Tufts University

Fall 2010

Tues./Thurs. 10:30-11:45

Block

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Office Hours:

Tues./Thurs., 12:00-1:00

Packard Hall 307

PS 138-08

The Israeli Political System:

A Guide to the Perplexed

Course Description:

Although Israel is a prominent actor on the international stage, its political system is a labyrinth in which not many can find their way. This course will introduce the students to Israel's political system: its institutional and constitutional framework, the electoral system and various patterns of political participation. During the course we will also examine the way the Israeli political system reflects the structure and dynamic of the Israeli society. By becoming familiar with the inner forces of domestic politics in Israel, we will be able to analyze the challenges which the Israeli political system faces and its unresolved major dilemmas: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the relations between the " Jewishness" of the state and its democratic aspects.

Grades

Grades will be determined as follows:

a) 20% Midterm exam (in class)

b) 40% Final exam (in class)

c) 30% Two presentations in class (hand in an outline).

d) 10% Attendance and participation in class

a) The midterm exam will be held in class on March, 17. It will have two parts: multiple choice questions and definition of concepts. (grades scale 1-20)

b) The final exam will be held on the last class April, 28 in class. The exam will have two parts. The first part: open questions (choose 2 of three). Part 2: six concepts to define.

c) During the term you will need to present two papers in class (about 25 min., you can do that in pairs). The subjects for the presentations appear in the appendix. The dates for the presentations are: first presentation: February, 17, 22. Second presentation: April, 12, 14. You need to hand in outline of your presentations.

d) See Attendance and Participation below.

Final Grades Scale
All assignments (written, oral, exams) will be given a numerical grade on the following scale:

A+	96-100					
A	93-95	B-	80-82	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	C+	77-79	D	63-66
B+	87-89	C	73-76	D-	60-62
B	83-86	C-	70-72	F	59 and below

Attendance and Participation in Class

Attendance: Regular attendance and timeliness are important. more than two absences (without proper excuse) will affect your participation grade, and absence from more than a third of the classes will automatically result in a failing grade. Students arriving late will generally be counted as absent.

 Participation: Participation in class discussions is welcomed and expected. Reading assignments for each class is obligatory and it will also enhance and improve the quality of your participation. *Participating in class can only improve your grade and it will not harm it in anyway*.

Students are encouraged to keep up on current events relating to Israel. If you wish you can present in class a current event that is connected to the class subjects. I recommend reading an Israeli newspaper for ideas (www.haaretz.com or www.jpost.com or www.ynetnews.com) as well as an American one such as the NY Times or the Washington Post.

Honesty

The university's policy on academic honesty will be strictly adhered to. *For more information on plagiarism and the proper citing of sources, see:*

http://uss.tufts.edu/arc/writingresources/plagiarism.asp

Useful links:

*The Israeli Parliament (the Knesset) website: www.knesset.gov.il
   Where you can find, for example, a lexicon of terms:
   http://www.knesset.gov.il/lexicon/eng/cindex_eng.htm

*The Israeli Democracy Institute:
        http://www.idi.org.il/SITES/ENGLISH/Pages/homepage.aspx

        Where you can find: The Israeli Democracy Index (2003-2009)
        http://www.idi.org.il/sites/english/ResearchAndPrograms/The%20Israeli%20Democracy%20Index/Pages/TheIsraeliDemocracyIndex.aspx

*Jewish Virtual Library: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/index.html

  "Israel Studies: An Anthology"
http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/isdf/text/anthologycvr.html

        You can also find in the site a glossary:
        http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/gloss.html

- Course Text Book (Available in the bookstore):

Mahler, Gregory S. (2004). Politics and Government in Israel: The Maturation of a Modern State. Lanham, MD: Roman and Littlefield.

PART I: Foundations: The Pre-state period

(Jan 20/25/27)

General historical background
Zionism
The legacy of the "Yishuv"

- Mahler, Gregory S. (2004). *Politics and Government in Israel: The Maturation of a Modern State*. Lanham, MD: Roman and Littlefield, pp. 13-52.

- Theodor, Herzl, *The Jewish State* (1896), ch. 1, ch. 2

http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Zionism/herzl2.html

- Israel's Declaration of independence: http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/megilat_eng.htm

PART II: Institutions Matter

(Feb, 1)

Parliamentary systems and consensus Democracy: an Introduction

- Lijphart, Arend (Ed.) (1999). *Patterns of Democracy. Yale University Press,* pp. 1-8, 116-129.
- Lijphart, Arend. (1994). Democracies: Forms, performance and constitutional engineering**.** *European Journal of Political Research*, 25, pp. 1-17.

  http://ipw-hsg.spsr.ch/caramani/Lijphart%20(1994).pdf

The Israeli Parliament and Coalition Government

(Feb, 1/3/8)

- Lijphart, Arend (Ed.) (1999). *Patterns of Democracy. Yale University Press*, pp. 90-106.
- Nachmias, David (2009). "National Government Institutions". *Israel Studies: An Anthology* (Mitchell G. Bard and David Nachmias (Eds). Jewish Virtual

Library Publications. http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/isdf/text/nachmias.html

- Mahler (2004), pp. 132-169.

- Chazan, Naomi (2005). "The Knesset." *Israel Affairs,* 11(2), pp. 392-416.

- Douglas M Stinnett. (2007). International Uncertainty, Foreign Policy Flexibility, and Surplus Majority Coalitions in Israel. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 51(3), 470-495.

The Electoral system

(Feb, 10)

- Mahler (2004). 193-219.
- Hazan, Reuven Y. (1996). "Presidential-Parliamentarism: Direct Popular Election of the Prime Minister, Israel's New Electoral and Political System", *Electoral Studies*, 15 (1), pp. 21-37.
- Kenig, Ofer, Rahat Gideon and Hazan, Reuven Y. (2005). "The Political Consequences of the Introduction and the Repeal of the Direct Elections for the Prime Minister", in Asher Arian and Michal Shamir (eds.) *The Elections in Israel 2003*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, pp. 33-61.

The Political Parties

(Feb, 15)

- Mahler (2004), pp. 171-191.
- Arend Lijphart, Peter J. Bowman and Reuven Y. Hazan (2000). "Party Systems and Issue Dimensions: Israel and 35 Other Old and New Democracies Compared", in Reuven Y. Hazan and Moshe Maor (eds.), *Parties, Elections and Cleavages: Israel in Comparative and Theoretical Perspective.* London: Frank Cass, pp. 29-51.
- *Gideon Rahat, Reuven Y. Hazan and Richard S. Katz (2008).* Democracy and Political Parties: On the Uneasy Relationships between Participation, Competition and Representation. *Party Politics*, 14 (6), 663-683.

The Current "political landscape"

(Feb, 17)

Gideon Rahat and Reuven Y. Hazan (2009). "One Winner, Two Winners, No Winners: The 2009 Elections in Israel", R**epresentation**, Vol. 45 (4), pp. 405-420.

Reuven Y. Hazan and Abraham Diskin (2009). "The Parliamentary Election in Israel, February 2009", **Electoral Studies**, Vol. 28 (4), pp. 654-657.

Taub, Gadi (2009). Israeli Labor's Sad Decline and Uncertain Fate." *Dissent*, 56 (4), pp. 23-27.

(Presentations: Parties – Feb 17, Feb 22)

*Note: Feb, 24 – No class

The Judicial and the constitutional framework

(March, 1)

- Mahler (2004), pp. 117-135.
- Rubinstein, Amnon. "Israel's Partial Constitution: The Basic Laws." *Israel Studies: An Anthology* (Mitchell G. Bard and David Nachmias (Eds). Jewish Virtual Library Publications. http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/isdf/text/Rubinstein.html
- Gavison, Ruth (2003)."Constitutions and Political Reconstructions: Israel's Quest for a Constitution." *International Sociology*, 18 (1), pp. 53-70.

Political participation
(March, 3)

- Herman, Tamar (1996). "Do They Have a Chance? Protest and Political Structure of Opportunities in Israel." *Israel Studies*, 1 (1), pp. 144-170.
- Herman, Tamar. (2010). The Emergence of Antipolitical Sentiment in Israel. http://www.idi.org.il/sites/english/ResearchAndProgr

PART III: Society

The cleavages in the Israeli society:
(March, 8, March, 10; March, 15)

- Mahler (2004), pp. 85-114.
- Ben-Porat, Guy (2009). Multicultural Realities. *Israel Studies: An Anthology* (Mitchell G. Bard and David Nachmias (Eds). Jewish Virtual Library Publications.
  http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/isdf/text/benporat.html
- Ya'ar, Ephraim. (2005). Continuity and Change in Israeli Society: The Test of The Melting Pot." *Israel Studies,* 10(2), 91-128. http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v010/10.2yaar.pdf
- Sharkansky, Ira (2004). "A critical look at Israel's economic and social gaps." In: Dowty, Alan (Ed.). *Critical Issues in Israeli Society.* Westport, CT: Praeger, pp. 129-150.
- Cohen, Asher (2004). "Changes in the orthodox camp and their influence on the deepening Religious-Secular schism at the outset ot the twenty-first century." In: Dowty, Alan (Ed.). *Critical Issues in Israeli Society.* Westport, CT: Praeger, pp. 73-94.
- Gitelman, Zvi (2004). "The 'Russian Revolution' in Israel." In: Dowty, Alan (Ed.). *Critical Issues in Israeli Society.* Westport, CT: Praeger, pp. 95-108.

The politics of the cleavages:

- Arian, Asher and Michal Shamir (2008). A Decade Later, the World Had Changed, the Cleavage Structure Remained: *Israel* 1996-2006. *Party Politics*, 14(6), 685-705.

Mid-Term Exam (in Class) - March, 17

The Arab Minority in Israel:

(March, 29)

- Rekhess, Elie (2007). "The Evolvement of an Arab-Palestinian National Minority in Israel", *Israel Studies*, Vol. 12 (3), pp. 1-28. http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v012/12.3rekhess.pdf
- Ghanem, Asad (2001). *The Palestinian-Arab Minority in Israel, 1948-2000: A Political Study.* Albany : State University of New York Press, pp. 1-30, 157-174.

PART IV: Unsolved policy issues

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict from IsraeI's domestic politics point of view
(March, 31, April, 5)

- Mahler (2004), pp. 251-366.
- Dowty, Alan (2005). *Israel/Palestine* . Cambridge, UK: Polity, pp. 105-216. (*)
- Gazit, Shlomo (1998). "Israel and the Palestinians: Fifty years of wars and turning points." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 555, pp. 82-96.
- Golan, Galia (2009). "The Peace Process." *Israel Studies: An Anthology*, Mitchell G. Bard and David Nachmias (Eds.), http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/isdf/text/golan.html
- Waxman, Dov (2008), "From Controversy to Consensus: Cultural Conflict and the Israeli Debate over Territorial Withdrawal", *Israel Studies*, 13 (2), pp. 73-96. http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v013/13.2.waxman.pdf

Note: April, 7 – No Class

(Presentations: April, 12, April, 14)

A Jewish and/or Democratic state

(April 19, April, 21)

- Barak, Aharon (2009). The Values of the State of Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State. *Israel Studies: An Anthology* (Mitchell G. Bard and David Nachmias (Eds). Jewish Virtual Library Publications.
  http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/isdf/text/barak.html
- Smooha, Sammy (1997). "Ethnic Democracy: Israel as an Archetype", *Israel Studies*, 2 (2), pp. 198-241.
  http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v002/2.2smooha.pdf
- Dowty, Alan (1999). "Is Israel Democratic? Substance and Semantics in the Ethnic Democracy Debate", *Israel Studies*, 4 (2).
  http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v004/4.2dowty.pdf
- Gavison, Ruth (1999). "Jewish and Democratic? A Rejoinder to the "Ethnic Democracy" Debate", *Israel Studies*, 4 (1), 1999.
  http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v004/4.1gavison.html

Summary
(April 26)

Final Exam
(April, 28)

Appendix: Subjects for presentations

First Presentation (Feb, 17,22): You need to choose one current party in the Knesset. Describe its historical background and its stand on the Israeli political parties map. You need to describe the party platform and its role in the current political landscape.

Second presentation (April 12, 14): You need to choose an event related to the Israeli-Arab/Palestinian conflict and analyze it from Israel's domestic political point of view (who were the leaders, who were the parties in the coalition, opposition, the parties stand, public opinion, results and effects on Israel's political system and society, etc.)