

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Peter Berkowitz and Michael McFaul, *Studying Islam, Strengthening the Nation*

It remains painfully true, more than three years after Sept. 11, that even highly educated Americans know little about the Arab Middle East. And it is embarrassing how little our universities have changed to educate our nation and train experts on the wider Middle East.

For believers in a good liberal arts education, it has long been a source of consternation that faculties in political science, history, economics and sociology lack scholars who know Arabic or Persian and understand Islam. Since Sept. 11 it has become clear that this abdication of responsibility is more than an educational problem: It also poses a threat to our national security.

The case for bolstering faculty and curriculum resources devoted to the Muslim Middle East is, of course, obvious from an educational perspective. The region is vast. Islam represents one of the world's great religions and provides not only an intellectual feast for comparative study in the social sciences and humanities but also an indispensable comparison and contrast for more familiar religions and ways of life. Particularly in the era of globalization and the information revolution, there is little excuse for universities' continuing to betray the liberal ideal of educating students in the ways of all people.

Our national security interest in this area should also be obvious. As in the Cold War, the war against Islamic extremism will not be won in months or years but in decades. And as in the Cold War, the non-military components of the war will play a crucial role.

To fight the decades-long battle against communism, the United States invested billions in education and intelligence. The U.S. government sponsored centers of Soviet studies, provided foreign-language scholarships in Russian and Eastern European languages, and offered dual-competency grants to enable graduate students to acquire expertise both in security issues and in Russian culture.

In the early days of the Cold War, a mere handful of Soviet experts dominated scholarship and policy debates. Not coincidentally, this was the time when we made some of our greatest mistakes, such as treating the communist world as a monolithic bloc and considering all communist regimes to have the same degree of internal dissent. By the end of the Cold War, however, the effort to "know the enemy" had resulted in the training of tens of thousands of professors, government analysts and policymakers. Every interpretation of Soviet society or Kremlin behavior triggered an informed and exhaustive debate.

Today, there is not one tenured professor in the departments of political science at Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, Chicago or Yale universities who specializes in the politics of the wider Middle East. Some scholars do study Islam and the languages and countries of the people who profess it. Programs in and outside of universities aimed at comprehending and combating Islamic extremism also exist, but they are woefully underdeveloped and changing at a snail's pace. Everyone now recognizes that we lack "human intelligence" — covert agents, spies and informants — in the Middle East. But we also suffer from shortages of NSA linguists, academic scholars, and senior policymakers trained in the languages, cultures, politics and economics of the wider Middle East.

It is time to recognize our ignorance and address it. Universities, working in tandem with government and foundations, should take immediate steps. And in doing so, they should resist the temptation to simply amend existing faculties with programs in Middle Eastern studies centers that are not rooted firmly in the established faculties of the university. Programs set up this way promote a kind of intellectual ghettoization because of the misguided assumption from which they and the multitude of special-interest programs that have sprung up around the university derive: that in each area of human

affairs there is a methodology distinctive to it. 52

Universities should encourage the study of Islam from within the various social 53
 sciences and humanities, the better to promote truly interdisciplinary conversation. 54
 And they should avoid concentrating resources on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. 55
 The disproportionate weight it is often given in Middle East studies programs reflects 56
 the poisonous political proposition that Israel is the root source of all the ills that 57
 beset the Muslim world. Teaching and inquiry in the university must remain, to the 58
 extent possible, nonpolitical. 59

Universities need to make a priority of teaching Arabic, Persian and Turkish, and 60
 it should be done not by part-time adjunct faculty but by tenured professors. The 61
 study of language opens doors to culture, history and politics. It disciplines the mind, 62
 and allows people to reach out to foreigners by showing them the respect that inheres 63
 in addressing them in their mother tongue. 64

It will not be easy to find the necessary faculty. During the Cold War, universi- 65
 ties could draw on a pool of extraordinary European émigrés. But in educating schol- 66
 ars of the Muslim Middle East, we must start almost from scratch. We can provide 67
 incentives to bring PhD candidates from the region to study at U.S. universities, but 68
 we must understand that filling the large gaps in our universities is the work of a 69
 generation. 70

As for government, it should immediately foster a dramatic expansion of fellow- 71
 ships for graduate students to study Arabic, Persian and Turkish. And the government 72
 ought to provide grants to universities to fund undergraduate education in Islam. 73
 These investments would be a drop in the bucket of the federal budget and would 74
 bring huge rewards. 75

Major foundations can play their role, too, by, for example, creating mid-career 76
 fellowships for senior faculty in the social sciences and humanities to obtain new comp- 77
 etencies in the study of the Islamic world. They could also use their financial leverage 78
 to endow new chairs in the study of the wider Middle East. 79

Dramatically increasing opportunities for the study of Arabic, Persian, Turkish 80
 and Islam in our universities is the right thing to do, to advance the cause of learn- 81
 ing and America's interest in training people who can contribute to the spread of 82
 liberty abroad. We owe it to our universities to demand that they live up to their 83
 responsibility. 84

1. The authors' tone in paragraphs one and two (lines 1-9) can best be described as
 - a. dramatic
 - b. critical
 - c. defensive
 - d. objective
 - e. skeptical

2. The authors use the word "abdication" in line 8 to mean
 - a. acceptance
 - b. belief
 - c. denial
 - d. neglect
 - e. reversal

3. Which of the following best describes the relationship between the second and third paragraphs (lines 5-17)?
 - a. The third paragraph describes the effects of the consternation mentioned in the second paragraph.
 - b. The third paragraph elaborates upon the threat to national security mentioned in the second paragraph.
 - c. The third paragraph provides details to clarify the ideas of the "believers" (line 5) mentioned in the second paragraph.

- d. The third paragraph offers points opposing the argument established in the second paragraph.
 - e. The third paragraph illustrates the current level of teaching of the college faculties mentioned in the second paragraph.
4. The authors' discussion of the Cold War in paragraphs 4–6 (lines 18–34) suggests all of the following parallels regarding the development of educational programs about the Arab Middle East EXCEPT
- a. The development of educational programs about the Arab Middle East will take many years.
 - b. Developing programs that represent the complexity of the Arab Middle East is essential to avoid making generalizations about an entire region.
 - c. It is necessary to develop a wide range of educated professionals to foster knowledgeable discussion about the multitudinous facets of the Arab Middle East.
 - d. Developing programs in language and culture is as essential as developing programs related to security issues.
 - e. Programs should be developed to create a few experts who can dominate scholarship and policy debates.
5. Paragraph 7 (lines 35–44) serves which of the following functions?
- a. It provides more detail to emphasize the claims made in the first paragraph (lines 1-4).
 - b. It illustrates claims made in the previous paragraph (lines 27-34).
 - c. It refutes claims made in the first and second paragraphs (lines 1-9).
 - d. It expands upon the case made in the third paragraph (lines 10-17).
 - e. It describes specific cases to support the overall argument.
6. The pattern of development of this essay can best be described as
- a. problem to theoretical background to practical solution
 - b. assertion of claim to general consideration to qualified opinion
 - c. problem to parallel situation to solution
 - d. general statement of argument to examples to counterargument
 - e. abstract point to specific examples to generalized solution
7. “At a snail’s pace” (line 40) and “a drop in the bucket” (line 74) are both examples of
- a. onomatopoeia
 - b. cliché
 - c. alliteration
 - d. hyperbole
 - e. paradox
8. In the final sentence, the authors state: “We owe it to our universities to demand that they live up to their responsibility” (lines 83–84). The word “responsibility” refers to:
- a. “educating students in the ways of all people” (lines 16-17)
 - b. “training . . . professors, government analysts and policymakers” (lines 32–33)
 - c. “promot[ing] truly interdisciplinary conversation” (line 54)
 - d. “teaching Arabic, Persian and Turkish” (line 60)
 - e. “filling the large gaps in our universities” (line 69)

