

CultureTalk Islamic Worlds: A Cultural Resource in Many Languages

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CultureTalk Islamic Worlds is one of the ongoing materials development projects in the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages. The Center is the language institute for the institutions in the Five College consortium: Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke and Smith Colleges and the University of Massachusetts Amherst. In 2006, we received a grant from the International Research and Studies division of the US Department of Education to create *CultureTalk Islamic Worlds*. Although the final website is still in the process of being assembled and will be throughout this academic year, I previewed a number of the site's components at the CLAC conference.

CultureTalk Islamic Worlds is a web-accessible collection of over 1,500 short video clips that gives students of languages and cultures at all levels the opportunity to hear ordinary people talking about their lives in the languages and dialects they use every day, to read transcripts and translations of those interviews and conversations in English, and also to hear citizens of predominately Muslim countries who are fluent in English speaking in English about their everyday lives and cultures. There is no similar resource that highlights the diversity of Muslim countries and the many languages spoken in those societies. The video clips created for the *CultureTalk Islamic Worlds* website come from overseas filming and from local interviews related to countries of the Middle East and North Africa that have Arabic speaking populations, countries in West and East Africa with large Muslim populations, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, the countries of Central Asia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Muslim communities in India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Muslim communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, and Kosovo. The site includes videos in multiple dialects of Arabic from various regions such as North Africa, Egypt, Sudan, the Levantine coast, Iraq, and the Gulf states; African languages such as Wolof, Hausa, Somali, and Swahili; Turkish and Turkic languages such as Azerbaijani, Turkmen, Uzbek, Kazakh, and Kirghiz; Persian dialects from Iran, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan; South Asian language such as Pashto, Urdu, and Bangla; Indonesian and Malaysian from Southeast Asia; and Bosnian and Albanian from Eastern Europe.

The site is free and openly available at: <http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu>

Additional countries and languages will be uploaded throughout 2008-2009.