Call for Papers: China in the Middle East

Indiana University’s Ottoman and Modern Turkish Studies Chair invites interested scholars and advanced graduate students to submit proposals for the conference below. The event will take place at the Indiana University China Office, Beijing, March 17-18, 2015. Please submit a 200-word paper proposal along with your CV to ksilay@indiana.edu, tugrulkeskin@pdx.edu, and zantao79@pku.edu.cn by October 1, 2014.

Indiana University Ottoman and Modern Turkish Studies Chair Presents
An International Conference on
China in the Middle East

Indiana University China Office, Beijing
March 17-18, 2015

http://china.iu.edu/a

Organized by
Dr. Kemal Silay, Ottoman and Modern Turkish Studies Chair, Indiana University, USA
Dr. Tuğrul Keskin, Portland State University, USA
Dr. Zan Tao, Peking University, People’s Republic of China

Keynote Speech by
Dr. Yitzhak Shichor, University of Haifa, Israel (Invited)

Conference Program

March 17, 2015

9:00 - 9:30 AM Opening Ceremony

9:00 - 9:15 AM Welcome Speech by President Michael McRobbie (Invited), Indiana University

9:15 - 9:30 AM Opening Remarks by Dr. Kemal Silay, Indiana University

9:45 - 12:00 PM Panels

1. Panel 1: Cultural Exchange between China and the Middle East
   In this panel, we will explore social and economic history between China and the Middle East before and after 1949. Trade and commerce between China and the Middle East has a long-standing mutually beneficial history of exchange, which
has created social and cultural bridges between these societies. The panel will examine the role of cultural exchange between Chinese and Middle Eastern Societies based on trade and commerce.

2. Panel 2: Sino-Turkish Relations: Past and Present
Unlike other Middle Eastern societies, the relationship between Chinese and Turkish societies is a historic one, based on social, political and economic diversification. Social and political connection can be clearly seen in the history of Turkish people in Mahmud al-Kashgari and Yusuf Khass Hajib’s writings and ideas; however, following the emergence of nation-states in the 20th century and the economic globalization of China after Deng Xiaoping, these two societies and states have established a more economic based exchange which has become the core of their relationship. Over the last 20 years, Chinese economic growth led to much attention in Turkish economic circles. As a result, more Turkish and Chinese business communities began to engage in trade exchanges. Turkey, as a member of NATO, and wanting membership in EU, began to seek economic and political partners in the globalized world. In this panel, we will examine the Chinese-Turkish relationship in the modern era with these factors in mind.

12:00-13:30 PM Lunch

14:00-16:30 PM Panels

3. Panel 3: Sino-Iranian Relations: Past and Present
One of the examples of a stable relationship between China and a Middle Eastern state can be the mutually beneficial friendship between China and Iran. Iran has had a long historical and diplomatic relationship with the PRC in the 20th century; however, today, Sino-Persian ties are mostly in trade and commerce. With the growth of the Chinese economy and the search for more energy resources, the PRC began to shift its foreign policy towards the Middle East, specifically Iran. This panel explores current social, political, and economic trends in the Sino-Persian relationship.

4. Panel 4: Sino-Israeli Relations: Past and Present
Although Israel was one of the first nations to recognize the PRC as a legitimate government, China did not establish its diplomatic relationship with Israel until 1992. However, since then, both countries have developed commercial and military links based on mutual benefits. An interesting aspect of the Sino-Israeli relationship is that the Chinese accepted Holocaust survivors escaping from Nazi persecutions. The panel investigates Sino-Jewish relationships in the contemporary era.

March 18, 2015

9:30-12:00 PM Panels
5. **Panel 5: Sino-Arab Relations: Past and Present**

Chinese and Arab-populated states are the product of the colonial conditions in the 20th century. However, both Chinese and Arab societies have an economic and social exchange which predates Islam. This exchange has created mutual understanding and led to mutual benefits. Chinese interests in Arab-populated societies are purely based on economic investment and energy resources. On the other hand, Arabs view China as a new global partner, not replacing the US and Europe, but rather as a new relationship in the globalized era. This panel focuses on social, political, and economic exchange between the PRC and Arab states in the modern era.

6. **Panel 6: China’s Energy Security Strategy and the Middle East**

The Middle East is considered an American backyard for energy resources; however, with the increased need of oil for newly emerging economies, the Middle East has received a lot of attention from states such as China. After 2020, US domestic oil production will eliminate the need for foreign oil sources; therefore, the US will play less of a role in the Middle Eastern oil market. However, current trends in the Chinese economy point to their increased need for foreign energy in the future. This panel will examine the overlapping interests of China and the United States in the Middle East.

**Closing Remarks by His Excellency Ali Murat Ersoy, Turkish Ambassador to the People’s Republic of China** (Invited)