



האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים
THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

בית הספר לתלמידים מחו"ל ע"ש רוטברג
Rothberg International School



Department of Summer Courses
and Special Programs

המחלקה לקורסי קיץ
ותוכניות מיוחדות

Israel and the New Middle East: An Interactive Post-Arab-Spring View

Course Instructor: Dr. Nir Boms

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July 4 – 26, 2017

Sun, Thu: 8:00 - 18:00 | Tue 9:00 – 12:00*

45 Academic Hours, 3 Academic Credits

This course can be taken as a single course or as a component of the 9-credit program [Coexistence in the Middle East](#) (CME), which is comprised of the following three courses:

- [Narratives and Realities: Inside the Israeli Palestinian Conflict](#)
- [Israel and the New Middle East: An Interactive View of the Post-Arab Spring](#)
- [Religion in the Holy Land: Faith's Role in Peace and Conflict](#)

Since these courses are designed to complement each other we strongly recommend that participants to enroll in all three courses.

** Class hours will vary according to field trips and course activities. A two-day field trip is scheduled from Thursday 9:00hrs to Friday 17:00hrs for each CME course.*

Course Description

This course offers a first-hand perspective on the arising challenges and opportunities of Israel in a changing region. The course will review the dramatic events that began with the Arab “spring” of 2010 and that have continued to shape and reshape the history of the Middle East. Through field trips and engaging in dialogue with regional players, participants will gain personal insight into the religious, cultural and political forces shaping the changing reality of the region and their influence on Israel's future. Since the beginning of the Arab Spring, the Middle East has experienced a tectonic shift that continues to shape the geopolitical map of the region. The established political systems have quickly collapsed, leaving a vacuum that is still being filled by old and new political players including radical non-state players that change the political, religious and tribal map of the region. These new emerging realities influence Israel, which remains an island of stability in the middle of the regional storm. Through exposure to multiple perspectives, this course offers students the opportunity to analyze this changing reality and the way it influences Israel.

Site Visits and Meetings

Through multiple field trips and encounters, this program offers the unique opportunity to gain first-hand access to key places and regional actors. Subject to the availability of guest speakers, participants will have the opportunity to meet with:

- Diplomats and government officials
- Representatives of international and non-government organizations
- Analysts and journalists
- Academic figures and Middle East experts

Field trips and encounters will be finalized at a later date. As a reference only, participants may refer to the [tentative itinerary](#) for the Coexistence in the Middle East program. Please note that field trips in the itinerary are split among all [three CME Summer Courses](#).

List of Topics to be explored

The following list of topics might be updated due to the dynamic character of the Middle East and our intention to focus on the current issues in the region:

1. **Introduction to the Middle East, Spring and other Seasons**
2. **Northern Threats: Syria, Hezbollah and the Islamic State**
3. **Iran Post Nuclear Agreement and the Changing Geo-Political Arena**
4. **Yad Vashem**
5. **The International Community and the Middle East**
6. **An Israeli view of a Changing Region, MFA visit**
7. **Dissidents and New Media - Challenges and Opportunities**
8. **Between Axis of Peace and Axis of War**

Grading & Course Requirements

Participants who do not require academic credits will be exempt from these requirements and will receive an active participation certificate.

- **25% Reading and class participation**
- **75% Term Paper.** The essay is not to exceed 3,000 words. Students will be encouraged to work in small teams and engage in related fieldwork. Paper outlines will be presented in the last two weeks of classes.

Papers must be submitted no later than two weeks after the last class.

It is mandatory for students to attend all classes, guest lectures, field trips, etc. Failure to attend classes will result in a student being denied the right to partake in the final assignment and receive a final grade in the course. Students who have a justified reason to miss class (illness, mourning, etc.) must communicate with their instructors and the Department of Summer Courses and Special Programs, and complete the material that they have missed. Students who have missed class due to illness must obtain a signed and stamped sick note from a treating physician and submit it to the Dept. of Summer Courses and Special Programs immediately following their return to class. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence. The Department reserves the right to refer the issue to an Academic Committee. In some cases, the Academic Committee may decide, in light of the requirements of the course, that it is not possible to make up the missing course work.

Earning Graduate Credits for this course

Graduate students are expected to inform the Rothberg International School – rissummer@savion.huji.ac.il – of their interest in earning graduate credit for their summer course(s).

Graduate students must complete a 15-page, double-spaced seminar paper with bibliography for the course in place of the course's standard final assessment (in most cases, an exam). The topic and bibliography for these papers must be chosen in conjunction and agreement with each course instructor. Students must

approach course instructors by the end of the first week of the course and arrange a time to meet and define their paper topic and bibliography.

The seminar paper must make use of at least five scholarly sources (books or academic articles), in addition to internet resources.

The graduate seminar papers must be submitted within 2 months following course completion in order for the graduate student to fulfill requirements for this course.

Course Outline and Readings*

Due to the dynamic character of the Middle East and the intention to focus on the current issues in the region the contents and readings might be updated.

Introduction to the Middle East, Spring and other Seasons (05/07)

This section will serve as an introduction to the course. What is and where is the Middle East? Who are its key players who had shaped its history? What has changed in this region in the recent years and since beginning of the “Arab Spring”?

It will present a review of key terms and events associated with the Middle East and focus on the changing and emerging realities as the “Arab Spring“ continues into its seventh year. We will further discuss the course structure and the theme questions that will accompany as we begin to engage with the readings and tours.

- Elhousseini Fadi (2015). “The Arab Spring and the rise of non-state actors” in *Middle East Monitor*, June 13th. [MEM website](#)
- Inglehart, Ronald F. (2017). “Changing Values in the Islamic World and the West: Social Tolerance and the Arab Spring,” in Mansoor, Moaddel and Michele, Gelfand (eds.) *Values and Political Action in the Middle East* New York: Oxford University Press, Pp 1, 14-23.
- Abdelbaki, Hisham (2013). “The Arab Spring: Do We Need a New Theory?” *Modern Economy* 4 (2013). 187-196. [EJOURNAL](#)
- Al-Sahli Nabil (2014). “The Arab Spring and Israeli Security Concerns” in *Middle East Monitor*, February 14th. [MEM website](#)

Grigorios Rapanos (2017). The role of human development in the transition to democracy after the Arab Spring, *Mediterranean Politics*, DOI: 10.1080/13629395.2017.1309730

Northern Threats: Syria, Hezbollah and the Islamic State (ISIS) (7/07): two day field trip. Coordinate: hospital, IDF spokesperson, Meeting with Druze/minorities, Nazareth and more.

The Syrian conflict was the last surge of the Arab Spring; it grew from a local uprising to a full-scale sectarian, ethnic proxy war that de facto divided the country and influenced the surrounding geography and demography--particularly following the appearance of ISIS. The issues involving Syria are linked to its neighboring country, Lebanon, a country that Syria still views as part of “Bilad a- Sham,” or the “greater Syria.” Hezbollah, the self-defined “party of God,” has gained military strength and political influence in Lebanon with Syrian-Iranian backing. We will further explore these dynamics via a tour to the north, where we will visit Kiryat Shmona, the Lebanese border, the Golan Heights, the Syrian border as well as other sites of importance in the area.

Readings:

- Hegghammer, Thomas and Nesser Petter (2015) “ Assessing the Islamic State’s Commitment to Attacking the West” in *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Vol 9. No 4.

- Hassan, Hassan (2016) “The Sectarianism of the Islamic State: Ideological Roots and Political Context” in *Carnegie Endowment for international Peace*.
- Krishnadev, Calamur (2017) “How Is Syria Still Using Chemical Weapons?” in *The Atlantic*, April 4th, 2017.
- Boms, Nir “Syria, by Body Count,” in *Wall Street Journal*, April 25th , 2013
- Mihaylov, Dimitar (2013). “The Upheaval in Syria Viewed from Inside and Outside” in *The Israeli Journal of Foreign Affairs*, Volume 7 No. 3.EJOURNAL (via IJFA website).
- Jones, Rory, Raydan Noam and Ma’ayeh Suha, “Israel Gives Secret Aid to Syrian Rebels,” *Wall Street Journal*, June 18th 2017.,

Iran Post Nuclear Agreement and the Changing Geopolitical Arena (10/07)

Iran’s conduct in the region remains a major factor despite the nuclear agreement of 2015. Since the agreement, Iran has sent additional forces to the region and has begun to deepen its presence along Israel’s borders. We will conduct a strategic analysis of Iran’s current geopolitical agenda which is still perceived as the highest threat to Israel and other countries in the Middle East with far-reaching impact inside and outside the Middle East. We will also attempt to understand Iran beyond its nuclear zone and focus on its regime, its diverse society and on the prospects for political change facing upcoming elections.

- Berman, Ilan (2015) “Iran’s Various Voices”, *American Foreign Policy Council Iran Strategy Brief*, vol. 7. **AFPC website** (<http://www.ilanberman.com/17476/iran-various-voices>)
- Kelly, John & Etling, Bruce (2008), *Mapping Iran’s Online Public: Politics and Culture in the Persian Blogosphere*, The Berkman Center for Internet and Society, Research Publication No. 2008-01. [Search Google](#)
 - Katzman, Kenneth & Kerr, Paul K (2017) , “[Iran Nuclear Agreement](#)” in *Congressional Research Service*, 7-5700, February 10, 2017
- Kuperwasser, Yossi & Davidi, Avi (2016), *Iran in the Post-Nuclear Deal Era: Iranian Dissidents’ Perspective*, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. **Via [JCPA Website](#)**

Yad Vashem (12/07) including a lecture on the challenge of incitement

Guided tour in Yad Vashem, discussing the issue of incitement in the Middle East Today.

The International Community and the Middle East

This section will deal with the external circle involving Israel and the Middle East: the involvement of external players ranging from Israel’s immediate neighbors and to international organs as well as central global players such as Europe and the US and other significant powers such as Russia and China. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict attracts the attention of various international players, ranging from a wide network of interested activists and NGO’s to the top policy-makers of world affairs. That involvement further extends to the Middle East, involving critical Israeli interests and agendas such as Iran. We will explore the role of the different international players and attempt to evaluate their respective contributions in respect to ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to Israel’s place in the Middle East.

- Hanafi, Sari (2004), “The Role of NGOs: Scream If You Want to be Heard” in *The Palestine-Israel Journal*, vol.11, no.2, p. 25-30. [E-JOURNAL](#)

- Salehi, Kumars (2015) “BDS in the United States” in *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, **E-JOURNAL**: <http://berkeleyjournal.org/2015/01/bds-in-the-united-states>
- Steinberg, Gerald M. (2012), “International NGOs, the Arab Upheaval, and Human Rights: Examining NGO Resource Allocation,” in *Northwestern Journal of International Human Rights*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 125 – 149 **E-JOURNAL**
- Rosen, Steve (2012) “Why a Special Issue on UNRWA?” in *Middle East Quarterly*, vol. 19, no. 4 pp. 3 – 10. **E-JOURNAL** <http://www.meforum.org/3344/unrwa-special>
- Yemini, Ben Dror (2011) “NGO’s vs. Israel” in *Middle East Quarterly*, vol. 18, no. 2, pp. 67-71. **E-JOURNAL** <http://www.meforum.org/2919/ngos-vs-israel>
- Candar, Cengiz (2015), "Will 'Kurdish Spring' redraw Middle East Map?" in *Al-Monitor*, Feb 5th, (<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/02/turkey-kurds-kurdish-spring-david-phillips.html>)

An Israeli view of a changing Region, MFA visit

Lectures at Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs that will cover the Israeli view of the region with a focus on the Syrian, Iranian and Palestinian arena.

Dissidents and New Media - Challenges and Opportunities

In this section we will explore the phenomena of dissidents with a focus on the “enablers” who drove the “Arab Spring” by helping empower movements of change and creating a new political discourse. We will meet some of the voices behind the Arab Spring and will focus on the role of new media and on new opportunities for engagements created by these new dynamics. We will also try engage with active dissidents and create an opportunity for a live dialogue with dissidents and activists from the region.

- Abdulla, Rasha A. (2011), “The Revolution Will Be Tweeted” in *The Cairo Review of Global Affairs*, vol. 3, pp. 40 – 49. **E-JOURNAL** (<http://cdn.thecaireview.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/CR3-Revolution.pdf>)
- Boms, Nir (2016) “Media, Virtual Media and Real Revolutions “ in *Expat-ing Democracy: Dissidents, Technology Democratic Discourse in the Middle East*, Peter Lang GmbH, Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, ISBN-10 3631654693, Pp 183 - 202
- Carothers, Thomas (2015) “Why Technology Hasn’t Delivered More Democracy?” in *Foreign Policy*, June 3rd, 2015.
- Shavit, Uriya, (2012). “The Wasafī and Salafī Approaches to the Religious Law of Muslim Minorities” in *Islamic Law and Society* 19 (2012) 416-457
- Human Rights Watch “Turkey, Events of 2016”
- 8th Annual ASDA’A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey, <http://www.arabyouthsurvey.com/en/home>
Between Axis of Peace and Axis of War (The Arab Peace Initiative and beyond)
The past five years have seen a dramatic change sweep across the Middle East, toppling governments and leading to social ferment, the likes of which have never been seen before in that part of the world. This section will further delve into the realities of the Arab Spring and its challenges to Israel – but will also look toward the opportunities it may bring to Israel, which is still struggling break the impasse of a century old conflict. One such broad opportunity may come from an old- yet- new direction, The Arab Peace Initiative which offers a possible platform to re-orient a broader picture of relations in the Middle East. In this concluding class we will further review the changing face of the Middle East and discuss with regional players the possibilities of new alliances and new opportunities that may further develop as the dust of the “Arab Spring” begins to settle.

- Salem, Walid (2015), “The Arab Peace Initiative and the International Community: Concerted Efforts for Its Implementation”, in *Palestine-Israel Journal*, vol. 20, no. 2-3. [E-JOURNAL](http://www.pij.org/details.php?id=1614) (<http://www.pij.org/details.php?id=1614>)
- Podeh, Elie (2007) “The Arab Peace Initiative: A Missed Opportunity?”, in *Palestine-Israel Journal*, vol. 14, no. 4. [E-JOURNAL](http://www.pij.org/details.php?id=1126) (<http://www.pij.org/details.php?id=1126>)
- Muhanna, Jasmin (2017). “The Samad Initiative: A Call for a Shakeup in Arab-Israeli Engagement” in *The American Interest*, Feb 13th, 2017

Looking to stay current, get ideas for your paper, or just learn more?

Check these news sources

New York Times, www.nytimes.com

Washington Post, www.washingtonpost.com

BBC, www.bbc.co.uk

Financial Times, www.ft.com

The Times, www.timesonline.co.uk

The Economist, www.economist.com

Haaretz (Israel, newspaper), www.haaretzdaily.com

Y-Net -- Yediot Ahranot (Israel, newspaper),

(<http://www.ynetnews.com/home/0,7340,L-3083,00.html>)

The Jerusalem Post (Israel, newspaper), www.jpost.com

The Forward (Jewish daily newspaper), www.forward.com

Electronic Intifada (U.S.-based) www.electronicintifada.net<http://www.electronicintifada.net/>

The Israel Policy Forum (U.S.-based), www.israelpolicyforum.org

The Alternative Information Center (Israeli-Palestinian news site) www.alternativenews.org

Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre (Palestinian research institute), www.jmcc.org

Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (Palestinian research institute), www.pcpsr.org

Independent reporting and commentary from Israel and Palestine (ezine), <http://972mag.com/>

Middle East Research and Information Project, <http://www.merip.org/>

Foreign Policy Magazine’s Middle East Channel, <http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/>

Jadaliyya (ezine), <http://www.jadaliyya.com/>

Al-Jazeera (Arab world, news site), <http://english.aljazeera.net>

al-Ahram Weekly (Egypt, newspaper), <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/>

Jordan Times (Jordan, newspaper), <http://www.jordantimes.com/>

Daily Star (Lebanon, newspaper), www.dailystar.com.lb

Now Lebanon (Lebanon, news site), <http://www.nowlebanon.com>

Middle East Times (Egypt, newspaper), www.metimes.com<http://www.metimes.com/>

Dissidents Network, www.CyberDissidents.org