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**Budapest Study Tour: A Front Row Seat to Watch a Free Press Emerge**

“This was an excellent dose of education, networking, and entertainment … if it wasn’t for this program, I don’t think it would have been possible to meet all these people in such a short period of time.”

Those word were uttered by Hazem Abu Loghod, executive director of Mazaj FM, one of Jordan’s leading radio stations. Abu Loghod was one of six media professionals from Jordan who attended a two-week-long tour of Budapest and
Vienna. The trip was organized by CGCS in collaboration with Central European University, and is part of CGCS’s Jordan Media Strengthening Program (JMSP). Its aim was to expose Middle Eastern media professionals to the emergence of a new media model in Central Europe.

“Under Communism, most of the media in Central Europe was state owned and controlled,” explained Libby Morgan, research and editorial coordinator for CGCS. “Many countries in the Middle East, including Jordan, are undergoing a similar restructuring and liberalization of their media sectors. This visit was organized to give media professionals the opportunity to compare the processes of change and to experience how a free, privately owned media environment functions.”

From March 31 to April 13, the group attended a live broadcast on Roma radio station Radio C, visited Hungary’s telecom and broadcast regulators, the National Communications Authority (NHH) and the National Radio and Television Commission (ORTT); dined at the Jordanian consulate’s residence with the U.S. Ambassador to Hungary; delivered a public presentation on Jordan’s media scene at Central European University; and visited the Austrian public broadcaster, ORF.

“(This) was a great experience for us to have first-hand knowledge and experience about the Central European countries that started the process of democratic transformation almost at the same time as our countries. It is interesting to acquaint ourselves with this important experience given the faster rhythm of this transformation (happening) in Central European countries.” – Sami Zobaidy, journalist for the Arabic daily Al Rai

The participants, in addition to Loghod and Zobaidy, included Nofan Ajarmeh, lawyer and law professor at the University of Jordan; Jaafar Nsour, Director of
Administration and Finance at the Audiovisual Commission; Luna Sabbah, Lawyer and Executive Director of Adaleh Center for Human Rights Studies; and Aida Taweel, journalist for the Arabic daily Ad Dustour.

Annenberg’s role in the three-year JMSP is to: 1) improve understanding of media policy issues among lawyers, judges, regulators, members of parliament and other government officials, 2) enhance the law drafting process, and 3) help invigorate civil society around these issues. Find out more about the JMSP.

**Monroe’s Huffington Post Blog**

Monroe Price has been blogging about China and the upcoming Beijing Olympics, explaining the public diplomacy implications of the event and its media coverage. Since April 11, he’s tackled the Olympic torch’s travels, asymmetric information warfare, the Dalai Lama, and the “modernizing propaganda state.” You’ll find his latest insights on China and the Olympics here.

**Monroe E. Price International Media Law Moot Court Competition**

The inaugural edition of the Monroe E. Price International Media Law Moot Court Competition took place in Oxford in April 2008. The competition was organized by the Programme in Comparative Media Law and Policy (PCMLP) at the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, University of Oxford, in collaboration with the International Media Lawyers Association (IMLA). Teams of law students from Zimbabwe, Sierra Leone, Georgia, Russia, Malaysia and India put their arguments before judges from the European Court of Human Rights and distinguished scholars and experts in media law. The main goal of the competition is to promote media defense work among students worldwide and to raise awareness of international standards of protection of media freedom. Congratulation to the Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyyah of Laws (IIUM) **Media Mooting Team** from International Islamic University Malaysia for winning the competition. The Price Moot Court Competition will take place annually. It is named in honor of Professor Monroe E. Price, founder of the PCMLP. More details here.

**ASC Grad at CEU Summer School**

Angela Lee, who just completed her first year as a doctoral student at Annenberg, will attend the Central European University Summer University course on *Media, Democratization and Civil Society*. The course, which will take place from June 16 to 28 in Budapest, will examine the interconnections between media, democratization and civil society. It will focus on the Central/Eastern European region, but will also be relevant in other contexts where media and civil society have played crucial roles in processes of democratization. The course will provide an overview of theories of transition and democratization, civil society and social movements, and media policy and reform.

**Scholar Spotlight - Ibrahim Al-Marashi**
Note: Dr. Al-Marashi’s new book, *Iraq’s Armed Forces: An Analytical History*. It deals with the role of the military played in political communication in Iraq, has just been published.

In the Spring 2008 term Dr. Ibrahim Al-Marashi became the first jointly-hosted visiting scholar between the Middle East Center and CGCS. He is an assistant professor at Bahcesehir University, Faculty of Communication, where he teaches courses on media and the Middle East. He is also an adjunct instructor at Bogazici University's History Department, where he teaches courses on the modern history of Iraq, and Iran. He obtained his Dphil at University of Oxford, completing a thesis on the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, part of which was plagiarized by the British government in Feb. 2003 prior to the Iraq War. He is an Iraqi-American who lived at various times in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Egypt and Morocco, and has travelled extensively through the Middle East.

Dr. Al-Marashi was invited by CGCS to spend three weeks in January 2006 at Annenberg, during which time he delivered a public lecture on Iraq’s media to the ASC community predicting the sectarian strife that would engulf Iraq beginning in February 2006. His association with CGCS has continued on a number of projects, including contributing to the first CGCS occasional paper, *Toward an Understanding of Media Policy and Media Systems in Iraq*.

He says his association with CGCS began over a cup of coffee in old Byzantium in the historic quarter of Istanbul, Turkey. “Monroe Price sent me an e-mail after he read a power point presentation of mine on the Web, which was a lecture on Iraq’s media that I had given to UNESCO in Doha, Qatar,” Dr. Al-Marashi said. “The way the association began between myself and ASC is a testament to the ‘global communications’ of CGCS,” he said.

“Being based here at Annenberg has allowed me to attend numerous talks and seminars that have been beneficial to my own research, while giving me the chance to teach a group of stellar undergrads in my course, which deals with media and Middle East politics. The most valuable part of my experience with CGCS is that is has allowed me to be part of a node that connects several global networks of communications scholars. Professor Price has assembled networks of scholars and practitioners who work on Iraqi media or on media in the Mediterranean region, or from Open Society Network based out of Budapest, Hungary. I’ve enjoyed working with all those networks and owe it to CGCS for introducing me to them.”

**Graduate Student Spotlight - Lokman Tsui**

Lokman Tsui is a doctoral candidate at Annenberg. His dissertation focuses on the implications the rise of citizen media has for the global production of news. His research more generally centers on new media, journalism, and global communication.

His is co-editor of *The Hyperlinked Society: Questioning Connections in the Digital Age (2008)* together with Joseph Turow, Ph.D., the Robert Lewis Shayon Professor of Communication at Annenberg. Lokman's research has benefitted greatly from classes and research assistantships under Professor Price, where a term paper written
for Professor Price's class was later published under the title "An Inadequate Metaphor: the Great Firewall and Chinese Internet Censorship," (Global Dialogue, Winter/Spring 2007).

Lokman also organized a CGCS-sponsored one-day symposium, "Towards a Harmonious Information Society in China? Technology, Tensions, and Observations" (2008) that focused on the implication information technology has for social stratification in China. With the support of CGCS, Lokman was able to attend seminars including the Programme in Comparative Media Law & Policy at Oxford University (2004) and the Summer Doctoral Programme of the Oxford Internet Institute, held in Beijing, China (2005) that laid much of the foundation for his dissertation. CGCS support also allowed Lokman to work with Ken Farrall, another Annenberg Ph.D. student, and present their research on China, destabilization and internet censorship at IAMCR (Taipei, 2005) and Westminster University (London, 2006).

Workshops

5th Anniversary Conference: Media, Communication & Humanity
London School of Economics (LSE) and Political Science, London, Sunday 21st - Tuesday 23rd September 2008

In celebration of the Department of Media and Communication's 5th year, LSE is inviting critical thinking about how the media and communications environment is implicated in shaping our perceptions of the human condition. How is it mediating human values, actions, and social relations? CGCS, LSE, and the Stanhope Centre for Communications Policy Research will co-sponsor a panel entitled, “Media Studies and Media Action: the role of communications in shaping attitudes, values and politics in crisis areas.” This panel will cover case studies in Darfur, Ethiopia, Iraq, and will explore how to assess the role of the media and how to use the media in reconciliation efforts. Panelists will include Susan Abbott, associate director of CGCS, and Monroe Price as well as former CGCS Visiting Scholars Nicole Stremlau, Iginio Gagliardone, Helena Bilandzic, and Ibrahim Al-Marashi.

See the conference site to submit an abstract and to register.

About CGCS

The director of CGCS is Professor Monroe E. Price, a leading authority on issues relating to media and civil society, media law and policy advocacy, and the intersection between communication, development, and globalization. The associate director of the CGCS is Susan Abbott. Abbott works with Professor Price on increasing international and comparative research and activities. She helps to identify and develop capacity with international partners such as CMCS in Budapest and manages international development projects. CGCS staff includes Sylvie Beauvais, Project Coordinator; Libby Morgan, Research and Editorial Coordinator; and Kate Cover, Annenberg-CEU Post-Doc. More information on CGCS Staff.
Comments and suggestions for the newsletter may be forwarded to Sylvie Beauvais.

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