

A Brief Glimpse into the Life of Professor Galia Golan

Last week the Argov fellows had the unique opportunity to hear from Professor Galia Golan about her inspiring life and her impressive academic career.

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Prof. Golan began by telling us that it was not her initial intention to become a professor. In fact, she explained that her family initially was not willing to send her to college, preferring to use what little money they had on her brother's higher education instead. However, her brother had no interest in going to college, choosing instead to pursue his interest in art. With the help of her Uncle, Prof. Golan persuaded her mother to allow her to apply for college, and to her surprise she was accepted to study at Brandeis. At the time, the \$500 tuition at Brandeis was far beyond their family's means, so Prof. Golan applied for various scholarships that allowed her to attend the prestigious school.

After two years at Brandeis, Prof. Golan decided to study abroad in Geneva where she changed her major to Eastern European Studies. She was captivated by the subject and decided to pursue a career in international relations. She applied to take the State Department's Foreign Service Officer Exam, but before she could accept a job with them, she was recruited by the Central Intelligence Agency. While participating in the training program to become a CIA field operative, Prof. Golan's progress was halted due to a delay in her security clearances. She was temporarily assigned as an analyst in the Soviet Union intelligence division. Shortly after this assignment, the Cuban Missile Crisis occurred, and she was thrown headfirst into one of

the most exciting times in the world of U.S intelligence. Even after her security clearances came in, she could not bring herself to leave such an exciting position and retained her job as a CIA analyst.



Prof. Galia Golan

Although, she worked with the CIA for several years, Prof. Golan still had an urge to see the world and chose to spend one of her vacations visiting Israel. Her family was not religious and placed no emphasis on Zionism, however, she felt a connection to the land of Israel. She realized that a short vacation was not nearly enough to satisfy her interest in the country, and so she decided to spend another vacation in Israel. It was on this second trip that she decided to immigrate, and when she returned to America she tendered her resignation to the CIA.

Because of her involvement with the CIA, Prof. Golan was not able to immediately transition into the



Israeli Intelligence Services. Therefore, she decided to pursue a doctorate in the field of Eastern European Studies, and wrote about the current situation in Czechoslovakia. From this she naturally transitioned into the field of academia and taught at Hebrew University for over 30 years. After the end of the cold war, she transitioned her expertise to the field of general conflict studies, but was quick to admit that she deeply misses the Soviet Union. After retiring from her position at Hebrew University, she moved to Herzliya and accepted a job at the IDC. Prof. Golan helped to develop a number of the study tracks and masters programs at the IDC.

Outside of her academic career, Prof. Golan is the mother of four and the grandmother of three. She is also involved in a number of women's advocacy groups as well as peace movements, and was the founder of several organizations such as Peace Now. She discussed with us the importance of finding topics that you are passionate about, and initiating new programs or directives to make up for inadequacies in the status quo. Although we all knew who Professor Golan was due to her role within the school, few of us knew how inspiring her life was and we all felt honored by the opportunity to meet with her.