

School: Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy & Strategy B.A

Israeli Politics And Society

Lecturer:

Dr. Chaim B. Weizmann wchaim@idc.ac.il

Tutors:

Mr. Ori Barzel ori.barzel@idc.ac.il

Teaching Assistant:

Mr. Ori Barzel ori.barzel@idc.ac.il

Ms. Keren Guttman keren.guttman@post.idc.ac.il

Course No.:	Course Type :	Weekly Hours :	Credit:
871	Lecture	3	4

Course Requirements :	Group Code :	Language:
Final Paper	212087101	English

Course Description

This course will address central issues in Israeli politics and society. We will study Israel's political system, its origins, its formal and informal structure, institutions and the way it functions. We will discuss main issues and critical rifts in Israeli society.

First, we will deal with politics, highlighting Israeli parties, the electoral system and state institutions, political leadership, political elite and political behavior. During the second part of the course, we will review Israeli society, while analyzing various dimensions of Israel's most crucial rifts, such as socio-economic, ethnic, national, ideological, religious, and gender. We will discuss COVID-19 and its impact on Israeli society and its cleavages. Finally, we will examine future challenges facing Israeli society and politics.

Throughout the course, we will focus on public policy and its impact on Israeli society, emphasizing government behavior in dealing with the Corona pandemic: How it was influenced by the cleaved Israeli society and how this policy, in turn, affected the Israeli society. while asking ourselves - is Israeli society in crisis and if so, what should and can be done to deal with the problems and improve the situation?

Course Goals

-

Grading

Course Structure and Student Requirements:

- Lectures, discussions and case studies in class/by ZOOM
- Attendance and active participation in class/by ZOOM
- Recitations

- Readings

Course Grade:

- In-course assignments = 20% (10+5+5);
- Final paper = 80%.

- Specific details and instructions will follow.

 **Lecturer Office Hours**

By appointment.

 **Tutor Office Hours**

By appointment.

 **Reading List**

Required textbooks:

Arian, Asher. 2005. *Politics in Israel: The Second Republic*, 2nd ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Reuven Y. Hazan, Alan Dowty, Menachem Hofnung, and Gideon Rahat (Eds.) 2018. *The Oxford Handbook of Israeli Politics and Society*. New York: Oxford University Press (*selected chapters*).

Shapira, Anita. 2012. *Israel: A History*, Waltham, MA: Brandies University Press.

(Highly) Recommended readings:

Arian, Asher, David Nachmias, and Ruth Amir. 2002. *Executive Governance in Israel*, New York: Palgrave in association with International Political Science Association.

Beilin, Yossi. 1992. *Israel: a Concise Political History*, New York: St. Martin's Press.

Barnett, Michael N. 1996. The Politics of Uniqueness: The Status of the Israeli Case, in Michael Barnett, ed. *Israel in Comparative Perspective: Challenging the Conventional Wisdom*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Dowty, Alan. 1998. *The Jewish State: A Century Later*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Garfinkel, Adam. 2000. *Politics and Society in Modern Israel*, 2nd ed. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

Horowitz, Dan, and Moshe Lissak. 1989. *Trouble in Utopia: The Overburdened Polity of Israel*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Peretz, Don, and Gideon Doron. 1997. *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 3rd ed. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Introduction to the introduction (Required reading prior to first meeting):

Shapira, Anita. 2018. Political History of Israel, in *The Oxford Handbook of Israeli Politics and Society*.

* As you all know, our first meeting will take place on Thursday, October 29, 2020. This day is the official 25th **Yitzhak Rabin Memorial Day** and we will dedicate time to it. Please, towards our first meeting, also read about Yitzhak Rabin's life and work here:

<http://www.rabincenter.org.il/Web/En/LifeWork/Default.aspx> (you can skim through it).

Week 1 (Oct. 29, 2020)

Course Overview and Introduction + Review Syllabus

Yitzhak Rabin Memorial Day guest speaker: Former Member of Knesset & Minister of Health, Brigadier General (ret.) Dr. Ephraim Sneh

(<http://www.sneh.org.il/eng/articles/siteArticle.asp?aid=79>).

- Arian, ch. 1: Introduction.

Origins of the Israeli Polity

- Shapira 2012, ch. 3: Palestine and British Rule (pp. 67-102).
- Shapira 2012, ch. 5: The Yishuv as an Emerging State (pp. 119-132).
- *The Proclamation of Independence*, http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/megilat_eng.htm.

Suggested Readings

- Peretz and Doron, ch. 1: Historical origins of Israel (pp. 11-45).
- Beilin, ch. 1: Pre-state Jewish community in Palestine (pp. 13-36).
- Weitz, Yechiam. 2018. 1948 as a Turning Point on the Israeli Political Map. *Israel Studies*, 23 (3), 3-10.
- Halamish, Aviva. 2018. Immigration is Israel's History, So Far. *Israel Studies*, 23 (3), 106-113.
- Rozin, Oriz. 2018. State and Society Building in Early Israel. In *The Oxford Handbook of Israeli Politics and Society*.

Week 2 (Nov. 05, 2020)

Political Culture in Israel

Guest speaker: Dr. Amnon Cavari – *Elections in the U.S.*

- Ariely, Gal. 2018. Political Culture and Israeli Politics. In *The Oxford Handbook of Israeli Politics and Society*.
- Steinberg, Gerald. 2017. Insecurity and Vulnerability in Israeli Political Culture. *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, May 17. Available at: <https://www.georgetownjournalofinternationalaffairs.org/online-edition/insecurity-and-vulnerability-in-israeli-political-culture>.
- Arian, ch. 12: Aspects of Political Culture.
- Sprinzak, Ehud. 1993. Elite Illegalism in Israel and the Question of Democracy, in Ehud Sprinzak and Larry Diamond, eds. *Israel Democracy Under Stress*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, pp. 173-198.

Suggested Reading

- Beilin, ch. 6: Political Culture in Israel (pp. 128-195).

Weeks 3 & 4 (Nov. 12 & Nov. 19, 2020)

Institutions I & II

- Beilin, ch. 3: The Structure of Israeli Government (pp. 59-69).
- Arian, Nachmias, and Amir, ch. 2: Executive Governance and Democracy.
- Arian, ch. 9: The Government, the Knesset, and the Judiciary.
- Kenig, Ofer. 2018. The Executive Branch in Israel. In *The Oxford Handbook of Israeli Politics and Society*.
- Friedberg, Chen and Reuven Y. Hazan. 2018. The Legislative Branch in Israel. In *The Oxford Handbook of Israeli Politics and Society*.

Week 5 (Nov. 26, 2020)

Political Parties & Party Organization

Guest speaker: Yoram Dori (served as a strategic advisor to the late President of Israel, Shimon Peres)

- Arian, ch. 5: Political Parties.
- Arian, ch. 6: Party Organization.
- Hazan, Reuven Y. 2018. Parties and the Party System of Israel. In *The Oxford Handbook of Israeli Politics and Society*.

Suggested Reading

- Goldstein, Amir. 2018. The Creation of the Likud and the Struggle for the Identity of the Alternative Party. *Israel Studies Review*, 33(3): 61-78.

Week 6 (Dec. 3, 2020)

Electoral System

- Arian, ch. 7: The Electoral System.
- Harris, Michael, and Gideon Doron. 1999. Assessing the Electoral Reform of 1992 and its Impact on the Elections of 1996 and 1999. *Israel Studies* 4(2): 16-39. Available at http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/toc/is4.2.html.
- [Basic Law: The Knesset](#)
- [Basic Law: The Government](#)

Suggested Reading

- Itzkovich-Malka, Reut and Reuven Y. Hazan. 2017. Unpacking Party Unity: The Combined Effects of Electoral Systems and Candidate Selection Methods on Legislative Attitudes and Behavioural Norms. *Political Studies*, 65(2): 452-474.

Week 7 (Dec. 10, 2020)

Electoral Behavior

- Arian, ch. 8: Electoral Behavior.
- Shapira, Assaf and Gideon Rahat. 2018. Electoral Behavior in Israel. In *The Oxford Handbook of Israeli Politics and Society*.
- Rahat, Gideon, Reuven Y. Hazan and Pazit Ben-Nun Bloom. 2016. Stable Blocs and Multiple Identities: The 2015 Elections in Israel. *Representation*, 52(1): 99-117.

Suggested Readings

- The Israel Democracy Institute. The September 2019 Elections. Available at: <https://en.idi.org.il/israeli-elections-and-parties/elections/2019/>.
- The Israel Democracy Institute. 2019. Unity Coalition Governments: Explainer. Available at: <https://en.idi.org.il/articles/27116>.

Week 8 (Dec. 17, 2020)

Interest Groups and the Political System

- Arian, ch. 10: Interest Groups and Public Policy.
- Beilin ch. 8: Political Lobbies (pp. 242-262).
- Peri, Yoram. 2006. *Generals in the Cabinet Room – How the Military Shapes Israeli Policy*, Washington: USIP. Chs. 1 and 16.

Weeks 9 & 10 (Dec. 24 & Dec. 31, 2020)

People and Cleavages in Israel

Virtual tour at the Rabin Museum

- Horowitz and Lissak. 1989. Ch. 2: Israel as a Multi-Cleavage Society.
- Uri Ram, 2018. Sociopolitical Cleavages in Israel. In *The Oxford Handbook of Israeli Politics and Society*.
- Waxman, Chaim I. 2004. Religion in the Israeli Public Square, in Uzi Rebhun and Chaim I. Waxman, Eds. *Jews in Israel: Contemporary Social and Cultural Patterns*, Brandeis University Press, pp. 221-239.
- Dowty, Alan. 1998. *The Jewish State: A Century Later*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Ch. 9.

Suggested Readings

- Smootha, Sammy. 2018. The Jewish Ethnic Divide and Ethnic Politics in Israel. In *The Oxford Handbook of Israeli Politics and Society*.
- Illouz, Eva. 2012. 'Begin's Legacy / Enough of Ethnicity', *Haaretz*. 22 February. <http://www.haaretz.com/weekend/magazine/begin-s-legacy-enough-of-ethnicity-1.414169>.
- Shpurer, Sharon. 2012. 'Movin' on Up', *Haaretz*. 20 January. <http://www.haaretz.com/weekend/week-s-end/movin-on-up-1.408302>.
- Hermann Tamar and Golan Galia. 2006. The Parliamentary Representation of Women: The Israeli Case, in Tremblay Manon, Ed. *Parliamentary Representation of Women: A Comparative International Study* (French edition, Montreal: Remue-ménage Press), pp. 251-275 [French]. PDF file – English.
- Chazan, Naomi. 2018. Israel at 70: A Gender Perspective. *Israel Studies*, 23(3): 141-151.

- Kaplan, Eran, 2018. Begin, Chach'chachim, and the Birth of Israeli Identity Politics. *Israel Studies*, 23(3): 68-75.
- The Israel Democracy Institute. 2019. Conditional Partnership 2019: Relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel. *Press Release*, September 22. Available at: <https://en.idi.org.il/articles/28654>.

Week 11 (Jan. 7, 2021)

Coalition Building? The Inclusive Israeli Society: The Four Tribes Speech and Thereafter

- Brenner, Michael. 2018. A State Like Any Other State or a Light Unto the Nations? *Israel Studies*, 23(3): 3-10.
- Ben-Porat, Guy. 2018. Religion in Israeli Politics. In *The Oxford Handbook of Israeli Politics and Society*.
- [Basic Law: Israel as the Nation State of the Jewish People](#)
- President Reuven Rivlin Address to the 15th Annual Herzliya Conference
http://archive.president.gov.il/English/ThePresident/Speeches/Pages/news_070615_01.aspx

Week 12 (Jan. 14, 2021)

Basic Laws and the Constitutional Revolution

- Barak, Aharon. 1998. The Role of the Supreme Court in a Democracy. *Israel Studies* 3(2): 6-29. Available at http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/toc/is3.2.html.
- Arian, Nachmias, and Amir, ch. 4: Power-Sharing with Nonelected Authorities.
- [Basic Law: Israel as the Nation State of the Jewish People](#)

Suggested Readings

- Kedar, Nir. 2018. The Rule of Law in Israel. *Israel Studies*, 23(3): 164-171.
- Saif-Alden Wattad, Mohammed. 2018. Israel at 70: The Rule of Law and the Judiciary. *Israel Studies*, 23(3): 172-179.
- Waxman, Dov and Ilan Peleg. 2020. The Nation-State Law and the Weakening of Israeli Democracy. *Israel Studies*, 25(3): 185-200.
- Kontorovich, Eugene. 2020. A Comparative Constitutional Perspective on Israel's Nation-State Law. *Israel Studies*, 25(3): 137-152.

Week 13 (Jan. 21, 2021)

COVID-19: Is Israel Still Democratic?

- Maor, Moshe, Raanan Sulitzeanu-Kenan and David Chinitz. 2020. When COVID-19, constitutional crisis, and political deadlock meet: the Israeli case from a disproportionate policy perspective. *Policy and Society*, 39(3): 442-457.
- Dowty, Alan. 2018. Democracy in Israel. In *The Oxford Handbook of Israeli Politics and Society*.
- Sasson, Theodore. 2018. Israeli Attitudes on Civil Rights, Democracy and Arab-Jewish Relations. *Israel Studies*, 23(2): 217-225.

Suggested Readings

- Brenner, Michael. 2018. A State Like Any Other State or a Light Unto the Nations? *Israel Studies*, 23(3): 3-10.
- Dowty, Alan. 1999. Is Israel democratic? Substance and semantics in the ethnic democracy debate. *Israel Studies* 4(2): 1-15. Available at http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/toc/is4.2.html.
- Sa'di, Ahmed H. 2002. Catastrophe, memory and identity: Al-nakbah as a component of Palestinian identity. *Israel Studies* 7(2): 175-198. Available at http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/toc/is7.2.html.