

## **Selected Issues: Israel's National Security, 1948 to the Present**

Tuesday, 0930-1215, Eggers 151  
David Tal, Fall 2007

The course will deal with various issues relating to Israel's national security. It will touch upon general strategic topics as well as military events, and issues relating to the Israeli- Arab conflict.

The meetings will be based essentially on discussions over articles relevant to the meeting. Each article will be presented by student, and a discussion will follow the presentations.

In addition to the presentations, each student will write a book review on a book relevant to our course- the book report will not exceed 5 pages.

By the end of the semester each student will submit a paper of no more than 15 pages. The topic of the paper will be decided by the student, in consultation with me.

Deadlines:

Book report: November 9.

Final assignment: December 10.

The grade for the course will be based on:

1. Participation in class- 30%.
2. The grades on assignments & presentation- 30%
3. The final assignment- 40%.

### **August 28- Orientation and introduction:**

#### **September 11. The Foundations of Israel's National Security Thinking**

##### Discussion in Class:

David Ben Gurion, *Israel: A Personal History* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, Inc. 1971) pp. 367-376.

Ariel Levite, *Offense and Defense in Israeli Military Doctrine* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989), pp. 25-62.

Avner Yaniv, *Deterrence Without the Bomb* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1987), pp. 12-19,

#### **September 18. In Pursuit of Arms**

##### Discussion in Class:

Yitzhak Rabin, *The Rabin Memoire* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1979), pp. 45-66.

Zach Levey, "Israel Foreign Policy and the Arms Race in the Middle East, 1950-1960," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (March 2000), pp. 29-48.

Mordechai Gazit, "The Genesis of US-Israel Military – Strategic Relationship and the Dimona Issue," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (July 2000), pp. 413-422.

#### **September 25. Israel and the Nuclear**

##### Discussion in Class:

- Ariel Levite and Emily Landau, "Arab Perceptions of Israel's Nuclear Posture, 1960-1967," *Israel Studies*.
- Binyamin Pinkus, "Atomic Power to Israel's Rescue: French-Israeli Nuclear Cooperation, 1949-1957," *Israel Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 104-138.
- Zaki Shalom, "Israel's Nuclear Option Revisited," *Journal of Israeli History*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (September 2005), pp. 267 – 277.
- Shlomo Aronson, *The Politics and strategy of nuclear weapons in the Middle East : opacity, theory, and reality, 1960-1991 : an Israeli perspective* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), chap. 9.

## **October 2. Israel's Foreign Relations**

### Discussion in Class:

- Uri Bialer, *Between East and West: Israel's Foreign Policy Orientation, 1948-1956*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 9-34, 276-281.
- Elie Podeh, "The Desire to Belong Syndrome: Israel and Middle-Eastern Defense, 1948-1954," *Israel Studies*, Vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 121-149.
- Avi Shlaim, "Israel Between East And West, 1948–56," *The International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 36 (2004), pp. 657–673.

## **October 9. Israel - US Relations- the Diplomatic Dimension**

### Discussion in Class:

- Yaakov Bar Siman- Tov, "The United States and Israel since 1948: "Special Relationship"?", *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Spring 1998), pp. 231-262.
- Douglass Little, "Making of Special Relations: The United States and Israel, 1957-1968," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (November 1993), pp. 563-585.
- David Tal, "American-Israeli Security Treaty: Sequel or Means to the relief of Israeli-Arab Tensions, 1954-1955." *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 31 no. 4, (October 1995), pp. 829-848.

## **October 16. Israel's War of Independence**

### Discussion in Class:

- Martin Van Creveld, *The Sword And The Olive* (New York: Public Affairs, 1998), pp. 93-102.
- David Tal, "Between Intuition and Professionalism: Israeli Military Leadership during the 1948 Palestine War," *Journal of Military History*, Vol. 68, No. 3 (July 2004), pp. 885-910.
- David Ben Gurion, *Israel: A Personal History* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, Inc. 1971) pp. 102-109, 155-164.

## **October 23. The Road to the 1956 War**

### Discussion in Class:

- Motti Golani, "Shall We Go to War? And if We Do, When?" in Efraim Karsh, *From War to Peace* (London; Frank Cass, 1996), pp. 22-42.
- Benny Morris, *Israel's Border Wars, 1949-1956: Arab Infiltration, Israeli Retaliation, And The Countdown To The Suez War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 410-428.
- David Tal, "The Road to the 1956 War," *The International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 28 (1996), pp. 59-81.

### **October 30. The Not-So-Quite Decade: 1957-1967**

#### Discussion in Class:

Menahem Klein, "The 'Tranquil Decade' Re-examined: Arab-Israeli Relations During the Years 1957-1967," Karsh (edt.), *From War to Peace?* Pp. 68-82.

Zach Levey, "The United States' Skyhawk Sale to Israel, 1966: Strategic Exigencies of an Arms Deal," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (April 2004), pp. 255-276.

Moshe Shemesh, "Prelude to the Six-Day War: The Arab-Israeli Struggle Over Water Resources," *Israel Studies* Vol. 9, No. 3 (Fall 2004), pp. 1-45.

### **November 6. The War that Changed Everything: the June 1967 War**

#### Discussion in Class:

Avner Cohen, "Cairo, Dimona and the June 1967 War," *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (1996), pp. 190-210.

Ami Gluska, "Israel's Decision to Go To War, June 2, 1967," *MERIA*, Volume 11, Issue 3 (May 2007).

Arye Naor, "The Security Argument in the Territorial Debate in Israel: Rhetoric and Policy," *Israel Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 150-177.

### **November 13. The 1973 War**

#### Discussion in Class:

Simcha Dinitz, "The Yom Kippur War: Diplomacy of War and Peace," P. Kumaraswamy, *Revisiting the Yom Kippur War* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), pp. 104-126.

Uri Bar-Joseph, "Main Trends in the Historiography of the Yom Kippur War: A Thirty-Year Perspective," *The Journal of Israeli History* Vol. 24, No. 2 (September 2005), pp. 251-266.

Kenneth Stein, *Heroic Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 62-96.

### **November 20. Israel and the Challenge of Counter-Insurgency: the Palestinian Front**

#### Discussion in Class:

Steven R. David, "Fatal Choices: Israel's Policy of Targeted Killing," *Mideast Security And Policy Studies* No. 51, September 2002, The Begin-Sadat Center For Strategic Studies, Bar-Ilan University.

Gal Luft, "The Logic of Israel's Targeted Killing," *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2003.

Hafez, Mohammed M. and Hatfield, Joseph M, "Do Targeted Assassinations Work? A Multivariate Analysis Of Israel's Controversial Tactic During Al-Aqsa Uprising," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (2006), pp. 359-382.

### **November 27. Military- Civic Relations in Israel**

#### Discussion in Class:

Oren Barak and Gabriel (Gabi) Sheffer, "The Study of Civil-Military Relations in Israel: A New Perspective," *Israel Studies*, vol. 12 , no. 1, pp. 1-27.

Zalman F. Shiffer, "The Debate Over the Defense Budget in Israel," *Israel Studies*, vol. 12 , no. 1, pp. 193-214.

Yoram Peri, *Generals in the Cabinet Room* (Washington D.C.: US Institute of Peace, 2006), chaps. 5 & 14.

Dan Hortowitz & Moshe Lissak, *Trouble in Utopia* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), chap. 5.

**December 4. In Pursuit of Peace (?)**

Discussion in Class:

Zeev Maoz, *Defending the Holy Land* (Ann Arbor: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), chap. 10.

Mordechai Gazit, "Egypt and Israel- Was there a Peace Opportunity Missed in 1971?" *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (January 1997), pp. 97-115.

Ron Pundak, "From Oslo to Taba: What Went Wrong?" *Survival*, Vol. 43, No. 3, (Autumn 2001), pp.

Stein, *Heroic Diplomacy*, 53-62.

**And now to the *important* stuff:**

My office hours are: Monday, 05:00-06:00 pm (and by appointment), room 304 Maxwell.

My office phone number- TBA.

My email address is: dtal@maxwell.syr.edu

Feel free to call or email (or just bump into me in the corridors) whenever you feel I can help