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The 6th Annual Central & Southwest Asia Conference
April 24-26, 2008

Religion, Violence and Law – Islam and Human Rights in Central and Southwest Asia

By Otto Koester, Director of Grantwriting and Project Development

From Thursday, April 24, to Saturday, April 26, 2008, the Central and Southwest Asian Studies Program will host the 6th Annual Central and Southwest Asia Conference at The University of Montana. As in past years, a roster of internationally distinguished scholars and analysts, diplomats, policy makers, and journalists will gather in Missoula to engage the campus community, general public, and each other in dialogue about major issues and problems confronting the predominantly Islamic countries of Central and Southwest Asia. As in past years, the three-day event is expected to attract a large public audience.

The theme of this year’s conference is “Religion, Violence and Law – A Community Forum on Islam in Central and Southwest Asia”. Among the topics to be addressed are the fundamental teachings of Islam about war, peace and violence, and why militant Islam and terrorism have emerged in some parts of Central and Southwest Asia but not in others. Also to be examined is the question of whether or not Islam is a religion with immutable laws and traditions that are incompatible with the realities of the modern world, and the extent to which accommodations between religious and secular views of the state in Central and Southwest Asia can be reached. A special panel will also discuss the problem of terrorism and limits on counterterrorist measures aimed at protecting national security on the one hand, and the preservation of human and civil rights on the other.

Among the visiting speakers will be Dr. Marina Ottaway, Dr. David Ottaway, Dr. Nancy Lubin, Dr. Shukri Abed, and Ms. Nancy Hollander, Esq. Marina Ottaway is a noted expert on political movements in Southwest Asia who directs Middle East Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, DC. David Ottaway is a Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington DC currently on leave from the Washington Post and writing a book about Prince Bandar and Saudi-U.S. relations. Nancy Lubin holds degrees in Russian studies from Oxford and Harvard Universities and is one of this country’s leading independent analysts on the politics of Central Asia. Shukri Abed took degrees in Arabic Language and Islamic Civilization at Harvard University and Islamic and Western Philosophy at Tel Aviv University and is noted scholar, teacher, and researcher of Islamic religion, Arabic language and culture. Ms. Hollander is a criminal defense attorney from Albuquerque, New Mexico, a past president of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, and the leader of a legal team defending alleged terrorists at Guantanamo prison.

Additional visiting speakers will include the prominent international journalist, Praveen Swami from India who is an authority on the conflict between Pakistan and India over Kashmir; and Omer Kanat,
Manichaeism is a dualistic religion, which offers salvation through special knowledge (gnosis) of spiritual truth. Like Buddha, Mani thought that life in this world is painful and evil. The soul that had fallen into the evil world could only be saved by means of self-consciousness or intelligence. According to Mani, there were three general stages to life: the first (or past) stage, when the spirit and matter were separated; the second (or present) stage, when the two substances are mixed; and the third (or future) stage, when the original duality and separation will be re-established.

Within the Manichaean communities, there were two major groups, the elect (the few) and the hearers (the mass). Fragments of manuscripts written by Mani have survived, including: 1. Living Gospel; 2. Treasure of Life; 3. Treatise; 4. Book of Secrets; 5. Book of Giants; 6. Epistles; 7. Psalms and Prayers.

After twenty-six days of imprisonment, Mani was crucified outside the Sassanid Persian capital, in AD 276. Although Manichaeism was suppressed throughout the Persian Empire, in the fourth century, it rapidly expanded from Egypt and North Africa into the Roman Empire through vigorous missionary activities. In the seventh century, Manichaean communities found their way to Armenia, where they were known as the Paulicians. By the tenth century, they were known as Bogomils in Bulgaria, and in the twelfth century, they appear among Cathars, or Albigens, in southern France.

According to Chinese sources, Manichaeism reached the Chinese court in AD 694 and was freely preached throughout the eighth century in China. Uighurs, who ruled large parts of Central Asia, declared Manichaeism as their state religion in AD 762. The systematic and continued persecution of Manichaens in the Persian Empire forced them to seek refuge in Central Asia. The defeat of Uighur provinces by the Kyrgyz in AD 840 forced Uighurs to migrate from the shores of Yenisei River to the Sinkiang - Tarim basin. There, the Uighurs inherited the traditions of northeastern Iranians, the Tokharians, and adopted the script of another northern Iranian group, the Soghdians.

Fragments of Manichaean literature in a variety of languages were found in Kan-tcheou and Qoco within the Uighur populated areas. To the west, the large city of Samargand became a Manichaean center after the Abbasid Caliphs of Baghdad began to persecute the Manichaean community in the eighth century. Manichaeism remained popular in Central Asia until an Arab army conquered the region, imposing Islam as the official state religion. The Mongol invasion of the thirteenth century devastated the civilizations of Central Asia, including the Manichaean communities. In various parts of Central Asia, excavation of Manichaean temples continues to the present.

We look forward to seeing you in the class this fall.
# 6th Annual Central & Southwest Asia Conference April 24-26, 2008

**Religion, Violence and Law – Islam and Human Rights in Central and Southwest Asia**

### THURSDAY, APRIL 24

**11:00 AM-12:30 PM Tajikistan and Afghanistan: The Past and Present, UC Theater**
Chair and Discussant: Dr. Ardi Kia, Associate Director, Central and Southwest Asia Program and Department of Anthropology, The University of Montana
Tajik Presenters: Layokat Rasulova, Umed Partov, Mahdi Usmonov, SaidGaforov, Akram Mirzoev, Hojamurod Hojaev, Mavzuna Turayeva, and Rakhsanak Zaripova
Afghan Presenter: Shabib Rajaeeean

**2:00-3:30 PM Tajikistan: Independent Tajikistan and the World Community, UC Theater**
Chair and Discussant: Dr. Ardi Kia, Associate Director, Central and Southwest Asia Program and Department of Anthropology, The University of Montana
Presenter: His Excellency Abdurajabbor Shirinov, Ambassador of Tajikistan to the United States

**3:30-5:00 PM The Taliban and Islamic Militants in Afghanistan and Central Asia, UC Theater**
Chair and Discussant: John Fox, Director of the Office for Afghanistan at the United States Department of State
Panelists: Dr. Mehrdad Kia, Associate Provost for International Programs and Director, Central and Southwest Asia Program, The University of Montana and Jeff Renz, Professor of Law, The University of Montana
Discussant: Dr. Nancy Lubin, President of JNA Associates, Inc., and Senior Fellow for Eurasia at the American Foreign Policy Council

**7:30-9:00 PM Keynote Panel – Religion, Violence, and Law in the Arab Middle East: The Challenges to Political Reform, UC Theater**
Chair and Discussant: Dr. Richard Drake, Chair and Professor, Department of History, The University of Montana
Panelists: Dr. Marina Ottaway, Director of the Middle East Program of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Dr. David Ottaway, Fellow, Woodrow Wilson Center
Discussant: John G. Fox, Director of the Office for Afghanistan at the United States Department of State

### FRIDAY, APRIL 25

**1:00-2:45 PM Arabic: The Language of Islamic Religion, Law and Politics, UC Theater**
Chair and Panelist: Semir Bitor, Arabic Language and Literature, Central and Southwest Asia Program & Department of Modern and Classical Languages & Literatures
Panelists: Dr. Shukri Abed, Chairman of the Department of Languages and Regional Studies at Middle East Institute, D.C., and Khaled Huthail, Arabic Language and Linguistics, Central and Southwest Asia Program & Department of Modern and Classical Languages & Literatures, The University of Montana

**3:00-5:00 PM Islam in Turkey and the Caucasus: A re-appraisal, UC Theater**
Chair and discussant: Thomas Goltz, Resident Scholar and Faculty Associate, Central and Southwest Asia Program and Department of Anthropology, The University of Montana
Discussant: Dr. Sevgin Ates Rooney, Bosphorus University Chairperson of Department of Tourism/Economics, and Visiting Professor, Department of Political Science, Montana State University
Panelists: Elin Suleymanov, Consul General of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Los Angeles and Western States of the United States; Tamila Meladze, Turkish Language and Literature, Central and Southwest Asia Program & Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures; and David Grimland, former United States Department of State

**6:30-7:30 PM Cultural Event – Tajik Music and Dance Performance and Jeffrey Werbock, President of the U.S.-based Mugham Society, will play music from the mugham tradition, UC Theater**

**7:30-9:00 PM Keynote Panel – Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism and Human Rights, UC Theater**
Moderator: Ian Marquand, KPAX Television
Panelists: James Park Taylor, Co-Director Juries and Democracy Program, The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center, The University of Montana; Omer Kanat, Radio Free Asia; Praveen Swami, Journalist; Nancy Hollander, Freedman Boyd Hollander Goldberg & Ives P.A.

### SATURDAY, APRIL 26

**10:00 AM-Noon Roundtable Discussion, UC Theater**
Chair and Moderator: Dr. Nancy Lubin, President of JNA Associates, Inc., and Senior Fellow for Eurasia at the American Foreign Policy Council.
Panelists: His Excellency Abdurajabbor Shirinov, Ambassador of Tajikistan to the United States; Elin Suleymanov, Consul General of Azerbaijan to Los Angeles and Western States of the United States; Tamila Meladze, Turkish Language and Literature, Central and Southwest Asia Program & Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures; and Dr. Marina Ottaway, Director of the Middle East Program of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; Dr. David Ottaway, Fellow, Woodrow Wilson Center; Dr. Shukri Abed, Chairman of the Department of Languages and Regional Studies at Middle East Institute; Omer Kanat, Radio Free Asia; Praveen Swami, Journalist; Nancy Hollander, Freedman Boyd Hollander Goldberg & Ives P.A.

Sponsors: Humanities Montana, International Programs, Office of the President, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center, Center for Ethics, World Affairs Council of Montana, Missoula Ministerial Association, and the Central and Southwest Asia Program
The Ottoman Empire is Still With Us!
A Review of the Upcoming Book by Mehrdad Kia on the Ottoman Empire

By Thomas Goltz, Visiting Scholar at the Central and Southwest Asia Studies Program

The Ottoman Empire Is Still With Us!
This point, perhaps over-obvious to the handful of scholars who actually deal with modern Turkey and the chaotic Middle East, but which is all too often ignored by policy makers (not to speak of the general public, UM students included), is the main point of Dr. Mehrdad Kia’s new opus on the 500-year reign of the sultans of Ottoman Istanbul...

Well, not quite.
As Kia lucidly points out in his ‘The Ottoman Empire,’ a new addition to the popular Greenwood Guide to Historic Events, 1500-1900, the last great Muslim empire not only rose before the bracket dates of the series (arguably 1326, with the Ottoman capture of the Byzantine city of Bursa, which became their first capital), dominated the known world from 1361 with the capture of Adrianople in Thrace, (which the Ottomans renamed Edirne, their second capital, and first in Europe) to 1631 and the death of Grand Vizier Mehmed Köprülü, and a looming, losing war with Austria, after which Ottoman fortunes began their long decline. Oh, and did I forget the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, after a little hiatus due to a nasty defeat in 1402 at the hands of Timur the Lame, better known to history as Tamerlane? Or Napoleon’s invasion of Egypt? Details, details...

But it is precisely those ‘devil in the details’ that makes this book what it is. Kia, an Iran-born Ottomanist who studied under a number of the great names of Turcology at the University of Wisconsin/Madison before becoming director of the Central and Southwest Asia Studies Program at the University of Montana (and now vice-Provost for Academic Affairs), is a writer and scholar up the task of parsing out this complex and still controversial history of the world’s last great Muslim political entity. His ‘The Ottoman Empire’ serves not only as a concise political and social history of that state written in a way that is accessible to the lay-man (or undergraduate student), but also breaks new ground in surprising, scholarly areas.

One of these is the conflict between the Ottomans and the Safavid dynasty of today’s Iran, under the mercurial Shah Ismail Kitai, now venerated in Turkic-speaking Azerbaijan as the man who first defined ‘Azerbaijani-ness’ from ‘Turkic-ness’ (and arguably, ‘Iranian-ness’) by bringing in Shi’ite clerics from Arabia to distinguish his new state from the rival Sunni state with its capital in Istanbul.

What motivated Shah Ismail to do so, thus making a rift between Turkey and Azerbaijan that is only being (imperfectly) mended today? Kia explains.
In addition to such gems, ‘The Ottoman Empire’ also delivers on a number of other levels, ranging from a hard-nosed look at the reasons for Ottoman collapse (the rise of ethnic nationalism in Europe, and then of first Christian and then Muslim communities within the non-ethnic empire itself), to the bleak days associated with the coming of WWI, and allied plans to dismember the so-called Sick Man of Europe—issues which today resonate through the turmoil of the Israeli-Palestine conflict, and of course, the war in Iraq, an Ottoman province of Kurds, Shi’ites and Sunnis that remained largely quiescent for some 400 years.

Icing to the cake (or pasta, in Turkish) is provided by the appendix section of the book, which includes everything from love poetry of Suleyman the Magnificent, to the full text of the Hussein/McMahon correspondence and Balfour Declaration, that continue to define (and be-devil) the Middle East to this day.
Resident Scholar Thomas Goltz spent his Spring Break 2008 on the road, pontificating on Azerbaijan and the Caucasus at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy’s Southwest Asia Department at Tufts University, Boston; Colgate University at Hamilton New York; and the Centre for European, Russian, Eurasian Studies (CERES) at the Munk Centre for International Relations at the University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Although Goltz was obliged to drive through the night and a blinding blizzard across northern New York to get from Colgate to Toronto (via Niagara Falls!), he made it and a fine academic time was had by all. The UT announcement read as follows:

‘Azerbaijan has become a country of interest for many scholars, statesmen and businessmen around the globe. In the years to come, this interest is expected only to grow due to Azerbaijan’s geostrategic location and energy resources. This event brings together scholars and practitioners so as to review the developments in Azerbaijan, its role in the region and its policy objectives. The conference will shed light on an array of topics from regional cooperation to the economic boom of the past few years, from national security to issues of international strategic partnership, and more.

‘The speakers will place Azerbaijan in the historical and modern context of the region and will explore the roles that the country has started to play or is likely to play in the near future. Commentaries by Dr. Robert Austin and Dr. Edward Schatz will follow the presentations.

‘Professor Thomas Goltz, author of Azerbaijan Diary, a much-acclaimed account of Azerbaijan’s immediate post-Soviet years, will deliver a lecture titled: “Seventeen Years of Association With The Land of Fire: Prof. Thomas Goltz reflects on nearly two decades of change in Azerbaijan, from the ‘failed state’ of the early 1990s to the regional powerhouse of the early 21st century.”

‘Mr. Yashar Aliyev, Ambassador of Azerbaijan to the United States, will speak about Azerbaijan-US relationship in the fields of security and energy cooperation. Mr. Tofig Musayev, director of the Strategic Analysis Department at the Azerbaijan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will elaborate on the “Foreign Policy Priorities of Azerbaijan”.

‘Dr Taras Kuzio will expound on regional cooperation and integration into the Transatlantic structures. Aslan Amani will speak about the political and civic-culture implications of the regional and national developments. The speeches and commentaries will be followed by an academic debate and a luncheon/reception that will allow Canadian students of international relations and Eurasian politics to converse with the experts on a more personal basis.’

Summer Semester 2008 
Central & Southwest Asia 
Program Courses

HIST/ANTH/A.S. 106 Silk Road
Instructor: Ardi Kia

ARAB 195 Intro to the Arab World
Instructor: Samir Bitar

(Conference continued from page 1)

who works at Radio Free Asia in Washington D.C. and speaks out against the repression of Muslim minority groups in western China. Other speakers will include three prominent diplomats: His Excellency Abdujabbor Shirinov, Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to the United States; His Excellency Elin Suleymanov, Consul General of Azerbaijan for Los Angeles and 13 western U.S. states; and Mr. John Fox, Director of the Office for Afghanistan at the United States Department of State. Numerous faculty members from UM’s Central and Southwest Asian Studies Program, Departments of Anthropology, History, and Modern and Classical Languages, and School of Law, including Professors Richard Drake, Ardi Kia, Jeff Renz, Thomas Goltz, Mehrdad Kia, Samir Bitar, and Khaled Huthaily will also give presentations.

This year’s conference is once again funded in part by Humanities Montana and will be co-sponsored by Office of President George Dennison, International Programs, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center, Center for Ethics at The University of Montana, as well as the Missoula Ministerial Association and the Montana World Affairs Council. All sessions will be held at the University Center on the UM campus and be free of charge.

The detailed conference schedule is available on page 3 of this newsletter and can also be found at: http://www.umt.edu/cap/default.htm
Central & Southwest Asia Brown Bag

All presentations are held from noon to 1 PM in the Central and Southwest Asia Program seminar room (Old Journalism 303) and are free and open to the public.

Tuesday, April 22: Law and Policy of Land Protection in the Kyrgyz Republic
Presenter: Elizabeth W. Erickson, Law Student, The University of Montana

Tuesday, April 29: NGOs in Kyrgyzstan
Presenter: Aimon Tashieva, UM Graduate Student from Kyrgyzstan

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