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# The Role of Education in an Historically Challenging and Politically Complex Environment: The Response of Public Universities to the September 11 Attacks

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**THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN AN HISTORICALLY CHALLENGING AND POLITICALLY COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT: THE RESPONSE OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES TO THE SEPTEMBER 11 ATTACKS**

A Dissertation Presented

by

NIGAR J. KHAN

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University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
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Department of Educational Policy, Research and Administration

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## DEDICATION

To Fauzia and Azeem

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**ABSTRACT**

**THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN AN HISTORICALLY CHALLENGING AND POLITICALLY COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT: THE RESPONSE OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES TO THE SEPTEMBER 11 ATTACKS**

MAY 2012

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The dissertation critically analyzes the response of a major research public university to the attacks of 9/11 in order to gain a deeper understanding of public universities' stance on the relevance of Middle East studies, particularly in the context of the serious and far-reaching impact of 9/11. The absence of an articulated position of the U. S. universities in recognizing this need suggests the perpetuation of the dominant discourses of power and centrality of Western knowledge in the academy—the discourses that historically led to the marginalization of Middle East studies in the U. S. universities during the Cold War period. The study, underpinned largely by a critical theoretical perspective, employs a qualitative case study strategy to explore and analyze the presence of dominant Western ideological discourses that may have contributed to producing particular stance of the university's leadership on the relevance of Middle East studies in the aftermath of 9/11. More specifically, a critique is developed from the perceptions and insights of the senior administration and faculty based on their views of the pertinence of Middle East studies, and whether they think the university's response has been rather

deficient. The evidence drawn from this enquiry highlights that the thinking and practice that had arisen and prevailed during the Cold War still persists, ostensibly in the dominant academic discourses.

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**CHAPTER 1**

**INTRODUCTION**

<u>**Background to Inquiry**</u>

The tragic events of September 2001 exposed not only weaknesses in our national security systems, but also problems in American political and educational culture. Our society's lack of knowledge about Islamic countries and their politics, history, social dynamics and religious practices is not only troubling, it is likely to hinder efforts to prevent and deter future misunderstandings among Muslims and non-Muslim Americans.

Within this context, the ignorance about Islam and the Islamic world in academia, erosion of academic freedom of Middle East Studies[1], and the ubiquitous biased misrepresentations about Islam and the Middle East in the United States' mainstream media and politics have given rise to a compelling need for U.S. universities to respond to this emergent need. This situation clearly leads to the important role universities could have played by offering a well-grounded Middle East Studies program, not only as a scholarly field but also as an instrument of peace responding to the crucial shortage of the Middle East expertise in the nation's political, foreign and intelligence agencies. This concern seemed particularly urgent for public universities for their commitment to broad access to higher education and responsibility to serve the state, and the nation.

Despite the need, even a decade later, U.S. universities, for the most part, have chosen to remain silent to this compelling need to foster a greater understanding in this country of the Middle East and Muslim world—a truth that was made abundantly clear

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[1] Sometimes overlapping enterprises known as Oriental studies, Orientalism, Near Eastern studies, Islamic studies and Middle East Studies are used interchangeably. For the purposes of this research, the term will be referred to as Middle East Studies.

all too tragically by the September 11, 2001 attacks. From a postcolonial perspective, the silent narrative of the U. S. institutions resonates with the ideological discourses that historically led to the marginalization of Middle East Studies on the U. S. campuses during the Cold War period.

Considering what is at stake with regard to the current educational necessity, it is vital to conduct an assessment of the emerging ideologies in the academy. Consequently, to uncover the reason for this silent narrative, a critical analysis of the public universities' response to 9/11 seems to be an inevitable outcome to determine the impact of the ideological values in shaping the academy's current posture towards Middle East Studies. It was also important to examine the practices these discourses engender and how they advance or constrain this long-held necessity to revive, redefine, and reinvigorate Middle East Studies. The study, underpinned largely by a critical theoretical perspective, employs a qualitative case study strategy to explore and analyze the presence of dominant Western ideological discourses that may have contributed to producing a particular stance on the part of the university's leadership pertaining to the relevance of Middle East Studies in the aftermath of 9/11.

### Statement of the Problem

Given the complexity of international affairs, global economy, and the growing interdependence among countries in recent decades, it is expected that universities develop approaches that are responsive to the new challenges students will face in the real world upon leaving the academy (Aigner et al, 1992; De Wit, 2003; Knight, 1997, 2004). Within this context, the political and social impact of September 11, 2001 attacks, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the widespread unrest in the Islamic World have

given rise to an unprecedented threat—arguably larger in magnitude than even the Cold War (Lindee, 2007). Emphasizing the enormity of 9/11, Lindee asserts that "all the nuclear weapons in the world could not have prevented the events of that terrible day" (2007, p.1). These events, when examined within the framework of the tangled and often bitter history of the U.S. involvement in the Middle East for the past sixty years, manifest complex political, military, economic, and cultural dimensions with powerful consequences—not only for Islamic countries, but also for the United States (Lockman, 2004; Crossley & Tikly, 2004; Freedman; 2004; Rizvi,2004).

The lack of knowledge about the Middle East and Islam in the aftermath of 9/11 has led people to blindly trust the assurances and promises of those in power, which all too often resulted in shaping and justifying erroneous policies toward this critically important part of the world (Lockman, 2004; Owen, 2003). The public debates "driven by wildly inaccurate and often racist stereotype images about Arabs, Islam and the Middle East" are held in a "historical vacuum" and are "rarely grounded in a careful reading" of the Islamic World's reaction to American involvement in that vast region (Khalidi, 2004, p. xi). These misconceptions, based on lack of knowledge about the people, politics and cultures of the Islamic world, have generated a "culture of antagonism," allowing a number of political and media sectors to exploit this situation promoting hostility and mistrust across the country (Rizvi, 2004, p.10).

U.S. universities in general place the greatest emphasis on European studies followed by a focus on Latin American studies, compared to limited coverage of Africa and the Middle East. The September 11 attacks, nevertheless, seem to have changed this situation dramatically, turning the spotlight on U.S. higher education. The urgent

question that is being asked now of educators is the preparedness of U.S. higher education's adequacy in Middle East Studies to understand and interpret the significance associated with this event (Cummings, 2001). Within this context, Lockman (2004) asserts the important role of universities in creating programs that are crucial to the production of expertise in this area. He sees the necessity for scholars and students to become engaged in Middle East Studies. The understanding of the Muslim World as a scholarly field, its origin, history, arguments and debates would affect "production, dissemination and reception of its knowledge" (p. 2). More importantly, he argues, "[A] better grasp of the politics of contemporary Middle East Studies might enable ordinary Americans to make better sense of what is going on in the Middle East" (p. 3).

Grehan (2003), noting the extraordinary impact of 9/11 on the education system worldwide, emphasizes its far more serious implications for universities in the United States.  In his opinion, the dramatic changes in the field of international education have underpinned the emergence of new discourses and new priorities for both educational research and educational developments. Crossley and Tikly (2004), on the other hand, argue that the contextual and intellectual implications for education that emerged in the aftermath of 9/11 demand "new understandings of the relationship between religion, racism culture and education, not only in the United States but across the world" (p.152).

These developments clearly suggest the compelling need for U. S. universities to re-examine their responsibility in providing students an enhanced understanding of the political, cultural and educational dimensions of the Middle East and Islam. This challenge is particularly intense for public universities.  This is not a new phenomenon; Duderstadt and Womack (2004) note that throughout their history, public institutions—

from the land grant colleges to today's research universities—have responded to serve an ever-changing population and its evolving diverse needs. With this approach, public universities have responded effectively to both the real and perceived needs of American society and have maintained a strong tradition of promoting federal policies and academic programs to address national priorities.

In this context, in the years following World War II, concern for national security stimulated a research partnership between the federal government and universities which led to increased support for education and research on the nation's campuses (De Wit, 2002; Vestal, 1994; Helpern, 1969). More specifically, the Cold War concern for national security stimulated several programs that shaped scholarly studies of the "non-Western world" that directed scholarly attention to "distinct places and distinct ways of understanding them" (Cumings, 1997, p.6). In many ways, the 9/11 attacks have given rise to a similar concern for national security that demands universities to revive, redefine, and reinvigorate Middle East Studies in a broader historical, political, and intellectual context (Cummings, 2001; Lockman, 2004; Khalidi, 2004). It might even be possible to move beyond the Cold War and its annexation of non-Western area studies scholarship and to begin to open up to critical ways of thinking about politics and security. Programs could be presented for discussion, clarification and setting directions for constructive thinking and action (Bilgin & Morton, 2002, p.75).

Yet even after almost a decade, while the country remains embroiled in post-9/11 violence and aggression—searching for interpretation and understanding of the issues posed by 9/11—there has been no apparent action on part of the academy to address this compelling need. In particular, public universities that have always responded to the

needs and opportunities of American society, for the most part, seem to have chosen to remain silent about this issue. From an educational perspective, U.S. universities' approaches toward Middle East Studies can be seen as a wider development of postcolonial studies and in many ways are at the heart of the colonial approach (Crossly & Tikly, 2004, p152).

Emphasizing the point further, Cummings asserts that the "virtual absence of a focus on the Middle East is perhaps the most troubling aspect of U.S. international education" (Cummings, 2001, p.1). At the national level, he maintains that languages of the Middle East make up only 2% of language studies at universities, with 1.3% being Hebrew and .5 percent Arabic (Cummings, 2001, p.1-3). This situation apparently remains unchanged almost a decade later. For example, a website research I conducted in summer, 2008 shows that, of the 38 state-run public colleges and universities in the six states of New England, almost none offer comprehensive degree programs in Middle East/Islamic studies. From my own personal experience, even large public research universities have not shown much initiative in highlighting the ways in which Islam and the Middle East need to be studied and understood, especially in view of its complexity and the discursive field that has emerged since September 11, 2001.

The research, thus, exploring this particular posture of public universities in response to 9/11, commences with the conceptual framework that puts into context the nature of the problem and justification for its investigation and the intellectual traditions which influenced the research project. The review of literature provides an opportunity to historicize the cultural and ideological effects that continue to shape the development of Middle East Studies in the United States—drawing similarities between a colonial

approach and the present day consequences of 9/11—that are seemingly challenging the very existence of Middle East Studies in the academy. Following this conceptual framework, justification for a critical policy analysis becomes clear and the use of a qualitative approach appropriate. The document then outlines, in more specific terms, the data collection methods to be applied, namely an in-depth interview approach, using qualitative content analysis.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The political and social impact of September 11, 2001 attacks along with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the increasing tension between the U.S. and the Islamic World led scholars to question the nascent purpose of education: Why have universities remained silent to such an unprecedented threat? The core purpose of the study is to uncover this silent narrative by examining the inherent discourse of the centrality of Western knowledge and issues of power in the construction of American higher education. This particular discourse has not only adversely affected the academic development of Middle East Studies in U.S. public institutions but also has continued to marginalize its existence on U.S. campuses, despite the enormous educational and political implications of 9/11. Thus, to be able to understand the continued presence of this stance in the academy, the research examines public universities' response to 9/11 in a historical framework, engaging critically the postcolonial approach, which is most often applied in analyzing the continuing legacy of Western imperialism.

A postcolonial perspective allows me to examine the prevalence of the Cold War notions of the centrality of Western knowledge and power in the thinking of the academy. A critical analysis of public universities' response to 9/11 explores the presence of this

discourse in the academy and analyzes whether the emerging discourse continues to imply postcolonial approaches that perpetuate such inequalities.

Employing a qualitative research approach, the study engages a major research public university to explore the level of the university's responsiveness to 9/11 in providing a diverse and pluralistic education about the Islamic world and also investigates how decisions of this nature are made within an academic institution. Focusing on the important theoretical approaches that shaped academic governance, the research analyzes the importance of human factors and key social, political, and cultural elements that have had a major impact on the development of institutional governance. This multi-frame approach focusing on the human role in governance is most relevant to my dissertation research as it emphasizes how decisions emerge at a particular campus in relation to its social and political contexts—conflicts, values, power, influence, and interest groups: i.e., key elements that are related to people, not structure.

## Research Question

The central question of this research is: *In the context of the serious and far-reaching impact of 9/11, how is the need for understanding the Middle East and Islamic world perceived on selected public university campuses?* In examining this larger question, I will pursue the following subquestions:

- How has the 9/11 educational challenge been framed, and what actions and specific practices have been pursued? What actions to initiate and /or expand programs in Middle East Studies are emerging, and what specific practices accompany them?

- What are the issues and challenges universities have faced in order to implement and sustain these initiatives? How is the relevance and appropriateness of Middle East Studies seen on campus*?*

- What are the implications of not offering students a well-grounded education about the people, politics, and cultures of the Islamic world? How is this responsibility seen by state institutions?

- At what levels within the campus organization are the decisions of this nature discussed, framed, and implemented?

## **Inspiration of the Study**

Although in the aftermath of 9/11 the extreme naivete and ignorance displayed by the media and Washington about Islam and Muslims reflected the prevailing ethnic prejudice rooted in the Western consciousness, a large part of this ignorance was the sheer lack of historical and contemporary knowledge about the Middle East and Islam. As an administrator at a fairly large state research university, I became painfully aware of this ignorance, not just in the general public but in academia, which typically is expected to counter such ignorance.

In the ensuing months of 9/11, despite the emerging need for a better understanding about the politics and culture of the Middle East and Islam, the administration and faculty of the University for the most part remained silent. The only exception to this situation was the Graduate School where the lack of knowledge of the Muslim world was perceived not only as an embarrassment but also as dangerous. As a consequence, the idea to establish a graduate certificate program in Islamic/Middle East Studies seemed highly plausible and timely. This initiative incidentally coincided with

the University's plan to hire approximately 250 new faculty in the span of the next five years. The task, nonetheless and despite the promising circumstances, turned out to be an effort fraught with complications and negative sentiments. Months of deliberations and discussions addressing this need failed to persuade faculty and senior university administration to take action—any action—or show interest in the project.

As someone who has a long-standing experience of working with faculty and administration, this was a surprising phenomenon. In the past, I had observed university stances where the views and interests of minorities and women had not been well represented. Yet, eventually, I saw such initiatives come to fruition with strong faculty and administration support. This development, for the most part, owed to the newly found centrality of racial issues and the civil rights movements in the 1960s and '70s which played an important role in establishing programs such as the Afro-American Studies, Women's Studies, and Latino Studies.

There have also been strong precedents for advancing area studies to address national priorities. In the years following World War II, for example, concern for national security led to the establishment of several such programs including Russian, Polish, Chinese, and Japanese studies. Within this context, the 9/11 attacks highlighted the reality that academia, particularly public institutions, lack a deeper understanding of the Muslim World. In that regard, the dismissal of a well-timed and well-constructed cutting-edge program in this area of study, without a good reason, was a matter of serious concern to me. I began to notice a pattern of discourses that seem to overlook the study of Islam and the Middle East in spite of its apparent importance. I have not seen any such efforts, either on the part of the administration or departments, to enable historical

discourse, encourage discussions or exchange views about 9/11. How can this discussion, that is so long overdue, begin then?

Eventually, these experiences and concerns led me to this research which, I believe, is of particular importance, both from a personal as well as professional point of view. I hope the study yields some understanding and insight about the universities' apparent lack of interest in the Muslim world and also provides the reasoning that allows deliberation of such decisions. In the spirit of Rossman and Rallis (2012), I believe that "an understanding (interpretation) of reality [will be] formed through personal experience, interaction, and discussion" (p. 38).

### Assumptions

The two key assumptions that shape my inquiry are (1) that centrality of Western ideological discourse that historically led to the marginalization of Middle East Studies on U. S. campuses still continues to prevail in the academy despite the critical needs made clear by 9/11, and (2) that such issues of domination are embedded in and legitimized by "power relationships" and "privileged knowledge," preserving the academy's power and status quo as is (cited by Rossman & Rallis, 2012,  p. 91; see also, Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2000).

### Potential Significance and Conceptual Framework

Among the most notable changes in U.S. higher education that surfaced after September 11, 2001 was the realization that America, despite its continuing involvement with the Middle East and the Muslim world, lacks a deep understanding of the region (Lockman, 2004; Owen, 2003; Doumani, 2006). Thus, the most ubiquitous discourse was to call upon America's educational institutions to help foster a greater understanding in

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this country of the Middle East and Muslim world (Khalidi, 2004; Buck-Morse, 2003; Rizvi, 2004). In that regard, public universities as social institutions were seen to be uniquely positioned for advancing this knowledge. Yet, even more than a decade later, universities seem to remain unconcerned about this need (Rizvi, 2004; Dudziak. 2003; Meyerwitz, 2003; and Hauerwas & Lentricchia, 2003). Consequently, Middle East Studies continues to be peripheral on the nation's campuses (Montgomery, 1997; Lockman, 2004; Khalidi, 2004). The "virtual absence of a focus on the Middle East," William Cummings asserts, "is perhaps the most troubling aspect of U.S. international education" (2001, p. 1). This uncertainty, ambiguity, and lack of a concrete position that continue to prevail in the academy concerning Middle East Studies provide the conceptual backdrop for the study.

While much has been written about the Cold War discourses that led to the marginalization of Middle East Studies' positionality in the academy (e.g., Mitchell, 2004; Lockman, 2004; Belgin, 2004 ; Doumani, 2006; Khalidi, 2004; Rafael, 1994; Cumings, 1997; Johnson & Tucker, 1975; Engerman, 2009; Owen, 2003; Mirsepassi, et al. 2003), critical evaluations of the academy's ultimate power in shaping and relegating area studies, particularly Middle East Studies, to the fringe of the mainstream social science disciplines are still few (e. g., Mitchell, 2004, Rizvi, 2004; Cumings, 1997 and Teti, 2007), and often based in the Cold War context (e.g., Mitchell, 2004; Lockman, 2004; Hajjar & Niva, 1997). It is surprising that so little empirical research has actually been conducted that questions institutional authority in shaping area studies' academic framework. The most troubling aspect of this oversight is the way in which historians and even Middle East scholars have accepted the notion of institutional power without more

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than a passing reference to challenging universities' authority for this apparent discrimination. Even in the aftermath of 9/11, the focus of Middle East Studies remains largely on political aspects of this event—media, rhetoric, and discourses on Islam (Lockman, 2004). Although a few studies raise issues about the educational implications of 9/11, they fall short on inquiring into how universities across the country reacted to 9/11 and whether meaningful knowledge and understanding about the Islamic world is being provided to students.

The study begins to fill this gap by questioning universities' senior leadership and Middle East faculty for their response to 9/11. By focusing on the uniqueness of each response, the study explores its relevant implications for the university in general and Middle East Studies programs in particular. With an eye on the postcolonial perspective, I seek to answer three interrelated questions: How does a particular discourse take precedence over another? How is the emergence of certain discourses validated? And how do policy discourses construct the institutional academic governance framework within which people must operate? Conceptually and methodologically, a critical analysis of these responses sheds light on my claim that current practices of universities concerning Middle East Studies reflect the continuation of the past Western ideological discourses. It is through this lens that the study aims to gain a clear understanding of how individual administrators and faculty address these questions and to determine if there are common themes and a common understanding across disciplinary boundaries, across administration, across faculty within each discipline, and among individual faculty.

It is my hope that the research and conversations the study generates will contribute to the transfer of knowledge, which is a key factor in the promotion of freedom

of thought as well as a core foundation of educational institutions. It may in some very modest way help to overcome the inherent discourse of the centrality of Western knowledge and issues of power in the construction of higher education as well as the cultural and religious misunderstandings embedded within the culture of educational institutions. A more sophisticated study on this topic could, nevertheless, further establish its importance to the institutions of higher learning.

## **Delimitations**

The intent of the research is to critically analyze the overall approaches in the context of the serious and far-reaching impact of 9/11 and to identify how the need for understanding the Middle East and Islamic world was perceived on a selected public university. In this respect, the study explores the particular philosophies, values, and practices that define this particular approach of the institution. Consequently, the research is not intended to generate a particular policy solution but to generate discussions about providing a well-grounded education that helps students to overcome the cultural misconceptions and misunderstanding.

## **Dissertation Outline**

The dissertation is organized into eight chapters. Chapter 1 presents the background and problem statement, laying out the major goals and strategies of the dissertation as well as my personal and professional inspirations for the research. Chapter 2 presents the literature review that analyzes the basic historical approaches that have shaped and sustained the current posture of the academy and some of the major studies that have shaped the current academic governance and academic decision-making process. Chapter 3 presents the research methodology, the analytic approach which

guides the research, the description of the research site, and the participants' profiles. The

data analysis is presented in the subsequent chapters. Chapter 4 sets up one of the major

first steps in understanding the university's discourse by looking at the Middle East

Studies program, assessing its strength and vigor during the past fifteen years (from 1996

to 2011); analyzing the content of Middle East-related courses, degrees offered, number

and status of Middle East faculty and the approaches and initiative taken in the aftermath

of 9/11. The chapter shows how the peripheral position of Middle East Studies set the

basic discourse for the university's current stance on 9/11.

Chapters 5 through 7 present the findings related to the perceptions of the

participating faculty and administrators, highlighting particular aspects of Middle East

Studies. Based on the data analysis, discourses are identified as 1. *Middle East Studies:*

*leadership/ collaboration/ coordination*; 2. *Middle East Studies: Misunderstood and*

*Misconstrued;* and *3. Governance Challenges: Who Decides* presented in sequence in

Chapters5, 6and 7. Although these discourses are not mutually exclusive, each refers to a

special framework that influences Middle East Studies and how it is seen in the

university. These chapters explore the details of these discourses: how they are

constituted; the context within which they emerge; their disciplinary power and the

culture that they create; and the stance to which they give rise. The data to understand

these discourses, throughout the chapter, come from 18 in–depth interviews with senior

administrators and Middle East faculty members along with other official university

documents. Finally, Chapter 8 discusses these findings, presents their implications in the

Middle East Studies' context, and suggests recommendations for future research.

**CHAPTER 2**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**<u>Introduction</u>**

Throughout history, Kerr (1987) asserts, public institutions have responded quite effectively to the perceived needs and opportunities of American society. They have expanded and diversified to serve an ever-changing population and its evolving needs— from the land grant colleges to today's research universities. Within this context, the 9/11 attacks highlighted the reality that America, despite its continuing involvement with the Middle East and the Muslim world, lacks a deeper understanding of the region (Lockman, 2004; Khalidi, 2004; Rizvi, 2004; Buck-Mors, 2003; Owen, 2005; Doumani, 2006). In that regard, public universities are seen to be the best site to help foster a greater understanding in this country of the Middle East and Muslim world (Doumani, 2006; Khalidi, 2004; Lockman, 2004). Yet, public universities seem to have remained remarkably indifferent to this need (Rizvi, 2004; Dudziak. 2003; Meyerwitz, 2003; and Hauerwas & Lentricchia, 2003). The primary purpose of the research is to investigate the factors that have led public institutions to this position of ambiguity and non-commitment, even in the face of such an emergent educational need.

In order to thoroughly understand this premise, especially in the context of the serious and far-reaching impact of 9/11, the literature review examines and analyzes the basic approaches that affected the development of Middle East Studies in the United States since its institutionalization in academia following the World War II. This perspective, leading to existing social structures and patterns, allows exploring the conditions and ideologies that have shaped and sustained the current posture of the

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academy and its validity. The question of validity leads to the decision-making process

within academic institutions. To that end, the literature review analyzes important

theoretical approaches and some of the major studies that have shaped the current

academic governance and academic decision-making process.

## Overview

The literature review consists of four sections: Section I analyzes some of the

contextual and intellectual implications of 9/11 that underpin the need for new priorities

for educational development. Drawing attention to the hostile environment prevailed

toward Islam and the Muslim World in the aftermath of 9/11, the section illustrates how

the September 11 attacks, in many ways, degraded the academic climate on numerous

campuses, undermined academic integrity of Middle East Studies, and deepened the

conflict inherent in the traditional apathy of the West toward Islam.

Section II examines the development of area studies in the United States,

exploring the impact of the Cold War impetus, modernization theory and issues related to

foreign policy and national security that affected area studies' scholarship and its

standing within social sciences. Section III presents the discourses that have impacted the

Middle East Studies and its positionality in the academy in the United States from the

Cold War years to its present day position following the 9/11 attacks—highlighting the

factors—that seemed to cause decline in the field. By historicizing and contextualizing

the development of Middle East Studies, the section puts into context Middle East

Studies' current dilemmas and predicaments, pointing out the dominant impact of the

Modernization paradigm that underpinned the field's scholarship during the Cold War.

Analyzing the powerful links that were created between the academy and national

security interest, the section illustrates how such collaborations led to diminishing the credibility of Middle East Studies' scholarship, and weakened its position as a scholarly discipline in the academy. Within this context, the literature review looks into how and to what extent, the political events prompted in the Middle East and Islamic countries impacted the field, and the manner in which these events continue to affect the academy's posture toward Middle East Studies. The review also examines how these factors, intertwined with Islam and the Arab world, played a crucial role in the development of Middle East Studies as an academic field. This part of the literature review is most pertinent to my research as it sheds light on public universities' response to 9/11, and questions whether the emerging discourses continue to imply postcolonial approaches that perpetuate such inequalities.

Section IV summarizes important theoretical approaches and analyzes some of the major studies that have shaped the ways in which we understand how American higher education is currently governed. Briefly touching upon current controversies regarding the centralization or decentralization of campus authority, the review focuses on Birnbaum's (1988) major analysis of the important human factors and key social, political and cultural elements that have a major impact on the development of institutional governance. This multi-frame approach, focusing on the human role in governance, is most relevant to my dissertation research.

The four parts of the literature review—on Debating Middle East Studies Discourse after 9/11, Development of Area Studies in the United States, Middle East Studies-A Postcolonial View, and Governance Challenges: Who Decides?— come from highly noted scholars in the field. The literature covering the historical and political

dimensions of Middle East area studies in the United States, from its development in the 1940s to the conceptual analysis of the current situation, is substantial. Also, studies focusing on media, rhetoric, and discourse on public opinion about Islam and the Middle East especially in the aftermath of 9/11 are largely descriptive and wide-ranging. The literature, however, regarding the historical and current perspective of higher education about Middle East Studies, including universities' response to 9/11, is rather limited. This analysis is also based on my own three decades of experience working with faculty and the university leadership in formulating and analyzing academic policies at a fairly large research state university.

All and all, the literature review provides a comprehensive approach to Middle East Studies—its past, present, and the future in academia—universities' response to 9/11, governance challenges, and how decisions are made within educational institutions. One aspect of my research that has become rather important now is to examine how institutional vision and commitments are determined, that is, whether these commitments serve the larger social and political needs of the institution or merely reflect a tight governance structure that does not allow flexibility.

## Debating Middle East Studies: Discourse after 9/11

In the contemporary area studies dialogues, one of the most ubiquitous themes is the discourse of Middle East Studies. Recent years have seen dramatic changes in the field of international education, especially in the post-September 11 world that have surfaced a widespread unrest with the ensuing wars on Afghanistan and Iraq (Grehan, 2003). In this context, the 9/11 attacks have completely changed the long-established international and national relations, challenging traditional frameworks of analysis.

Among the many challenges posed by the 9/11 attacks for the education system worldwide, the most striking one has been the United States' ignorance of Islam and the Middle East (Lockman, 2004; Meyerwitz, 2003). Within an international context, the 9/11 attacks, have underpinned the epistemological shift that underlines the necessity to study the complex, conflict-ridden histories of the Islamic World in a new analytical framework of interdependence. Of course, this calls for new discourses and paradigmatic shifts to focus attention on new priorities for both educational research and educational developments (Crossley& Tikly, 2004; Dudziak. 2003; Meyerwitz, 2003; and Hauerwas & Lentricchia, 2003). Elaborating on the argument, Buck-Morss (2003), emphasizes the need for educators to understand the discursive field that has emerged since September 11and has "transformed irrevocably the context" in which studies about Islam and the Middle East have been perceived in the U.S. institutions of higher education (Buck-Morss cited in Rizvi, 2004, p.169).

Drawing attention to the emerging antagonistic relationship between the West and Islam in the aftermath of 9/11, Rizvi (2004) questions the implications of 9/11 for the role of education in the promotion of global democracy and justice, arguing that on the one hand, September 11 has "generated a culture of antagonism across religion and civilization divides" and on the other, "it has been increasingly recognized that the future for both the West and Islam are inextricably intertwined and interdependent" (2004, p. 169). In this context, Crossley and Tikly (2004) argue that the attacks of September 11 "demand new understandings of the relationship between religion, racism culture and education" (p.152). Stressing the point further, Richard Levin, the President of Yale University, sees universities as "instruments of peace" (2006, p. 1).

Shifting the argument to the nation's security and foreign policy issues, Johnson and Caruson (2003) assert that "Ignorance," of regional culture and languages has been one of the major reasons that "have plagued this nation's foreign policy over the years" (p. 5). The shortage in the nation's intelligence agencies is not only limited to speakers of Farsi, Arabic, Urdu and Turkish, but more importantly extends to "area analysts with a deep understanding of the history, politics, and culture of places like Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran" (p. 5),  which to him is simply astonishing. Multiple PEW surveys (2007) conducted in the aftermath of the attacks indicate that ignorance about Islam and the Middle East is not confined to ordinary Americans; it is prevalent in all facets of the American society—from government officials, politicians, news media, NGOs, businesses, and even academia, including prominent public institutions of higher education.

Nonetheless, such knowledge and acknowledgments failed to revive Middle East Studies' position on U.S. campuses. In the aftermath of 9/11, one would have thought that the narrow view of the academy about Middle East Studies would give way to reviving the field in the "name of producing policy-relevant scholarship in the 'war against terror'" (Teti, 2007, p. 3). None of these claims, Teti argues, held up to the scrutiny because claims about a "state of crisis" remedying the ignorance about Islam, in fact, compounded the pressures and uncertainties of Middle East Studies, reframing its political and legal paradigms  (Teti, 2007). The much debated issue about whether Islam or Islamism was a threat to the West got tied up with terrorism. Terrorism is seen as perpetrated by Muslims with strong roots in Islam, a notion that now increasingly in the

minds and thoughts of policy makers and scholars alike (Lockman, 2004; Mitchell, 2004; Owen, 2003; Rizvi, 2004; Buck-Morss, 2003).

## Middle East Studies after September 11

In such a politically charged climate, the USA Patriot Act, hastily passed by the Senate on October 11, 2001, "compromised privacy protections, eroded civil liberties, and chilled dissent" (Doumani, 2006, p. 14).  In the aftermath of 9/11, controversies that attracted national attention, unlike the McCarthy era, did not come from the government but from private groups who took charge of silencing dissent—"[to frame] public discourse, and to re-channel the flows of knowledge production" (Doumani, 2006, p. 23). The release of the report *Defending Civilization: How Our Universities Are Failing America and What Can Be Done About It,* by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) in 2002 was such an example of the external intervention in academia. Founded by Lynn Cheney (the former head of the national Endowment for the Humanities and spouse of Vice President Richard Cheney) and the Democratic senator Joseph Lieberman, among others, ACTA accused the universities of being the weak link in the war against terror. Specifically, the report criticized universities for adding courses on "Islamic and Asian cultures" rather than "ensuring that students understand the unique contributions of America and Western civilizations" (ACTA, 2002, p.7).

At the same time, the political attacks on Middle East Studies after 9/11 "with the (neo) conservative right" (Teti, 2003, p. 19) accusing "the field of failing to provide sufficient quantity and quality of policy-relevant studies" (p. 19) have added a new dimension to Middle East Studies as an academic field. Several of such right-wing institutions, by intervening on university campuses, discredited Middle East Studies and

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its scholars; created most contentious language debates; and launched attacks on academic freedom on Middle East and Islamic scholars in the aftermath of 9/11 at universities and colleges across the country. These attacks targeted in particular faculty and scholars connected academically or culturally to Muslim countries or the Middle East (Lockman, 2004). As a result, the anxieties about Middle East Studies felt in the aftermath of the Cold War have reached to new heights after 9/11 (Dudziak. 2003; Meyerwitz, 2003).

**Campus Watch Project**

The political divisions within the field of Middle East Studies that had been tense since the Arab-Israeli conflict in the 1970s onward became vocal and hostile in the aftermath of 9/11.  The 9/11 attacks also created an opportunity for socially conservative and right-wing institutions to intervene on university campuses and enforce their position by discrediting Middle East Studies and its scholars (Doumani, 2006; Beinin, 2006). The Campus Watch web site was one such campaign that initiated targeting specific professors, courses, and programs of study; the website, arguably, intended to affront academics who enjoyed good reputations at their institutions and among peers. A year after the September 11 attacks, the foundation for a project, Campus Watch—a website— was laid by an organization, the Middle East Forum, under the directorship of Daniel Pipes. The organization launched a new initiative directly targeting academics in Middle East Studies. This website apparently was established to "review and critique Middle East Studies in the United States, with an aim to improving them" (Lockman, 2004, p. 256). It invited college students and others to monitor their professors in classrooms; note down statements which they deemed anti-Israel or Anti-American, and help Campus

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Watch compile "dossiers" on suspect faculty and academic institutions. These activities, Doumani (2006) notes, ranged from "posting lists of 'un-American' professors on the Internet to coordinating attacks on specific scholars, course offerings, and programs of study… focused with greatest intensity on Middle East and Islamic studies" (pp. 14-15).

The website prompted a storm of protest when it posted "dossiers" on eight scholars of Middle East and Islamic studies from institutions around the country and cited 14 universities for what Pipes deemed unacceptable views about Islam, Islamism, and the U.S. policy in the region. "Aside from the Dossiers," Kristine McNeil (2002) asserts, the site's "Keep U.S. Informed" section provoked the most outrage, as it encouraged students to inform on their professors, rather than challenge them openly as part of the academic process.

## Controlling Language Programs

The attacks of 9/11, which focused national attention on the importance of language learning, also created a profound political climate that defined the contentious federal policy agenda for Middle East Studies and languages. In late 2003, the House of Representatives passed legislation, the "International Studies in Higher Education Act" (HR 3077), that provided for the creation of a new International Higher Education Advisory Board with the power to "study, monitor, apprise and evaluate a sample of activities supported under [Title VI]" (cited in Newhall, 2006, p. 220). This legislation was seen by many within and outside Middle East Studies as an attempt to stifle critical voices and a threat to the autonomy of long-established principles of academic freedom in American institutions of higher education. The situation became increasingly challenging in view of  the proposed advisory board' membership; consisting of 7

members; 4 appointed by Congress, and 2 of the remaining 3 members representing government agencies concerned with national security (Yee, 2003).

Mark Smith, director of government relations at the American Association of University Professors, asserted that "Professors and not legislators" should be the ones responsible for determining course content. Echoing the faculty sentiments, Smith argued that the presence of an advisory board would intrude on academic freedom and create "a huge intimidating force over curriculum decisions, books chosen," and "approaches taken to the subject" (cited in Jennifer Jacobson, 2004, p. 2). Mirian Kazanjian, a consultant to the Coalition for International Education, saw the board as creating a very "intimidating environment for area studies faculty who would have to submit to ideological investigations" (cited in Yee, 2003). In theory, Bruce Craig (2004) states, the Review Board was seen as "a force over university staffing and in hiring of guest lecturers, making curriculum decisions, approving books for classes and recommending approaches to be taken when teaching a specific subject" (Craig, 2004, p. 2).

These framing rationales for language learning in terms of national security led to mistrust between the government and academia, and discouraged open-minded analytical people who were needed desperately for such an enterprise, undermining the very purpose of the government to promote language training (Newhall, 2006). Arguing further, Newhall asserts that "To some extent, academia has been complicit in this loss of trust since it was content in earlier time to use these same arguments of national security to justify continued funding" (2006, p. 227). While these challenges are not new, the "forces issuing them" have been empowered by the 9/11 attacks. She adds, "We truly

are in the midst of a 'Sputnik moment.' It is time to start paying attention" (Newhall, 2006, p. 227).

**<u>Issues with Academic Freedom</u>**

Perhaps the most damaging effect of 9/11, Middle East Studies scholars argue, has been the attacks on academic freedom on Middle East and Islamic scholars. Several such attacks were launched in the aftermath of 9/11 at universities and colleges across the country, targeting faculty and scholars connected academically or culturally to Muslim countries or the Middle East. For most American professors, even in the Vietnam era as O'Neil (2005) notes, "the relative peace and stability have been a major premise of academic life" (p.108). The event of September 11 dramatically changed these assumptions. The attacks, O'Neil argues, "made most inevitable substantial changes in the relationship between government and the academy and certainly posed the threat of challenges to academic freedom comparable to those of the McCarthy era" (2005, p. 108). Controversies that attracted national attention—such as those at Harvard, Columbia, the University of Colorado, Berkeley, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Doumani asserts, "have had an especially corrosive effect on the intellectual atmosphere in this country and set dangerous precedents that bode ill for the future of academic freedom" (2006, p. 27).

Yet, universities' response in protecting the field's integrity remained understated. The universities whose faculty and programs were under attack failed to take strong measures to protect the integrity of the Middle East scholars or Middle East Studies programs at these institutions. The response of these university administrators remained weak, evasive, and inconspicuous (Doumani, 2006; Post, 2006; Butler, 2006; Strum,

2006; Beinin,[2] 2006).  In fact, Doumani (2006) argues, "Much depends on what academics and academic institutions do at this juncture. Regardless of whether academic freedom is an individual or an institutional right, one thing is clear: academics and the academy have to respond to the current challenges as a community" (p. 45).

## **Conclusion**

The increasing activities of the intimidating campaigns such as the 'campus watch' since 9/11 seem to have degraded the academic climate substantially on numerous campuses. "The worsening climate has been exacerbated by the weak response of university officials, who are constantly looking over their shoulders at corporate backers, politicians, alumni, individual donors, and mainstream media's stance" (Doumani, 2006, p. 27). These challenges are not about to go away any time soon. In fact, instead of declining as the aftershocks of 9/11, the campaigns have actually picked up steam with each passing year (Khalidi, 2004; Owen, 2003; Beinin, 2006). Nevertheless, it is important to realize that these issues are debated in a political climate that is particularly tense because of the American involvement in the Middle East and the global "war on terror" across the Muslim world and beyond (Lockman, 2004). These factors combined with the symbols of patriotism and the discourse of security, linked to eradicating the evils of terrorism, heighten the right-wing offensive.  As Franz (2002) puts it, "immediately after the 'Attack on America', the confused and insecure American public, influenced by a simplified media discourse, reverted to a nativist interpretation of the events, which was soon to be buttressed by a moral righteous and infallible nationalism, in the country's retaliation efforts" (cited in Fazal Rizvi, 2004, p.167). This interpretation

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[2] For further information on this issue, see Doumani, Beshara. (Ed.). (2006). Academic Freedom after September 11. New York: Zone Books.

has become a key component in the right-wing discourse—allowing threatening the credibility of even the most eminent scholars of Middle East Studies after September 11. In this context, it is a certainty that the character, direction, and funding of Middle East Studies in the United States will continue to be seen as controversial and conflictive in the coming years (Lock, 2004).

In a sense, Rizvi (2004) argues, very little has changed: only a minority of Americans has taken the trouble to ask why this has happened and whether it should be a cause for concern or for self-scrutiny. These are not the questions that the government or the mainstream media have encouraged Americans to ask or help with answers. Instead, it is an issue that requires the attention of U.S. institutions of higher education. Putting this matter in context, public universities' response to 9/11 must be viewed with some caution, particularly when considered through a critical lens of postcolonial approach. A postcolonial approach sees current academic approaches as rooted in structural inequalities of the past, in which area studies, especially non-Western area studies, were marginalized and excluded from the main social sciences.

<u>**Development of Area Studies in the United States**</u>

Area Studies are interdisciplinary fields of research and scholarship pertaining to particular geographical, national or cultural regions. The term exists primarily as a general description for many varied fields of research, encompassing both the social sciences and the humanities (De Wit, 2002; Van der Wende, 1996; Szanton, 2004). Typical area studies programs involved history, political science, sociology, cultural studies, languages, geography, literature, and related disciplines. Before World War II, area studies were barely able to maintain their strength in the knowledge of other cultures

and languages. American universities had just a few faculty who taught or conducted

research on the non-Western world. Foreign area studies were virtually nonexistent. In

the aftermath of World War II, as the United States began to expand its political,

economic, social, and academic control over the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Latin

America, dimension of international education in U.S. higher education took a dramatic

turn (Hajjar & Niva, 1997; Mitchell, 2004; De Wit, 2002). Goodwin and Nacht (1991)

viewed this shift in international education as "almost over-night [transforming]… from

'the periphery' to 'the center'" in U.S. higher education (pp. 4-5). Taylor (1977) saw area

studies as a university initiative, reinforced by the external challenges of World War II, to

overcome academic neglect about non-Western studies.

With the Cold War underway, government officials and academic leaders became

ever more concerned about the shortage of people who were trained in foreign languages

and had some expertise particularly on part of the world which were regarded as key

front of the Cold War and the Third World areas of instability. Robert B. Hall, author of a

1947 Report on Area Studies commissioned by the Social Science Research Council, a

nongovernmental body founded in 1924 to advance the social sciences, emphasized this

need as follows:

> National welfare in the postwar period more than ever before
> requires a citizenry well-informed as to other peoples, and the
> creation of a vast body of knowledge about them…[A]rea studies
> are essential if our universities are to meet their obligations to the
> nation. Two ghastly wars within a generation have proved beyond
> reasonable doubt that we must know more of the other nations of
> the earth (pp. 22, 81-82).

Area studies was, thus, understood as a new and better way of conducting academic

research and teaching. The Social Science Research Council played a key role in

developing and promoting area studies. Much of the funding and support for Area Studies

scholarship in the post-World War period came from federal government, the Ford

Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The

major push that set area studies and foreign language centers in motion came from the

1958 National Defense Education Act (NDEA), which for the first time provided a large-

scale government funding for colleges and universities toward establishing area studies

centers (Halpern, 1969; Vestal, 1994 Godwin & Nacht, 1991; De Wit, 2002).

Vestal (1994) saw NDEA as a direct reaction to the 1957 launch of Sputnik by the

Soviet Union and an effort by the United States to regain international leadership, while

to Goodwin and Nacht (1991) it was to establish the United States' role as 'leader of the

free world'. Wallerstein (1997) refers to these efforts as a stimulus for area studies for

geopolitical reasons and as a top-down enterprise, while other interdisciplinary studies

such as ethnic studies and women's studies, though closely linked to area studies, were a

bottom-up response[3]. The primary purpose of this funding, according to Cumings (1997),

was to enhance the United States' knowledge base as a means of limiting the growth of

communism (p. 8). Within the larger internalization context, the Cold War and related

increases in military expenditures played a central role in development of area studies,

providing opportunities to U. S. higher education for new research and new fields of

study.

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[3] Meek (2002) defines a bottom-up system wherein institutions merely respond to "government–inspired policy initiatives which are often enforced by the power of state" (p.56). Thus the centrality of racial issues in the 1960s, the opposition to the war in Vietnam and the civil rights movement in mid 1960s and '70s were the bottom-up response that played an important role in bringing universities' attention to the "groups often left out of elite-focused narratives—working people, racial, ethnic and later sexual minorities, and women and so on—…" (Lockman, 2003, p. 153).

## Cold War Impetus

During the Cold War period, the international dimension of higher education moved from a passive to an active mode, based mainly on political rationales and driven by foreign policy and national security issues (De Wit, 2002). During this period, Bender (1997) notes that the United States' new role as 'leader of the free world' and the confrontation with the Soviet Union led to the development of area studies with a strong orientation on Soviet and Chinese studies in accordance with the national security interest. Cumings (1997) points out that countries were clearly placed as friend or enemy, ally or adversary. For instance, Japan and South Korea, countries inside the containment system, were deemed ally while those outside it, like China and North Korea, were considered enemy. "In both direct and indirect ways," Cumings notes, "the U.S. government and the major foundations traced these boundaries by directing scholarly attention to distinct places and distinct ways of understanding them (for example, communist studies for North Korea and China, and modernization studies for Japan and South Korea)" (p. 8). In Bender's (1997) view, this was an effort on part of the U.S. government in legitimizing America's image abroad as well as increasing the understanding of the Soviet culture and languages during the Cold War. Thus, what was important to study and how it was funded and studied in the United States was determined by the world economy and rivalry with the Soviet Union (Hajjar &Niva, 1997, Cumings, 1997; Johnson & Tucker, 1975).

Although Cumings, Wallerstein, and Bender emphasize that the political motivations for the development of area studies during the Cold War concentrated on Soviet and Chinese studies, the demand of the Cold War, government, foundations as

well as academics involved with foreign policy issues, came to regard Asia, Africa, and Latin America as regions of great strategic importance and key arenas of the Cold War. Lockman asserts that "it was not Europe but Asia, Africa and Latin America which became the main battle grounds of the Cold War" (2004, p.112). In this context of rapid economic, political, and social change and political instability of the newly independent nation states in Asia and Africa, the leading sociologists, political scientists, and other social scientists in the United States who considered themselves experts in Third World studies found a new and intellectually powerful way of thinking, which they called "Modernization". This concept of modernization underscored the process of transition from a traditional society to modern society and, it was argued, offered a better way of understanding to charter the course of these new independent countries (Mitchell, 2004; Lockman, 2004; Szanton, 2004; Rafael, 1994).

**Impact of Modernization Theory**

Thus, during the Cold War years, the paradigm that dictated the scholarly agenda for Third World scholars came to be known as modernization theory. It combined scholarly inquiry about the "backwardness of non-Western regions with policy-oriented recommendations" to "reproduce Western liberal capitalist societies" (Hajjar& Niva, 1997, p.3). The concept of modernization has a long history; during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a Marxist theory of modernization proclaimed that the elimination of private property would put an end to exploitation, inequality, and conflict. A competing capitalist version held that economic development would lead to rising living standards and democracy.

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These two visions of modernization, Inglehart and Welzel (2009) note, competed aggressively throughout much of the Cold War. The rich Western democracies, the theory went, could implant modern values and bring progress to "backward" nations through economic, cultural, and military assistance adequate for understanding or acting effectively in the non-Western world. This new way of thinking implied that the direct application of Western models and techniques not only would assist the Third World societies in their economic development, political stability and modernization, but it will also help compete effectively for their loyalty with the Soviet Union (Rosen, 1985). From the early 1950s into the 1970s, modernization theory remained the dominant paradigm in area studies and became an instrument for the U.S. government policy that supported a number of highly oppressive regimes in the name of American national security interests (Gendzier, 1985: Montgomery, 1997).

By the late 1960s, however, when the free market policies of modernization theory seemed to have led much of the developing world to the brink of economic collapse, it lost much of its credibility (Wallerstein, 1997; Gendzier, 1985). The output of those scholars who followed the core premise of modernization theory became controversial. They were criticized severely for following the U. S. economic theory proclaiming that in the long run modernization theory would benefit every one (Hajjar & Niva,1997; Gendzier, 1985). In contrast, emergence of "dependency theory," driven by Latin American studies, reversed many of the assumptions of modernization theory, arguing that "politics and scholarly knowledge could not easily be separated" (Lockman, 2004, p.154). Lockman, (2004) argues that dependency theory "constituted an important critique of, and alternative to, modernization theory, and a challenge to much of

mainstream U.S. social science" (p.157). This trend was most dramatically evident in the

non-Western fields during the Vietnam War, which, in fact, triggered intellectual and

political dissent all across the area studies fields (Szanton, 2004; Lockman, 2004;

Gendzier, 1985). Consequently, area studies scholars and organizations became deeply

critical of U.S. government-sponsored "development" and "modernization" programs in

the Third World, alleging these programs as ill-conceived, counter-productive, self-

serving, and of limited value to the poor of the countries they were claiming to aid

(Bonnell, Breslauer & Walder cited in Szanton, 2004).

The guiding paradigm of modernization theory seemed to have had an adverse

effect on area studies scholarship. A majority of scholars, particularly from 1970s

onward, assert that the foundations and government support that enlisted Third World

scholars in the area of a western–style analysis of their own societies limited scholarship

to Cold War politics and weakened its standing as a social science discipline in the

academy—to the extent that it has not recovered from to this date (Lockman, 2004;

Gendzier, 1985; Escobar, 1995; Hajjar & Niva, 1997; Mitchell, 2004). It remained true

though that the Cold War scholarly agenda based on theories of modernization was often

influenced and shaped by "national security issues" and foreign policy, and remained the

main rationale for federal support in developing the scholarly and intellectual agenda for

area studies during the Cold War period, even though, as Wallerstein (1997) says, it did

not always deliver the results the military had hoped for.

**Issues of National Security and Foreign Policy**

The important role of national security and foreign policy in advancing

international education in the US, particularly during the Cold War, has been argued by a

large number of scholars in the field. Area studies, originally funded for Cold War purposes, affected universities' research and scholarship in the most profound manner: "Academics were rightly worried about the domination of scholarship by federal monies, and also about being tainted" (Nader, 1997, p.112). Closely related to the foreign policy argument was the issue of national security, which dominated U.S. education, particularly during the period between the 1960s and 1980s. McGeorge Bundy's 1964 speech at Johns Hopkins University perhaps captures this relationship most succinctly: He observed that "It is a curious fact of academic history that the first great center of area studies… [was] in the Office of Strategic Services…It is still true today, and I hope it always will be, that there is a high measure of interpenetration between universities with area programs and the information-gathering agencies of the government" (cited in Diamond, 1992, p. 10). Consequently, Cumings (1997) notes that the scholarly agenda was often influenced and shaped by the need of national security and supported by official funding. Noting the negative impact of government funding, Mirsepassi et al (2003) argue that CIA collaborative efforts with foundations and the Social Science Research Council in drawing on academics from the leading research universities to shape its research agendas often ended up creating factionalism between area studies and academic disciplines.

During the Cold War era (and even beyond), Lockman (2004) notes, there were a substantial number of academics who were willing, rather eager, to accept and even solicit funding from the military or intelligence agencies to conduct research that had a clear bearing on the U.S. policy in the Third World. In the late 1960s, the twin scandals of Project Camelot—a project using Latin American area specialists for national security

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purposes—and the Thai Affair, in which anthropologists were implicated to recruit

highland minorities in Northeastern Thailand into the war effort in Cambodia and

Vietnam. These matters, seen as an America's underhanded attempt to interfere in

internal government matters of these countries, prompted a crisis within area studies

(Baylay, 1987). These projects recruited numerous U.S. and foreign scholars to promote

social science research that would allow better strategies for countering the growth of

communism. These scandals provoked widespread controversy on compromising

scholarly principles, allowing scholars' expertise to serve the state's own purposes

(Hughes, 2003: Cumings, 1997; Lockman, 2004).

Senator William Fulbright (1905-95), a leading critic of U.S. government-funded

research projects, noted that "to produce ponderous studies of 'insurgency' and

counterinsurgency' studies which, behind their opaque language, look very much like

efforts to develop 'scientific' techniques for the anticipation and prevention of revolution,

without regard for the possibility that some revolutions may be justified or even

desirable" (cited Gendzier, 1985, p. 62).

In many ways, although involvement of the research and analysis branch of the

Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) presented a

model (i.e. collaboration between intelligence and academe), in reality, these efforts to

draw on academics often created division between the academic disciplines and area

studies (Cumings, 1997). Thus scholars in well-defined disciplines such as economics,

sociology, and political science all of a sudden found themselves entangled with another

emerging area of inquiry—area studies—without any prior discussion or input of their

own. "To put a subtle relationship all too crudely," Cumings argues, "Power and money

had found their subject first, and shaped fields of inquiry accordingly" (1997, p.19).

Elaborating the point further, Cumings asserts that "The state was less interested in the feudal domains of academe than in filling the vacuum of knowledge about a vast hegemonic and counter-hegemonic global space; it was the capillary lines of state power that shaped area programs" (1997, p.10). The impact of modernization theory varied widely across the disciplines, exerting considerably less influence on anthropology and economics than on political science. Political science found it difficult to abandon the need for the kind of local political understanding, traditionally supplied by area studies' research (Teti, 2007).

**<u>Challenge to Social Sciences</u>**

Despite the relative success in U.S. universities, area studies continue to be critiqued by disciplinary scholars and others in terms of either their disciplinary affiliations or by their political context and political commitments (Rafael, 1994; Mitchell, 2004; Lockman, 2004; Szanton, 2004). The debate between area studies and the social sciences is not new. Epistemological differences of universal knowledge and contextual knowledge methodology kept area studies specialists and social scientists apart. Historically, there has been a fair amount of tension between area studies scholars who felt strongly about historically contextualized knowledge of various parts of the world that could be gained by working closely with humanists and social scientists who believed in overarching universal knowledge that could draw connections between patterns of change and development across different areas (Bilgin & Mortan, 2002; Mitchell, 2004).

Within U.S. universities, area studies scholarship efforts have been to use logic and theoretical implications of the unique social and cultural values and dynamics that shape the societies and nations beyond Europe and the United States. Mitchell (2004), Lockman 2004), Teti (2007), and Rafael (1994) argue that the primary role of area studies in the U.S. has been to bring in a diverse perspective of non-Western world to social science and humanities disciplines which continue to draw largely on U.S. and European experience. Szanton (2004) argues that fundamentally the motivation for development of area studies in the U.S. "has been—and continues to be—to deparochialize US- and Euro-centric visions of the world in the core social science and humanities disciplines, among policy makers, and in the public at large" (p. 2).

It was widely accepted that social scientists' universalistic claims came out of the Western experience, while area studies specialists made particular claims about the non-Western world (Rafael, 1994). Using interdisciplinary approaches to understand non-Western societies and cultures, area studies scholars, argued for new structures of knowledge generation. In doing so, they directly challenged the disciplinary departments that insisted on maintaining their traditional intellectual and organizational boundaries, "their stylized narratives of 'the West,' their frequent universalization of Western experience, and the vertical organization of the [disciplines]" (Lauriston Sharp cited in Szanton, 2004, p. 17).

In the 1950s, efforts to add multi-disciplinary approach of areas studies into a traditional departmental structure became a subject of ridicule and attack from social science faculty and administrators. Area studies departments, seen as challenging the traditional notion, were frequently put down and belittled, insinuating that area studies'

scholarship comes from political agendas and therefore, is intellectually inferior and of a lower status in the university community (Hajjar& Niva , 1997). In Power's opinion, considerable opposition arose from "petty personal prejudices". Social sciences, he adds, were threatened by a "newcomer" to the traditional disciplines (1955, p. 94).

Mitchell (2004) and Szonton (2004) argue that the contentious tensions and contradictions surrounding area studies were far more problematic than the actual controversies. They created an environment of hostility and mistrust that remains as compelling now as it was in the 1950s. Area studies is criticized also from opposite quarters that reflect a cultural-humanistic and at times postmodern bent (Rafael 1994). Development of area studies meant more than simply the addition of new research agendas or particular scholarly communities in the U.S. universities. It was area studies scholars who give legitimacy to "new understandings and forms of knowledge which their Euro-centric or Americanist colleagues in the social sciences and humanities are not likely to have imagined" (Szones, 2004, p.15)**.** This disciplinary division also constituted hierarchy between non-Western area studies Western specialists and social scientists (Bilgin, 2004).

Elaborating on this point, Rafael (1994) argues that although all area studies were considered to be "Subordinate to the 'core' disciplines and deemed less important in relation to more 'developed' areas of study," programs such as "East Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia tended to be doubly marginalized in most American universities" (p. 99). By generating new data, new concepts and new approaches to key issues, they enlightened and legitimatized the

inherent and analytic value of the perspectives of the "native" or the "other," as well as more culturally rooted interpretations and explanations (Rafael, 1994).

Area studies continued to be critiqued by scholars who define themselves solely or largely in terms of a disciplinary affiliation. Amidst this controversy, Hall, a political scientist at the University of Michigan who conducted a survey of area studies with the support of the Social Science research council in 1947, made a strong case for the institutionalization of area studies. He saw area studies approach in invigorating disciplinary isolation on a global scale. Nevertheless, he insisted that the epistemological authority of the disciplines remains "almost the sole guardians of scholarly standards". Thus, maintaining disciplinary distinctions—area studies retained a relation of dependency to such disciplines—projecting a set of hierarchies and a field of unequal relations (Hall, 1948, pp. 32, 34-35).

Consequently, many social scientists, trained in one discipline, felt uncomfortable with a regional definition of study. The question of the relation of social science to the area studies format raised substantial problems. Singer (1964) notes that the new area studies programs embodied in the regional centers did not reflect any systematic classification of scholarship, but rather the various areas had been defined chiefly in response to the practical needs of military and political operations (Singer, p. 31). In the academy, successes of area studies in satisfying the needs and standards of the disciplines remained subject to debate. Yet, Szonton (2004) concludes that "by creating new types of multi-disciplinary academic units, area studies have intellectually and politically challenged, and even in varying degrees transformed, U.S. universities and the social science and humanities disciplines" (p.15).

Within this broad context of area studies, the following section of the literature review focusing on Middle East Studies, examines the Cold War cultural and ideological discourses and the political turbulent events in the Middle East and Islamic countries that have continued to impact the development of Middle East Studies in U.S. universities and the academy's posture toward this particular regional study.

## Middle East Studies-A Postcolonial View

It is impossible to disentangle Middle East Studies from its political surroundings. The rise and fall of Middle East Studies in the United States has been associated with changes in the geopolitical context and the links between knowledge and power. The evidence of this complexity and power to shape Middle East Studies in the United States is often reflected in the thinking of academia, even in the aftermath of 9/11.

Since its inception in the mid 1940s, two major factors continue to have a profound effect on the development of Middle East Studies in the United States: Cold War politics and the concept of East/West dichotomy. The guiding paradigms of Modernization theory, along with issues of national security, and the collaborative role of universities, foundations, and U.S. national security agencies developed during the Cold War, played an important role in shaping Middle East Studies' standing in academia. The perception of East/West dichotomy—the manner in which Islam has been represented in the West—made evident by U.S. foreign policy issues and its political motivations—have isolated Middle East Studies from other non-Western area studies, denigrating its status further in the academy. These factors, intertwined with Islam and the Arab/Israeli issue, have played a crucial role in the development of Middle East Studies as an academic field.

Middle East Studies evolved as an interdisciplinary field of inquiry during the interwar period and gained prominence as area studies in the Cold War context by the United States' need for policy-related scholarship (Hajjar & Niva, 1997). Supported primarily by private foundations and the U.S. National Defense and Education Act of 1958, the institutionalization of Middle East Studies in 1946 was seen as the most effective way for achieving an in-depth knowledge and understanding about the Middle East and other Muslim countries relevant to the Cold War politics. The U.S. state security agencies played an active and critical role in encouraging and establishing the crucial Middle East linkage between policy making and academic research (Bilgin & Morton, 2002). These linkages, instituting a certain relationship between scholarship and policy, centered around discourse of Modernization[4] that was to have a lasting legacy on the 'making' of the 'Third Worlds' (Hajjar & Niva, 1997; Cumings, 1997; Buck-Morss, 2003; Lockman, 2004; Rizvi 2004).

The Cold War politics of anticommunism and Soviet containment were central to the vastly expanded international role of the United States to shape the postwar world. In this context, Modernization theory implied that the direct application of Western models and techniques would assist societies such as the Middle East in their economic development, political stability and modernization as well as to compete effectively for their loyalty with the Soviet Union (Rosen, 1985; Gendzier, 1985). Modernization theory portrayed a Western ideology of developmentalism, including its assumptions of social evolution and Western superiority over non-Western societies (Escobar, 1995; Dudziak.

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[4] A large number of issues related to the U.S. Cold War politics that impacted Middle East studies— "modernization" and the controversy of scholarship—are analyzed in detail in the area study section. These issues, thus, are examined briefly in this section in term of their particular relevance to Middle East studies.

2003; Meyerwitz, 2003; Hauerwas & Lentricchia, 2003). The paradigm of modernization

theory that dictated the scholarly agenda for Third World scholars, combined scholarly

inquiry about the "backwardness of non-Western regions with policy-oriented

recommendations" (Hajjar & Niva, 1997, p. 7) to reproduce Western liberal capitalist

societies (Crossley & Tikly, 2004).

Scholars in both area studies and social sciences who played leading roles in the

development of Middle East Studies in the United States embraced 'Modernization

theory' that offered a better way of understanding of the Middle East, a universal and

unilinear process—developing transition—from a traditional society to a modern society

in a steady and consistent way (Lockman, 2004; Mitchell, 2004; Rafael, 1994). This

approach combined the insights of the different disciplines into a "total structure of

scientific knowledge" (Parsons cited in Mitchell, 2004, p. 85).  Consequently,

Modernization theory became an instrument for the U.S. government policy that

supported a number of highly oppressive regimes in the name of American national

security interests and remained the dominant paradigm in Middle East Studies from the

early 1950s into the 1970s (Gendzier, 1985; Hajjar & Niva, 1997; Lockman, 2004).

One of the major goals of social scientists engaged in elaborating the

modernization framework was to find a way to bring stability to underdeveloped

countries that the government feared would otherwise be drawn to communism. Marxist

explanations of imperialism and economic developments, attributing poverty and

underdevelopment to the legacies of colonialism, were popular in the Third World. Major

concerns in Middle East Studies emerged when modernization theorists ignored the often

violent social transformations, brought about by colonial expansion and global capitalist

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interference, to suppress democratic and nationalist movements such as Arab nationalism

and leftist forces in Iran (Lockman, 2004; Gendzier, 1985; Hajjar and Niva, 1997). Such

sentiments on the part of Middle East scholars, seen as pro-Soviet, did not sit well with

the social scientists who were influenced by Modernization theory with their roots in

Cold War thinking (Hajjar & Niva, 1997).

Many Modernization theorists, however, went beyond this premise, concluding

that an increase in authoritarianism may even be desirable in the early stages of

modernization (Gendzier, 1985). Lerner's *The Passing of Traditional Society:*

*Modernizing the Middle East,* published in 1958, was an exemplary focus of this

approach. For example, Lerner (1958) denounced Arab nationalism as a "manifestation

of irrational psychic disturbances," magnified by the new mass media that simulated a

"chain reaction of assassination and mob violence" across the Arab world (pp. 255-257).

As one of the most influential studies of modernization, the book was widely acclaimed

by social scientists as a modern alternative to the old-fashioned Orientalist notion that

emphasized the understanding of the region, developing a "relationship that is closer to

term of mutuality" (Gibb cited in Lockman, 2004, p. 27).

Such encounters between the Arab world and the West led Middle East scholars

to create their own critique of the modernization paradigm which, when combined with

Edward Said's notion of "traveling theory"—the spatial displacements—turned the

theoretical paradigm into "critical consciousness" that implied taking action against the

oppressive elements in one's life (Mitchell, 2004, p. 93; see also, Mustakova-Possardt,

2003).  At the same time, emergence of "dependency theory," driven by Latin American

studies, reversed many of the assumptions of Modernization theory, arguing that "politics

and scholarly knowledge could not easily be separated" (Lockman, 2004, p. 154). The new Middle East scholarship thus criticized the established scholarship for its reliance on Oriental Studies and incorporation of this work into the study of the modern period (Mitchell, 2004). The guiding paradigms of Modernization theory that played an important role in the development of Middle East Studies during the Cold War now seemed to have an adverse effect on its scholarship.

From the 1970s onward, it was understood that support from foundations and government which enlisted Middle East scholars in the service of a western–style analysis of their own societies limited Middle East Studies scholarship to the Cold War politics and weakened its standing as a social science discipline in the academy (Mitchell, 2004; Lockman, 2004; Gardizie, 1985; Rafael, 1994). "In the final analysis," Cumings argues, universities were the "capillary lines of state power that shaped area programs" (1997, p. 3). The emergence of this new relationship between power and knowledge determined the strengths and weaknesses of area studies and continued even in peacetime. In many ways, it was the academy that helped create the basic division between the academic disciplines and area studies (Mitchell, 2004; Lockman, 2004; Engerman, 2009; Doumani, 2006; Khalidi, 2004; Rafael, 1994; Cumings, 1997; Owen, 2003; Szanton, 2004; Hajjar & Niva, 1997; Mirsepassi, et al. 2003). The prevailing Western interpretation and biased misrepresentations distorted several aspects of Middle East history, economic and political development, and tainted its research, books and articles (Johnson & Tucker, 1975, p. 17).

Another factor that marred the scholarship of Middle East Studies was the model created by the Office of Strategic Services for collaboration between the intelligence

community and academe that not only allowed the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to influence academic research and operations, but also laid the foundation for the division between academic disciplines and area studies (Cumings, 1997). Such collaborations that tried to draw on academics from the leading research universities to shape their research agendas often ended up creating factionalism between area studies and academic disciplines (Mirsepassi, et al. 2003).

By the late 1970s, the change in the political climate, associated with the Vietnam War, Watergate, and other political scandals, triggered intellectual and political dissent all across area studies (Mitchell, 2004). Many Middle East scholars became publicly and passionately critical of the U.S. government's definition of "the national interest," and its policies and actions in the region of the world they were studying. This brought about an intellectual shift in mainstream Middle East scholars. This shift was viewed as breaking down the once-Cold War consensus and erosion of the once-close links between academics and policymakers (Hajjar & Niva, 1997). Many scholars in Middle East Studies, as well as their counterparts engaged in non-Western studies, became increasingly critical of and alienated from United States government policies in the particular area of their interest. "The sharp decline (within academia, at least) of once dominant paradigm of Modernization theory resulted in the dissipation of the intellectual coherence which had characterized the field in its first decades" (Lockman, 2004, p. 239; see also Hajjar & Niva, 1997; Mirsepassi, Ali & Basu, 2003).

By 1978, Middle East Studies that had been professionally organized only a decade or so earlier was now threatened on several sides. The publication of *Orientalism* (Said, 1978) placed Middle East Studies on the defensive. These interventions, Lockman

argues, stimulated new scholarly activity that was previously under-explored in Middle East Studies. Orientalism became a model for investigating the relationship between scholarly production and imperial power. It formed part of a larger shift in literary studies, history and power, and social formation. This shift in Middle East Studies, Sharabi (1990) points out, inspired methodological innovations and increasing coverage of previously marginalized subjects. The resulting tensions and contradictions, and the critiques they engendered created a "crisis in the disciplines" far more problematic than the debates surrounding area studies (Mitchell, 2004).

## Controversy of Scholarship

The history of Middle East Studies (in contrast to social science objectives) is quite complex. There are several other aspects that shaped its development. Although all area studies are considered to be "Subordinate to the 'core'" disciplines and deemed less important in relation to more "developed" areas of study, "non-Western area studies programs tended to be doubly marginalized in most American universities" (Rafael, 1994, p. 99). As such, Lockman (2004) notes, Middle East Studies is the one study area that had been particularly hard hit by changing world political conditions and altered federal and university spending priorities. Within this context, the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars heightened the politicization of Middle Eastern studies—generating bitter scholarly polemic debates, led by the publication of Edward W. Said's *Orientalism* (Grabar, 1982). Supporting the argument, Mitchell (2004) notes that for many years the Middle East Studies Association would not allow panels on Arab-Israeli relations because no one could be expected to "be objective" about the issues.

The concerns of Middle East Studies first emerged in the interwar period and, as Teti (2007) notes, were related to developments which were both political and intellectual. While noted orientalists like Hamilton Gibb, Bernard Lewis, Wilfred C. Smith and Harvey Hall insisted that they were the ones best suited to interpret the Muslim world and the Middle East, the social scientists who played the leading role in the development of Middle East Studies in the United States during the 50s and 60s were not impressed by the orientalists' approach (Johnson & Tucker, 1975; Mitchell, 2004). Instead, social scientists embraced 'modernization theory' that offered a better way of understanding of the Middle East—a universal and unilinear process--developing transition from a traditional society to a modern society in a steady, consistent, and undeviating way (Lockman, 2004; Rafael, 1994). It was thus up to social scientists to allow area studies to become universal, but in order to do so, Middle East Studies needed to "cleanse its social theory of provincialism" (2007, p. 10). Teti views this approach as singling out "a specific group of individuals—academics—having privileged access to, and thus authority to speak about the 'Middle East'" (p. 10).

Consequently, many social scientists, trained in one discipline, felt uncomfortable with a regional definition of study. The question of the relation of social science to Middle East Studies format in particular raised substantial problems. Binder (1974), for example, while praising the achievements of Orientalist scholarship, argued for the need to move beyond its limitations. Putting forward a new justification for Middle East Studies, he asserted,

> In my own opinion area studies rest upon a single key idea and that
> is that the object of study, the thing we want to know, is the
> determining and organizing principle of the intellectual enterprise
> and not the method or discipline…The question…is whether

Middle Eastern events constitute a valid unity so that the consequence of their study could reasonably be called knowledge. (1974, pp. 4-5)

Binder (1976), projecting the same thoughts, stated that "The fact is that Middle East Studies are beset by subjective projections, displacements of affect, ideological distortion, romantic mystification, and religious bias, as well as by a great deal of incompetent scholarship" (p. 16). Echoing these views, Korany and Dessouki (1991) criticized Middle East studies for remaining apparently unable to move beyond "inadequate conceptualization, overemphasis on historicism and the uniqueness of the Islamic-Arab situations and neglect of a truly comparative outlook" (p. 2). Green (1986), in agreement with this claim, stated that "Arab politics can be understood in the same social-scientific terms as politics elsewhere" (p. 613). Finally, Bill (1996), a senior academic in the field, assessing the fifty years accomplishment of the Middle East Institute, summed it up as, "we have learned disturbingly little after fifty years of heavy exertion," noting the scholars' failure in interpreting or foreseeing the major political developments in the region (pp. 501-512).

Such acknowledgements of failure have been a regular feature of Middle Eastern area studies. Despite many attempts since its inception as area studies, the gap between social sciences and Middle East Studies has not been bridged because traditional academia use "'motifs of science' to legitimatize its stand in marginalizing Middle East Studies as non-social scientific scholarship" (Teti, 2007, p. 6). Such differences rooted in the methodological commitments are the reasons for the heated discussions generated "over questing like the compatibility of Islam and democracy" (Teti, 2007, p. 8). In Mitchell's opinion, the Orientalist representation of the region helped implant into

American scholarship "the idea that the Islamic world formed a cultural unity, based upon a common cultural core that only the Orientalist was equipped to decipher" (Mitchell, 2004, p. 97).

In the aftermath of 9/11, one would have thought that "such an antiquated intellectual 'sectarianism' would bring about mutual understanding in the name of producing policy-relevant scholarship in the 'war against terror'" (Teti, 2007, p. 3). By accepting the area studies' multidisciplinary approach, the "key to such a common ground" (p. 3), could have ended the "'narrow factionalism' of traditional academia and strike a blow in the struggle for 'freedom'" (p. 3). Nonetheless, such "state of crises," despite the serious repercussions of the 9/11 attacks, was not important enough for disciplines to make a move towards reconciliation of the controversy between area studies and social sciences. Their position remained firmly rooted in the cold-war era, demonstrating the disciplines' dominance over area studies. Thus, this persistent biased disciplinary approach suggests that its purpose is not to "'bridge the gap' at all, but rather to colonize [Middle East Studies], to discipline the knowledge produced about for this area to conform to the universalizing ideal of social science" (Teti, 2007, p. 4).

**Impact of Arab-Israeli Conflict**

How do events in the Middle East and United States policy in the region influence Middle Eastern studies? Since the Cold War, American policy in the Middle East has been based primarily on the security of Israel, which has been projected to be surrounded by Muslim enemy states. The Arab-Israeli conflict has gone through several phases, each adding a different dimension to it. It began as a conflict between two national movements: Zionism and Palestinian nationalism. From the 1950s it was perceived as a

struggle between Israel and pan-Arab nationalism, which regarded Israel as a symbol of Western imperialism, designed to break down Arab territorial integrity and prevent Arab unity. It became an arena of the Cold War between the West and the Soviet Union. Khoury (1998) argues that "the Arab-Israeli conflict has been another major factor that blemished Middle East Studies in most unfortunate ways" (p. 120). The conflict, he notes, was highly visible even at the birth of the Middle East Studies Association in 1966, founded under the leadership of Morroe Berger, a Princeton sociologist and chair of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) committee (Khoury, 1998). The Middle East Studies Association, established as an organized field of expertise by a new generation of senior scholars, became an influential arm of Middle East Studies, promoting its funding and study projects (Mitchell, 2004). Even though in the opinion of many scholars Middle East Studies was fully established as an academic field, it only "marked the surfacing of new problems" (p. 87). Morroe Berger's negative comments condemning Middle East Studies right after the June, 1967, Arab-Israeli war at the Middle East Studies Association's inaugural meeting were seen humiliating and degrading for Middle East Studies. Burger's declaration that Middle East Studies "has been receding in immediate political importance to the U.S. (and even in 'headline' or 'nuisance' value) relative to Africa, Latin America and the Far East" (p. 16) were seen to be politically motivated and reflected an "academic attitude towards the Islamic Orient, as an instance of how a learned perspective can support the caricatures propagated in the popular culture" (Said, 1978, p. 290). Referring to Berger's remarks, Said argued further that given the moment at which it was noted seems to reflect something more than shortsightedness, it indicated how the Middle East and the Arab world are seen by the West.

The impact of the Arab/Israeli conflict on Middle East Studies continued through the years. A few months after the Six-Day War, scholars were asked to withdraw papers on Israel an Arab conflict at the Middle East Studies Association's annual conference (Mitchell, 2004). The subject was not allowed to be discussed; papers and articles written on the history or any aspect of the Arab-Israeli conflict were asked "to withdraw… due to the sensitivity of his subject" (MESA file, 1967).  Such actions denying scholars to discuss the scholarly analysis of Israel and the Palestinian issue undermined the academic freedom of Middle East scholars and threatened their credibility in academic institutions (Mitchell, 2004). Within the liberal culture of the U.S. academy, according to Gendzier, such were the norms: how to account differences—defining the problems and populations of the non-Western studies—and how to keep them at a safe distance (1985, pp. 92-98). As a consequence, Middle Eastern studies tended to avoid all discussion of issues that involved Arab-Israeli conflict.

Even six years later, following the ending of the 1973 Arab-Israel conflict, there was no formal discussion about this topic. Binder (1975), then the president of the Middle East Studies Association, defending the absence of discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict stated that the silence was not because scholars had nothing to say, the issue was "what one may appropriately say in this context" (Binder, 1975, pp. 4-5). Mitchell notes that there is a certain irony in Binder's attempt to ground scholarship (and political authority) in a much-desired objectivity of social science despite the fact that the Palestine Question "revealed the precarious nature of their detachment" (p. 89).  Thus, the professionalization of Middle Eastern studies, Mitchell argued, confirmed by the founding of the Middle East Studies Association in 1967, represented an attempt to

define this "context" in which it was established that scholars could speak as scholars but only say what was appropriate to say (Mitchell, 2004, p. 89).

The emergence of the Palestinians as a central actor in the Arab-Israeli conflict, the radical upsurges of immediate post-1967 period, and the continuing crises led to growing dissatisfaction among American students of the Middle East. At the same time, Lockman (2003) notes that Israel had begun to build a close relationship with the U.S. that manifested considerable levels of military and economic aid and political-strategic coordination (p. 162). Khalidi (2004) adds that the United States' aid to Israel "reached astronomical levels beginning in 1973, when it numbered in the billions of dollars annually, putting Israel ahead of all other American aid recipients" (p. 127). This situation entailed U.S. opposition to the PLO, "which officials in Washington saw as a radical and destabilizing force which was to be marginalized—a stance Israel greatly appreciated" (Lockman, 2003, p. 162). This deep involvement of the United States in the Middle East provoked young American-Arab scholars in becoming increasingly politicized and increasingly vocal about the issues that concerned Middle East Studies. The political views and scholarly work of some of the Middle East Studies were challenged by these leftist scholars who began to contest not only the leadership of Middle Eastern studies and its alleged professional detachment but also its construction of the region of study (Mitchell, 2004).

Thus, the 1970s marked the crystallization of these political/intellectual divisions. Muslim American, particularly Arab Americans who raised legitimate concerns about the Arab Palestinian issue, often found themselves as a beleaguered minority challenging a strongly pro-Israel establishment not only in the political arena but also in academia.

These factors, intertwined with Islam and the 9/11 attacks contributed to the increasing politicization of the field that played a crucial role in the development of Middle East Studies as an academic field.

**The Islam Factor**

The concept that emerges from such debates and acknowledgements illustrates that the notion of Middle East Studies marginalization, unlike other non-Western area studies, goes far beyond its non-Western aspect (Lockman, 2004). Islam is the major factor that occupies a unique place in the imaginations of western Europeans from the eleventh century onward. Islam was Europe's "other" in a way that China or India or any other indigenous groups could never be (Owen, 2003; Lockman, 2004). Though it is true that Europeans and Americans had and still have all sorts of images of other people, cultures, and religions that may be derogatory, the image of Islam has historically evoked both a profound sense of cultural difference and deep sense of threat (Frassetto & Blanks, 1999; Armstrong, 2006). Thus the traditional apathy of the West for Islam and Islamic people is one major imperative that has played a pivotal role in shaping the Middle East Studies.

Thus the East/West dichotomy that came to be an important way of dividing the world—the images of the Muslims as "other"—profoundly different from "us"—continue to influence scholarly knowledge of Islam and the Middle East. Even in academia, European and Western scholars of Islam and Middle East Studies have continued to view Islam and the Middle East with the same disdain and hostility that is prevalent in the present day popular culture of the United States and the Western world (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 1994; Said, 1978). The notions of intolerance and

intercultural understanding, according to Johnson and Tucker (1975), have been cultivated in Islamic and Middle East Studies beneath the façade of understanding. The condescending and distorted view of Islam as an under developed religion color most of orientalists scholarship and research (Johnson & Tucker, 1975).

Within this context, Orientalist depiction of Islam and Modernization theory's conception of the Third World played a major role in shaping the perception of officials, the media, and the public about Islam and the Muslim world (Khalidi, 2004; Lockman, 2004; Gendzier, 1985; Mitchell, 2004; Frassetto & Blanks, 1999). These arguments gave rise to sweeping generalization about the character and thought processes of Arabs and Muslim as one entity, from the rise of Islam to the present, and from Morocco to Indonesia. The assumptions are that there is an unchanging and distinctive "Arab mind" or "Islamic mind" implicitly or explicitly different from an equally unitary and essentialized "Western mind" (Lockman, 2004; Mitchell, 2004). As we have seen, this concept had its roots in the division of humanity into distinct civilizations: an episteme that relies on ethnocentrism and in recent years echoes in Samuel Huntington's (1993) controversial "clash of civilization" thesis.

The scholarly interpretive frameworks, produced within certain political and cultural contexts, thus shaped the perception of policy makers in the West and the United States about Islam and the Middle East (Said, 1978; Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 1994). The prejudiced view of Islam strengthened the U.S. Cold War imperialism underpinning the centrality of Western knowledge and the Western form of power-knowledge relationship that involved an active remaking of Middle East Studies (Wollerstien, 1998; Said, 1978; Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 1994). Middle East Studies' scholarly agenda

and academic development continue to be conditioned by global power relations, political events, and the U.S. policy concerns and interests. Adding to that, the rise of anti-Semitism against Muslims and the impact of Israel-dominated foreign policy have contributed heavily in shaping the field. This notion, combined with the politics of oil resources, has resulted in the quite extraordinary demonizing of Islam and Islamic studies in the United States (Wallerstein, 1997).

## Conclusion

Thus the premises drawn from this inquiry historicizing and contextualizing the academic developments of Middle East Studies in the United States leads to a plausible conclusion that the ideological effects of imperialism and colonialism apparently continue to prevail in the academy and public institutions of higher education in the United States. While there may be many other reasons for universities not to offer programs in Islamic studies, my contention is that the cultural imperial assumptions inherent in the academy's perception, particularly about the comparative worth of the Muslim world and its epistemologies, seem to be the primary factor in determining the need for Middle East Studies programs. Thus "if a pattern be discerned in these debates it is the tendencies of the 'imperialistic Western view of Islam' built into the fabric" of the academy that translates into 'colonize' Middle East Studies (Teti, 2007, p. 18).

If the past represents the only data we have from which to glean patterns of behaviors to produce general truths—then it is only after applying these truths—we could discern why Middle East Studies are dormant on U.S. universities' campuses—even in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. In order to come to some understanding about this phenomenon, we need to ask how universities, especially state land-grant universities, are

responding to the need for Islamic studies to 9/11 in a historically challenging and politically complex environment.  And how are institutional vision and commitments shaped and determined? An examination of the important theoretical approaches and ideas that have shaped the ways in which we understand how American higher education is currently governed, combined with the historical context of Middle East Studies, may reveal more about the nature of public universities' posture towards Middle East Studies in the aftermath of 9/11.

## Governance Challenges: Who Decides?

Shared academic governance has always been an integral part of American higher education. The principle of shared responsibility and authority between administrators and faculty dates back to the foundation of the earlier colonial colleges (Altbach, 2005). Kerr (1987) points out that, although universities have moved from a "guild-like" status to a more centralized structure, they still exist in the same forms, with similar functions "unbroken histories" and "with governance carried on in much the same ways" (1987, p. 184).  However, at the same time, Kerr argues that, when looked at from within, universities have changed enormously (1987). The centralized position the university has acquired demands for greater equality of opportunity, higher competence, meeting labor market needs, and facilities for life-long learning. These diverse environmental issues, in Kerr's opinion, have created "great tensions" and "eternal contradictions" in higher education institutions that has brought about a greater need to concentrate on "human beings" who "often triumph over poor policies and bad structures" (1987, p. 185).

Modern governance structures, comprising boards of trustees, presidents, academic administrative officers, and faculty, have their origins in the early history of the

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colonial era. In the late eighteenth century as higher education evolved and academic

disciplines developed, faculty members, as experts in their disciplines, acquired decision-

making power in academic governance in terms of curriculum and academic programs,

recruiting students, and the major role in hiring of faculty. The final say, nevertheless,

always remained with the higher administration (Geiger, 1999; Jencks & Riesman, 1968).

Titles such as dean, provost, and proctor, created in medieval universities, lacked power

and influence because in the early years of United States history, very few individuals

made education a full-time career. Governing boards often exercised full authority in the

small colleges that dominated American higher education well into the late nineteenth

century (Goodchild & Wechsler, 1997; Green & McDade, 1991; Moore & Burrows,

2001). By the early twentieth century, Levine (1986) points out, the urban university

became a key center of higher education. Consequently, the "old practitioner-teachers"

were replaced with academicians holding the Ph.D. degree, academic departments were

created, and faculties were organized by rank (Brubacher & Rudy, 1958, p. 354). As a

result, power and authority were eventually distributed to faculty members serving in

administrative roles. The ability of these academic administrators to fulfill the critical

leadership roles was understood to have a huge impact on the success of an institution

(Finkelstein, 1997: Green & McDade, 1991; Moore & Burrows, 2001).

From the late 1960s and early 1970s, the reality of shared governance became

increasingly complex. As faculty gained greater voice and a key role in the academic

power structure, the decision-making process spread among trustees, president, and

faculty. Corson (1960) indentified it as "a unique dualism in organizational structure"

(cited in Birnbaum, 1988, p. 9). The governance structure became further complicated

with the inclusion of external stakeholders such as accrediting institutions, funding

organizations, higher education associations, governors, executive and legislative

branches of state government, the U.S. Department of Education, related congressional

committees, state departments and boards of education (Cohen & Brawer, 1996;

Balderston, 1995). But even with significant social, political, and legal changes in the

academic environment, trustees and Presidents continue to exert significant authority

(Cohen, 1998). Despite the changes, the importance of the governing board remained

intact. The AAUP 2006 Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities stipulates

that the governing board of any college or university within the United States is usually

the final authority for the decision-making process within the institution (pp. 135-140).

Despite the relative clarity regarding the role of the governing board, there is little

agreement about how to structure governance in various colleges and universities.

Academic governance is defined differently by various members of the academic

community, usually resulting in slight to considerable scholarly agreement over precisely

what constitutes the actual norms and structures governing the academy. Although

modified over time, because of academic institutions' unique characteristics, no general

agreement exists concerning the appropriateness of any one single academic governance

model (Birnbaum, 1988).

The vast literature on governance assumes that governance refers to the process of

decision making; relationships between the various members of the college or university

community; or pursuit of the basic academic mission (Kezar & Eckel, 2004). For

example, Corson (1960) defines governance as a decision-making process for making

rules and regulations which govern the conduct of and relationship between the various

members of the college or university community (pp. 12-13). Millett (1980), on the other hand, defines governance that involves decisions making—policies, programs, resources, enrollment, budget allocation and evaluation— in the pursuit of the institutional mission. In Birnbaum's opinion (1988), there is no clear or precise definition for college governance. Colleges and universities in many ways differ from each other but the concept that set them apart from other organizations is their governance structure. At the broadest level, governance could be referred as "the structures and processes through which institutional participants interact with and influence each other and communicate with the larger environment" (Birnbaum, 1988, p. 4).

The early scholarship on governance, focused mainly on structural theory, often referred to this as a professional bureaucracy. Some of the most important aspects in understanding governance, according to scholars of structural theories, include organizational structures such as lines of authority, roles, procedures, and bodies responsible for decision making. Many studies conducted in the 1960s and 1970s defined decision-making bodies as state lay boards, presidents, departments, colleges, programs, and the bureaucratic features that include "chain of command," "role differentiation" and "systematizing of processes," resulting from size and complexity. The underlying assumption being that structure form of governance is better manageable and improves governance effectiveness (Kezar & Eckel, 2004, pp. 375-76). These structural perspectives, in one form or another, have continued to influence governance process for the past 40 years. Clark Kerr was one of the first individuals in the 1960s to examine governance from structural perspective. Kerr's notion of the "Multiversity" was a structural description of changes that occurred with the increased federal and state

support for higher education, "a mechanism held together by administrative rules and powered by money" (1963, p.20).

In 1970s, various governance studies explored the impact of increasingly larger campuses, decentralization, and diffuse authority on campus decision making authority (Clark, 1963). Birnbaum (1988) saw this situation as increased specialization of faculty, particularly in large, complex institutions where schools and colleges became more independent, administering their own financial affairs and enrollments. Cohen and March's (1986) study on presidential leadership and governance argued that the complexity and decentralization of campuses weakened presidential leadership and evolved "organized anarchies", encouraging a "garbage-can decision-making process" (cited by Kezar &Eckel, 2004, p.378) where apparently simple decisions became incredibly complex and eventually discarded. Garbage-can decision-making process, in fact, focused on structural aspects of the environment, such as human condition, interpersonal dynamics, people and culture, the factors that had a major affect on collegial governance processes and the related issues of participation, efficiency and responsiveness. Cohen and March's study also identified new dimensions of communication, information channels, and many other aspect of governance (Birnbaum & Eckel, 2005; Kezar & Eckel, 2004).

Another important issue about leadership that continues to receive conflicting reviews is leadership's impact on the effectiveness and efficiency within the governance process.  Birnbaum (1988), in his seminal study, *How Colleges Work: The Cybernetics of Academic Organization and Leadership*, *an inquiry into college and university organization,* asserts that senior leadership though it may be important in some situations,

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plays a lesser role within the governance process. In reality, he asserts that dual systems of authority that accommodate the differing perspectives of faculty and administrators are key to effective governance in that they retains both faculty educational values and administrator responsiveness. He notes that campus governance systems may not be efficient but are highly effective, in fact, increasing efficiency could even jeopardize its effectiveness. He argued that inefficiency and effectiveness, the two opposing notions, when applied to campus governance, allow for better decisions to emerge (Birnbaum, 1988).

Schuster et al.'s (1994) empirical study, in contrast, confirmed the significant role leadership plays in shaping governance, particularly in terms of its effectiveness and efficiency, and in its positive institutional outcomes (Kezar & Eckel, 2004). Benjamin and Carroll (1998) of the RAND Corporation, on the other hand, saw campus governance as totally ineffective and inefficient because of its structure. Their recommendations, reflecting public and political criticism for campuses' tardiness in responding to external changes, suggested restructuring of campus governance by clarifying priorities and developing university-wide evaluation criteria for decision making (Kezar & Eckel, 2004). In earlier studies, Mortimer and McConnell (1979) pointed out that shared governance was not suitable for all environments—governance structures needed to take the size and culture of the particular campuses into the consideration.

In the early 1970s, the first major study that introduced the human side of governance was *Power and Conflict in the University* (1971) by Baldridge. In his view, people throughout the organization are central to the process. The major concepts underpinning decision-making processes emerge from an individual institutions' values,

conflict, interpersonal communication, and influence, embedded in the institutions'

cultural and political climate. Baldridge's ethnographic study of New York University

determined that though bureaucratic and structural models were relevant to understanding

how governance operated, a political model involving informal deal making process

helped to explain how decisions were actually made. It was interpersonal relations, rather

than structure, that shaped the process and determined how decisions were made.

Birnbaum's (1988) core argument, reinforcing the human dimension of

governance, suggests that understanding a governance structure can not be achieved from

one single model. Instead, what works varies from campus to campus. In contrast to

structural theory, this conclusion reinforces cultural theories in which the local context,

history, politics, symbolism, and human dimension of governance override generalized

strategies for improving governance. Birnbaum (1988), along with Eckel (2003) and

Schuster et al. (1994), argues that culture shapes the governance process in profound

ways; it shapes the governance process and provides important direction for future

scholarship. Emphasizing the point that institutions are seen to be hindered or empowered

by their institutional culture, Birnbaum argues that "Organizational culture is a powerful

way of looking at how people in institutions create social reality through their

interactions and interpretations" (1988, p.72).

Another noteworthy aspect of Birnbaum's work is the importance of cybernetics,

a concept that integrates the existing governance model of colleges and universities as

cybernetic organizations, creating "a more complete understanding of the dilemmas and

complexities of how colleges work" (p, xvii). The cybernetic view emphasizes the

linkages between various governance units, highlights the dynamics of organization, and

draws attention to the important role systems play in institutional choices. "Cybernetic systems" Birnbaum asserts, "are notoriously difficult to change; the same forces that make them unlikely to fail also make them difficult to improve" (1988, p. 202).

Although Birnbaum's research opened up several promising new lines of inquiry—political, cultural, environmental, collegial, and symbolic processes— underpinning the importance of human factors to governance, few people followed his lead (Kezar & Eckel, 2004). Studies of structure continued to be predominant. One area of governance that seems to be gaining momentum is an open systems approach, which examines how broader economic, political, and cultural forces are affecting campus decision making (Clark, 1998). One way to approach understanding governance and decision making as a complete, systemic, and shared set of processes that occur in campuses that simultaneously posses multiple models of organization (Birnbaum, 1988) is to recognize that each campus has multiple dimensions—bureaucratic, collegial, political, symbolic, and systemic—that come together in unique combinations to form a variety of multidimensional governance models that vary from campus to campus (Berger, 2000; Berger & Milem, 2000). As such, all campuses possess the same essential complex models, but put them together in varying combinations, each model reflecting the unique characteristics of individual colleges and universities.

Another area of concern is the notion of accountability that seems to have the potential to impact the academic profession quite adversely, particularly the high degree of autonomy which the academic profession has traditionally enjoyed. In Altbach's (2005) opinion, this trend not only intensifies fiscal constraints, but it brings public institutions under greater scrutiny, requiring an increasing amount of data concerning

faculty research productivity, quality of teaching, and the "basic output of academic

institutions" that could "have a considerable impact on the operation of universities and

colleges" (p. 304).  Nevertheless, despite its complexity, higher education, founded on

the principle of shared responsibility and authority between administrators and faculty,

largely remains the same today (Altbach, 1999; Fain, 2005; Finkelstein, 1997; Birnbaum,

1988; Kezar, 2000; Kerr, 1987). In short, as Altbach, Berdahl, and Gumport reflect:

> Thus one is left with Clark's observation that most systems partake
> of varying degrees of the elements of coordination. What may be a
> correct balance for one system many not be appropriate for another
> system; and indeed, what may be correct for one system at one
> stage in its development may not be correct for that same system at
> another stage. There is no theoretical model for the correct balance
> at a given time, so we are left with making subjective judgments
> based upon common sense and upon both conscious and
> unconscious biases. (2005, p. 10)

## Conclusion

At the present time, higher education finds itself in a period of significant strain.

Over the past four decades, higher education institutions have faced increased complexity

related to governance (Berdahl, 1991; Birnbaum, 1988; Kezar, 2000). The significant

changes in the university environment and challenges such as pressure for accountability

and competition, weak mechanisms for faculty participation, financial cutbacks,

enrollment uncertainties, and confusion about academic goals have made governance

even more problematic (Altbach, 2005; Kezar & Eckel, 2004). At the campus level,

Zusman (2005) argues that, for the past two decades, there have been movements toward

more "centralization and more decentralization of authority" (p. 146). College and

university presidents and other top administrators have gained more authority to deal with

budget and accountability. This "responsibility-centered budgeting" is creating certain

pressures, raising questions as to whether university-wide missions and values (for example, commitment to access) will be maintained and whether departments that typically do not bring in large amounts of external funding will retain their priority.

**The Special Case of Middle East Studies in American Higher Education**

Although the engagement of United States with the Middle East, Islam and other prominent parts of the Muslim world goes back to more than half a century, a better understanding of the Middle East and Islam is much more important today than ever before. The tragic events of the 9/11 attacks as well as the tangled and often painful history of the U.S. involvement with the Middle East over the past six decades demonstrate that American society in general and American higher education in particular cannot remain ignorant about the histories, politics and cultures of this region. Since 9/11, the country has witnessed the violence and devastation caused by the kind of knowledge or lack of knowledge about the Middle East that has prevailed rampantly in the media, state, academia and with those in power (Lockman, 2004; Belgin, 2004; Buck Morse, 2003; Khalidi, 2004; Owen, 2003).

Furthermore, the implication of this knowledge has often allowed political leaders, media sectors and radical groups to exploit the situation, promoting misguided stereotypical misconceptions that have entrenched patterns of hostility and mistrust across the country (Rizvi, 2004; Buck Morse, 2003; Teti, 2007).  The need for American higher education to educate students about the cultural foundations of the Muslim world—to counter the polarized perceptions that have threatened the national stability— and to address the world's imbalances have never been greater (Crossley & Tickly, 2004; Grehen, 2003; Lockman, 2004). This challenge has been particularly intense for public

universities that have the responsibility to prepare students for the global realities of the twenty-first century (Altbach, 2003). There is also strong precedence for promoting academic programs that have worked through colleges and universities to address national priorities (Duderstadt and Womack, 2003).

Based upon this premise, in order to assess the academy's present day stance to Middle East Studies, the discourses that have impacted the development of Middle East Studies since the Cold War have been analyzed in the literature review, highlighting some of the important issues that have shaped the field. Middle East Studies in the U.S. emerged as a field of "area studies: and have been shaped largely by the paradigms of modernization that were linked to a larger Cold War agenda.

A more subtle set of critiques comes from the manner in which Islam has been represented in the West that related to both the concept of the East/West dichotomy and the Arab/Israeli conflict. Within this context, the literature review delved into how and to what extent the political events prompted in the Middle East and Islamic countries impacted the field—and in the way they have continued to affect the academy's perspective toward Middle East Studies. An abiding concern raised in the literature review is the way in which Middle East Studies intersects with policy making and the demand for the use of information by the political establishment. An analysis of the controversy of scholarship raises questions about its position as an area studies and the nature of its political and scholarly agenda that govern its scholarship and, finally, how all these factors were further aggravated by the notions of "imperialism, globalization, and colonialism, revived by the 9/11 attacks and the subsequent U.S. foreign and military policy" (Owen, 2003, p.1).

A critical examination of these discourses as they affected Middle East Studies shows how the narrow traditional view of academia through an imperial mindset over the academic disciplines affect the importance of studying Middle East and Islam, and marginalize it as an irrelevant non-social scientific scholarship. Arguably, the 9/11 attacks could have generated incentives for universities to help foster a greater understanding in this country of the Middle East and the overall Muslim world, influencing the production of knowledge that could have developed an epistemological project to study Muslim societies. Instead, the attacks of September 11 reframed the political and legal paradigms that presented the far-right neo-liberalists an opportunity to launch an assault on scholars and faculty in Middle East/Islamic Studies (Teti, 2007; Lockman, 2004).

Nevertheless, the common memory of the academy continue to be framed by the media and state's interpretations—one that continues to reverberate in the notion of power and the insignificant nature of the region (Khalidi, 2004; Rizvi, 2004). None of these views simply encapsulate the truth and the shifting perspectives of 9/11 and the events that have come to "crystallize the issues and clashes that have existed for years: the tensions between established states and groups without states to represent them and the need to pay central attention to what earlier looked like peripheral concerns" (Calhoun, Price & Timmer, 2002, p.5). As is evident throughout these pages, universities have no unified view of the 9/11 attacks or a meaningful response to the emerging complex implications for educational institutions. It is unfeasible to achieve a deeper understanding of September 11 by ignoring the role of education in providing students an understanding of the religion, cultures, politics and economy of the Islamic world.

Calhoun, Price and Timmer (2002) argue the necessity to understand the challenges posed by September 11 in terms of " a post–Cold War, post 'unipolar' relationship among states" (p. 20) that are far removed from the familiar patterns of relations that existed prior to 9/11 between nations. The need to bring greater dimension of Middle East Studies to American higher education has not been elevated to the status of a national challenge and has remained on the periphery than a deep-seated reality for most colleges and universities.

In conclusion, considering what is at stake with regard to this educational need, the disconnect narrative begs to question this particular discourse of public universities and to examine its implications, both for students and Middle East Studies. Consequently, a critical analysis of the public universities' response to 9/11 seems to be an inevitable outcome to determine the impact of the ideological values in shaping the academy's current posture towards Middle East Studies. It was also important to examine the practices these discourses engendered and how they advanced or constrained this long held necessity to revive, redefine, and reinvigorate Middle East Studies. The study, underpinned largely by a critical theoretical perspective, employs a qualitative in-depth interview strategy to explore and analyze the presence of dominant Western ideological discourses that may have contributed to producing a particular stance on the part of the university's leadership pertaining to the relevance of Middle East Studies in the aftermath of 9/11. Clearly, this is rather a challenging issue at this critical moment for public universities to consider reframing their thinking about non-Western area studies, particularly Middle East Studies, and take initiatives to reinvent undergraduate education that emphasizes the international dimension of study (Altbach, 2003).

Thus, the central goal of this research is to explore how public universities are responding to this complex and important educational challenge. More specifically, the study engages more directly with the actual educational policy and practices of a flagship public university with particular emphasis on its response to developing a comprehensive Middle East Studies program. Thus, considering the serious and far-reaching impact of 9/11, the key question is how the need for understanding Middle East Studies is perceived on the campus and how this perception affects Middle East Studies in providing a well-grounded education in this area of study.

# CHAPTER 3

## STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

The purpose of the study was to determine how and in what ways the Western ideological discourses of centrality of Western knowledge and issues of power that historically led to the marginalization of Middle East Studies on university campuses still exist in the thinking of the academy despite the need posed by 9/11. For that, I turned to a close examination of a major public research university's response to the impact of the 9/11 attacks. Since such issues are heavily influenced by the institutional decision-making process, the study also investigated the academic governance structure of the university. My intent for this study was to build an understanding of the ways the centrality of Western knowledge is embedded in one public university. It is also intended to highlight the complexity of these discourses that at first glance might have appeared to lack clarity and coherence. Thus, I hoped to understand these issues more fully by conducting in-depth interviews with the former and current senior administrators and area studies faculty at the University.

This chapter begins with the theoretical approach that puts into context the nature of the problem and justification for its investigation and the intellectual traditions which influenced the research project. The second section focuses on the main research question and the important sub-questions; section three describes the research design used for the collection of data; and section four discusses the methodology used for data analysis and the efforts to enhance trustworthiness and limitations inherent in the study.

## Theoretical Approach

The major aim of the study was to examine a large state research university's response to the 9/11 attacks in a historical framework, engaging critically a postcolonial approach, which is quite useful in analyzing the continuing legacy of the Western imperialism (Boemer, 2005: Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2000). The research is underpinned by a critical theoretical perspective that is particularly informed by colonial and postcolonial theories with an emphasis on imperialism and power-knowledge relationships (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Both colonial and imperial theories allow for a diverse examination of seemingly acceptable visions of societies that are conditioned by historical realities. According to Said (1993), imperialism in its most general sense means "the practice, the theory and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center, ruling a distant territory" (p. 9). While "colonialism is almost always a consequence of imperialism"—"implanting of settlements on distant territory" (Said, p. 9). As such, the notion of imperialism is used "for the ideological force and 'colonialism' for the practice", which is a specialized and historically specific form of imperial expansion—"a distinctive kind of political ideology" (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2000, p. 46). These theoretical approaches aim to analyze specific political, cultural and economic forces and factors of the past that contribute and continue to shape certain imperative paradigms within a society or an organization (Rossman & Rallis, 2012; Creswell, 2002).

Postcolonial theory as an academic discipline shifts the analytic focus to an examination of colonialism and aftermath and its continuing effects to the present time; such approaches specifically frame the perspective of those who most often are socially

marginalized and oppressed (Creswell, 2002; Rossman & Rallis, 2012; Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2000). The research in particular addresses the imbalance created by Western style of dominance and political practice that shaped scholarly studies of "the non-Western world" following the Second World War. Said (1978) describes postcolonialism as the ways in which the West defines itself in opposition to the East. Thus, from a critical perspective, the theoretical perspective that shapes my inquiry involves issues of power and centrality of the Western knowledge, arguing that this has led to the academy's limited interest about the Muslim world, while protecting and preserving the academy's power and status quo.

Historicizing of the current phenomena gives perspective to an otherwise complex subject of my research—the powerful and the marginalized. The literature review suggests that ideological values and the issues of power have continued to shape the academy's posture in marginalizing Middle East Studies. This perspective, leading to existing social structures and patterns, allowed me to explore the conditions and discourses that seemed to shape and sustain the current posture of the academy and question its validity. Marshall and Rossman (2011) observe that "scholars espousing critical theory challenge the historic assumptions of neutrality in inquiry," view society as essentially "conflictual and oppressive" and argue that it involves "issues of power" (p. 20).

### **<u>Application of Theory and Rationale</u>**

In a broad international context, the study sought to capture the critical institutional approaches toward Middle East Studies in the aftermath of 9/11: the challenges that call for enhancing knowledge and understanding of students about the

social, political and historical foundations of the Muslim world—programs that may have been traditionally excluded or often left out of "elite-focused narratives" (Lockman, 2003, p. 153). In particular, the study investigated Middle East Studies and its institutional history; degrees and content of the programs currently offered; and the initiatives taken in the aftermath of 9/11. Specifically, the study looked into the political contexts and the issues and challenges public research universities had to confront historically in particular following 9/11, in initiating and sustaining such programs

Since such curricular and programmatic issues are influenced by institutional organizational decision-making process, the governance structures of the institution were reviewed carefully to gauge their responsiveness in taking new Middle East Studies initiatives in the aftermath of 9/11. Although a campus governance structure typically includes three levels of decision-making process: institutional, college and departmental, Birnbaum (1988), Eckel (2003) and Schuster et al. (1994) argue that even more than the hierarchical structure, the institutional environment shapes the governance process in profound ways, providing important direction for decision. It is the human dynamics— how people within an institutional organization affect the decision-making process— whether it is in local context, history, belief, values, or motivation (Birnbaum, 1988; Riley & Baldridge, 1977). Although the large research university campus selected for this research may seem similar in many respects to other universities, the unique characteristics of this campus determined its individuality that helped in understanding how decisions were made within this particular institution. Birnbaum argues that understanding the governance structure cannot be achieved from one single model. Instead, what works varies from campus to campus (1988).

<u>**Research Question**</u>

The central question of this research was: *In the context of the serious and far-reaching impact of 9/11, how is the need for understanding the Middle East and Islamic world perceived on selected public university campuses?* In examining this larger question, I pursued the following sub questions:

- How has the 9/11 educational challenge been framed, and what actions and specific practices have been pursued? What actions to initiate and /or expand programs in Middle East Studies are emerging, and what specific practices accompany them?

- What are the issues and challenges universities have faced in order to implement and sustain these initiatives? How is the relevance and appropriateness of Middle East Studies seen on campus*?*

- What are the implications of not offering students a well-grounded education about the people, politics, and cultures of the Islamic world? How is this responsibility seen by state institutions?

- At what levels within the campus organization are the decisions of this nature discussed, framed, and implemented?

<u>**A Qualitative Case Study**</u>

The study, underpinned by a critical theoretical perspective, employed a qualitative in-depth interview strategy to explore and analyze the presence of dominant Western ideological discourses that may have contributed to producing a stance of the university's leadership on the appropriateness of Middle East Studies in the aftermath of 9/11**.** As Merriam (1998) notes, "Case studies are differentiated from other types of

qualitative research in that they are intensive descriptions and analyses of a single unit or bounded system" (p. 19). Thus, the case study methodology allowed me to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and the people involved.

Given the historical, social and political "multilayer complexity" with which this research project is concerned, critical in-depth interview strategy seemed to be most useful in achieving my objectives. Rossman and Rallis (2012 ) argue that critical case studies, "grounded in a critique of existing social structures", assume "theoretically that oppression and domination characterize the setting and seek to uncover how patterns of action perpetuate the status quo" (p. 104). In this context, this particular study, guided by postcolonial theory, has interrogated the continued presence of the Western ideological discourses in the academy that have continued to marginalized Middle East Studies despite the educational need posed by the 9/11attacks. Thus, the importance of theory and its positionality within the literature review is "not only helpful in designing a case study, but it also later becomes the vehicle for generalizing a case study's result" (Yin, 1993, p. xiii). Thus, "[r]eliance on theoretical concepts," Yin asserts, not only "guide the design and data collection for case studies" but also remain as "one of the most important strategies for completing successful case studies" (p. 3). Accordingly, strong theoretical perspectives and their positioning within the literature review provide a lens to guide and articulate the issues that are important to the study.

### Participants/Data Sources

The study aimed to gain a deeper understanding of public universities' senior administrators' and faculty's stance on the relevance and appropriateness of the study of Islamic world in the aftermath of 9/11. The participants for the study included senior

administrators of the institution including chancellor, provost, deans, and area studies faculty. The primary advantage of interviewing this "elite group" was that it allowed me to "capture the deep meaning of experience in the participants' own word" and the participants' worldviews in assessing the campus' need for the expert knowledge of the language and culture of the Islamic World (Marshall & Rossman, 2011**,** p. 93)**.** The selection of the administrators and faculty was based upon their knowledge, experience, and broad understanding of higher education, as well as the position of leadership they hold (or held) within the institution.

The semi-structured thought provoking and broadly focused interviews elaborated the crucial research questions such as participants' own interpretation and understanding of 9/11; implications of the attacks for their own and other institutions; assessment of the campus climate; and whether participants' ideas and understanding of the situation carried any weight vis-à-vis institutional governance, institutional vision and commitment, with follow up questions as needed (see Appendices A & B).  Each interview was scheduled at the time and location of the participants' convenience and choice. Ten of the interviews took place in the interviewee's office, and four in the researcher's office, at the request of the participants. All interviews were audio-taped, with the consent of the participant, and then transcribed by the researcher.

Although the "elite group" participation was highly beneficial to my inquiry, it was a herculean task to have them agree to talk about a controversial subject such as Middle East Studies. Even more challenging was their availability for an in-depth interview. Consequently, invitations requesting their participation in a 60-90 minute, in-depth, semi-structured interview were sent out to a pool of 18 potential participants: 10

administrators and 8 faculty members. Fourteen individuals including 9 administrators and 5 faculty agreed and did participate in individual interviews. One of the top administrators declined the request, noting his unfamiliarity with the subject. Two faculty members did not respond, and 1 declined for being on sabbatical.  Given the recent turnover in the top administrations, 4 key participants from a previous 2008 pilot study were contacted for permission to utilize their interviews for this study, to which they all agreed.  Their vintage knowledge, thoughts, and personal reflections on the subject enriched the quality of data significantly.

Subsequently, the data were collected through 18 in–depth interviews with senior administrators and faculty members. Of the 18 interviewees, 5 were women and 13 were men. Fifteen identified as White, 2 of Middle East origin and 1 Black. In presenting these data, I focus on how men and women with complex identities tap into discourses associated with the power structure in the university context.

### Issues of Confidentiality

The importance of ethical considerations is addressed by most scholars who discuss qualitative research design (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Merriam, 1998; Cresswell, 2003). The issue of confidentiality, however, was of a particular concern in this study as the participants' position and the institution were highly visible. In this regard, written permission was received from the participants. An Informed consent (Appendix A) letter assured the participants the strict confidentiality and anonymity of the information gathered during the interviews with the further assurance that it would only be used for the purposes of this research. As the research progressed, the uniqueness of its setting suggested dilemmas that required thoughtful measures to protect the

participants' privacy. This challenge required not only protecting the participants' identities, names, titles and workplace but also the information they shared with the researcher (Rossman & Rallis, 1012).

In this particular case, since the research involved interviewing the "elite group," it was highly plausible to discern the participants' identities. Punch (1994) suggests, "Many institutions and public figures are almost impossible to disguise…The cloak of anonymity for characters may not work with insiders who can easily locate the individuals concerned or, what is even worse, claim that they can recognize them when they are, in fact, wrong" (p.92). Thus, safeguarding the identities and content of the interviews created an ethical dilemma in deciding how much to reveal, how much to hold without distorting the purpose of the research (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, pp.72-73).

Although, Rossman and Rallis (2012) note "there are no easy solutions to ethical dilemmas" (p.77), the study has taken additional measures to mask the participants' identities. The participants' names, titles, departmental affiliations including the background information had been covered for privacy and was internationally kept vague and indistinguishable. An overview of the participants is attached (see Appendix C).

**Data Sources and Collection**

Supplementing these interviews were data collected from other sources: governance documents, archival records, and participant observation that enhanced the data credibility considerably and made facilitated to reach a holistic understanding of the research objective (Yin, 2003). Patton (1990) and Yin (2003) note that the use of multiple data sources enhances data credibility and helps to reach a well-rounded understanding of the subject being studied. In Johnson's view (1997), engaging multiple methods, such as,

observation, interviews and recordings, create triangulation of data that leads to more valid and reliable construction of realities. Triangulation generated from different data sources "build a coherent justification for themes" (Creswell, 2003, p. 196). Thus, the in-depth interviewing supplemented by other data resources provided me with an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the topic that allowed me to collect robust and detailed data about how the top administrators and key faculty view the institutions and institutional policies in this particular context (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). The selected documents from a cross-section of sources coupled with the participants' analysis of the discourses and practices about Middle East Studies were central to the understanding of the university's stance to 9/11.

The data collection was carried out in two phases. The first phase of the study consisted of a 15-year (from 1996 to 2011) survey of the documents that assessed the strength and vigor of the Middle East Studies program offered at the university. Since the central aim was to identify and critically examine Middle East Studies as well as evaluate its discourse within the larger context of the university, I selected and used the following documents/texts for my research:

*University Archival Records*: These were the official university documents stored in the library. These documents primarily provided me a glimpse of the historical aspects of the Middle East and Judaic studies programs.

*Faculty Senate Records*: these documents were highly significant pertaining to the university governance process and the policy and procedures relating to all academic matters.

*Undergraduate Course Catalogue*: These were very important document for examining the history and pattern of Middle East Studies courses and the course descriptions.

*Course Enrollments Documents*: Provided the crucial information about the Middle East Studies course enrollments for the past 15 years. However, it was very difficult to obtain this information from the institution's Enrollment Office.

*Degree Awarding Information*: Again, extracting this information was another difficult task—it took hours to retrieve it from the institution's Office of the Institutional Research.

*Website Documents*: The information pertaining to the three institutions was obtained from the each institution's website. It largely contained detailed information about these institutions' Judaic and Middle East Studies programs' descriptions; course descriptions; and the faculty profiles.

The Research I University website provided detailed description of the needed academic programs within social sciences and humanities, profile of area studies faculty and the courses they offer. These documents allowed analyzing the Middle East Studies program structure and its positionality within the university; Middle East related courses; degrees offered; number and status of Middle East faculty; and the approaches and initiative taken in the aftermath of 9/11. An examination of the institution's governance structure and decision-making process allowed me to identify the presence of dominant discourses and provided a means for ascertaining the topics of interest and importance as perceived by various groups concerned with the Middle East Studies over this time period. Marshall and Rossman (2011) note, that "the analysis of documents is potentially quite rich in portraying the values and beliefs of participants in the setting" (p.160)**.** The

governance documents in particular provided an in-depth understanding of the university's governance in terms of how decisions are made, who makes the decisions, and how these decisions are implemented.

The second phase of the research was confined to in-depth interviewing and observing the perspectives of present and past senior administrators and faculty in regarding educational opportunities about the Islamic world in the aftermath of 9/11. Given the exploratory nature of the research, the data collected from the interviews were most helpful in determining the participant's perspectives and subjective views on this topic. Their insight, knowledge and imagination contributed immensely to a robustly rich detailed data that was developed "through the dialogue of long, in-depth interviews and participants 'co-construct' meaning" (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 176)**.**

### The Coding Process and Analysis

Merriam (1998) and Marshall and Rossman (2011) contend that data collection and data analysis is often a simultaneous process in a qualitative research. The collection and analysis of the data goes "hand-in-hand as theories and themes emerge during the study" (Erlandson et al, 1993, p. 109). Given this perspective, the process of analyzing and interpreting of the data was initiated from the very beginning of the inquiry and ran through the entire course of the study. First of all, I concentrated on acquiring a deep familiarity and an in-depth understanding of the data, reviewing them repeatedly to develop and refine insights. This led me to identify key themes and helped draw inferences from the data (Perakyla, 2005). The conceptual framework—based largely on the literature review and research questions, and the perspective of the participants— helped in narrowing down the broader focus of the study into categories of interest,

noting in particular how the two themes, power and knowledge, are distributed in an educational setting, their downward flow, neutrality, and, finally, how they impacted the development of Middle East Studies at a public institution (Merriam, 1998).

A deeper analysis of the data led to the emergence of patterns and themes within the various categories, observing specifically for themes and patterns that elaborated post colonial theoretical perspective in influencing the discourse of area studies (Yin, 2003). This analytic process consequently helped to identify a framework for the current practices of public research universities. The study then examined if these practices, despite the catastrophic attacks of 9/11, have continued to reflect postcolonial theoretical approaches that perpetuate a culture of indifference toward Middle East Studies. My interpretation and understanding was guided by the two approaches noted by Rossman and Rallis (2012): "discourse analysis and semiotics" that allow building a discourse of understanding by examining "cues and clues to construct meaning in the immediate moment" (p. 295). Semiotics represented a broad interpretive framework, generated by body language, attitude, and emotions or even how the participants were dressed. Discourse analysis, on the other hand, basically helped me analyzed the "recorded talk"—"how social issues such as power, gender relations, or racism were expressed in talk"—and the thematic frequency of such occurrence (p. 295).

The emergent themes based on my interpretations rested on values of *inductive logic,* which involved moving from a set of specific facts to a general conclusion— filtered through my own personal perceptions and my specific sociopolitical and historical stance (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 10). The data analysis thus involved interpreting the data, comparing the findings with past literature and theory, and

validating the accuracy of findings. Triangulation of data from multiple sources then was converged in the analysis process, which added strength to the findings and promoted a greater understanding of the research objective (Yin, 2003; Creswell, 2003; Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

## Ethical Issues

The ethical concerns largely surround general approaches to the safety and confidentiality of the participants in all phases of my research: i.e., in presenting the rationale of my study; negotiating the use of a tape recorder; conducting and transcribing interviews; and noting the observations. Interviewing the *elite* ( i.e., a small number of universities' top administrators in particular), required consistent monitoring to avoid situations that might have inadvertently led to harm for the participants. Punch (1994) argues that "serious academics [need to] be wary of spoiling the field, of closing doors to research, and of damaging the reputation of their profession—both as a matter of principle and out of self-interest" (p. 94).

Marshall and Rossman (2006) contend that "Reflection of one's identity and one's sense of voice and perspective are key to the researcher's choice of questions and researcher role" (p. 58). To that end, I was fully aware of my biases, assumptions, and interpretations. In fact, I had felt that, given the nature of the subject of my research, my theoretical assumptions and my identity as a Muslim might have changed the dynamics somewhat as I may be seen to be influenced by my particular perspective and interests. Nevertheless, this factor did not seem to get in my way in conducting the interviews. Being aware of this phenomenon (subjectivity), in fact, gave me opportunity to reframe my research questions within which participants could express their own understanding

in their own terms. Citing Needleman, Heshusius points out that "the management of subjectivity" could be a matter of concern. "In resisting the undue influence of values and emotions," she argues, "one can eventually cut oneself off from the real 'feeling/knowing'" which is a sensitivity toward the other that "is more necessary than perhaps anything else for relating to world" (Heshusius, 1994, p. 18). The interpretive strengths of the inquiry were augmented further by "triangulation, peer debriefing" and critical review of research analysis by friends and colleagues (Marshall & Rossman, 2006**,** p. 203-04).

## <u>Researcher's Positionality</u>

I have worked at a large research university for almost twenty years, during which time I have worked closely and interact extensively with senior administration, faculty, and major councils and committees of the Faculty Senate. The nature of my work— formulating academic policies, monitoring academic programs progress, coordinating institutional studies, etc.—has allowed me to develop an in-depth understanding of an institution of higher education with all its complexities and ambiguities. These experiences, along with my knowledge of the research subject, have formed the basis for this study. My objective is to consciously acknowledge these experiences and let them guide the study in its entirety, from the choice of topic, to articulating the conceptual framework, to selecting methodologies, and to interpreting data. My perceptions are shaped both by my reflexivity and by the nature of the interaction with the research participants; both influenced my research in important and interesting ways.

**<u>Limitations</u>**

By focusing on one public university's response to 9/11, the purpose of the study was to explore whether the centrality of Western knowledge and power has influenced the academy's stance toward non-Western area studies, specifically Middle East Studies. While these analyses have significant strengths, they may also have analytical weakness, subject to multiple interpretations (Marshall & Rossman, 2011)**.** The intent of this research is not to generate a policy solution for public universities, but to bring to the surface the preconceived notions, biases, and foregone conclusions imbedded in the consciousness of the academy that seem to stand in the way of the advancement of non-Western and ethnic studies. A sophisticated study on this topic could further establish its importance to the institutions of higher learning.

**<u>The Research Site</u>**

The case study was conducted on a large public research university's flagship campus. For the purposes of this study, the university is identified as the Research I University. The site offered relatively easy access and a suitable educational environment that in many ways were uniquely qualified for my inquiry. A broad array of academic and research programs, a large number of faculty, and a library system with a sophisticated collection that reflected the likelihood of strong international presence and perhaps a better grasp of the 9/11 attacks. The comfortable environment of the institution and my access to the participants ensured the strong possibility for rich and meaningful interviews with the university's top administration and faculty. The frequent changes at the University particularly in the top administrations, however, represented challenges to understanding a full history. The current chancellor will be leaving soon. The new

provost was brought in by the out-going chancellor about two years ago. Other senior-level changes included a new vice provost for international affairs. Comparatively, the changes in the Middle East faculty have been minor.

The university offers approximately 90 bachelor's degrees programs, 70 masters, and 50 doctorate programs. There are about 26,000 students, made up of nearly 20,000 undergraduates and 6,000 graduates. A small number of Middle East Studies courses are offered by a few area studies faculty. The university offers an undergraduate interdisciplinary Middle East Studies program that includes courses related to the Middle East offered through various departments. The library system is large with more than 8 million items. Within that, a small Middle East collection about 110,000 includes Middle East to Asia, Israel, Semitic languages, Islam, and all the Near Eastern language books.

## In Conclusion—The Role of In-depth Interviews

The chapter explored the steps that went into developing the design and methodology for the research. The purpose of the study was to determine how and in what ways the Western ideological discourses of the centrality of Western knowledge and issues of power that historically led to the marginalization of Middle East Studies on university campuses still exist in the thinking of the academy despite the need posed by 9/11. The study, underpinned by a critical theoretical perspective, employed a qualitative in-depth interview strategy to explore and analyze the response of a major research public university to the 9/11 attacks. A deeper understanding of this stance was gained by tapping into the insights and perspectives and responses to 9/11 of university's senior leadership and area studies faculty.

The data collection in this research was carried out in two phases. The first phase of the study, consisting of a 15-year survey, from 1996 to 2011, assessed the strength and vigor of the Islamic/Middle East Studies programs offered at the university. The second phase, confined to in-depth interviews, analyzed the senior administrators' and Middle East Studies faculty's response to 9/11, capturing the institutional stance on the relevance of Middle East Studies, particularly in the context of the serious impact of 9/11.

The data for the second phase were collected through 18 in–depth interviews with senior administrators and area studies and discipline faculty. Before the interviews, I had determined what information I was looking for, which was then incorporated into the overall research framework. Also, prior to the interviews, the participants were informed about the nature and intent of my research. A protocol (Appendix A) was prepared in advance; detailed questions were formulated, and participants were consulted in advance to ensure that all issues were covered. The protocol questions were divided into four major categories: *response to 9/11*; *assessment of the Middle East Studies Program*; *Governance Challenges: Who Decides?*; and *personal reflections* of the participants about the impact of postcolonial studies, centrality of Western knowledge, Arab/Israeli conflict, Arab Spring uprisings, and several other related aspects that could have had an impact on Middle East Studies. Thus, the data gathered from the interviews were clearly related to specific questions that the research sought to answer. The conceptual framework—based largely on the literature review and research questions, and the perspective of the participants—helped in narrowing down the broader focus of the study into categories of interest. The most frequently occurring themes through several rounds of coding confirmed that the current institutional practices illustrated a disconnect

between 9/11 and its educational implications. This disconnect, in turn, drew upon discourses that reinforced the notion of marginality of Middle East Studies. Though these discourses in part solidified institutionalized colonial approaches embedded in the spoken word and written text, they also drew attention to other implicit approaches, one in particular—the peculiar setting of Middle East Studies with —that seemed to intensify the marginalization of Middle East Studies. It is out of these complex and possibly contentious contexts that Middle East Studies discourses are emerging. The compelling nature of the marginalization of Middle East Studies, evident in the preceding chapters, seems to continue in shaping the academy's current posture, highlighting the centrality of Western knowledge and power discourses in its current policies and practices despite the needs posed by 9/11.

In reviewing through the data, I focused on the following issues that seemed to be most relevant to the central question: "How have the 9/11 educational challenges been framed, and what actions and specific practices have been pursued to expand programs in Middle East Studies?; What were the issues and challenges to implement and sustain these initiatives?; How has Middle East Studies been seen in the larger context of the university?;  What were the implications for not offering students a well grounded education in the knowledge and understanding of the Middle East and Islam?; At what levels are decisions of this nature discussed, framed, and implemented on campus?" Based on these questions and the analysis of the data, I identified three discourses as 1. *Middle East Studies: leadership/ collaboration/ coordination; 2. Governance Challenges: Who Decides?;* and *3. Middle East Studies: Misunderstood and Misconstrued.*

The next several chapters explore the details of these discourses—how they are constituted; the context within which they emerge; their disciplinary power and the culture they create; the stance to which they give rise, move the analysis forward to provide reflections needed to understand more fully the participants' individual perceptions about 9/11 and its implications for the university. Though the discourses are not mutually exclusive, *Middle East Studies: leadership/collaboration/coordination* primarily refers to "The 9/11 Factor: How Was It Viewed?" exploring the administrators' and faculty's awareness in understanding the issues related to 9/11, and how this awareness and knowledge factors into enhancing Middle East Studies courses. "*Governance Challenges: Who Decides?"* refers to the governance and management policy approach that start to characterize the institutional academic governance process, reflects the perceptions of the faculty, middle administration and senior administration concerning faculty hiring processes and how it influences the Middle East Studies discourse. Finally, "*Middle East Studies: Misunderstood and Misconstrued"* refers to three micro discourses*: Middle East Studies: A Peculiar Situation,* which unravels the unusual nature of Middle East Studies positionality; *The Question of Marginality*, which characterizes indigenous Middle East scholars' positions in the university culture; *Middle East: Relevance of the Field*, which portrays the senior administration and area studies faculty's perspectives on the relevance of Middle East Studies; *Personal Reflections*, which illustrates the participants' views on the Arab-Israeli conflict; the Arab Spring uprisings; and centrality of Western knowledge—the factors that may have had serious impact on Middle East Studies. The section also includes a brief discussion of Islam's continued impact on global and domestic realities and the role and responsibility of state

universities in providing students with the knowledge and understanding of the Islamic World.

These macro discourses, accompanied by a range of micro discourses, seem to exist to some extent in the discourses and practices of the university with regard to Islam and the Middle East. In this context, the next chapter describes the strength and vigor of the Islamic/Middle East Studies programs offered at the university and sets up one of the major first steps in understanding the university's discourse.

In conclusion, the in-depth interview strategy allowed me to have a format and a process to determine the spectrum of insights and perspectives that existed about the Middle East Studies Program at the university. The in-depth interviews, while focused, afforded me, as well as the participants, the flexibility and latitude to explore this issue within the framework of a boundary and context of the issue:   i.e., marginalization of Middle East Studies that helped in evaluating potential solutions. In a few instances, however, the participants were unable to relate to the topic, and I had to use a general question approach to carry on the conversation. There was a genuine give and take, mutual sharing of ideas and understanding. The interviews gave me a clear understanding of the participants' worldviews and their awareness and perceptions about the topic. In many ways, the thoughts and comments that were put forward were similar but, in several instances, they brought unique and exceptional views and perspectives.

# CHAPTER 4

## FRAMING THE MIDDLE EAST STUDIES PROGRAM CHALLENGES

How is the university's stance to 9/11 being framed, and how does it shape the Middle East Studies discourses?

### **Introduction**

Among the many challenges posed by the 9/11 attacks for the education system worldwide, the most striking one has been the United States' ignorance of Islam and the Middle East (Lockman, 2004; Rizvi, 2004). Within the international context, the 9/11 attacks have underpinned the epistemological shift that underlines the necessity to study the complex and conflict-ridden histories of the Islamic World in a new analytical framework of interdependence. This situation called for the most compelling need for educators to understand the complexities of the field that has emerged since September 11, and has transformed the context in which studies about Islam and the Middle East have been perceived in the U.S. institutions of higher education (Buck-Morss cited in Rizvi, 2004, p. 169). In that regard, public universities providing broad access to higher education were seen to be uniquely positioned to bring a more comprehensive dimension of this knowledge to American higher education to help foster a greater understanding in this country of the Middle East and Muslim world (Khalidi, 2004; Buck-Morse, 2003; Rizvi, 2004).

The uncertainty and ambiguity concerning Middle East Studies that continues to prevail in the academy requires going beyond the university's posture to 9/11 and examine the discussions and arguments advanced to justify such discourse. One important strategy for doing this is to ask a series of probing questions, and use them as guides in analyzing the framing of this discourse. In this regard, what are the reasoning

and motivations that seem to foster the university's apparent lack of interest in the Middle East and the Muslim world? What are the motives that drive an institutional stance that shapes the structure of its leadership in marginalizing the field, especially when a better understanding of Islam and the Middle East seemed to be more important than ever? These questions serve as general guides for examining the framing of Middle East Studies discourse at the university.

In this context, this chapter looks at the Middle East Studies Program at a large public university to analyze how the university's stance to 9/11 framed and shaped the Middle East Studies discourses. Focusing on the program's current stature, the chapter examines the Middle East Studies program's development throughout the past fifteen years. Part I of the chapter introduces the Middle East Studies program at the university and offers a detailed analysis of the program's institutional history, course offerings, enrollments, and the degree awarding pattern for the past fifteen years and highlights the impact of 9/11 on its general profile. Part II, analyzing the unique positionality of the program vis-à-vis Judaic Studies, compares this particular situation with the key features of Middle East and Judaic Studies programs at two other flagship land grant public research institutions.

## Middle East Studies: Research I University

The Middle East Studies Program at the Research I University (RIU) is located within the Department of Judaic Studies and offers a major and a minor in Middle East Studies. The program is comprised of one full time faculty member who also coordinates the program. In the 1970s, according to archival documents, the Middle East Studies program at the university had the flexibility to offer about ten Middle East related courses

in the areas of art history, civilization, history, and government and politics as well as in Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, Turkish, Armenian, and Yiddish languages. With some eleven faculty members, the Middle East Studies seemed to be a thriving program, offering balanced courses in both Judaic and Middle East Studies. Around mid 1970s, a Judaic interdisciplinary program was merged with the Middle East Studies. Over the years, while Judaic Studies flourished and moved from program *status* to that of a department level, Middle East Studies gradually reduced to its current position, a program with one faculty and the course offering limited to Arabic language courses.

Even though a 15-year survey of the program enrollments indicates a steady increase in the Arabic language courses, Middle East Studies has continued to experience challenges in expanding the program. Although irrelevance of the program seemed to be a major obstacle in the growth of the program, a deeper and more serious examination pointed to another major impediment: its positionality within Judaic Studies. This particular positioning of the program seemed to have overwhelmed its progress as an academic unit in the university for the past several decades. This particular situation will be discussed to some extent in this chapter and in greater detail in the subsequent chapters. The following section focuses on the said survey of the Middle East Studies program and explores the nature of Middle East courses, enrollments, and degree awarding pattern.

**Pattern of Course Offerings, Enrollments, and Degree Awards**

From the onset, I would like to note that it was quite challenging to extract the needed information from the designated course numbers. On several occasions, the course numbers listed by Middle East Studies Program did not reflect the actual number

of students because of the cross listing of these courses in various other disciplines. Consequently, to rectify this situation, in some cases, a cross-listing check was made by contacting the individual faculty to verify the enrollments in certain courses. The Middle East courses at the university, by and large, are offered by a small number of faculty; about five in humanities and two in social sciences. The majority of courses are offered by the faculty in humanities. A review of the courses offered in the past fifteen years—from 1996 to 2011—(noted in Appendix C), points to an eclectic collection of courses.

The course pattern seemed to reflect primarily the faculty members' department priorities and research interests. The pattern that emerged from the survey placed the courses into two categories: long-standing, stable courses and short-term courses. The long-standing courses with steady enrollments included Middle East I and II that blend both the traditional and contemporary aspects of the Middle East such as the Ottoman Empire, the impact of European imperialism, Zionism, Islamism and contemporary political, social and economic trends that have shaped the Middle East, as well as the construction of nationalism and national identities and the Arab Spring uprisings. Another set of stable and long-termed courses were the Arabic language courses. The enrollment trends in both of these courses have been sound and steady. As seen in Appendix C, the enrollments in Islamic History I and II have ranged from 80 to 90 students, while the enrollment in elementary and secondary Arabic language courses have increased from an average of 25-30 to 50-60 students—surging even to 66 in the post 9/11 period.

Among the short termed courses, a sequence of history courses in the Civilization of Islam offered in 1998 with a healthy average enrollment of 30 to 40 students was

dropped in 2002 by the department apparently due to a shift in departmental priorities. A few topical courses, such as the Middle East and the West and Islamic National Movements, also failed to attract students and were dropped. The only course, Understanding 9/11, that became quite popular was a course developed in response to 9/11. It was taught for the first time in spring 2002 with 36 students. As the course's popularity increased, it was offered again in spring 2005 (29 students) as well as in fall 2005 (26 students), and spring 2008 (153 students) in a large class format. This course appears to have been the only effort to connect Middle Eastern politics to American foreign policy. The course encouraged students to develop original ideas about how to address policy dilemmas, particularly pertaining to Middle Eastern countries in the aftermath of 9/11. The course was recognized for its uniqueness in responding to the difficult post-9/11 climate with fairness and educational clarity, and the faculty member who organized the course was honored with a national award. Unfortunately, last offered in 2008, it is not likely to be offered again. In many ways, the discontinuation of such a significantly effective Middle East course, without any apparent reason, may be an indication of how departmental priorities in humanities and social sciences supersede the need and interest of Middle East Studies.

The enrollments in the ME 100 and 101, a cross listing of Middle East I and II courses for Middle East majors, indicated the approximate number of Middle East Studies majors that ranged from 4 to 11 students—an understandably low number but logical, given the limited resources supporting the program. The number of degree awards (see Table 1 below), particularly following 9/11, indicated a steady increase: six

awards in 2004, five in 2008, seven in 2010, and six in 2011—reflecting students'

tenacity and determination, despite the incoherent nature of the program.

**Table 1**
**Degree Awards: Middle East Studies (1996/1997 – 2010/2011)**

| 96 97 | 97 98 | 98 99 | 99 00 | 00 01 | 01 02 | 02 03 | 03 04 | 04 05 | 05 06 | 06 07 | 07 08 | 08 09 | 09 10 | 10 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | ? | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 6 |

It is evident that Middle East courses that adequately mixed traditional and

modern innovative topics such as the Middle East I and II and the established Arabic

language courses, compared to short termed topical courses, are much more rewarding not

only in terms of offering students a rigorous program of training but also in attracting a

large number of students. According to Meri (1999), major transformations, during the past

many years, including innovative course offerings, increased faculty hiring, and substantial

endowments, have led to the revitalization of Middle East Studies programs in a number of

public and private institutions in the U. S. The most successful programs have led the way

in offering interdisciplinary seminars and team-taught courses which have brought both

traditional and modern scholarship together to be an integral part of both undergraduate and

graduate studies. Such an active promotion of the Middle East Studies Program at the

university could have been possible if Middle East Studies had a more central role in the

humanities decision making process, which the program at RIU did not seem to have

achieved under its existing structure.

Despite the challenges and the dependency on humanities and social sciences, the

Middle East Studies program seemed to have progressed well in Arabic language courses

as indicated by its enrollment pattern and degree awards since 1996. Nevertheless, it has

failed to secure either additional faculty or sufficient resources to build a comprehensive program that could have adequately fulfilled the program's need as a major. Thus, the question that arises is why RIU failed to offer undergraduates and graduates a well grounded program in Middle East Studies. As seen in Appendix C, the enrollments in Islamic History I and II, in the past fifteen years, have ranged from 80 to 90 students, while the enrollment in elementary and secondary Arabic language courses, in the same span of time, have increased from an average of 25-30 to 50-60 students—surging even to 66 in the post 9/11 period. It seems likely that the needs of a program with such decent enrollments would get addressed by the administration. In this case, there seems to be no obvious reasons why the program failed to secure the departmental or senior administration's support. Consequently, the one factor that apparently has had a profound impact on its development seems to be the unusual positionality of the program within the Judaic Studies—a topic that is discussed further in the following section.

## The Positionality of Middle East Studies

The archival documents indicate that since the merging in the 1970s, Judaic Studies flourished tenfold: the number of faculty increased from two to thirteen, and the number of courses went up from six to sixty-six. In the meantime, the Middle East Studies program depleted to one faculty, offering only Arabic language courses. Given the span of time, the issues with funding cannot be held responsible for the problems. In this regard, the university certainly had several opportunities to build up the program by hiring additional Middle East faculty. In recent years, according to the university's faculty senate records, several faculty positions were filled within the humanities departments including six faculty positions in just one department. While the positioning of Middle East Studies

may not suggest but seemingly success of Judaic Studies in comparison to Middle East

Studies, in a larger historical and contemporary context, reflect the Arab-Israeli conflict. A

situation motivated by the fear of those who hold dominant views in the field of Middle

East Studies—a political division that became vocal and hostile in the aftermath of 9/11

(Lockman, 2004).

Over the years, rapidly increasing enrollments in Arabic presented administrative

challenges, specifically about advising. For example, since Middle East Studies offered

only Arabic language courses, Middle East majors needed advice in finding related courses

offered through various departments on campus. The most demanding task for the program

administrator, therefore, was to establish meaningful connections with those disciplines

that offer such courses, mainly the faculty in humanities and social sciences. In many

instances, being the only faculty in the program left little room for the administrator to

build a productive relationship with relevant faculty in other departments. This task became

even more difficult given the schism between area studies and disciplines. The

apprehension between area studies and disciplines is not an uncommon occurrence and

generally leads to some tension. Also, the disciplines, in most cases, had privileged access

and authority to speak about Middle East Studies in any which way they choose. The lack

of meaningful interactions thus, left students confused and without a clear roadmap to

pursue their course of study. The following comments gathered during a meeting with an

undergraduate student describe this situation succinctly:

> I seek to broaden my knowledge of international affairs,
> particularly in relation to the Middle East, in order to prepare
> myself for a career in diplomacy. I intend to structure my major on
> five main academic disciplines: political science, economics,
> history, philosophy, and language. A fusion of these disciplines is

critical; [yet] no single academic department provides me with the
necessary skills or comprehensive knowledge needed for success.

Such incidents, on one hand emphasize the need for additional faculty to fulfill

the program's growing needs but on the other hand, end up creating a situation where it

becomes justifiable for the Judaic Studies Department to criticize Middle East Studies for

its incompetence, leading to a negative impact on the program's request for additional

faculty. In this context, the particular position of Middle East Studies vis-à-vis Judaic

Studies seems remarkably curious. From an educational perspective, the university's

approach toward Middle East Studies can be interpreted as the continuing legacy of

colonialism imposing the oppositional discourses of those who have struggled against it.

One can argue that what we are currently witnessing is in fact the emergence of a new

form of western imperialism that purposefully wants to place Middle East Studies within

a marginalized second class category (Tikly, 2004). The results also seem to confirm the

claim in Huntington's thesis: culture does matter, and matters a lot, in that the religious

legacies leave their distinct imprint on contemporary values (Norris & Inglehart, 2002).

Thus, in order to get a better grasp of this particular phenomenon and to attain a

deeper insight about the university's apparent lack of interest in Middle East Studies, I

examined key features of Middle East Studies and Judaic Studies programs at two other

flagship public research institutions, namely Research II University and the Research III

University. The two universities were selected for their demographic and regional

commonalities as well as for their broad array of graduate and research programs (A table

comparing the three universities can be seen in Appendix D). An additional commonality

was that the states the universities were located in have similar patterns of social,

economic, and demographic trends as the Research I University ("Official Reports,"

2001). The three flagship campuses located on the fringes of urban areas seemed to be comparable in their research and academic programs. Of the three, the Research I University (RIU) and the Research II University (RIIU) were more comparable in enrollment, graduate level academic programs, and research, while the Research III University (RIIIU)—though much smaller—seemed versatile in its undergraduate offerings.

The following section presents a comparative analysis of the Middle East and Judaic Studies programs at the three universities, describing each program's academic structure and setting within the institution and the characteristics of courses and degrees offered by both programs.

<u>**A Comparative Look: Middle East Studies**</u>

The Middle East Studies program at RIIU is coordinated by a committee of interdisciplinary faculty that supervises a minor in Middle East Studies and had oversight over courses, research, conferences, and outreach activities related to the Middle East Studies Program. In addition to six Arabic language courses, the program offered fourteen courses covering culture, politics, history, and other aspects of the region, taught by fourteen faculty (Appendix F). The program also offered courses in Persian and Turkish through its Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies.

The Research III University (RIIIU), although did not offer degree programs either in Middle East or Judaic Studies, had an array of courses in Middle East Studies that included four Arabic language courses and six courses in various aspects of history, politics, and culture of the Middle East. This was the only institution among the three that

offered a course on "Economics in Islamic Societies," covering economics in Islam and Islamic banking, which seemed to be an important area for business majors.

My analysis suggests that there are some key differences between the Middle East Studies programs at the three institutions. First, the organizational structure at RIU that places Middle East Studies within Judaic Studies isolates and marginalizes the program in the larger context of the university. Second, the lack of faculty resources allocated to the program means that the one faculty member has to also serve in an administrative capacity which limits his/her ability to build a sound and robust program.

The structure of Middle East Studies at RIIU is comprised of a committee of fourteen interdisciplinary faculty. This structure provided the support from the social science disciplines to the program—the kind of leverage lacking at RIU. The cohesiveness of the social science disciplines is evident in the program's course offerings—striking a balance between contemporary courses such as American Diplomacy, International Relations, Economic History of the Middle East, and traditional courses on history and civilization. In addition, the program offers a wide variety of language courses in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish—a luxury that is unreachable for the program at the Research I University. This situation becomes even more enviable where a small institution like RIIIU that did not offer either a major or a minor in Middle East Studies showed the capability to offer six well-grounded Middle East Studies courses.

Although, in comparison to Research II University seemed to be offering a more cohesive program but in actuality the level of course offerings is not much different from the Research I University. Unlike some other recognized public universities such as the University of Arizona, both the universities lack a sound Middle East Studies program

that could serve well to their huge student population. What obviously lacking at RIU program is the crucial departmental and college support and the program's position within the Judaic Studies Department.

## A Comparative Look: Judaic Studies

This section offers a comparative look at Judaic Studies at RIU and RIIU as the third institution, RIIIU, did not offer a program or courses in Judaic Studies. The Judaic Studies at RIIU, located in the Center for Judaic Studies and Contemporary Jewish Life, offered an undergraduate minor, an undergraduate major, and a master's degree in Judaic Studies. The fifteen courses, taught by five faculty, included four Hebrew language courses and eleven other courses, covering various aspects of the history and literature of the Jews. The university's web site claimed that RIIU was the "one of only a handful of public colleges and universities which offered a M.A. in the named field of Judaic Studies".

The Judaic Studies program at RIU was a program of great magnitude. It offered an undergraduate major and an undergraduate minor with a wide selection of over sixty courses in Jewish history, a full program in Hebrew language and literature, several Yiddish language courses, and a team of twelve full-time faculty members. The difference between the two programs was clear. The Judaic Studies Program at RIU— both in terms of faculty and courses—was much more elaborate than the program at RIIU. Nevertheless, it was also obvious that, within its limited resources, RIIU seemed to have accomplished a good deal, going beyond the undergraduate major to offering a graduate degree program.

In the final analysis, despite the resourcefulness of Judaic Studies, the efforts of

Middle East Studies in achieving academic success within it Arabic language program at

RIU—regardless of its continued difficulties and limited resources—is worth noting. A

comparison of the number of Middle East and Judaic Studies degree awards (see table

below) indicated that Middle East Studies degree awards had remained equally, if not

more, competitive with Judaic Studies degree awards.

**Table 2**

**Degree Awards Comparison: Middle East and Judaic Studies (1996/1997 – 2010/2011)**

|    | 96 97 | 97 98 | 98 99 | 99 00 | 00 01 | 01 02 | 02 03 | 03 04 | 04 05 | 05 06 | 06 07 | 07 08 | 08 09 | 09 10 | 10 11 |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| ME | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | ? | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 6 |
| J | 1 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4 | ? | 5 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 5 |

Thus, the peculiar setting of Middle East Studies within the Judaic Studies

Program raises some questions and concerns: What does this structure suggest?  Is there

the wish to bring the two programs into a more effective relationship with one another?

Or does this structure keep the Middle East Studies program under 'surveillance,' thereby

shaping the knowledge available? In terms of Middle East Studies, the historical context

is essential to understanding the nature of present and past strengths, i.e. what there is to

build on. The historical context, by providing a better understanding of the current

dilemmas and predicament, could shed light on the needs and demands of Middle East

Studies.

#### Conclusion

The university's present day stance towards Middle East Studies must be

understood in the context of the Cold War, which gave rise to questions regarding the

relevance of Middle East Studies in an increasingly globalized world. In the 1950s and

60s, the guiding paradigm of Modernization theory, highlighting the close links between the field and government and corporate interests, affected the development of Middle East Studies. Within this larger context, the political events prompted in the Middle East and Islamic countries, the U.S. protective posture toward Israel, U.S. policy interests, and the post colonial agenda impacted the field further. A more subtle set of critiques related to Middle East Studies comes from the manner in which Islam has been represented in the West. Despite such impediments, Mitchell (2004) argues that "the genealogy of Middle East Studies must be understood in relation to the wider structuring of academic knowledge and to the struggles not of the Cold War but of science – and social science in particular -- as a twentieth-century political project" (p. 76). The question of the future Middle East Studies is, therefore, in his opinion, a question about the future of the social science project rather than simply an issue of how best to conduct regional studies. Therefore, it is a disturbing tendency on part of the social sciences to ignore area studies in general, and Middle East Studies in particular, one issue that seems to threaten Middle East Studies since the end of the Cold War.

Another important issue with Middle East Studies is that it has to function under the particular difficult environment of the hostility to the Middle East in the general culture. Khalidi, noting the severity of the problem, asserts that "even the prospects of peace between the Arab states and Israel will not suffice to erase this hostility, for although the Arab-Israeli conflict probably contributed to enhancing it, this hostility antedates the Arab-Israeli conflict by centuries" (1995, p. 4). The positioning of the two programs though may not be reflective of the controversies that attracted national attention in silencing dissent in the aftermath of 9/11 but nevertheless does raise some

questions about its possibilities. The political attacks on Middle East Studies in the

aftermath of 9/11 created an environment in which Middle East Studies programs and

scholars have had to defend themselves, not only against their disciplinary colleagues, but

also against politically oriented critics like Martin Kramer, an American scholar of the

Middle East.  In 2001, Kramer published a book, *Ivory Towers on Sand: The Failure of*

*Middle Eastern Studies in America.* His work criticizes Middle Eastern Studies in the

United States for what Kramer argues is a systematic left-wing bias backed with poor

scholarship. Kramer takes issue with Middle East scholars on disciplinary grounds for

failing to explain and predict changes in the Middle East and on political grounds for

failing to serve the U.S. policy needs and interests (Lockman, 2004).

Throughout this history, the university could have risen above the general culture

of negativity by strengthening Middle East Studies and putting it on equal footing with

Judaic Studies. It would have been a unique example for an academic institution. By

overcoming this centuries-old enmity, the university could have set forth a culture of

peace and resolution. Altbach (2002) argues that "the strength of higher education in this

country is acclaimed throughout the world…But we ignore the rest of the world at our

own peril" (p. 4). American students need to understand the rest of the world and, in that

regard, universities bear a great deal of responsibility to offer students a well-grounded

education. Within this framework, universities have an obligation to be responsive to the

challenges and needs of a changing world. American universities could build up not only

expertise but good will and mutual understanding between the United States and other

nations (Altbach, 2002). Nevertheless, given the continued marginalized position of

Middle East Studies, the university's dominant discourses appear to support a

postcolonial approach that, despite the catastrophic attacks of 9/11, seem to continue to

perpetuate a culture of indifference towards offering students a well-grounded education

about the people, politics, and cultures of the Islamic world.

The analysis in this chapter, bounded and situated in a very specific context, sheds

light on the program's complexity and provides a deeper understanding of the

participants' views and perception which will be analyzed in the subsequent chapters.

## CHAPTER 5

## MIDDLE EAST STUDIES DISCOURSES: MIDDLE EAST STUDIES: LEADERSHIP/COLLABORATION/COORDINATION

### <u>Introduction</u>

In order to understand the participants' stance towards Middle East Studies, it was crucial to gauge their understanding of the 9/11 attacks, i.e. how these attacks were perceived by the participants in their key institutional roles as well as personally. The most notable change that surfaced after September 11, 2001, apart from its tragic consequences, was the realization, Lockman (2004) and Owen (2005) note, that America, despite its continuing involvement with the Middle East and the Muslim world, lacks a deep understanding of the region. Thus, the most ubiquitous discourse was to call upon America's educational institutions to help foster a greater understating in this country of the Middle East and Muslim world (Khalidi, 2004; Buck-Morse, 2003; Rizvi, 2004). This was not all; there were damaging effects of 9/11 that impacted universities' faculty and students in the aftermath of 9/11 across the country. The U.S.A. Patriot Act hastily passed by the Senate on October 11, 2001, "compromised privacy protections, eroded civil liberties, and chilled dissent" (Doumani, 2006, p. 14).

The 9/11 attacks also created an opportunity for socially conservative and right-wing institutions to intervene on university campuses and enforce their position by discrediting Middle East Studies and its scholars. The Campus Watch web site was one of many right-wing institutions that began to target specific professors, courses, and programs of study that had a good reputation at their institutions and among peers. Another major impact was the creation of a new International Higher Education Advisory Board by the U.S. legislature with the power to "study, monitor, appraise and evaluate"

the teaching and other activities of faculty supported by the government supported

centers (Newhall, 2006, p. 220).

The most damaging effects of 9/11, however, were the attacks on the academic

freedom of Middle East and Islamic scholars. Several such attacks were launched in the

aftermath of 9/11 at universities and colleges across the country, targeting faculty and

scholars connected academically or culturally to Muslim countries or the Middle East.

Even during the Vietnam era, for most American professors, O'Neil (2005) notes "the

relative peace and stability have been a major premise of academic life" (p.108). The

event of September 11 dramatically changed these assumptions. The attacks, O'Neil

argues, "made most inevitable substantial changes in the relationship between

government and the academy and certainly posed the threat of challenges to academic

freedom comparable to those of the McCarthy era" (p. 108).

Against this backdrop, I asked participants how the 9/11attacks were perceived by

both themselves and more broadly by the university. The first section of this chapter

explores the administrators' and Middle East faculty's awareness and understanding of

9/11, focusing on how these attacks were perceived by the institution and by them

personally. Section 2 examining Middle East Studies courses, explores the adequacy of

the currently offered Middle East courses, areas of faculty expertise and how that

expertise related to offering students a well-grounded understanding of the region.

### 9/11 Factor: How Was it Viewed?

This section in general determines the participants' level of familiarity with these

tragic events in particular their knowledge and understanding of the impact of 9/11 on

universities and colleges across the country, an issue explicitly discussed in the *Chronicle*

*of Higher Education*, a publication widely read by American educators. The nature of

responses provided ranged from detailed narration to a few words, indicating the

participants' awareness of 9/11 and their own individual disposition. For example,

Admin2, a senior administrator, newly arrived on campus from a cosmopolitan

institution, described his/her experience of 9/11 in great detail—the intensity of the

moment—the devastating impact it had on the class s/he was about to begin—but could

not:

> [E]verybody kind of came in looking shell-shocked. And I though
> the best thing to do to make the class work was to take care of that
> issue first, and I said to them, "My parents always talked about
> where they were when they heard about Pearl Harbor. In my
> generation, it was 'where were you when you heard John Kennedy
> or Martin Luther King had been killed?' For your generation, it is
> going to be this morning." Because it was one of those cusp points
> in history, people will define this before 9/11 as a punctuation
> mark in the timeline of the U.S.

Describing further, s/he added how s/he watched the very slow healing process—and the

"depth of the wound". Though s/he talked about his/her personal experience, s/he did not

add much regarding the impact on the institution. S/He did not appear to have knowledge

about the assaults on Middle East faculty and programs at universities across the country.

In contrast to this rather emotional response, the remarks of a mid-level social

sciences administrator, a veteran of more than twenty years at the university, came across

short and abrupt. Responding to his/her whereabouts on 9/11, he said, "I was directing

the [Academic] Center." Upon further probing as to how the attacks were perceived by

the university, s/he replied, "I don't know if I can characterize 25-30 thousand people's

reactions—shock, disbelief, horror…" These were the sentiments of an administrator in a

social sciences department that is important to understanding Middle East politics and

culture. The remarks, although noted the tragic impact of 9/11, did not address their effects on the university.

These responses provided the perspectives how 9/11 attacks were perceived on the RIU campus: while the first responder projected an understanding and compassion, the other portrayed an attitude that appeared more detached. The perceptions of 9/11 in general ranged from being totally shocked to being disoriented, except for the remarks made by a senior administrator. S/He offered a balanced interpretation and understanding of the attacks: "I think it was a world changing event. When it happened, I remember that I thought that it was not justified as too strong a work, but the pent up hostility towards the American foreign policy is a little bit understandable."

In general, administrators and faculty could not recall what actions were taken for interpreting and understanding the issues posed by 9/11 except for a very few who noted that they didn't remember exactly other than that there was a campus-wide memorial service. Some of the remarks varied in nature even within the same discipline. For example, the two versions were offered by the current and former administrators in social sciences. The current administrator remembered the university being reasonably caring by "offering counseling to students…but did it make a huge intellectual change in the course of the university…in terms of any kind of sustained reaction? There wasn't any… Absolutely nothing changed." While the previous administrator recalled vividly:

> we responded well to the actual crisis by bringing people together, creating opportunities for grieving discussion and some understanding, and there was an attempt [made in] various ways to try to rally against demonization of Muslims as a group, and there were a bunch of dialogues going on right here in the immediate aftermath. And as a longer term response, *I don't think people have really asked that question*

In the same vein, two faculty members, one in social sciences and one in humanities, recalled the university actions differently. The faculty member in social sciences, Professor2, thought that the administration's expressed interest in trying to organize intellectual response was limited due to the unavailability of resources:

> Overall, the university was clearly trying to react. But there weren't a lot of resources or abilities to coordinate in order to react. As with everything, there was a sense of 'if people have something to say, they should step up to the plate.' So I developed a course, and other people tried to do things, but we didn't have a lot of infrastructure for response. But the university was certainly interested in response

While Professor1 in humanities, on the other hand, thought that there was much more talk about public lectures rather than:

> [C]hanging courses, offering more courses or something like that… The few of U.S. who targeted that problem…we were too few, and we couldn't stop doing everything else we were doing…we couldn't stop teaching other classes, committees and all these other things. So we were just limited in what we could actually accomplish. It would have required someone much higher in the administration to sponsor it, to push it through.

The above quotes suggest that, as quite appropriate, faculty focused on the potential for building and maintaining the Middle East Studies program by developing courses that might increase students' understanding and knowledge about the 9/11 attacks, as well as about the region.

Although the need for understanding and enhancing students' knowledge about the region was recognized, it was clear that, in the absence of an Islamic or Middle East Studies umbrella organization such as a center or an institute the incentive to do much was lacking. The first and foremost responsibility faculty felt was to their own departments—and not to Middle East Studies. It is nevertheless important to note that a

course Professor2 developed in 2003 was the one course that specifically responded to the 9/11 challenges, linking issues of Middle Eastern politics, Islam, and U.S. policy.  In terms of the curriculum, then, this course stands out as an action – albeit modest - taken by the university to raise awareness. Thus in the final analysis, this course was noteworthy because it would remain part of students' learning experiences, while the university-organized seminars, workshops, and meetings were more fleeting. Professor Professor2 received a national award and was recognized for his/her efforts in encouraging students to develop original ideas about how to address policy dilemmas, in particular Middle Eastern countries. This approach, s/he indicated, generated thoughtful discussion in dispelling stereotypes surrounding Muslims and Arabs.

A careful analysis of the spoken comments and the non-spoken expressions paint a picture of general indifference, even where there was some empathy for the tragedy of 9/11. Turning to Middle East Studies and the knowledge of the region that this program held did not appear to be course of action.  While the profound and intense trauma and its long term repercussions were recognized, none of the administrators who participated in this study spoke directly about 9/11's educational implications. This may not be that surprising given some critiques of the American academy regarding the inclusion (or exclusion) of Islam in academic curricula and programs. Travis Kavulla (2007), in his article "Ignorance of Islam," notes that "Despite all the pretense about 'understanding' other cultures, or 'respecting' or 'being sensitive to' them, few universities have taken measures beyond the platitudinous" (p. 2). He asserts, "Islam and the Middle East have a surprisingly low profile in most universities' core curricula. Despite a pretense toward "internationalism," this new pedagogy manifests itself only in small bits" (p. 2).

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In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that most of the remarks with the exception of faculty were of a general nature. The impression I took away from their insights and perceptions was of 'detachment' and 'indifference'. When asked about the possible consequences of 9/11 for the university, a senior administrator in humanities, Admin5, the college in which Middle East Studies resides, responded:

> It was huge in terms of American foreign policy. We're going to be living with it for a long time to come. It's not the first, and certainly given the events of this winter, not the last reminder to Americans that there is a real danger in insularity. I mean there are dangers in ignoring any part of the world. What we lose in our understanding of ourselves and our place in the world by neglecting and not including is part our discourse about who we are in the world…

Such rhetoric put forward some eleven years after the attacks—with few if no attempts to improve the university's Middle East Studies program—is surprising.  On one hand, it may suggest an unwillingness to apply these ideas to the home department; on the other, it may suggest a strong understanding that broad support for Middle East Studies was limited.   All and all, the nature of responses, from detailed narration to a few words, demonstrated the participants' outlook and opinions that in my opinion were based largely on their academic affiliations.

### Middle East Studies Disciplinary View: Middle East Faculty Expertise and Participation

The attacks against American targets in September 2001 galvanized scholars engaged with the study of Islam and the Middle East to respond to a nearly overwhelming demand for information from students who felt they had little grasp on the subject. In the months after 9/11, for example, the University of North Carolina faculty and graduate students, through difficult negotiations, focused on the study of the Middle

East and Muslim civilizations, i.e., a combination of Middle East area studies and a trans-regional emphasis on the theme of Muslim societies and civilizations.

Taking the above thought in stride, this section focuses on mapping out Middle East Studies, providing insight into faculty and administrator perspectives, explaining how they see Middle East Studies in view of 9/11. The section explores the adequacy of the currently offered Middle East related courses, areas of faculty expertise and how that expertise relates to offering students a well grounded understanding of the region. The following section reviews the faculty expertise and the course offering structure within humanities and social sciences. The section is divided into three parts: the first part reviews faculty expertise in humanities, the extent of their contribution, and their perceptions about the program; the second part covers the thoughts, ideas, and perceptions of social science faculty, their area of expertise, and the types of courses they teach to support Middle East Studies; and finally, the third part concentrates on the Middle East Studies program itself, reviewing its strengths, weaknesses, and how it is perceived by the faculty and administration across campus.

Over the past several decades, a handful of scholars at RIU have generated a productive cross-regional approach to Middle East Studies. Although, the program in Middle East Studies offers a major and a minor in Middle East Studies, its course offerings are limited to only Arabic language. A variety of Middle East courses, offered by faculty in humanities and social sciences, comprise the courses required for the major.

**Middle East Studies: A Humanities View**

The largest number of faculty involved in the Middle East Studies program at the university is within humanities and spread over three departments. Two faculty members

in humanities teach courses ranging from Ottoman period and the Arab world to Mamluk

Empire of Egypt and Mongols to Afghanistan and the surrounding areas. The courses

taught by other faculty range from art and architecture of the Islamic world to Middle

East languages, history, and civilization.  Thus, the strength of the course offerings seems

to reside in the courses focusing on Medieval Middle East, Ottoman Empire, and

Mamluks of Egypt.

When asked how scholarly expertise translates into providing students a well-

grounded education about the Islamic world, Professor1 responded:

> We're like lily pads in this big pond. So you can go from the
> Mamluks of Egypt with [one faculty], and you can talk about
> Central Asia with [another]. And [one can] go into Afghanistan,
> Iran, and Turkey a little bit. [With another faculty, one can] also do
> Ottoman period—Turkey, Arab world, Balkans a bit… So
> honestly, if a student came here and said they wanted to study the
> Middle East, wanting to come to [the university], I could not really
> support that in good conscience. If they said, the Modern Arab
> world or medieval, like the Mamluks, I would say we're good
> there**...**See, generally we'd have to say no because you'd have to
> have several people to work with…

The department's priorities did not appear to focus on a full array of courses for

Middle East Studies majors. In Professor1's words, the department course offerings

remained "woefully inadequate". Of note, a position vacated in 1995 by a Middle East

scholar of twentieth-century Islam was not replaced by another Middle East scholar.

However, in 2005, the department hired a Medieval Middle East scholar. Why was a

Middle East Medievalist hired instead of someone with expertise to help students

understand and address the 9/11 attacks? Professor1 explained that it was not the

department's intent to fill the position with a Middle East scholar but it all happened in a

circuitous manner:

> After our [European] medievalist retired, they would not allow
> U.S. to search for another. Our [senior administrator] didn't think
> it was worth covering the medieval world. So we took advantage
> of this opportunity to say "Well, maybe you don't like medieval
> Europe, but how about the medieval ME?" And we sold it on the
> strength of that.

Evidently, this is all about institutional priorities but regardless, this professor insisted,

> the department has continued to develop more classes dealing with
> the Muslim world especially the Central Asia that link the study of
> history and culture to current problems, because it is the
> understanding or awareness of current problems that will draw
> students in, and to help them understand why things are different in
> other places than they are here at home, but it is really an uphill
> [battle]…Here we sit in [this state] in [this region], home of the
> pilgrims, and when it comes to studying history, people think
> [American history]-Paul Revere,…So if there's going to be a
> priority, it is going to be easy for the Dept. to ask for positions that
> fit the region that we're in. And it's going to be really easy for any
> administrator to understand why that matters if you're in the state
> university here. Beyond that, you really have to have people who
> have some sense of the globe and some kind of vision, and we just
> don't have that many people like that.

Assessing Middle East Studies, Professor1 thought it needed a little more structure, a few more dedicated people, and a shift of balance from humanities and social sciences to the Middle East Studies program itself. It is hard with just two full-time people and one half-time person in one humanities department and two social scientists in the entire university to cover the area, especially when there is a single faculty in the Middle East Studies program. Following Professor1's remarks, the comments of humanities administrator, Admin5, about the adequacy of the Middle East program and Middle East faculty came across somewhat vague:  When asked how successful Middle East Studies was in preparing students with sophisticated knowledge and understanding of Islamic world, s /he responded:

> I can't really speak to that; I haven't seen studies of the program. I haven't [seen] AQADs [academic quality assessment] of the program. I understand that the program draws on a wide range of courses throughout [the university and the surrounding colleges]. I'm not sure how effective it is in presenting coherent courses to the students. They offer a fairly rich array of courses, but I'm not sure how coherent a program it is. I certainly don't know how the program has been organized.

This last point suggested some detachment on the part of this administrator from the area studies faculty within humanities and the significant contributions they made to support the program. On the other hand, the humanities department itself embodied a degree of contradiction in terms of their research interests and students' need. The broader interest of the department seemed to focus on the discipline sub-specialties. Yet, they seemed to recognize that students ought to be taught in a way where they didn't necessarily had to immerse themselves in studying the history and civilization of the Middle East but should develop a broad understanding of subjects such as terrorism and human rights—the kinds of initiatives that fit within the larger framework of the university. Thus, concluding the humanities' perspective, the next section moves on to examining the social sciences' approaches and interest in offering courses in the Middle East Studies.

## Middle East: A Social Sciences View

The Middle East Studies area did not appear to have of much interest to the social science disciplines at RIU. At the time of this study, there were only two faculty members in that college that offered courses specifically in the Middle East area. The faculty member in one department was hired as a lawyer who happened to have training in the Islamic law. Eight years after his/her hire, another faculty member joined the political science department; his/her main areas of interest was contentious politics,

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movements of mobilization, and social movements in countries such as Jordan, Yemen, Egypt, and Iran. The absence of a Middle East expert in a discipline that focuses on international relations and the analysis of political systems may seem surprising given that the social science department has not hired a Middle East political scientist despite the United States' deep involvement in the Middle East. The Middle East position that was filled in political science in 2007 was filled on the insistence of a previous social science administrator who seemed to have an interest in building expertise of the Islamic world:

> [I]f I showed you the different hiring plans by substantive areas of three quarters of our departments here, I think you would be pleased to see that actually our departments are in their own departmental spaces wanting to build this [Middle East expertise]. What gets tricky is given the multiple goals that we have in terms of hiring, we're being asked very appropriately so to diversify our faculty and our student body, and we know that that tends to focus on more traditional views as to who counts as diversity and severely underrepresented groups, and….I think we're missing the boat. I think we clearly want to come together to figure out how a center for Islamic Studies could work.

The two Middle East scholars in social sciences, Professors2 and 3 taught upper level courses. Unlike Humanities, the courses offered by these two faculty members were very much in tune with the current politics of the region. While Professor2 taught Middle Eastern law and politics, and globalization studies, Professor3, keeping up with the discipline requirements, taught thematic courses such as political Islam and Middle East Politics As a comparativist, his/her main areas of interest related to contentious politics, movements of mobilization, and social movements in countries like Jordan, Yemen, Egypt, and Iran. Explaining the nature of the courses, s/he pointed out:

> I teach a thematic course like Protest and Dissent. And I do that every Spring. About a third of the material is Middle East. So I

teach broad themes. One of the reasons I do that is because I have expertise in the Middle East, and of course I should bring my knowledge to the classroom. But it helps to de-essentialize the Middle East to something rude and exotic.

Similarly, the course Professor2 developed in 2002—interpreting terror—in direct response to 9/11—had been very popular with students. Professor2 stood out as a faculty member on campus who felt strongly about the need for raising students' awareness of possible misconceptions about the people and politics of the Middle East:

It was designed to get at the stereotypes about Muslims and Arabs and I think by the end of the course people felt very much that they had pushed some of that stuff away. They went out and talked to others…I thought about making this a really large class but I felt it would be lot better if it was more interactive. I think we still had a good effect on creating some amount of thoughtful discussion and dispelling of stereotypes surrounding Muslims and Arabs.

A new course offered in spring 2012 also focused on the implications of 9/11 for the US, Europe, and the Middle East, analyzing topical issues of U.S. and global policy under a common theme. It allowed upper class students to learn and apply theories of public policy formulation and law. In terms of enrollment, Professor3's courses have always been over-subscribed. At the time of the study, s/he was contemplating increasing the Middle East courses from once a year to once every semester. Indicating demand for such courses; s/he said, "We need another Middle East politics person… and they are not giving us…" Professor2 also seemed optimistic about the increasing enrollment in his/her 9/11 interpreting terror course. Given the popularity and students' interest, s/he strongly indicated that "[university] needs another Middle East politics person".

Professor Professor3's remarks about whether the department was interested in hiring a political scientist suggested that the department itself was not clear. At one point, s/he felt resistance but, at another time, s/he said that the department was looking for

"someone who does Ancient Islamic Philosophy, because most theorists are Western-centric, and our theorists are Western-centric, but they know that that's the wrong approach. So they're looking for someone who maybe does Al Farabi or some ancient theorist".

Although the scope of Middle East Studies looked hopeful from the faculty perspective, it was important to explore how Admin8, a mid-level administrator, and Admin7, a senior administrator in social sciences, felt about this matter. In response to the need for Middle East faculty as alluded to by Professor3, Admin8 responded:

> We have someone [already]. Frankly, we have other geographic holes... in 2007 it was a priority. We have no one who teaches Russia, China, India, Japan, Korea…These are also major areas of the world where the U.S. has been involved in diplomacy and military action, and we have no coverage. So we have many needs.

Additionally, s/he thought that having one Middle East scholar was enough to fulfill the need for Middle East Studies:

> [Professor3] is now teaching the course, and s/he just won an … award. So it's hard to find anybody better to take classes with. So the fact that we have someone who teaches as well as s/he does means that students get as much as they can from any one person.

Admin7 expressed the same sentiments but in a more forceful and straightforward way. S/he claimed that when an advertisement is put out, the department chooses the best person regardless of the person's academic concentration. For instance:

> [If] we put out an ad for someone in International Relations, and if they happen to be studying the Middle East, that's fine. My understanding is that we're just hiring the best people in any area. So the fact that we have these scattered people in Middle East Studies is more serendipity than anything else. It just wasn't a willful kind of exercise.

This could be the reason why positions left vacant by Middle East faculty were not

always replaced by faculty with the same expertise. One such position, advertised the

previous year, was hastily filled by a Russian expert. Admin8 explained this situation

further:

> That was a [another department position]. When she was resigning,
> we were in the middle of a search. It wasn't specifically looking
> for a person who did that. Although that would be very
> attractive…[this particular department] is woefully under-
> resourced…They were just looking for the best person…So they
> hired someone whose work involves Russia, but she is not a
> Russian politics person…she is a law and society person…and a
> second person who studies the death penalty.

The statement seems to be clear about the department's priorities and interest in

the Middle East. In terms of Middle East Studies, both Admin7 and Admin8 agreed that

in the absence of an institutional focus, an umbrella organization or a center, initiatives

were being taken in isolation. Although the idea of a Middle East Studies center was a

positive acknowledgment, programs involved with Middle East Studies broadly, such as

humanities or the Middle East Studies program itself, were not mentioned. Such a lack of

interdisciplinary collaboration between area studies and social sciences is a common

occurrence—a controversy that has been going on for decades—was suggested in both

administrator's comments (Bilgin & Mortan, 2002; Rafael, 1994; Szanton, 2003).

In summary, it seems appropriate to conclude this section with Admin7's

comments which in many ways sum up key aspects of the university's culture:

> When do we as a university ever react to specific events very
> much? We have this [an administrative] team now. The first one
> will be about the Gulf. The one after that will probably be social
> networking. That's as close as we seem to get to reacting to events
> in the world. It takes years and years for U.S. to be reactive. We
> are really not a nimble organization…Was there active response on
> campus during Vietnam? I came after that, but I know it was

active. It was not so much…I mean did we have programs emerge from that or certificates? There was huge political activity oriented toward the outside world and not intellectually. I just haven't seen an interest there. When I first got your email, I told you it would take two minutes to tell you what I knew, because no one has ever come to talk to me about it. No one ever…not in the two years I've been here.

These remarks may well capture the university's stance, not only to the 9/11 attacks, but more broadly to other non-Western regions of the world or spheres of interest.

## Conclusion

In spite of America's deep and continuous involvement in a rapidly changing and often volatile Islamic world, RIU seems to have a limited investment in Middle East Studies. This can be seen in the peripheral status of Middle East Studies that has remained unchanged even a decade after 9/11. The primary impact of 9/11 recognized by senior administrators and selected faculty was the intense trauma and its long term repercussions. With the exception of a few faculty members, the idea of a connection between 9/11 and Middle East Studies was not articulated by university administrators—until I showed up at their doorstep. Even while engaging in the interviews, they did not make connections between Middle East Studies and 9/11. The course developed by one faculty member in response to 9/11 stands out as an effort to respond. Taken together, all this may suggest the innate conservatism of academic culture that could be the result of parochialism, detachment, insularity or lack of resources—as demonstrated through many comments during the interviews.

The humanities faculty comments, recognizing the inadequacy of the Middle East Studies program in offering a deep and well-rounded program of study, seemed to be

more in tune with the need for additional faculty and support for academic advising within the program.  The social sciences faculty, on the other hand, did not seem to have much connection with the area studies faculty; they seemed satisfied with the timely nature of their courses and the positive responses from students.

Thus, by the end of the study, the future for Middle East Studies at RIU was unclear. Given the responses captured in these interviews, expectations of reviving the field seem unrealistic.  Unfortunately, many analyses of 9/11 presented by Middle East scholars such as Lockman, 2004; Teti, 2007; Rizvi, 2004; and Buck-Morss, 2003 link the need for education about the Middle East and Islam with terrorism and misconceptions about the region—its cultures, histories and politics—so much so that it has become difficult for at least RIU, if not other public universities, to see the usefulness of such an education. This situation persists despite the existence of a plurality of views within the humanities and social sciences and of the varying implications of those views for the necessity of understanding the Middle East and Islam (Tikly, 2001; Khalidi, 2004). On the other hand, Lockman (2004), still hopeful, sees the important role of universities in creating programs that are crucial to the production of expertise in this area and argues for the need for scholars and students to become engaged in Middle East Studies as a scholarly field.

**CHAPTER 6**

**MIDDLE EAST STUDIES DISCOURSES: MISUNDERSTOOD AND
MISCONSTRUED**

**<u>Introduction</u>**

> The modern Middle East and North Africa is not a center of great cultural
> achievement, nor is it likely to become one in the near future. The study of
> the region or its languages, therefore, does not constitute its own reward so
> far as modern culture is concerned. (Morroe Berger, 1967)

Morroe Berger, a central figure in Middle East Studies during its initial phase,

published this comment on the state of the Middle East in 1967. Since then, the United

States' engagement in the Middle East and other predominantly Muslim parts of the

world has risen to a new level.  The engagement, which goes back more than half a

century, has had complex political, military, economic, and cultural dimensions and

powerful consequences for the United States, as evidenced by the 9/11 attacks.  Even

today, more than a decade later, the attention of media, politics, and government debates

in the U. S. has remained focused on the Middle East and the Muslim world (Lockman,

2004; Khalidi, 2004; Mitchell, 2004).

The need for education, especially after 9/11, for understanding the Middle East

and the Islamic world has been voiced by a number of scholars and educators in the field,

yet many universities have been unresponsive to this call. Davidson argues that this

situation must be blamed, at least in part, on academia for not taking a firm stand and

commitment toward this critical need (Davidson, 2004).  In this context, this chapter

analyzes three macro discourses: "Middle East Studies: A Peculiar Situation"; "the

Question of Marginality"; and "Middle East: Relevance of the Field." The first section of

the chapter, Middle East Studies: A Peculiar Situation analyzes the unusual positionality

of Middle East Studies at RIU, a factor that seems to have damaged the program in more ways than one. The discussions below, focusing on this aspect of Middle East Studies, sheds new light on this situation. The second section, the Question of Marginality, characterizes indigenous Middle East scholars' position in the university culture; and the third section, Middle East: Relevance of the Field portrays the senior administration and Middle East faculty's perspectives on this topic. In addition, it illustrates their *Personal Reflections* on the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Arab Spring uprisings, and centrality of Western knowledge—factors that may have had an impact on the Middle East Studies program. This section also includes a brief discussion on Islam's continued influence on global and domestic realities and the role and responsibility of state universities in providing students with the knowledge and understanding of the Islamic World. These macro discourses, accompanied by a range of micro discourses, seem to exist to some extent in the discourses and practices of the university with regard to Islam and the Middle East.

## **Middle East Studies: A Peculiar Situation**

Even though the peculiar positionality of the Middle Eastern Studies program was discussed in chapter 4, this section analyzes the issue from a new perspective. The oddity of its positionality was put into context by two individuals who were closely related to the Middle East Studies program: Admin11, a mid-level administrator, and Amin12, an administrator in the Middle East Studies program. Hierarchically, Middle East Studies sat within the Department of Judaic Studies. Although a number of universities have Middle East departments, what is most peculiar about the Middle East Studies program at RIU, according to Admin12, is the nature of its "partnership between [Judaic Studies] which

was actually imposed by [Admin11]" upon his/her arrival as faculty in Judaic Studies in the 1970s. S/he placed a condition on the dean at the time that s/he would accept the job offer from the university "only if the [senior administration] combined what was then a Middle East Studies with a new label, 'Judaic Studies'" and to have them developed concurrently. Explaining the situation further, Admin12 noted:

> Now the university can tell you that they also probably tried to correct the situation by having Middle East faculty in some other departments… [political science] or history, but this is not area study based. We still don't have Middle East languages and cultures and we are not developing like other departments. I mean having an area study in Middle East doesn't preclude having other faculty in social sciences but it should not be either or, and we suffer from that. Judaic Studies doesn't. They have their own faculty plus adjuncts from other departments.

Admin11 saw this situation in the same way but with a bit of twist. In the late 1970s, s/he says, s/he was offered a position in the then Hebrew language program within the then Middle East Studies Program. Though s/he accepted the position, s/he was worried about it. S/he thought, "this would be the end of me as a scholar. I thought that I was becoming a Hebrew teacher, and that's it". Soon after making the remarks, Admin11, perhaps feeling a bit uncomfortable about belittling the teaching of languages, added hastily:

> I actually don't mind and I actually even like the teaching of the language and linguistics, and I'm not the only one throughout this building… It's very nice and refreshing after having been to a place like [the Middle East] and Europe, where teachers of language are looked down upon. It is considered to be less prestigious. Here, it is much more egalitarian, and makes more sense.

The discussion on language teaching went on for a while before returning to the merging of the two programs. Up to the late 1970s, there was only one interdisciplinary program:

Middle East Studies. In the following years, a dedicated group of Jewish faculty felt

strongly about establishing a separate interdisciplinary Judaic Studies department, which

consequently was established in the mid 1980s. Upon Admin11's return from a research

leave, s/he was asked by Judaic faculty members within social sciences to take over the

administrative position since they preferred a core faculty like him/her from the then

Middle East Studies program, and "not just faculty from other departments." However,

before accepting this position, Admin11 suggested to the higher administration to have

the Middle East Studies program merged with Judaic Studies:

> [W]e [Judaic Studies] had always been getting along famously, no
> problem, and it would work out nice, and he was very happy with
> it. At this point we became a [program] in [the mid 80s] and I
> became the first chair" but " [t]he unfortunate part of this
> [program] is that to this day we haven't been able to get any more
> core people in Middle East Studies. It remains just the Arabist, and
> that's it.

This last remark made by Admin11 implied that Middle East Studies gradually

dwindled to a one-faculty program. A higher administrator within the discipline, Admin5,

indicated that Admin11 had the option to ask for Middle East faculty lines but apparently

had not chosen to take this option for the past over twenty-five years. Any request made

by Admin12 needed Admin11's support in his/her capacity as the administrator. The

question arises as to why Middle East Studies remained with one faculty member over

the years. Admin11's response to this question was: "The truth is, I think, I'm not really

sure…to tell you the truth I don't understand it to this day. There's such increased interest

in the Middle East. So I don't understand why they don't have it." Explaining it further,

s/he said:

They [probably the higher administration] seem to be happy with the arrangement that most of the core courses in Middle East Studies are provided by other departments like History and by other colleges in the area. So Middle East Studies to this day unfortunately doesn't even have its own courses. A student who comes here doesn't even know what courses to take because they [university] don't even allow U.S. anymore to cross-list. They [students] have to know that they have to take [HIS 001], a basic survey course, and such courses in Arabic, and such and such upper level courses. But they don't know what they [courses] are because they [courses] are not listed anywhere as Middle East Studies. It is a disaster. And the university has not been responsive.

Interestingly, Admin11 turned the situation around, deferring the decision making responsibility to the higher administration. This may have merit as, over the years, none of the senior administrators had looked at the program as one for investment; instead, an administrator who had served from the mid-1980s until close to 2010, was very much inclined to dissolve the Middle East program. Such options, nevertheless, were still being considered by the end of this study. In 2011, when Admin12 was on research leave, efforts were made to remove him/her as program administrator, a position s/he has held for many years. Admin11 explained this situation:

I talked at great length to [the higher administrator], and she was ready to put in a new temporary replacement [for the current ME program administrator] with the hope that the person will become the [ME administrator], right after, because it is time to change anyway. She said that she does want to include Amin12 in the process. So apparently she should start something in the Fall, but I don't know what to say.

By and large, Admin11 did acknowledged Admin12's isolation and the lack of support, particularly from powerful faculty members who blamed Admin12 for not being responsible. But having said that, s/he himself continued to fault Admin12: "S/he hasn't really done anything to promote the program…I'm not attacking him/her personally; I'm saying there was neglect." S/he went even further:

> I think it stands for a sudden paranoia that he has, and the paranoia
> is that they are going to take Arabic from him and put it in the
> [lesser important position] for less commonly taught languages or
> something, and destroy it like that. It is an absolute paranoia that
> has no basis. Many times both the [mid level administrators] and
> others have offered to him an additional position or two and he
> refused. He feels so threatened that he doesn't even want an
> additional position. Can you imagine? In spite of him, because I
> am chair now, we're going to get an additional position in Arabic, I
> hope from the [surrounding community]. He was always opposed
> to the [idea]. He thought the [the surrounding community] were
> out to destroy Arabic. It is absolute paranoia. Also, I think he
> wants to keep the control in his own hands.

Thus, apparently, one of the reasons for Admin11 to have Middle East Studies remain with Judaic Studies was based on his/her desire to expand the teaching and research opportunities for Judaic Studies. He thought the joining of the two programs offered him and other colleagues a better chance to continue to teach language courses as well as do research. In his view "it has been a very good combination." In the process, however, he did not foresee how this situation would impact Middle East Studies.

These actions that seemed to marginalize the existence of Middle East Studies at RIU evoke the impracticality of disentangling Middle East Studies from its political surroundings. Throughout Middle East Studies' short history as an academic program at RIU and other universities, the continuing crisis of the Arab-Israeli conflict has been one of the major factors affecting its development. The emergence of the Palestinians as central actors in the Arab-Israeli conflict and the radical upsurges of the immediate post-1967 period led to accusations that Middle East scholars were unsympathetic to Israel. The Middle East Studies Association itself over the years has faced similar charges and, at times, has been instructed not to discuss the conflict publicly (Mitchell, 2004; Lockman, 2004).

Given the history and the peculiar positionality of Middle East Studies at RIU, combined with the perception of its irrelevance in the larger context of the university culture, it is not surprising that Middle East Studies seemed to be grappling with questions about its reason for existence as an academic program. The next section, broadening the issues, focuses on the marginalization of indigenous Middle East scholars within a postcolonial framework, inquiring into the colonial experience from the perspective of the colonized.

## The Question of Marginality

As Said (1978) puts it, "The regime of knowledge constructed by western epistemologies frames the orient in a particular way that aid and justify the orient's conquest and exploitation by the West." Said also points out that this regime of knowledge principally constructed an "absolute and systematic difference between the West, which is rational, developed, humane, superior, and the Orient, which is aberrant, undeveloped, inferior" (p. 301).

The notion of marginalization of Middle East Studies, as Lockman asserts (2004), goes far beyond its quality of being non-Western. Unlike other non-Western studies, Islam has "occupied a unique place in the imaginations of western Europeans" from the eleventh century onward. Islam was "Europe's 'other' in a way that 'China or India' or any other indigenous groups could never be" (Lockman, 2004, pp.36-37).

Although the suspicions about Islam and the Arab World are deeply rooted in western culture, discovering evidence of this within the university culture was dismaying. Over the years, with changes in the political scene, the number of indigenous Middle East scholars increased across the United States (Lockman, 2003).  RIU, too, had its fair share

of indigenous scholars for a brief period of time. Nevertheless, by the late 1990s, three internationally recognized indigenous Middle East scholars left the University. All three faculty joined Ivy League institutions of the highest standing, which may not be an unusual occurrence but in many instances faculty often get counter offer because of their unique contributions to the program. This situation seemed unusual as three indigenous faculty left within a short span of time. One of these scholars, in fact, left the university within a year of his/her arrival. During the same period, two new Middle East related positions were filled with white individuals. As a result, at the end of this study, the university was left with only one Middle East faculty of Middle East origin.

Intellectually, indigenous scholars often make special efforts to accommodate perspectives of peoples from the regions into their scholarly frameworks, investing in solidarity politics that lead to, at times, critiquing of the U. S. policy (Mitchell, 2004). Viewing this negatively and in order to discourage this trend, a number of ultraconservative institutions, like the Heritage Foundation and the National Association of Scholars, have adopted a two-pronged approach: encouraging or promoting conservative scholars to positions of influence, and "challenging those 'tenured radicals' who articulate views inimical or hostile to a conservative agenda" (Hijjar & Niva, 1997, p.7).

In this context, the pattern of hiring and retention of Middle East faculty at RIU demonstrates a trend that is neither welcoming nor conducive to retaining faculty of Middle East or Asian origin. Given the university's posture, it seemed appropriate to find out why the university let go of such outstanding, internationally famed scholars. Were there any efforts on part of the departments to stop them from leaving? Consequently, I

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wrote to the three faculty members asking about their experiences at RIU and the reasons

why they left. One faculty member wrote back, saying:

> I had every intention of returning to teach at [RIU] since I took a
> one year leave of absence. With few days left before I had to start
> at [the Ivy League institution], I was asked by the Chair of the
> [department] to vacate my office for another faculty member. As I
> started to pack my books, I realized the amount of time it was
> taking, time which I did not have since I had to prepare for classes.
> I hired someone to help me and then decided that I might as well
> leave for good. I was tired of being pushed around. I had already
> moved my office once to accommodate the previous chair of the
> department since he did not like having students who came to my
> office for consultation (my office was across from his).

Consequently, at the time of this study, the university was left with only one

indigenous Middle East scholar, Admin12, the administrator for Middle East Studies. In

order to get a better grasp of this situation, I judged it important to explore how Admin12

was seen, perceived, and understood within the university culture. Some aspects of this

situation are captured above, in the preceding sections of this chapter. This next part,

consistent with Said (1978), introduces "a style of thought based on an ontological and

epistemological distinction between 'the Orient' and 'the Occident' that produces and

perpetuates certain power relations, in this case the power which Western states and

authoritative individuals exercised over the Orient" (Said, 1978, p. 2-3).

Admin12, the program administrator of Middle East Studies, had been with the

university for over fifteen years. During his/her tenure, s/he had asked for additional

faculty to help build a program that could offer students a well grounded education.  But

despite rises in enrollment, his/her requests had been denied. Instead, the department

administrators and more senior administrators held him/her responsible for not

coordinating the program competently. According to Admin11, the mid-level

administrator, Admin12 "never tried to establish anything. S/he is a disaster as a [program administrator]. S/he is a good scholar but a disaster as the coordinator of the area". Following a few more such comments, Admin11 then ascribed Admin12's inadequacies to his/her being an Arab. Admin11 said that s/he had been asking him/herself "how come the Jews were successful in Israel and the Arabs are taking so much longer to develop? Jews", s/he said, "completely broke away from traditions, and imposed a real revolution upon themselves." Explaining the notion further, s/he noted:

> Whereas in the Arab world there were no real revolutions. Take the Nation of Islam or the Arab Nation in the days of Muhammad. The nation that has narrow military elite at the top with an Imam or something like that at its head…military societies…and they haven't really changed…To give you an example, I'm quoting somebody, he said look at the Jewish funeral for example and look at an Arab funeral. The latter is a riot. This is not a civilized way of conducting things.

From there on, s/he continued talking a great deal about Israel, Palestine, and the Arab Spring uprisings. Her/his hopes were for a peaceful solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict as well as for the countries involved in the Arab Spring movements. Her/his thoughtfulness was touching: "It makes me sad," s/he said, "when Admin12 uses the ethnic card that s/he is being discriminated against because s/he is an Arab." S/he continued:

> you know…which is so ridiculous because to accuse someone like me of being anti-Arab is unbelievable. Anyway…I'm sorry I gloated like this but it is very sad because there's such interest to have a good number of majors, and many more in Middle East Studies today than Judaic. And in Arabic I fight with him also all the time, because I …… I think it is a lack of leadership.

One way to help understand this situation is to go back to Said who argued that Western pursuits of truth and knowledge are infused with racist power and cultural

supremacy—it is a thought process "that can be discussed and analyzed for dealing with the 'Orient'" in all forms of communications—"by teaching it…making statements about it [or] authorizing views of it… in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said, 1978, p. 2-3).

Broadly analyzed using these ideas, the above discussions have drawn on the concepts and methods that focus on the relationship between knowledge and power illustrated in particular in the emergence of discourses produced by power and exercised by organizations, rulers or institutions (Foucault, 1979). In this situation, it can be argued that the university faculty and administrators paid little attention to emerging patterns of hiring (or non-hiring) and retention (or non-retention) of Middle East faculty; these may well have suggested a marginalization of indigenous Middle East scholars.

### Middle East: Relevance of the Field

In light of the impact of 9/11, as well as the recent events in Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, and Libya, this section analyzes the relevance of Middle East Studies in offering students a well-grounded education about the people, politics, and cultures of the Islamic world.  Recent years have seen dramatic changes in the field of international education, especially in the post September 11th world that has led to widespread unrest with the ensuing wars on Afghanistan and Iraq (Grehan, 2003). In this context, this section focuses closely on the perceptions and perspectives of the university's senior administration with regard to Middle East Studies' relevance as an academic program and the program's structural placement vis-à-vis Judaic Studies.

As seen in the previous sections, the concerns expressed about Middle East Studies' unchanging and static position remained unaddressed. All matters in terms of

broadening its scope were left to the discretion of the departmental and discipline

administration. In that context, the Admin2's, a senior administrator's comments were

not much different from the remarks of other senior administrators, noted in the previous

chapters. Although s/he acknowledged the overbalancing of Judaic Studies, s/he did not

offer any clear cut solution for it:

> We do have the Dept. of Judaic and Middle East Studies. It is a bit
> overbalanced on the Judaic side. But there are a number of scholars
> studying more broadly in the region. It is something that needs to
> be nurtured. We have this new [Judaic Studies] Center, but it's one
> side of it. We need to make sure that we can try for a balance. If it
> is going to be studied, it has to be balanced. Otherwise it becomes
> proselytization.

His/her concern about the over balancing of Judaic Studies did not seem to place high

priority on this issue. In fact, his/her phrasing, "If it is going to be studied," raised

questions as to Middle East Studies' centrality in the curriculum. Focusing on hiring

patterns, s/he noted, "We don't reach into the departments…We create the openings, but

the hires happen at the college level, and then they come to U.S. for approval." In

discussing Judaic Studies' 'over balancing', s/he explained that when a new program gets

started, it generally pulls together scholars who are already on campus and working in

this area.  For instance, "The tendency in departments—something I've always pushed

against—is to reproduce what you have…so when a search comes up, you get more of

what you've got rather than trying to broaden the base."  With regard to preparing

students with knowledge and understanding of the Islamic world, s/he said his/her plans

were to recruit students from abroad—focusing more on South Asia than the Middle East.

This, in his/her opinion, would help to internationalize both students and faculty across

the campus.

In contrast, the responses of a former senior administrator seemed pragmatic. AdminA was clear about the complicated nature of Middle East Studies, i.e. where to invest and have leverage to be successful. Middle East Studies in general, in his/her opinion, struggled with its own internal political problems, even in articulating their own point of view, getting resources, getting along with Israel, and also getting along with each other. S/he added: "So cultural contexts complicate the argument…I think people exaggerate the hindrance of Israel as an excuse." Comparing Middle East Studies to East Asian Studies, he stated that Asian Studies subordinated their historical differences in order to mobilize a program within American universities. "Middle Eastern groups do not only get along with Israel, but also do not get along with each other." His/her remarks demonstrated remarkable depth of knowledge about the subject. During the 1970s, Middle East Studies main stream approaches were in fact criticized by the emerging dissident networks and journals. Such movements, Lockman argues, contributed to the increasing politicization of the field and resulted into weakening the field (Lockman, 2004).

Moving to the foreign language issue, this former administrator claimed that students did not want to learn a foreign language and the university no longer required a foreign language. Consequently, noting Middle East Studies, s/he asserted "[T]o promote a program for which there is no student demand, and for which there is no outside subsidy, and for which there is no declaration of the national interest, and for which the state has indicated no interest, is a significant challenge." Adding further, he asserted that American higher education responded to whatever the nation's agenda was at a particular time. During the Cold War, the Federal Government generated a host of programs that

subsidized and motivated American universities to engage on behalf of the national

agenda, to deal with the Cold War. At the Cuban crisis, the Federal Government

generated funding, and American universities responded with programs and activities to

deal with what was perceived as a national threat. "The peculiarity of this cycle of life is

that the Federal Government has shown no interest in supporting the transformation and

our implementation of programs to deal with whatever this current cycle of threat to the

Unites States might be." "So the response that you see around you whether it is RIU or

any other university is a function of what the nation's objectives is." The assumption, he

argued, "that universities pursue objectives that are not those of the nation are idealistic

and have never occurred in the history of American higher education." His/her remarks

not only supported the marginality of Middle East Studies on university campuses but

also its irrelevance to the government agencies, despite the 9/11 attacks. Broaching the

role of senior administrators in supporting Middle East Studies, he asserted:

> Universities who imagine that their strength comes from the
> [senior administration's] opinion about a particular intellectual
> enthusiasm are very poor universities. The reason is that [senior
> administrators] don't last very long while faculty do—programs
> have to be owned by the faculty who outlive all administrators.
> Now, on the other hand, if the Federal Government were to
> generate a big program, then university could mobilize its assets.
> For example, we have in Education a big program on Afghanistan.
> We support that program. But why is that successful? Because the
> [senior administration] thinks Afghanistan is important? Because
> there is a faculty member supporting this program.

His/her robust arguments, generating from years of experience, for faculty owning and

supporting the program was stressed by almost all the participating faculty and

administrators; a necessity most obviously lacking at RIU Middle East Studies program.

Thus, to summarize, the attitudes, approaches, and perspectives of senior administrators about Islam and the Middle East ranged from its impact on the nation's internal politics—"exhibited by how the general population, particularly his political enemies, saw the President"—to "if it weren't for 9/11, the entire country would ignore that area" or "it's not unlike our disinterest in South Africa; they're so beneath U.S. in terms of economics that Americans don't hold the area as valuable." Perhaps most importantly, despite the existence of Middle East Studies that spanned many administrations, the program has remained dormant for the past twenty years—a situation that seems to involve many considerations such as personalities, positionality, leadership, and detachment, university priorities, and lastly the lack of vision and the acknowledgment of global issues.

In terms of global realities, the next section captures some of the reflections of the participants on issues such as: the Arab-Israeli conflict; the recent Arab Spring uprisings; and the prevalence of the centrality of Western knowledge—factors that may have had an impact on the development of the Middle East Studies program. It also includes a brief discussion of Islam's continued impact on global and domestic realities and the role and responsibility of state universities in providing students with knowledge and understanding of the Islamic World.

### Questions and Complexities in Middle East Studies Discourses

The following are topics that, for the most part, the participants did not talk much about or go into lengthy discussions. The answers were short, often spoken with cliché phrases, and muted, despite the potential for these topics to elicit spirited responses. They

were, nevertheless, reflective enough to give a glimpse into the personal perceptions of the participants.

## Arab-Israeli Conflict

As noted by scholars of the Middle East, the political divisions within the field of Middle East Studies had become more intense from 1970s onward, especially over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. After the September 11 attacks, American-Jewish far-right organizations launched a number of attacks targeting Middle East Studies and scholars across the nation's campuses (Lockman, 2004). Acknowledging the attacks, Professor2, in the social sciences thought that the extreme nature of the impact was much evident in the early years after 9/11. S/he commented that it was difficult at that time to teach courses that had to do with Islamic politics or the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It was neither the university nor the students who were involved in such activities; these attacks, by and large, were perpetrated by outside organizations. Though Professor2's concern drew attention to the situation at hand, the question had a deeper and more subtle purpose of inquiry into the kind of influence the conflict had on the academy and its decision making process.

Most of the participants avoided addressing the Arab-Israeli conflict. Most often, the reason for the conflict was perceived as lack of understanding of the Muslim world. Professor2 pointed out, students are growing up in a vacuum, and "there's a real need to have some clarity not on just the traditions but also contemporary needs or desires for self-determination and where that plays out." In Admin2's view, it was the cultural milieu: "It's incumbent on people who teach introductory courses to learn the perspectives of people who come in with narrow perspectives so that they go on and take

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more things to learn different things from their initial perceptions." His/her thought, though reasonable (perhaps) from the institutional perspective, did not express much concern about the conflict's impact on Middle East Studies. However, one interviewee did go into more depth on this issue. In response to Israeli-Palestinian issues impacting the academy's posture toward Middle East Studies, Professor1's response was

> Absolutely! Yes. Some people may like to think that we're somehow pristine, beautifully insulated here from the politics of the world, and that is utterly untrue. It would be highly advantageous if the Arab-Israeli issue could be separated from all the other issues around the Muslim world.

Noting the highly-visible programs about the holocaust, s/he thought these programs tended to complicate the issues because of the perpetuation of the memory of the holocaust, which did not take place in the Middle East and has nothing to do with the Arab world:

> It colors very much American public and political perceptions toward the Middle East and toward the relations of the Arabs to the Israelis. In that, the uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt and the Arab world, in many ways were very helpful—it was consistently conspicuous how nobody talked about Israel…Israel's existence or anything else…If we could find a focus like that, it could make it a little easier to teach about it.

As alluded to by Professor1, the adverse impact of the Arab-Israeli conflict on Middle East Studies and scholarship had been evident since the Arab-Israeli War in 1967. The polemical debates between the two groups politicized the discipline, developing a gap between intellectual concerns and political views of many Middle East Studies specialists, on the one hand, and the policy makers' vision of the world—the kind of knowledge they needed, on the other. This development correspondingly caused a decline in the influence of university-based scholars on shaping foreign policy, on the media, and

on attitudes about the region of the broad public (Owen, 2003; Lockman, 2004; Hajjar &

Niva, 1997; Mitchell, 2004).

## **Centrality of Western Knowledge**

The following analyses shed light on the notion of the centrality of Western

knowledge, another factor that marred the development of Middle East Studies both

politically and intellectually during the Cold War period, and still seems to persist in the

academy. Thus, this section looks at the perceptions of the participating faculty and

administrators about the presence of Eurocentrism in the academy. This discourse has

emerged as an overarching ideological framework to conceptualize the social, political,

and cultural history of the United States**.** One important service that Middle East scholars

rendered to the state during the Cold War era was the provision of intellectual

frameworks which policymakers could use to make sense of what was going on in the

world and formulate policy accordingly. The paradigm of modernization theory that

dictated the scholarly agenda for Third World scholars combined scholarly inquiry about

the "backwardness of non-Western regions with policy-oriented recommendations"

(Hajjar & Niva, 1997, p.7). Thus, the intrusion of the state, over the years, disparaged

Middle East Studies' scholarship and denigrated its position as an academic program

(Bilgin & Morton, 2002). Asked whether the university's approaches to Middle East

Studies might reflect the continuation of these ideological discourses, participants gave

multiple positive responses.  One key response came from a senior administrator,

Admin2:

> If you go and read a true world history book from high school, the
> thousand years of Ottoman Empire, which is pretty important, is
> given very short drift. It is really a history of Middle and Western

Europe, and the rise of the West. Where the Ottoman Empire is
mentioned in its waning days, they came to the gates of Vienna…

His/her view expressed notions that have commonly prevailed in secondary and

higher education. In recent years, however, many colleges and universities have made

efforts to change this outlook—helping students to look beyond a U. S.-centric or Euro-

centric mindset. In this context, Professor3 of social sciences thought that studying

Middle East Studies was extremely important for students but, s/he said, it took a lot of

effort for an institution to become internationalized: "Internationalization is like apple

pie; no one is against it. But it's a little facile sometimes." Another administrator in social

sciences saw this topic as needing serious attention, expressing the opinion that

universities still approach each area studies from a Western point of view and are

certainly ethnocentric:

> If you look at our curriculum, it's very western oriented…so I
> think we need to broaden our…This conversation is very useful for
> me because I'm thinking about our college, we want to understand
> the world, we want our students to be citizens of the world in the
> social sciences, and in fact we really should be involved in this
> issue.

In Professor1's view, the centrality of Western Knowledge was the reason: "the post-

colonial world became the playing field for this vast chess game of the Cold War." In

his/her opinion, the notion of power and privilege very much prevailed in the academy

but it depends on the individuals and their particular place of work: "You go from one

university to another and what is very different in decision making has very much to do

with the personalities of the people that are in power. Frankly, I think, our campus has

become more traditional in the sense that it has become more hierarchical, patriarchal."

Professor1's remarks highlighted the possible impact of Western knowledge and its imperial ideology – its hegemony – in perpetuating inequalities that affect programs such as Middle East Studies. The other participants, however, did not discuss its effect beyond the presence of Eurocentrism in literature and popular viewpoints. Historically, during the Cold War period, the paradigms of social science research were guided by a Western ideology of "developmentalism;" these had an adverse effect on area studies scholarship. Later, in the 1970s, the foundations and government support that enlisted Third World scholars in a western–style analysis of their own societies weakened their standing as social science scholars in the Academy—to such an extent that it has not recovered to this date ( Gendzier, 1985; Escobar, 1995; Mitchell, 2004).

**<u>The Arab Spring Uprisings</u>**

This section describes briefly the thoughts and perceptions of administrators and faculty regarding the recent uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Libya, and Syria. The question posed was: What was the university's response to the Arab Spring? How did it differ from the one to 9/11? What effect will it have on Middle East Studies?

In this regard, Admin7 was not hopeful: "If 9/11 didn't do it, it's tough to know what influence will come from these sources…But I take your point…bottom line is we should be doing more." A senior administrator, Admin2, on the other hand, sounded much more upbeat about the idea: "Almost certainly," s/he replied, provided the democratic forces prevail and even if there are conservative Islamic parties participating in the democracy, it would end up with much better connections.

This remark suggested that Admin2 was interested in developing better relations with these countries, but only if they chose to be democratic; s/he did not appear to extend this to Middle East Studies, per se.

My argument is that it is that, as a result of traumatic events such as 9/11, the need for understanding a region is highlighted. The specific circumstances of 9/11, then, call for educating students about Islamic countries which might, in turn, promote better understandings between the U. S. and the Islamic world. A dmin2's concern, however, was more about students and faculty exchanges, which is another way to become familiar with other cultures, a subject that s/he mentioned several times during the conversation.

Explaining his/her ideas further, Admin2 thought Turkey was a good example. S/he noted that using Turkey as an example might not be perfect, but it could "thread a nice line between being an Islamic nation in a modern world and having good relationships with the rest of the world...It is part of NATO…the only Muslim country. There might be some internal problems, but it is by far more progressive." Adding further, s/he noted:

> My [spouse] and I visited Istanbul a few years ago, and we on purpose stayed in the old city…and I remarked to [my spouse] as we were leaving that anybody who fears the Muslim world should spend a weekend in Istanbul. And I'm sure the same is true for many cities. We just happened to be there. It was a great experience. Obviously a different culture, but obviously too a society that wanted to be part of the world and wanted to do business with the world. That was the part that you encounter as a tourist…

His/her keen interest in Turkey was positive; with just one visit, s/he seemed to have developed substantial knowledgeable about the Muslim cultures, Turkey's history and civilization. The Islamic world is a huge part of the world, and "there's got to be

understanding…If we are going to have good understanding of peace,

business…whatever your emphasis is…it's going to have to be better than it is now" s/he

said.

Professor3 in social sciences was more pragmatic. One aspect of the Arab Spring

that interested her/him was the partial visibility of Islamic rhetoric in the protests. These

protests were not just about democracy but also for economic justice and labor rights,

he/she suggested.   In this, they seemed to resonate with the U. S. protests. S/he continued

by saying:

> So it doesn't necessarily have to be divide-inducing; it could draw
> connections" but no one knows how those are going to turn out.
> One of the struggles for people who teach Middle East or Islamic
> World is "some do not hate the West"… "Middle East people love
> Americans". There is so much that people emulate. I wish what
> they emulate would be good.

Thus, as distinct from 9/11, the Arab Spring uprisings seem to have invoked more

positive thoughts and a desire for forming connections with these countries. In the end,

nonetheless, the fact remains that, whether it is 9/11, the Arab Spring, Iraq or

Afghanistan, all point to an increased involvement of the United States in the Muslim

world.  My central argument is that these circumstances manifest a crucial need for

public universities to focus on programs that generate knowledge and understanding of

the Muslim world.  Thus, the following section discusses public universities'

responsibility in providing students a well grounded education in this respect.

**Public University: Responsibility or Liability?**

Duderstadt and Womack (2004) note that, throughout their history, public

institutions—from the land grant colleges to today's research universities—have

responded to serve an ever-changing population and its evolving diverse needs. With this

stance, public universities have responded to the real and perceived needs of American society and have maintained a strong tradition for promoting federal policies and academic programs to address national priorities. This section notes how the faculty and administrators' who participated in this study view this particular responsibility for a state institution.

A senior administrator articulated this responsibility as follows: "It is a broad mandate to educate our students…. We're a land-grant institution. So we have a special mandate to educate in the practical arts. If you take the practical art of business, if you don't understand what's going on in the world, you're not going to be able to do business with that part of the world…We need to have these connections around the world." His/her remarks suggest a commitment to a broader global perspective, rather than specifically about the Middle East.

Admin5 in humanities, on the other hand, did not feel that such responsibility automatically needed to be linked to the nature of the educational institution—whether private or public. Although public institutions seem to be more aware of the demand for public accountability, faculty, s/he pointed out, "have not necessarily made a political commitment to these institutions." S/he recognized that there are relatively few free-standing departments of Middle East Studies. It is, thus, inevitable for Middle East Studies to be an interdepartmental and interdisciplinary activity:

> But in the nearer future, it makes sense to assuming you have willing faculty committed to the area, to increasing public knowledge, then it would be really good to be able to fund that kind of work with the kind of support that even interdepartmental programs need in terms of secretarial support, funding for events, etc.

As senior administrator, s/he was cautious about expressing a need that might end up in requests for funding or for new faculty positions. In contrast, the upper level administrator in social sciences, Admin7, sounded enthusiastic, convinced of the necessity for Middle East Studies:

> We should not be putting ourselves behind any school whether they're private or public. Part of a well-educated person's understanding of the world needs to include the Middle East obviously, and we need to be offering this to our students. It's really important. [And if I were to be provost] I would offer two or three positions saying we're [going to] start this cluster and I'm looking for proposals. I think it could be done very easily.

Admin7's thoughts suggest cautious optimism. The positionality of Middle East Studies has made it difficult to address the program's academic needs. While many interviewed do not seem to be convinced about Middle East Studies' relevance in the broader context of the university, there was some recognition of the Islamic world's growing global importance and the need to educate students.

## Conclusion

As a central enterprise of the twenty-first century, Altbach (2002) notes, universities bear a great deal of responsibility to offer students a well-grounded education. Within the framework of this study, then, one could argue that they have an obligation to be responsive to the challenges and needs of a changing world. Internationalization in general and Middle East Studies in particular, are growing emphases in universities, both public and private. Thus, this chapter presented themes about the Middle East and Islam that emerged in the interviews. I argue that a deep and grounded understanding of Middle East Studies is needed to make sense of the varied and complex ways the region – and the Islamic world – are affecting the current and future

lives of students. Deep inequalities seem to undergird many current trends that are, at least in part, based upon misconceptions and misunderstanding about the Middle East and Islam.

In this sense, given its positionality and marginalization within the larger context of R1U, the future of Middle East Studies did not look promising. Middle East Studies' unusual position within, which might have come about based on a whim of an administrator, has not been challenged or questioned in the past thirty years.

Another issue introduced in this chapter was the ethnocentrism that seems to have prevailed in the university culture, particularly with regard to indigenous Middle East faculty. This may not be an unusual occurrence: an increasing number of Middle East Studies faculty members have faced intense scrutiny, not only for their written work but also for how they teach (Doumani, 2006; Mitchell, 2004; Lockman, 2004). Even the languages indigenous to the Middle East are now subject to scrutiny at several state funded university centers; these language programs are viewed as training students to view U.S. foreign policy too critically (Newell, 2006). A number of Middle East scholars claim that, in certain events in the post 9/11 climate, the academic credentials of internationally famed scholars have also been challenged (Doumani, 2006).

Similarly, the Middle East Studies Program at RIU has encountered numerous threats to its survival within the university. Nevertheless, participants, particularly the line administrators who had both the authority and power to change this situation, did not acknowledge this as a problem. One exception was an administrator who expressed concerns, but claimed that it was not up to him/her to take any action. An interesting response came from a senior administrator who thought that the best way to educate

domestic students about the Middle East or any other non-Western area was by recruiting students from those areas. In contrast to this perspective, a former administrator's comment suggesting the insignificance of the program left me questioning the university's understanding of and commitment to this area of study.  The responses from faculty, however, generally recognized a need to expand the program but they seemed to feel helpless given their own departmental needs.

 A critical examination of these meta-discourses suggests that they may have contributed to the marginalization of the study of the Middle East and Islam.  As Post asserts (2006), one cannot assume that university colleagues even acknowledge the important contributions made in Middle Eastern studies.

From observations and comments made by participants, the Arab-Israeli conflict seemed to be the most sensitive issue. Only one faculty member talked about it candidly. S/he understood the spirit of the question and its impact on Middle East Studies. Here again, views differed as to how this conflict was affecting the two disciplines. The Arab Spring uprisings, Eurocentrism in the academy, and embracing the teaching of the Islamic world cultures and politics as a university responsibility did not seem to be of great importance to most participants.

**CHAPTER 7**

**GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES: WHO DECIDES**?

**<u>Introduction</u>**

From an academic perspective, it is important to understand where authority lies in the academic decision process. And within the process, it is also important to understand the faculty role in determining the campus academic structure, particularly in hiring faculty, and how much authority is exerted by the top and middle administration on such matters. This section analyzes the important steps of this process as perceived by faculty, department heads, deans, and the senior administration.

From the standpoint of this discussion, Birnbaum's (1988) multi-frame approach analyzing the human role in governance seems to be most relevant, as it emphasizes how decisions emerge at a particular campus in relation to its social and political contexts—conflicts, values, power, influence, and interest groups—that is, key elements that are embedded in people, not structure. Thus, for this study, one aspect that is discussed below focuses on the rationale or motivation for hiring faculty—whether hiring plans relate to building a comprehensive program within a department, college or university, or whether such decisions are made on an ad hoc basis. Another aspect of this section focuses on how faculty expertise are deployed to provide students with a well-grounded education. The first part of the section looks at faculty perceptions of the decision making process; part two examines the views of middle administration, including department heads and deans; and finally, part three explores the role of senior administration in this process.

## Academic Governance

The literature on academic governance focuses on the processes of decision-making; the relationships between the various members of the college or university community; and/or the pursuit of the basic academic mission (Kezar & Eckel, 2004). As higher education evolved and academic disciplines developed, faculty members, as experts in their disciplines, acquired decision-making power in academic governance in terms of curriculum and academic programs, recruiting students, and a major role in hiring of faculty. The final say, nevertheless, always rested with the higher administration (Geiger, 1999; Jencks & Riesman, 1968).

At Research I University, the governance structure, comprising a board of trustees, president, academic administrative officers, and faculty, is not any different than a majority of institutions of higher learning across the nation. According to the university's official governance documents, faculty members have a major responsibility in academic matters such as curriculum, instruction, research, admissions, degree programs, and courses, and also have the primary responsibility for faculty appointments, reappointments, promotions, tenure, and salary adjustments. All of this is subject to approval by the department chairs, deans, senior administrators, and – ultimately – the board of trustees.

The provost, the chief academic officer of the campus, is responsible for education, research and scholarship, and outreach, including faculty recruitment, retention, performance, reappointment, promotion, tenure, and undergraduate and graduate academic programs. Academic deans, on the other hand, occupy a unique place

as academic leaders of colleges/schools in facilitating links among department chairs/heads, faculty, and university leadership.

## Academic Governance: Faculty Perceptions

The participating faculty responses about the faculty hiring process were mixed and seemed to depend on their own particular experience within the department, on the personnel committee, and in relation to the dean. This section discusses and analyzes four faculty responses; two in humanities and two in social sciences. This discussion highlights the responses of two faculty members, as they were the most knowledgeable about processes on the R1U campus. One professor in humanities, a veteran with several years' experience as department chair, had broad experience, knowledge, and awareness of the complexity of the hiring process. Another faculty member seemed frustrated with the hiring process because s/he had not received authorization to search for an additional faculty in the past twenty years. A newly-appointed faculty member in the social sciences did not have experience at R1U to draw on; and another in social sciences did not have much involvement with the departmental hiring decision making process.

Discussing the faculty hiring process, a humanities professor thought that, though the process might seem simple on the surface, it could turn into a complex and frustrating experience. In humanities, each year the process starts with the mid-level administrator asking department heads and chairs to submit a ranked list of priorities. In setting departmental priorities, it is not the department chair but the personnel committee that plays the key role. Even though it does not bind the chair, the professor was quick to point out that "the chair would be extremely foolish not to follow it".

From there on, s/he noted, if a search is approved by the department personnel committee, the chair advances it to the dean who could either block it or advance it to the provost. At that point, the provost may realize that s/he "needs a chemist… so history may just have to wait" or s/he may say "I know I told you 3 slots, but you can have 1". These sorts of things could "completely derail what you're trying to do" said this professor. S/he asserted that the provost had the ultimate authority and final say in the hiring of faculty. If people say it is faculty, "then they're just denying their responsibility." Responding to the role of faculty in the decision making process, s/he chuckled:

> The faculty could line up, hold their breath until they turn blue and get nothing if the provost doesn't want to grant it. On the other hand, if the provost likes the idea, he will come down and ask the department to put together some rationale, and that's terrific, but what if the department doesn't want it?

S/he recalled the department's annoyance and frustration when, at the request of the provost's office, a Middle East postdoctoral fellow was appointed in the department:

> [P]eople complained. Why get that? Did we ask for this? This wasn't on our priorities list. We wanted somebody who does [East Asia]. We want someone who does antebellum US, somebody who does comparative slavery. We didn't ask for someone who does [Islamic studies]. We've got three people who do stuff like that. So there's a lot of negotiating and struggle.

Considering that the humanities department has only a few faculty who are affiliated with the Middle East Studies program, it seemed odd for the department to voice such discontentment over a temporary one-year appointment. In fact, it raised questions about the department's posture toward Middle East Studies. The professor commented: "Honestly," s/he said, "first of all we all care about our own research. And most of U.S. do research that only slightly overlaps our teaching…"

In terms of hiring Middle East faculty, s/he strongly maintained that the

department's top priority was U.S. history: "So unless terrorists bomb the U.S.

annually, we're not going to bump U.S. History out of the top slot… but if there were

enough student demand, it might affect the thinking of the administration." However, it

was very hard to demonstrate a long-term compelling need to hire more Middle East

faculty sufficient to change other plans. S/he continued to say:

> That's why I think the best step with what we have—this may or
> may not be the question you're going to ask me—is to coordinate
> what we've got right now. And show that we can create an
> institutional foundation, and that then will have its own
> momentum, and money of its own, and that there is a demand and
> that there is both research and teaching implications and preferably
> that it has policy implications.

This professor was very clear that Middle East Studies was not a department priority.

His/her expressions for its development were a generic strategy for a program to put

down a solid foundation. In order to do so, however, the program needed the support of

the department as well as the middle and upper administration, which had been missing

in the case of Middle East Studies. Nevertheless, his/her comments about Middle East

Studies not being a priority in his/her department did not seem to be disparaging toward

Middle East Studies generally, but rather a candid assessment of the institution's current

posture.

In terms of the faculty hiring decision making process, this humanities professor

had frustrating experiences, both as a faculty member and as an administrator, perhaps

leading him/her to believe that all important decisions about faculty hiring were made by

senior administration with little input from faculty. His/her experience seems to relate to

Mintzberg's (1979) observation about the bureaucratic qualities of institutions, including

chain of command and role differentiation, that result from increased size and complexity

of the institutional governance process.

A mid-level administrator, closely affiliated with the Middle East program, on the

other hand, had bitter experiences with the department decision making process. For the

previous twenty years, his/her requests for additional Middle East faculty had

consistently been turned down, first by the departmental committee and then the

departmental and discipline administrators. Over the years, while faculty lines in Judaic

Studies increased, Middle East Studies remained a one-faculty member program. At one

point, s/he asked for four faculty lines to build the foundation of the program, but did not

get an acknowledgment for this request. In the late 2000s, nevertheless, for the first time,

s/ he received a response from the administration. S/he explained:

> The reason that I was given by [the administration] about four
> years ago was "we don't want to copy what other universities
> have" and if there's a kind of specialty that we can project, and
> s/he was basically saying Judaic Studies, s/he was not against
> having Middle East Studies. In fact, s/he wrote me an encouraging
> note when I sent him/her a letter asking for new lines, and s/he
> said, and I still have that note, "Thank you very much for your
> letter suggesting the lines. These are very important specialties and
> I have served in the past on searches not related to Islamic studies
> and Arabic Literature." And s/he was moving in the direction of
> developing, but s/he was held back once s/he realized the
> sensitivity from Judaic Studies, particularly [from one influential
> faculty], about having Middle East lines. So that was his/her
> reason. But prior to him/her there was never really any reason
> given; it was just evasion. And no one had really asked for hiring
> priorities in Middle East Studies in the four areas I suggested
> before I came, the four areas being Turkish literature and culture,
> Arabic studies and literature, and Islamic studies.

The above narrative conveys this mid-level administrator's frustration with the

lack of support from the department personnel committee or more senior administrators.

Meanwhile, s/he indicated that support from senior administration would not

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necessarily help. In his/her opinion, it was sufficient to have recognition from the

middle level administration whose receptiveness on the basis of student demand for

courses would certainly be helpful. The student demand, s/he asserted, had been

"substantial since the [1990s]." So in terms of the governance structure, it is the

personnel committee, composed of mostly Judaic faculty, and the administrators who

have had the strongest voice in the departmental decision making process. As this

administrator noted:

> We don't have a completely Middle East Studies committee
> process… but hopefully once you have one or two members in the
> department in addition, they [will] become part of the personnel
> committee and sustain the process of future hires. Right now I am
> the only one.

Thus, contrary to the humanities professor's experience, the perspective of those

associated with Middle East Studies, the campus decision making process moved from

senior administration to a diffused authority structure divided among  the middle level

administration, department, and faculty—a structure that, in more typical circumstances,

could be of advantage to Middle East Studies.  In this case, it had not been.

In social sciences, a professor viewed the faculty hiring process in two ways:

either someone was hired with a specific interest area or someone just happened to be a

good candidate.  In this latter case, an example would be a newly hired faculty member

who was an Islamic law expert but was hired because s/he was a comparative Islam

expert. These, nevertheless, are the "departmental issues" – this social sciences

department being interested in a horizontal comparative model and not in area expertise

with language skills. In general, this social sciences professor thought that anthropology,

sociology, communication, and economics did not have a strong tradition of Middle East-

focused scholarship: "So the only big social sciences department that does have a strong tradition of area studies is [ours].

This professor's statement, particularly about this particular social science department having a strong tradition of area studies, seems to be problematic, at least in terms of Middle East Studies. The university archival records show that the department did not have a Middle East expert for the fifteen years prior to this study until a few years ago when the department hired a Middle East on the insistent of the discipline administration. This step was taken at the request of a former senior administrator who had strongly recommended that the department hire a Middle East faculty. When asked about his/her efforts in bringing Middle East scholars to social science, s/he replied:

> On the ground in this college, if I showed you the different hiring plans by substantive areas of three quarters of our departments here, I think you would be pleased to see that actually our departments are in their own departmental spaces wanting to build this program.

Thus, from the conversations and discussions, the faculty members were seeking a clear understanding of the process. Their own diverse and changing positions, as well as dilemmas and experiences within the department and the institution, seem to be quite complex and problematic. Based on the faculty observations, the key elements of the campus governance seemed to emerge in social and political contexts, relating to conflicts, values, power, and influence—the characteristics that are embedded in people, not structure (Birnbaum, 1988). Moving from faculty perceptions, the following section explores institutional governance through the eyes of middle level administrators.

**Academic Governance: Perceptions of Deans and Department Heads**

Important aspects in understanding academic governance include organizational

structures such as lines of authority, roles, procedures, and bodies responsible for

decision making. Though faculty members, as experts in their disciplines, acquire some

decision-making power in academic governance, the final say, nevertheless, always rests

with the higher administration (Geiger, 1999; Jencks & Riesman, 1968).

Many studies define decision making bodies as state lay boards, presidents,

departments, colleges, programs, and the bureaucratic features that include "chain of

command," "role differentiation," and "systematizing of processes" that results most

often from the size and complexity of the institution (Kezar & Eckel, 2004, p. 375-76).

The underlying assumption is that the structural form of governance is better managed

and improves governance effectiveness (Kezar & Eckel, 2004). Within this hierarchical

system, the role of the department chair is often seen as the first administrative position

held by faculty members (McDade, 1987). The discussion in this part reflects the views

and perspectives of department heads and deans. The discussion focuses on deans then

department chairs.

One chair/head was quite new in the position and, therefore, had little to

contribute either about the institutional governance process or the departmental practices

concerning hiring. Another chair/head did not go into great detail about the hiring process

in that department. Another mid-level administrator seemed sensitive to the issues, but

admitted candidly his/her ignorance about Middle East Studies. In response to how and

with what intentions the hiring of faculty is done, s/he replied;

> We did have cluster hires. That was terrific, but none of the
> clusters were Middle East. Now, could we have done this? Could

we still do it—absolutely. Right now, for instance, the [senior administration] is offering an RFP [request for proposal] for cluster hires across [social sciences] and [humanities]. Could there be a Middle East cluster? That's totally reasonable, but I just haven't seen an interest there.

An administrator in the humanities described their hiring process as very much a bottom-up process. S/he stated: "Faculty hires come as a result of department requests. So each department develops its own priorities for hiring, and their needs". Typically, a position is defined in terms of current research and curricular needs; this goes from the department to the dean; and then, depending on funding availability, if approved by the dean, goes forward to the provost to be approved at that level.

> If somebody is retired, we want to use that line… [t]his year eighteen searches were undertaken in humanities [but] there are strategic plans... [with] their priorities and needs…so nothing is ad-hoc.

Thus, in contrast with the social sciences' practices, the humanities pattern seemed to involve substantial strategic planning, which made sense in terms of building strength in certain areas. Defining the faculty role in the decision making process, the administrator noted that "the voice of faculty in making hiring decisions is very strong." But this administrator also noted that the senior administrators "certainly make their priorities clear in terms of what types of positions they fund."  This administrator asserted that, though hiring is essentially a departmental prerogative, it is hoped that the departmental and program needs coincide; however, this is not always the case. Explaining this further, s/he observed:

> We're dealing with this in a number of areas. Native American Studies is one where you have faculty in a lot of departments with connection to the field, but it's very hard to build a cohesive program…[i]t is very difficult without lines in that area…I think what is really lacking right now is leadership in the faculty,

because as you say the resources are there, the people with the expertise are there, but without a real desire on the part of the faculty members themselves and someone who is willing to do the work of coordinating, maybe in a more assertive way.

It was interesting to note that the administrator did not mention Middle East Studies in this context but s/he seemed to want to convey the message that Middle East Studies was not singled out. However, in answering general questions about hiring processes and expertise sought, her/his response focused in on Middle East Studies:

Well that research and teaching rift is certainly the case with ME Administrator. You're touching on the problem of any interdepartmental program. These are not departmental lines. The faculty teaching is going to be determined by the needs of students, research interest, [and] teaching interest, with a departmental focus rather than program focus.

His/her statement underscored Middle East Studies' status as a program that needed to coincide its interests within Judaic Studies. S/he was very clear that the program's need for faculty lines could be determined only by the department and only with a departmental focus. In other words, Middle East Studies would likely remain a one faculty program—until or unless Judaic Studies acknowledged the needs of Middle East Studies. Finally, in response to whether decisions are made in relation to their social and political contexts, the humanities administrator asserted that:

They [probably mean senior administration] are looking at other questions such as research productivity, and that certainly is number one [priority]. It is the departments who are much closer to what are the contemporary realities of the discipline. How does a discipline indeed respond and interact with the events in the world? Those are questions that will have a realization at the departmental level. And so hopefully that will be reflected in department's priorities and the way they begin to imagine moving forward.

Thus, depending on the college/school norms, there seems to be some difference in understanding the faulty hiring process, not only among the colleges and schools but

also within departments and, at another level, between faculty and the administration. According to Kezar and Eckel (2004), the most important aspect in understanding governance is to examine organizational structures such as lines of authority, roles, procedures, and bodies responsible for decision making. Yet it is a multilevel phenomenon with multiple processes with different decision making functions, which can be molded, altered or managed with more ease compared to influencing social interactions and social norms. This brings the discussion to the final aspect of institutional governance: interpreting and analyzing the thoughts, perceptions and views of the senior administration.

**University Governance: Perceptions of Senior Administrators**

The literature presents conflicting evidence on the importance of leadership for effectiveness and efficiency in the governance process. Cohen and March (1986) suggest that senior leadership plays a lesser role than commonly believed but can be influential in certain circumstances. In contrast, Schuster et al. (1994) confirm empirically that leadership or leadership style significantly shapes governance in terms of both effectiveness and efficiency, as well as in many other outcomes. Gumport and Dauberman (1999) argue that presidents and other campus leaders feel urgency to reshape governance processes and play a large role in this endeavor. At present, there have been few studies on the effects of leadership, and the evidence is mixed.

This section focuses on the response of the senior leadership, primarily one of the most senior administrators of the campus. Senior administrators in most cases hold responsibility for education, research and scholarship, faculty recruitment, retention, and

performance; reappointment, promotion, and tenure, as well as for undergraduate and graduate academic programs.

One senior administrator joined the university a few years ago. S/he brought a rich academic and administrative experience to the university, particularly in faculty governance, an area in which s/he was most active in his/her previous multiple leadership positions at private and public research universities. S/he is a well recognized scholar with a PhD from a highly prestigious institution and has numerous fellowships, honors, and awards to his/her name. This senior administrator stands out for his/her familiarity with Islam, Muslims, and the Middle East.

In the interview, one question focused on the nature of the decision making processes for hiring faculty, probing as to whether such decisions tended to be a top down or bottom up enterprise or some complex mix of both. Her/his response:

> What we're trying to do is a mixture. Most hires funded from
> turnover are bottom up. Someone retires, and the dept goes to the
> Dean and says "We need to have a new faculty member," and if
> their enrollments justify it, the Dean's office in general will put the
> line back into the dept that just had the loss, and they proceed.

However, as the senior administrator proceeded, it became clear that s/he intended to change the bottom up pattern. S/he related how s/he and other senior administrators started a process called 'Request for Proposal' (RFP) for areas that *they* thought needed attention. Since the most competitive proposals tended to be awarded to sciences, the situation was balanced with RFPs awarded to the prestigious undergraduate college to bring in new faculty. In addition, small awards were created for initiatives that might come about by merging two colleges into one. S/he went on to articulate the strategy of cluster hiring:

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[I]n order to promote thinking between the departments and different schools, we have a small cluster of hire for next year. So those cluster positions are being added from the top in areas that we think need attention. We occasionally very targeted hires. For example, something completely different from area studies… [a research center] that is an important part for every undergraduate. We had a decision to make about how we would staff the Director of [the research center]. The model that was presented to me was to hire a professional staff person as director—someone with a Ph.D. in [that that area of study]. And I thought when I looked at the salary needs and so forth, and thought for a little more we could hire another faculty member in [in that area instead of a director]. We made a deal with the [relating] Dept about taking possession of the [research center] if we provided [the department] this other person, and we've worked out the details and I think this is going to happen next year. So that is a very strategic replacement. One more faculty member [for the department] and they could do this. One could see it perhaps happening in area studies if enrollments justify it. So we do some from the top, and a lot from the bottom.

The rather lengthy narrative indicates that this senior administrator was not only targeting academic positions but at times taking over the responsibility of developing and growing a research center.  Another point that emerged was her/his reference to 'area studies,' which s/he made twice during the conversation. This perhaps was an intentional effort on her/his part to say there might still be hope for area studies, in this case Middle East Studies.

Referring to the motivation in faculty hiring, s/he asserted that: "When they hire a faculty, it is to build a comprehensive program within the department." There has to be a certain amount of planning, especially with tenure-track faculty—whether it fulfills a particular need or whether the need is to fill a graduate program niche, undergraduate program or some combination of the two. Such arguments 'have to be made' by the dean in conjunction with the provost's office. Ad hoc hiring, on the other hand, is done only

for temporary faculty and is driven mostly by enrollment. Regarding long-term hiring, this senior administrator pointed out:

> the tenure-track hiring is meant to be well-planned and vetted all the way up the system because after all a tenure-track faculty member will be an investment for the next 35 years.

Though his/her strong focus on planning prior to hiring faculty makes great sense, in many ways it differed from the views expressed by both the middle administration and faculty in social sciences where, regardless of the area expertise of the candidate, recruiting excellent faculty seemed to be the ultimate goal. In humanities, on the other hand, the emphasis was on research and scholarship. In this administrator's opinion, research and undergraduate education need to be balanced, but in departments with strong graduate concentrations, s/he thought, "there is often a tendency to worry more about having the right spectrum of faculty to fulfill the graduate needs—particularly of the doctoral program." Recently, there has also been a substantial growth in overall enrollment that demands teaching freshman classes like "general education" or "threshold courses like organic chemistry …so [department] has to look at its hiring…It is that balance of need…"

In terms of who has a key role in academic decision-making process, s/he said it was a collaborative effort. The senior administration has a certain role—even in RFP

Although the need for balancing teaching and research was emphasized, it was clear that her/his stronger emphasis was on research and scholarship. The nature of the question—if the hiring of faculty intends to fulfill research or undergraduate education obligation—placed her/him in a slightly awkward position. S/he felt compelled to acknowledge the importance of undergraduate education and thus the notion of balancing the two aspects.

In terms of who has a key role in academic decision-making process, s/he said it was a collaborative effort. The senior administration has a certain role—even in RFP

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faculty hiring where an RFP is put out by the senior academic administrator, it still

requires a departmental response to justify the request within the curriculum, though s/he

insisted that hiring to fill a retiring facutly almost always started in the department. The

senior administration gets involved only with the review in its final stages of the process.

The same thing is true in curriculum:

> Someone sitting around the table will say, "We should have an
> undergraduate program in Biofuels." That's fine, but unless the
> faculty put it through the curriculum and the governance process,
> it's not going to happen. So sometimes it's our role to provide
> incentives, to present ideas, and it might catch fire. We'll cajole,
> but it's ultimately the faculty who will create the curriculum.

One particular question that kindled the senior administrator's responses involved the

aspects of faculty hiring in relation to particular social and political contexts. This was a

topic that had not brought much interest from faculty and administrators. They, by and

large, appeared not to care to comment on it. In contrast, the senior administrator had

substantial comments about it. S/he thought it was important to talk about:

> That's hard to address…We're all social beings. So any decision
> has some social context. We're also supposed to be scholars who
> view the situation in a cold and calculating way, and…It's so
> bound up together that it's hard to tease out, but in any dept's
> discussion of an important hire or even an unimportant hire, bound
> up in that discussion, whether they see it explicitly or not is a
> social context.

In his/her view, some of the departments seem to be very aware of the social

context and place it even in job descriptions—"for example, a term like 'social justice,'

which is a big theme on this campus"—but in general "it is not something that you would

say is an absolute scholarly credential, but that's more to fit a particular social milieu of

the department."

Within the context of external influence, s/he stated that the overall governing of the university is certainly done by the trustees but within that framework, the campus has built its own structure to meet its academic and other requirements. The curriculum in particular is not influenced by any of the government agencies or the external stake holders. A big donor has been an ardent supporter of one of the schools and probably may have some influence on the dean and their support of courses of entrepreneurship but that is about it. Bringing the issue of Middle East Studies back in the conversation, s/he suggested that:

> One way someone from the outside could influence a hiring in Middle East would be to endow a professorship or endow a chair, because that would give that department an opportunity to hire somebody else that they might not otherwise have. It is an outside influence through philanthropy.

S/he did not realize how a program with one faculty member and a few Arabic language courses could bring an endowed chair. Although there could be opportunities to receive funding or even for endowed chairs, particularly from Islamic countries, but none of the organizations would choose a program that is subordinate to a department that is primarily a Judaic Studies program.

In the final analysis, her/his knowledge, comments, and assessment of university and faculty governance were well-articulated. It was evident that s/he preferred to have greater oversight of the faculty positions which, in turn, would allow her/him to shape academic disciplines according to her/his own propensity and liking. One view that emerged strongly was her/his desire for building a strong science program along with novel teaching methods and excellent opportunities for research and scholarship. Though

her/his references to Middle East Studies were few and far between, they conveyed a clear message for its not being a priority at the current time.

## Conclusion

At the risk of over-generalizing from this very small sample, recruiting excellent faculty with superior research and scholarship seemed to be the ultimate goal of departments, colleges/schools, and senior administrators, while concerns about undergraduate education seem to be of secondary importance. Despite the relative clarity of the governance process, there was little agreement within various schools or colleges about the decision-making process, particularly in hiring faculty. Academic governance was defined differently by various members of the academic community. In some cases, it was relaxed and informal, while in others, particularly pertaining to Middle East Studies, it seemed to be tightly structured and daunting. The strict lines of authority along with lack of departmental support left little room for the program to maneuver or take recourse to change the situation. In all instances, the final decision making authority seemed to rest with the senior administrators.

Although it seemed prevalent, one important aspect of the process—interpersonal relationships and its impact on the outcome of the decision making process — was not mentioned by any participants. One of the characteristics of governance, recognized by Riley & Baldridge (1977), is a political model in which people throughout the organization are central to the process, since influence and informal process are critical to the formation of policy. Under this model, decisions emerge from interest groups, conflicts and values, influences and the informality of the process. Birnbaum (1988)

argues that "Organizational culture is a powerful way of looking at how people in institutions create social reality through their interactions and interpretations" (p.72).

In the final analysis, the aim of this chapter was to find out at what levels within the campus organization the important decisions such as hiring faculty or developing a comprehensive area studies program are discussed, framed, and implemented. For various reasons, R1U presented a shared governance model and had many of its characteristics. It seemed to operate with a multitude of unclear, competing, complex inconsistent goals. Faculty from different departments want different outcomes, based on their own interests and their own understanding of the governance process—and within that, people, interpersonal dynamics, and culture affected the governance process. While certain departments and deanships followed clear norms and structures to achieve their goals, others, despite working within the same structure, took it more casually and pursued their objectives with interpersonal techniques. The most unfortunate programs were the ones who had neither political influence nor interpersonal skills and so remained marginalized in tightly-bound bureaucratic structures.

# CHAPTER 8

## ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

### Introduction

This study has looked at the discourses surrounding Middle East Studies on a large public university's flagship campus. My primary purpose was to understand institutional approaches toward Middle East Studies in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. I hoped to gain a deep understanding of this particular public university's stance on the relevance of Middle East Studies, particularly in the context of the serious and far-reaching impact of 9/11. The impetus for the study emerged from the absence of a clearly-articulated position of U.S. universities towards the study of the Middle East and the Muslim world. Many have remained silent to the compelling need that calls for a greater understanding in the U.S. of the Middle East and Muslim world—a need that was made abundantly clear all too tragically by the September 11, 2001 attacks. Thus, the main objective of the study was to uncover the reasons for this silenced narrative by examining whether there continued to be a prevailing discourse related to power and the centrality of Western knowledge in the academy, the discourse that historically led to the marginalization of Middle East Studies during the Cold War period.

The current dilemmas and predicaments of Middle East Studies in general and at this university in particular cannot be viewed solely in the context of contemporary conditions and trends. Middle East Studies can only be understood in an historical context. To set the contextual and intellectual scene, the study examined the ways in which debates about Middle East Studies and education have changed since September 11, 2001. The broad contextual themes included 1) the emergence of a 'new narrative of

academic freedom' where non-academic groups feel free to intervene in universities' academic programs; 2) the consequences of an antagonistic relationship between the west and Islam; and 3) the on-going consequences of the Arab/Israeli conflict. Within this context, the study highlighted the implications of these developments for the role of education in promoting cultural awareness about the Middle East and Islam.  Emerging from this analysis is a clearer understanding of the nature of our intertwined and interdependent world.

Using a qualitative approach, the study invited the university's senior leadership, area studies and discipline-based faculty to share their understandings of the impact of 9/11 on the university, their disciplines, and Middle East Studies.  From their narratives, a preliminary portrait of the university's response to 9/11 has emerged; I argue that this response had profound implications for the Middle East Studies programs. A postcolonial perspective allowed me to examine whether, and in what ways, the Cold War notions of the centrality of Western knowledge and power are still prevalent this particular academy. This lens helped to interpret how individual administrators and faculty addressed these questions, which in turn helped in identifying commonalities and differences across role groups and disciplines.

At this point, I revisit the administration and faculty responses to 9/11; discuss the positionality of Middle East Studies within the university; and summarize insights and perspectives. Section 1 summarizes the relevance of 9/11 to Middle East Studies in the university context, followed by an analysis of the common themes and participants' individual perceptions about aspects of Middle East Studies. Next, the section examines the Middle East Studies program's position within Judaic Studies, followed by a brief

review of how Islam and the Arab World are seen in this selected slice of the university's culture. Section 2 presents the implications of this study and what could be done to improve the university's outlook on Middle East Studies and, finally, Section 3 presents recommendations for future research.

## The 9/11 Context

The profound lack of knowledge of Islam, Middle East, and the Muslim world brought to attention by the 9/11 attacks is evident in academia, the media, and the government. The 9/11 attacks, unfortunately, instead of strengthening Middle East programs, exacerbated tensions and misperceptions further—especially by challenging the academic freedom of Middle East scholars and Middle Eastern studies programs on university campuses. Historically, such political confrontations occurred at dramatic historical events—the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the events of September 11, 2001, and the war in Iraq—that created a volatile context that stifled its scholarship and position on American campuses.

What makes the post-9/11 environment so distinctive is that it occurred at a time of global recognition of the United States as a primary world superpower, on the one hand, and at a time of political conservatism, on the other. These forces, when combined with the possibly increased influence of private and corporate donorship on American universities (the 'neo-liberal agenda'), have contributed to a political climate in which "there is no field more radioactive than that of Middle East Studies, and nothing more frowned upon than expressions of support for Palestinian studies" (Doumani, 2006, p. 31). The War on Terror created a climate in which academic specialists in Middle Eastern studies were blamed for not having predicted the events of

9/11, yet there continues to be a shortage of qualified and informed experts. As Doumani argues, "Such a shortage, of course, is one reason why the crisis occurred in the first place" (2006, p. 23). In all this, what seemed to be missing was an understanding of the unfortunate effects of the marginalization of Middle Eastern studies that simply would not have occurred if this field had historically been considered an important program to the university. Although the field has undergone some striking transformations since 1975, notably in terms of its position and scholarly agendas, academic developments continue to be conditioned by global power relations, events and, most immediately, U.S. policy concerns and interests.

### Middle East Studies Discourses

This section summarizes the analyses presented in the previous four chapters, touching upon some pertinent aspects of perceptions and insights concerning Middle East Studies at RIU. Though each participant had his or her individual point of view, some common themes were evident across both the faculty and administration, with some commonalities among faculty and some in the ranks of the administrators. To start with, the educational challenges posed by the 9/11 attacks were only marginally recognized by faculty members and held virtually no significance for senior administrators.  In this study, there was not strong support for curriculum, faculty lines, and other support for understanding the region or enhancing Middle East Studies The marginality of Middle East Studies was the background of every conversation and sometimes very much evident, especially in conversations with the program's department head and the senior administrators.  Though the imbalance between the two programs, Judaic and Middle East Studies, was noted, there was not much discussion

about Middle East Studies' vulnerability and heavy dependency on Judaic Studies, a position that kept the program at the margins of the academic enterprise.

Though in general recognized the need for understanding Islam and the Middle East, the faculty were aware of the under-resourced condition of Middle East Studies; they did not, however, voice a comprehensive solution. They seemed to have reconciled with senior administrators as well as their own departmental priorities and did not anticipate building relationships that could have had positive effect on Middle East Studies. To some degree, the general tensions that have existed for some time between Middle East Studies as an area studies and the social sciences seemed to be present as well.

In general, within humanities and social sciences, there seemed to be no clear understanding about the faculty hiring process except that it valued research and scholarship over the undergraduate mission. Academic governance pertaining to faculty hiring was defined differently by various members of the academic community. In some cases, it was relaxed and informal, while in others, particularly concerning Middle East Studies, it seemed to be tightly structured and daunting. The strict lines of authority along with lack of departmental support left little room for the program to maneuver or take recourse to change the situation. In all instances, the final decision making authority seemed to rest with the senior administrators.

In such circumstances, it was not surprising that, despite Middle East Studies' survival through many deans, provosts, and chairs, the status of the program remained unchanged, without additional faculty or funding resources, over the past some thirty

years. Meanwhile, the strength and vigor of Judaic Studies has increased dramatically. A

further analysis of this situation is presented in the following section.

## The Positionality of Middle East Studies

The preceding analysis argues for the beleaguered state of the Middle East Studies

program at the university, a program that has been beset with troubles since its merger

with the Judaic Studies program in the 1980s. The positionality issue of Middle East

Studies within Judaic Studies has been analyzed in preceding chapters. Nonetheless, it is

an issue that needs further attention. The academic development of Middle East Studies,

despite the considerable gains both in enrollments and degree awards, was inundated with

all kinds of problems, mostly relating to its positionality. This situation may have been

exacerbated by what can be seen as 'silence' on the part of the university's senior

administrators for whom the existence of the program and the notion of its

marginalization did not appear to be important.

As a stand-alone program, Middle East Studies could have tapped many resources

to help build and expand the program, particularly from wealthy Arab and the oil-rich

Gulf states that have been helping many U.S. universities to fund chairs or programs in

Arab and Middle East Studies.  Why were such efforts not pursued?  This situation,

however, is not unique to Middle East Studies. In circumstances where American

universities have accepted large donations from Jewish and Israel studies programs from

both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations, aggressively pursuing Arab support for

Middle East Studies can be politically challenging.

Although merging of the two programs ultimately resulted in imbalance between

them, the situation was not addressed by any subsequent administration. What might

account for this? Perhaps the antagonistic relationship between Middle East Studies and Jewish organizations was a factor; the situation has been intense since the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In many ways, Middle East Studies' position at the university cannot be separated from this issue—an issue that has perhaps continued to marginalize Middle East Studies in the United States. After the September 11 attacks, hostilities were further aggravated and, perhaps, deepened by some American Jewish far-right organizations that launched a number of attacks targeting Middle East Studies and scholars across the nation's campuses (Doumani, 2006; Lockman, 2004).

Thus, from an educational perspective, the university's approach toward Middle East Studies appears to be rooted in the structural inequalities of the past, where Middle East Studies was marginalized from the main social sciences. It can also be seen as a wider development of postcolonial studies that in many ways are at the heart of the colonial approach (Crossly & Tikly, 2004). This, however, does not mean that nothing changed; rather that it was difficult to find significant change that resulted directly from Middle East initiatives. As always, there were exceptions. Middle East Studies, contrary to other language programs, continued to maintain high enrollments in Arabic language programs. One might conclude that, in spite of the early travails of the Middle East Studies program, in the right circumstances, administrative reorganization could have made a difference, particularly when accompanied by an infusion of money. If the new structure had the support of the central administration, if the individual who headed it was in a position to be an effective advocate for Middle East funding projects, a new administrative unit could have played a significant role in moving the Middle East Studies agenda forward. To a greater extent, by separating the program from its

subordinate role in Judaic Studies, would have given the program considerable independence and financial leverage by unlocking new funding sources and allowing it to be a viable program.

I argue that dominant discourses continue to affect the field and its position in the academy. The issues of the East-West dichotomy that have intertwined with Islam and the Arab world have also played a crucial role in the further marginalization of the field in academia. The following brief remarks highlight some of these interpretations about the university culture.

## Perceptions about Islam and the Arab World

Even though institutions invoke rhetoric about diversity and pluralism, the awareness of the discourses characterizing the centrality of one's own group in the university's culture could be constructive particularly in view of the institution's own policies and practices.

Although the West had and still has derogatory images of other people, cultures, and religions, the image of Islam has historically evoked both a profound sense of cultural difference and a deep sense of threat (Frassetto & Blanks, 1999; Armstrong, 2006).  Thus, the traditional apathy of the West for Islam and Islamic peoples has been one major imperative that has played a pivotal role in shaping Middle East Studies. Although such suspicions about Islam and the Arab World have been ubiquitous and are deeply rooted in western culture, evidence of these fears within the university culture was disturbing.

For example, the pattern of hiring and (non)retention of indigenous Middle East faculty suggests, at best, a culture of indifference; at worst, a culture of fear.  Thus, it

cannot be ignored that, over the span of a few years, several outstanding Middle East faculty left the university. Their departure did not seem to reflect academic concerns as they all joined prestigious Ivy League institutions. There could have been several reasons why so many faculty of Middle East origin left, but it seems reasonable to assume that there was, in part, a very chilly, if not hostile, climate.

Again, these incidents suggest ways that discourses of power and hegemony seem to prevail in the university culture. Indigenous Middle East scholars have often been criticized for accommodating perspectives of peoples from the regions into their scholarly frameworks, investing in solidarity politics that lead to at times critiquing of U.S. policy (Bilgin, 2004; Mitchell, 2004). In general, this characteristic was seen as a flaw in their scholarship. Kramer (2001) sees Middle East Studies' value only in terms of its relevance to U.S. interests, while Daniel Pipes, a far right organizer of a website called Campus Watch, continues to target and attack Middle East scholars for being unpatriotic. Given these sentiments in academia, it is left to one's imagination under what circumstances the university let its prominent Middle East scholars leave.

Another example of ethnocentrism that reinforces the notion of 'otherness' is the one and the only indigenous Middle East scholar the university employed at the end of this study. Although discussed in previous chapters, the brief analysis here reinforces the importance of this issue. Understanding the salience of this matter is critical for an academic institution with a substantial number of students and faculty who come from non-Western parts of the world. As one may recall, an administrator in the Middle East Studies was criticized as "a disaster" in terms of her/his lack of ability to coordinate the program effectively. At times, however, her/his inadequacy was translated into identity

politics – that he/she was an Arab - echoing the arguments that have given rise to totalizing generalizations about the character and the thought processes of Arabs. The implication here is that there seems to be an assumption of an unchanging and distinctive 'Arab mind' or 'Islamic mind,' implicitly or explicitly different from an equally unitary and essentialized 'Western mind'—a mind stance that has roots in the division of humanity into distinct civilizations (Lockman, 2004; Said, 1978). As such, the images of the Muslims as 'other'—profoundly different from 'us'—have continued to influence scholarly knowledge of Islam and the Middle East. Even in academia, Western scholars of Middle East Studies at times view Islam and the Middle East with the disdain and hostility that is prevalent in the present day popular culture of the United States and the Western world (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 1994; Said, 1978).

Such misconceptions were further reinforced during the 2008 presidential election year. For months, the mention of two words—'Muslim' and 'Obama'—were prevalent all through the campaign, accusing Obama of being a 'Muslim', using the term as a pejorative—connoting anti-American leanings and a hidden attachment to terrorism. Such examples of prejudice, which by extension, judge area studies programs and scholars of non-Western origin, particularly the Middle East and the Muslim world, are not only limited to popular culture but are prevalent in the sophisticated university culture as well. It is important for the university and the campus community to understand and consider these differences, particularly as policies are created and implemented. Without such consideration, the implications of culturally dominant – and dominating - discourses that attempt to maintain a diverse and plural climate on campus may result in the further marginalization of those who do not have the same ethnicity or point of view.

## Conclusion

The aim of the of this study was to examine this phenomenon with a special emphasis on postcolonial perspectives that have identified dominant discourses which may well be responsible, in part, for perpetuating inequality in the academy. The dominance of such discourses was evident in the institution's governance and practices, and the attitudes and perceptions of senior administrators and faculty. In important respects, this idea provide a unifying framework that brings together many of the themes explored in this study. I have argued that the Middle East Studies program at R1U has been profoundly shaped by the prevailing beliefs and attitudes – discourses - of senior administrators. I have also argued that education could have played a crucial role in responding to the nation's need for understanding the Middle East and Islam. Increasing such understanding would have been of great value in potentially bringing peaceful resolutions to conflicts and misunderstandings. In this respect, education might well be the ultimate solution. Though there were many obstacles and vested interests, the hope was that recognition of this crucial need would be an incentive for R1U, and perhaps other universities, to play a significant role in widening access to Middle East Studies at all levels.

The analysis of discourses, which began with exploring key figures in the university's response to 9/11, has identified the these discourses convey a sense of ambiguity, uncertainty, and the lack of a concrete position concerning Middle East Studies. These discourses have not only shaped the marginality of Middle East Studies; they have also constructed particular social identities for Middle East scholars. This stance demanded that I examine the discussions and arguments advanced to justify such a

discourse. I hoped to discover the reasons and motivations that have caused this lack of

investment in Middle East Studies—especially at a time when a better understanding of

Islam and the Middle East seemed to be more important than ever.

One reason for the marginalization of Middle East Studies seems to be the

intimidating environment that surrounds it, i.e. its peculiar position within Judaic Studies.

Also largely influential is the ongoing conflict, violence, and political maneuvering in the

Arab world; the influence of these world events cannot be discounted.  Within this

context, the perception of administrators and faculty about Middle East Studies does not

seem to be deliberately disdainful, but rather benignly neglectful.  Thus, in the final

analysis, the motives that drive the institutional choices and decisions that ended up in

marginalizing the field are complex and contradictory, not unlike the disconnect that has

characterized America's involvement with the Middle East over the past half century.

One could argue that the arrogance of power on the part of the U.S. that continues to

view the Middle East and Muslim countries as irrelevant against the vastly superior

military power of the United States.

In the months leading up to 9/11, John Dower noticed that, despite nearly forty

warnings that an attack by Al Qaeda somewhere in the United States was being planned,

policy-makers could not believe it. According to the CIA's chief, Michael Scheur, who

headed the 'bin Laden unit', "Washington's top personnel and policy makers thought that

it was their duty to mankind especially to the unwashed, unlettered, undemocratic,

unwhite, unshaven, and antifeminist Muslim masses" to bring around and make them see

the way America lives. How could "a polyglot bunch of Arabs wearing robes, sporting

scraggly beards, and squatting around campfire in Afghan deserts and mountains…pose a mortal threat to the United States"? (cited in Dower, 2010, p. 58).

In the same manner, the participants in this study seemed to view Middle East Studies through somewhat parochial and limited lenses. The University's stance, as articulated by key administrators and faculty, may well have allowed only a limited role for Middle East Studies, as manifested in its peripheral status, which has remained unchanged even after a decade since 9/11.

The inferences drawn from this inquiry highlight that thinking and practices that rose during the Cold War persist into the present, quite evidently in patterns of academic decision-making and discourse. Patterns of domination, embedded in power relationships and privileged knowledge, can be seem as characterizing R1U's stance that sees the study of Middle East and Islam as peripheral to the central purposes of the university. This brings U.S. back to where this investigation began: the politics of knowledge. In that sense, Rizvi (2004) argues, very little has changed: only a minority of Americans have taken the trouble to ask why this has happened—reasons for so much hate—and asks should it be a cause of concern or for self-scrutiny.

The study, by shedding light on one public university's response to 9/11, has argued that evidence of postcoloniality exist in public institutions, thinking that hinders the transfer of critical knowledge by not truly allowing space for multiple voices, especially those that have been previously silenced by dominant ideologies.

In conclusion, I argue that we must educate our students about the Middle East and Islam. The cost of historical amnesia, ignorance, and misunderstanding about the region and rest of the 'other' world that prevail in academia and American society,

culture, and politics are only likely to rise. The issues that are addressed in this study are very much with U.S. and likely to persist in the years ahead.

<u>**Recommendations**</u>

I am deeply aware of the difficult task of making recommendations in an environment such as R1U. The primary goal of my research was not merely to develop some specific steps that may seem superficial but to create an understanding and awareness to recognize the importance of pursuing Middle East studies. Nevertheless, the unique cultural, ideological, and practical realities within the university make it hard to come up with reasonable recommendations.

My central objective was to help build a deeper understanding of the university's stance to 9/11 and, based on that, specify implications in terms of its educational importance. From there on, my hope was to have the senior administration recognize the challenges that Middle East studies confronts on this campus and encourage them to define a framework in which discussions could take place that would facilitate better understanding of the Middle East and Islam. Thus, my research is meant to generate important insights which might be of value to senior administration, faculty, and Middle East Studies to improve the circumstances that marginalized the program.

My overarching recommendation to the senior administration is to assess the impact of the current situation (9/11, the Arab Spring uprisings, etc.) and take active steps to validate the crucial need for Middle East studies. I recommend framing a Middle East studies program that is located in a neutral environment, most probably within humanities along with other language programs, under the direct supervision of the dean. More ambitious recommendations include an infrastructure, a center or an institute for Middle

East studies, in which all the Middle East related courses, seminars, and events, currently scattered all through the campus, could be brought together and housed. This would indeed improve its visibility and standing on campus.

Nevertheless, before proceeding to specific program recommendations, it is important to focus on building a framework that could meaningfully and deeply integrate Middle East Studies into the main fabric of the university, linking Middle East Studies with other campus priorities. This can be done by: building coalitions of support across academic units; bringing visibility to the institution through thoughtful initiatives; and taking the leadership role in advancing campus multidisciplinary programs.

**Building Coalitions of Support**

There is tremendous diversity within the Islamic world, and any effort to view it through a single lens is seriously misguided. The history and cultural heritage of Islamic peoples is rich and complex, and Islamic contributions to global knowledge in such fields as architecture, mathematics, literature, medicine, and science are extensive. Initiatives in Middle East Studies, thus, under a new rubric of 'Study of Global Islam' could strategically and collaboratively engage Middle East Studies with the meaningful and effective advancement of global education on the campus. It could be an important intellectual hub for Middle East Studies faculty and students at RIU, the surrounding colleges and beyond, and a highly successful and sought after program that cuts across a variety of traditional disciplines. The measures noted below outline numerous strategies through which RIU can reach this goal. Several of these recommendations, relatively easy to implement, have a widespread positive results:

- Using current faculty, and existing majors, minors, and courses, RIU could create a Study of Global Islam program with a variety of interdisciplinary concentrations focusing on regions as well as global issues.

- Concentrations within 'Study of Global Islam' could include areas such as sustainability, global business, global engineering, global public health, international relations, leadership Studies, nonviolence and peace studies, conflict resolution; violence and trauma studies; aging studies; world cinema, and much more.

- Development of other new global and interdisciplinary undergraduate and graduate programs and courses, especially combining work in the humanities, the life sciences, the social sciences, and the professional schools.

- Create incentives to encourage faculty to develop more content-based language courses, e.g. Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish for engineers/scientists/business professionals/health professionals/etc.

## Enhancing Institutional Visibility

In order to bring visibility to RIU, Middle East Studies needs a leader, a dynamic faculty advocate, who could provide significant leadership in creating initiatives that would further enhance the national and international profile of RIU and capture the attention of the key decision makers.  Initiatives such as:

- The Association of American Universities (A AU) Stance: on Middle East scholarship and education, well documented by AAU leaders' 2008 visit to Iranian universities.

    - A substantial number of AAU public universities such as University of Arizona, Indiana University, the State University of New York, and several campuses of University of California have comprehensive Middle East Studies program

    - AAU focus on solutions to the nation's economy, security, and well-being presents ample funding opportunities for Middle East postcolonial research, research policy issues, and graduate and undergraduate education.

    - AAU focus on developing international partnerships creates opportunities for graduate student/faculty joint research and international educational collaborations.

- Global Islamic Scholars program: a special track within the Honors Program or emulating the Honors Program, maximizing existing knowledge and resources.

- Funding Opportunities: U.S. Dept. of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs; U.S. Department of Education National Resource Center; Arab and the oil-rich Gulf states, etc.

- Creation of multidisciplinary Task Force on Global Islamic Cultures charged with: increasing the visibility of RIU in this vibrant area of scholarship, research, publication and professional achievement through conferences, special projects, publications, grants and seminars,

- Creation of an interdepartmental interdisciplinary Institute for the Study of Global Islam and corresponding graduate and undergraduate program based at RIU and the other members of the surrounding academic institutions.

**<u>Leadership in Interdisciplinary Studies</u>**

Currently, Islam stands out as one of the fastest growing religions, both globally and in the West. Nearly 14 million Muslims live in Western Europe, while about four to six million reside in the United States. Though the legal and political integration of Islam in Europe and in the United States has been an area of interest for a number of academic disciplines, there has been a rising demand for studies in Islamic and Middle East cultures following the political and social consequences of 9/11. The need, therefore, for the RIU to have an institutional umbrella, providing undergraduate and graduate level academic and research programs, is not only desirable but crucial. In this regard, the establishment of an institute or a center for Middle Eastern Studies could fulfill this need sufficiently. The leadership role in creating interdisciplinary research and graduate and undergraduate programs could assist students in acquiring a sound grounding in the history, cultures, economy, politics, and languages of the Islamic world. The institute could be a unit in planning degree or certificate programs for students who intend to use their knowledge of the Islamic World in careers, in teaching, research, governmental and

non-governmental organizations, business, journalism, and other personal and

professional pursuits. For example graduate and undergraduate certificate and degree

programs in:

- Middle Eastern Studies/Islamic Cultures and Languages: providing a broad knowledge of Middle East in contemporary Middle Eastern studies—history, Islamic studies, Islamic art and archaeology, and Arabic, Hebrew, Farsi or Turkish language or literature. It could be offered either by the university or through surrounding institutions.

- Middle Eastern Studies with concentration in Business Administration: this could combine the strengths of the Study of Global Islam and the school of management. The program could help students gain a firm grasp of Islamic banking and finance along with history, politics, and economy of the Muslim world; the skills for careers in international business.

- Middle Eastern Studies with concentration in Public Policy: this could address the needs of students wishing to acquire a solid background in modern Middle Eastern languages, history, and civilization while developing their abilities in policy analysis in preparation for professional careers in scholarly, educational, governmental, non-governmental, and business environment in the United States and abroad.

Several such joint interdisciplinary certificate and degree program could be developed

linking unaccustomed campus partners such as engineering, natural science, public

health, and nursing through collaborations by actively supporting the teaching and

research of RIU Middle East specialist faculty, graduate students, and scholars.

**Facilitating Multicultural and Multidisciplinary Understanding**

In addition, opportunities could be created for students to gain greater insight and

appreciation for cultural values with which students will interact in an increasingly inter-

dependent world. Being a public institution, the university could encourage greater public

understanding of these issues by reaching a wide variety of the state, pre- and post-

secondary educators, businesses and community through a variety of public forums,

media and discussions such as:

- Increasing the availability of Islamic culture and language related courses by helping bring visiting faculty to academic departments and professional schools who lack such specialists;

- Organizing and sponsoring lecture series, colloquia, film series, seminars, and major research conferences;

- Enhancing Islamic and the Middle East cultures and language teaching and learning at the university through direct and indirect support of both teachers and students;

- Promoting interdisciplinary and collaborative work through joint sponsorship with other research units of intellectual programs and visiting scholars;

- Collaborating with the university outreach office and other educational organizations to serve elementary, secondary, and post-secondary teachers and students;

- Supporting Islamic culture and language related community and cultural activities and programs.

### Further Research

Among the most notable changes in U.S. higher education since September 11, 2001, was the realization that America, despite its continuing involvement with the Middle East and the Muslim world, lacks a deep understanding of the region. Thus the most ubiquitous discourse was to call upon America's educational institutions to help foster a greater understating in this country of the Middle East and Muslim world. In that regard, public universities providing greater access to higher education were seen to be uniquely positioned for advancing this knowledge. Yet, even a decade later, universities seem to remain unconcerned about this need. Consequently, Middle East Studies continues to be peripheral on the nation's campuses.

While much has been written about the Cold War discourses that led to the marginalization of Middle East Studies in the academy, critical evaluations of the academy's ultimate power in shaping and relegating area studies—particularly Middle

East Studies—to the fringe of the mainstream social science disciplines are still few and often based in the Cold War context. It is surprising that so little empirical research has actually been conducted that questions institutional authority in shaping area studies academic framework. The most troubling aspect of this oversight is the way in which historians and even Middle East scholars have accepted the notion of institutional power without more than a passing reference to challenging universities' authority for this apparent discrimination. Even in the aftermath of 9/11, the focus of Middle East Studies remains largely on the political aspects of this event—media, rhetoric, and discourses on Islam (Doumani, 2006; Lockman, 2004). A few studies raise issues about the educational implications of 9/11, but fall short of explaining how universities across the country reacted to 9/11, and if a meaningful knowledge and understanding about the Islamic world is being provided to students.

This study is a modest attempt to fill this gap. It is my hope that the research and conversations the study generates contribute to an alternative to dominant discourses, thus creating space for multiple thoughts and ideas that remain a core foundation for institutions of higher learning. It may in some unobtrusive way help to overcome the inherent discourses of the centrality of western knowledge and issues of power in the construction of higher education as well as the cultural and religious misunderstandings embedded within the culture of educational institutions.

**APPENDIX A**

**INFORMED CONSENT**

Dear ---

My name is Nigar Khan and I am a doctoral candidate in the International Education Program in the Department of Educational Policy, Research and Administration at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. I would like to invite you to participate in my dissertation research study that examines the role of education in a historically challenging and politically complex climate.

More specifically, I am interested in exploring public universities' response to 9/11, which will provide a deeper understanding of public universities' stance on the relevance and appropriateness of Middle East studies particularly in the context of the serious and far-reaching impact of 9/11. The study will be helpful in raising awareness of possible misconceptions about the Islamic world, thereby stimulating conversations about public universities' responsibility to offer programs that would build a better grasp of the Islamic world—contributing to the production of experts who could be instrumental in diffusing conflict through their scholarly research and teaching.

I appreciate your participation in the project. It will entail one semi-structured audio-taped interview, lasting about 60 to 90 minutes. The information gathered during this interview will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous, and will only be used for the purposes of this doctoral study. Pseudonyms will be used for all participants.

Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice. You also have the right to review any of the information or materials gathered in this study, including the final research paper.

I have supplied two copies of this informed consent form, both of which must be signed if you agree to participate in the study. You may keep one copy for your records and the other is for my own records. By signing below, you agree that you have read and understand all information provided to you in this form, that you are willingly participating in this research study, and that you are aware that you can withdraw from he study at any point.

It would be an honor and a privilege to have you participate in this study. Your knowledge of the institution and its vision will be most beneficial to my inquiry. If you have questions, please contact me at 413-253-7257 (home) or 413-441-2215 (cell) or via email at nkhan@grad.umass.edu. Should you have further questions about the research, please contact my advisor Professor Gretchen Rossman at 413-545-4377 or via email at gretchen @educ.umass.edu.

_____     _____
Signature                                          Date

## APPENDIX B

## INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

**Overview:** In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the absence of an in-depth and nuanced understanding of the Middle East and the Muslim world was evident in the media, Washington, as well as in academia. This lack of understanding might have led to universities taking on responsibility to offer programs and courses that would build a better grasp of the politics of contemporary Middle East studies, thereby contributing to the production of expertise in this area. Given the serious and far-reaching impact of 9/11 as well as the recent events in Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, and Libya, I would like to explore state universities' responsibility in offering students a well grounded education about the people, politics, and cultures of the Islamic world? I am particularly interested in exploring UMass' stance on Middle East studies— how do these factors impact its posture, and—how Middle East studies is seen in the larger context of the University.

**Response to 9/11**

1. How were the attacks of 9/11 perceived by the University?

2. What campus-wide actions were taken immediately for interpreting and understanding the issues posed by 9/11—discussions, exchange of ideas, debates, symposiums, etc.? If yes, what were the actions taken? If not, what is your understanding of why not?

3. If there were campus-wide discussions, in your opinion, how effective were they in raising awareness of possible misconceptions about the people, politics, and cultures of the Islamic world?

4. What challenges did 9/11 create for the University in terms of fostering a better grasp of the politics of contemporary Middle East studies?

5. What steps, actions and specific practices have been taken since 9/11 by the University to initiate or expand Middle East studies programs, faculty, and the curriculum?

6. What incentives were put forward by the senior administration to support and encourage such initiatives? If there were no incentives, in your opinion, why not?

7. What steps were taken by the faculty, specifically Middle East faculty, for creating programs that would help produce expertise in this area?

8. What was the demand for such programs by the students?

9. What issues and challenges does the University face to create, implement and sustain these initiatives? From where did these issues arise?

10. Overall, how do you perceive the University's response to 9/11?

11. What concerns do you have about it?

**Middle East Studies Program**

12. What is your perception about Middle East studies at UMass Amherst?

13. Did the number of Middle East faculty increase or decrease since have been on campus? If decreased, why?

14. How do you assess the potential of the current programs, faculty and courses in preparing students with sophisticated knowledge and understanding of Islamic world: its history; politics; economy; culture; and language?

15. In your opinion, how adequate is the Judaic/Near Eastern studies program to fulfill this need?

16. How do Middle East faculty in other departments relate to Judaic and Near Eastern program in offering a comprehensive program in Middle East studies to UMass students?

17. What is the expertise of the current Middle East faculty?

18. How does these faculty expertise translate into providing students a well grounded education about the Middle East and the Islamic World?

19. What issues and challenges does the University face to create, implement and sustain Middle East studies programs? From where did these issues arise?

20. Are the current Middle East studies programs adequate in fulfilling the need and expectations associated with a flagship research public university?

21. How is Middle East studies seen in the larger University context?

22. What concerns do you have about it?

23. What challenges does it create?

**Governance Challenges: Who Decides?**

24. How were/are the decisions pertaining to 9/11 response made within the University?

25. At what level of administration are such decisions discussed, framed, and implemented? Are they a top-down or a bottom-up enterprise, or some complex mix of the two?

26. Who has a greater voice and a key role in the academic decision making process?

27. What role does the campus leadership play?

28. How strong is the faculty role in determining the campus academic structure and the decision-making process?

29. How much authority is exerted by the trustees and the President?

30. How much influence do the external stakeholders have in shaping academic decision?

31. How do decisions emerge in relation to their social and political contexts?

**Questions and Complexities in Middle East Studies Discourses**

The country, as we know, is still embroiled in war on several fronts. And we are witnessing popular movements for democracy in several Arab countries. By now, a well grounded education in Islamic studies could have produced hundreds of young professionals who might have been instrumental in diffusing conflicts, contributing scholarly research, and raising awareness of the Arab world within popular culture. Given these assertions:

32. What is your personal interpretation and understanding of 9/11 and its consequences for the University?

33. What kind of needs and new priorities for educational development are brought about by the new intellectual implications of 9/11 and recent events in the Middle East?

34. What would you like to see improved?

35. How did 9/11 undermine the academic integrity of Middle East studies on public university campuses?

36. What kind of effect does the Western perception of Islam and the Arab-Israeli conflict have on the development of Middle East studies in public institutions?

37. How do these factors impact the academy's posture toward Middle East studies?

38. Can the U.S. universities' approach to Middle East studies be seen as a wider development of postcolonial studies?

39. To what extent do the Cold War perspectives concerning non-Western studies still prevail in the thinking of the academy, particularly Middle East studies?

40. How do you see Islam's continued impact on global and domestic realities for the foreseeable future?

41. What impact will the recent events in Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, and Libya, in your opinion, might have on public universities' posture toward Middle East studies?

42. How do you personally perceive the role and responsibility of state universities in providing students the knowledge and understanding of the Islamic World in the aftermath of 9/11 and in view of the recent events?

43. Is there anything else you would like to add that we haven't already addressed?

*Thank you very much for being so generous with your time*

## APPENDIX C

## Table 3

## MIDDLE EAST
## COURSE ENROLLMENTS: 1996-2011

| | | Fall '96 | Fall '97 | Fall '98 | Fall '99 | Fall '00 | Fall '01 | Fall '02 | Fall '03 | Fall '04 | Fall '05 | Fall '06 | Fall '07 | Fall '08 | Fall '09 | Fall '10 | Fall '11 | Grand Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Humanities** | 105: Middle East  I | 83 | 42 | 93 | 98 | 109 | 89 | 99 | 90 | 80 | | 95 | 99 | | 84 | 99 | 90 | 1250 |
| | 115: Middle East  II | | | | | | | | | | 46 | | | | | | | 46 |
| | 310: Islamic History I | | 39 | 36 | 29 | 29 | | | | | | | | | | | | 133 |
| | 320: Islamic History II | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 330: Middle East & the  West | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Humanities (Special Topics)** | 391: Islamic National Movements | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 395: Central Asian Empires | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Humanities** | 111: Middle East  I | 11 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 10 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 10 | | | | | | | | 64 |
| | 112: Middle East  II | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 409:: Understanding 9/11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 380: The Middle East Today: Culture and Change | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 496: Understanding 9/11 | | | | | | | 3 | | | 27 | | | | | | | 30 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Table 3, cont'd.:

| | | Fall '96 | Fall '97 | Fall '98 | Fall '99 | Fall '00 | Fall '01 | Fall '02 | Fall '03 | Fall '04 | Fall '05 | Fall '06 | Fall '07 | Fall '08 | Fall '09 | Fall '10 | Fall '11 | Grand Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ARABIC LANGUAGE COURSES** | 126: Elementary Arabic I | 25 | 19 | 21 | 29 | 34 | 26 | 39 | 30 | 57 | 66 | 45 | 61 | 67 | 53 | 49 | 50 | 671 |
| | 146: Elementary Arabic II | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 226: Intermediate Arabic I | 7 | 5 | 18 | 10 | 8 | 5 | 8 | 17 | 13 | 17 | 18 | 16 | 25 | 16 | 23 | 15 | 221 |
| | 246: Intermediate Arabic II | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 326: Advanced Arabic I | 2 | | | 8 | 2 | | 2 | | | | 4 | 2 | | | | | 20 |
| | 426: Advance Arabic II | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 380: Modern Arabic | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 410: Modern Israel and Arabic Languages | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Table 3, cont'd.:

Spring

| | | Spr '97 | Spr '98 | Spr '99 | Spr '00 | Spr '01 | Spr '02 | Spr '03 | Spr '04 | Spr '05 | Spr '06 | Spr '07 | Spr '08 | Spr '09 | Spr '10 | Spr '11 | Spr '12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Humanities** | 105: Middle East I | | | | | | | | | | 90 | | | | | | |
| | 115: Middle East II | 46 | 80 | 64 | 89 | 82 | 92 | 92 | 96 | 94 | 99 | 99 | 101 | 102 | 102 | 92 | 100 |
| | 310: Islamic History I | 57 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 320: Islamic History II | | 33 | 31 | 36 | 29 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 330: Middle East & the West | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Humanities (Special Topics)** | 391: Islamic National Movements | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 395: Central Asian Empires | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Humanities** | 111: Middle East Survey I | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 112: Middle East Survey II | 8 | 9 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 5 | 10 | 7 | 7 | | | | | | | |

Table 3, cont'd.:

| | | Spr '97 | Spr '98 | Spr '99 | Spr '00 | Spr '01 | Spr '02 | Spr '03 | Spr '04 | Spr '05 | Spr '06 | Spr '07 | Spr '08 | Spr '09 | Spr '10 | Spr '11 | Spr '12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 409:: Understanding 9/11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 380: The Middle East Today: Culture and Change | | | | | | | 28 | | | | | | | | | |
| | 496: Understanding 9/11 | | | | | | 8 | 36 | | 4 | 29 | | 153 | | | | |
| ARABIC LAN-GUAGE COURSES | 126: Elementary Arabic I | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 146: Elementary Arabic II | 4 | 8 | 17 | 10 | 12 | 16 | 15 | 17 | 32 | 32 | 24 | 37 | 33 | 34 | 25 | 20 |
| | 226: Intermediate Arabic I | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 246: Intermediate Arabic II | 2 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 12 | 8 |
| | 326: Advanced Arabic I | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 426: Advance Arabic II | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 380: Modern Arabic | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 410: Modern Israel and Arabic Languages | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

# APPENDIX D

## RESEARCH I UNIVERSITY, RESEARCH II UNIVERSITY, RESEARCH III UNIVERSITY
## INSTITUIONAL PROFILES 2009-2010

| | Year Established | Location | Enrollment | Academic Degree Programs | Research & Development |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| Research I University | 1863 | Rural | Total: 27,016 UG: 20,873 G: 6,043 | UG: 90 Masters: 83 Doctoral: 67 | $160, 666,000 |
| | | | | | |
| Research III University | 1892 | Rural | Total: 16,392 UG: 13, 234 G: 3,158 | UG: 102 Masters: 55 Doctoral: 36 | $86,000,000 |
| | | | | | |
| Research II University | 1881 | Rural | Total: 29,517 UG: 21,496 G: 8,021 | UG: 120 Masters: Doctoral: Grad: 95 | $210,400,000 |

(Sources: RIU 2009-10, RIIU 2009, RIIU 2010 Fact Sheets)

# APPENDIX E

## RESEARCH I UNIVERSITY, RESEARCH II UNIVERSITY AND RESEARCH III UNIVERSITY
## MIDDLE EAST / ISLAMIC STUDIES COURSE
## COMPARISON CHART 2009-2010

| Research I University | Middle East/Islamic Studies Courses | Arabic Language Courses |
|---|---|---|
| | 307 Islamic Art I | 126 Elementary Arabic I |
| | 308 Islamic Art II | 146 Elementary Arabic II |
| | 105: Middle East I | 226 Intermediate Arabic I |
| | 115: Middle East II | 246 Intermediate Arabic II |
| | 491 Seminar Muslim Women | 326 Advanced Arabic I |
| | 330: Middle East & the West | 346 Advanced Arabic II |
| | 380: Modern Arabic | |
| **Research III University** | | |
| | 177 The Islamic Middle East: History | |
| | 376 Women in Muslim Societies | |
| | 377 Revolution in Islam | |
| | 378 Arab-Israeli Conflict | |
| | 371 Economics in Islamic Societies | |
| **Research II University** | | |
| | 1121. Traditional Arab Literatures, Cultures, and Civilizations | 1111. Elementary Arabic I |
| | 1122. Modern Arabic Culture | 1112. Elementary Arabic II |
| | 3038. Peoples and Cultures of the Middle East | 1113. Intermediate Arabic I |
| | HIST 3300 Near Eastern Pre-History | 1114. Intermediate Arabic II |
| | HIST 3301 Ancient Near East | |
| | HIST 3330 Palestine Under the Greeks and Romans | |
| | POLS 3447 American Diplomacy in the Middle East | |
| | POLS 3462 International Relations of the Middle East | |
| | POLS 3464 Arab-Israeli Conflict | |
| | Economic History of the Middle East | |
| | 3704. Medieval Islamic Civilization to 1700 | |
| | 3705. The Modern Middle East from 1700 to the Present | |
| | 3712. The Middle East Crucible | |
| | 3462. International Relations of the Middle East | |

(Sources: RIU 2009-10, RIIU 2009, RIIIU 2010 Course Catalogues)

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