

OUR UPCOMING MEETING

Nabil Echchaibi was born and raised in Morocco. He received his BA in English Literature from Mohamed V University in Rabat and his



MA in journalism and PhD in media studies from Indiana University-Bloomington. His recent research focuses on the intersections between Islam, Arab popular culture and the media. Arab Muslim identity in diaspora is increasingly shaped, though not exclusively, by a shared

MOSQUES AND QUR'AN BURNING: ISLAM AS MEDIA SPECTACLE

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TIME/PLACE:

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7:30 PM, Mount Vernon Country Club**

political and cultural consciousness heavily nurtured by transnational television and interactive media. Nabil

Echchaibi's current research in the political economy and reception of Islamic satellite media is an attempt to document and analyze the new public articulation of identity and religion among young Arabs. His book on the role of diasporic media among young Muslims in France and Germany is forthcoming with Lexington Books. He is also interested in new media and their impact on journalism. His co-edited book on international blogs, identity and networked publics was published in 2008 by Peter Lang Publishing. Nabil is currently an assistant professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Colorado. ■

SEPTEMBER MEETING REVIEW

Brazil on the Rise: The Story of a Country Transformed

Larry Rohter, Reporter, *New York Times*

By Deborah Pearce, Secretary,
Colorado Foothills World Affairs Council

According to former *New York Times* reporter Larry Rohter, the U.S. has focused its attention on India and China, overlooking the changes within our own hemisphere in a nation larger than the U.S., Brazil. In 2003, Goldman Sachs identified the rapidly emerging economies of the BRIC group, Brazil, Russia, India, and China. Today, Brazil is the world's eighth largest economy with hopes of passing Italy for the number seven position. Brazil holds over \$250 billion in foreign currency reserves and is the fourth largest

creditor to the U.S., behind China, Japan, and the United Kingdom.

The classic image of Brazil as a coffee exporter is fast becoming a thing of the past. While Brazil remains an agricultural superpower, her greatest exports are airplanes, automobiles and car parts. An interesting triangular relationship exists between Brazil, China, and the U.S. Brazil ships raw materials to China who manufactures goods that are traded with the U.S. Brazil also has achieved energy independence and is a world leader in bio-fuels and alternative energy.

Between 1972 and 1985, a repressive military dictatorship stripped Brazilians of political rights and created an atmosphere of intimidation. The nation was



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SEPTEMBER MEETING REVIEW

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divided along racial lines in which a small elite controlled the land and the wealth while the majority suffered extreme poverty. Today, Brazil is a democracy with over twenty political parties, a division of power and an aggressive press. The economy has improved and income is more evenly distributed. The presidential election of October 3, 2010 is being watched closely. Issues driving the campaign include the strained physical infrastructure, demand for skilled labor, and the continuation of economic reform. Both candidates are educated technocrats and economists. Jose Serra, the Social Democratic candidate is the former governor of Sao Paulo and served as health minister under former President Fernando Henrique Cardoso. The projected leader, Dilma Rouseff,



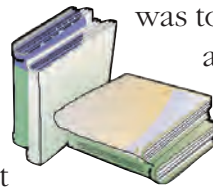
was hand-picked by current President Luiz Inacio “Lula: da Silva to represent the Worker’s Party and may make history as the nation’s first female leader.

In 1941, Austrian author Stefan Zweig, wrote *Brazil, Land of the Future*, and some joked that it always would be. Over the past decade, Brazil has seen measurable economic, cultural and social growth. The discovery of off-shore oil in 2007 promises to propel Brazil’s oil and gas exports and change the politics of energy in the region. Brazilians’ optimism for the future is evidenced by the national motto *Ordem e progresso* (Order and progress). With a projected growth rate of seven percent, Brazil hopes to join the U.S., China, and Europe as a major world power. As the host of the 2016 Olympics, Brazil is ready for the world stage. For more information on Brazil, look for Rohter’s newly published book, *Brazil on the Rise*. ■

SUGGESTED READINGS

By Fred Nyland, News Editor

Hannah Pakula, *The Last Empress: Madame Chiang Kai-shek and the Birth of Modern China*, Simon & Schuster, 2009. The author is an experienced biographer of royal women. In this book she looks at the imperious wife of the Chinese Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek and presents a complex account of 20th century China. Despite its length, this book remains thoroughly engrossing. Born May-ling Soong and educated in America, Madame Chiang and her five Soong siblings were wealthy, Christian, fluent in English and major players in Chinese politics. Marrying Chiang in 1927, the strong minded and hot tempered, shrewd and ruthless May-ling quickly became a partner in his efforts as Chinese leader until the Japanese invaded. In 1945 Mao’s Communists drove him to Formosa which he ruled until his death in 1975. For many years Americans idolized Madame Chiang as a symbol of Chinese resistance to the brutal Japanese and as an anticommunist stalwart. Critics of her and her husband’s ineffective, authoritarian, corrupt leadership soon became the majority. In his review of this book, Jonathan Mirsky touches on a number of interesting aspects of Madame Chiang’s life. “She was also incredibly sexy. Pakula convincingly argues that she had a one-night stand with Wendell Willkie in 1942 when the defeated presidential candidate



was touring China. Still it was not her sexiness that enabled her to address a joint session of Congress in 1943, the second woman ever to do so, and the first private citizen. Rather it was her intelligence, understanding of Americans (she was a Wellesley graduate), eloquence and charisma. Eleanor Roosevelt, who later changed her mind, described her as ‘a great person, receiving the recognition due her as an individual valiantly fighting in the forefront of the world’s battle.’ Although Madame Chiang had a mighty publicity machine, she was a brave woman as well as a persuasive one. She traveled throughout dangerous Chinese war zones.” One of her most ardent fans and supporters was Henry Luce of *Time* magazine. When Madame Chiang visited the White House, it was reported that she always slept on silk sheets especially provided for the occasions. (Sources: *Publishers Weekly*, Jonathan Mirsky, “*She Who Must Be Obeyed*,” *New York Times*, November 29, 2009.)

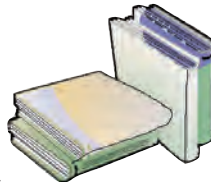
John Farmer, *The Ground Truth: The Untold Story of America Under Attack on 9/11*, Riverhead Trade; Reprint Edition, 2010. The author was senior counsel to the 9/11 Commission. Drawing on recently declassified records and investigative reports from the departments of de-

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SUGGESTED READINGS

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fense and transportation, the author concludes that the failure to detect and prevent the attack lay in the bureaucratic nature of the U.S. government. Crucially, rules proscribing information sharing within and among agencies meant that no one had complete access to all available intelligence or information. Typical bureaucratic inertia accounted for the government's bungled response. The author faults the disconnect between decision makers and operational employees, concluding that the leadership was irrelevant on 9/11 and the official version of events was almost entirely untrue. Farmer's conclusion that bureaucratic government does not adapt fast enough to changing missions is not original, but dominated the events of 9/11. Jacob Heilbrunn, a senior editor at *The National Interest*, has commented extensively on this book. "For all the trillions of dollars lavished on it, for all the talk about confronting new security threats, for all the exhortations to reinvent government, America's defense establishment, as John Farmer reminds us in *The Ground Truth*, continued to fight the cold war more than a decade after it had ended. Preoccupied with building a costly missile defense system to counter a spurious menace from Russia and with maintaining 'full spectrum dominance' over the rest of the globe, most Bush administration officials blithely ignored the danger emanating from the caves of Afghanistan, where Osama bin Laden and his acolytes plotted against America. Confronted by a small group of mostly Saudi nationals armed with box cutters, the central nervous system of the country's defense agencies went into a state of cataleptic shock. The only decisive action taken on 9/11 came not from the military, but from the courageous passengers who stormed the cockpit of United Airlines Flight 93, leading the hijackers to crash the plane on Pennsylvania farmland before it could reach its intended target in Washington. Farmer also suggests that the cold war did



not come to an end until the 9/11 attacks took place. In trumpeting an ill-defined war against terrorism, Bush simply transposed the bombast of the cold war to the present to suggest that he was a new Churchill staring down evil and that America needed to combat a new totalitarian threat emerging from the Islamic world. Still, Farmer's accomplishment is to throw 9/11 into fresh relief. A precise and reliable accounting of what happened has been absent until now. This is it." (Sources: *Publishers Weekly*, Jacob Heilbrunn, "The Lies They Told," *New York Times*, November 15, 2009.)

Neil Sheehan, *A Fiery Peace in a Cold War: Bernard Schriever and the Ultimate Weapon*, Random House Publishing Group, 2009. This book is a biography of an important Air Force officer who led a successful effort to introduce a new class of weapons into America's strategic arsenal. The author takes the reader from Schriever's boyhood in Texas through his apprenticeship in the open cockpit biplanes of the Army Air Corps in the 1930s and his participation in battles against the Japanese in the South Pacific during WWII. Assigned by General Hap Arnold to bring technology into planning for the future of the Air Force, Bernard Schriever surrounded himself with many scientists and engineers. Later, he set out to create the one class of weapons that can enforce peace with the Russians - intercontinental ballistic missiles. Such weapons are unstoppable and can destroy the Soviet Union in thirty minutes. Conversely, Soviet missiles could do the same to the U.S. In the course of his effort to develop ballistic missilery, Schriever encountered allies and enemies among some intriguing figures: John von Neumann, Hungarian mathematician and mathematical physicist, Colonel Edward Hall, who created the ultimate ICBM in the Minuteman missile, and his brother, Theodore Hall, who spied for the Russians. He also dealt with Curtis LeMay, the bomber general who favored amassing enough nuclear weapons to destroy the entire Northern Hemisphere, and with Hitler's former rocket maker, Wernher von Braun. In an inter-service fight, according to the author the Army's General Medaris tried to steal the ICBM program. LeMay wanted to deliver nuclear warheads with bomber aircraft and did not

Upcoming Program

Tuesday, November 16, 2010

Peter David on

"U.S. Foreign Policy after the Elections"

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SUGGESTED READINGS *(Continued)*

support efforts to build ballistic missiles. The Soviets organized their military services somewhat differently from the U.S. in that they had four major services: an army, an air force, a navy, and their strategic rocket forces. They built the latter service into a formidable organization consisting of short range and very long range missiles. During the 1950's their first ICBM rockets were used to launch satellites, much to the dismay of American leaders of the time. Eisenhower was briefed by Schriever and his associates, and received the go-ahead to proceed on his ambitious project. Many of us in Colorado worked for Bernard Schriever's organization on the Titan missile. Regarding Bernard Schriever, Michael Beschloss has commented, "Before the publication of this excellent book, few Americans would have recognized his name. Indeed, he was pushed down the path to oblivion as early as 1961, when Robert McNamara and his self-confident whiz kids took over the Pentagon. Looking on Schriever as a relic of what they considered the somnolent, misguided Eisenhower years, they made it very clear that they did not want or need his services." (Sources: *Publishers Weekly*, Michael Beschloss, "Missile Defense," *New York Times*, October 4, 2009.) ■

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The Colorado Foothills World Affairs Council is a non-profit organization which meets to provide a forum for those in our community wishing to keep abreast of developments in international relations and to discuss them on a regular basis with those having similar interests.

For more information, call Walter "Joe" Shaw 303-979-5927. ALL COLORADO FOOTHILLS WAC MEETINGS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. RESERVATIONS ARE NOT REQUIRED.

DIRECTIONS to Mount Vernon Country Club: Exit I-70 at Genesee Park (Exit #254). Go North on Mount Vernon Country Club Road, Staying on the paved road and curving to the right. The Club entrance will be on your left, 1.1 miles from the I-70 exit.

DINNER AT 6:00 PM in the main dining room at Mount Vernon Country Club is optional. Reservations have to be made no later than the Sunday before the event. Call Mt. Vernon Country Club at 303-526-0616 and ask for seating with the Colorado Foothills WAC. Cost of dinner will be collected by the Club. 


TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS, AND MEMBERSHIP DUES: Information can be sent to: Ned Biggs, P.O. Box 1602, Evergreen, CO 80437-1602.



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SEND YOUR IDEAS and articles for the newsletter to the Editorial Committee: Beatrice Szadokierski, Editor in Chief, 1923 Parfet Estates Drive, Golden, CO 80401, email: szadokierski@comcast.net or call 303-279-2638.