AT A GLANCE

Building bridges through academic cooperation at the University of Madison-Wisconsin

The “Palestinization” and “Israelization” of the Arabs of Israel

Amidst war, the TAU Workshop sees its ninth year of success

Newly-released books analyzing the current situation in Syria, the Kurds, and Israel and its neighbors
MISSION STATEMENT

The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies seeks to contribute by research, documentation, and publication to the study and understanding of the modern history and current affairs of the Middle East and Africa. The Center is part of the Graduate School of Historical Studies in the Lester and Sally Entin Faculty of Humanities of Tel Aviv University. The Center is governed by a Board of Governors, acting on the advice of an International Board of Overseers. It is administered by an academic director.

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DIRECTOR: Uzi Rabi
Dear Friends,

In the past six months we have witnessed the emergence of new challenges to the prospects for peace and stability in the Middle East.Spawned by the ongoing and bloody Syrian crisis, the Islamic State (IS) and other takfiri Sunni groups continue to carry out an aggressive campaign of conquest and justify their expansionist, brutal rule by co-opting motifs from early Islam. Their success, which positions IS to overturn the existing status quo of nearly a century, threatens the continued integrity of both Syria and Iraq, and the safety of minority groups residing in their sphere of control. In response to this threat, we see alliances formed, both new and unexpected, over suddenly converging interests. In this tense climate, longstanding enemies view each other as potential partners, resulting in collaboration between those who wish to preserve the status quo against those who seek its undoing. Here in Israel, the outbreak and the resolution of the 2014 Hamas-Israel conflict deeply reflects the new and sometimes paradoxical nature of current regional politics.

At the MDC, the second half of the 2013-2014 academic year remained productive and promising. I proudly report that the MDC became the beneficiary of an extremely generous gift from the Sincere Family, which will fund scholarships for qualified doctoral candidates as well as collaboration between the MDC and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. We bade a bittersweet farewell to Prof. Asher Susser, who will be a visiting professor at the University of Arizona in the coming semester, and whose retirement we celebrated in June. The MDC released two new books: the first dealing with nationalism in the Middle East, and the second grappling with the timely issue of the ongoing Syrian conflict. In July we launched an exciting new quarterly publication in collaboration with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung titled, Bayan, which focuses on contemporary Arab affairs in Israel. Our forums continued to provide the platform for innovative and thought-provoking lectures delivered by guest speakers of international renown.

In closing, on behalf of my colleagues and myself, I wish to express our gratitude. The activities and research of the MDC would not be possible without the generous support of our friends, both in Israel and abroad. I invite you to keep in touch with us through Twitter, Facebook, and our website, www.dayan.org.

Best wishes,

Prof. Uzi Rabi
Remembering Prof. Yosef Kostiner z”l

On March 11, 2014, the MDC community gathered to honor the memory of Prof. Yosef Kostiner z”l. A slideshow of photographs tracing Kostiner’s career from student to esteemed scholar moved his colleagues, students, and family, who were present at the widely attended event. Kostiner’s theories on tribal-state relations, particularly relevant today, were his gift to the field of Middle Eastern Studies. Scholars from Tel Aviv University and beyond, including Prof. Uzi Rabi, Dr. Joshua Teitelbaum, and Dr. Brandon Friedman spoke briefly to honor their mentor and his legacy. Each emphasized Prof. Kostiner’s excellent research, his unique and meticulous work, and the kindness of his character.

At the memorial, Kostiner’s dedicated students presented an edited volume, *The Persian Gulf and the Arab Peninsula: Societies and Nations in Transition* (Hebrew, Moshe Dayan Center, 2014), edited by Dr. Shaul Yanai and Prof. Uzi Rabi. Contributing authors to this publication gave short remarks about Prof. Kostiner’s posthumous influence on scholarly work focusing on the geopolitical and economic present and future of the Gulf States, and provided an overall picture of the current and changing realities of the region.

Graduate students continuing in Kostiner’s field of research received scholarships in his name, allowing for a new generation to continue analyzing and exploring these important topics.
In May 2014, at the annual TAU Board of Governors’ meeting, the MDC and Tel Aviv University inaugurated the Debra and Richard Sincere Tel Aviv University Project in Middle Eastern Studies. The generosity of the Sincere Family provides scholarships to qualified doctoral candidates at the MDC, and funds a joint academic agreement between the MDC and the Mosse/Weinstein Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The academic agreement includes joint research seminars and conferences, faculty and student exchanges, and an effort to develop co-taught online courses. The first joint seminar, focusing on religion in the public sphere in the modern Middle East, took place in November 2014, followed by a second meeting in Madison during the spring of 2015.

During the ceremony Richard Sincere, an alumnus of TAU and the University of Wisconsin, expressed his joy at fulfilling one of his dreams: supporting two institutions that gave him wonderful experiences and excellent education. He stated, “As a 20-year-old college student I saw a building being donated and thought: I want to be able to do that...the point is — all of us can change the world.”

In addition to helping young scholars, the gift reflects the Sincere Family’s dedication to promoting cooperative endeavors between TAU and universities in the United States. The family hopes this project will serve as a model for other donors to follow.

The Arabs in Israel: A New National Agenda?

Since 1948, the Arabs in Israel have lived a difficult and dichotomous existence. Legally, they are individually equal to their Jewish neighbors, but nevertheless face discrimination, mistrust, and fear from the Jewish majority. Though defined by the state as “Arab Israelis,” in the context of the ongoing conflict their self-identification as Palestinians adds an additional dimension of complexity. Further exacerbating the situation, Arabs in Israel lack effective communal representation, as their elected leadership often seems to defend its own individual interests at the expense of those it purports to represent.

Focusing on the events of the past twenty years, Arabs in Israel are at somewhat of a crossroads. On a rhetorical level and personal level, their collective identity is undergoing further “Palestinization.” Yet, simultaneously, Arabs are increasingly integrating into the cultural framework of mainstream Israeli life, a process that has been termed “Israelization.”
In order to further explore this dynamic, on May 1, 2014, the Konrad Adenauer Program for Jewish-Arab Cooperation at the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies hosted a conference to discuss developments in the national agenda of the Arabs in Israel. Speaking on the subject were prominent experts, both Jewish and Arab. The conference also marked the retirement of Michael Mertes, who has served as the director of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung in Israel for the last three years.

The first session, headed by Dr. Itamar Radai, academic director of the Konrad Adenauer Program, was devoted to the discussion of the complicated, multifaceted, and ever-changing national discourse of Arabs in Israel. A major component, asserted Prof. As'ad Ghanem, of the University of Haifa, is the perception that Arabs in Israel are in crisis, and that their socio-political leadership does not properly represent them. Ghanem argued that the central agenda espoused by political parties such as Hadash (The Democratic Front for Peace and Equality), and a prospective “two-state solution” is ultimately unacceptable because it does not solve the Palestinian problem within Israel proper. It does not take into account the internal displacement of Arabs in Israel, nor does it propose to solve the problem of the expropriation of their property. The continued definition of Israel as a “Jewish State,” according to Ghanem, is problematic. Should a Palestinian state become independent, Arabs in Israel will be consigned to “exile,” unable to take part in the civil life of their compatriots. Nevertheless, Ghanem identified the gradual weakening of this central agenda as evidenced by the results of local elections in Nazareth in late 2013. Moreover, the Northern Islamic Movement, some intellectuals, and youth movements are all working to change the status quo, whether within existing parties or outside them, and are pushing for a single, bi-national state, which Ghanem believes is the only acceptable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. The road to peace with the Arab world leads through the Arabs in Israel, and Israel must make peace with them first, contended Ghanem. What is truly needed, he concluded, is a democratic country built on justice, not ethnicity and religion.

Ghaida Rinawie-Zoabi, of Injaz – the Center for Professional Arab Local Governance, agreed with the statement that the status quo is unsustainable. Like Ghanem, Rinawie-Zoabi shared that there needs to be a civil definition of citizenship without a religious or ethnic element. It is increasingly clear that no one is truly looking out for the interests of Arabs in Israel, claimed Rinawie-Zoabi. Given the unlikelihood that a political solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is forthcoming, Arabs in Israel have begun to understand that they need to be pro-active in changing the discourse by building platforms...
for civil life and taking their destiny into their own hands. Rinawie-Zoabi argued that they must find creative solutions that will make it easier on the coming generations to cope with the contradictions inherent to being an Israeli citizen and also a Palestinian. Furthermore, the events of the “Arab Spring” have taught Arabs in Israel that they need not be deterred. Democratic, peaceful change is possible, and they can look their leaders in the eye and demand change. Indeed, the “Arab Spring” and the fall of two pro-Western dictators in Tunisia and Egypt has given hope to many Arab intellectuals in Israel, who believe that the rise of democracy might give support to anti-establishment forces there.

Yet, Dr. Yusri Khaizran, of the Truman Institute in Jerusalem and the Open University of Israel, fears that the escalation of the brutal civil war in Syria has greatly damaged Arab ideological unity, especially among Arab Christians as Christians are increasingly harassed in Syria, Egypt, and elsewhere. Arab Christians increasingly feel that their safety depends on strong central governments that can protect them against some of the more anarchic Islamist trends that have become part and parcel of the revolution in Syria. The fact that many Arab Muslims in Israel support that revolution has caused many Israeli Arab Christians to re-evaluate their own Arab identity. Christian recruitment to the IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) has increased sharply as part of rising calls for greater integration into Israeli society, and as a reflection of the belief that a strong Israeli state, though it be Jewish, is necessary for their protection.

The issue of Israel’s identity as a “Jewish State” has become critical, both in internal Arab discourse in Israel and in the context of ongoing negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. As noted by Arik Rudnitzky, project manager of the Konrad Adenauer Program for Jewish-Arab Cooperation, it is true that discrimination against Arab citizens is often materially and symbolically derived from the fact that Israel identifies itself as a Jewish-Zionist state. At the same time, however, Arab discourse is increasingly complicated regarding the legitimacy of Jewish self-determination in the area that was once Mandatory Palestine. The Haifa Declaration, for example, drafted by a group of Arab intellectuals, represents somewhat of a “retroactive recognition” of Jewish self-determination, but holds that such is valid so long as it does not come at the expense of the indigenous Arab minority. Nevertheless, there are others in Arab society, such as the nationalist camp, that argues the Jewish connection to the land is artificial and illegitimate. This faction believes that the indigenous people should not have to share the land with their colonizers. In general, the national discourse of Arabs in Israel is increasingly interested in understanding “who the Jewish majority is.” This does not mean, in any way, that the discourse accepts Zionism, but it is becoming more complex.

The second session discussed changes and proposed changes in national organizational patterns, which further impact communal organization and representation. Dr. Ilana Kaufman, of the Open University, considered the implications of the recent election threshold hike on Arab politics. The intention of the framers was to reduce the national Arab discourse within the Knesset. Yet, paradoxically, the law may result in greater Arab representation in the Knesset by forcing smaller Arab parties to create united lists,
which may increase turnout in the Arab sector. At the same time, however, parties oppose a law that may, in the end, increase their representation to as much as ten percent of the Knesset. Kaufman contended that although this would benefit political representation of Arabs in Israel, party leaders fear jeopardizing their positions of power by changing status quo. Another objection derives from the fact that Arab parties do not share the same platforms when it comes to such issues as the role of religion in society and the status of women. It may be difficult for voters to abandon the issues that are dear to them in favor of a “big-tent” party. Kaufman noted that there may also be a push for the boycott of elections, and a search for alternative frameworks of representation.

Dr. Yousef Jabareen, of the University of Haifa, Tel Hai College, and the Dirasat Center, believes that the potential rise in Arab parliamentary representation is a good thing. He stated, however, that to understand the political situation in the Arab sector today, one must first look back to the Oslo period of the 1990s. At that time, Arab parties were closer than ever before to the “table of government,” and their voices were crucial to the passage of the Oslo Accords. Yet, since then, the Right has recognized the political potential of the Arabs in Israel and, subsequently, initiated a program of de-legitimization. In the current government, de-legitimization is taking the form of emphasizing the dividing lines between various Arab sub-groups, recognizing Christians as distinct from Muslims who are distinct from Druze, and serve as an excuse for discrimination. The Right also makes the false claim that Arabs do not pay taxes so they should not receive services. The answer here, Dr. Jabareen explains, is the advancement of a discourse that recognizes the Arab minority as indigenous and which will push for a shared, civil citizenship with fair division of resources. Meanwhile, as an indigenous minority, there is an increasing call for self-determination in internal and local affairs - a concept that has precedence in other countries with recognized indigenous minorities.

Adv. Samah Elkhatib-Ayoub, of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, argued that the establishment of a representative body is, indeed, a necessity and the right of the Arabs in Israel as an indigenous minority in a state defined as Jewish and democratic. As such a minority they have the right to exercise autonomy, but there is no body that exists which will enable them to do so. Therefore, it is necessary to create a representative, voluntary entity that will defend both the political and cultural identity of Arabs, but also provide a mechanism for the creation of a civil space that she finds lacking. Filling this gap, she argued, will help with the protection of those minorities within the larger Arab minority and encourage equality between the Arab minority and the Jewish majority.

Dr. Nohad Ali, of Western Galilee College and University of Haifa, presented poll data that indicated vast support for Israeli recognition of an elected body as the Arab population’s representative in the government. He pointed out, however, that a voluntary body intended to serve a similar purpose already exists. He examined the Arab public’s position on the Supreme Follow-Up Committee, a voluntary political body meant to be the supreme authority of the Arab population in Israel. The SFUC is increasingly arising in discourse, and a majority of Arabs in Israel believe that the SFUC credibly represents their interests more than their current elected politicians do.

The conference concluded with a roundtable discussion led by Dr. Elie Rekhess, of Northwestern University, who identified two opposing streams within Arab societal discourse. The first is guided by elites (among them intellectuals and politicians) that call for an alternative to the “1948 paradigm.” It identifies the Arabs in Israel as an indigenous minority group, and rejects the notion of a “Jewish State” in favor of a bi-national one. Meanwhile, the second stream, composed of the emerging Arab middle class, juxtaposes their identity and ideology with their desire to better integrate into mainstream Israeli society. There is an increase in the number of Arabs represented in higher education, in the technology sectors, and other professions. There is also a decline in the number of Arabs in Israel who know Classical Arabic and an increasing integration of Hebrew into the Palestinian dialect. The question remains, however, whether the ideology of the first stream, or the pragmatism of the second, will emerge triumphant?
On May 19, 2014, the MDC hosted the annual colloquium in memory of Erga Segev z”l. Segev, a former student of the Department of Middle Eastern and African History at Tel Aviv University. Prof. Uzi Rabi presided over the event and Dr. Mira Tzoreff gave words of tribute. Following the memorial, scholarships were presented to outstanding young scholars.

Prof. Eyal Zisser was the keynote speaker and presented his new book, *Syria — Protest, Revolution, and Civil War*. The lecture delved into the development of the current Syrian crisis, beginning in December 2011, through the present day. According to Zisser, prior to the uprising in Syria, leaked WikiLeaks documents, in their official discussion of the economic hardships Syrians were suffering due to extensive drought, somewhat foretold of the current conflict. Yet, no one, including influential Syrian experts such as Patrick Seale, “connected the dots,” claimed Zisser.

Although the confined local protests of farmers in the periphery were essentially nonviolent, the regime’s harsh reaction converted the Syrian reality from protest, to revolt, to war. Gangs and combatants replaced peaceful protestors, and the regime recruited mercenaries from within and without the country in response. Jihadists continue...
journeying to Syria to fight in the civil war. Three years of bloody civil war later, the dynamics have changed. The players and events are different. A conflict that began as a spontaneous Syrian national uprising of the masses is now a struggle over resources and for survival.

Zisser also noted that the sides fighting the war are dependent on regional and international forces. If Saudi Arabia would cease the flow of billions of dollars to the jihadists, or if Turkey or Jordan decided to close their borders with Syria, the war would be over in a few days. In the international arena, two important factors perpetuating the conflict are the U.S.’s effective silence, and the unequivocal support Russia grants Asad’s regime in the form of weapons, money, and political support.

With regard to Israel and Syria, Zisser explained, if Asad wins retaking control of the country will not pose a problem to the dictator. The question is: If Asad does win – which Asad will Israel face? A leader that would be careful in keeping a quiet border with Israel, or a leader that would be a bolder, more confident version of himself?

**Prof. Asher Susser’s Farewell and Commemorative Book Launch**

On June 8, 2014, the MDC staff and experts gathered together to celebrate Prof. Asher Susser on the occasion of his retirement. During the gathering, the MDC presented Susser with a copy of a book compiled in his honor, titled *Nationalism, Identity, and Politics* (Moshe Dayan Center, 2014). The book, with essays in both Hebrew and English, deals with the themes about which Susser has spent his career analyzing, teaching, and writing. In his thoughtful, insightful, and eloquent way, he has profoundly influenced generations of researchers and students, both in Israel and abroad.

For the MDC, Prof. Susser was instrumental in enabling its survival during years of austerity and was vital in helping it to flourish. As its director from 1989-1995, and again from 2001-2007, Susser enabled the Center to reach new audiences and to expand its impact on scholarly discourse. Fortunately for the MDC, Prof. Susser will remain in his capacity as a Senior Research Fellow, and will continue to educate and inspire scholars and students.
Gattegno Symposium

In life, Isaac (Itzik) Gattegno z”l was a lover of knowledge and a frequent host of gatherings in his home where issues concerning the Middle East were the main topic of conversation. On June 12, 2014, to honor the memory of a dear friend to the MDC, Gattegno’s friends and family came together for a symposium. Prof. Uzi Rabi presented an analysis of the current situation in the Middle East three years after the “Arab Spring.” Specifically, he addressed the current situation in Syria and Iraq, including the remarkable success of the Islamic State in taking over large swathes of territory.

Following Rabi’s remarks, scholarships were awarded to master’s student Efrat Gilad and doctoral candidate Basem Ajweh.

The Emergence of the Modern Middle East

During spring 2014, the MDC offered a nine-week, globally accessible online course, entitled “The Emergence of the Modern Middle East,” with instruction given by Prof. Asher Susser and Duygu Atlas. The course syllabus commenced with lectures outlining the fall of the Ottoman Empire, its legacy and impact on the region. Further topics included the creation of the Arab state system, Arab nationalism, Islamism, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and concluded with a comprehensive analysis of the “Arab Spring.” The instructors reported consistent, high-level engagement from participants throughout the duration of the course.

“Emergence of the Modern Middle East” will be offered once again, at no cost, from March through May 2015. Registration details may be found at https://www.coursera.org/course/modernmiddleeast.

Diwaniyya: the Dayan Center Podcast

Under the direction of Samantha Sementilli, in spring 2014 Diwaniyya produced two podcasts and posted a variety of articles on its blog. In the March episode of Diwaniyya, as a leading expert on Jordanian Bedouins, Dr. Yoav Alon, of Tel Aviv University, discussed the history of the Bedouins in the Middle East and their place in today’s society, using Israel and Jordan as case studies. In June 2014, Diwaniyya featured a leading researcher of the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), Dr. Benedetta Berti. Berti offered a unique analysis of the Syrian revolution from the angle of social movements, providing new insights to a popular contemporary topic.

Students from the International Master’s Program in Middle Eastern Studies (MAMES) steadily contributed articles to the Diwaniyya blog. These articles explored a range of contemporary topics, personal interviews, and travel accounts, including: Qatar and the 2022 FIFA World Cup, Al Qaeda in Yemen, the gay rights movement in the Arab world, Egyptian revolutionaries, Turkish elections, and Arabic media in Israel.

Both the Diwaniyya podcast and its blog reach an ever-growing audience, both in the Middle East and throughout the world. We encourage you to download the latest podcast on iTunes or YouTube, and to visit the Diwaniyya blog (www.diwaniyya.org) to view photos, videos, music, and original articles.
On May 12, 2014, the Forum on Kurdish Society, History and Culture hosted Prof. Yona Sabar, from the University of California in Los Angeles, for a lecture, entitled “Kurdistani Jews and their Muslim and Christian Neighbors: Mutual Relationships and Interactions.” The lecture analyzed the code of coexistence among the Jews of Kurdistan and non-Jewish Kurdistani communities from a historical perspective, expounding upon mutual relationships that influenced the cultures and languages of Kurdistan. Sabar is a Kurdistan-born Jewish scholar known for his numerous works on history, language, and culture of the Kurdistani Jews.

Sabar contends that the enduring coexistence of different linguistic and religious groups in Iraq’s mountainous Kurdistan region created hybrid cultures for each of these communities. In his analysis, samples of Jewish-Kurdish culture and language in modern Israel with equivalents from Kurdistan were used to shed light on such hybridity, which, to some extent, is still present among the Kurdistani Jewish community in Israel. A video of the ancient Jewish town of Zakho, taken by Sabar in 1991, was also shown in the lecture, in which he was seen reuniting with his Muslim and Christian neighbors before his immigration to Israel in the early 1950s.
The Yezidis in the Eye of the ISIS Storm: A Personal Account

On September 11, 2014, the Forum hosted Dr. Mirza Dinnayi, a well-known Kurdish-Yezidi expert on Iraqi politics, to hear his lecture, titled “The Yezidis in the Eye of the ISIS Storm: A Personal Account.” Discussants at this meeting included Prof. Ofra Bengio, Dr. Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, Dr. Brandon Friedman, Ceng Sagnic and Idan Barir.

In the aftermath of the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham’s (ISIS) attacks on Yezidi regions of Iraq (where hundreds of thousands of Yezidis were displaced as a result), Dr. Dinnayi acted as head of the Kurdistan Regional Government’s (KRG) humanitarian aid efforts. Dinnayi shared his personal account of the humanitarian crisis with a particular focus on the KRG’s current warfare against ISIS. Dinnayi asserted that ISIS attacks on the Yezidis of Iraq are essentially a part of the continued campaign of intolerance towards non-Muslim communities in the region as a whole. Barir and Dinnayi emphasized that jihad-motivated attacks on Yezidis have given rise to a separate perception of identity among this minority group. Meaning, Yezidis have recently begun to voice their request for international protection in the regions they populate, as well as autonomy that would allow them to form local security units.

Kurdish Lessons

The MDC is proud to offer its fourth semester of Kurdish language classes through its Kurdish Studies Program. Ceng Sagnic continues to teach beginner and advanced Kurmanji, the most widely spoken Kurdish dialect. This exciting opportunity is available to both Tel Aviv University students and members of the public who would like to learn a fascinating and increasingly relevant language in today’s dynamic Middle East.

The Glazer Media Initiative at the Moshe Dayan Center

The recently renovated Glazer Media Initiative room at the MDC is a vibrant media center offering students and researchers the unique opportunity to explore Middle Eastern history through the lens of feature and documentary films, music, and broadcasts from the region. The MDC continuously works to expand its film collection and make it available to students and researchers for educational purposes. Recent acquisitions include Wadjda (2012), The Gatekeepers (2012), and Bethlehem (2013).
In March 2014, Prof. Uzi Rabi took part in a number of “One-Day University” events sponsored by the American Friends of Tel Aviv University. Rabi was among three TAU experts that addressed audiences in Los Angeles, Miami, and New York. His lecture, “Israel’s Middle East: A Changing Geopolitical Landscape,” an especially relevant topic in today’s tumultuous and sectarian Middle East, touched upon Israel’s position in the “eye of the storm” of its neighbors’ many conflicts.

While in New York, the Huffington Post interviewed Rabi on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He fielded questions on Hamas and the Palestinian Authority’s unity agreement, the two-state solution, the Palestinian plan to bring their case to the United Nations, and America’s and Europe’s attempts to resolve the protracted conflict.

In May 2014, Rabi lectured at Columbia University’s Institute for the Study of Global Anti-semitism. His lecture addressed the changing relationship between Iran and Israel in light of recent regional and global developments.

The MDC Abroad

The MDC’s Middle Eastern film club, Nadi Cinema, brings together students and researchers to discuss politics, society, and culture from the perspective of Middle Eastern film.

On March 6, 2014, Dr. Joel Parker presented the Lebanese documentary Beirut Diaries (2006). Set against the turbulent background of the Lebanese civil war and the assassination of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in February 2005, the film served Dr. Parker as a useful springboard from which to discuss the ongoing events in Lebanon and Syria today.

On April 24, 2014, the MDC proudly hosted Salim Fattal, director of the documentary, The Jewish Community of Babylon, and screened the first part, “A Land that Devours the Inhabitants Thereof,” of this fascinating and well-researched work. Dr. Esther Webman moderated discussion following the widely attended event that included graduate students as well as a larger public interested in the history of the Jews of Iraq.

On May 15, 2014, Michael Barak presented the film Bab ‘Aziz: The Prince Who Contemplated His Soul (2005). The film is a story of longing and belonging, dreams and faith, centered around the story of a blind dervish named Bab’aziz and his spirited granddaughter, Ishtar, who wander the desert in search of a great reunion of dervishes that takes place once every 30 years.

On June 19, 2014, Dr. Bruce Maddy-Weitzman presented the classic, The Battle of Algiers (1966). Maddy-Weitzman provided the public with a background of the Algerian War of Independence and also commented on the situation in Algeria after the Arab Spring.

The final screening of Nadi Cinema for the 2013-2014 academic year took place on July 17. Dr. Brandon Friedman concluded the summer program with the Iranian film, The Green Wave (2010), a documentary focusing on the 2010 Green Revolution in Iran that uses animation and narrated blog posts to tell the story of contemporary Iranian youth. The film sparked discussion among the students on the recent political changes in Iran and in the region.

Nadi Cinema screenings take place once a month on Wednesdays at 4pm in Gilman Building, room 133, and are free and open to the public.
Summer 2014 saw to the successful carrying out of the Ninth Annual Tel Aviv University Workshop on Israel and the Middle East. An intensive 12-day academic workshop and travel program that focuses on the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict and contemporary issues related to Israel, the Palestinian territories, and the broader Middle East, the program offers instructors of Middle Eastern Studies a unique, balanced, and on-the-ground perspective about the history of the conflict and Israel’s contemporary regional challenges. Coordinated by Prof. Uzi Rabi, a diverse group of Middle Eastern Studies lecturers from universities around the world participated in the program on an invitation-only basis. This year’s workshop included participants from academic communities in Turkey, Iraq, Germany, Slovakia, Poland, the United Kingdom, Russia, China, Brazil, Australia, Indonesia, and the United States.

Bayan — A Quarterly on Arabs in Israel

In June 2014, the Konrad Adenauer Program for Jewish-Arab Cooperation at the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies launched Bayan — a new quarterly on contemporary Arab affairs in Israel. Bayan is published simultaneously in Hebrew and English. Co-edited by Dr. Itamar Radai, academic director of the Konrad Adenauer Program for Jewish-Arab Cooperation, and Program Director Arik Rudnitzky, Bayan’s goal is to provide access to issues concerning Arab society, to which the general Israeli public is not typically exposed.

Shabbat eve at the Western Wall

TAU Workshop on Israel and the Middle East, July 6–17th, 2014

Each year, the Workshop invites prominent Israeli and Palestinian scholars to present on historical and current issues related to Israel and the region. Among this year’s presenters were senior researchers from the Moshe Dayan Center including, Prof. Meir Litvak, Prof. Ofra Bengio, Dr. Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, and Dr. Esther Webman. Other experts invited to share their expertise were political scientists, journalists, mapping specialists, former intelligence officers of the IDF and (former) senior officials that partook in, and continue to be a part of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.
Complementing lectures and discussions, workshop participants visit cities and sites relevant to the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict, including Jewish and Muslim holy places such as the Western Wall and the Temple Mount, the security fence, the Golan Heights, Yad Vashem, and Umm Al-Fahm.

This year’s Workshop coincided with the war between Hamas and Israel. Due to the heavy barrage of rockets hitting the south and center of Israel, the itinerary was modified on a daily basis. Under these circumstances, the workshop experience proved to be especially educational as discussion with Israeli scholars, journalists, and citizens allowed for the participants to gain firsthand experience of the tenuous atmosphere in which Israel often finds itself.

After nine years, the Workshop now boasts over 180 participants. Proudly, the MDC facilitates the global network of scholars that contributes to an academic platform for academics to exchange views and to pursue joint academic activities such as conferences, student exchanges, journal publications, and visiting scholar opportunities. To date, Workshop alumni have contributed to the MDC’s *Bustan: The Middle East Book Review*; the Workshop has been the incubator for cooperative agreements between TAU and the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, and the Asan Institute for Policy Studies in Seoul, South Korea; and spurred group visits to Israel of students from Sweden’s Lund University, North Carolina State University, and South Dakota University, among others.

**Visiting Interns and Scholars**

In the spring and summer of 2014, the MDC welcomed a number of outstanding interns and visiting scholars from prestigious universities such as Yale, University of Michigan, George Washington University, Johns Hopkins University, Oxford, and the Sciences-Po, who contributed to publications, conducted research with individual experts at the MDC, and delivered exciting lectures to the MAMES students.

A major focus of the internship program this year was the role of China in the Middle East. The MDC hosted four Chinese speakers, including three students from Yale University, two of whom were stationed at the MDC while conducting groundbreaking research jointly for the MDC and SIGNAL (Sino-Israel Global Network & Academic Leadership). In addition, interns contributed to a wide variety of research foci ranging from the illegal ivory trade in the Horn of Africa with Dr. Irit Back, to economic research on Iran with Dr. Paul Rivlin.

Additionally, over the year visiting scholars gave lectures and authored articles for MDC e-publications. Aaron Rock-Singer, a Ph.D. candidate at Princeton University, wrote “Salafi Piety in Sadatist Egypt: The Quest to Map Public Space,” which focused on public morality in Egypt. David Labude, from Germany, partook in research being carried out by the Konrad Adenauer Program regarding Jewish-Arab relations in Israel. In March, Iris Seri-Hersch, from Aix-Marseille University, delivered a lecture based on her research in Israel, entitled “Revisiting the Foundation of Jisr al-Zarqā’: Kabbāra Land Conflicts and Politics of Sedentarization in Early Mandate Palestine.” There were a number of other constructive encounters with visiting scholars and Ph.D. fellows, notably, the timely article by Konstantinos Zarras, from Greece, “Blurring the Borders of Conflict: ISIS between Iraq and Syria,” published by the MDC in *Tel Aviv Notes*. 
NEW PUBLICATIONS

NATIONALISM, IDENTITY AND POLITICS:
ISRAEL AND THE MIDDLE EAST
STUDIES IN HONOR OF PROF. ASHER SUSser

Edited by Meir Litvak and Bruce Maddy-Weitzman
(English and Hebrew, Moshe Dayan Center, 2014)

Published on the occasion of his retirement and as a tribute to Prof. Asher Susser, distinguished scholar and gifted lecturer of modern Middle Eastern history at Tel Aviv University, Nationalism, Identity and Politics: Israel and the Middle East deals with the interactions between Israel and its neighbors, and examines the evolution of national identities and political orientations over the decades in the Middle East. This edited volume directly touches upon the themes of Susser’s scholarly research. In the current climate of uncertainty and change, this volume provides valuable insight into the origins of the current dynamic between Israel and its neighbors.

SYRIA — PROTEST, REVOLUTION AND CIVIL WAR

By Eyal Zisser
(Hebrew, Moshe Dayan Center, 2014)

In March of 2011, the wave of protests and rebellions that first engulfed Tunisia and Egypt finally reached Syria. While initially limited to a few cities in the south, localized and limited protests by hungry peasants and rural Sunnis quickly evolved into a nation-wide popular uprising, a bloody civil war, and inspired yet another global call to jihad. Faced with a battle of survival, the Asad regime has surprised regional onlookers and analysts with its endurance.

This book provides a summary for the Hebrew reader to grasp the story of the Syrian revolution to the present day, its origins and roots, and its escalation from a limited protest into a civil war.

KURDISH AWAKENING: NATION BUILDING IN A FRAGMENTED HOMELAND

Edited by Ofra Bengio
(University of Texas Press, 2014)

Kurdish Awakening examines key questions related to Kurdish nationalism and identity formation in Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Turkey. The world’s largest stateless ethnic group, Kurds have steadily grown in importance as a political power in the Middle East, particularly in light of the “Arab Spring.” As a result, Kurdish issues – political, cultural, an historical alike – have emerged as the subject of intense scholarly interest. This book provides fresh ways of understanding the historical and sociopolitical underpinnings of the ongoing Kurdish awakening and its already significant impact on the region.
Experts’ News


he delivered his paper, “Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank: Geopolitical Dilemmas and Internal Challenges.” In August 2014, Chorev and Uzi Rabi’s article, “To Deter Hamas – Expect the Unexpected,” was published in the Huffington Post. In September 2014, his article, “The Road to Operation Protective Edge: Gaps in Strategic Perceptions,” was published in the Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs.


On October 24, 2013, Litvak lectured on “The Roots of Iran’s Attitude towards Israel,” at the INSS conference “Iran at a Crossroad,” in Tel Aviv. In February 2014, he submitted a paper on “The Sunni-Shi`i Rift and the Arab Upheaval” at the “U.S.-China-Israel Trilateral Roundtable: Shared Interests in Promoting Stability and Coexistence in the Middle East,”


In October 2013, Uzi Rabi presented his paper, entitled “Iran and Israel: Post 2013 Elections,” at the annual conference of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) in New Orleans, LA. In March 2014, he represented Tel Aviv University for AFTAU’s “One-Day University” trip that brought him to Los Angeles, Miami, and New York, where he presented “Israel’s Middle East: A Changing Geopolitical Landscape.”


Regularly sought as an expert by both the Israeli Knesset and the local and international media, during Operation Protective Edge Rabi was a fixture on Israeli television as an analyst. Additionally, Rabi appeared on a number of national and international news broadcasting programs in order to provide commentary on current events in the Middle East. Such programs included: Erev Chadash (Channel 1), London and Kirshenbaum (Channel 10), Reuters, Galey-Tzahal (IDF) Radio, Reshet Bet (radio), i24 News, Israeli noon news editions, Arab Television Channels, as well as various newspapers in the Arab world, the United States, and the United Kingdom.


Ilan University. On June 5, 2014, he delivered a paper on “The Palestinians since Sadat’s visit to the First Intifada, 1977-1987,” at the Middle East and Islamic Studies Association of Israel (MEISAI) annual meeting at Sapir College. On June 18, 2014, he delivered a paper on “A Bourgeois Society under Colonial Rule: The Palestinian Arab Middle Class under the Mandate,” at the British Society of Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) annual meeting, University of Sussex, UK. On June 25, 2014, Radai delivered a paper on “Palestinian Arab Jaffa in 1948” at the Association of Israel Studies (AIS) annual meeting, Ben Gurion Institute, Sede Boker. On June 29, 2014, he delivered a lecture on “The Palestinian National Identity of the Arab Minority in Israel” at the Weizmann Institute for the Study of Zionism and Israel Young Researchers Colloquium, Ein Harod.


Asher Susser taught Tel Aviv University’s first MOOC (massive open online course) on the Middle East in the Fall Semester of 2013, through which he reached 30,000 students, worldwide. Prof. Susser and his teaching assistant, Duygu Atlas, a PhD candidate at TAU, delivered the nine-week course, “The Emergence of the Modern Middle East,” within the framework of an international consortium of universities known as Coursera.

In October 2013 he participated in a conference held by the TAU-based Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) on “Iran at a Crossroads,” where he lectured on “Iran, the Arab World and the Impact the Sunni-Shi’i Conflict.” In November 2013, he spoke on “Israel and the Palestinians” at Exeter College, Oxford, at a symposium on “Israel and the Changing Middle East: Today and Tomorrow.” In January 2014 he took part in an international conference on “The Role of Trust in Conflict Resolution” at TAU, under the joint auspices of the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research and the S. Daniel Abraham Center for International and Regional Studies, where he spoke on “Historical Narratives and the Issue of Trust.” In June 2014, he gave two lectures at the Summer Institute for Israel Studies at Brandeis University on “Religion and Politics in the Middle East,” and on “Israel’s Place in the Middle East.” In July and August 2014, he was a visiting research associate at the Israel and Golda Koschitzky Center for Jewish Studies at York University, Toronto, and in August he was appointed as the Stein Professor for Israel Studies at the Center for Judaic Studies, at the University of Arizona in Tucson, for the Fall Semester of 2014.
His article on “Israel’s Place in a Changing Regional Order, 1948-2013,” was published in *Israel Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Summer 2014).


Webman attended three conferences. In December 2013, she presented a paper on “Patterns of Migration: The Experience of Jews from Arab Lands,” in Istanbul, at the conference “Jewish Migration from Turkey and the Ottoman Empire.” In May 2014, she participated in the international conference on “Anti-Judaism, Antisemitism, Delegitimizing Israel,” at the Hebrew University, and delivered a lecture on “The ‘Jew’ as a Metaphor for Evil in Arab Public Discourse.” In September 2014, she attended ESA RN 31 midterm conference on “Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism in the Shadow of the Holocaust,” and gave a paper on “Old and New in the Palestinian Holocaust Public Discourse.”

**Ronen Zeidel**’s article “Writing about the Other: Israel in Recent Iraqi Novels,” was published in *Arabica*, Vol. 60, No. 6 (2013). He also published “Gypsies and Society in Iraq: Between Marginality, Folklore and Romanticism,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 50, Issue 1 (2014). His article, “The Minorities in the Iraqi Novel: The Case of the Kurds,” (in Arabic and English) was published in Sa’ad Salloum’s (ed.) *Minorities in Iraq: Memory, Identity and Challenges* (Baghdad and Beirut: Masarat, 2013). In this collection he appears as an Israeli scholar

Currently, Zeidel’s dedicated efforts to promote relations between Israeli and Iraqi intellectuals include the translation of the first Iraqi novel into Hebrew and assisting in bringing the Israeli film *Mafriah Hayonim* to cinema halls in Baghdad.

**Daniel Zisenwine** spent the 2013-2014 academic year as the Schusterman Visiting Israeli Professor at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD. In fall 2014, he is serving as a visiting professor at Georgetown University in Washington, DC.

**Eyal Zisser** delivered a paper on “Israel and the Syrian Revolution,” at the MESA (Middle East Studies Association of North America) Annual Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, October 10-13, 2013. In March 2014, he delivered a lecture series on “Israel and the New Middle East,” at the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation at Monash University, Melbourne, Australia. He also delivered a lecture, entitled “On the Sidelines? The Civil War in Syria from regional and international perspectives,” at the Heidelberg Center for American Studies, April 24, 2014. In May 2014 he spoke on the Syrian civil war at the Center for Israeli Studies at the National School of Political Science and Public Administration, and at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Bucharest, Romania.

Junior Researchers

Duygu Atlas was the teaching assistant to Prof. Asher Susser in the course, “The Emergence of the Modern Middle East,” created for the online education platform Coursera.


Joyce van de Bildt’s book chapter, “Nasser nostalgia in post-Mubarak Egypt,” was published in the edited volume Inglorious Revolutions: State and Cohesion in the Middle East after the Arab Spring, edited by Bruce Maddy-Weitzman and Brandon Friedman (Tel Aviv: The Moshe Dayan Center, 2014). In September 2013, she delivered a paper, “Nostalgia and memory on Facebook: The Emergence of ‘Nasser’ Facebook pages in Egypt,” at the Graduate Summer School “Memory Unbound: Transcultural, Transgenerational, Transmedial, and Transdisciplinary Dynamics of Memory” in Ghent, Belgium. In November 2013, she delivered a talk on “Using Facebook as a Tool for Examining Collective Memory: The Emergence of ‘Nasser’ fan pages in Egypt” at the annual conference of the Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa (ASMEA) in Washington, D.C. In June 2014, she delivered a paper, titled “Collective Memory and Nostalgia for ‘Abd al-Nasser in Post-Revolutionary Egypt: The Emergence of ‘Nasser’ Facebook pages,” at the annual conference of the Middle East & Islamic Studies Association in Israel (MEISAI) at Sapir College, Ashkelon, Israel. In August 2014, she delivered a paper “Documenting the 25 January Revolution: Online Memory Initiatives and the Challenge to State-Controlled Information in Post-Revolutionary Egypt,” at the Graduate Summer School “Media of Memory” in Stockholm, Sweden.

Van de Bildt was the recipient of the 2014 Dan David Prize Scholarship for Young Researchers in the field of History and Memory Studies. She also received a 2014 ASMEA research grant, which is awarded in support of scholarly work concerned with Middle Eastern and African Studies.


Chelsi Mueller delivered a paper, “Nationalist Representations of the Persian Gulf under Reza Shah Pahlavi,” on June 5, 2014, at the annual meeting of the Middle East & Islamic Studies Association of Israel (MESAI).

Arik Rudnitzky’s article, “The Contemporary Historiographical Debate in Israel on Government Policies on Arabs in Israel During the Military Administration Period (1948–1966),” was published in Israel Studies, Volume 19, Number 1 (Spring 2014). On May 1, 2014, he delivered a lecture, “The Arab Minority’s Discourse on the ‘Jewish State’,” at a conference organized by the Konrad Adenauer Program for Jewish-Arab Cooperation at Tel Aviv University.

Ceng Sagnic appeared regularly in Iraqi, Kurdish, Syrian, and Turkish media, providing expert commentary contextualizing the conflict between the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), Iraq, Syria, and the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (ISIS). In November 2014, he delivered a speech on ISIS-related regional crisis in a NATO workshop held in Jerusalem.

On November 4-5, 2013 Hay Eytan Cohen Yanarocak presented his paper, “Dynamics of Turkish Foreign Policy – Israel & EU,” to European Parliament members in a closed session at Tel Aviv University. On November 14, 2013, he attended a closed forum, “Turkey-Israel Relations and the Strategic Situation,” at the S. Daniel Abraham Center for Strategic Dialogue, Netanya Academic College, and shared his paper, “Current Dynamics of Turkey’s Syria Foreign Policy.” On December 3-4, 2013, he participated in an international conference, titled “Migration of Jews around the world — Jews of Ottoman Empire and Turkey,” held at Kadir Has University of Istanbul, where he presented his paper, “Jews of Turkey 1923-1948: Between Turkification and Self-Awareness.” On May 4, 2014, Yanarocak was invited by the Jewish Community of Turkey to give his paper, “Identity Crisis: Being a Jew, Israeli and Turkish.” On August 26, 2014 he delivered a lecture, titled “Erdoğan’s Turkey,” at the University of Haifa.
**Experts**

- Prof. Uzi Rabi, Director, Senior Research Fellow
- Dr. Irit Back, Research Fellow
- Prof. Ofra Bengio, Senior Research Fellow
- Dr. Nir Boms, Research Fellow
- Dr. Harel Chorev-Halewa, Research Fellow
- Dr. Brandon Friedman, Research Fellow
- Mr. Yitzhak Gal, Research Fellow
- Prof. Motti Golani, Senior Research Fellow
- Dr. Ephraim Lavie, Research Fellow
- Prof. Meir Litvak, Senior Research Fellow
- Dr. Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, the Marcia Israel Principal Research Fellow
- Dr. Joel Parker, Research Fellow
- Prof. Itamar Rabinovich, Senior Research Fellow
- Dr. Itamar Radai, Research Fellow
- Dr. Paul Rivlin, Senior Research Fellow
- Prof. Shimon Shamir, Senior Research Fellow
- Prof. Asher Susser, the Stanley and Ilene Gold Research Fellow
- Dr. Mira Tzoreff, Research Fellow
- Dr. Esther Webman, Senior Research Fellow
- Dr. Ronen Zeidel, Research Fellow
- Dr. Daniel Zisenwine, Research Fellow
- Prof. Eyal Zisser, Senior Research Fellow

**Junior Researchers**

- Basem Ajweh
- Duygu Atlas
- Michael Barak
- Heidi Basch-Harod
- Joyce van de Bildt
- Rachel Kantz Feder
- Chelsi Mueller
- Arik Rudnitzky
- Ceng Sagnic
- Annie Tracy Samuel
- Hadas Sofer
- Hay Eytan Cohen Yanarocak
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