On August 16th, I assumed the position of Director of the Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, following Hadi Esfahani’s decision to return to full-time teaching. I wish, first of all, to recognize Hadi’s very able leadership of CSAMES, as is demonstrated by the many significant events the Center has sponsored in the past year, which are described in this edition of Akhbar, in addition to advancing the university’s curriculum on the Middle East and South Asia. We are all beneficiaries of his vision and dedication.

What an exciting year this has been! CSAMES has responded to the unprecedented levels of sociopolitical change in the Middle East by organizing a number of activities involving CSAMES faculty who specialize in the Middle East: a panel in February on the Arab spring, a team-taught Middle East summer institute for educators in June on political and social change in the Middle East, a team-taught course this fall on the same topic at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, and an eight-week team-taught course on the Arab spring (ARAB/SAME 150) to be taught this semester, beginning October 17. In addition, the topic of the 2011 Joint Area Centers Symposium, which took place in April, was “Iran and the World”. The dynamism and vital importance of the Middle East and South Asia in today’s world make CSAMES’ mission more crucial than ever.

Once again, our university hosted the Summer Institute for the Languages of the Muslim World, and members of our faculty have led—and plan to continue to lead—wonderful study abroad courses in India, Israel, Morocco, and Turkey. This semester, faculty are teaching exciting new courses, including Rini Bhattacharya Mehta’s course on Indian cinema, Asef Bayat’s course on religion and politics, Kenneth Cuno’s course on family and colonial modernity in South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and Linda Herrera’s course on education and power in the Middle East. New courses planned for the spring include ECON 490, Business and Economic Environment in the Middle East and North Africa (Hadi Esfahani); EPS 590, Youth and Citizenship in a Digital Age (Linda Herrera); LA 593, The Alhambra (D. Fairchild Ruggles); and TURK 490, Language, Culture and Identity in Modern Turkey (Ercan Balci).

In addition to weekly “brown bag” lectures, CSAMES has already hosted two major events this fall: a lecture on M.S. Subbulakshmi (1916-2004), a famous singer in the Karnatic tradition of southern India, delivered by Dr. Gowri Ramnarayan, a playwright and music and film critic, who for several years was also Ms. Subbulakshmi’s vocal accompanist; and a lecture entitled “Ten Years Later: Re-Imagining the War between Islam and the West,” delivered by Deborah Baker, author of The Convert: A Tale of Exile and Extremism, with commentary by Adil Khan, Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Religion. We were also pleased to co-sponsor the fabulous twenty-third annual Tagore Festival, a celebration of the life and...
Director’s Note (cont.)

In the next month we are sponsoring more exciting events, including a remarkable one-woman play on October 14th by Kim Schultz entitled “No Place Called Home,” a series of vignettes giving voice to Iraqi refugees in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan.

CSAMES represents two regions that have a rich and complex history, are deeply connected to each other, and are of vital importance to the world today. It is our mandate to raise awareness of these regions on our campus and to educate students, the university community, and the general public through courses, lectures, symposia, and other events. As a Center, we also wish to connect faculty with expertise in different aspects of these areas to each other, to create networks that are both stimulating and productive. To that end, we invite you to take an active part in the Center’s activities.

Angela Williams appointed Associate Director

On September 9, Angela Williams was appointed Associate Director of CSAMES. Angela holds a Master’s degree in Linguistics, with a specialization in Arabic, and is currently working toward a doctorate in the College of Education, with a focus on Middle East curriculum. Angela had served as Outreach Coordinator of CSAMES since May 2008. As CSAMES lost first its Program Coordinator in August 2010 and then its Associate Director in February 2011, Angela gradually took over most of the tasks associated with those positions, and has been a great asset to the Center. It is, therefore, a pleasure to announce her formal appointment as Associate Director.

New Office Support Associate

I am pleased to announce that CSAMES now has a new Office Support Associate, whom we share with the Center for African Studies. Terri Gitler received both her B.A. and her M.A. in English on our campus, and has extensive experience working as a proofreader and copyeditor. We are fortunate to have someone with her skills and background in this position. She will be working in the CSAMES office from 8:30-12:15, and for African Studies in the afternoons.

Welcome New Faculty

CSAMES is pleased to welcome three new affiliated faculty members who have joined the University within the past year.

Keera Allendorf is an Assistant Professor in the Sociology Department at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. She received her doctorate in sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and was a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Population Studies Center at the University of Michigan. Much of Dr. Allendorf’s past work explored the determinants of women’s agency and the effects of such agency on maternal and child health. Her recent work incorporates a focus on family relations, structure, and formation in India and Nepal. Current projects examine changes over time in family behaviors, marriage formation and quality, and the links between family behaviors and health.

Linda Herrera is a social anthropologist with regional specialization in the Middle East and North Africa. She works in the fields of global studies in education, critical development studies, and youth studies. Her work examines the intersection between education and learning as local practice and global process. She has undertaken ethnographic studies of Egyptian schools, youth, and educators since the 1990s. She has also carried out critical investigations of the role of development aid, neoliberal economic policies, geopolitical interests, and global educational policy on education reforms and the fashioning of new notions of childhood and youthhood. In the past five years she has been looking at generational change and been compiling learning biographies of Arab youth to understand how they are learning citizenship dispositions and doing politics in a digital era. More recently she has turned her attention to youth, new media, and revolution in the Middle East.

Dov Weiss, Assistant Professor specializing in Judaism, received his PhD in the History of Judaism from the University of Chicago Divinity School in June, 2011, specializing in rabbinic theology and rabbinic biblical interpretation. Weiss’ dissertation, “Confrontations with God in Late Rabbinic Literature,” examines the history of rabbinic theology and biblical exegesis in the Byzantine period. Prior to attending the University of Chicago, he served as an Instructor of Talmud and Jewish Law at the YCT Rabbinical School in NY.
Political Uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa

Kenneth Cuno, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Editor’s Note: On February 8, CSAMES organized a panel of several leading scholars to discuss political uprisings in the region. The panel included Asef Bayat (Sociology), Elabbas Benmamoun (Linguistics), Kenneth Cuno (History), Linda Herrera (Education, Policy, Organization and Leadership), and Jane Kuntz (French). Below, Kenneth Cuno provides an analysis of the Egyptian revolution in its early stages, leading up to the ouster of President Mubarak.

It is now two weeks since the Revolution of 25 January. I’m calling it a revolution because that’s what Egyptians are calling it, and the term they are using, “revolution” or thawra, is significant. Egypt’s modern history is understood by Egyptians as a long struggle for full independence and self-rule. Until now three revolutions framed this history. The Urabi Revolution of 1881-82 sought to end European financial control and establish a constitutional monarchy, but it was defeated by a British invasion and occupation lasting over 70 years. The 1919 Revolution was a nationwide uprising against British colonial rule that failed to oust the British but achieved a limited degree of self rule. The July Revolution of 1952 was actually a military coup that brought to power the Free Officers headed by Gamal Abdul Nasser. They overthrew the corrupt monarchy and got rid of the British garrison, finally ending the occupation, but they established the military backed autocracy that has continued, under Mubarak, to the present. Now there is another uprising that Egyptians are embracing as a fourth “revolution.”

Who is behind this revolution? A few organizations have been mentioned so far. The April 6 Youth Movement was formed in support of a workers’ strike in the factory town of Mahalla al-Kubra in 2008; it is a Facebook network with tens of thousands of members, and it was involved in organizing the January 25 protests. Another Facebook network is called “We Are All Khaled Said.” It was formed in response to the brutal murder of Khaled Said in Alexandria in June 2010 by police, and organized monthly silent protests. Another group is the National Society for Change, which is associated with Muhammad al-Baradai. The legal opposition parties have played a subsidiary role, while the Muslim Brotherhood withheld its support from the January 25 protests and did not throw its support behind the demonstrations until three days later.

The demonstrators are a cross section of society with all classes represented but especially professionals. There is marked participation by youth, women (veiled and uncovered), and Coptic Christians. The cross-and-crescent symbol, first displayed to signify national unity in 1919, was revived after the New Year’s Eve church bombing in Alexandria, and now is appearing in the demonstrations in Tahrir square.

The messages and announced aims of the protests have been overwhelmingly non-sectarian and non-ideological. The main demands are (1) resignation of President Mubarak (31 years rule, 82 yrs. old), (2) lifting the state of emergency, (3) dissolution of parliament, and (4) a national unity government to manage constitutional and government reforms.

What are the factors behind protests? Economic difficulties are important; poverty and hardship have increased due to “structural readjustment” policies pushed by the Americans, and there have been thousands of strikes in the past decade. But political factors appear to be more important. In 2005 the opposition won 20% of parliamentary seats, but in the November 2010 elections the government’s party won 97% of the seats. The election was rigged so blatantly that gradualist strategies of working within the system seemed pointless. There was also the increasingly lawless and abusive behavior of the authorities, symbolized by the murder of Khaled Said.

Author’s Note: In the days and weeks since these remarks were prepared President Mubarak resigned (Feb. 11), the constitution was suspended and the parliament dissolved, and power was vested in a Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). The emergency laws have not been suspended, nor has a unity government been formed to manage reforms. The SCAF has overseen a plebiscite in which several amendments to the old constitution were approved. Parliamentary elections will be held in September, followed by a presidential election in November.
Workshops and Symposia >>

Conference on Iran’s Economy

Ali Dadpay, Clayton State University & Sharif University of Technology

On October 15-17, 2010, a group of predominately Iranian economists and researchers gathered in the University of Chicago Gleacher Center in downtown Chicago to share their latest findings in the studies of Iran’s economy. This was not, however, the first time a group comprised of such prominent scholars has assembled to talk about Iran’s economy. In previous years, economists and scholars from around the country as well as several from Europe and Iran, have convened on university campuses to discuss developments in studies of Iran’s economy.

The idea of an annual conference on Iran’s economy was initiated by Hadi Salehi Esfahani, Professor of Economics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) and the Director of its Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (CSAMES), who went on to implement this idea in organizing and coordinating the first conference which took place in December, 2008, on the UIUC campus.

This first conference was a tremendous success, with some of the most eminent names in Iranian studies and economic research in attendance as well as researchers and doctoral students from various American and European universities. The second conference, entitled “Iran Economy at a Crossroads,” was held the following year at the University of Southern California and was comprised of presentations and discussions on various aspects of Iran’s economy, including labor market, income distribution, gender gap, industries, financial markets, and stock exchange. The 2010 Conference on Iran’s Economy displayed a definite progress and increase in interest regarding participation and attendance, with more than 50 papers submitted from scholars in Iran, USA, EU countries, and Turkey. This year, the conference also gained support from PGN and GERPA, who held concurrent conferences in Chicago so that their members could also partake in the Conference on Iran’s Economy. The conference drew an audience of not only academicians, but of national and international government employees as well.

During the conference, the 15 presenters departed from discussing the generalities and overall trends in Iran’s economy, and instead focused on the intricacies of Iran’s housing market, the Tehran Stock Exchange, the exchange rate, and institutional transformation and political economy in Iran. The second day’s presentations were focused on discussing labor market and income distribution, investigating the dynamics of participation, the role of education in female labor force participation, and the income distribution and income gap in Iran. A special panel was organized to discuss academic research in Iran and commemorate Mehdi Sami’i, the former governor of Central Bank of Iran and head of Iran’s Plan and Budget Organization in the 1960s and early 1970s.

In the final panel Hashem Pesaran, Professor of Economics and Fellow of Trinity College at Cambridge University, spoke of the necessity for high quality research on Iran’s economy. He told an audience of researchers and doctoral students: “we should study Iran’s economy using the latest methodologies and techniques; we should study and create work publishable in the best journals. Otherwise the research on Iran’s economy would be yet another field where we would be left behind.” To this end, a group of economists have been working together to form an association of scholars interested in the study of economic issues concerning Iran. The aim of the association is to promote first-class economic scholarship and research on Iran's economy and facilitate communication and networking among the scholars in the field through meetings and publications. The association’s website is expected to go live in the near future and plans to hold its first meeting in London next year. The conference culminated on October 17 at the University of Chicago campus for a Symposium of Nobel Laureates and Eminent Chicago Economists which was jointly held with GERPA/ANGED/PGN at Harris School for Public Policy.

The growing interest on studies of Iran’s economy coupled with the availability of larger datasets and more varied information on economic factors in Iran has the potential to create a great deal of advancement in the field of economics. In turn, many Iranian scholars have been motivated to concentrate their efforts in this field, bringing a new sense of enthusiasm that only increases in each gathering.
Workshops and Symposia >>

Iran at Large: The Global Emergence of a Regional Power?
2011 Joint Area Centers Symposium

The Joint Area Centers Symposium (JACS), is an annual event organized by the University’s international and area studies centers dedicated to exploring topics that concern all world areas. This year’s JACS, which focused on Iran in the global arena, was organized by CSAMES and the Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center (REEEC), with supportive services from the Center for International Business and Education Research (CIBER) and International Programs and Studies (IPS) and held on April 1-2, 2011. The Symposium was also co-sponsored by Center for Advanced Study; Center for African Studies; College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences; College of LAS; Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies; Economics; European Union Center; Center for Global Studies; Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies; Lemann Chair; Lemann Institute for Brazilian Studies; Political Science; and Sociology.

The aim of the conference was to examine the critical issues surrounding Iran’s interactions with various countries in different regions of the world. Because of its vast energy resources, strategic position in the Middle East, and the political stances of its government, Iran has become a significant player in the world arena. Over the past few decades, it has challenged the West, especially the United States, while developing new relations with many countries in the rest of the world. This strategy has been complex, entailing considerable tensions with some countries and economic and political alliances with some others. To analyze this strategy in depth and to understand how Iran’s relations with different countries interact with each other at the global level, leading scholars from various disciplines explored the trends in Iran’s foreign relations and connected them with the developments inside and outside Iran. Collectively, the presentations offered a broad picture of Iran’s foreign relations and their potential future directions as well as the implications for the countries involved.

Presentations

Arshin Adib-Moghaddam (SOAS)  
Iran’s Global Strategy

Paul Diehl, Alexandru Balas (Illinois), and Gary Goertz (University of Arizona)  
Continuity and Change in Iran’s Rivalry Patterns

Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi (Illinois)  
Ahmadinejad and the Doctrine of Madness in Foreign Policy

Hadi Salehi Esfahani (Illinois)  
Iran and the Global Economy

Mahjoob Zweiri (Qatar University)  
Arab-Iranian Relations: When History and Politics Dominate

Asef Bayat (Illinois)  
Iranian Revolution and the Arab World

Andreas Wilde (University of Bonn)  
Potential Patron or Regional Power? Iran and Its Policy in Afghanistan and Central Asia

Mark N. Katz (George Mason University)  
Iran and Russia

Bernd Kaussler (James Madison University)  
From Friend to Foe? EU-Iranian Relations 1992-2011

Alex Vatanka (The Middle East Institute)  
Iran’s Strategy in Africa

John W. Garver (George Institute of Technology)  
China-Iran Relations

Manochehr Dorraj (Texas Christian University)  
Iran’s Expanding Relations with Latin America

Paulo Sotero (Brazil Institute, Woodrow Wilson International Center)  
Iran and Brazil
India Studies

New Perspectives on the Indus Civilization

The 2010 India Studies Lecture was delivered by Dr. J. Mark Kenoyer, Professor and Chair of Anthropology and Director of the Center for South Asia at UW-Madison on November 12. Dr. Kenoyer’s research interests include the archaeology of early urbanism and state level society, ethnoarchaeology, experimental archaeology, ancient technology, and quantitative methods. His geographic areas of interest include South Asia (particularly India and Pakistan), West Asia, and East and Southeast Asia.

Dr. Kenoyer has been excavating at Harappa, Pakistan since 1986. His main focus is on the Indus Valley Civilization and he has worked in both Pakistan and India since 1974. He has a special interest in ancient technologies and crafts, socio-economic and political organization as well as religion. These interests have led him to study a broad range of cultural periods in South Asia as well as other regions of the world. His publications include monographs on the Indus civilization as well as numerous articles, a grade school book on ancient South Asia and even a coloring book on the Indus cities for children. His work is featured online at www.harappa.com. Dr. Kenoyer was Guest Curator with the Asia Society for the exhibition on the Ancient Cities of the Indus Valley Civilization, which toured the U.S. in 1998-1999. He was also a special consultant for the Art of the First Cities: The Third Millennium B.C. from the Mediterranean to the Indus exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 2002. The 2010 India Studies Lecture was hosted by Spurlock Art Museum. The India Studies Distinguished Lecture is an annual CSAMES event. The India Studies Lecture is part of the larger goal of expanding Indian Studies at the University of Illinois with additional course offerings and faculty appointments, through the India Studies Fund, which is made possible by the generous contributions of donors in the community.

Govardhan Hill: Imagined, Enacted, and Reclaimed

An exhibition on Govardhan Hill in Braj, India: Imagined, Enacted, and Reclaimed was held at the Golf Club, Lucknow, India on December 30, 2010. It was organized by Amita Sinha, Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture and Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at the invitation of the Indian Institute of Interior Designers. It featured collages and drawings covering planning and design proposals of the sacred landscape of Govardhan Hill in Braj. These were prepared by graduate students in LA Design Workshop under the guidance of Prof. Sinha. Seven students had visited and studied the site between Jan 1-Jan 14, 2010 at the invitation of Braj Foundation and prepared a preliminary proposal that was later developed on campus during the Spring semester.
In the Arts >>

A Window to The Other Pakistan

Lars Dyrud, Program in Arms Control, Disarmament, and International Security

The Other Pakistan is an exhibition of forty photographs by thirteen members of the Pakistan Photographers Group, showcasing images that reflect the rich texture, beauty, and dignity of everyday life in Pakistan.

The exhibition was hosted by the University YMCA as the premier exhibition for the new Art @ the Y program, which is led by Ann Rasmus.

Held from September 23 to November 4, 2010, the exhibition provided an opportunity for the campus community and the public to see another side of Pakistan – one not often seen in the U.S. today.

Rather than protests, the aftermath of an attack, or natural disasters, these photos depict images of everyday life. The exhibition resonated with me since it reveals the Pakistan I know. Doing research in Pakistan for several years, I was often struck by the pastoral scenes of small farms, wheat fields, and shepherds. I also saw life in the vibrant cities with their colorful festivals, bazaars, and typical family activities like picnics, sporting events, and spiritual observances that are so common there. This exhibition captures pieces of all these things.

In addition to the photos themselves, an opening reception was held on September 23, and a film screening and interfaith dialog was held on October 5, showing the documentary film Ki Jana Main Kaun (Who Knows What I Am). Directed by Sharpil Baloch, the film follows the director as he seeks to understand the seemingly improbable harmony between Muslims and Hindus in the Sindh province. The screening was followed by a panel discussion with Pakistani graduate students on the interfaction issues presented in the film. However, the discussion also moved into broader topics of spirituality in Pakistan, including the Sufi tradition.

The events were well-attended and well-received by the community. A comment book was set out, and several entries echo the following sentiment: “Thank you for a magnificent exhibit. I was struck by the diversity and beauty of Pakistan – the faces of people old and young, the spectacular landscapes, and the elegant architecture. And, oh yes, the bright-eyed children and the vital street scenes were also a joy to behold.”

The Other Pakistan may not be the one seen my most Americans on a regular basis.

However, it is the one lived by most Pakistanis today through festivals, weddings, commerce, and discussions over tea. I believe this exhibition and its related events made a wonderful effort to show that.

In addition to CSAMES, the event was co-sponsored by Art @ the Y, an initiative of the University YMCA; the Center for Global Studies; the Program in Arms Control, Disarmament, and International Security (ACDIS); the Pakistani Graduate Students Association; the Pakistani Students Association; SHURE; and Jonathan Pines/Private Studios.

The Other Pakistan is still available for display in other venues under the care of Elisabeth Braun, who may be contacted at eb815@comcast.net. Most of the photos in the exhibition may also be viewed at her website: http://web.me.com/braunmedia/ BRAUN_MEDIA/Exhibitions_2008-09/ Pages/he_Other_Pakistan_USA_tour_2008-10.html. Individual prints are also available.

Tanusree Shankar Dance Troupe Dazzles Campus Audience

Matt VanderZalm, International Programs and Studies

The Tanusree Shankar Dance Company gave a dynamic performance during a free show to an estimated audience of 300 community members of all ages at Foellinger Auditorium on the University of Illinois campus March 13.

The performance, “Indian Dance Creations,” was a colorful medley of traditional and contemporary dance forms.

Through a skillful combination of movement and vibrant costumes the dance troupe offered an interpretation of the cultural diversity and richness that India has in the world of dance. Headed by renowned dancer and choreographer Tanusree Shankar, the performance is based on the technique of New Dance, following the path shown by Uday Shankar, the pioneer who popularized Indian dance and music all over the world since 1920.

Tanusree Shankar is one of the leading dancers and choreographers of contemporary dance in India. She earned her fame as the leading dancer of the Ananda Shankar Centre for Performing Arts in the 1970s and 1980s. Her husband, the late Ananda Shankar, was a world famous music composer who experimented with fusion music. Mrs. Shankar continues to display her mastery on stage, delighting audiences with her grace and skill, “She was amazing,” commented Anine Singh-de Grood, who attended the performance and teaches traditional Indian dance through the Urbana Park District. “I spoke to several families who planned to leave during the intermission,” noted Nicole Tami, who helped organize the event, “but the kids were so enthralled that they ended up staying for the entire show!”

The performance was part of the Tagore Sesquicentennial Celebration at Illinois, honoring Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore’s 150th birthday and the relationship he and his family had with the Channing-Murray Foundation, Urbana Unitarian Church, and the University of Illinois. The Tagore Celebration culminated on April 15 with “Tagore Today: Symposium on the Life and Legacy of Rabindranath Tagore.”

The show was sponsored by the Channing Murray Foundation, the Consulate General of India in Chicago, the East Central Illinois Bengali Association, the Office of the Chancellor, the Office of the Coat of Arms, and the Office of the Associate Provost for International Affairs.
Residents of Urbana-Champaign had the special opportunity on Sunday afternoon, September 19, 2010, to accompany Rajmohan and Usha Gandhi, through photographs and dialogue, on their April 2010 trip to the West Bank and Jerusalem. At the journey’s end, they were also challenged with a new idea for non-violent action. On a world-wide Voyage of Dialogue and Discovery for the NGO Initiatives for Change International, the Gandhis had experienced firsthand the conditions of Palestinians in the West Bank as guests of non-violence advocate Dr. Mustafa Barghouti and the Palestinian National Initiative. Afterwards, they had recounted their observations to Israeli President Shimon Peres in Jerusalem and expressed their hope for justice to be provided to the Palestinians.

An overflow crowd of more than 180 community members gathered at the Champaign Public Library to participate in the event titled “The Role of Non-Violence in Palestinian-Israeli Relations: A Conversation with Rajmohan Gandhi.” The public had been invited to hear about the Gandhis’ experiences on their visit and to join in the conversation to explore the role we can all play in promoting peace and justice in the region, based on the principle of security for both peoples.

The gathering was also an opportunity to learn a bit about Initiatives of Change International, an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations which is committed to building relationships of trust across the world’s divides. Professor Gandhi was president of that organization through the end of 2010 and he took unpaid leave from the University of Illinois to make the trip.

With Mrs. Gandhi coordinating photographic slides, Professor Gandhi spoke about their visit. He made clear to the crowd that he was not offering an academic paper on non-violence but rather a description of experiences and reflections on their recent visit.

His words drew pictures for the vicarious travelers: “Seeing the settlements with our own eyes bowled us over. They are not a bunch of huts or temporary structures but cities, in some cases large cities. They are overwhelming in size, location, and number. They surround and intimidate; they occupy the mountain tops and the high ground and a good percentage of the West Bank’s land area. They are connected to one another and to Israel by settler-only roads, and protected from the Palestinians by walls of enormous length and impressive height and thickness. The West Bank’s Palestinian towns and villages seem secondary and subservient to the settler towns.”

Gandhi spoke of seeing and hearing evidence of nonviolent protests and resistance by Palestinians against injustices such as “the extension of a new settler-only road, or a new takeover of land, or a barrier with soldiers present preventing people from crossing a street to buy something or meet someone.” He also saw evidence of Israeli support for justice for Palestinians by their participation in these nonviolent protests. Given the realities of ‘the situation’ in Palestine and the security fears in Israel, Gandhi asked all in attendance to objectively consider whether there is a real possibility for a genuinely independent Palestinian state. It was clear that he thinks not.

Given that, in concluding his prepared remarks, he surprised many with the provocative policy suggestion that the Palestinians say to the Israelis: “You win, you have foiled the creation of a Palestinian state. We accept second-class status in all of Israel-cum-Palestine.” Professor Gandhi suggested that this position might be the ultimate nonviolent action that would stir the powerful Judaic conscience to right their wrongs against the Palestinian people. His suggestion to the audience for their roles in promoting peace and justice in the region was twofold. First, make a real visit there if possible to see the situation for yourself. Second, demand transparency. Learn what precisely was offered to the Palestinians at the 2000 Camp David talks and decide for yourself if it was fair. Get a detailed map of Israel and the Palestinian territories with the separation wall, settler-only roads, established and planned settlements marked, and decide for yourself if a West Bank state is a practical idea.

Challenging comments as well as a lively question and answer session followed. “The Role of Non-Violence in Palestinian-Israeli Relations: A Conversation with Rajmohan Gandhi” was organized by the Urbana Champaign Peace Initiative and co-sponsored by the Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Students for Justice in Palestine. UCPI is a diverse group of community and university members whose goal is to widen the audience for education about initiatives for peace and justice in areas such as Palestine and Israel by creating local opportunities to learn about and discuss peaceful responses to violence and injustice.
Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish knows the pain of conflict. It is the pain of the violent deaths of his three daughters and a niece. The pain of a world that has been the seat of constant struggle, a struggle that seems to have no end and is sometimes lost in the din of funeral processions and gunfire. It is a pain that has come at a high price for many in his part of the world — the Gaza Strip. But in the face of pain, horror, grief, sadness, bombs, bullets, and invasions, Dr. Abuelaish has been a resolute voice for peace.

The one-time Nobel Prize nominee and the Michael and Amira Dan Professor in Public Health at the University of Toronto, visited Urbana-Champaign February 11-13, on a trip co-sponsored by CSAMES and the grassroots community group, Urbana-Campaign Peace Initiatives (UCPI). Dr. Abuelaish delivered a message that strikes at the core of the human spirit, one that implores people to stand resolute despite the most basic primal urges to fight back.

Dr. Abuelaish is fighting occupation and war, and his own personal tragedies, with peaceful resistance. He is a medical doctor by profession, yet he is also a writer, jotting down his experiences into a book that has become for many a manifesto for peace and the humanist experience. His book ‘I Shall Not Hate: A Gaza Doctor’s Journey on the Road to Peace and Human Dignity’ is his journey through struggle and pain that has led him to his conviction that peaceful resistance is the key to ending bloodshed.

“It is important to feel anger in the wake of events like this; anger that signals that you do not accept what has happened, that spurs you to make a difference,” Dr. Abuelaish wrote. “but you have to choose not to spiral into hate. All the desire for revenge and hatred does is drive away wisdom, increase sorrow, and prolong strife.”

Dr. Abuelaish is first and foremost a Palestinian. He is from the occupied territories, accustomed to the harsh living environment that comes with living under occupation in the Jabalia Refugee Camp in Gaza. It is an environment he contended with as a child and as a doctor, witnessing the human toll of conflict firsthand.

Despite the bloodshed, the occupation, Dr. Abuelaish learned at a young age that the best route to empower himself was an education. He has studied and received degrees from Harvard, University of London, and Cairo University. “The Gaza Doctor,” as he is widely known, brought his experiences and his message to Urbana-Champaign during a busy schedule packed with presentations, radio interviews, and dialogue sessions that helped in painting a vivid and more personal image of the conflict in this part of the world.

Throughout the visit his message of peace and nonviolence touched more than 200 people who attended these events. CSAMES sponsored a Brown Bag Discussion entitled “Empowering Women and Girls in Palestine.” Educating young women is at the heart of Dr. Abuelaish’s foundation. “Daughters for Life” is set up to provide girls in the Middle East with educational opportunities and help improve existing programs through research and provision of funds.

During his three-day stay in Urbana-Champaign, Dr. Abuelaish discussed his book at the Urbana Free Library, presented a lecture at Provena Medical Center entitled “Healing Two Cultures: from Gaza to Tel Aviv” and gave a book talk at the Central Illinois Mosque and Islamic Center. He was also interviewed on WILL-AM 580 radio by David Inge on Focus and with Steve Shoemaker on Keepin’ the Faith.

His message during all of his appearances has been the simplest, yet the most difficult to understand for those who hear his tragedies — peace. Despite the bloodshed, peace must triumph. Dr. Abuelaish is a nonviolent advocate, and his message and its symbolism — let’s hope — is much stronger than conflict.
Outreach >>

Middle East Summer Institute for Educators

Professional development workshops for educators continue as a vital part of our outreach to K-12 educators. The 2010 Institute was held on June 27-30, and focused on teaching about the modern Middle East through its representation in mainstream and independent media. The material presented was designed to support the teaching of U.S. history, government, global studies, current events, and media studies at the upper middle school, high school, and college levels. Through use of print, audio and video, and online materials, participants received strategies on how to use media to encourage the development of critical thinking skills in their classes while learning about political conflicts and other current issues in the region.

The Institute kicked off with a hands-on demonstration of the role that food plays in identity formation in the Middle East. Barbara Petzen of the Middle East Policy Council demonstrated how to make dolma (Turkish) or waraqa al-’aynab (Arabic), which are stuffed grape leaves, and hommos. The following day, Petzen addressed stereotypes of the Middle East that are prevalent in U.S. media and introduced resources for teaching media literacy as well as using various forms of media, such as cartoons published online, as teaching tools. Tom Regan of Alshorfa.com discussed journalism in the Middle East, which introduced the screening of the film Control Room. The following day, Robert Naiman of Just Foreign Policy, gave an overview of Iran’s politics and demographics, while Regan discussed social media in Iran, from Facebook and Twitter to microblogging. The group also viewed the film Inside Islam, which deals with public opinion in predominately Muslim countries. Petzen and Angela Williams presented on music as a means of social and political resistance in the region, while Professor Steve Tamari of Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville presented an overview of myths and realities of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The 2011 Middle East Summer Institute was held on July 17-18 with the theme of “Political and Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa.” On the first day, Professor Kenneth Cuno gave an overview of the historical nuances of uprisings in the region, while Professor Valerie Hoffman discussed religion and sociopolitical change in Egypt. Over lunch, participants viewed The Revolution in Cairo and were led in discussion by M. Aladdin Elasar. Professor Al Kagan demonstrated how to access the University Library’s online resources covering the Arab Spring, and Professor Asef Bayat gave a presentation and discussion on post-Islamist revolutions. The following day was dedicated to curriculum resources for addressing change in the region. Angela Williams presented on the use of music in the Egyptian revolution and Professor Hadi Esfahani addressed the economic consequences of change in the region. Barbara Petzen closed the Institute with an interactive session on defining U.S. interests in the region, as well as with several examples of multimedia resources for teaching about the modern Middle East.

Illinois Council for the Social Studies (ICSS) Annual Meeting

I-Hotel and Conference Center, Champaign
April 14, 2011

Scott Kistler, Professor of History at Kankakee Community College, presented on “Connecting the Middle East to the Modern World.” His presentation offered resources and strategies to highlight the impacts of modernity and Middle Eastern responses to it. One resource was James Gelvin’s The Modern Middle East: A History, a textbook that connects Middle Eastern and world history. Professor Kistler has attended CSAMES’ Middle East Summer Institute for the past three summers.

Celebrating Music, Dance and Cultural Traditions

Southside Elementary School, Champaign
May 17, 2011

Rabie Abu Saleem, Graduate Student in Nuclear Plasma and Radiological Engineering, and Angela Williams visited Karinsa Moline’s music class to talk about traditional instruments and music. After the presentation, Rabie led the class in dabkeh traditional dance.

Our Story Times continues to be held at Urbana Free Library on the third Saturday of each month at 2:00 pm. This year, the series features an India Story time on Oct. 15 for children to learn about the celebration of Divali.

Following the Arab Spring

TAP In Leadership Academy, Champaign
July 14, 2011

Angela Williams visited the TAP In Leadership Academy summer enrichment program to demonstrate how scholars can research and learn about the Arab Spring via online resources and social media. A Facebook page was created to help foster discussion. The mission of TAP In Leadership Academy is to educate, equip, and empower youth living in marginalized, urban communities to enhance educational achievement, leadership development, and cultural awareness.
Faculty Achievements >>

CSAMES congratulates the following faculty on their awards and book publications:

Francis Boyle, Professor of Law, authored a book entitled *The Palestinian Right of Return Under International Law* (Clarity Press, 2011).

Kenneth Cuno, Associate Professor of History, published *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: Histories of Trans-Saharan Africans in 19th-Century Egypt, Sudan, and the Ottoman Mediterranean*, co-edited with Terence Walz (The American University in Cairo Press, 2010).


Linda Herrera, Associate Professor of Educational Policy, Organization and Leadership and Asef Bayat, Professor of Sociology, co-edited a book entitled *Being Young and Muslim: Cultural Politics in the Global South and North* (Oxford University Press, 2010).

Faranak Miraftab, Associate Professor of Urban and Regional Planning, was awarded membership to the Campus Research Board, UIUC, in 2010, for a project entitled “A Multi-Sited Study of Transnational Community Development: Illinois, Togo and Mexico.” She was also a recipient of the Arnold O. Beckman Research Award and received a Creative Research Award, FAA, UIUC.


Marina Terkourafi, Assistant Professor of Linguistics, published an edited book entitled *The Languages of Global Hip Hop* (Continuum, 2010).

CSAMES also acknowledges the continued scholarship of our faculty and emeriti members who have published articles, presented at conferences, and contributed to student advising. For more information about all faculty affiliated with CSAMES, visit: [http://www.csames.illinois.edu/people/faculty/](http://www.csames.illinois.edu/people/faculty/).

New Course Offerings in South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Instructor(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARAB/SAME 150</td>
<td>The Arab Spring: Perspectives on Current Events in the Arab World</td>
<td>(Co-taught by CSAMES affiliated faculty, including: Asef Bayat, Wail Hasan, Linda Herrera, Valerie Hoffman, Ed Kolodziej, Jane Kuntz, and Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWL 207</td>
<td>Indian Cinema in Context</td>
<td>(Rini Bhattacharya Mehta)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 490</td>
<td>Business and Economic Environment in the Middle East and North Africa</td>
<td>(Hadi Esfahani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPS 590</td>
<td>Youth and Citizenship in a Digital Age</td>
<td>(Linda Herrera)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPS 590</td>
<td>Education and Power in the Middle East</td>
<td>(Linda Herrera)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIST 502</td>
<td>Family and Colonial Modernity in South Asia</td>
<td>(Kenneth Cuno)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 593</td>
<td>Spring. The Alhambra</td>
<td>(D. Fairchild Ruggles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 562</td>
<td>Religion and Politics</td>
<td>(Asef Bayat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURK 490</td>
<td>Spring. Language, Culture and Identity in Modern Turkey</td>
<td>(Ercan Balci)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ARAB/SAME 150

The Arab Spring: Perspectives on Current Events in the Arab World (Co-taught by CSAMES affiliated faculty, including: Asef Bayat, Wail Hasan, Hadi Esfahani, Ercan Balci, Elabbas Bennamoun, Kenneth Cuno, Linda Herrera, Valerie Hoffman, Ed Kolodziej, Jane Kuntz, and Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi)

CWL 207

Indian Cinema in Context (Rini Bhattacharya Mehta)

ECON 490

Business and Economic Environment in the Middle East and North Africa (Hadi Esfahani)

EPS 590

Youth and Citizenship in a Digital Age (Linda Herrera)

EPS 590

Education and Power in the Middle East (Linda Herrera)

HIST 502

Family and Colonial Modernity in South Asia (Kenneth Cuno)

LA 593

Spring. The Alhambra (D. Fairchild Ruggles)

SOC 562

Religion and Politics (Asef Bayat)

TURK 490

Spring. Language, Culture and Identity in Modern Turkey (Ercan Balci).
Our Students >>

CSAMES 2011 MA Graduates

Jeffrey Peyton joined the CSAMES MA program in Fall 2008, with the Middle East specialization. His primary interest is in religion in the Middle East; in particular, he plans to examine interreligious relations and relations between states and minority religions in the region. Jeff grew up in Champaign and completed his undergraduate work in Islamic Studies in the Department of Religion at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. He is the recipient of a FLAS fellowship for the 2010-2011 academic year and is studying Turkish and Arabic. Upon completing his MA at CSAMES, Jeff intends to pursue a Ph.D. in Religion.

Congratulations! Congratulations to Jeff on his accomplishments and best wishes!

Current Students

Sarah Lazare is a masters student in Middle Eastern studies, beginning in Fall 2010. She has worked as an independent journalist, writing articles for publications ranging from The Nation to Common Dreams to Al Jazeera English. She was also previously a staff writer for The Multinational Monitor. Sarah is actively involved in the U.S. anti-war movement, as well as other intersecting movements for economic and social justice. She is a recipient of a FLAS fellowship for the 2010-11 academic year and is studying Arabic. She is currently working on a book about the GI resistance movement against the U.S.-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Matthew Niemi entered the CSAMES MA program (Middle East focus) in Fall 2010, soon after completing his undergraduate degree at UIUC in International Studies (Middle East focus) and with a minor in Linguistics, making this his fifth year on campus and his fifth year as a member of the Marching Illini. He is fascinated by how people form their belief systems and act on them privately, publicly and politically, particularly in regards to the Abrahamic religions in the Middle East and the West. He is a recipient of a FLAS fellowship for the 2010-2011 academic year and studying Arabic. After completing his MA, Matt hopes to study Islam in a religious institution in the Middle East and then return to the U.S. to pursue a doctorate.

2011 Tikke Prize Winner

This year’s Girdhari Tikku Memorial Prize was awarded in collaboration with Program for Comparative and World Literature to Adam Sadik for his paper entitled "Nature as a Route to Identity: Examining Arab Gardens within Diana Abu-Jaber's 'Crescent'." Adam is a senior majoring in Molecular and Cellular Biology and English. Diana Abu-Jaber’s Crescent (2003) is a novel that communicates aspects of the Arab American experience, especially since September 11, 2001. In Sadik’s words:

“My reading of the novel centers on its use of plant life and traditional natural elements. I argue that these elements and natural surroundings allow the novel to reflect the individual growth of its protagonist. The traditional and symbolic importance of plant life in the Arab world and greater Middle East also becomes relevant because it is used in the novel to give a positive and healthy view of Arabs and Arab Americans, a view that is rarely seen in the media’s stereotypical and generalized portrayals of them.”

Applications for the 2012 Tikku Prize will be due in April. All students are welcome to apply. For general information, visit: http://www.csames.illinois.edu/program/prizes/
Study Abroad >>
Faculty-Led Programs, Summer and Winter 2010

Morocco

In May-June, 2010, eleven students spent three weeks engaging in a transcultural course in Morocco, learning about the culture and society through direct dialogue and interaction with Moroccan teachers and students. Preparation began six weeks before the trip, when the group met to learn about Moroccan history, language, and culture, and prepare for seminars and to teach English as a foreign language. The students spent three days in Rabat in seminars with students studying English at Mohammed V University. From there they traveled to Marrakech for two days and then to the Sahara Desert, where they spent four days teaching English at a middle school in Sifa, a village south of the town of Erfoud. The students also visited nearby sand dunes and enjoyed the hospitality and rhythm of small-town life in Morocco. While at Sifa, the Illinois students produced an English-language video, 'Eye on Erfoud,' a play written by one of the middle schoolers about a village girl whose family convinces her father to allow her to board at the high school in Erfoud. The students also reciprocally enjoyed being taught some Arabic on the last day by the middle schoolers at Sifa. The trip concluded with two days in Fes, a world heritage site whose old city, or medina, remains largely unchanged from its founding in the early ninth century. From there they traveled to Casablanca for an afternoon of sightseeing before returning via Rome.

-Mark Dressman, Associate Professor, Curriculum and Instruction

Jerusalem, Israel

This course allowed students to explore issues related to immigration and intercultural interactions in Israel. Students met guest speakers from several government and non-government agencies and met members of several immigrant and Arab communities. The group visited and conducted observations in different sites within Jerusalem, including the Old City, religious sites, Hebrew University, and several commercial centers and districts. Excursions to other parts of Israel included a visit to a bilingual school and a research center in an Arab town; a city built by immigrants; the mayor's office at the center for immigrants; and Tel Aviv. Many of the student projects generated unique observations about social, educational, and political issues in Israel, while analyzing these issues in the U.S.

-Yore Kedem, Visiting Lecturer of Modern Hebrew

Istanbul, Turkey

GLBL 298: Cultural Diversity in Modern Turkey explores linguistic and cultural diversity of Turkey not only from a historical perspective but also from the lens of today. Istanbul is one of the best locations to understand global issues by interacting with the diverse residents coming from different ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic groups. In Winter Break 2010, 22 students from U of I visited Turkey and learned about both well-known historical sites and the ones known only by the locals to get a good grasp of how history shapes today's landscape and people's thinking. Because of the special geopolitical status of Istanbul, students achieved a better understanding of globalization, the interactions and conflicts between the East and the West, secularism, and religion at the crossroads of history and modernity. The students had the opportunity to be immersed in the local culture by interacting with students. This study tour made positive influence not only on the lives of our students, but also on the local culture. Our visit to Edirne, a city not far from Istanbul, made headlines in the local paper as “Cultural Escapade.” This course will also be offered in Winter Break 2011.

-Ercan Balci, Lecturer of Turkish

Delhi, Lucknow, Ranchi, India

The short term study abroad course titled “Globalization and Language and Culture of India” was offered again in Fall 2010. Thirteen students visited New Delhi, Lucknow, and Ranchi to study and experience the linguistic and cultural diversity of India and the ongoing impact of globalization on the lives of people of various social strata in rural, urban, and metropolitan settings. Students examined the challenges that transnational cultural integration brings to the Indian identity through debates on maintenance and shift of the local traditions.

-Mithilesh Mishra, Lecturer of Hindi
Event Spotlight>>

Living with No Place Called Home

In the fall of 2009, Intersections International, a New York-based NGO that works with communities in conflict, led a delegation of eight American artists from various disciplines on a three-week mission through Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, as part of the Iraqi Voices Amplification Project. The goal of the project was to use the power of the arts to call attention to one of the most pressing and under-reported humanitarian crises of our time: the displacement of more than four million Iraqis as a result of the military intervention in Iraq. The delegation entered into conversations with hundreds of refugees at community centers and in their homes. Writer and actress Kim Schultz and musician Amikaeyla Gaston were two of the artists who were part of the delegation. Upon their return, the artists created a series of artistic pieces designed to humanize the crisis and give voice to the millions of refugees whose plight has yet to enter broad public consciousness. No Place Called Home is one such piece.

On Oct. 14, CSAMES hosted the performance of No Place Called Home, a one-woman play that tracks one woman’s story as she travels to the Middle East to interview Iraqi refugees. As she is overwhelmed by the stories of devastation and loss, she finds herself falling in love with Omar, a displaced Iraqi artist living in Syria. This play is an unexpected story—a story of an American woman and an Iraqi man, a story giving voice to 13 refugees among 4 million displaced people. It is a story, according to Schultz, that wasn’t supposed to be a love story.

The play is accompanied by music by Amikaeyla Gaston, who sings Arabic traditional songs and plays a variety of instruments throughout the performance. Gaston’s soulful voice and accompanying instruments transport the audience through moments of contemplation, sorrow, surprise and unexpected humor.

After the performance, Schultz and Gaston were joined by two Champaign-Urbana community members on the stage for a panel discussion. Ahn Ha Ho, co-Director of the East Central Illinois Refugee Mutual Assistance Center, located in Urbana, provided insight on the processes refugees must undergo when emigrating to the U.S. Not only has she helped immigrants and refugees resettle in this community for over twenty years, but she also emigrated to the U.S. from Vietnam. The other panelist was Raad Ismail, a local activist who has collaborated with CAN (the Campus Antiwar Network), AWARE (the Anti-War, Anti-Racism Effort), and the ISO (International Socialist Organization) in organizing events related to U.S. and British foreign policy in the Middle East. Ismail was born in Baghdad, Iraq. In the late 1980’s, he was an occasional contributor to a few Iraqi periodicals, translating them from English to Arabic, in topics related to music, specifically in the genres of Progressive Rock, Punk, and Reggae.

No Place Called Home was co-sponsored by a variety of units, including Religion; the School of Music; the Cline Center for Democracy; Sociology; History; the School of Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics; the Women and Gender in Global Perspectives Program; the Program in Jewish Culture and Society; Theatre; Political Science; and the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory.
Featured Posters

Remote from the Prophet’s Land
translating the islamic sex segregation in indonesia

Posters designed by:
Tutin Aryanti, doctoral student in the School of Architecture, UIUC and Andi Muhlis, graduate student in the Environmental Management Program, Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia
Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
221 International Studies Building
910 South Fifth Street
Champaign, IL 61820

http://csames.illinois.edu

Contribute to CSAMES >>

You can support our programs and events by contributing to any of the following funds:

- Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Annual Fund
- Middle Eastern Studies Fund
- South Asian Studies Fund
- India Studies Fund
- Iranian Studies Fund

Please make checks payable to The University of Illinois Foundation and note the fund to which you want your gift directed in the memo line of the check. You can send your checks to the address at right.

If you would like to give by credit card, please complete this form and send it to the address on the right, or visit us online at http://csames.illinois.edu/giving.

Name ________________________________
Address ________________________________
Phone (______) ____________________________

I would like to contribute:
☐ $1,000  ☐ $500  ☐ $250  ☐ $100  ☐ $50  ☐ $____

Fund: ____________________________________________

Please charge my credit card an amount of $_____                        
☐ Visa  ☐ AMEX  ☐ Discover  ☐ MC

Number ________________________________
Expiration date ____________________________
Signature ________________________________

Rebecca A. Linder
Director of Advancement
International Programs and Studies
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
507 E. Green Street, Room 402 (MC-417)
Champaign, Illinois 61820
217-333-5742