

**Poli Sci 179 (67570)**  
**Israeli Politics in Comparative Perspective**  
**TUE THU 9:30 am – 10:50 am PSCB 120**  
**(Physical Sciences Classroom Building, room 120)**  
**Prof. Menachem Hofnung**

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**Office Hours: Thu. 3:30-5:00 or by appointment**

Israel is one of only a few countries that appear frequently in the global media, and is regularly covered by most of the US print and electronic media, yet, its political system and social structure are often poorly understood.

This course provides a comparative overview of Modern Israeli Democracy, Society and Politics. It consists of three major units: An introductory unit designed to provide the basic concepts, theory and complex understanding of studying Israel in a comparative perspective. The second part looks at the institutions and practices of Israeli politics. The third part, discusses critical issues in contemporary Israel: cleavages, ideologies and identity politics.

**Student Requirements and Participation:**

The syllabus, paper guidelines, and other handouts are all available from the class website. Announcements will be posted to the website; it should be your first port of call if you're unsure about what's happening when and where. You have two ways to contact me:

The course is built on lectures and active discussion. Discussion is a large part of the course. Students will be expected to come to class having completed the readings for that day and be prepared to discuss them. Participation is an important part of the grade. Participation means both attending and participating actively.

E-mail: I will generally respond within 48 hours to e-mails that I receive Mondays through Fridays. Often my response will come in less than twenty-four hours, but I do not guarantee it. E-mails that I receive over the weekend will be answered on Monday.

**Readings**

All readings are available on the net.

**While this syllabus provides a detailed outline of our weekly topics and readings, I reserve the right to make changes as your particular interests and issues arise in the course of our study.**

The students might be interested in current events in Israel, for which the English version of *Haaretz* daily is a good source: <http://www.haaretz.com/>

Another good online source for information about Israel is:

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/index.html>

### **Grade Distribution**

15% Active participation

25% Mid-semester Exam

60% Final exam

### **Mid-Semester Exam**

The mid-semester exam will be made up of combination of identification, multiple-choice, and true/false questions. They may or may not include essay questions.

### **Final Exam**

Take home exam.

## **Class Schedule**

### **Introduction: Is Israeli Comparable or Unique? (Jan 4, 2011)**

Michael Barnett, "The Politics of Uniqueness: The Status of the Israeli Case." In Michael Barnett (ed.) *Israel in Comparative Perspective: Challenging the Conventional Wisdom*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1996, pp. 3-25.

[Available at class website.](#)

"Proclamation of Independence"

[http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/megilat\\_eng.htm](http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/megilat_eng.htm)

### **Suggested reading:**

Alexander Yakobson (2008). "Jewish Peoplehood and the Jewish State, How Unique? – A Comparative Survey". *Israel Studies* 13(2), pp. 1-27. Available at:

[http://muse.jhu.edu/login?uri=/journals/israel\\_studies/v013/13.2.yakobson.pdf](http://muse.jhu.edu/login?uri=/journals/israel_studies/v013/13.2.yakobson.pdf)

### **Zionism, and Political Environment (Jan. 6).**

Gregory S. Mahler. *Politics and Government in Israel: The Maturation of a Modern State*. Lanham, MD: Roman and Littlefield, 2004, pp. 34-44; 53-78.

[Available at class website.](#)

### **Cleavages in Israeli society (Jan 11)**

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 Dowty Alan (ed.) (2004) *Critical Issues in Israeli Politics*, Westport Connecticut And London: Praeger. Pp. 71-94;

[Class Website](#)

Majid Al Haj (2004) The Status of The Palestinians in Israel: A Double Periphery in an Ethnic National State, pp. 107-126 in Dowty, Alan (Ed.), *Critical Issues in Israeli Politics*, Westport Connecticut and :London, Praeger.

[Class Website](#)

**Suggested Readings:**

Zvi Gitelman (2004) "The Russian Revolution in Israel", pp 95-108 in Dowty Alan (ed.) *Critical Issues in Israeli Politics*, Westport Connecticut and London: Praeger,

**Political Institutions (Jan. 13)**

Gregory S. Mahler (2004). *Politics and Government in Israel: The Maturation of a Modern State*. Lanham, MD: Roman and Littlefield, pp. 117-126; 141-165.

**[Class Website](#)****The Party System (Jan 18)**

Giovanni Sartori, (2000). "The Party Effects of Electoral Systems" in Reuven Y. Hazan and Moshe Maor (eds.) *Parties, Elections and Cleavages: Israel in Comparative and Theoretical Perspective*. London: Frank Cass. Also available at *Israel Affairs* 6(2), 13-28.

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~db=all~content=g777095805>

Arend Lijphart, Peter Bowman and Reuven Y. Hazan (2000). "Party Systems and Issue Dimensions: Israel and Thirty-Five Other Old and New Democracies Compared" in Hazan and Maor (eds.) *Parties, Elections and Cleavages: Israel in Comparative and Theoretical Perspective*. Also available at *Israel Affairs* 6(2), pp. 29-50.

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~db=all~content=g777095805>

**The Shaping of Electoral Preferences (Jan. 20)**

Berrebi Claude and Klor Esteban (2008). "Are Voters Sensitive to Terrorism? Direct Evidence from the Israeli Electorate". *American Political Science Review*, 102 (3), pp. 279-301.

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayFulltext?type=1&fid=2300120&jid=PSR&volumeId=102&issueId=03&aid=2300112&bodyId=&membershipNumber=&societyETOCSession=>

**Models of Judicial Review and the Israeli Judiciary (Jan. 25)**

Ran Hirschl (2000). "The Struggle for Hegemony: Understanding Judicial Empowerment Through Constitutionalization in Culturally Divided Polities." 36 *Stanford Journal of International Law*. 73-123.

[Available through Lexisnexis on campus computers.](#)

**Civil Military Relations (Jan. 27)**

Yagil Levy, Edna Lomsky-Feder, Noa Harel (2007). "Obligatory Militarism" to "Contractual Militarism"—Competing Models of Citizenship". *Israel Studies* 12(1) pp. 127–148.

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel\\_studies/v012/12.1levy.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v012/12.1levy.html)

**State and Religion (Feb 1)**

Benjamin Neuberger (1999), "Religion and State in Europe and Israel", *Israel Affairs* 6(2) pp. 65-84.

<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?hid=12&sid=3ba2357b-38b6-4740-876f-cd25e07de37f%40sessionmgr15&vid=3>

Cohen Asher and Susser Bernard (1996), "From Accommodation to Decision: Transformations in Israel's Religio-Political Life", *Journal of Church and State*. 38(4), pp. 817-839.

<http://jcs.oxfordjournals.org/content/38/4/817.full.pdf+html>

### **Suggested**

Jonathan Fox (2006). "World Separation of Religion and State Into the 21st Century". *Comparative Political Studies*, 39(5) pp. 537-569.

<http://cps.sagepub.com/content/39/5/537.abstract>

### **Immigration and absorption of non-Jewish immigrants (Feb. 3)**

Alexander Yakobson (2010). Joining the Jewish People: Non-Jewish Immigrants from the former USSR." *Israel Law Review*, Vol. 43: 218-239.

<http://law.huji.ac.il/upload/Yakobson.pdf>

### **Israel Diaspora Relations (Feb 8)**

#### **Midterm Exam (30 minutes)**

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

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel\\_studies/v010/10.1sheffer02.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v010/10.1sheffer02.html)

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

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel\\_studies/v010/10.1safran.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v010/10.1safran.html)

### **The Israeli Palestinians: "Us" or "Them?" (Feb 10)**

Sammy Smooha (1990). "Minority Status in an Ethnic Democracy: The Status of the Arab Minority in Israel," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 13(3) pp. 389-413.

<http://soc.haifa.ac.il/~s.smooha/download/MinorityStatusEthnicDemocracy.pdf>

Rouhana, Nadim 1998 "Israel and its Arab citizens: predicaments in the relationship between ethnic states and ethnonational minorities" *Third World Quarterly* Vol.19, No.2 pp. 277-296 JSTOR

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~db=all~content=a713700736~frm=titlelink>

### **Suggested Reading**

Yoav Peled (1992). "Ethnic Democracy and the Legal Construction of Citizenship: Arab Citizens of the Jewish State," *American Political Science Review* 86(2), pp. 432-443.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/1964231.pdf?acceptTC=true>

### **The Politics of Moving Borders (Feb 15)**

Lustick Ian (2001) "Conclusion: Right-Sizing and the alignment of States and Collective Identities", in Brendan O'Leary, Ian Lustick, Thomas M. Callaghy (Eds), *Right-sizing the state: the politics of moving borders*. NY: Oxford University Press, pp 389-405. **Class Website**

As'ad Ghanem (2009). "One Country to Two Peoples or a Bi-National State Solution: The Bi-National State Solution." *Israel Studies* 14(2): 120–133.

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel\\_studies/v014/14.2.ghanem.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v014/14.2.ghanem.html)

### **Israeli Citizenship and Identity Politics (Feb 17)**

Joel Migdal (2006). "Whose state it is Anyway?" *Israel Studies Forum* 21(2) pp. 3-27.

<http://berghahn.publisher.ingentaconnect.com/content/berghahn/isf/2006/00000021/00000002/art00001>

### **Colonialism, Orientalism and Zionism ((Feb 22)**

Jeremy Forman and Alexandre (Sandy) Kedar, "Colonialism, Colonization and Land Law in Mandate Palestine: The Zor al-Zarqa / Barrat Qisarya Land Disputes in Historical Perspective, *Theoretical Inquiries in Law* 4 (2003): 491-539.

Available through Lexisnexis on campus computers.

Ran Aharonson (1996) "Settlement in Eretz Israel — A Colonialist Enterprise? Critical Scholarship and Historical Geography," *Israel Studies* 1, 214-229.

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel\\_studies/v001/1.2aaronsohn.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v001/1.2aaronsohn.html)

### **The "Post-Zionist," discourse (Feb 24)**

Aronson, Shlomo (2003), "The Post-Zionist Discourse and Critique of Israel: A Traditional Zionist Perspective". *Israel Studies* 8, pp 105-129.

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel\\_studies/v008/8.1aronson.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v008/8.1aronson.html)

Moshe Lissak (1996), "Critical' Sociology and 'Establishment' Sociology n the Israeli Academic Community: Ideological Struggles or Academic Discourse?" *Israel Studies*, pp. 247-294.

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel\\_studies/v001/1.1lissak.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v001/1.1lissak.html)

Michael Shalev(1996), "Time for Theory: Critical Notes on Lissak and Sternhell," *Israel Studies* 1, pp. 170-177.

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel\\_studies/v001/1.2shalev.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v001/1.2shalev.html)

### **Israel in Comparative Governance Indicators (Mar 1)**

Kaufmann, Daniel 2007. *Who Is Afraid of Data on Governance & Corruption?: Inconvenient Facts for Statisticians, Academics, & Politicians*. Public Lecture at the Central Bureau of Statistics, Jerusalem, Israel, July 1st, 2007 (selected parts). (Class Website)

### **Democracy in the Middle-East: Challenges Ahead (Mar 3)**

Sammy Smooha (1997). "Ethnic Democracy: Israel as an Archetype." *Israel Studies*, 2(2), pp. 198-241.

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel\\_studies/v002/2.2smooha.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v002/2.2smooha.html)

Alan Dowty (1999). "Is Israel Democratic? Substance and Semantics in the Ethnic Democracy Debate," *Israel Studies* 4(2), pp. 1-15.

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel\\_studies/v004/4.2dowty.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v004/4.2dowty.html)

## **Threats and Opportunities (Mar 8)**

Diskin Abraham, Hanna Diskin, Reuven Y. Hazan (2005). "Why Democracies Collapse: The Reasons for Democratic Failure and Success". *International Political Science Review* 26(3), 291–309.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/30039034.pdf?acceptTC=true>

## **Conclusion and wrap up (Mar 10)**

## **Helpful links**

### **Academic Journals**

**Israel Affairs (table of contents: back issues)**

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~db=all~content=t713677360~tab=issueslist>

**Israel Studies (all issues)**

<http://inscribe.iupress.org/loi/isr>

**Israel Studies Forum (table of contents: back issues)**

<http://berghahn.publisher.ingentaconnect.com/content/berghahn/isf>

**The 2009 Elections**

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~db=all~content=g918953511~tab=toc~order=page>

**Israel studies- an ethnology**

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/isdf/text/anthologytoc.html?246,171>

**Israeli Daily newspapers in English**

[www.haaretz.com](http://www.haaretz.com)

[www.jpost.com](http://www.jpost.com)

[www.ynetnews.com](http://www.ynetnews.com)