



אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון בנגב
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev



The Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel & Zionism

The Woodman-Scheller Israel Studies International Program (WSISIP)

Dr. Natan Aridan

M.A. Course:

***ISRAEL FOREIGN RELATIONS: DILEMMAS
AND CRITICAL DECISIONS***

016-2-2052 Spring Semester 2024

Credits: 2

Tuesday 08:30-10:00 Sede Boker Campus

aridan@bgu.ac.il Phone: 0505-972969 – Office hours by arrangement at the Institute

Course Description: The course explores and traces the dilemmas and tensions relating to Israel's complex diplomatic relations with the world powers which gradually began to view Israel as permanent feature in the Middle East. At the same time, the backdrop of the Cold War affected Israel's security and search for coexistence and peace with its Arab neighbors. The limited number of classes focus on major crises and turning points with a special emphasis on primary documents and resource materials.

Course Objectives: The basic assumption underlying the course is that knowledge of these intricate and multifaceted relations can best be understood by providing students with a wide knowledge of Israel's foreign relations relations with the Great Powers since its establishment benefiting from the unique opportunity to analyze primary documents and resource materials I have gathered, and for them to arrive at their own understanding and conclusions. The course will also help serve to deepen students' perspectives on their own country's foreign policies and relations. By the end of the course students will also gain skills in writing papers and presenting arguments on different viewpoints.

Course Structure: Each class includes a lecture, and a discussion based on the readings.

Teaching Method: The course is conducted through a combination of formal lectures and class discussion. The classes are based on weekly reading assignments and course texts. Students are required to write a research paper on a subject agreed upon with me.





Course Requirements: Compulsory attendance. Students will have their final grade lowered an entire grade level if they miss more than two class meetings unexcused.

Structure of Final Course Grades: Active Participation = 20%, Midterm research paper = 30%, Final Paper = 50% = **100%**


Work handed in late, will not be graded.


Israel is a hotly discussed subject –while I encourage debate and discussions in class, these must be grounded in an academic discourse and respect of the opinions of all classmates, even if one disagrees with them.


The following materials (all on the class website on Moodle) are not compulsory BUT suggested readings designed to provide deeper background reading on issues taught in class.

<p>-1- 30.4.24</p>	<p>EXPLANATION AND EXPECTATIONS ISRAEL BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS, 1948-1950  <i>Helpful background reading</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Document</u>: “Draft Position of the United States with Respect to Palestine,” February 17, 1948, United States National Archives, State Department, (1-8). 2. Henry Fetter, “Showdown in the Oval Office - 12 May 1948 in History,” <i>Israel Affairs</i> 14.3 (2008): 499-518. 3. Joseph Heller, “The Soviet Union and Israel - From the Gromyko Declaration to the Death of Stalin (1947–53),” <i>The United States, the Soviet Union and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-67: Superpower Rivalry</i> (Manchester, 2016), 6-18. 4. Uri Bialer, “Facts and Pacts - Ben-Gurion and Israel's International Orientation 1948-1956,” Ronald Zweig, ed., <i>David Ben-Gurion: Politics & Leadership in Israel</i> (London, 1991), 216-35. 5. <u>Document</u>: MFA Discussions, Korean Crisis – June-August 1950, ISA, <i>DFPI (Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel)</i>, Vol. 5, ed., Yehoshua Freundlich (Jerusalem, 1988), (7). 6. <u>Document</u>: Eliahu Elath Report: Meeting with Sir William Strang, 15.1.1951, ISA, 36/14, (9). 7. <u>Documents</u>: General Robertson Visit to Israel, 19-21.2.1951, ISA, <i>DFPI</i>, Vol. 6, ed., Yemima Rosenthal (Jerusalem, 1991), (8).
<p>-2- 7.5.24</p>	<p>PRESSURE ON ISRAEL TO ABIDE BY UN RESOLUTIONS ON THE RETURN OF ARAB REFUGEES AND INTERNATIONALIZATION OF JERUSALEM  <i>Helpful background reading</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Document – US State Department, criticism on Israel regarding refugees (Lausanne) 27.5.49.[5 pages]. 2. <u>Document</u>: “Sharett Instructions for Moving the Foreign Ministry to Jerusalem,” 13.7.53, ISA (Israel State Archives), 130.11/2512 (4). 3. <u>Document</u>: Sharett to Dulles, MFA Moving to Jerusalem, 27.7.1953, ISA, 130.12/2491 (5). 4. Gadi Heimann, “The Struggle Between the United States and Israel over Recognition for Jerusalem as Israel's Capital, 1952–67,” <i>The International History Review</i> 37.4 (2015): 790-808 [extract] (10). 5. Ofira Gruweis-Kovalsky, “Israeli Policy on the Foreign Consulates in Jerusalem in the Early 1950s,” <i>Israel Studies</i> 24.1 (2019): 126-49.
<p>-3- 21.5.24</p>	<p>ISRAEL'S RESPONSES TO COUNTERACTING ARAB TERRORIST ATTACKS  <i>Helpful background reading</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Zaki Shalom, “Strategy in Debate: Arab Infiltration and Israeli Retaliation Policy in the Early 1950s,” <i>Israel Affairs</i> 8.3 (2002): 104-17. 2. ‘Qibya’ [Excerpt from] <i>My Struggle for Peace – The Diary of Moshe Sharett, 1953-1956</i>, ed., Yaakov Sharett and Neil Caplan (Bloomington, IN, 2019), 29-62.
<p>-4- 28.5.24</p>	<p>THE SUEZ-SINAI WAR: COOPERATION, COLLUSION, COERCION, CAPITULATION, CULMINATING IN ISRAEL'S COVERT DETTERENCE  <i>Helpful background reading</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Joseph Heller, “Israel and the United States on the Road to War (November 1955–November 1956),” <i>The United States, the Soviet Union and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-67: Superpower Rivalry</i> (Manchester, 2016), 63-77.


	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. <u>Document</u>: David Ben-Gurion (Jerusalem) to Golda Meir. 27 September 1956. 3. <u>Document</u>: Ben-Gurion’s Diary, the Suez-Sinai Campaign,” ed. & introduced by S. I. Troen, <i>The Suez-Sinai Crisis 1956 – Retrospective and Reappraisal</i>, eds. S. Ilan Troen & Moshe Shemesh (London, 1990), 305-17. 4. <u>Documents</u>: Eban meetings at the State Department, 28, 29.10; 1.11.1956, <i>FRUS</i>, vol. 16, Arab-Israel Dispute 1955-1957 (1956), 808-10; 821-5; 925-7. 5. Mordechai Bar-On, “Three Days in Sèvres, October 1956,” <i>History Workshop Journal</i> 62 (Autumn, 2006): 172-86. 6. <u>Document</u>: ‘US Aid to Israel Discontinued;’ US Ambassador in Paris, suggested policy towards France & Britain, <i>FRUS</i>, vol. 16, Arab-Israel Dispute 1955-1957 (1956) 1.11.1956, 928-9; 931-2. 7. Isaac Alteras, “Israel’s Withdrawal from the Sinai and Gaza – The Diplomatic Struggle,” <i>Eisenhower and Israel – U.S.-Israel Relations, 1953-60</i> (Gainesville, FL, 1993), 246-86.
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<p>-5- 4.6.24 Midterm assignment handed out</p>	<p><i>DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO PREVENT A WAR IN MAY-JUNE 1967; ISRAEL’S SECURITY & DIPLOMATIC OPTIONS – 1968-1973: A MISSED OPPORTUNITY TO REACH A SETTLEMENT/ PEACE AGREEMENT?</i></p> <p> <u>Helpful background reading</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Document</u>: ‘Notes of a Meeting with President Lyndon B. Johnson and Foreign Minister Abba Eban at the White House, 26.5.1967, ISA, 5937/30, <i>Israel Studies</i> 4.2 (1999): 227-36. 2. William B. Quandt, “Lyndon Johnson and the June 1967 War – What Color Was the Light,” <i>Middle East Journal</i> 46.2 (1992) :198-228. 3. <u>Documents</u>: Drafts and UN Security Resolution 242, 22.11.1967 (12). 4. Ruth Lapidoth, “Security Council Resolution 242: An Analysis of its Main Provisions,” (Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs (2007), 13-27. 5. Mordechai Gazit, “Egypt and Israel – Was There a Peace Opportunity Missed in 1971?” <i>Journal of Contemporary History</i> 32.1 (1997): 97-115. 6. Elie Podeh, “The Rogers Plan, 1969”; “The Jarring Mission and the Sadat Initiative, 1971,” <i>Chances for Peace: Missed Opportunities in the Arab-Israel Conflict</i> (Austin, TX, 2015), 93-121. 7. Moshe Gat, “Military Power and Foreign Policy Inaction: Israel, 1967–1973,” <i>Israel Affairs</i> 22.1: 69-95.
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<p>-6- 18.6.24 Midterm assignment to be handed in</p>	<p><i>THE 1973 YOM KIPPUR WAR</i></p> <p> <u>Helpful background reading</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Documents</u>: US ‘Declassified Yom Kippur War files’ [Selected by Dr. Aridan] (80). 2. David Tal, “A Tested Alliance - The American Airlift to Israel in the 1973 Yom Kippur War,” <i>Israel Studies</i> 19.3 (2014): 29-54. 3. Hagai Tsoref, “Golda Meir’s Leadership in the Yom Kippur War,” <i>Israel Studies</i> 23.1 (2018): 50-72. 4. Craig Daigle, ‘The Crisis of Détente October 1973,’ <i>The Limits of Détente: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1969-1973</i> (New Haven, CT, 2012), 294-331.
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<p>-7- 25.6.24</p>	<p><i>THE ISRAEL-EGYPT PEACE AGREEMENT AND THE CAMP DAVID ACCORDS</i></p> <p> <u>Helpful background reading</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Uri Bialer, ‘Egypt – Diplomacy in the Shadow of the Sphinx,’ <i>Israel Foreign Policy</i> (Bloomington, IN, 2020), 291-319.
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. <u>Document</u>: ‘The Peace Plan of the Israeli Government and President Sadat's Journey to Jerusalem, November 1977,’ Israel State Archives (3). 3. <u>Document</u>: Camp David Accords - 17.9.1978 (5). 4. Charles D. Freilich, ‘Camp David I – Making Peace with Egypt, 1977–1979,’ <i>Zion's Dilemmas - How Israel Makes National Security Policy</i> (Cornell, 2012), 79-99. 5. Kenneth Stein, ‘Unintended Consequences – The 1977 Road to Geneva Ends in Jerusalem,’ <i>Heroic Diplomacy - Sadat, Kissinger, Carter, Begin, and the Quest for Arab-Israel Peace</i> (New York, 1999), 187-228. 6. Kenneth W. Stein, “From Jerusalem to Oslo and Beyond 1978–1998,” <i>Heroic Diplomacy - Sadat, Kissinger, Carter, Begin, and the Quest for Arab-Israel Peace</i> (New York, 1999), 229–59.
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-8 2.7.24	<p><i>FROM THE FIRST AND SECOND LEBANON WARS TO THE OSLO ACCORDS</i></p> <p> <u>Helpful background reading</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Charles D. Freilich, “The Invasion of Lebanon 1982,” <i>Zion's Dilemmas - How Israel Makes National Security Policy</i> (Cornell, 2012), 122-40. 2. Laura Eisenberg and Neil Caplan, ‘Breakthrough – The Oslo Accords,’ <i>Negotiating Arab-Israeli Peace: Patterns, Problems, Possibilities</i> (Bloomington, IN, 2010), 165-89. 3. Charles D. Freilich, “Leaving Lebanon – The Unilateral Withdrawal, 2000,” <i>Zion's Dilemmas - How Israel Makes National Security Policy</i> (Cornell, 2012), 141-52. 4. Charles D. Freilich, “Disengaging from Gaza, 2005,” <i>Zion's Dilemmas - How Israel Makes National Security Policy</i> (Cornell, 2012), 177-98. 5. Charles D. Freilich, "Back Again – The Second Lebanon War, 2006," <i>Zion's Dilemmas - How Israel Makes National Security Policy</i> (Cornell, 2012), 199-221.
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-9- 9.7.24	<p><i>ISRAEL’S RELATIONS WITH CHINA & INDIA</i></p> <p> <u>Helpful background reading</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yitzhak Shichor, “The U.S. Role in Delaying Sino-Israeli Relations: Two’s Company, Three’s a Crowd,” <i>Jewish Political Studies Review</i> 22.1-2 (2010): 7-32. 2. Yitzhak Shichor, “Striking When the Iron is Cold: Moshe Sharett and Sino-Israeli Relations,” <i>Israel Studies</i> 20,3 (2015) 102-30. 3. Zev Suffot, “Israel's China Policy 1950-92,” <i>Israel Affairs</i> 7.1 (2000) 94-118. 4. Wang Yu, “Israel–China Relations in the Trump Era,” <i>Journal of Modern Jewish Studies</i> 20.3 (2021): 277-300. 5. Khinvraj Jangid, “Imagining Nations, Creating States: Nehru, Ben-Gurion and an Analogical Study of India and Israel in the Post-colonial Asia,” <i>Israel Studies</i> 26.1 (2021): 73-94. 6. Vinay Kaura, “Indo-Israeli Relations in the Modi Era: A Transformative Shift,” <i>Israel Affairs</i> 25.2 (2019): 217-33.
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-10- 16.7.24	<p><i>ISRAEL’S SECURITY & INTERNATIONAL LAW</i></p> <p> <u>Helpful background reading</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amichai Cohen and Stuart Cohen, “The Dynamics of Israel’s National Security Constitution since 1948,” <i>Israel Studies</i> 23.3 (2018): 181-9. 2. Aharon Barak, “International Humanitarian Law and the Israeli Supreme Court,” <i>Israel Law Review</i> 47.2 (2014):181-9. 3. Eytan Gilboa, “The Palestinian Campaign against Israel at the United Nations Human Rights Council,” <i>Israel Affairs</i> 27.1 (2021): 1-21. 4. +
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