

CMENAS



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Greetings and good wishes to all CMENAS students, alumni, donors, and friends!

We at the Center for Middle East and North African Studies (CMENAS) at the University of Michigan have a lot of exciting news to report this year, but before turning to our center's accomplishments, I want to remember the pressing news that is unfolding across the MENA region. In recent weeks, people around the world have followed with sadness and sympathy the news of the tragic earthquakes that struck Morocco and Afghanistan, as well as the dam failures and devastating flooding in eastern Libya. Each event has killed thousands and caused untold damage, creating multiple humanitarian crises. Most recently, we are also witnessing with deep concern the outbreak of violence and war between Israel and Gaza. We in CMENAS share our sympathy and condolences with those suffering from these tragedies and call on all those who can promote peace and offer rescue assistance to do so.

Even in times not driven by disaster and violence, and especially in these trying times, CMENAS strives to promote a more humane and global understanding of the world and give students the tools to build a better future. As a National Resource Center (NRC) with a Title VI grant from the U.S. Department of Education, we train and support graduate students

pursuing research on the history, cultures, politics, languages, literatures, and religions of the MENA region. We support faculty research and initiatives and organize workshops and other enrichment opportunities for K–12 educators who take what they learn back to their classrooms to inspire young minds and change young lives. We build partnerships with local colleges and universities, such as Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti and Henry Ford College in Dearborn, as well as universities across the country, from San Diego State to Georgia State and beyond, to support programming and cultural events that promote MENA cultures and languages. These and other ventures serve to create globally minded citizens who represent the best ideals in America.

Language learning and cultural outreach are essential to our mission of promoting mutual understanding and confronting the scourges of war, xenophobia, racism, Antisemitism, and Islamophobia in our world. CMENAS is committed to the ongoing support of all MENA languages through the Foreign Language Area Study fellowship program, delivering over \$400,000 in fellowships to our language students each academic year. We are thrilled to announce that beginning in 2024, undergraduate students will be able to minor in Arabic. This will expand our Arabic program beyond the reach of the current major, bringing many more students into our language classrooms.

We are also excited to report that five of our faculty members—**Adi Raz** (Hebrew), **Behrad Aghaei** (Persian), **Nilay Sevinc** (Turkish), **Sosy Mishoyan** (Armenian), and **Michael Pifer** (Armenian) received a prestigious grant, New Initiatives/New Instruction (NINI) from the U-M College of LSA for their project, “Seeds of Peace: Cross Cultural Talk in the Middle East.” This initiative will bring together students in our Hebrew, Persian, Turkish, and Armenian language programs for weekly meetings to learn about shared dimensions of life in the Middle East. This is exciting news for language learning and for undergraduate education in Middle East Studies at U-M!

This year we have also promoted cultural encounters through a series of events and initiatives dedicated to border studies and migration in the MENA and beyond. The timeliness of this work was underscored for us on June 14, 2023, when a Libyan boat carrying Pakistani, Syrian, Egyptian, and Palestinian migrants and refugees sank off the coast of Greece, killing hundreds. This is one of an ongoing wave of tragedies affecting displaced persons worldwide. In June 2023, CMENAS co-hosted The World History and Literature Initiative (WHaLI), a one-day conference for secondary teachers focused on “Border Walls” in a comparative context. In August, we continued our partnership with other U-M NRCs to hold a multi-day conference in San Diego and Tijuana

on the issue of borders, migration, and refugees around the world.

While the U.S. Department of Education supports some of these initiatives, our funding is constantly threatened by shifting political and financial forces in Washington and around the globe. CMENAS relies on the critical support of allies and alumni like you to be able to continue to realize its mission, even in the face of uncertainty. Your donation enables us to fund faculty research, undergraduate and graduate study-abroad, as well as educational outreach to K–12 teachers who spark the imagination of the next generation. If you believe in CMENAS's educational vision, we hope you will take a moment to translate your goodwill toward CMENAS into a tangible investment in the future.

Can we count on your support?
Your help has never been more important.

To donate:
ii.umich.edu/cmenas/donate

If you have ideas about the work ahead, or would like to invest in a new generation of students and leaders with moral and material support, please reach out to us. I am happy to discuss the center's strategic plan and talk frankly about monthly charitable pledges or named benevolent gifts to support the CMENAS initiatives you wish to honor most. Simply contact me at szpiech@umich.edu, or call: 734-647-4143. And feel free to connect on social media: Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn—we LOVE to hear from our CMENAS community!

Thank you! And Go Blue!

Ryan Szpiech

Director, Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies

Associate Professor, Romance Languages and Literatures, Middle East Studies, and Judaic Studies

ABOUT THE CENTER

The study of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region began at the University of Michigan (U-M) in 1889. Since the inception of the Center for Middle Eastern & North African Studies (CMENAS) in 1961, U-M has been committed to area studies and language training. In 1993, the center became a member of the university's International Institute, which seeks to stimulate research and teaching on critical areas of the world and foster cooperation among the university's departments, schools, and colleges.

Ryan Szpiech

CMENAS Director and Associate Professor, Romance Languages and Literatures, Middle East Studies, and Judaic Studies

Jay Crisostomo

CMENAS Associate Director and George G. Cameron Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Civilization and Languages and Civilizations, Middle East Studies

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Evyn Kropf (Ex Officio)

Librarian, Middle East Studies and Religious Studies; Curator, Islamic Manuscripts Collection

Renee Ragin Randall

(Elected)

Assistant Professor, Middle East Studies

FRONT COVER: Al-Azhar Mosque in the historic Islamic core of Cairo, Egypt. It was the first mosque established in a city that eventually earned the nickname “the City of a Thousand Minarets.” It was commissioned in 970 to develop the city into a major center for Islamic learning. Photo by Hana Mattar.

CMENAS WELCOMES
NEW ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

JAY CRISOSTOMO

Jay Crisostomo is George G. Cameron Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Civilizations & Languages, Associate Professor of Assyriology, and Director of Graduate Studies at the Department of Middle East Studies. We sat down with him to discuss his role as the new Associate Director of CMENAS.

What do you see as your role as the associate director?

I see this role as primarily providing support for the director, staff, and importantly, support for the students. I'm here to help the students navigate their degrees, their research, and inasmuch as enable their career options.

Thinking back on your own time as a graduate student, what made you a strong advisor? What actions of your own advisors have made a lasting impression?

I was fortunate enough to have incredible models of good mentors. What stands out most for me is that my advisors didn't

treat me as merely a student or as someone indebted to them. They treated me as a collaborator and partner in dialogue. While recognizing that I was not quite a colleague, they regularly sought out and considered my thoughts on their questions. Perhaps most importantly, they treated me as a human being; they never saw me as just a student, an academic. They realized I had many other responsibilities and roles and provided support so that I could function well in all those capacities, whether as a partner, a parent, a teacher, a colleague to other grad students, a friend to people outside the university, etc. I try to acknowledge and support our students similarly.



“As [an] advisor, I look to support [students], challenge them, and encourage them in their investigations.

And as much as possible, collaborate with them as they think about their futures and their research.”

How does the role of mentor/student and advisor/advisee change between undergraduate and graduate years?

As undergraduates, our students tend to be in a more exploratory phase of their lives. MENAS is one of several interests, perhaps only an option among many possible career routes. They are still in the process of asking questions related to MENAS; as undergraduates, they offer important insight and perspective. As mentors, we are there to help them figure some of this out and how to apply all the different ideas they're taking in in their coursework or research to their futures. Graduate students tend to have a clearer idea that MENAS will be an important part of their future, professionally, academically, or otherwise. As a result, they ask different questions than undergraduate students and are learning more about discovering the answers they need or developing new ideas of their own. As advisors, I look to support them, challenge them, and encourage them in their investigations. And as much as possible, collaborate with them as they think about their futures and their research.

How do you intend to develop a community at CMENAS?

I wish there were a magical formula for building community. As our students get pulled in different directions — something we strongly encourage and believe they

should do — it becomes more and more difficult to bring them together in ways that don't feel contrived and, therefore, detrimental to a community. I'm fortunate enough to also have a strong graduate student community in MES that I hope our MIRS students will be invited to join. I also aim to provide good opportunities for our community to come together in the form of the colloquium or in other programming and events.

What impression do you want to leave on the CMENAS community, faculty, staff, students, etc.?

One of my goals is to create stronger bonds between the work we do at CMENAS and my other communities on campus. Historically, CMENAS has focussed on more modern and highly relevant research; given my own research and communities are connected to the ancient histories and cultures of the MENA world, I hope to continue to bring those communities and research to CMENAS programming.

Secondly, and this is more personal, I want to be a good colleague. Someone that faculty, staff, and students recognize as supportive (there's that word again) of anything they do and someone who helps them find success, however, that is defined.

A CONVERSATION WITH TAMIM ANSARY

MENA Reading Cohort Guest Author

By Jennifer Lund



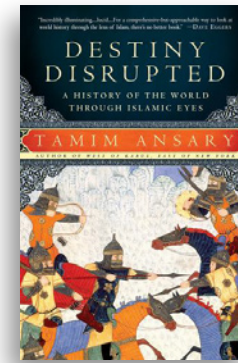
In spite of a winter ice storm that wreaked havoc in much of Southeastern Michigan, the Middle East North Africa (MENA) Reading Cohort kicked off its first book discussion group on March 4, 2023. Meeting both virtually and in-person, eight of the ten-member cohort gathered with the purpose of expanding their knowledge of MENA history and culture. The March 4 event featured a lively discussion of Tamim Ansary's non-fiction book titled *Destiny Disrupted: A History of the World through Islamic Eyes* (2009). Ansary, who joined the group via Zoom from San Francisco, is an award-winning Afghan-American author born in Kabul, Afghanistan, where he lived until moving to the United States for High School at age sixteen. Ansary's father taught science and literature at Kabul University, and his American mother taught English at the first girls' school in Afghanistan. His acclaimed memoir *West of Kabul, East of New York* (2003) explores his journey straddling these two cultures. Wearing many hats throughout his life, Ansary has worked as a textbook editor and publisher, children's book author, columnist for the encyclopedia website Encarta, as well as running the *San Francisco Writer's Workshop* for several years. *Destiny Disrupted* recounts the history of the Muslim world from the founding of Islam through the 9/11 attacks. The book emphasizes the

influence of Islamic culture on the West and how this, in turn, has impacted the course of world history.

On March 7, 2023, CMENAS outreach coordinator Jennifer Lund met again with Tamim Ansary via Zoom to learn more about his journey from textbook editor to author, his ideas to broaden the scope of social studies and world history courses, and other thoughts on schooling in today's world.

Jennifer Lund: *How did you get inspired to write your book *Destiny Disrupted*?*

Tamim Ansary: I worked in textbook publishing for 20 years and at the end of my career I was a freelance editor and I was hired to develop a brand new world history textbook. The job consisted of looking at all the High School world history textbooks that are out there, charting what's covered in them and how, and creating an outline for one that has everything they have plus more. But what I got to thinking about when I did that was the structure of world history as it is viewed in all the world history textbooks that were in mainstream programs in America at that time. And I saw that Islam was part of one of ten units, and it was one chapter in that unit and that unit included Pre-Columbian Americas, Ancient Empires of Africa, and then Islam. And so it certainly situated Islam as something that happened a long time ago and was maybe 1/30th of importance in the picture of world history. So, I got to thinking about the map that we see today, about what is the Islamic world, and I saw that it was, A, quite large territorially, and, B, it was right next door to Europe. Then I thought about the history of Islam and I realized that there was a lot of interaction between Islam and Europe—not friendly interaction in a crucial period—the Crusades were a big element. And I began to rethink what the shape of world history might be if you were situated someplace between, say, Istanbul and the Indus River. And if you were someplace in there and you looked at world history and the story of how we got to where we are



today, what would that story be? It would include events that happened in Europe. It would include events that happened all over the world, but the center of it would be that the heartland of the Islamic world. So, then 9/11 happened and all of a sudden I think many people were saying, “Look—what’s going on here? Who are these guys?” And my thought was that these guys have been here all along and they’re pretty ancient, so, from there I ended up writing this book, *Destiny Disrupted*.

JL: *One teacher in the cohort asked, ‘How do Social Studies teachers begin to challenge this Eurocentric narrative and, in kind, the overly simplistic, largely inaccurate perception of Muslims and the history of Islam? Where do we begin?’*

TA: Well, I don’t think I said this (during the book discussion on March 4) but it occurs to me now that one of the linchpins of the narrative of Eurocentric history is the Dark Ages. If you were to give a three-phrase summary of history you would say: the glory that was Greece, the Dark Ages, and then civilization rose again. One good place to start is the Dark Ages, which were actually the Bright Ages someplace else. The Dark Ages were a period when the Islamic Caliphate, the original Islamic Empire, was in its peak of civilizational grandeur. Charlemagne who was crowned King of the Holy Roman empire in the year 800 sent a message apparently to Harun Al-Rashid who was the peak emperor of the Abbasid Dynasty in the Islamic world. He said, “I’m the ruler of the West and you are the ruler of the East so we should be allies.” The story goes Harun Al-Rashid looked at this message and said, “He’s what? He’s the ruler of where? What is this place he’s talking about?” For them that was just out there in the darkness. So that was the period when there were the Islamics almost getting science, art, mathematics, philosophy, and so on. You could also look at the Crusades as being a really pivotal event in World History. And it’s not just because there was a war and so on but the Crusades was a moment when the rising West realized there was something big and wonderful over there in the East and it was the event that opened up the flow of goods and ideas from the Islamic world and China and that included, among other things, inventions like the magnet, paper, printing, and also ideas like Greek philosophy, Aristotle. This sort of jumpstarted Scholasticism and then the Renaissance, and so on. You (teachers) could connect events in Islamic history with the course of events in European history...and I think the Crusades would be a crucial

one. The Crusades were essential in the rise of universities and the birth of the Renaissance in the West along with the flow of ideas that came through the Caliphate in Spain and then into Western Europe. This is all part of the same big story.

JL: *What do you hope to see shift in the way history is taught in American schools?*

TA: The world is going through some shift that is almost too big to talk about. One of the givens that all of us grew up with was, A, the shape of the world was the West is the top of the heap and that’s a 500 year-old story. In the last 25 years, we’re starting to see that that’s shifting. We don’t know the future. With the advent of technology, with cyberspace and all of that, physical geography is becoming less important and so we have to start thinking about human communities existing in some other way than just geographic, just physical, so countries are up in the air now. Are there going to be such things as countries in the familiar way we’ve thought about them? These are all ideas I’ve gone into in my book *The Invention of Yesterday* (2019), which is really saying that history is a narrative. What I’m trying to say about that is that it’s always about the present—especially world history. What’s happening right now is best understood as the current chapter of a story already in progress. So history asks the question, what is the story already in progress? And then we only want to know that so we can see what the thrust of the momentum of events is into the future. If that’s the story, what is the next chapter? That’s why we’re studying history at all. Aside from it being really interesting in my opinion (laughs) because it’s about human beings.

JL: *Is there anything else you want to share regarding your views on schooling?*

TA: I think interaction between schools here and schools internationally is a really good thing. Over the past few years there have been educational exchanges between American students and students in Afghanistan. I’m aware of some of those projects. There’s a school of leadership in Afghanistan that was educating girls and they had interactions with people here....I think that sort of thing is really good. And I have to say I’m a really big fan of public education and public schools because I think it is really important to have a discourse we all share. And we’re going to have less of that if everybody goes off to private schools where they all agree about what they think and they are not even talking to people who have other views. Public schools increase globalization in our culture. So, public education is a really important aspect of keeping the country going.

A WORLD ON THE MOVE

TEACHING GLOBAL ISSUES WITH CASE STUDIES OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN MIGRATION

By Jennifer Lund

According to the World Bank's 2021 Groundswell report, without intervention, climate change could cause up to 216 million migrants worldwide. To highlight this crisis and help teachers address it in their classrooms, CMENAS, along with the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (LACS), and the African Studies Center (ASC), hosted a K-12 teacher workshop on Earth Day, April 22, 2023. This all-day, in-person event titled, "A World on the Move: Teaching global issues with case studies of climate change and human migration" offered 4.5 State Continuing Education Clock Hours and brought together twelve middle school and high school teachers who specialize in subjects as diverse as world history, global studies, EL intervention, and library media. Experts in the field presented case studies from Morocco, East Africa, and Columbia, helping participants to contextualize these issues within three different world regions.

The first speaker was Leah Squires, a 2020 Masters of International and Regional Studies, Middle Eastern & North African Studies specialization alum and former Peace Corps volunteer in Morocco. Squires, who also has a U-M master's degree in public policy, spoke about Morocco's national water policy and its impact on human migration. She highlighted the impact of drought on the country, especially given that 14 percent of the GDP comes from agriculture.

Larissa Larsen, chair of the urban and regional planning program and an associate professor of urban and regional planning at the University of Michigan, followed with a talk on climate change and water challenges in East Africa's urban cities with a focus on Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. She discussed water challenges in the region, such as limited access to safe and reliable water that has become amplified due to climate change and increasing the vulnerability of the poor.

The workshop's third presenter, Pendle Marshall-Hallmark, is a U-M School for Environment and Sustainability master's student specializing in environmental justice in the United States and Latin America. Her talk focused on multinational resource extraction in Colombia and its effect on exacerbating climate change through air and water pollution and causing community displacement.

To provide teaching strategies for implementing the case studies, CMENAS, LACS, and ASC partnered with the Center for Education Design, Evaluation and Research (CEDER), which is housed within the Marsal Family School of Education. Darin Stockdill of CEDER presented strategies for integration across grade levels and subjects. The teachers were also introduced to ways in which climate change affects indigenous communities through a powerful short film and an interactive teaching idea presented by teacher consultant Amy Perkins, a Lakeshore High School world history teacher.

The day concluded with a chance for teachers to process and brainstorm their own teaching ideas with source sets based on the day's discussions. In addition to the workshop, teachers are also given access to a Canvas course site where shared resources are readily available and the professional learning community created during the workshop has the potential to continue.

This workshop was funded in part by Title VI grants from the US Department of Education with additional funding from the International Institute. To learn about similar workshops in the future, please visit ii.umich.edu/ii/outreach or contact cmenasoutreach@umich.edu.



Guest speaker Leah Squires reunites with Social Studies/English Learner teacher Carole Hawke. The two met previously in an Arabic language course at Middlebury Language Schools.

2023 WHALI

BORDER WALLS: NAVIGATING EXCLUSION IN A DIVIDED WORLD

By Jennifer Lund

The 2023 World History and Literature Initiative (WHaLI) titled, "Border Walls: Navigating Exclusion in a Divided World" was held in-person on June 13, 2023, at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. The goal for WHaLI is to build teachers' content knowledge, enhance their pedagogical practices, and acquire new resources and instructional materials that encourage students to think on a global scale. The educational design of WHaLI is co-led by Michelle Bellino, associate professor of educational studies, and Darin Stockdill, instructional and program design coordinator of the Center for Educational Design and Evaluation Research (CEDER), both within the U-M Marsal Family School of Education. Darin and Michelle bring their joint expertise in history and citizenship education, teacher development, learning theory, and comparative analysis into WHaLI resources and experiences. Amy Perkins, a historian and world history teacher working at Lakeshore High School was the Teacher Liaison, supporting the development of materials and communication.

Through the lens of area studies, 17 teachers spent the day building regional knowledge from area studies experts who presented four regional case studies on border walls and related issues. The teachers also participated in small groups to discuss strategies to approach the topic in their classrooms and ways to

use the resources provided by the WHaLI design team. This year's WhaLI also included a pre-workshop module on Canvas with an asynchronous component that focused on the historical and political context of border walls led by Professor Bellino. While the event was targeted for middle school and high school teachers of world history, social studies,

and English Language Arts in Southeast Michigan, this year's attendees also included teachers from Northern Michigan, Illinois, and Puerto Rico due to a partnership between U-M's Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies and the University of Puerto Rico.

All participating educators reported high satisfaction with the symposium's modules and educational resources. Unanimously, they found the content very useful for understanding border walls, and said they would return to the workshop materials in the future. "One of the best PD I have ever attended. I wish more people knew about it and it was longer," reported one teacher. Another wrote, "I found almost everything about this workshop to be relevant to what I teach. It will enrich my course so much."

WHaLI 2023 was sponsored by U-M's International Institute, Marsal Family School of Education, and the Center for Education Design, Evaluation, and Research (CEDER). The Center for Armenian Studies and five Title VI National Resource Centers were represented including, the Center for Latin America and the Caribbean Studies, the East Asia National Resource Center, the Center for South Asian Studies, the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, and the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies. It was funded in part by Title VI NRC grants from the U.S. Department of Education.



AP World History and Human Geography teacher Asim Gaffar, College Preparatory School of America in Lombard, IL, participates in the 2023 WHaLI teacher workshop.



Nora Lester Murad shares her books with a conference participant at the Diverse Books Conference

RIGHT: YA book author Nora Lester Murad presents at the Diverse Books Conference



CMENAS SPONSORS ARAB AMERICAN BOOK AWARD WINNER AT DIVERSE BOOKS CONFERENCE

By Jennifer Lund

The First Annual Diverse Books Conference was held at Bemidji State University in Bemidji, MN on July 25, 2023, and featured author Nora Lester Murad as the keynote speaker and workshop facilitator. The conference brought together not only P-12 teachers and administrators but also local authors, librarians, and literacy leaders. Lester Murad recently won the 2023 Arab American Book Award for her young adult novel *Ida in the Middle*. The book features Ida, a Palestinian-American 8th grader, who eats a magic olive that takes her to the life she might have had in her parents' village near Jerusalem. It is a coming-of-age story that explores identity, place, voice, and belonging.

Ida in the Middle was also featured by CMENAS in May 2023 for the Caught Between Cultures book discussion group hosted by the University of Minnesota Institute for Global Studies. The session included the presentation of a curriculum guide to accompany the book. More information on the book and guide can be found at idainthemiddle.com.

THE NEXUS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY, FOOD, AND WATER

CMENAS Participates in Midwest Institute Workshop for Community College Faculty

By Jennifer Lund

On July 31–August 4, 2023, CMENAS' Title VI funding supported the Midwest Institute for International Intercultural Education (MIIE) to hold a hybrid pedagogical workshop for 19 community college faculty. The week-long workshop titled, "The Nexus of Climate Change and Energy, Food, and Water" welcomed both virtual and in-person educators at Kalamazoo Valley Community College with some traveling as far away as Florida and Nebraska to attend in-person.

CMENAS invited Amelia Burke, a Ph.D. candidate in anthropology & history at U-M, to present a talk titled, "Changing Climate, Changing Livelihoods: Food Production in North Africa". In a highly interactive presentation, Burke shared her research on communal land management and water policies in Morocco and the impact of climate change on food production throughout the North African region. She noted that because of the large population of people working in

agriculture in the region, climate change has a larger impact.

The MIIE week-long workshop also included a curriculum development component whereas participants created a curriculum module based on the workshop theme of climate change. The goal is to infuse a course that they teach with content on climate change in different world regions at two or three points during the semester. This could include, for example, a case study, a paper, or a team project.

Other NRCs co-sponsoring the event included the Centers for African Studies, Asian Studies, and Latin American & Caribbean Studies at Michigan State University; the Centers for Global Studies and Middle East Studies at University of Illinois; the Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies at University of Pittsburgh; the Center for African Studies at University of Kansas; and the African Studies Program at Indiana University.

(RE)HUMANIZING THE POLITICS OF GLOBAL MIGRATION

U-M and San Diego State University Partner for the Global Migration Education Initiative

By Jennifer Lund

The Global Migration Education Initiative (GMEI) presented its 3rd annual educator workshop on August 7-9, 2023, in San Diego, California and Tijuana, Mexico, an epicenter of international migration. The multi-day binational program titled "(Re)Humanizing the Politics of Global Migration" focused on reframing the ways in which the politics of migration produce harmful, discriminatory, and dehumanizing narratives of migrants. The initiative aims to shift toward narratives that forefront the stories of people behind the statistics. This year's teacher cohort included eleven 4th-12th grade educators. Six teachers were from various districts in Michigan and five from the Rio School District in Oxnard, California, a PK-8 school where 70 percent of the students are emerging bilinguals. In addition, six of the participating teachers currently work primarily with ESL/ELL and Dual Enrollment students while others teach AP world history, English Language Arts, and social studies. The program goals included sharing best practices for teaching global migration studies in the classroom, creating educational resources about global migration flows, and sharing pedagogical strategies for inclusive education.

As an ongoing collaborative project since 2022 between San Diego State University (SDSU) and multiple NRCs as well as the Marsal Family School of Education at the University of Michigan (U-M), the workshop featured three full days of events. The first day involved presentations from both SDSU and U-M faculty on global migration and border issues around the world and Diann Rowland, a fourth-generation Korea-Maya-Mexican descendant who shared her unique family history of transnational migration from Korea to Mexico. CMENAS Director Ryan Szpiech attended this

year's workshop and gave a talk titled "Border Thinking, Past and Present" where he shared images showing what power is distributed and where from the 7th Century CE to today's modern world while underlining the shift from no borders with free flowing movement to how borders are now used to express political power.

On the second day, the teacher participants and some SDSU and U-M faculty and staff crossed the U.S.-Mexico border on foot for an excursion to Tijuana where they engaged in conversation with 30+ migrants primarily from Afghanistan at the Refugee Empowerment Center & Transitional Shelter run by the Latina Muslim Foundation. Some individuals had been traveling for two years from their home country to Brazil and then the treacherous Darien Gap, an often deadly no man's land between South and Central America to finally reach the border in Tijuana. On this day, participants also gathered at the mural-covered border wall at Friendship Park, a binational park on the U.S.-Mexico border on the Pacific Ocean, where they heard the personal story of a trans-border community activist who grew up in Mexico but crossed the border every day to attend school in the U.S. Professor Victor Clark-Alfaro, the founder of the Binational Center for Human Rights, joined the group to share his fascinating work studying the routes migrants follow to gain entry to the U.S.

There were also site visits to education programs in both Tijuana and Chula Vista, CA, designed to meet the academic and socio-emotional needs of migrant children. These included the Espacio Migrante in Tijuana, conversations with educators from the Alba Roja Secondary School in Tijuana, and the MAAC (Metropolitan Area Advisory Committee on Anti-Poverty) Community Charter School in Chula Vista that provides an alternative learning environment for students ages 14-20. The third day focused on pedagogical processing and critical discussion of the previous two days. This was led by Darin Stockdill from U-M's Center for Education Design, Evaluation, and Research at the Marsal Family School of Education and Wanda Toro-Zambrana, a special education and ELL specialist at Scarlett Middle School in Ann Arbor as well as some training in oral history methods from Latin American and Caribbean Studies Librarian Edras Rodriguez. Toro-

Zambrana shared how she developed her own curriculum materials based on knowledge learned in a previous GMEI workshop and pedagogical strategies for reaching all learners regardless of their academic proficiency in English.

GMEI is supported by a Title VI National Resource Center Grant from the U.S. Department of Education.



Teachers and workshop facilitators from California and Michigan gather at Friendship Park in Tijuana, Mexico.

CMENAS CONGRATULATES THE 2023 GRADUATES

Ethan Concannon
Bachelor of Science,
Middle East & North African Studies

Ziad Fehmi
Bachelor of Science,
Middle East & North African Studies

Duaa Aljirafi
Minor, Modern Middle East
& North African Studies

Ethan Lyman
Masters in International
& Regional Studies,
Middle Eastern & North
African studies specialization

PHOTO BY FARUK KAYMAK VIA UNSPLASH



Ethan Lyman

BENNOUNE AWARD WINNERS

CMENAS is pleased to announce that two students received the Mahfoud Bennoune Memorial Thesis Award for their outstanding work. Among them is **Ethan Lyman**, Masters in International and Regional Studies (MIRS), Middle Eastern & North African Studies (MENAS) specialization, '23.

The award is given in memory of **Professor Mahfoud Bennoune** (1936–2004) and is awarded to a CMENAS student(s) in recognition of an outstanding MA thesis that focuses on North Africa and emphasizes values that Professor Bennoune fought for: tolerance, secularism, human rights, and women's rights.

FLAS AWARDEES

The Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies administers Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships to graduate and undergraduate students for area studies and study of a Middle Eastern and North African languages, including: Arabic, Armenian, Hebrew, Persian, Turkish, and Uzbek. Listed below are current recipients.

Academic Year Graduate

Loue Aburukba, *Arabic*

Sheriff Almakki, *Arabic*

Aishah Al-Mohamedi, *Arabic*

Mary Kump, *Arabic*

Hasher Nisar, *Turkish*

Rosa Razmi, *Persian*

Academic Year Undergraduate

Remy Djavaheerian, *Persian*

Reem Killawi, *Arabic*

Hanna Lupovitch, *Hebrew*

David Shutt, *Hebrew*

Summer FLAS

Spencer Cook, *Turkish*

Joseph Fisher, *Arabic*

Shakeelah Hicks, *Arabic*

Derek Lief, *Arabic*

Ahmad Taylor, *Arabic*

Omar Malik, *Arabic*

Rojin Shirwan, *Turkish*

Sam Winikow, *Arabic*

INCOMING CMENAS STUDENTS



ANAWAR ALI

Anawar Mahagoub Ali, a Sudanese scholar and law graduate, is interested in heritage and archaeology, focusing on local community representation and development. He has co-presented at the Warsaw University International Conference for

Nubian Studies. And in 2023, he co-presented a research paper at the Archaeological Institute of America. Anawar has spent over seven years working with the University of Michigan (U-M) archaeological team in Sudan, excavating and preserving ancient monuments at the Kush kingdom's royal cemetery. He is now collaborating with the U-M team to create the El-Kurru heritage center that reflects Sudan's heritage and Kush Kingdom history, supporting the village's basic needs and providing income for many.



SHERIFF ALMAKKI

Sheriff is a biochemist pursuing a dual degree between MPP/MIRS with focus on the Middle East and North Africa.



JAMES E. BROWN

Jeames is pursuing a dual degree between a JD/MIRS. His main research interest and career goals focus on international diplomacy and the intersection between culture and human rights, and the extent to which cultural relativism can and

should be tolerated. James worked at the United Nations in Geneva over the summer of 2022 and has since been working in the international department of the U.K. law firm, Leigh Day LLP.



MCKENNA KUMP

McKenna (Kenna) is pursuing a Masters of International and Regional Studies with a focus on the Middle East and North Africa. During her undergraduate studies at Utah State University, she collected data and completed research

concerning topics such as climate security, systems analysis, agriculture, sustainability, and political science. McKenna also has interests in human rights, development, foreign affairs, and political stability. She has had the opportunity to connect and network with individuals across a wide spectrum of fields, including intelligence analysis, history, robotics, and genetics. Through her involvement with the Center for Anticipatory Intelligence at USU, she has developed the interdisciplinary analytical skills necessary to form links across fields and issues.

LIBRARY UPDATE
FROM MENAS LIBRARIAN
EVYN KROFF

Another exciting year! Hoping everyone is still finding ways of care and working as our approaches to research, teaching, and coursework continue to evolve. As ever, you can rely on your partners in the University Library. We continue to support the crucial work of collections processing and maintenance and to improve our search and digital collections interfaces, including [a new site for cross-searching archival finding aids](#). We have also been excited to open [newly](#)



[renovated study and work spaces in the Shapiro Library](#) and [remain committed](#) to enhancing our physical collection storage and access.

We also continue to enhance digital collection access with myriad ebooks, online journals, digital archives, and online reference works relevant for the study of the peoples, languages, and cultures of the Middle East (Southwest Asia), North

Africa and diasporas accessible through our [library search platform](#). Recently, we were able to acquire for the collections an incredibly valuable [digital archive for the Turkish newspaper Cumhuriyet](#), the [Encyclopedia of Turkic Languages and Linguistics Online](#), and an [Arabic anthology of select articles from the Encyclopaedia of Islam](#)—alongside several important collections from academic publishers. Grant support from CMENAS helped fund these purchases.

For contemporary publications from SWANA, print remains incredibly important with most new releases in physical format. Our bookseller partners in the region continue to navigate the turbulent economic situations with resilience and to gather books, journals and magazines in Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Hebrew to send to our library. We have also added still more valuable gifts of Persian and Arabic books from legacies in the university and wider community. Our expert cataloguers continue to work diligently to ensure these materials are received and processed for access.

We have also been fortunate to partner with undergraduate students Zainab Hakim and Serena Safawi on a selection of exhibits—online and in the Hatcher Graduate Library—featuring the experiences and contributions of Iraqi artists and academics, particularly those impacted by the U.S.-led invasion and occupation of Iraq. Be sure to visit their online exhibit *Tracing Iraqi Artists: From Shadow to Light* and watch for invitations to events this fall and spring.

As ever, for collection requests and specific guidance related to your ongoing projects, coursework or teaching—as well as accessing other collections, preparing for your research trips, and working with manuscripts and archival material—please feel free to be in touch with me. We can still video chat or even discuss over tea/coffee. In the meantime, take care!

CMENAS AT MESA

Congratulations to all CMENAS affiliates presenting in and chairing panels at the 2023 Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Annual Conference taking place November 2–5, 2023!

Charlotte Karem Albrecht
Departments of American Culture and Women’s & Gender Studies

Roundtable. *Queering the Question: Rethinking Middle East Studies through Queer Methodologies*. (Presenter)

Wijdan Alsayegh
Department of Middle East Studies
Panel. *Racializing Arab Cultures. Paper: The Vast Veil: Black Arabs and Blackness in the Contemporary Arab Fiction* (Presenter)

Juan Cole
Department of History
Special Session. *Academic Freedom and the Israel/ Palestine Conflict: Lessons from the Kenneth Roth Scandal at Harvard. Sponsored by Alwaleed Center for Muslim–Christian University at Georgetown and DAWN (Democracy in the Arab World)*. (Discussant)

Cameron Cross
Department of Middle East Studies
Panel In Honor of Franklin Lewis I: *Persian and Other Literatures: Multilingualism and Translation*. (Discussant)

Panel In Honor of Franklin Lewis II: *Persian and Other Literatures: Multilingualism and Translation. Paper: Translating the Divan-e Shams: Poetics, Politics, and Pedagogy*. (Presenter)

Gottfried Hagen
Department of Middle East Studies
Panel. *The Decline of Rise: Re-examining the Ottoman Rise Paradigm*. (Chair)

Mark Tessler
Department of Political Science
Roundtable. *Gender, Nation, Emigration and the State: A Tribute to Laurie Brand*. (Presenter)

Panel. *Public Opinion and Participation in MENA Countries. Paper: Political Culture, Elections, and the Implications for Governance in Six Arab Countries* (Presenter)

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Weiser Hall, 500 Church Street, Suite 500
Ann Arbor, MI 48109

Donations are sought in the CMENAS Support Fund (798809), the Lois A. Aroian Middle Eastern and North African Studies Scholarship Fund (700745), the Mahfoud Benounne Memorial Thesis Award (570802), and the Richard P. Mitchell Memorial Prize (794815).

Weiser Hall, 500 Church Street, Suite 500
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1042

BELOW: Lanterns being sold in Khan-El-Khalili, the famous bazaar/souk in the historic center of Cairo, Egypt. Photo by Hana Mattar.

We hope to engage you all through our website and social media accounts.

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