Issues in Israeli Politics:
A Comparative Perspective

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The major goal of this course is to enable students to look "inside" Israeli politics, making it understandable through the use of comparative tools.

Among the questions that will be addressed are: how does a state come into being? How did the Zionist movement succeed in establishing a strong state? How and why are religious, ethnic and other social cleavages pronounced in Israeli politics? What are the major characteristics of Israeli political institutions? How can we understand the way that decisions are made in the context of an institutional setting that is (or at least was) so different from the US setting (parliamentary vs. presidential regime, proportional representation vs. majoritarian electoral system, unitary vs. federal state)? What happens to a regime that was designed according to the European "Continental" structure when it tries to "Americanize" some of its parts?

These topics and other selected issues in Israeli politics will be analyzed using the comparative approach (historical, one-case and cross-national perspectives). The course will be "comparative" in two senses. First, it will present an analysis of aspects of Israeli politics and government using comparative tools: concepts, theories, models, units of analysis (the single case study approach). It will also analyze the development of these aspects from a historical comparative perspective. Second, the Israeli cases will be compared to other cases.

Lectures proceed from the assumption that all students have read the assigned material.

Grades: There will be a mid-term (25% of the grade) and a take-home exam (75% of the grade) or an optional essay.

Course Textbooks

Asher Arian. <u>Politics in Israel: The Second Republic</u>. 2nd Edition. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 2005.

Michael Barnett (ed.). <u>Israel in Comparative Perspective: Challenging the Conventional Wisdom</u>. Albany: SUNY Press, 1996.

Reuven Hazan and Moshe Maor (eds.). <u>Parties, Elections and Cleavages: Israel in Comparative and Theoretical Perspective</u>. London: Frank Cass, 2000.

1. Introduction: The Israeli Political System

Asher Arian. Politics in Israel: The Second Republic. 2nd Edition. Washington, D.C.:
Congressional Quarterly, 2005.
Ch. 1: Introduction, pp. 1-18.
Ch. 2: People of Israel, pp. 19-47.

(1a) Yitzhak Galnoor. "The Israeli Political System: A Profile," in Keith Kyle & Joel
Peters (eds.), Whither Israel? The Domestic Challenges, London: The Royal Institute
of International Affairs & I.B. Tauris, 1993, pp. 87-102.

2. Historical Origins of the State of Israel

(2a) "Proclamation of Independence"
http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/megilat_eng.htm

(2b) Joel Migdal. "Society-Formation and the Case of Israel," in Michael Barnett
(ed.), Israel in Comparative Perspective: Challenging the Conventional Wisdom.
Albany: SUNY Press, 1996, pp. 173-198.

(2c) Joel Migdal. "The Crystallization of the State and the Struggles over Rulemaking:
Israel in a Comparative Perspective," in Baruch Kimmerling (ed.), The Israeli State
and Society: Boundaries and Frontiers. Albany: SUNY Press, 1989, pp. 1-27.

(2d) Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak. Origins of the Israeli Polity. Chicago: Chicago
University Press, 1978, chapter 8, "The State of Israel and the Political Heritage of the
Yishuv." pp. 186-212.

3. Democracy in Israel

(3a) Sammy Smooha. "Ethnic Democracy: Israel as an Archetype." Israel Studies, vol. 2,
no. 2, 1997, pp. 198-241.

(3b) Alan Dowty. "Is Israel Democratic? Substance and Semantics in the 'Ethnic
Democracy' Debate," Israel Studies, vol. 4, no. 2, 1999, pp. 1-15.

(3c) Asher Arian, Nir Atmor, Yael Hadar. 2006. Auditing Israeli Democracy – 2006
Changes in Israeli's Political Party System: Dealignment or Realignment? Jerusalem:
Israel Democracy Institute, 2006.

(3d) www.freedomhouse.org.

4. A Basic Classification of the Israeli Regime

(4a) Arend Lijphart. "Israeli Democracy and Democratic Reform in Comparative Perspective," in Ehud Sprinzak & Larry Diamond (eds.), <u>Israeli Democracy under Stress</u>. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993, pp. 107-123.

(4b) Peter Medding. "From Government by Party to Government despite Party," in Reuven Hazan and Moshe Maor (eds.), <u>Parties, Elections and Cleavages: Israel in Comparative and Theoretical Perspective</u>. London: Frank Cass, 2000, pp. 172-208.

5. Israeli Society: Social Cleavages in Israel

(5a) Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak. <u>Trouble in Utopia: The Overburdened Polity of Israel</u>. Albany: SUNY Press, 1989, Chapter 2, "Israel as a Multi-Cleavage Society," pp. 32-97.

(5b) Majid Al-Haj. "The Status of Palestinians in Israel: A Double Periphery in an Ethno-National State," in Alan Dowty (ed.), <u>Critical Issues in Israeli Society.</u> Westport: Praeger, 2004, pp. 109-126.

(5c) Alan Dowty. <u>The Jewish State: A Century Later</u>. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, Chapter 7, "The Communal Split," in Alan Dowty (ed.), <u>Critical Issues in Israeli Society.</u> Westport: Praeger, 2004, pp. 143-158.

(5d) Asher Cohen. "Changes in the Orthodox Camp and Their Influence on the Deepening Religious-Secular Schism at the Outset of the Twenty First Century," in Alan Dowty (ed.), <u>Critical Issues in Israeli Society</u>. Westport: Praeger, 2004, pp. 71-94.

(5e) Zvi Gitelman. "The 'Russian Revolution'," in Alan Dowty (ed.), <u>Critical Issues in Israeli Society</u>. Westport: Praeger, 2004, pp. 95-108.

(5f) Arend Lijphart, Peter Bowman and Reuven Hazan. "Party Systems and Issue Dimensions: Israel and Thirty-Five Other Old and New Democracies Compared," in Reuven Hazan and Moshe Maor (eds.), <u>Parties, Elections and Cleavages: Israel in Comparative and Theoretical Perspective</u>. London: Frank Cass, 2000, pp. 29-51.

6. The Executive Branch

Asher Arian. <u>Politics in Israel: The Second Republic</u>. 2nd Edition. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 2005, pp. 264-282.

(6a) "Basic Law: The President of the State"
http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic12_eng.htm

(6b) "Basic Law: The Government"
http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic14_eng.htm

(6c) Reuven Hazan. "The Failure of Presidential Parliamentarism: Constitutional versus Structural Presidentialization in Israel's Parliamentary democracy," in Thomas Poguntke and Paul Webb (eds.), <u>The Presidentialization of Politics.</u> Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. pp. 289-312.

(6d) Avraham Brichta. "The New Premier-Parliamentary System in Israel," <u>The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science</u>, vol. 555, 1998, pp. 180-192.

(6e) Abraham Diskin. "The New Political System of Israel," <u>Government and Opposition</u>, vol. 34, no. 4, pp. 498-515.

(6f) Yitzhak Navon. "Presidency in Israel: Formal Authority and Personal Experience," <u>Israel Affairs</u>, Vol.11, No.2, 2005, pp. 359–375.

7. The Legislative Branch

Asher Arian. <u>Politics in Israel: The Second Republic</u>. 2nd Edition. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 2005, pp. 282-298.

(7a) "Basic Law: The Knesset"
http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic2_eng.htm

(7b) Naomi Chazan. "The Knesset," <u>Israel Affairs</u>, vol. 11, no. 2, 2005, pp. 392-416.

8. The Judicial Branch and the Constitutional Setting

Asher Arian. <u>Politics in Israel: The Second Republic</u>. 2nd Edition. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 2005, pp. 298-312.

(8a) "Basic Law: The Judiciary"
http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic8_eng.htm

(8b) "Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty"
http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic3_eng.htm

(8c) "Basic Law: Freedom of Occupation"
http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic4_eng.htm

(8d) "The Existing Basic Laws: Summary"

http://www.knesset.gov.il/description/eng/eng_mimshal_yesod2.htm

(8e) Emanuel Gutmann. "Israel: Democracy without a Constitution," in Vernon Bogdanor (ed.), <u>Constitutions in Democratic Politics</u>. Aldershot: Gower, 1988, pp. 290-308.

(8f) Martin Edelman. "Israel," in C. Neal Tate & Torbjorn Vallinder (eds.), <u>The Global Expansion of Judicial Power</u>. New York: New York University Press, 1995, pp. 403-415.

(8g) Menachem Hofnung. "The Unintended Consequences of Unplanned Constitutional Reform: Constitutional Politics in Israel, <u>The American Journal of Comparative Law</u>, vol. 44, 1996, pp, 585-604.

(8h) Aharon Barak. "The Role of the [Israeli] Supreme Court in a Democracy," <u>Israel Studies</u>, vol. 3, no. 2, 1998, pp. 6-28.

(8i) Dan Avnon. "The Israeli Basic Laws' (Potentially) Fatal Flaw," <u>Israel Law Review</u>, vol. 32, no. 4, 1998, pp. 535-566.

(8j) Oren Soffer. "Judicial Review of Legislation in Israel: Problems and Implications of Possible Reform," <u>Israel Affairs</u>, Vol.12, No.2, 2006, pp.307–329.

9. The Electoral System and Electoral/Government System Reform

Asher Arian. <u>Politics in Israel: The Second Republic</u>. 2nd Edition. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 2005.
Ch. 7: "The Electoral System," pp. 202-232.

(9a) Gideon Rahat and Reuven Y. Hazan. "Israel: The Politics of an Extreme Electoral System," in Michael Gallagher and Paul Mitchell (eds.), <u>The Politics of Electoral Systems</u>. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2005, pp. 333-351.

(9b) Avraham Brichta. <u>Political Reform in Israel.</u> Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2001, pp. 1-13.

(9c) Gideon Rahat. "The Politics of Reform in Israel: How the Israeli Mixed System Came to Be," in Matthew S. Shugart and Martin P. Wattenberg (eds.), <u>Mixed-Member Electoral Systems: The Best of Both Worlds?</u> Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 123-151.

(9d) Ofer Kenig, Gideon Rahat and Reuven Hazan. "The Political Consequences of the Introduction and the Repeal of the Direct Elections for the Prime Minister," in Asher Arian and Michal Shamir (eds.), <u>The Elections in Israel 2003</u>. New York: Transaction Books, 2005, pp. 33-61.

10. Political Parties and Party System

Asher Arian. Politics in Israel: The Second Republic. 2nd Edition. Washington, D.C.:
    Congressional Quarterly, 2005.
Ch. 5: Political Parties, pp. 117-165.
Ch. 6: Party Organization, pp. 166-201.

(10a) Yitzhak Galnoor. Steering the Polity. London: Sage, 1982, Chapter 5, "Channels:
    The Political Parties," pp. 159-188.

(10b) Reuven Hazan. "Party System Change in Israel, 1948-1998: A Conceptual
    and Theoretical Border-Stretching of Europe?" In Paul Pennings and Jan-Erik
    Lane (eds.), Comparing Party System Change. London: Routledge, 1998, pp.
    151-166.

11. Civil Society and Interest Groups

Asher Arian. Politics in Israel: The Second Republic. 2nd Edition. Washington,
    D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 2005.
Ch. 10: "Interest Groups and Public Policy," pp. 313-363.

(11a) Yael Yishai. "Civil Society in Transition: Interest Politics in Israel," The Annals of
    the American Academy of Political and Social Science, vol. 555, 1998, pp. 147-162.

(11b) Yair Zalmanovitch. "Transitions in Israel's Policymaking Network," The Annals of
    the American Academy, vol. 555, 1998, pp. 193-208.

(11c) Yael Yishai. "Interest Politics in a Comparative Perspective: The (ir)regularity of
    the Israeli Case," Israel Affairs, vol. 5, no. 2, 1999, pp. 73-86.

(11d) Gabriel Sheffer. "Is the Jewish Diaspora Unique? Reflections on the Diaspora's
    Current Situation" Israel Studies, Volume 10, Number 1, 2005. pp. 1-35.

(11e) William Safran. "The Jewish Diaspora in a Comparative and Theoretical
    Perspective," Israel Studies, Volume 10, Number 1, 2005, pp. 36-60.

12. Political Culture and Electoral Behavior

Asher Arian. Politics in Israel: The Second Republic. 2nd Edition. Washington,
    D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 2005.
Chapter 8, "Electoral Behavior," pp. 233-262.
Chapter 12, "Aspects of Political Culture," pp. 413-447.

(12a) Uri Ram. "Citizens, Consumers and Believers: the Israeli Public Sphere Between
    Capitalism and Fundamentalism," Israel Studies, vol. 3, no 1, 1998, pp. 24-44.

(12b) Michal Shamir and Asher Arian. "Collective Identity and Electoral Competition in
    Israel," American Political Science Review, vol. 93, no. 2, 1999, pp. 265-277.

13. Religion and Politics

(13a) Benyamin Neuberger. "Religion and State in Europe and Israel," in Reuven Hazan
    and Moshe Maor (eds.), Parties, Elections and Cleavages: Israel in Comparative and
    Theoretical Perspective. London: Frank Cass, 2000, pp. 65-84.

(13b) Eliezer Don-Yehiya. "Conflict Management of Religious Issues: The Israeli Case
    in a Comparative Perspective," in Reuven Hazan and Moshe Maor (eds.), Parties,
    Elections and Cleavages: Israel in Comparative and Theoretical Perspective. London:
    Frank Cass, 2000, pp. 85-108.

(13c) Reuven Hazan."Religion and Politics in Israel: The Rise and Fall of the
    Consociational Model," in Reuven Hazan and Moshe Maor (eds.), Parties, Elections
    and Cleavages: Israel in Comparative and Theoretical Perspective. London: Frank
    Cass, 2000, pp. 109-137.

14. Gender Politics

(14a) Gershon Shafir and Yoav Peled. Being Israeli. Cambridge: Cambridge
    University Press, 2002, pp. 95-109.

(14b) Yael Yishai. Between the Flag and the Banner. New York: SUNY, Chapter 4,
    "Political Participation: Women in the Party-State," and Chapter 9, "Conclusion:
    From Integration to Mobilization?," 1997, pp. 91-117, 231-251.

(14c) Hanna Herzog. "Homefront and Battlefront: The Status of Jewish and Palestinian
    Women in Israel," Israel Studies, vol. 3, no. 1, 1998, pp. 61-84.

(14d) Frances Raday. "Women's Human Rights: Dichotomy between Religion and
    Secularism in Israel" Israel Affairs, Volume 11, Number 1, 2005. 78–94.

15. Are Israeli Politics and Society Comparable or Unique?

(15a) Michael Barnett. "The Politics of Uniqueness: The Status of the Israeli Case," in Michael Barnett (ed.), <u>Israel in Comparative Perspective: Challenging the Conventional Wisdom</u>. Albany: SUNY Press, 1996, pp. 3-28.

(15b) Yehezkel Dror. "On the Uniqueness of Israel: Multiple Readings;" in Michael Barnett (ed.), <u>Israel in Comparative Perspective: Challenging the Conventional Wisdom</u>. Albany: SUNY Press, 1996, pp. 245-261.

(15c) Ira Sharkansky. "The Promised Land of the Chosen People Is Not All that Distinctive: On the Value of Comparison," in David Levi-Faur, Gabriel Sheffer and David Vogel (eds.), <u>Israel: Dynamics of Change and Continuity</u>. London: Frank Cass, 1999, pp. 279-292.