

Anna Sobol Levy Fellowship Final Report, 2010-11

fellows

Kimberly Seifert

Christopher McIntosh

Peter Uthe

Sarath Ganji

Joshua Gotay

Nicholas Castle



Biographies



Coming from Mosav Ya'ad in northern Israel, **Ran Smoly** just finished his first year of an honors M.A. program at the Federmann School of Public Policy & Government of Hebrew University. During his military service, Ran was an infantry officer in the Nahal Brigade. He finished his service as a lieutenant and is now a platoon commander of the Border Guard, when called to Reserve duty. He has worked as a tour guide for several companies, mostly guiding youth groups from all over Israel during their educational excursions with school. His military, travel, tour guide experience very much enhance his role as the ASL coordinator. In his opinion, serving in the I.D.F. and living his life under Israel's high-pressure security situation have given him a hardened knowledge of what ASL fellows should and must learn through this program.



Joshua Gotay was a Visiting Student in the Israel Politics and Society programs at Hebrew University's Rothberg International School. He graduated Summa Cum Laude from West Virginia University where he received a bachelors in Political Science with a focus on Law and Legal systems. Additionally, he graduated as a Distinguished Military Graduate and received his commission in May 2010 as an officer in the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps. While in college, Joshua interned in the U.S. Coast Guard's Office of Budget and Programs, and served as an assistant program reviewer. At Hebrew University, Joshua focused his studies on North Africa and Iranian political issues. While in Israel, Joshua enjoyed his travels to Jordan, Turkey, Egypt, and various parts in the West Bank. Upon returning to the U.S., Joshua is looking forward to beginning his military career



Nicholas Castle completed a B.A. as an N.R.O.T.C. cadet in International Studies and Economics at Idaho University in 2010. He finished with honors and received the Leadership Award, Commanding Officer Commendation, Academic Achievement Award, Academic Excellence Award and Physical Fitness Award. Nick's studies at Hebrew University have emphasized topics related to developmental economics in the Middle East and North Africa. Though unable to do the outdoor activities he enjoys in Idaho, Nick ran a half marathon in Jerusalem (in the first marathon ever to be held in Jerusalem) and did quite a bit of hiking, including "Yam le Yam", a hike from the Mediterranean Sea to the Sea of Galilee. He thoroughly enjoyed learning about the I.D.F., particularly through ASL trips to training bases. Nick will miss the unique culture and cuisine offered only in Jerusalem, but is excited to begin his career as an officer in the US Marines.



In 2008, **Kimberly Seifert** completed a B.S. in Economics at Miami University, spending her last year in Shanghai, China as an exchange student. She finished with honors, received the Del Snider Award for International Economics and was named Higgin Kim Scholar for Asian Studies Abroad. In 2007 and 2008, Kimberly interned in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, supporting the activities of the Globalization Task Force and the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States. She came to Hebrew University in 2009 and this year will finish an M.A. in Israeli Politics & Society. Kimberly was an ASL fellow for both years of her degree and very much appreciates everything she learned about the IDF and Israel's national security issues. She hopes to apply her deepened understanding of the I.D.F. and US-Israel relations to a career as a Foreign Service Officer.



Peter Uthe graduated from the University of Louisville in 2010, earning a degree in Geography with a focus in Environmental Analysis. His focus of study while at the Hebrew University was Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies. One interesting thing he experienced in Israel was competing in the first marathon in Jerusalem, only completed the half marathon. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army and was branched Infantry.



Sarath Ganji was a Visiting Student in the Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies program at Hebrew University's Rothberg International School. He graduated *magna cum laude* from Georgetown University, where he received a bachelors in International Politics and a certificate in International Development. During college, he interned with the U.S. Congress and State Department, and participated in fellowships with the Embassy of Israel and Center for the Study of the Presidency. While in Israel, Sarath enjoyed most his travels to the West Bank, Egypt, Jordan, and Turkey, as well as his regular diet of schnitzel and shawarma. Upon returning to the United States, he hopes to work in Washington, D.C. for a few years before continuing his studies in public policy.



Chris McIntosh was a Master's Candidate in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the Hebrew University's Rothberg International School. He holds a B.A. in History from Villanova University and spent seven years on active duty in the US Marine Corps from 2000-2007. He is well traveled in the Middle East, particularly throughout the Gulf States. Being the only ASL fellow seasoned with years of combat and regular service, Chris frequently enriched ASL trips and lectures with anecdotes illustrating his deep understanding of military issues and Middle Eastern culture. He also kept things lively with his unceasing humor. Post-graduation Chris seeks to work in the region.

I. Tel Aviv IDF History Museum and Convoy Wars Presentation, August 2010

Location: Tel Aviv/Yafo, Sha'ar HaGai

Viewpoint

Discussion: The tour began with Tel-Aviv's Israel Defense Force (IDF) History Museum. The museum is located at the old railway station in Yaffo, and served as the point of departure for the fellowship's activities throughout the year. The museum provides a collection of war memorabilia ranging from document and photographs to armored vehicles and artillery pieces. With exhibitions from the IDF's foundation in 1948 to present, the museum offers an ample survey of the Israel Defense Force. The tour began



with a discussion of the transition of Israel into statehood in 1948, in which the IDF was a reflection of society at large. The IDF was formed in a fluid transition from ad-hoc guerilla brigades such as the Haganah and Palmach, which formed the backbone of the IDF during its origin. The IDF's early challenges were as much logistical as ideological. The search for heavy weapons and armor were considered essential to the defense of the new-born nation, while simultaneously the organization of the IDF was in development. The tour then explained the evolution from these early beginnings into a modern-force capable of decisive and effective action. During the tour we discussed the challenges of integrating naval, air, and land warfare into a sensible command structure, as well as the modernization of these respective services. The tour ended with an exhibit displaying the Chiefs of Staff throughout the fifty-two year history of the IDF, as well as the Medal of Valor winners who fought in defense of their new-founded homeland.

The second portion of the tour returned to the 1948 War of Independence discussing the Convoy Wars in relation to the siege of Jerusalem. The fellows stopped nearly mid-way between Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem on Highway 1 overlooking the highway at a point where the ridgeline closed into two narrow hillsides which the highway bore through. The landscape showed a perfect ambush point which was used in 1948 in order to cut off Jerusalem from its' lifeline of supplies in Tel-Aviv. The overlook allowed a graphic representation of the story of armored convoys that pushed through the highway despite numerous ambushes along the route. The overlook and the story of the convoy wars showed the relative isolation of Jerusalem, and its importance within the psyche of both Arab and Israeli minds.

Comments/Recommendations: As the first tour for ASL Fellowship 2010/2011, this event sought to provide a foundation to subsequent events throughout the year. The IDF Museum was beneficial in providing a visual representation to the historical background learned throughout the course of the year. Its effectiveness as an introduction is excellent; though a guide other than the standard one provided by the museum is recommended. An individual who could offer a broad overview of the development of the IDF, rather than specifics of the museum exhibitions, would be preferable.

The overlook of Highway 1 and the synopsis of the Convoy Wars were excellent. While at the overlook a brief terrain analysis was conducted in relation to military operations, which was beneficial in terms of mindset for junior officers.

II. Azreili Center, Ministry of Defense and Galgalatz Radio Station, August 2010

Location: Tel Aviv

Discussion: Our tour began with a visit to the Azrieli Center Circular Tower located in the heart of Tel Aviv. After enjoying the incredible view from the 49th floor, we were explained the brief history of one of Israel's most important metropolitan areas. After observing the view from the tower we proceeded towards our next site, with a brief stop at the Malha shopping mall along the way. We then arrived to the Ministry of Defense located in HaKriya, Tel Aviv. The Ministry of Defense is integral to the government by serving as the department responsible for defending the State of Israel from internal and external military threats.

Upon arrival to the Ministry of Defense we were introduced to Major Carmell, the Chief Education Officer of the Central Command. She began her discussion by focusing on the main education challenges facing the IDF, highlighted by the following points: (1) strengthening motivation of meaningful and productive service; (2) morale strengthening of soldiers and commanders; (3) overcoming educational gaps; (4) strengthening Israeli Jewish identity; (5) advancing the integration of soldiers; (6) strengthening leadership schools; (7) and strengthening the dialogue between commanders and their soldiers. The challenges themselves were guided by an

overall Israeli principle of establishing identity and purpose within the spirit of the IDF. Major Carmell noted that the education force is responsible for establishing a solid base of national identity for all junior level recruits. ASL fellows were invited to participate in an open question-answer session following the lecture.



We concluded our day by visiting Galgalatz, a popular radio station operated by Israel Defense Forces radio. The station was established with aid from the Israeli Ministry of Transportation, in order to improve safety conditions on major highways and roads. In addition to broadcasting traffic and safety messages, Galgalatz receives high ratings from the general population for broadcasting popular music. Our guide escorted us through three main studio-recording rooms, in order to show us where key Israeli leaders have conducted interviews. Our last stop in the facility was a tour of the music collection Galgalatz has at their disposal – including records of Bruce Springsteen, Eric Clapton, and the Eagles.

Comments/Recommendations: All three site visits were incredibly beneficial, as they functioned both to introduce us to key units, and transmit to us an overall understanding of guiding principles within the IDF. With regard to the former, as a group, we did not realize the importance of the education command and radio station elements until seeing them firsthand. Additionally, speaking with Major Carmell, brought a fundamental understanding to the Fellows of both recruiting and retention techniques used by the IDF as well as the overwhelming challenges the Israeli modern army faces. In observing the challenges faced by the IDF, we were allowed to draw an array of correlations to the United States military – for example, leadership schools and the challenges in overcoming educational gaps. The question-answer session was the most beneficial aspect of the meeting due to

the fact that it facilitated an open dialogue where the fellows were allowed to ask multiple questions regarding the education system within the IDF. With regard to the latter, the amount of emphasis placed on the education system highlights a guiding principle within the IDF – ensuring that all soldiers are taken care of by the government and set up for success within and outside of the IDF. Overall, the three site visits proved to be great events – scheduled early on in the year – which gave



the

Fellows a broad understanding of the IDF.

III. Moshe ‘Bogi’ Ya’alon, Deputy PM, Minister of Strategic Affairs, September 2010 **Location: Offices of the Prime Minister, Jerusalem**

Discussion: General Ya’alon began our meeting with an introduction to the Ministry of Strategic Affairs (MSA), of which he currently heads. MSA was established in 2008 to provide the Foreign Affairs and Security Cabinet with analyses of strategic threats and proposed solutions. Its duties are comparable to those of the National Security Council in the United States. Today, MSA’s primary missions are: the Iranian threat, the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and developing Israel’s national security concept. Gen. Ya’alon did not hesitate to emphasize that the Jewish people deserve an independent state and that Israel’s primary strategic challenge is the reluctance of Middle Eastern partners to recognize Israel as a *Jewish* State.

Gen. Ya’alon went on to discuss certain differences of opinion between the Israeli Government (IG) and the United States Government (USG). Firstly, USG considers the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict as the primary challenge in the Middle East and the core of instability in the region; IG contends that the region would be unstable regardless. Furthermore, USG believes that the solution to this conflict is territorial: enforce the Two-State Solution, bringing Israel back to the ’67 borders. IG maintains that the dispute is not only territorial, but also a question of Israel’s existence. Finally, USG wants Israel to first solve the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, then move on to dealing with Iran. IG argues that Iran is a center of gravity, especially given their involvement with and support of numerous terrorist groups; therefore, IG must deal with Iran first.

Our meeting was concluded with Gen. Ya'alon's assurances that the U.S. and Israel have several shared values and that our strategic relationship is mutually beneficial and critical to the security of both nations.

Comments/Recommendations: This meeting was hugely beneficial for two reasons: (1) it was an exceptional opportunity for us to meet with such an established and high-ranking official; (2) Gen. Ya'alon was remarkably candid. Although it is somewhat doubtful that Gen. Ya'alon will be in the same position next year, I do believe that it would be excellent for all ASL fellows to have at least a comparable acquaintance. Meeting with an Israeli official of such background and authority cannot be understated. We were also lucky to benefit from the fact that Gen. Ya'alon is very direct, even outspoken, in spite of his position. I'm not sure how our coordinator managed to schedule this meeting, but we all very much appreciated the experience.



IV. Galilee & the Golan Heights, October 2010

Location: northern Israel

Discussion: All 6 fellows, coordinator, our driver, Musa and one security guard departed Jerusalem around 1700 on Thursday 21 October and headed north towards the Kary Desh Guest House on the Kinneret. We arrived in time for dinner after which we watched the movie, Beaufort about an IDF unit's final days at a fort in southern Lebanon. It was extremely eye opening and a solid introduction to security operations in the north. The following day we travelled further north to a kibbutz on the eastern edge of the Kinneret called Giv'at Yo'av where we met a Tsvika, a dairy farmer who had a career in security for various agencies in and out of the Israeli government. He gave us a tour of his dairy operation and then sat down with us to talk about his history and that of Giv'at Yo'av. The kibbutz actually has a disproportionate amount of its young people going into elite units of the IDF (ie. special forces and pilots). His own son was a naval commando in fact. Next, we took a ride to a lookout point atop a former machine gun position where we could see the entire Sea of Galilee and a good portion of the surrounding area. From here he oriented us to various locations in the region and spoke of the strategic importance of it. He also discussed Israel's various military campaigns and told some personal accounts of his time in the IDF.

From the lookout point we headed to Katsrin in the Golan where we took in a panoramic video featuring the natural beauty of the Golan Heights and some of the agricultural projects Israelis have developed there. In the same building we also saw a light show of sorts over a massive topographical map of the Golan Heights. The lights discussed briefly the history of the region beginning with pre-historic times, moving through the Temple Periods up to the wars of 1948, the Six Day War in 1967, and of course the 1973 Yom Kippur War in which the Golan witnessed one of the most intense tank battles in Israeli history.

Our next stop was Mount Bental which overlooks the Syrian cities of Old and New Qunetra as well as much of the Golan itself. An additional attraction of Mount Bental is the small bunker

system there which has not been used in decades but remains as a good example of the many bunker systems which intermittently overlook Israel's border and were also constructed in Lebanon during the country's extensive military presence there. After seeing the movie Beaufort the previous night, walking through these bunkers was even more meaningful. On top of Bental, we received a talk from a Golan resident named Avi who gave us the past and present history of the region with special emphasis on the war of 1973.

Our final event was an off-road excursion through a portion of the Western Golan and Hula Valley. We were in two different jeeps and stopped periodically to discuss significant landmarks such as one of the site of one of the first kibbutzim, a former custom's house along the old border between Mandate Palestine and Syria. We ended the trip near the Lebanese border where we received one final talk about the recent Lebanon War and current history of the region. Afterwards, we met up with our bus and headed back to Jerusalem.



Comments/Recommendations: Without doubt, this is an extremely worthwhile trip and with such a variety of activities, we certainly were able to make the most out of our time. Each stop along the way broadened our understanding of the region in some way and not always through the lens of security which is important. The jeep tour was an absolutely brilliant idea, really a great way to get in touch with the geography of the area and simply see what is going on in the hinterlands of the Western Golan/Hula Valley area. The trip increased our knowledge of Israel exponentially. Time management seemed to be an issue and it is a shame to not take the fullest advantage of time since many Fellows have limited exposure to Israel in general. In the future, the trip should be scheduled for two nights and one and a half days. With the extra time, the group could visit the kibbutz at Misgav Am on the Lebanese border and/or tour the Galilee a bit more. The panoramic movie of the Golan is not a great use of time, the topographical map, however, is very useful and should perhaps be one of the first stops of the trip for the sake of orientation. Mount Bental is indispensable and the jeep tour, or something comparable should also remain a staple of the Golan trip. Finally, the idea of a movie before starting to tour the region is an excellent way to orient the group. It is very clear a great deal of planning went into the trip such that the Fellows get the most out of the experience.

V. Dr. Ya'akov Bar-Siman Tov, December 2010

Location: RIS

Discussion: Dr. Yaakov acquired his PhD in International Relations at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and his post-doctorate in Political Science at Stanford University. Dr. Bar-Siman Tov is a leading expert at the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies focusing on conflict management, resolutions, negotiation and the Arab-Israeli conflict.
Jerusalem and its Value: Cultural and Strategic

Dr. Yaakov Bar-Siman Tov began the discussion with the cultural and religious reasons for a power struggle over the city of Jerusalem. He stated that over the years many different empires have ruled Jerusalem and it has a weathered past. Moving toward more contemporary times he discussed the city's status since the Israeli War of Independence in 1948. He discussed the demographic

problems facing the city with multiple isolated ethno-religious groups scattered throughout the city. He described how urban and population growth has complicated the peace process by illustrating, via maps, where Arabs reside and where Jews reside in relation to the 1967 border agreement.

Dr. Yaakov explained the complexities with the Arab Israeli Conflict and peace negotiations relating the split of Jerusalem. He explained to us the differences between Arab Israeli citizens and Arab residents of Jerusalem. He went on to explain that the entire issue of Peace in Jerusalem hinges on protected values compared to interests. Protected values are the intangible things related to social and religious identity. Protected interests are more tangible items such as neighborhoods, property, and rights.

Four barriers to conflict resolution:

- 1) The Temple Mount
- 2) The Old City
- 3) Arab Neighborhoods
- 4) Jewish Neighborhoods
- 5) Two Capitols within one city

The current situation is very complex but Dr. Yaakov gave us three solutions to the apportionment of Jerusalem:

- 1) Current situation can last forever.
 - a. It has lasted 43 years and it could stay the same with Israel holding the important land and controlling the entire situation. The key issue with this is to maintain a status of peace or peaceful relations. Conflict Management would have to be an effective deterrent to violence. As well as conflict management a settlement freeze would have to be in place to appease the Arab population in the West Bank.
- 2) Joint management of key territories ie. The Temple Mount and the Old City.
 - a. This situation will only work if there is good willingness and trust on both sides. It will truly take a large vested interest from a third party to help manage the tensions that are undoubtedly going to arise.
- 3) Partition the entire city and split up areas by religious designation.
 - a. This would require walls to separate neighborhoods, parks, as well as the Old City. This would mean reverting back to the 1967 borders and would also mean the end of Jerusalem as a unified city.

Comments and Recommendations: The value of this discussion for the overall understanding of the importance of the distribution of Jerusalem for the peace negotiations was fully uncovered. Dr. Yaakov fully explained the known and lesser known intricacies of the issue that the average American would not know.

If the discussion on Jerusalem's history would have started after the year 1967 I think we would have covered the key Issues more thoroughly. As a result of his exhaustive historical background discussion, the question-answer portion was cut short. Also, if there were more time for questions it would allow for a more detailed explanation on topics that interest the fellows.

The lecturer could have focused on more contemporary issues if we were given an article or two about background information that would help the Fellows prepare for the lecture. This would also give a baseline of knowledge so that a broad review does not need to take place during the

given lecture time. The last 50% of the lecture was incredibly valuable and focused to the task at hand.

The lecture was very valuable time spent learning about the complexity of peace negotiations as well as the history of Jerusalem. The most important thing that was explained is that there are two different sides with protected values which are shared over a very small territory.



VI.IDF Armored Corps Museum, December 2010

Location: Latrun

Discussion: Our guide began the tour by providing us with an introductory note concerning the museum's history and purpose. The site itself is integrally tied to the history of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and, more specifically, the Armored Corps: the Latrun station, originally built in 1940 as a British police station, was a site of contention between Israeli and Jordanian forces during the 1948 War. Israeli forces eventually captured the site in the 1967 June War. Yet, the idea for a museum was only put forth after the 1973 Yom Kippur War, when, as our guide explained, high casualty figures

motivated the need for a memorial for those a part of Israel's Armored Corps. The site was dedicated in 1982, and the museum became operational in 1986.

Following her introductory remarks, our guide proceeded to show us exhibits that highlighted the following points: (1) key components and functions of a tank; (2) models that were of particular importance to the Israel Defense Forces; (3) models from other countries, including France, Lebanon, and the United States; (4) and the details of tank operations during the 1973 War. ASL fellows were invited to explore the museum's many exhibits, during which they raised questions concerning various models' make-up, origins, and use in battle operations. Embedded in these discussions was the guide's emphasis on otherwise overlooked details, such as Israelis' use of a "kicking system" to communicate with one another when operating a tank, and the Merkava's use of chains with ball weights to disrupt anti-tank munitions and minimize damage.

After touring the outdoor exhibits, we made our way to an indoor area that featured artwork and photos. There, we also viewed two short films—the first an action video that depicted tanks in operation, and the second a sort of documentary that highlighted the value of the Armored Corps Museum to the IDF and greater Israeli public. We concluded our tour by walking through the Tower of Tears, which consisted of a walkway and room that projected the faces of fallen Armored Corps soldiers, as well as a tower erected to symbolize the Israeli population's paradoxical sadness and hopefulness for its fallen.

Comments/Recommendations: The site visit was an incredibly valuable experience, as it functioned both to introduce us to key aspects of Israeli military history, and to convey more subtle points concerning the IDF's priorities and concerns. With regard to the former, we learned a great deal about the 1948 War, and did so with an eye toward the role of tank operations in military—and, more broadly speaking, Israeli—objectives. This added a dimension to our previous understanding

of Israeli political history. With regard to the latter, our guide's focus on the otherwise overlooked details mentioned above revealed important aspects concerning the IDF's priorities—for example, the importance of technological advancement to the IDF, not only for the sake of battlefield advantage but also for the purposes of protecting its own. Even the “kicking system” noted above suggested the challenges of battlefield communication, especially during the 1948 War, when Israeli soldiers lacked a common language and relied on alternative means to communicate. Such details are difficult to understand in the context of the classroom; the value of site visits, therefore, cannot be overstated.



Time was the ultimate limitation on this event. Although two hours were devoted to the visit—which appears adequate enough—the end of the tour was rushed, so much so that we almost missed touring the Tower of Tears, which in fact turned out to be very important in our understanding of the symbols crafted by the museum's architects to connect the Israeli population to the IDF and Armored Corps. Greater flexibility on time—which we understand at times can be a difficult suggestion to entertain—would be beneficial. A second suggestion is to provide a background video or reading to interested ASL Fellows prior to events or lectures. Given the varying levels of knowledge among Fellows concerning various topics—in this case, the Armored Corps—recommending sources for more further information would allow us to be on the same page prior to an event, and would permit us to think about subjects beforehand which could translate into useful questions during the event itself.

Overall, this proved to be a great event—scheduled at a very appropriate time (after we had visited the Golan and generally learned about the role of tanks in the 1973 War)—and is highly recommended for inclusion in next year's fellowship agenda.

VII. IDF Special Forces Soldier, Ran Bar Yoshafat, January 2011

Location: RIS

Discussion: Ran Bar Yoshafat served as an officer in Sayeret Maglan, an Israeli special forces unit which specializes in operating behind enemy lines and using advanced technologies and weaponry. Mr. Yoshafat fought in the Second Intifada during his active service, and participated in Second Lebanon War as a reserve soldier.

He met with us to give us his more personal take on the Israeli Defense Forces. Mr. Yoshafat opened his talk with some statistics on the make up of the IDF (e.g., 0.5% of the I.D.F. is special forces) while also presenting us with some very intriguing problem solving exercises involving questions of tactics and morality. These scenarios included examples from border-crossing gates and scenes of urban warfare, as well as more conventional situations. Indeed, several of these hypothetical schemes were based on his personal experience.

One example was based on Mr. Yoshafat's service during Lebanon II. He began by asking us to imagine a small, remote village and to try and suggest potential locations for cover. The obvious best answer is in citizens' homes, which Mr. Yoshafat confirmed they used several times. However, the less obvious dilemma is: how is a soldier to behave once inside a citizen's home? If the soldier needs to use the bathroom, should he use the toilet available in the home? Can he sit on the couch? Eat their food?

Mr. Yoshafat's primary purpose in telling us his stories and presenting us with predicaments that he has faced was to emphasize that even when the orders are clear, common sense is necessary. It is not possible to prepare for all of the situations that one will face in conflict. Moreover, Mr. Yoshafat repeated more than once that in his opinion, the IDF consistently executes its missions according to the highest possible ethical standards.

Commentary/Recommendations: Mr. Yoshafat's lecture was a valuable look at the IDF from a soldier's personal perspective. Such lectures are especially enjoyable, as those not currently in a position of authority are able to be much more candid in their discussions. However, Mr. Yoshafat gives this lecture as part of a lecture series, thus he had a very clear agenda. I recommend at least a few such lectures every year.



VIII. Israeli Air Force Museum & Bedouin Cultural Center, January 2011

Location: Be'er Sheva

Discussion: This trip into the Negev included two different sorts of experiences, equally valuable for different reasons. The IAF Museum holds a very large collection of various aircraft relating to Israel's history. Fellows were guided by a young airman who first explained some of the basics of aviation and quickly delved into IAF history explaining the main phases of its development from a challenging inception in 1948 through the present day, all the while pointing to the aircraft to support her narrative. Fellows learned how early Israelis circumvented the embargo to cobble together aircraft out of parts from a myriad of locations to create the Air Force during the War for Independence. In the 1950s good relations with Britain led to the British age during which Israel received aircraft from this nation. Next was the French period allowing Israel to attain Mirage fighter

aircraft in the 1960s. Of all things, an Iraqi Mig-21 ushered in the current American age when an Iraqi defector flew one such aircraft to Israel giving the west its first look at the state of the art ingenuity of the former Soviet Union. Israel shared this aircraft with the United States which has been selling its aircraft to Israel ever since. In addition to Israeli planes, helicopters, and unmanned aerial vehicles, the museum's collection contains captured aircraft from Israel's former and current threat states, still painted with the appropriate markings.

The next stop was the Bedouin Cultural Center inside the Joe Alon Center in the Lahav Forrest. Our guide, a Bedouin himself, escorted fellows through the museum's displays depicting traditional Bedouin life, their tools, tents, clothing and food. The two-floor building contains a great deal of photographs, dioramas, and artifacts that help visitors understand how Israel's Bedouins are adapting an ancient past to modern demands. Fellows also viewed a film about Bedouin life and how the people are trying to remain loyal to their culture in the face of great change. After the museum, fellows gathered in a tent, drank coffee, tea and enjoyed a rolled laffa with zatar and lubneh. The guide spoke at the same time about finer points of Bedouin etiquette of hospitality. With this, we concluded the tour.

Comments/Recommendations: This trip was an excellent use of time and resources. Of course, the IAF museum is valuable for basic history and the young airman effectively conveyed this. It bears mention again however that a more knowledgeable guide would make a massive difference in these museum experiences. The Bedouin Cultural Center visit, while not immediately related to the Fellowship, was a superb reminder of the societal intricacies at work inside Israel which naturally have implications for the IDF which the fellows discussed with the coordinator. Cultural experiences like this pay large dividends in understanding the macro picture of the nation and how identity impacts public opinion, soldiers, and national security.

IX. Ir Amim Tour of Jerusalem, February 2011

Location: Jerusalem vicinity

Discussion: Our tour was administered by Ir Amim, a public advocacy organization that specializes in providing tours of Jerusalem and conducting policy research; its primary aim is to build a Jerusalem that accommodates both Israelis and Palestinians so as to make a two-state solution viable. The tour consisted of a van ride around the city, punctuated by several stops during which we were able to leave the van and survey relevant sites tied to the tour's main themes. Our guide Aryeh Dayan discussed the main political issues underlying Arab-Israeli relations in the context of Jerusalem's many neighborhoods, integrating historical and political facts throughout his presentation. Each neighborhood, in turn, served as a case study of an issue that jeopardized a two-state solution.

One theme was the political nature of Israeli settlement construction. Here, Aryeh talked about Har Homa, a settlement that, due to its burgeoning population and increasingly religious character, had demanded protection by the Israeli government in the form of the separation wall. But building the wall around settlements, he noted, contributed to the territorial discontinuity of the West Bank, an issue brought to light in the Palestinian Papers where Palestinian negotiators were shown willing to compromise on many issues but not on settlements exacerbating territorial discontinuities, like Har Homa.

A second theme concerned the lives of Arabs living in Jerusalem. Here, Aryeh situated Arab Jerusalemites' lives in the context of law (residency requirements that force Arabs to pay taxes or else face deportation), religion (Arabs who view their residency in Jerusalem as a "struggle"), and

politics (little of the city's tax revenues are used for Arab neighborhoods). This theme was connected to the more controversial issue of Israeli public officials trying to redraw Jerusalem's borders—and in support of this policy, altering facts on the ground via settlement construction—so as to fulfill the demographic and security requirements they deemed necessary. Our guide also noted the differing levels of development between East Jerusalem and West Jerusalem, and touched upon the importance of the holy sites to any future peace negotiations—holy sites which are largely ignored by public officials who know well how difficult they are to address.

A third theme was the “incomplete sovereignty” Israel exercised over its territory due to the settlements. In effect, international recognition of Israel's claims over Jerusalem is absent because settlements, which aim to extend Israel's territorial sovereignty, are not recognized as Israeli territory by much of the world and, hence, prevent Jerusalem's larger and more established neighborhoods from being considered a part of Israel. In this context, Aryeh argued that, as time went by, Palestinians would “get more and give up less” because of demographic changes (namely, Palestinians' rising population figures in comparison to Israeli's) and territorial discontinuities that would ultimately shift the discussion from one about a two-state solution to one about a single state with equal rights for Palestinians, thus threatening Israel's basis as a Jewish majority state.

The above theme led us to discuss the difficulties of labeling some neighborhoods as “settlements” and others as actual Israeli neighborhoods. Aryeh stated that some settlements, like Gilo, were clearly going to be a part of Israel, should a two-state solution be reached. But other settlements, like Ariel in the northern part of Israel, were clearly detrimental to any two-state solution; in this particular case, Ariel, already a sizable community of over 30,000 residents, threatens to split the West Bank into northern and southern portions, effectively eliminating prospects of a West Bank state. Here, we were also briefed on the singular case of Shu'afat, the only Palestinian refugee camp located in Israel's borders, whose residents possess East Jerusalem residence cards as well as refugee cards, a situation which makes the administration of public services to the camp incredibly difficult and, as a result, paves the way for humanitarian crises.



The sum of these themes led Aryeh to state why working toward a two-state solution was Ir Amim's ultimate goal: the alternative would be a state in which a Jewish majority would no longer be possible without Israel being labeled an apartheid state by the international community. Understanding the facts on the ground—in particular, the separation wall and settlements—was thus necessary in order to create policies that dealt clearly with those obstacles in the way of the peace process.

Comments/Recommendations: The Ir Amim tour was a fascinating look at Jerusalem from a historical and political perspective. The details provided during the tour were of the type unavailable to us through classroom lectures and, more importantly, were supported by facts based on the organization's own research. I cannot stress enough how useful it was for the tour guide to take a deep dive into a variety of issues that lie at the center of Palestinian-Israeli relations. Instead of broadly characterizing the separation wall as “good” or “bad,” our guide made sure to point out the usefulness of and logic behind the wall at certain locations, while then discussing the contradictions

and inadequacies of the wall at other locations. His neighborhood-by-neighborhood approach also gave us a newfound appreciation for what constitutes a settlement versus a neighborhood. Labels are often thrown around by those whose politics bleeds into their rhetoric. Aryeh's arguments, however, problematized these simple labels and made us appreciate more which settlements were actually facts on the ground that would certainly be part of an Israeli state, and which settlements were illegal, not recognized by the vast majority of Israelis, and lay at the heart of Palestinian-Israeli disagreements at the diplomatic level. The above details, in other words, made us consider policy questions related to the Arab-Israeli conflict which we had not previously considered.

A second aspect of the tour which I appreciated immensely was Aryeh's candidness, especially in terms of his politics. Although Aryeh made clear, at the outset of the tour, that he had his own biases and prejudices which made his presentation, to an extent, subjective, he was also careful to back up his statements with facts and to open his points to questions by and discussions with us. Given the one-sidedness of previous speakers we had (in particular, a few of the speakers we met with during our trip to the Golan), it was refreshing—and in our best interests—to have someone who admitted his biases up front. Moreover, it was important that Aryeh supported his claims with facts in contrast to previous speakers who seemed to brief us along the lines of their opinions only. Also unlike previous speakers, he continuously emphasized the importance of cross referencing his information.

Although the tour as a whole was a fantastic experience, it was clear that we had missed out on an important part of the tour: going through Arab neighborhoods in East Jerusalem. Our guide pointed out numerous times during the tour that, in order to really understand the situation in X or Y neighborhood, we needed to actually travel to those neighborhoods, to see the areas up front, and to meet with its residents firsthand. Only then could we really have an appreciation for the role of Jerusalem in the peace process. Due to restrictions imposed on us by Hebrew University, however, our guide was not permitted to take us to Arab neighborhoods, even though these neighborhoods were part of Israel, were frequented by other Ir Amim tours, and were known to be safe based on past tours' experiences. By the end of the tour, given the number of times Aryeh stated that we were missing out on an important aspect of the tour, I felt as if I had lost out on an incredible opportunity and that, because of the university's restrictions, I was unable to understand fully key issues a part of Palestinian-Israeli relations that fit into the broader purposes of this fellowship program—namely, to gain a first-hand understanding of the dimensions of the conflict so as to better inform me as a future policy maker.

While I would highly recommend this tour for future ASL groups—and in fact, I would suggest scheduling this tour more than once per ASL class, given the different types of tours that Ir Amim gives and the wealth of information that it provides during each—I would be very disappointed if the restrictions placed on us for this tour remained in place for future ASL classes.



X. *Paradise Now* (film) & Discussion, March 2011
Location: RIS

Discussion: We began our lecture session by watching *Paradise Now*, a Golden Globe winner for best foreign

language film in 2005. The film focuses on two Palestinian childhood friends, who live in the West Bank, and are recruited for a suicide attack in Tel Aviv. The movie attempts to make clear the normalcy of humiliation and violence felt by Palestinians. Throughout the film we could see that there was a clear attempt to demonstrate various examples of the deep psychological effects felt by the younger generation living in the West Bank. The movie served as a catalyst for the ASL fellows to open up a full discussion ranging from historical issues to present day implications of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Following the viewing of the film we were joined by a former Israeli soldier who had also served as a member of the non-profit organization called *Breaking the Silence*. His experiences in both fields helped facilitate an open and broad discussion on the gaps between Israelis and the Arabs. In analyzing the current situation in Israel, our visitor found it particularly important to explain the differences between Israel's moral code and the traditional Arab moral code. According to him, the Arab moral code is centered around very strict requirements to maintain one's honor and particularly that of the family. This can often lead to acts of revenge in the quest to regain that honor against which the IDF is forced to apply extreme pressure militarily. Our guest went one step further and stated that, "sometime the military is forced to do things to show that they are 'crazy' in order to curb violence." He referenced an array of military orders passed down by former Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin to site examples of extreme and very unpopular tactics employed by the IDF during the first Intifada. Unfortunately our discussion came to a dead end when we began discussing possible solutions to the peace process. The closing statement our guest stated was that the majority of Israelis are not optimistic for any solutions that are currently being presented and when asked why he left *Breaking the Silence*, he sited his own lack of faith in the work he was doing and the pointlessness of trying to improve a deteriorating situation.

Comments/Recommendations: The lecture session was a valuable experience, as it served to both help the fellows acquire basic knowledge on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and to facilitate an open discussion. With regard to the former, we learned a great deal from our guest speaker, including his personal experiences while serving in the IDF. Additionally, his personal views helped cast light on some of the intricacies surrounding IDF military policy.

With regard to the latter, the session helped answer the majority of the fellows questions regarding future solutions to the conflict. Overall, this proved to be a good lecture session – scheduled at an appropriate time (while peace negotiations still hang in balance) – and is highly recommended for future ASL classes. In fact, even this year, we could organize more films as they are an excellent way to become oriented to Israeli culture and see how the society is viewing its own military.

XI. Rachel's Tomb & Bethlehem Checkpoint, March 2011

Location: Jerusalem - West Bank Border

Discussion: The Fellows met with a Spokesman of the Israeli National Police who gave a lecture on the security of Israel's border with the West Bank. He discussed the importance of the MAGAV (Border



Police) and the tactics in which they provide security. We arrived at a police station 200 meters from the checkpoint with Bethlehem and toured the facilities. In the tour we saw the advanced electronic surveillance systems which keep an eye on the separation wall between Israel and the West Bank. The officer in charge explained a normal day of operation and how he runs the police station 24/7. After touring the surveillance rooms we went outside to see some of the state of the art equipment the MAGAV was using. We observed the new Combat Jeep the MAGAV developed and took it for a



ride to Rachel's Tomb. Rachel's Tomb is a Holy Site for Judaism that sits inside the city limits of Bethlehem. Israel has built a wall around the tomb so that Israelis can visit the Holy Site. The fellows were able to climb up a watch tower and see the defenses surrounding the site. The Spokesman explained the problems that occurred during the second Intifada and how the Israeli National Police handled the attacks.

Next we traveled back to the Rachel's Tomb Checkpoint to see how the MAGAV deals with the continuous flow of Palestinians in and out of Jerusalem. Inside the Checkpoint we saw the surveillance systems in place to capture the events that occur inside the facility. Also we

were able to talk with people working the border to gain their perspective on the security threats affecting their lives at work. All of the Fellows have passed through this checkpoint as civilians visiting the West Bank. We were able to see firsthand the complexities of allowing the flow of Palestinian workers but also limiting the restricted portion of population. This tour further enhanced our knowledge on the intricacies of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict.

Comments/Recommendations: The overall experience at the checkpoint was outstanding. We had two very involved and interesting tour guides who were willing to answer every question we had from tactics to technology. This trip should be kept the same with very small changes if any. The time frame of a weekday afternoon did not inhibit the school day and freed the weekend up for travel or other ASL activities. It is imperative that the ASL fellows either travel through this checkpoint or take a tour of it. This experience shows in real life the magnitude of security that is in place to safeguard Israeli civilians.

XII. Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center & the Palmach Museum, March 2011

Location: Gllot and Tel Aviv

Discussion: The day's events began with a visit to the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (ITIC). The ITIC, opened in 2001, is part of the Israel Intelligence Heritage and Commemoration Center, which is a non-governmental organization "dedicated to the memory of the fallen of the Israel Intelligence Community." Our visit to the ITIC consisted of three parts: (1) a tour of the memorial dedicated to those who lost their lives while a part of Israel's intelligence community; (2) viewing of a film demonstrating the ways in which the intelligence community operates; and (3) a tour of two rooms with items depicting Palestinian terrorism.

The first part of the tour, conducted in the ITIC's memorial, offered the fellows an overview of Israel's intelligence community—how it is structured and the ways in which it operates—as well as stories of former intelligence missions. Israel's intelligence community consists of 4 main bodies (Mossad, IDF Intelligence Corps, Shin Bet, and Nativ) and, as our guide noted, is unique, when

compared to other states' intelligence agencies, for its focus on rescuing Jews who are abroad. Beyond detailing the successes of Israel's intelligence efforts, such as those carried out by Eli Cohen and Yonatan Netanyahu, our guide also reflected on the importance of Israel's intelligence community to the nation's heritage.

For the second part of the tour, the fellows watched a fictional movie, styled in the mold of FOX's *24*, that portrayed the various components of Israel's intelligence community working together to assess and to counter an impending threat. Although the fictional story itself occupied most of the movie's screening time, the movie ended with its main characters providing a brief but detailed discussion of how intelligence officials in fact carry out their tasks and coordinate their efforts. Following the movie, the fellows were taken to the ITIC's "captured material display," where weapons, posters, documents, and other equipment, recovered from the Palestinian territories, were shown. Our guide, an employee who administers the ITIC's website, took us around the ITIC's two display rooms, pointing out items of interest. She also offered additional information about the ITIC—in particular, its goal of putting out the Israeli government's perspective on terrorism so as to overcome the propaganda that is typically generated.



Following lunch at a Tel Aviv mall, the fellows traveled to the Palmach Museum, part two of the day's tour. The Palmach was the elite striking force of the Haganah, the underground military organization of the Jewish community prior to the creation of the state of Israel. The museum itself is an experiential museum: visitors learn about Palmach by watching a series of fictional short films following the lives of members of a Palmach unit from their initial days of training to their activities during wartime. As such, after receiving a brief overview of the Jewish community's pre-Israel militias (with a particular focus on the Palmach) from a museum guide, visitors were given translation devices and subsequently shepherded into a series of rooms, each of which was designed to match the short film being shown therein. The fellows came away from the museum with a general understanding of Jewish military history in the years prior to the formation of the Israeli state.

Comments/Recommendations: Both sites were immensely beneficial to the fellows and served the broader purposes of the fellowship. The ITIC, on the one hand, provided the fellows with a basic understanding of the bodies forming Israel's intelligence community, of the ways in which these distinct bureaucracies coordinate their actions when assessing threats and making decisions, and—to an extent—of the nature of the terrorist threat that Israel faces. The Palmach Museum, on the other hand, gave fellows a lesson in Israeli military history, detailing the origins and activities of the Palmach and, later, describing the Palmach's eventual transformation into the IDF and its subsequent involvement in the 1948 War. As such, both sites gave fellows an appreciation for the security challengers Israel once faced and still faces today—with particular attention to the bureaucratic and personal dimensions of those challenges—and offered fellows a case study with which to compare events in the U.S.'s own military history.

With that said, there were two clear shortcomings that diluted the full potential of the day's events. Concerning the ITIC, the first and third parts of the visit—tours of the memorial and of the captured terrorism material rooms—were conducted by individuals who lacked a comprehensive understanding of the exhibits on which they were presenting. In the case of the memorial, the guide's knowledge of the basics—in particular, the structure of Israel's intelligence community and key figures who died while serving Israel's intelligence interests—was sufficient, though not comprehensive, to carry out the task. However, in the case of the terrorism material rooms, our



guide seemed to lack any understanding of the materials in the rooms and their actual significance. Throughout our tour of the two captured material rooms, our guide tended toward conflating very different materials into the same narrative, glossing over nuances differentiating terrorist groups, and ignoring the context in which certain materials were produced. Our guide's lack of knowledge on the subject made a tour of otherwise important materials rather pointless. As such, I recommend that future fellows' tours—especially involving those sites where the academic or professional credentials of the guide largely shape the quality of the tour—be accompanied by outside experts whose qualifications permit them to

speak to the subject matter of that particular tour. In the case of the ITIC, for example, a Hebrew University professor, whose field of expertise concerned Islamic movements, would have done a much better job of contextualizing and explaining the significance of the materials found in the ITIC's material rooms. The use of outside experts would have also benefitted our previous visits to the armored corps and air force museums.

Concerning the Palmach Museum, because the contents of the tour dealt with Israeli history prior to the 1948 War, the visit would have been more beneficial to us—as far as providing a context for the later tours and lectures we would ultimately have—if scheduled much earlier in the fellowship calendar, for example in August. Our ASL coordinator was unable to schedule the museum visit earlier in the year because fellows' varying class schedules prevented him from scheduling events during weekdays. Yet, since fellowship activities are of the utmost importance and greatest benefit to fellows during their time in Israel, some priority should be given to them, including over class attendance. As such, the ASL coordinator should be permitted, with permission from the ASL Board and the Rothberg School's Graduate Student Administration, to take fellows on tours or lectures during weekdays, even if doing so requires fellows to receive excused absences from class. This would not be a regular occurrence, but the coordinator should have the authority, as well as the flexibility, to schedule events during weekdays in order to ensure that fellows can indeed visit key sites and do so in a manner that best compliments other ASL events.

XIII. Tour to the South, April 2011

Location: Various locations throughout the Negev

Discussion: Our two-day tour to the South included visits to locations of both military and civilian importance. The first stop was a small restaurant run by a dairy farmers Anat and Daniel Kornmehl. During our meal, Daniel explained that they chose the location for their farm based on a government assistance program to develop and bring residents to the Negev. Their farm produces specialty cheeses and practices sustainable farming. Kornmehl farm is an example of the government's efforts not only to support entrepreneurs and green initiatives, but also illustrates a strategic effort to boost security with a more populated Negev.



From the farm we continued on to Bahad 1, the officers' training school near Mitzpe Ramon. Unlike most other IDF training bases, Bahad 1 does not belong to a single corps; all soldiers train there before becoming officers (except for Air Force crews and Navy shipboard officers). After an introductory lecture, we toured the facilities. The base features several classrooms and dormitories as well as a very large, newly renovated synagogue. Our tour guide described some of the challenging survival exercises the soldiers must complete during their officer training. We were fortunate to tour the base on the graduation day for a class of officers. The base was full of proud friends and family members excited to show their support for the graduates. This was a wonderful opportunity for us to better understand the exceptional role of the IDF in Israeli society.

Next, we visited the Bio Ramon Nature Reserve. Here we learned about the regional fauna. Though not directly related to the IDF, the trip was very interesting and a lot of fun. After the Reserve, we visited an observatory located on Makdesh Ramon. We were greeted by an astronomer who showed us the in-house equipment, including the largest telescope in Israel. He told us that financing for such telescopes typically comes from wealthier nations who in return receive full cooperation from the recipient nation and nearly unfettered access to the equipment. It was very interesting to learn the extent to which Israel, the US and EU countries cooperate when it comes to sharing knowledge and data about space.

We ended the evening with a movie about the cleavages in Israeli society and challenges of new immigrants, "Turn Left at the End of the World." We also watched a documentary about Israeli peace negotiations with Egypt.

The following day we visited the Nahal Training Base. Historically, Nahal soldiers combined regular military activities with some form of public service. Initially, this public service took the form of establishing a new agricultural settlement. Today Nahal soldiers complete all sorts of volunteering and social welfare projects. For their military service, many Nahal soldiers are part of the Nahal Infantry Brigade. At the training base, we heard a detailed lecture from a Nahal Officer about the various units that make up the brigade. We also had the opportunity to talk to a few new soldiers and ask them about themselves and their thoughts about being part of Nahal. This conversation was particularly enlightening as the soldiers were very young and candid. In fact, one of the soldiers was an American Jew who had just finished his undergraduate degree and came to Israel just to serve in the IDF. He provided a very unique perspective on the IDF as well as highlighted the level of dedication and loyalty world Jewry has for Israel.

Our last destination of the trip was Moshav Kadesh Barnea, located less than a kilometer from the Egyptian border, approximately 20 kilometers southeast of Gaza. We were greeted by a moshav resident who started our discussion by pointing out a mountain just across the border. He told us that this mountain is known to be a hotbed of al-Qaeda activity and that Egyptian forces are unable to expel the group. Otherwise he said that living so close to the Egyptian border and Gaza was not at all a nuisance. He and his wife had purposely relocated to the moshav to pursue a quiet life and a small business. After our discussion of security issues, the resident showed us the moshav's agricultural facilities in which they grow cherry tomatoes for export to Europe.

Commentary/ Recommendations: Our trip through the Negev was great. We visited two bases, spoke with several soldiers and discussed security issues with civilians. The Q&A with the Nahal soldiers and the lecture at Bahad 1 were particular highlights. We also learned quite a bit at the observatory, which is



especially relevant given the geo-political and security issues surrounding space programs. The visit to the nature reserve was also fun and we had a lot of laughs. Next year, I would suggest leaving out the movies. We learn much more from trips and lectures, and it was a bit difficult to watch multiple movies at the end of such a long day.