



Ben-Gurion University of the Negev  
Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism  
The Israel Studies International MA Program

## **David Ben-Gurion**

### **1935-1965 – 30 Years of strategic decisions**

**A research workshop at Ben-Gurion archive**

### **Prof. Tuvia Friling**

The Workshop will focus on three main issues: 1. Theoretical analysis of modules of democratic leadership. 2. David Ben – Gurion as a test case of a democratic leader who operate in a continuous crisis situation. 3. The methodological challenges that stems from the research workshop based on rich archival environment.

The seminar will aim to reconstruct, analyze and evaluate some of Ben-Gurion's strategic decisions during more than 45 years of political career in the epicenter of decision-making of the nation and the state building processes.

Among them: The decision the change his party nature for a class to a nation party; To change his party immigration policy from a selective Aliya to a mass immigration; The decision about the rescue and aid policy of the Yishuv during the Holocaust; The Turning more westward – substitution of the British orientation with a new – American one; Declaration of independence - the feeling of “now or never” that underpinned this decision, despite internal and external pressure to postpone the declaration; The Melting pot policy; Shaping the major outlines of the components of Israel’s national security perception and the role of nuclear power in this equation; The tormenting question about Israel-New Germany relations in general and the Reparations Agreement between Israel and West- Germany, in particular; the Exemption of yeshiva students from military service etc. etc.

Strategic and formative decisions he made during the roll he played as the leader of the Labor party, the chairman of the Jewish agency executive, and the first Prime Minister and Defense minister of Israel. A Leader who dedicated is life to find answers to two major questions: the first – what has to be done in order to attain statehood for the Jewish people. The second – what needs to be done to avoid loosing it.