curtain needs to shield only two of its sides: there will be a square drape shielding one long side, and a smaller rectangular drape shielding the foot of the bed. Both lengths of curtain will drape from curtain rods suspended at equal heights from the ceiling of the hospital ward. But this is where Sami faces a problem. Because of economic sanctions and supply shortages in Baghdad, the only material that he has available for the curtain rods is a 6-meter wooden pole, which he can cut into the two pieces that he needs. Sami is concerned to know how large a rectangular volume he will be able to enclose with these two pieces of curtain rod.

In this module, the students translate the above question into a cubic polynomial that they examine numerically, graphically, and algebraically. They solve the problem much as al-Tūsī had done, using concepts that foreshadow Newton's infinitesimal calculus. The maximum volume of privacy turns out to be 32 cubic meters, achieved by making the square curtain 4 by 4 meters, and the rectangular curtain 2 by 4 meters.

In May 2001, Sister Joan Kusak happened to show this hospital-ward exercise to Bishop Thomas Gumbleton because at the time, the latter had actually visited hospitals in Baghdad and was speaking out against the health effects of the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq. The bishop got quite a kick out of looking over the material and wrote back to Sr. Kusak, "I think that is one of the most creative things I've seen in a long time. I was very impressed—and also very glad that I'm not taking his class. I'd never pass!"

### Reactions from Students

In the U.S., people from non-European cultures often yearn for a public recognition that important contributions to

knowledge were made in other parts of the world. This becomes evident when I ask my students to write down their reactions to the cross-cultural activities. Alice, a young woman from Beirut, proudly wrote, "Beginning with colors and threads and finishing with a combination formula is a great breakthrough in the historical past of any country." Ahmad, a business student from Tripoli, Lebanon, decided to turn in his paper with his name written in ancient Phoenician script and accompanied by 11 pages about Phoenician contributions to history, which he'd printed out for me from the Internet. He went on to comment:

Arab, Indian and Chinese did not only invent some mathematical techniques, but they also invented physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, and philosophy when Europeans were still living in the dark, and the American continent wasn't even discovered yet. Not to mention that Phoenicians (my ancestors) discovered the alphabet and spread it all over the world. Trying to internationalize the curriculum might be a good idea, since we live in a world full of hatred, bigotry and racism, and since some Americans (with all due respect) don't know a lot about the rest of the world.

While this student went too far in belittling European achievements, I find even such strong remarks quite understandable. They represent a natural reaction to a curriculum, and a cultural mindset, that has been dismissive of the mathematics of Arab and other non-European peoples.

At the same time, these activities also have broad appeal to non-minority students born in the U.S. Some of these students simply find the cultural connections intriguing, as with one who wrote, "I thought it was very interesting because, not only did we learn different ways of doing the problems, but we also learned where these methods originated from and how they were used." Other U.S.-origin students consciously want greater cross-cultural and cross-national understanding. Kathy, a returning student in marketing, wrote:

In this day of global hostility as well as global economics I believe it almost a mandate that all things possible be done in order to lay the foundation for not merely acceptance but rather an *appreciation* of cultures and people different from those with whom we are accustomed [...] Gradually, I submersed myself into the worksheets and found them to be intensely interesting. I found enough culture description that I almost felt as though I could see the beautiful colors of silk threads used to make the tassels from which the problems were derived. All the while I was intrigued with the realization that these techniques originated from a region previously given little attention yet is now of great national interest.

Of course, it is too much to expect that historical and cross-cultural activities will appeal to *all* of the students enrolled in traditional mathematics and science courses. However, in my experience the number of adverse reactions has been tiny. Specifically, some students think that the activities represent "extra work" that isn't strictly necessary in order for them to learn the mathematical skills needed to pass the course. Occasionally a student will even say, "I'd rather just be told the formula to memorize, and forget about who discovered it or how it was used." Unfortunately, such an attitude actually impairs a student's ability to learn (as opposed to "memorize")



mathematics; in fact, it is a symptom of the narrow pragmatism that has nourished a Eurocentric bias in Western education.

I believe that in a multicultural society such as ours, the Islamic doctrine of *al-tawhīd* (unity in multiplicity) has great relevance to education. The work described in this article shows that in a classroom where deliberate efforts are made to teach both the diversities and commonalities among world cultures, students not only learn more mathematics, they learn how every culture has important contributions to make to the unified stock of human knowledge. That is an outlook that is sorely needed now in our fractured and fractious world. •

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### Letter and Spirit: A Great Library Revived

The library in the busy Mediterranean seaport of Alexandria, Egypt was an intellectual marvel of the ancient world. Now, some two millennia later, its letter and spirit have been revived near the ancient site.

The original library was built around 300 BCE by the Ptolemies, the Greek dynasts who ruled Egypt during the Hellenistic period preceding Roman rule. With a royal mandate to collect all of the world's knowledge, the Library at Alexandria housed not only a reading room and shelves of treasured manuscripts in different languages, but also meeting rooms, lecture halls, a museum, gardens and walks, and a room for shared dining. For centuries it functioned as a research center and a hub for international scholars. Alas, it perished in a series of Roman attacks on the city.

The revived Bibliotheca Alexandrina opened in 2002. Built by the Egyptian government with support from UNESCO, its exterior sports a rising-sun design. Inside, there is space for eight million books from around the world, a conference center, several museums and art galleries, a planetarium, a manuscript restoration lab, and the world's only backup copy of the Internet Archive.

The notion of a "clash between civilizations" is one that does not compute for current library director Ismail Serageldin. Raised in Cairo and educated there and at Harvard, he is a champion of cultural interaction, rational dialog, and liberal thinking. "The ancient library was about openness of knowledge, no taboos, questioning everything", he told the *New York Times*. In his view, most Muslim leaders of the past would have condemned, as he does, the "current drift toward an intolerant, pseudoreligious fanaticism." He also promotes women's rights, saying "no issue looms larger" than this one.

Youssef Ziedan, who oversees the museums and manuscripts in the library, is a philosophy professor at the University of Alexandria and a prolific author. He is perhaps most renowned for his efforts to identify strands of Islamic philosophical thought that remained independent of Hellenistic philosophy. The latter was absorbed via ancient Greek writings that Arab and other scholars voraciously translated and studied in the first few centuries of Islam.

— RKS

## Ethnocentricity to the Extreme

by Kristine Root

*Schoolcraft College student Kristine Root of Hartland, MI wrote this research paper last Winter semester while enrolled in English 102 (English Composition 2) with Prof. Sumita Chaudhery. A Health Information Technology major, she has three children, aged 21, 19, and 13.*

Dr. Seuss is well known for his children's books and silly rhymes. On a more serious note, but in a humorous way, his book *The Sneetches and Other Stories* introduces the idea of ethnocentrism to children. The story demonstrates how Sneetches who had stars on their bellies felt they were better than those who didn't. It goes on to describe how badly they treated those without stars, how those without stars felt, and how someone who was not a Sneetch comes along and takes advantage of both. In the end, both types of Sneetches discover "that Sneetches are Sneetches and no kind of Sneetch is best on the beaches" (Geisel, p. 24).

According to the *Corsini Encyclopedia of Psychology and Behavioral Science*, "ethnocentrism is a learned behavior, and thus can be unlearned" (Craighead and Nemeroff, s.v. "Ethnocentrism"). While it was easy for the Sneetches, this process would be more difficult for people. However, with available technology, community awareness, and education, it is possible that people can learn to treat those who are different from themselves with respect, instead of viewing them as inferior, and enjoy the diversity of our world instead of destroying it.

According to the *New World Encyclopedia*, the term ethnocentricity was originally "coined by William Graham Sumner, a social evolutionist and professor of Political and Social Science at Yale University", in 1906. Sumner defined ethnocentrism as viewing one's own group as the central judgment point for viewing all other groups (p. 2). However, the practice of viewing one's own group as superior has been around much longer. Since the beginning of history there are records of tribal feuds, wars, ethnic cleansings, and religious conflicts. Examples include the Kardouchoi harassment of retreating Greeks in 401 B.C.; when the Kurds were Islamized in the 600's A.D.; the beginning of the Albigensian Crusade in 1209; when Romany were expelled from the Meissen region of Germany in 1416; and the 1894-1896 Armenian uprising against Ottomans, which led to large-scale massacres of Armenians (Rudolph). Many of these conflicts were waged to eliminate other religions, races, and cultural identities, and all are examples of ethnocentricity to the extreme.

The colonization of foreign lands by Western cultures led to other extreme ethnocentric activities, including the development of Native American reservations, forced teaching of the English language in acquired lands, and denial of the Aborigine heritage of Australia. More recently, in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the use of genocide has left undeniable evidence of horrific results of this extreme form of ethnocentrism.

"Genocide is not a random, unconscious, or unplanned act. Genocide is always initiated and committed by deliberate, calculating, and thinking men" (Bridgman and Worley, p. 24). From 1904, when the Germans all but eliminated the Hereros of South West Africa, to the cease-fire of the Bosnian war in 1995,

this last century has seen some of the worst demonstrations of ethnocentrism in the form of genocide. One of the most widely known examples is the "Nazi slaughter of the Jews during WWII" when 5-6 million Jews were "systematically exterminated" (Niewyk, p. 136). In Adolf Hitler's view, Jews were non-feeling, unpatriotic, corrupt, and materialist in a predatory manner. "Hitler adopted this hackneyed litany in its most extreme, social Darwinism form that interpreted history as a struggle between superior and inferior races" (p. 139), a clear-cut example of an ethnocentric person at their worst.

In another case of extreme ethnocentricity, "One race believed they knew what was best for another race whom they considered inferior." This is a quote from the book *The Lost Children* (Edwards and Read) regarding an ethnocentric process that began in the early 1800's in Australia. Missionaries set about building institutions to teach aboriginal children to be "useful" in order to prove to the white people that Aborigines could be civilized. The ethnocentric white inhabitants of the colony believed "that Aborigines were little better than animals" (p. x). The practice quickly evolved from a voluntary one of placing the children in educational institutions, where the parents could live close and visit often, into forcibly removing Aborigine children from their birth homes and placing them with white families or in institutions with no contact with their parents. Further, no information was ever given to the children as to why they were removed or about their Aboriginal history or culture (p. x). The result has been devastating for generations of parents and children, and damaging to the history of Australia. The book *The Lost Children*, co-edited by Coral Edwards and Peter Read, is a first-hand account of 13 Aboriginal people, born after 1950, who were removed from their parents and put through this barbaric, ethnocentric system. Co-editor Coral Edwards was taken from her family as an infant and not reunited with them until she was 30. She is also the founding coordinator for the organization Link-Up, which helps reunite Aboriginal children with their birth families. Her co-editor Peter Read worked at Link-Up and is a research fellow at the Australian National University in Canberra.

While ethnocentrism has been a problem since the beginning of history, nationalism is a more recent issue. In his book *The Ideas That Conquered the World*, author Michael Mandelbaum, professor of American Foreign Policy at the School of Advanced International Studies of the Johns Hopkins University, discusses three main topics: Peace, Democracy, and Free Markets. Section II discusses The Invention of Peace and includes a chapter on Post-Cold War disorders, including Border Problems. This latter subchapter highlights the problems of determining national borders where multiple ethnic groups are present. "In Bosnia... the pattern of settlement was not that of a neatly tiled floor, with definable, delimitable, homogeneous clusters separated from one another; it was more like a tossed salad" (p. 188). The border-determining process eventually caused violence where ethnic and national determination could not be separated. In the former Yugoslavia, the attempted solution to the problem of ethnically diverse nations was to remove the unwanted groups. This ethnocentric process later "became known as ethnic cleansing" (p. 189). It occurred not only in Bosnia in the early 1990's, but also to Albanians in Kosovo in 1998. According to the *Encyclopedia of Modern Ethnic Conflicts*, the FRY army and police developed certain tactics aimed at causing harm to the Albanians and forcing them to flee. When they felt that most Albanians had evacuated, "the Serbs would sweep the area and assemble those remaining

for a processing that often resulted in torture, rape, and murder” (Scharfen, p. 340). The practice of ethnic cleansing also occurred in the Lebanon civil war in 1975-1990, but on a smaller scale (Zahar, p. 112).

Proponents of ethnocentrism state that without ethnocentrism, histories are distorted. To some extent this is accurate, if the history that is desired is one written from the so-called “superior” culture’s perspective. However, in this modern day of journalism and technology, it is possible for the subjected people’s history to challenge the accepted “facts”. An example of this is the book by Rudolph, *Encyclopedia of Modern Ethnic Conflicts*. Each account of ethnic conflict is written by an expert on the subject. All give accurate facts and case study information designed to get researchers started in discovering the truth of the history. Another is the book by Totten et al., *Century of Genocide*, which gives eyewitness accounts of genocides that occurred in the last 100 years.

Another argument of ethnocentrism supporters is the need to preserve one’s own culture. However, this can be accomplished without viewing other cultures as inferior. Development of community-wide ethnic experiences such as literature, theater, restaurants, and cultural events preserves the culture while also educating others from different ethnic backgrounds (Rafuse and MacInnis, p. 2; Edwards and Read, p. 3). These types of activities also help to prevent ethnocentric behavior by promoting cultural contact and relativism. According to Sandy Rafuse and Paul MacInnis in their article “Squelching the Fire”, these are exactly the types of activities the government should be promoting. The article is specifically written for Canada, but the idea is global: “Ethnic identity need not be sacrificed in order to identify with the larger community of humanity; that which needs to be sacrificed is ethnocentricity” (p. 2).

The stories from the Christian Bible state that God created all peoples and nations and loves them all. A quote from the book of Revelations, chapter 7, verse 9, gives us a picture of what the “community of humanity” might look like: “After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language standing before the throne... They were wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands” (*NIV Women’s Devotional Bible*). They were different, but the same, culturally diverse, but one multitude. Different upbringings, histories, families, sizes, colors, nationalities, all dressed alike and accepted for themselves, not for their sameness, and not rejected for their differences. Could there ever be a world like that? Are people so proud of their differences that they will never accept that everyone is part of “the larger community of humanity” (Rafuse, p. 2)? To quote Israel W. Charny, an Israeli psychologist and historian who travels and speaks to victims of genocides: “Which genocide matters more?” (Charny, p. xiii). He acknowledges that it’s normal for people to care more about people they identify with, but at the same time states that people need to care about all human life no matter whose it is (p. xix). So, can people be like the Sneetches and forget “about stars and whether they had one, or not, upon thars” (Geisel, p. 24)? Can you? •

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### From the Editor

#### Why Does Ethnocentrism Thrive?

Kristine Root’s work here is one of a number of student papers on ethnocentrism and racism that I was able to read from the Winter semester, when Global Roundtables and GlobalEYEzers focused attention on this important and timely subject.

While there was good thinking and fact-finding in the papers, they tended to leave unanswered the question of how racism and ethnocentrism actually arise, and what social forces perpetuate them. Some students wrote that “ethnocentrism is everywhere and resides in everyone”, or argued that if people were simply made aware of the respect due to other cultures, then ethnic injustice and atrocities would never happen again. This seems to overlook the role of forces acting at levels higher than just an individual, such as the aggressive interests of whole nations and classes.

So, here is a challenge. Below are a few examples of ethnocentrism that were mentioned in the student papers. Does anyone think these are due simply to the rotten thinking of individuals, or is there more to it than that? If so, what?

- the U.S. government’s syphilis experiments on African-Americans in Tuskegee, Alabama
- the prevalence of anti-Arab stereotypes in U.S. cinema
- the Turkish army’s wars to wipe out Armenians and Kurds
- the Nazi holocaust against Jews, Romany, and others.

# “The Universe and Everything within It is Crying Out”

by Caroline McNutt (Biology)

If you were asked to identify courses offered at Schoolcraft College that are “inherently international” in scope and focus, what would immediately come to mind? Foreign language classes such as Spanish, French, Arabic, and Chinese? Art History and Humanities classes? World History? Certainly no one would dispute that such courses have a built-in global perspective, thus offering Schoolcraft students the opportunity to earn a Global Endorsement on their Associate degree by taking 15 credit hours of International designated coursework.

But what about other disciplines such as the natural sciences? When I considered this question four years ago, my initial reaction was that it would be a bit of a stretch to designate biology courses as international or global courses. As I learned more about the application process, however, I realized that Biology 104, a course that I had been teaching for many years, was in fact an ideal candidate for the International designation.

Biology 104 is a one-semester course called Conservation and Natural Resources. This course has an inherently global component, in that it focuses on preserving biological communities and raising awareness of environmental conservation issues in various regions of the world. This interdisciplinary course integrates relevant contributions from the fields of law, political science, economics, history, and sociology into the fundamental biological principles of conservation.

## Saving Marine Turtles in Brazil

At the very beginning of the semester, I introduce my students to a global perspective with a case study of the National Marine Turtle Conservation Program in Brazil, called Projeto TAMAR. The challenge back in the 1970’s was that the sea turtle populations were being decimated by a combination of factors, including destruction of their nesting habitat, hunting of the adult turtles and collecting



On a beach in Arembepe, Brazil, researchers from the TAMAR project work with the local villagers to protect the sea-turtle population. Photo: Projeto TAMAR, <http://www.tamar.org.br>.

turtle eggs for food, and suffocation due to entanglement in fishing gear. The researchers were convinced that any attempt to rescue the sea turtles also needed to take into consideration the economic needs of the low-income coastal communities that had historically depended on the sea turtles as a food source for survival.

My students are fascinated by the real-life story of how the local villagers, conservation biologists, and the Brazilian government all worked together to learn about the sea turtle life cycle, nesting behavior, population dynamics, and the ecological impact of commercial development. This assessment led to the discovery that shadows cast by the tall buildings changed the temperature of the sand where the eggs incubated, which in turn affected the determination of sex in the developing turtles. On some beaches, virtually all of the emerging turtles were females, clearly affecting the reproductive success of these populations. Furthermore, emerging hatchlings often became disoriented by the bright lights from the buildings and wandered in wrong directions, rather than heading straight into the ocean. Those that did make it to sea often ended up being caught in the nets of fishermen.

Based on the data collected from the TAMAR survey, the Brazilian government passed legislation in 1986 that led to the complete protection of sea turtles and the establishment of two new biological reserves, a marine national park, and conservation stations at each of the 21 main nesting beaches. Additionally, TAMAR's self-sustainability and community interaction programs have boosted the local economies by creating more than 1,200 jobs for local villagers along the coastal beaches in northeastern Brazil, many of whom were former sea turtle hunters and fishermen. Ecotourism and the retail sale of locally produced TAMAR souvenirs have even helped fund the ongoing research and conservation of sea turtles. The fact that Projeto TAMAR has dramatically improved the future outlook for both the sea turtles *and* for the local community is encouraging and inspiring to my students. Through this case study, they learn that it *is* possible to integrate conservation goals with community education and sustainable economic development. This paradigm shift to a win-win mindset is a theme that is woven into the tapestry of the entire course.

#### Students Measure Their Global Footprints

Another highlight of the class is having my students evaluate their own environmental impact. Through taking an online quiz that measures their personal ecological footprint, students learn about the effect that their personal daily habits, including their mode of transportation, source of food items, choice of consumer products, and housing options, might ultimately have on the fate of threatened and endangered species in other parts of the world. Many of my students are shocked to discover that if everyone on earth lived the way they do, we would need four, or five, or even six earths! (You can try this quiz for yourself at <http://www.myfootprint.org> and see how you do!)

Although I generally present the topics in this course from a moderate's stance, as opposed to taking a "hardcore" militant pro-environment position, students nevertheless still must be aware of the current urgent challenges in environmental conservation. While it might seem that species marching toward extinction in vanishing tropical rainforests have little direct relevance to our own lives, my students need to see that everything they do potentially has an impact on the global environment. The U.S. is home to approximately 5% of the world's human population, yet we consume 30% of the earth's natural resources and generate 30% of the total waste. This is brilliantly explained in an engaging 20-minute video called "The Story of Stuff" (<http://www.storyofstuff.com>), which I require my students to watch as part of an online discussion-board forum early in the semester. Weeks later, many students still comment on the impact that video has made on their personal life, and how much it has helped them to see the "Big Picture" of the global environmental crisis. Some have even shared the website link with their friends and family, or posted the link to their Facebook page.

Because biology courses are inherently content-dense, students sometimes have the impression that the main goal is simply to memorize as many facts as possible and then "regurgitate" them on test day. Biology 104, however, is a course that is designed to open students' eyes to global environmental conservation issues, and to encourage them to consider personal stewardship and globally sustainable solutions. As the saying goes, "Think globally, act locally".

I will let Ericka Warren, one of my BIOL 104 students in the Spring 2010 term, have the last word. The following is part of her final-reflections posting on the last discussion-board forum of the semester.

I really enjoyed this course and learned a lot about conservation biology to the extent that it has changed my way of thinking and my way of living greatly. I have made changes in my consumption and recycling. I talk to just about everyone I have a conversation with in order to spread the information about what is happening in our world. I have decided to join groups that support the conservation of natural resources and look forward to the opportunities to make a difference. We all can make changes and improve in our knowledge base and dissemination of that gained knowledge. I believe that once you have been given the knowledge of something, you become responsible for it. I don't believe that anything comes to us by accident. This is the time in our world where the universe and everything within it is crying out and we must listen and take action in whatever capacity we can to the best of our ability. We all may not do it in the same way, but each way that is unique to us will make a difference. •

# A Tour of China's Present, Past, and Future

by Faye Schuett (English)

From May 18-25, 2010, Dr. Anita Stuess Kaushik led six Schoolcraft travelers on a seven-day, three-city tour to Beijing, Xi'an, and Shanghai, China— present, past, and future. Schoolcraft joined college groups from South Carolina and Missouri to make up our intrepid two dozen journeyers. The travel was organized by Education First (EF Educational Tours).

Our group was the last one to arrive in Beijing, so we didn't get much sleep before our first long march. As would be the case in all of the cities, though, our modernized hotel provided a bonanza breakfast buffet with numerous western and eastern options. My morning favorites included *litchi* fruits, fried rice, *bok choy*, soup, sesame noodles, and various green vegetables. We especially enjoyed being invited to sit with Chinese families at the round tables, share the condiments on the Lazy Susans, and exchange Chinese and English greetings.

## Beijing: From Imperial Palaces to Olympic Park

The Summer Palace in the capital, a huge park, lake, and residence built and rebuilt by the Dowager Empress, Cixi, is now a park for the people. Beijing citizens mix with thousands of tourists to demonstrate musical instruments, walk, relax, or practice calligraphy with broom-sized water brushes. We were fascinated to watch the calligraphers water-paint characters on the walkways while crowds stepped respectfully aside and the sun dried the fleeting proverbs from the slate. After strolling down a mile of covered walkway among the throngs, we learned to keep together by keeping our eyes on our guide's toy panda raised on a stick, or else on Mike, a six-foot-four Missouri dad who wore a straw cowboy hat. After we saw the Marble Boat where Cixi ate her meals, we took a breezy dragon boat back across the lake to eat lunch and to learn about the freshwater pearls harvested from the shallow lake's oysters. Becky, from South Carolina, won a pearl for guessing correctly that oysters culture 30 pearls each.

It took our group the rest of the hot afternoon to walk from Harmony Garden at the north gate of the Forbidden City to Tiananmen Square beyond the Imperial City's south gate. In Chinese gardens and architecture, explained our Beijing guide, the first element is suspense. In the Imperial City, walls, corridors, and gates impede the eye strategically, and, around each corner, the revealed vistas inspire awe. Sweeping roofs of the graceful pavilions are tiled in bright yellow, the imperial color, and rest on deep-red cedar columns. Many blue, green, and gold ceiling decorations had been freshly restored for Olympic visitors in 2008, so the ancient city sparkled in the hot sun. Until I stood on Tiananmen Square it was hard to grasp its 40 football-field immensity; it was moving to think how, in 1989, the Beijing citizens had helped the Tiananmen protestors live in that shade-less place for nearly a month before the tanks rolled in. At night, from our hotel, we could identify Tiananmen Square by the green neon lights that outline Mao Zedong's tomb.

We rose early the next day to bus to the Badaling section of the Great Wall. Built by slaves, captured soldiers and workers over decades, the wall is a somber and spectacular wonder, alive with people and challenge. Each stone and step is cut to fit the spine of the mountains, so the climb is precarious. The view was breathtaking, yet the hundreds of Chinese families and Chinese tour groups dominated the scene. Many elderly people climbed with their young relatives. I shall always remember one slender, white-haired elder, dressed in an immaculate serge suit, standing like a soldier on the summit, proud and content.

While the South Carolina group visited a university in the afternoon, the rest of us walked around the Olympic park and saw the "Bird's Nest" stadium and swimming pavilion. We then visited a tea store, saw a tea ceremony, and watched beautiful *cha* flowers unfurl. That evening we took a rickshaw ride to a *hutong* (an urban neighborhood of courtyards and narrow streets), where a family cooked for us at their home restaurant. The rickshaw drivers turned the ride back to the bus into a Ben Hur-style chariot race. *Hutong* communities are disappearing from Beijing as new apartment buildings arise.

Before flying to Xi'an, we spent Saturday morning at the Temple of Heaven Park, where people flock on their day off for ballroom dancing, sing-a-longs, card games, martial arts, and shuttlecock. We enjoyed the beauty of the tall, circular temple, the quiet cypress forest where we learned some *tai chi*, and joined the Chinese patrons in their fun.

## Xi'an: Cultural Hub on the Silk Road

Central Xi'an, an ancient city on the Silk Road, is still surrounded by its original city wall. On our first day there, our tour guide took us on an early-morning walk through narrow streets to an ancient mosque and treated us to some honey-filled donuts at a street-side Muslim bakery. Outside Xi'an, China's First Emperor, Qin, lies buried in the countryside surrounded by an underground army of life-size terracotta warriors. A farmer, digging a well, discovered the warriors in 1974. As we drove out to visit the three covered excavation pits, we saw the wheat used to make this region's famous noodles. Only a fraction of the terracotta army has been uncovered, and only a fraction of the life-size soldiers, broken when the underground roofs fell in, have been restored. Their silent, life-like ranks stand loyally in sunlight and shadow— each face revealing a different personality and emotion.

Before leaving Xi'an, we also toured an art institute where we learned about Chinese painting, modern farmer painters, and tried our hands at calligraphy. We practiced the word "forever" because the figure requires all the calligraphy strokes. We also attended the Big Wild Goose Pagoda, home to many revered holy men, and an operetta about the First Emperor that featured historical music and instruments, beautiful costumes, and breathtaking acrobatics. It was hard to leave Xi'an and its ancient wall. Because of its many universities, Xi'an is a cultural city of young people, buoyant with beauty and exuberance.



**Heida, Anita, Linda, and Faye enjoy a music concert during dinner in Xi'an. Photo courtesy of Faye Schuett.**

### Shanghai: A City Growing Vertically

Upon our arrival back on the Pacific coast, we drove to the Shanghai World Financial Center (SWFC), a skyscraper whose top is shaped like a bottle opener. The uppermost horizontal is an observation deck (1,555 ft.) where much of the floor is transparent. My knees wobbled the whole time, but the view was instructive. Shanghai is like 10 New Yorks or 20 Chicagos. Our guide said that many Chinese tease Shanghailese for living in birdcages; the expanse of apartment buildings and traffic from the high city center seems endless. On the sky bridge, a quiet woman walked bravely, back and forth across the see-through floor, clearing footprints with a mop.

Driving is a fairly new phenomenon in China, and the traffic tangles often made me cringe. The mix is amazingly patient, though, and we saw only one accident the whole week. All manner of bicycles, tricycles, cars, busses, and trucks negotiate the thoroughfares with little pause. Pots of greenery festoon most highways in Shanghai to add oxygen to the air, and every energy-saving apartment has a drying porch for laundry.

When we visited the Jade Buddha Temple in the middle of Shanghai, it happened to be Buddha's birthday. Consequently, we heard both monks and laypeople chanting from scripture. We

also got a chance to visit beautiful Yu Yuan Garden, and a small factory where we observed workers harvesting silk from silkworm cocoons, and making silk comforters.

On our last afternoon in Shanghai, we visited a mall where numerous merchants sold Shanghai "knock offs". After the students tested their bargaining skills, we drove to a technical high school where students were training for the tourist industry, and to Shanghai University for International Studies where we met a class of senior English majors. My conversation partner, Emma, plans to work as a translator and hopes to attend graduate school abroad someday. She admires D. H. Lawrence, watches "Desperate Housewives" reruns to practice English, and loves the *Twilight* novels. Many of us have continued exchanging notes with our conversation partners by e-mail.

After a wonderful dinner of fish, vegetables, barbecue, and dumplings, we had to say goodbye to our Missouri and South Carolina friends and think about our flights home. It was especially difficult to say good-bye to our tour guide, Li C'iu, or John, who'd been such a helpful friend and teacher.

Our tour of China was a trip of a lifetime! Where will Dr. Süess travel next? •

# Report from the MIIE Conference in Springfield

Compiled from reports by Helen Ditouras (English), Sam Hays (English), Sandy Roney-Hays (Anthropology and Sociology), and Yovana Soobrayen-Veerassamy (French and Political Science)

On March 26-27, the four of us represented Schoolcraft at the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Midwest Institute for International/ Intercultural Education (MIIE). This year's gathering took place at Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield, IL. Below, we provide a summary of some of the sessions in which we participated.

The Midwest Institute, headquartered at Kalamazoo Valley C.C., is a consortium of 113 colleges including Schoolcraft. Its annual conference furnishes a way for faculty and staff from the member institutions to share ideas, information, and initiatives related to international and multicultural programming and to network with one another. Next Spring's conference is to be held at Edison State College (Fort Myers, FL).

## Global Opportunities for Students and Staff

Schoolcraft's Sandy Roney-Hays was one of the presenters at a session on "International Service-Learning and Campus Projects". She discussed the emerging student-faculty community concerned with international issues on our campus. In particular, she focused on the success of the Global Roundtables symposium in fostering open dialogue and reflection on the part of students and instructors. Other presentations at the session were also very interesting, focusing on the role that community colleges are playing in incorporating a variety of service-learning projects across the disciplines.

David Cox and Maria Boerngen (Lincoln Land C.C.) gave a detailed and insightful presentation on LLCC's study abroad program in Belize, which emphasizes the life sciences. In "Successful Models for Study Abroad for Students", Michael Fuller (St. Louis C.C. - Meramec) and Adolf King (Roane State C.C., East Tennessee) outlined the mechanism for making study abroad programs successful, and gave practical day to day examples.

Four speakers presented at the session on "Standards and Assessments of Overseas Projects". Some of them commented on conflicts between administrators and instructors over the value of overseas education; there is ongoing debate about the relative value of internationalizing the existing on-campus curriculum versus establishing study-abroad programs for credit. For instance, one presenter stated that her college is now de-emphasizing overseas study trips and is aggressively replacing them with globalized coursework. Another presenter complained that he is now required to include what he sarcastically calls "seat time" in his overseas archaeological tours. He made a related distinction between "experiential" and "accountant" learning, referring to demands to keep detailed records on

how the time abroad is spent. A countervailing perception was shared by Katherine Rowell (Sinclair Community College, Dayton, OH). She celebrated international trips and the way they enhance student learning more than anything else. As for "accounting", she keeps minute details on her trips because she learns a lot from doing so, even though her administrators complain that she overloads them with information! Sam Hays commented that even though we at Schoolcraft have put our clear emphasis on globalizing the curriculum, and so are not part of this battle, it was interesting to observe the heated debate.

In "Language of the Landscape", Linda Rzoska (Kalamazoo Valley C.C.), who teaches Graphic Design as well as Animation and Gaming, shared her experiences from her sabbatical year in the Netherlands. She also elaborated on the art techniques that she uses in order to complete her intricate masterpieces.

## Cinema Across the Curriculum

Schoolcraft's Helen Ditouras gave a presentation on "Cinematic Pedagogies: Teaching 'Munich' as a Global, Interdisciplinary Text". She outlined the value of teaching film texts as a way to introduce students to global issues, not just in film courses but also in other disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, political science, and sociology. As an example of a film ripe for ideological textual analysis by students, Helen uses Steven Spielberg's historical fiction *Munich* (2006), about an Israeli hit squad that tracks down Black September militants thought to be responsible for the 1972 Munich Olympic massacre. Through the use of such films, students can be taught to examine the global impact of cinema and its potential for learning about international issues and cultures. Sandy declared that this was the best talk at the conference, and Helen will reprise it here on campus on October 13, sponsored by SCII.

"Feast your Eyes!: Food, Film, and Global Media" was Helen's favorite presentation by far! The presenter has created a global, food-themed version of an Introduction to Film course, and it has been very successful at his college, St. Louis C.C. - Forest Park. Like Schoolcraft, they have a strong culinary program, and this course has been targeted not only for all students across disciplines, but specifically for the culinary students. Helen reports that she gained many ideas for her own film course from this presentation, and is excited to implement them in the near future.

"Human Rights Abuse, Repression, and Genocide" was a fascinating analysis of genocide and how such weighty themes can be incorporated into student learning. The presenter from the discipline of geography highlighted specific projects and films that he has used, such as the documentary "Shake Hands with the Devil" covering the Rwandan genocide. The ultimate project for the course is a research assignment that allows students to focus on a region of the world rife with global conflict.



### Spotlight on Asia

Schoolcraft's Yovana Veerasamy presented a module about Vietnam that she developed for inclusion in French language classes. Vietnam, of course, was once a colony of France, and the defeat of French forces there in 1954 paved the way for U.S. military intervention in Southeast Asia. French is still widely spoken in the region, and traces of colonial influence can be found everywhere. Yovana created her module, "French Colonization in South East Asia: Viet Nam, a Brief Case Study", as part of her participation at the MIII's Southeast Asia Workshop on Module Development in Summer 2009. Her material, which incorporates video and other educational resources, teaches students about the geography, climate, languages, and culture of the country, including such aspects as cuisine, transportation, and interpersonal relations. Students become familiar with Francophone Vietnamese authors, the broader impact of French culture in Vietnam, and conversely, the ripple effect of the Vietnam War on France, especially the student uprisings in Paris in May 1968. All of this knowledge is important not only in improving cultural understanding of the Vietnamese but also in being adept at doing business in Southeast Asia. She commented that preparing this module allowed her to broaden her own knowledge of the region, especially the process of French colonization, the reasons for the U.S. war in Vietnam, and the literature on the experiences of the Vietnamese under Western imperialism.

At the same session, two other presentations also focused on Vietnam. Dr. Keith Husley (St. Louis C.C. – Forest Park) spoke of his "immigrant experience" when he and his family spent a year living in the nation. Kay Blalock and Cindy Epperson (St. Louis C.C. – Meramec) addressed issues of working in Vietnam— Dr. Blalock speaking of her insightful experiences as an English teacher there earlier this year, and Cindy Epperson explaining the rewards and frustrations of setting up partnerships with community colleges in Vietnam.

India was the focus of a session on "Global Perspective in English Composition and Student Success". An English instructor as well as several of her students were involved in this presentation. Apart from the written assignment that students complete in conjunction with the course theme on India, students are also expected to present their research on Indian culture (food, customs, geopolitical issues, etc.) in a classroom setting. A few of them actually created YouTube videos instead of oral presentations.

### Science and Technology

Two history instructors, Yufeng Wang (Sinclair Community College, Dayton, OH) and Yuegen Yu (Central State University, Wilberforce, OH), made a presentation, "Striving for Balance: Electric Cars and Wind Energy in China". They noted that China now manufactures 90% of the world's electric cars, exporting them mainly to India, Romania, and Hungary. The dominant Chinese producer is

BYD Auto (Build Your Dreams) in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, founded in 2003 and led by the brilliant entrepreneur Wang Chuanfu. The company is getting ready to begin exporting the world's first mass-produced plug-in hybrid compact sedan, the F3DM. The presenters went on to describe the big campaign in China to increase wind energy. At present, coal still supplies 80% of the nation's energy needs, and wind only 0.4%. However, wind energy in China has soared by a factor of eight since the year 2006, when the nation instituted legal reforms to encourage its production: government guarantees of renewable-energy purchases, and high fees for nonrenewable-energy consumption. China has surpassed the U.S. as the world's leading installer and manufacturer of wind energy products. It plans to start 378 new wind projects in 2010, and the goal by 2020 is to have 10% of all energy derive from renewable resources. The quick pace has not occurred without problems, with some of the wind projects being inefficiently located or of poor quality.

"Environmental Issues Infusion in Philosophy and Science" was a session covering the discourse of ethics in relation to food environmentalism and global warming. Both presenters explained how these issues are embedded within their philosophy coursework, and described the opportunities that students have to research the current trends in environmentalism throughout the course via writing assessments.

One of the more intriguing presentations was from Rihab Sawah (Physics Dept., St. Louis C.C.), who spoke about medieval Islamic-Arab astronomy. She explained that what motivated her to undertake a second master's degree (history of science) was her curiosity about a seeming gap in the history of astronomy between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Centuries. She found that during that period, Islamic astronomers absorbed the work of Ptolemy and other renowned ancient Greek astronomers, but instead of simply preserving this, they corrected, added to, and in some case came to deviate significantly from what they inherited. (Yovana commented that she felt the speaker should also have acknowledged the indebtedness to Indian, not just Greek, astronomy.) Sawah outlined the accomplishments of such Muslim astronomer-mathematicians as al-Battani, al-Tusi, and Ibn al-Shattir and the way that their discoveries were later used by Copernicus and other European astronomers. Apart from mathematics, astrology also contributed to these developments; for example, al-Tusi's great astronomical observatory at Maragha, Iran, was financed by a Mongol ruler who believed that the stars determined his fate. Another prestigious observatory, at Samarkand in what is now Uzbekistan, was founded by a ruler, Ulugh Beg, who was himself an astronomer-mathematician. Such observatories became international centers of learning, drawing astronomers from as far away as China; between 800 and 1500, Arabic emerged as the language of science. Sawah also presented examples of her student assignments, such as: "Discuss two Islamic astronomical tables. Who created them? What was created? What was their influence?" •

# Multicultural Events Calendar for SE Michigan

See also the schedule for *Focus Middle East* (page 8).

**Aug. 29 – Nov. 29, 2010:**

“Synagogues in Germany: A Virtual Reconstruction”, an exhibit that uses Computer Aided Design (CAD) to present virtually reconstructed synagogues as they appeared before their destruction during Kristallnacht in November 1938. Organized by the German Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (ifa) and the Technische Universität Darmstadt. Holocaust Memorial Center Zekelman Family Campus, 28123 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills. For more info, call 248-553-2400 or see <http://www.holocaustcenter.org>.

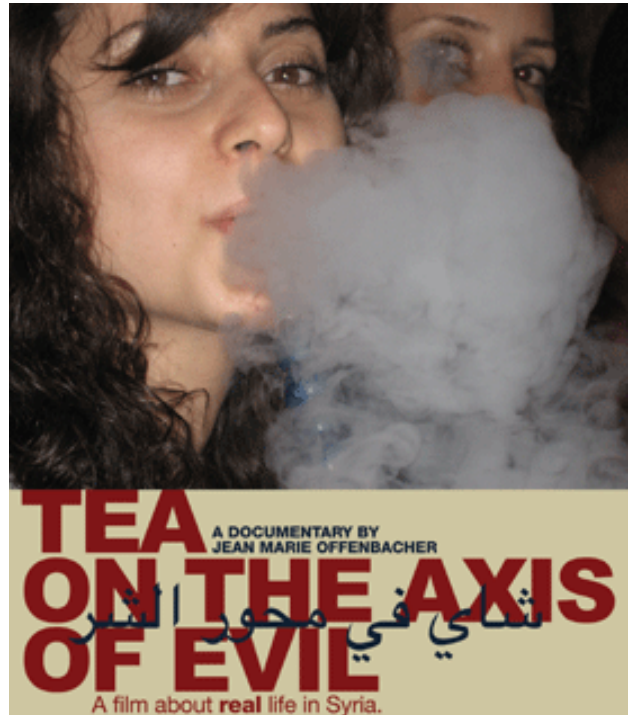


**Sep. 14, 2010:** Free screening of “Forgotten” by local filmmaker Jeffrey O’Den. This documentary tells the story of the Black soldiers and sailors of the Civil War, including the 102<sup>nd</sup> U.S. Colored Infantry, which mustered and trained in Detroit. Organized by the Black Historic Sites Committee of the Detroit Historical Society. Seating is limited; RSVP at 313-833-1262. 6 pm. Detroit Historical Museum, 5401 Woodward Avenue, Detroit. For more info, call Kim Simmons at 313-310-6270 or Bob Sadler at 313-833-7937.

**Sep. 15, 2010:** “Tea on the Axis of Evil”, a touching and enlightening documentary by director and producer Jean Marie Offenbacher, which was winner of the Arab Film Festival in 2004. Made to combat talk about Syria as the next likely candidate for attack by the U.S., it portrays a vibrant, educated, and tolerant population, and challenges stereotypes about gender roles in the Arab world. The film interviews a variety of subjects, from a female politician championing equality to a young student claiming a *hijab* makes her look “cute”. Followed by a discussion with Ms. Offenbacher herself. Sponsored by the UM-D Women’s and Gender Studies Program, Journalism and Screen Studies, the Institute for Research on Women and Gender, and the Religion and Society Program. 6 pm. Room 1030 CASL Bldg., 4901 Evergreen Road, University of Michigan-Dearborn. For more info, e-mail Suzanne Bergeron at [sbergero@umich.edu](mailto:sbergero@umich.edu).

**Sep. 16-18, 2010:** “Polish Studies in the 21st Century”, the Third International Conference on Polish Studies. Organized by UM Center for Russian and East European Studies. 9 am – 5 pm. Henderson Room, Michigan League, 911 N. University, Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor. For more info, visit the website <http://www.ii.umich.edu/crees/events/polishconf> or call 734-764-0351 or e-mail [crees@umich.edu](mailto:crees@umich.edu).

**Sep. 24, 2010:** Sean Blackman’s In Transit. A beautiful, powerful theatrical concert that blends music and dance from three continents along with Detroit jazz as created by celebrated composer Sean Blackman. He melds Afro-Brazilian influence with his background in Armenian



Jean Marie Offenbacher will be on hand to present her award-winning film, “Tea on the Axis of Evil”, which challenges stereotypes about gender roles in the Arab world (see Sep. 15).

stringed music. 8 pm. Orchestra Hall at Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Avenue, Detroit. For more info, see <http://www.detroitssymphony.com>.

**Oct. 6, 2010:** Talk by the anti-racist writer and activist Tim Wise. Wise is an engaging speaker and well-known author of several books, most recently *Colorblind: The Rise of Post-Racial Politics and the Retreat from Racial Equity*. Sponsored by the Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion. 7 – 9 pm. Presentation Room (VT-550), VisTaTech Center, Schoolcraft College, 18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia. For more info, contact Helen Ditouras at [hditoura@schoolcraft.edu](mailto:hditoura@schoolcraft.edu) or 734-462-4400 x5647.

**Oct. 8 – Nov. 8, 2010:** All-media art exhibit, “Common Threads that Unite the World’s Religious Traditions”. Exhibit Gallery, Madonna University, 36600 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia. Curated by Nancy Paton, SC instructor in Humanities and Art & Design. For more info, contact her at 734-223-3694 or [nancypaton@yahoo.com](mailto:nancypaton@yahoo.com).

**Oct. 13, 2010:** “The Modern Politics of Gender in the Gulf States”, brown-bag presentation by May Seikaly, WSU Prof. of Classical and Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. 12:30-1:30 pm. Room 2339 Faculty/Administration Bldg., Wayne State Univ., 656 W. Kirby, Detroit.

**Oct. 15-17, 2010:** International Festival, featuring international food, music and dance performances, children’s activities, and authentic handmade crafts and goods sold from around

the world. Sponsored by the City of Southfield and the International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit. Southfield Pavilion, 26000 Evergreen Road. For more info, call Ann Clark at 313-871-8600 x229 or see <http://www.iimd.org/?q=node/1775>.

**Oct. 16, 2010:** Navratri Garba/Bhangra celebration. Schoolcraft's version of the Hindu festival that traditionally marks the beginning of autumn and celebrates the goddess Durga. Live music, dance, costume, food, and a marketplace. Sponsored by the Student Activities Office and the Asian Student Association. 7 pm – 12 midnight. VisTaTech Center, Schoolcraft College, 18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia. For tickets, e-mail [sao@schoolcraft.edu](mailto:sao@schoolcraft.edu) or call 734-462-4400 x4422.

**Nov. 6, 2010:** Concert of French-Canadian roots and traditional music by De Temps Antan ("Yesteryear"). The trio consists of two current members and one former member of the legendary Quebec group La Bottine Souriante: Pierre-Luc Dupuis on accordion, harmonica, and bombarde (a brutally difficult pipes-oboe hybrid from Brittany); Eric Beaudry on guitar, mandolin, and bouzouki; and André Brunet on violin, guitar, and foot percussion. 8 pm. The Ark, 316 S. Main Street, Ann Arbor. For more info, call 734-761-1800 or see <http://www.theark.org>.

**Nov. 6, 2010 - Feb. 27, 2011:** "George Washington Carver". Discover the life and work of an extraordinary man (c. 1860-1943), born into slavery, who became a trail-blazing economic botanist and humanitarian. Organized by the Field Museum (Chicago) and Tuskegee University (Alabama), this touring exhibit includes artifacts, photography and film, plant models, and hands-on activities. The Henry Ford, 20900 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn. For more info, call 800-835-5237 or see <http://www.thehenryford.org/events/carverExhibit.aspx>.

**Nov. 16, 2010:** "Understanding China's Growing Informal Labor Market", brown-bag presentation by Sarah Swider, WSU Prof. of Sociology. 12:30 - 1:30 pm. Room 2339 Faculty/Administration Bldg., Wayne State Univ., 656 W. Kirby, Detroit.

**Nov. 16, 2010:** Annual Raoul Wallenberg Lecture: Dr. Denis Mukwege, a leading voice in the effort to bring attention to the problem of warfare and sexual violence in the Congo. Dr. Mukwege is the recipient of several awards for his humanitarian efforts, including the UN Prize in the Field of Human Rights. He is an OB/GYN, a surgeon, and director of Panzi Hospital in the city of Bukavu in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. He specializes in the treatment of women who have been gang-raped by Rwandan militia; the hospital provides rape victims with psychosocial support, vocational training, medical and other support for those with HIV, as well as care for children who were conceived through rape. 7:30 pm. Rackham Auditorium, Rackham Building, 915 East Washington, Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor. For more info, contact Lynne Shivers at 734-647-2644 or [lshivers@umich.edu](mailto:lshivers@umich.edu).

**Dec. 16, 2010:** "A calypso Christmas!", concert by the famous Trinidad Tripoli Steel Band. Based in Ypsilanti, their Caribbean steel-drum sound is known all over the world. 8 pm. The Ark, 316 S. Main Street, Ann Arbor. For more info, call 734-761-1800 or see <http://www.theark.org>.

## Ford/Comerica Global Thursdays

Global Thursdays is a multicultural performance series showcasing the finest in world music, dance, film and performance art, supported in part by Ford Motor Company and Comerica Bank. A wide variety of local, national, and international acts truly allows you to "see and hear the world, right here". Programs are on Thursday evenings at 6:30 p.m. at the Arab-American National Museum (13624 Michigan Ave., Dearborn). Tickets for concerts: \$10; discounts for students, AANM members, and series ticket holders. For more information, see <http://www.arabamericanmuseum.org>.

### Sep. 9, 2010:

Jesus "Chuy" Negrete  
(Mexican folks songs and ballads)

### Oct. 7, 2010:

Riad Abdel-Gawad  
(Egyptian composer-violinist)

### Nov. 4, 2010:

Sean Blackman  
(Armenian strings with Afro-Brazilian influence)

## University Musical Society

These performances by international artists are scheduled at various venues in Ann Arbor. For more information and tickets, call 734-764-2538 or visit <http://www.ums.org>.

### Oct. 23 and 24, 2010:

Sankai Juku (Japanese dance)

### Nov. 5, 2010:

Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán (Modern Mexican mariachi)

### Nov. 6, 2010:

Assi El Helani (Lebanese pop)



Mariachi  
Vargas de  
Tecalitlán

## News from Our Neighboring Schools

**Gary Flemming** and **Lesley Lambright**, coordinators of Macomb Multicultural International Initiatives (MMII) at Macomb Community College (Warren, MI), have announced new degree and certificate programs in International Education. The school now offers two different two-year degrees in International & Global Studies, focusing respectively on Europe and on Speech (Intercultural Communication). Five different certificates are also available, focusing respectively on Global Business Fundamentals, Global Communication & Understanding, and Modern Language & Culture of Asia, Europe, or Latin America. Macomb also offers \$500 awards to students for study-abroad programs in Guadalajara, Mexico (Spanish), Ciociaria, Italy (Italian), and Pompeii, Italy (Ancient Food and Drink). For info, visit <http://www.macomb.edu/mmii>.

Photography instructor **Terry Abrams** at Washtenaw Community College (Ann Arbor, MI) has been teaching PHO 105 (Digital Photography Abroad) for the past few years. Offered in the Spring term, the course takes students to a region such as Florence or Morocco for a series of on-location shoots, lectures, critiques, and digital imaging demonstrations. The students create personal portfolios as well as a joint online portfolio. For a 2009 portfolio from Morocco and a travelogue written by one of the students, see <http://www.flickr.com/photos/washtenawcc/sets/72157619359858799/>

Associate Dean **Miriam Greenberg** at Wayne State University (Detroit) organized a study-abroad course first offered in June 2009 and June 2010, “The Middle East Experience: History, Politics, and Culture— Israel and the West Bank” (Near Eastern Studies 5700 / Political Science 5999). The 3-credit course introduces students to the history of the modern Middle East and to the sociocultural dimensions of both the Palestinians and Israelis in the region. The course includes lectures at WSU, Ben Gurion University (Israeli), and Al-Quds University (Palestinian). The 20 days spent overseas also include the opportunity to interact with students at the universities and to visit cities, villages, and other sites. For more information, visit <http://www.clas.wayne.edu/middleeast>.

Poet, playwright and English professor **Bill Harris** (Wayne State Univ., Detroit) is the author of *Birth of a Notion; Or, The Half Ain't Never Been Told* (WSU Press, 2010). In a fast-paced narrative running from 1830 to 1900, he considers cultural productions that gave rise to America's idea of the “new Negro”, including the development of minstrelsy as popular entertainment, the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the museum curios of P. T. Barnum, the exhibitions of “exotic” people at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, and the rise of jazz and the blues. Prof. Harris will give a brown-bag presentation of the book at 12:30 - 1:30 pm on Sep. 14 in Room 2339 of the WSU Faculty/Administration Bldg., 656 W. Kirby, Detroit.

**Kathleen Sienko**, a professor of mechanical engineering and biomedical engineering at the University of Michigan, has developed a new course, “Design for Global Health: Sustainable Technology”, part of a new

Global Health Design option within UM's graduate-level mechanical engineering program. This past Winter, Sienko led the students in studying best practices in low-cost technologies for diagnosing, treating, and preventing the 10 leading causes of death in low- and middle-income countries. The students traveled to Nicaragua to observe medical care there, and carried out projects in which they developed new medical devices and other health solutions involving appropriate technology and community education and outreach. The innovations are being compiled in a database for the World Health Organization.

Graduating UM senior **Ethan Shirley** is spearheading the creation of the Pantanal Center for Education and Research, to be located in the Jaguar Ecological Reserve in Brazil, a remote area that had previously been without schools of any kind. Construction began this past Summer. The center will feature classes for local children and adults, and a field station where UM researchers and students will study sustainability and the environment. The school will be overseen by the state government, but funded by facility usage fees paid by the researchers and students.

Ecology professors **Ivette Perfecto** (UM), **John Vandermeer** (UM), and **Angus Wright** (CSU Sacramento) are the authors of *Nature's Matrix: Linking Agriculture, Conservation and Food Sovereignty* (Earthscan, 2009). The authors, who have devoted much of their careers to studying natural resources in Central America, propose a radically new approach to biodiversity conservation based on recent advances in the science of ecology. They also take into account the reality of political unrest in rural areas, the collapse of rural product markets, and massive rural-urban and international migration. They argue that the approach of targeted land purchases emphasized by international conservation groups is anachronistic, and call instead for solidarity with the small farmers around the world who are struggling to attain food sovereignty.

**Randa Jarrar**, a lecturer in American Culture at UM, won the Gosling Prize and the Arab American National Museum Book Award for her novel, *A Map of Home* (Other Press, 2008). In a Starred Review, *Publishers Weekly* said that “Jarrar's sparkling debut about an audacious Muslim girl growing up in Kuwait, Egypt and Texas is intimate, perceptive and very, very funny.” The Hay Festival, a world-famous book fair in Wales, named Ms. Jarrar, who is of Egyptian and Palestinian heritage, to its list of 39 prominent Arab writers.

Ann Arbor native **Micheline Maynard**, an adjunct professor at UM's Ross School of Business and a senior business correspondent for the *New York Times*, is the author of *The Selling of the American Economy: How Foreign Companies Are Remaking the American Dream* (Crown Business, 2009). Her book is a provocative examination of a new type of globalization that has reached into the Heartland: foreign ownership of American business. •