The ascension of the middle class (MC) in rapidly transforming economies of East Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East is one of the most remarkable phenomena of recent decades. Given the magnitude of the changes felt by vast numbers of households across the globe as well as the importance the issue holds in the realms of society, politics, business, economics, and culture, examining the middle classes in emerging markets (EMs) will be a topic of investigation for years to come in multiple areas of academic inquiry.

While a consensus definition may not exist, the middle class generally refers to a growing number of households in EMs who have access to a substantial disposable income that they can now direct towards discretionary purchases. One benchmark is having at least 30 percent of total household income available for discretionary consumption. The business community is not alone in studying the MC phenomenon. Scholars from such disciplines as film, media, communication, sociology, anthropology, political science, literature, education, history, art, urban studies, geography, and architecture are also actively examining this topic.

A special interest of some scholars is to contrast the contemporary developments in EMs with those already experienced by mature, post-industrial economies. Some also approach the middle class as a social phenomenon that derives meaning from social and cultural practices, while others treat it as political power with the capacity to shape a country’s social, political, economic, and cultural landscape. By design, this conference brought together scholars from multiple disciplines and countries to examine the middle class in emerging markets from at least three key themes: consumers, citizens, and the media.

Conference Objectives:
- Captured what we already knew about, and generated a holistic understanding of the middle class phenomenon in emerging markets
- Formulated and advanced a multi-disciplinary research agenda
- Facilitated the formation of collaborative research networks among scholars
- Prepared and disseminated an edited book, featuring select papers presented at the conference
On September 26, 27 and 28, Georgia State University’s CIBER office hosted the First Annual Middle Class Phenomenon in Emerging Markets Conference. The conference brought together scholars from multiple disciplines and countries to discuss the trend of middle class in emerging markets, with focus on consumers, citizens and the media.

The conference was chaired by S. Tamer Cavusgil of the Robinson College of Business, Hongmei Li of the Communications department, Leslie L. Marsh of the Modern and Classical Languages department and Ilke Kardes of the University of Applied Sciences in Düsseldorf, Germany. Special guests to the conference included Gary Knight of Willamette University, Tim Duvall from the U.S. Department of Education, John Reisenberger of the Thunderbird School of Global Management, and Seyda Delingou, professor of Management at St. John Fisher College. With their dedication and hard work for many months, this conference was a true success.

"The increasing numbers of people who have moved out of poverty and into the middle classes in emerging nations is truly remarkable. I think the recent conference on the middle class in emerging markets was a unique opportunity for cross-disciplinary dialogue. We were able to bring together scholars from so many different fields who are all looking at the question of how changes in economic status impacts how people see themselves and the world around them, how their daily lives are changing, their political attitudes, new outlooks on the future, and so forth. This process or phenomenon isn’t a question one scholar or one field can answer. I walked away from the conference with new insights into my own work as well as new questions. Overall, I thought the conference was a tremendous success and I very much enjoyed working with my colleagues throughout the planning stages."

- Leslie L. Marsh, Modern and Classical Language Department at Georgia State University

Panels included guests from Brazil, Turkey, China, India and Russia that specialize in areas of business management, finance and economics, foreign policy, women’s studies and sociology. This dynamic collection of professionals from different disciplines and countries garnered collaborative and stimulating discussions from multiple perspectives.

“As a co-organizer, I felt really proud that our effort promoted dialogues and conversations across different disciplines and different countries,” says Hongmei Li, an assistant professor for the Department of Communication. “Given that the middle class in emerging economies is a phenomenon that has been attracting increasing global attention, I am sure more and more scholars would participate in contributing to the scholarship that aims to understand the middle class in relation to other social economic segments, the shift in power dynamics and global economic, political and cultural transformations.

“I think the recent conference on the middle class in emerging markets was a unique opportunity for cross-disciplinary dialogue,” adds Leslie Marsh, another co-organizer and assistant professor for the Department of Modern and Classical Languages. “We were able to bring together scholars from so many different fields who are all looking at the question of how changes in economic status impacts how people see themselves and the world around them, how their daily lives are changing, their political attitudes, new outlooks on the future, and so forth. I walked away from the conference with new insights into my own work as well as new questions."

Panelists and presenters discussed defining and measuring the new middle class in emerging markets, company strategies for catering to middle class consumers in emerging markets, future directions for studying the middle class in emerging markets and engaging the middle class through various marketing practices, new communication technologies and social media.
Simone Guercini

Simone Guercini was born in Tuscany, Italy and currently resides in the city of Florence. Simone attended Sant’Anna School of Pisa (Italy) and the University of Sussex (England). He completed a Ph.D. in Competitive strategies and international marketing. His field of interest includes international business marketing and business actors’ behavior and cognition.

Simone has also conducted an empirical research on the textile and fashion industry. Recently, he visited a researcher at Max Planck for Human development in Berlin, where he studied the heuristics rules learned and shared by actors in contexts in the research group of Gerd Gigerenzer. Simone is currently a professor in Marketing and Management at the University of Florence. He also holds the position of Dean of the BA course in Management and is a member of the Doctorate in Economics. During his career, Simone was awarded grants from public and private institutions. He has also won numerous awards for best papers and outstanding reviewer in journals.

Due to his outstanding accomplishments, Simone serves in the editorial board of numerous journals such as, Management Decision, Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management, and Journal of Global Fashion Marketing. Simone also serves as co-editor of Mercati & Competitività, the official journal of the Italian Marketing Society. His main goal for his trip to GSU–CIBER is to continue his research on the internationalization process of firms, with a main focus in emerging economies and ethnic entrepreneurship. Simone has many expectations for this trip. He hopes to collaborate with professors and research professionals of the Georgia State University on topic related to my research interests.

Andrea Runfola

Andrea Runfola was born in Florence, Italy. Andrea together with his family currently reside in Florence, Italy. Andrea graduated in Economics and Management at the University of Florence. He then continued to pursue his PhD in Marketing at the University of Urbino. His area of studies are internationalization, international business networks, cross cultural marketing, international retailing, business models, and international fashion marketing. Andrea is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Perugia, where, he is also the Aggregate Professor of Basic Marketing and International Tourism Marketing.

Andrea has been recognized and granted many awards, which include the Best Reviewer in 2010 for Mercati e Competitività (Markets and Competitiveness), the Official Journal of The Italian Marketing Society (SIM) . During his stay in Atlanta, Andrea will continue his research in GSU-CIBER. He hopes to confer with faculty members about related issues to internationalization of relevant companies in Georgia. Within his research, he hope to have sufficient information to compare the best practices to other Italian and European companies. Andrea hope that with this trip he is also to network with colleagues who find an interest in similar areas of studies. He also hope to become involved in common international research projects. Andrea is very passionate about Archeology and
FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

CIBER would like to acknowledge several Board of Advisor members that have made contributions to CIBER activities and programs. Among others, these contributions help GSU and RCB continue their mission of furthering international education and creating global citizens by funding study abroad.

**Nick Shreiber (Nick Shreiber and Associates) and Ann Marie Shreiber**

**Brad Ferrer (CNN)**

**The Payne Fund**

**Eric & Barbara Joiner**

Brad Ferrer also contributes to Bradford & Patricia Ferrer Scholarship, meant to provide support to prospective CIBER study abroad students with financial need. Other advisory board members who contribute to study abroad scholarships include:

- **S. Tamer Cavusgil** – The S. Tamer & Judy Cavusgil Scholarship provides financial support to Robinson College of Business students who have never traveled abroad with an institutional GPA of 3.0 or higher.

- **Michael and Cynthia Shannon** – The Michael & Cynthia Shannon Scholarship provides financial support for J. Mack Robinson College of Business students who demonstrate financial need and have a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

- **Eric and Barbara Joiner** – The Eric & Barbara Joiner Scholarship provides financial support for master of international business students with a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Other scholarships include the Nita Robinson Scholars Program, Coca-Cola Global Ambassadors Scholarship, Mary Kathleen Berry Study Abroad Scholarship, Sidney and Mary Harris Travel Award, and the Atlanta Air Cargo Association Scholarship.

The Study Abroad Programs office also offers the International Education Fee and Global Experience Scholarship for eligible students. In 2013, the Study Abroad Programs office sent 766 students abroad. Approximately 85% of GSU study abroad students have financial need. 399 IEF scholarships and 31 Global Experience Scholarships were awarded to students in the 2012-2013 academic year.

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**Did You Know?**

CIBER offers research grants for eligible faculty members and doctoral students? Grants are provided on a competitive basis in order to facilitate interdisciplinary research. Foreign language, international and area studies, and business faculty will be eligible to apply. To download the proposal application, go to http://robinson.gsu.edu/ciber/faculty/grants.html.

If you need more information about CIBER’s Research Grant Program, contact Dawn Foster at dawnfoster@gsu.edu. If you would like to discuss your research proposal further, please contact Dr. S. Tamer.
Study Abroad Workshop
March 13, 2013
The GSU-CIBER S.E. US Higher Education Consortium for International Business conducted its third workshop focused on study abroad. The theme for this workshop was “Building an Innovative Study Abroad Program.”

MIB Program
"The MIB program helped me strengthen and develop not only my academic career, but it provided me with the opportunity to build long-lasting friendships, it exposed me to a variety of events in which I established a strong professional network both locally and globally, with executives from small and medium sized companies to fortune 500 companies. I was able to use those relationships to seek mentoring and guidance through my career development. Obviously, I made sure to take advantage of utilizing wisely all of the guest speakers and the events, and participate actively throughout, but without the MIB I wouldn’t have established such strong relationships!"

- Juanita Velez, Fast—Track MIB, 2013

Teaching Workshop—Master Your Public Speaking Skills
November 19, 2013
Tugba Kalafatoglu is President of the international consulting firm Tugba Kalafatoglu & Associates. Additionally, she is founder and president of VOTE Women in Politics. Tugba is an avid entrepreneur, a business and political consultant, public speaker, and seminar leader who speaks internationally on topic including entrepreneurship, how to run successful international business, cross-cultural management, intercultural communications, foreign policy, running for office, lobbying, leadership, and presentation skills. Holding all these magnificent skills, Tugba conducted a teaching workshop to educate attendees how to overcome Public Speaking fears.

Conversation with the CEO—Quiznos
November 15, 2013
GSU-CIBER invited Honor students, faculty, and staff to have a Conversation with the CEO of Quiznos, Stuart Mathis. Mr. Mathis joined Quiznos as President and CEO in July 2012. Mr. Mathis has over 30 years of experience in franchising, operations and administration. Before joining Quiznos, Mr. Mathis served as President of The UPS Store network for 10 years. In that capacity, he led The UPS Store to double digit same store sales growth and record setting sales of new franchises. Prior to The UPS Store, Mr. Mathis was EVP of Operations at Mail Boxes, Etc., the predecessor brand to The UPS Store.

Teaching Workshop
November 8, 2013
This interactive session focused on: (a) “what” – content; (b) “how” – pedagogy; and (c) “resources” – for teaching international business. Professor S. Tamer Cavusgil and Professor Jacobus Boers shared their experience and teaching tools that have been especially developed for IB educators. Also covered was an overview of online resources for teaching. The intent was also to engage participants in an interactive discussion designed to search for excellence in the teaching of international business.

MIB Students receive two VIP Executives
Master of International Business students have the honor of conversing with two VIP executives, Ahmet Bozer, President of Coca-Cola International, and Jeffrey Sprecher, Chairman and CEO of Intercontinental Exchange, ICE.
GSU-CIBER strives to address the 21st century needs for U.S. global business competence through a transformation of business school curriculum, assisting business faculty and practitioners to acquire global competence, enhancing student opportunities for study and work abroad, and carrying out research to enhance U.S. business competitiveness in the global marketplace.

"International business has never been more interesting! Whether it is the evolution of emerging markets into sophisticated, mature economies, the rise of middle class households in these markets, globalization of indigenous brands, the new entrepreneurial class, growing role of government... these are all issues our faculty are addressing. GSU-CIBER is a catalyst to research, teaching, pedagogy development, and business outreach. We continue to pursue a profile agenda, serving our stakeholders on and off campus. This newsletter brings you just a sample of the activities ongoing at GSU-CIBER!"

-Dr. Tamer Cavusgil, Executive Director at CIBER