Amos Nur Says Farewell

All good things must come to an end—as will my tenure as director of Overseas Studies Programs (OSP) on August 31. These five years were exciting—as I have often said, before I joined OSP I thought that the director’s job would be easy and somewhat boring. Instead it turned out to be demanding but exciting.

Several things were accomplished in these five years: we opened a program in China—Stanford’s first in mainland Asia; we opened a unique and rewarding program focused on the Australian Great Barrier Reef and rain forest; introduced the September three-week Overseas Seminars (9 are offered this coming September); designed our first ten-week-long, one-time seminar (to be held in Cape Town, South Africa next winter); and instituted the first academic conferences attended by students and faculty from all centers.

The success of these offerings is reflected by the substantial increase in the numbers of students participating (over 600 in 2004-05 vs. less than 400 five years ago) and by the increase in the number of faculty who applied to lead seminars or serve as faculty-in-residence at our regular programs. We have also been able to restructure the program in Moscow to make it not only more cost-effective by greatly reducing the fixed costs (so we can operate even with a very few students), but also moving it to a top academic institute. We are in the process of doing the same in Kyoto—where we hope to arrange for the Stanford Center for Technology and Innovation (SCTI) to be embedded in a local university.

Over the past five years OSP succeeded in raising around $32 million designated for OSP as an integral part of the Campaign for Undergraduate Education (CUE). Although this is a bit short of the $50 million we hoped for, it is nevertheless a respectable sum.

There are some things that I have failed to accomplish: I was hoping to open programs in India, Mexico, Jerusalem and Spain; India is currently on hold, Jerusalem is blocked because the region is unsafe, and a program in Spain is on the drawing board. Mexico remains a real disappointment—I was not able to generate enough enthusiasm on campus to back a meaningful program.

Looking back I recognize also two other successes: first, we were able to create a sense of a team out of fairly disparate program directors and home-office staff. OSP now has transparency and collegiality that brings great pleasure to our work, with the overseas directors meeting regularly and exchanging ideas. And, finally, the OSP Council, an advisory group consisting of some Stanford trustees and other OSP alumni, has provided incredible encouragement and good advice as the changes in OSP were implemented over the past five years. So I want to thank all of you: the Council’s members, donors, the directors and OSP staff at the centers and the home office for making these five years so much more rewarding to me than I originally imagined possible. — Amos
First Year in Beijing

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

learning the language is an integral part of the students’ experience here, they are still able to fulfill most of their academic mission without having to rely on their Chinese skills. This characteristic sets our center apart from other study abroad programs in China because the language requires so much effort to learn, most students’ experience here, they are still able to fulfill most of their academic mission without having to learn the language is an integral part of the transition from tourist to insider. On every level of the student, Cultural Reality claims that the difference between these two stereotypes is fairly clear: women, a factor orientation, our program’s staff would tell us later at Cultural Orientation, don’t be fooled! Even she, an American who has been teaching in the States for many years and is currently the Director of International Relations and International Policy Studies). Look for more information in the next issue of the newsletter of the STANFORD OVERSEAS STUDIES PROGRAM.

Naimark Appointed New Director of OSP

Norman Naimark, the Robert and Florence McDonnell Professor in East European Studies, has been named Director of the Overseas Studies Program effective September 1, 2005. An alumnus of Stanford in Germany, Group XIII (Beutelsbach, June-December, 1964), Professor Naimark joined the faculty of Stanford’s History Department in 1988. A scholar of great breadth and imagination, he has earned national distinction for his mastery of Russian, Polish, German, and Jewish historical materials, with an emphasis on the 19th and 20th centuries. He participates in national and international professional activities and has garnered numerous grants to support his research. Complementing Naimark’s ground-breaking scholarship are excellence in teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and strong administrative skills (he served as Director of the Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies for many years and is currently the Director of International Relations and International Policy Studies). Look for more information in the next issue of Abroad.

New Director in Santiago

Stanford’s Program in Santiago will celebrate its 15th anniversary this year, and a number of changes are underway. Professor Eduardo Fuenzalida, who has led the program most ably since its beginning, has taken the decision to retire in late 2005. His leadership and wisdom will be missed, but he leaves a strong program well positioned for the future. After an extensive international search the Overseas Studies Program is pleased to announce that Dr. Iván Jakšić will be assuming the Directorship in January, 2006. Dr. Jakšić says he is looking forward to working with students, faculty, and staff to build on the excellent work that has already been done in the Santiago program. Chile is a vibrant nation, a magnificent base for learning about the country, and the region as a whole. I hope to cement and expand Stanford’s presence in this important part of the world.

Born in Punta Arenas, Chile, Jakšić studied philosophy at the Universidad de Chile in Santiago before moving to the United States to pursue graduate work in American Studies (SUNY-Stonybrook, M.A., 1976) and History Ph.D., 1981). After graduation, he was Research Associate, and then Vice-Chair, of the Center for Latin American Studies at the University of California, Berkeley (1982-1988). He went on to the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee as Associate Professor of History and Director of the Center for Latin American Studies (1989-1994). He next taught at the University of Notre Dame as Associate and Full Professor of History (1994-2004), serving for a time as Associate Provost for International Studies (1995-1997). Jakšić’s primary research interests are in Latin American intellectual and political history, especially of the Independence and national periods. He has been a Visiting Scholar at the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard University, a Senior Associate Member at St. Antony’s College, Oxford University, and a Visiting Professor at the Institute of History, Pontifical Catholic University of Chile. He is the recipient of numerous grants and fellowships and author of books and journal articles as well as various essays and reviews.

University President John Hennessy and his wife, Andrea, visited Stanford’s Program in Oxford this past March. Here President Hennessy and the Program’s Director, Geoffrey Triock, stand in front of the fallin red door at 65 High Street.
The second Stanford-Siemens-Lufthansa Conference on Globalization took place in May in Berlin. Stanford University and Stanford Overseas Studies are initiated to Siemens and Lufthansa for providing facilities for the Conference and transportation for participants from the Centers in Beijing, Berlin, Florence, Oxford, Paris, and Santiago. Dr. Urko Tepes has taught at Stanford in Berlin since 1994, is Editor of "Internationale Politik" published by the German Council on Foreign Relations, and awaits publication of her most recent book on globalization this summer. She was academic leader of the Conference and provides this account for abroad.

Globalization seems to be an all-pervasive phenomenon. "Globalizing" became one of the key issues in last November's U.S. Presidential campaign. China's future role as an economic and potentially military power and the strategic impact are hotly debated by intellectuals in Europa, the U.S., India or South-East Asia. Globalization as the "ever faster exchange of goods, capital, people and ideas" has become a blueprint to understand our contemporary world.

New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman even goes so far as to declare in his recent book that "The world is flat. Globalization has leveled the playing field. Each and every country—and even more each and every individual—no matter where on this globe—is affected by and has to respond to the dynamics of globalization. But has the world really become flat? Or has the widely travelled journalist overlooked some hills, if not mountains?

Discovering the hills.

To gain a deeper understanding of different cultures and an "abroad from home" perspective is one of the major goals and assets of Stanford's Overseas Studies Program. Stanford students don't just appreciate this experience intellectually. These OIS conferences on World War I have shown a tendency among Stanford students even to "internalize" their specific host country's perspective, a willingness and aptitude to view certain phenomena through the cultural, political and social lenses offered to them in their respective centers.

"Globalization most certainly poses new and similar challenges to different countries and regions. Responding to an ever faster connecting and integrating world, however, are shaped by history, political frameworks as well as social and cultural "mindsets" very unique to each country and society.

In a second "Stanford-Siemens-Lufthansa Conference on Globalization", taking place in Berlin from May 26 to 28th, Stanford students, students of Siemens "topaz" program and Lufthansa trainees were given ample opportunity to explore the—deadly to say—"global phenomenon of globalization" from local perspectives, have stories present "their country"s outlook on globalization, and understand certain aspects of globalization somewhat deeper through discussions in smaller groups.

Center presentations opening the conference exposed this diacritic of global challenges versus local responses. Clearly, Berlin's presentation focused not only on the economic reforms undertaken by former Party Leader Deng Xiaoping and the country's role as a global economic powerhouse but on a "short introduction into China's long history". Taking into consideration that this history dates back no less than 3,000 years and that a "short introduction" might sound like a somewhat ambiguous undertaking, Berlin students' presentation still held a great deal of interesting ideas about the forces shaping China's proud self-image as a regional and world power and the difficulties of Mao's dictatorship that had destroyed civil society and had left a country so rich in human and natural resources in deep poverty. Latin America long suffered from an image as the "U.S. back yard", and it is hindered in its development by authoritarian regimes and a deep mistrust in multinational corporations as the main drivers of global capitalism (dating back to often misguided interferences by the U.S.). Latin American students want to be a prime example of self-confidence integrating into a world economy, while carefully protecting itself from the "ocean sea of capital" (The Economist) that had hit countries like Argentina and Mexico extremely hard.

In contrast to Latin America and East Asia, Europe is like China's "old sea". In Europe the EU portrays a long process of integration that has brought the continent the longest period of peace and prosperity in its troubled history. Long understood as the optimal way to integrate a world-wide company created by globalization, it seems, however, that this model of integration (EU enlargement) might pose not only solutions but difficult problems as well. Oxford and Florence's presentations pointed to a direction that recently was proven by the reality of the EU's financial summit's failure. Does the EU create too many limits on a country's ability to formulate its own fiscal and monetary policy, independently? Is more liberalization needed, as Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair claims? Or is globalization in the form of "unleashed capitalism" rather perceived worldwide as the Paris and Berlin centers (in a reference to the recent "capitalism debate" in Germany) implied, and the EU's failure to protect European culture and one of Europe's proudest achievements—the welfare state—against the rough rides of globalization?

Noteworthy that the center presentations also revealed that the world is anything but flat. A look at a map of Siemens branches revealed: Siemens might be one of Germany's few truly "global" companies, but it is still very much restricted to the industrialized nations and developing countries in East and South East Asia. Africa and large parts of the Middle East are blank spots on Siemens' world map.

Bridging the gaps.

It would be hard to think of a phenomenon as ideologically charged as globalization. Why do globalization theorists want to see an all-out cure for almost all of our contemporary world in opening markets, liberalization and integration, globalization's critics fear the negative impacts of those same dynamic forces: an erosion of the nation state, an ever growing divide between rich and poor, the destruction of local cultures on behalf of a "mindless, only consumer-oriented Americanization." The mandatory readings for this conference — Canadian journalist's Naomi Klein's thoroughly anti-capitalist and popular book No Logo and Financial Times columnist's Martin Wolf's Why Globalization Works, were meant to take this ideological divide into account. Too much so? "All too often, proponents and opponents of globalization end up talking past each other," Professor Eric Roberts [Professor of Computer Science at Stanford] noted in his excellent keynote speech. He preferred an approach of finding middle-ground and "bridging the gap" by referring to authors like Joseph Stiglitz or George Soros and their "much more thought-provoking books". Can, however, this ideological gap be bridged or should it be addressed openly?

I think there might be a major contradiction of globalization that while some common ground is revealed, almost on the same lines rifts are exposed. Technological progress, internationalization and globalization have set in motion a process of integration that, at least in part, created a global village. Today's technologies have benefited from lower costs of transportation and communication. In his dynamic thought-provoking keynote speech, however, Siemens' Board member Dr. Uriel Sharef pointed out that multinational corporations certainly are the main drivers of globalization, but are driven themselves by almost relentless competition and the constant pressure to innovate and adapt to the rapidly changing world of technology.

Economic growth has helped developing countries like China and India to pull mostly of a sub-par consumer level. But economic growth requires natural resources, like oil. What, Professor Arnoos Nour [Director of Overseas Exchanges at Stanford] asked, if that thrust for oil becomes unquantifiable? Is it a dynamic process like globalization that requires a new kind of thinking and new strategies moving into a new conflict over resources?

Conferences are meant to reveal, rather than bridge different views and opinions. They only are good as long as they are able to engage their participants in lively discussions. Overhearing students debating different issues of globalization over breakfast or eagerly exchanging different views on globalization in their respective host countries seems to prove that this conference was a success.
Kramer, Berlin, and Stanford

In October, 2004, Bill Landreth, alumnus of Stanford in France, Group-Marketing Director, Stanford Overseas Studies came to Stanford-in-Berlin, 1966-67, and fellow alumnus invited one of their local instructors in Tours—in 1967 her name was Françoise Pandoux, and she is now Professor Lawal—to Stanford to be with them at a dinner in conjunction with a reunion of the group. She was unable to attend, but in response sent the following personal, poignant memoriam to be read at the occasion:
The love story between America and me began in the early days of my childhood. Born in 1934, I was five when the United States entered World War II and in my childhood, humanity was thus divided between the “good guys” and the “bad guys.”
The “bad guys” were those self-conscious soldiers in leather boots who made me change sidewalk sides when I saw them on my way to school and who always spoke to me cautiously. They had also “occupied” my grandparents’ house, to which I had to come to spend a holiday. An officer had tried a nice paternoster trick, but my grandma spoke to him coyly, but more than coyly. They had also “occupied” my grandparents’ house, to which I had to come to spend a holiday. An officer had tried a nice paternoster trick, but my grandma spoke to him coyly, but more than coyly.

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