

Workshop, October 7-8, 2015

**Political Parties in Israel and Canada:  
How Degrees of Centralization and Decentralization  
Influence the Organization of Political Parties**

William Cross, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada

Gideon Rahat, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel

Israel is one of the most centralized democracies, at least in the territorial sense, while Canada is one the most decentralized democratic polities. The goal of the workshop is to identify the impact of this difference on the organization of political parties.

Workshop participants will consider aspects such as the linkage between parties at different levels (local and national in Israel; local, provincial and federal in Canada) and the power relationship between the center and the other regional and local levels within each party organization. Questions of intra party democracy -- relating to the ways through which the local-national relationship influences leadership and candidate selection and policy formation -- are central to our focus.

Hosted by the Halbert Center with the additional generous support of the Nancy S. and Lawrence E. Glick Fund and the Eshkol Institute.

## Tuesday, 6 October

Opening Dinner: Caravan restaurant, Abu Gosh (will leave at 6:30 from the hotel lobby)

## Wednesday, October 7

### Morning:

9:45 – 10:15

Opening discussion

10:15- 11:15

*Stratarchy and the Analysis of Party Organization*

Kenneth Carty

The University of British Columbia

In this paper I explore the utility of the notion of stratarchy as a primary conceptual device for understanding the operation and, equally importantly, the changing dynamic of internal party relations and their impact on party activity. The cases of the Liberal Party of Canada and Ireland's Fianna Fáil are used to illustrate how stratarchical relationships change over time and with what consequence for internal and external party activity and outcome. The instance of the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party provides a case of a very different kind of stratarchical organization where national vertical factions structure political life.

Discussant: Gideon Rahat

11:15 – 11:30 break

11:30 – 12:30

*Power Sharing within Political Parties: Finding the Balance between Local and Central Authority*

Bill Cross

Carleton University

This paper analyses the different methods of intra-party power sharing used by eight parties in four Anglo-parliamentary systems (Australia, Canada, Ireland and New Zealand). Focusing on the key party activities of candidate and leadership selection and policy development, the paper identifies the relative levels of influence exercised by local and central party bodies. The paper concludes that there is limited 'mutual autonomy' (or stratarchy) and that power relationships are better described by an 'electoral college' model in which both levels of the party constantly strive for greater authority in all areas of decision making while recognizing the necessity for involvement of the other level.

Discussant: Reuven Hazan

12:30 – 2:00 LUNCH

Afternoon:

2:00-3:00

*From Local to National Politics - Is the Local Arena in Israel a Springboard for Women to the National Arena?*

Chen Friedberg and Assaf Shapira

Israel Democracy Institute

Although there has been a substantial increase in women's representation in the Knesset over the past twenty years, women's representation in Israeli politics remains far from satisfactory. Israeli women are under-represented in the local arena even more than in the national arena. Our research explores the relationship between the local and the national arenas from the perspective of recruitment and gender. By analyzing the background of all 120 MKs in the 15th (1999) and the 20th (2015) Knessets, we wish to find out whether the local arena uses as a springboard for women to the Knesset.

The preliminary results show that the representation of women among MKs that had a municipal background was higher in 2015 in comparison to 1999. However, in 2015 the representation of women among MKs that had a municipal background was lower than their representation among all MKs; in 1999 it is the other way around. Our preliminary conclusion is that under representation of women in the local arena is one of the barriers for further improvement in the representation of women in the Knesset.

Discussant: Scott Pruyers

3:00-4:00

*A Cross-National Comparative Study of Parties' Presence and Power in Local Politics: Preliminary Findings*

Ofer Kenig and Gideon Rahat

Ashkelon College and Hebrew University of Jerusalem

In the past, a comparison of the relationship between national and local politics in Canada and Israel would find them to be world apart. In Canada, the local scene was (and still is), controlled by local lists and independent candidates. In Israel, local and national elections took place at the same time and national parties dominated the local scene. Since the 1970s, with the separation of timing of national and local elections and the reform of the local electoral and governance system (adopting direct elections for mayors), Israel has become, more and more, similar to Canada. Local "parties" and independent candidates took over the local scene. Is the weakening of national parties in local politics unique to Israel, or can we detect similar trend in other parliamentary democracies as well? Did reforms in other countries led to similar development? These are the main questions that paper addresses. It presents preliminary findings of a cross-national study of national parties' presence and power in local politics in 15 nations in two points in time.

Discussant: Bill Cross

19:00 Dinner, Chakra restaurant, Jerusalem (will leave at 6:30 from the hotel lobby)

## **Thursday, October 8**

### Morning:

9:00-10:00

Csaba Nikolenyi

Concordia University

*Party Switching In Israel and Canada: Assessing the Impact of Electoral and Legislative Institutions*

This paper seeks to resolve the puzzle of an unexpected difference in the rates of party switching between Canada and Israel. Although it is well known that party-centered electoral systems, such as the closed-list proportional representation that Israel has used since the creation of the State, incentivize elected legislators to remain loyal to their party groups more than candidate-centered electoral systems do, such as Canada's first-past-the-post, party switching rates in the two national parliaments do not bear out this expectation. Whereas less than 10% of Canadian deputies have changed their partisan affiliation in an inter-election period (Tardi 2007), almost a quarter of Israeli deputies have changed their party label at least once between two elections. In other words, party switching rates are higher in Israel than in Canada in spite of what we would expect given the institutional incentives of the electoral systems of the two democracies. The paper hypothesizes that the format of the party system provides the missing link between electoral laws and party switching rates. As such, closed-list PR generates higher rates of party switching in Israel than first-past-the-post in Canada because in equilibrium it leads to a more fragmented legislative party system where even small perturbations in party weights, caused by even relatively small party switches, can cause significant changes in party's bargaining power.

Discussant: Or Tuttnauer

10:00-11:00

Scott Pruyers

Carleton University

*Decentralization, Stratarchy, and Party Integration: Evidence from Canada*

Federalism, electoral devolution, and supranational elections have made multi-level governance an increasingly widespread and common practice. By dividing authority between regional, national, subnational, or supranational levels, structures of multi-level governance can have a profound impact on the shape of electoral competition as well as the character of democratic institutions such as political parties. In the Canadian case, there are very few *formal* linkages between federal and provincial parties. Indeed, the norm is for organizational separation and truncation. The practice of stratarchy, however, provides the party on the ground (constituency associations) with a significant degree of autonomy and independence over the management and

direction of local party affairs. Drawing on data from a unique survey of 273 federal and provincial constituency associations, this paper explores how constituency associations use this autonomy to respond to the decentralized multi-level nature of Canadian politics. Rather than living in isolation and embracing “two political worlds”, the data reveal important cooperative and collaborative networks between the federal and provincial realms. While informal, these personnel linkages represent a crucial aspect of vertical party integration.

Discussant: Ofer Kenig

11:00-11:30 break

11:30-12:30

Or Tuttnauer

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

*Competition across Levels: Coalescence in Israeli Central and Local Government*

The Israeli political system is highly centralized, lacking regional electoral components or strong governments at the local level. However, political and institutional differences between the national and local levels provide differing pressures and incentives for parties operating at both levels. This paper aims to portray how these environmental differences shape the interaction between such parties. Do coalescence patterns in Israeli municipal follow the same lines of those in the national arena, and if not, in what way do they differ? Building on data from fourteen large Israeli cities over two municipal terms, and the corresponding coalition compositions in the Knesset, I show that national parties in the local level tend much more to cooperate with each other in a very inclusive coalitional environment. I end by exploring several explanations and suggesting ways to test them, given more data.

Discussant: David Stewart

12:30-2:00

LUNCH

2:00-3:00

David Stewart

University of Calgary

*Federal-Provincial Variation in Leadership Selection: Processes and Participation*

This paper explores leadership selection in parties at both the federal and provincial levels in Canada. It outlines differences in the overall selection methods used and also examines differences in the methods used within each party or party family. The level of party integration forms part of this analysis and the paper shows that integration is very loosely related to leadership selection method. The levels of participation in the various selection methods are also presented both in terms of membership and voting and the paper outlines and attempts to explain differences in these patterns.

Discussant: Csaba Nikolenyi

3:00-4:00

Reut Itzkovitch Malka and Reuven Y. Hazan

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

*Mind the Gap: The Combined Effects of Decentralizing Inter- and Intra-Party Competition on the Legislative Organization of Political Parties*

This article analyzes the effect of electoral systems, candidate selection methods and the interplay between them on individual legislative attitudes and behavioral norms, specifically on two facets of party unity: party agreement and party loyalty. Our main argument is that one must take into account the effect of inter- as well as intra-party competition, and the interaction between the two, in order to explain individual legislative attitudes and norms. Using data from 34 European parties across 10 countries, we show that under exclusive candidate selection methods there are large differences between PR and SMD electoral systems in their effect on party agreement and party loyalty. Under inclusive candidate selection methods, however, such differences do not exist. In other words, the candidate selection method conditions the influence of the electoral system on legislative attitudes and behavioral norms. In order to define the inclusive/exclusive nature of the candidate selection method we use the inclusiveness of the electorate. Nevertheless, there is a case to make for the use of decentralization as well, as it clearly affects the inclusive/exclusive nature of the selection process, thus affecting the interaction between the candidate selection method and the electoral system.

Discussant: Kenneth Carty

Closing discussion

19:00 Dinner Majda Restaurant, Ein Rafa (will leave at 6:30 from the hotel lobby)