

**WOODROW WILSON SCHOOL
POLICY TASK FORCES AND CONFERENCES
SPRING 2008**

WWS 402a – Islam and Democracy: Lessons from Turkey

Task Force

Robertson Hall, Monday, 7:30 – 10:00 PM

Mario Zucconi

In early 2004, the Bush administration launched its “Greater Middle East Initiative,” an overall strategy of democracy promotion advanced as a remedy to the social and economic problems in that region and to the threats emanating from it. Since the common denominator in the region is Islam, the administration’s proposal rekindled an old debate on the compatibility of Western-style democracy and its rights-system, and Islamic culture.

Later, the unforeseen and enduring difficulties in the occupation of Iraq and the growing hostility encountered by its policies in the region made it necessary for Washington to scale back its ambitions and fall back on a more traditional relationship with its undemocratic friends in the region. In Turkey, however, a party of Islamist origins earnestly embarked on a broad process of political reforms and put Turkey on the track to accession to the European Union. Since then, Washington has been pointing to that experience as a role model for “moderate Islam” (over the objection of secularists in Turkey). Developments there are being carefully watched by moderate Islamist groups in Egypt, Syria, Morocco and elsewhere.

The task force will examine the evidence from Turkey and identify some major hurdles and conditions for the advancement of democratic institutions and politics elsewhere in the region. Then, checking those findings against the record of the American policies in the region, it will make recommendations to the U.S. State Department on actions it should take to help advance democratic politics in the Middle East.

Mario Zucconi is a Public Policy Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington D.C.. He previously taught international relations at the School of Political Sciences in Urbino, Italy.

WWS 402b – Testing for Accountability in Higher Education

Task Force

Robertson Hall, Wednesday 7:30 – 10:00 PM

Daniel Oppenheimer

One of the key motivations behind the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation was to have a level of accountability for public schools. To this end NCLB mandates high stakes standardized testing, with the possibility of sanctions against schools whose students fail to demonstrate adequate yearly progress. This has been tremendously controversial; while proponents point to improvements on key measures of learning, critics argue that it has had a number of

negative consequences including “teaching to the test” and removing flexibility from individual schools and teachers in developing curricula.

Recently, Margaret Spellings and the Spellings commission developed “a comprehensive national strategy” for the improvement of post-secondary education (i.e. university level education). The report called for higher institutional accountability among universities; this, in turn, has led to a call by some politicians for standardized testing for higher education in the way that NCLB did for secondary education.

In this policy task force, we will consider the pros and cons of this kind of testing at the post-secondary level. Students will learn testing theory, become acquainted with the assumptions, capacities and limitations of testing, and will examine the strengths and flaws of current testing policy. The task force will use Princeton University as a case study; its report will be in the form of recommendations to the new administration in Washington on what policies should be adopted for accountability on higher education.

Daniel Oppenheimer is Assistant Professor of Psychology and Public Affairs.

WWS 402c – Access to Services: Gaps in Care for Medicaid/SCHIP Beneficiaries

Task Force

Robertson Hall, Monday, 7:30 – 10:00 PM

Stephen Somers/James Verdier

Policymakers in states all across the country wrestle with the fact that not all of their Medicaid and State Children’s Health Insurance Program beneficiaries can get access to all the services they need and to which they are entitled. Medicaid has made tremendous strides since its inception but there are still considerable gaps in clinical and geographic areas. Budget constraints and low reimbursement rates are the most often cited reasons for the access problems, but stigma and provider resistance to government programs remain real issues, and a shortage of child mental health workers and pediatric dentists is also a contributing factor.

The task force will examine the literature and conduct interviews in selected states on the scope and characteristics of the problems and will seek to identify ways to improve access to these programs. Its report will be in the form of recommendations to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which expends significant resources promoting expansions in public coverage, and to state Medicaid directors, on ways to support the development of innovative solutions at the state and local levels.

Stephen Somers is president of the Center for Health Care Strategies in Princeton. He previously worked as a professional staff member in the U.S. Senate and the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. James Verdier is a senior fellow at Mathematica Policy Research in Washington, DC, and previously served as Indiana State Medicaid Director.

WWS 402d – Undocumented Immigration in the United States

Task Force

Wallace Hall, Monday, 7:00 – 9:30 PM

Marta Tienda

Despite legislation in 1986 (the Immigration Reform and Control Act) and 1996 (the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act) designed to curtail unauthorized entries to the United States, undocumented immigration rose during the last two decades and reached an all-time high of approximately 12 million. The 1990s also witnessed an unprecedented geographic dispersal of the foreign-born population, including undocumented immigrants, which has fueled anti-immigrant sentiment across the nation. Although the regulation of immigration is a federal responsibility, the failure of the U.S. Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform legislation has prompted many state and local authorities to assume immigration enforcement roles. The vigilante activities and the proliferation of local ordinances—in more than 600 communities in over 35 states—to deny immigrants and their children access to schools, medical services, and housing warrants an evaluation of interior enforcement strategies that are effective, that adhere to constitutional guarantees, and that protect human rights.

This Task Force will focus on enforcement as it plays out at the state and local level, with a focus on the new immigrant destinations. The Task Force will review case studies like Hazelton, PA; Farmingville, NY; Hightstown, NJ; and New Haven, CT to identify the range of enforcement being used by state and local authorities and to evaluate their effectiveness and legality. The task force report will focus on interior enforcement, including job sites, housing, schools, hospitals, motor vehicles, and other institutions, and will be in the form of recommendations to the senior staff of Senator Menéndez and Governor Corzine.

Marta Tienda is Maurice P. Daring '22 Professor of Demographic Studies and Professor of Sociology and Public Affairs. She chaired the National Resource Council Panel on the Status of the U.S. Hispanic population.

WWS 402e – U.S. Trade Policy and the Politics of Globalization

Task Force

Robertson Hall, Monday, 7:30 – 10:00 PM

Tim Reif

U.S. trade policy is at a turning point. Public and congressional confidence in that policy is at perhaps the lowest level in more than 30 years. The task force will examine the making of U.S. trade policy through an examination of the domestic and international politics of globalization.

The task force will focus on the intersections of policy and politics as they relate to the three key pillars of U.S. trade policy: (1) multilateral negotiations to broaden and deepen the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO), in particular through the Doha Development Agenda round of negotiations begun in 2001; (2) bilateral and regional free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations; and (3) enforcement of existing trade agreements and domestic fair trade rules derived from those agreements. This examination will in turn focus on key issues such as basic international labor standards, protection of medical patents versus access to essential medicines, especially in poor countries, trade and environmental protection, liberalization of trade in agriculture, non-tariff and

regulatory barriers to trade and competition, innovating new trade policies for the poorest countries, and developing a new “fast track” compact between the President and Congress. The goal will be to develop a clearer understanding of how a representative democracy like the United States copes with the policy challenges and political pressures generated by globalization as it seeks not only to participate in but to lead the development of global trading rules.

The task force report will identify the top priorities for U.S. trade policy and consider how best to achieve support for those policies in Congress. It will be in the form of recommendations to the President-elect as of November 8, 2008.

Tim Reif is Staff Director and Chief Trade Counsel for the Trade Subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives. He served in the Executive Office of the President as a trade negotiator during the NAFTA and Uruguay Round negotiations.

WWS 402f – U.S. Policy toward the Rise of China

Conference

Chancellor Green, Monday, 7:30 – 10:00 PM

Lynn White

The planet's most populous country is increasing in strength and has by far the fastest-growing large economy. China's "rise" presents the U.S. with both opportunities and problems. For example on security, America has benefited from Chinese cooperation in the North Korean nuclear issue; but the Taiwan disagreement, if mishandled, could conceivably after some years cause a Sino-American war. The economic ledger similarly has two sides: booming Chinese exports of products that American consumers like to buy have allowed major Chinese purchases of U.S. Treasury bonds, but trade disputes also abound. America is a democracy; China's regime type is Leninist, still calling itself a "dictatorship" (albeit not still credibly 'of the proletariat'). On many issues, at the U.N. Security Council and elsewhere, China and America have worked well together. The U.S. has fast-increasing trade interests, normative liberal interests, environmental interests, and security interests in China. But the executive and legislative branches in Washington have obvious difficulties making a coherent U.S. China policy from these assorted concerns.

The Conference will attempt to construct a more comprehensive, longer-term, more coherent U.S. policy toward China. The conference will consider topics such as the following: the future domestic development of China's political system and its effects on U.S. interests; the security of adjacent democracies; American trade and investment in China; the effects of Chinese diasporas on PRC development; China's relations with oil-exporting and other countries, media and technological influences on PRC socio-politics, and American political groups' diverse concerns about China. The report of the Policy Conference will be in the form of recommendations to the U.S. State Department.

Lynn White is Professor of Politics and Public Affairs and former Chairman of the WWS Undergraduate Program.

WWS 402g – Implementation of Climate Change Policy in the United States

Conference

Thursday, Whitman Hall, 7:30 – 10:00 PM

Hal Feiveson

There is now wide acceptance in the country that it is essential over the next several decades to sharply reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the United States compared to business as usual. There are state initiatives, including the AB-32 Global Warming Solutions Act in California; regional initiatives, including the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) of nine Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states; and proposals at the national level now being looked at in Congress.

This Policy Conference will explore the range of policy instruments being considered by these initiatives at the state, regional, and national levels. It will consider approaches to these issues such as the following: “cap and trade” schemes in which greenhouse gas emissions are capped overall, but where some or a lot of emissions permits could be traded among the emitters; “carbon taxes,” favoured by many economists, but often dismissed as politically unrealistic; regulatory initiatives, including renewable portfolio standards and high corporate average fuel economy (CAFÉ) standards; and various technological approaches to the issue. It will review the context for policymaking on this issue, including the greenhouse trading schemes now in existence among the Kyoto agreement countries and in Europe.

Its report will be in the form of recommendations to New Jersey’s Governor and its Congressional delegation.

Harold Feiveson is Co-Director of the Program on Science and Global Security in the Woodrow Wilson School. He is the Editor and one of the founders of the international journal, Science and Global Security.

WWS 402h - Oil & Poverty: Insights from Southern Africa

Task force

Francis Wilson

In Cape Town, South Africa

This task force will examine the dynamics of oil in the sub-continent at a time of rapid change on both the demand and on the supply side. With the price of oil rocketing to all-time highs, the challenges for South Africa, with its high proportion of poor people, are immense. But on the supply side the problems are, if anything, even more difficult. Although a number of African countries including Angola, have discovered large amounts of oil and their foreign exchange earnings have therefore risen dramatically, these earnings have failed to translate into basic improvements in the quality of life (apart from a very few). In parts of Africa they have in fact created greater misery. Against the background of the continent as a whole, but looking specifically at South Africa and Angola, the Task Force will seek to identify the major problems facing oil-importing and oil-exporting countries in southern Africa and to make recommendations for dealing with them.

Francis Wilson is an emeritus professor in the School of Economics at the University of Cape Town and a Research Associate at the Southern Africa Labour & Development Research Unit, which he founded and directed for 25 years.

WWS 402i – US Democracy Promotion in Egypt

Task Force
Maye Kassem
In Cairo, Egypt

The September 2001 terrorist attacks produced what appeared to be a major shift in US foreign policy towards Egypt - as part of the Middle East region at large. As the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice noted on her 2005 trip to Egypt: “For sixty years, the United States pursued stability at the expense of democracy in the Middle East – and we have achieved neither... We are all concerned for the future of Egypt’s reforms when peaceful supporters of democracy – men and women- are not free from violence... The Egyptian government must fulfil the promise it has made to its people – and to the entire world – by giving its citizens the freedom to choose... So together let us choose liberty and democracy”. (Speech at the American University in Cairo, 20 June 2005). Such rhetoric was reinforced by the application of some political and economic pressures as well as the creation of two democracy promoting programs: the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and the Broader Middle East and North Africa partnership (BMENA). While some political openings did occur in Egypt in 2005, the regime regressed to its traditional authoritarian policies which it legally reinforced in its revised 2007 constitution.

The task force will examine the Egyptian political system and its changing relations with the US government. It will review the nature of US democracy promotion in Egypt and assess alternative policies to promote stable democratic reform. The task force report will be in the form of recommendations to the Government of Egypt and senior MEPI officials.

Dr. May Kassem is Associate Professor in Comparative Politics at the American University in Cairo.