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PARTY FACTIONALISM AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN ISRAEL INDICATORS OF POLITICAL INSTABILITY (1948-1973)

Manuel S. Hassassian

Party factionalism has been considered by many leading political scientists as a usual criterion in measuring the degree of stability in a multi-party system. According to J. Jupp, Israel is placed under the multi-party system, because "no party commands a clear majority and governments are normally composed of coalitions."¹ However, the history of Israeli politics portrays that Mapai (the leader of the Labor movement) controlled the government for almost four decades through elections, and "allowed other parties to function in supporting, or opposition roles."² Students of politics have always "seen political parties as aggregating interests, setting goals, and formalizing conflict."³ To a certain extent this description fits Israeli parties, for all of them represent practically definite economic interests with a wide spectrum of goals, ranging from theocracy, through *Laissez-faire* and a democratic welfare state, to communism.

Introduction

The Arab-Israeli conflict poses an overwhelming socio-psychological and political tension on the inhabitants of the Middle East Region. Consequently, this conflict creates an insecure environment, characterized mainly by political upheavals and instability. It is not surprising however, to see that this conflict impels the political parties in Israel towards a rather cohesive and consensus-based policy during crises situations. Furthermore, domestic issues and socio-economic pressures induce the parties in Israel to form a clear-cut unanimity on public issues. Inasmuch as the questions of national border and security have been considered as vital issues in Israeli politics, thus representing a crucial determinant between the Doves and the Hawks in the "Knesset". This split is molded along ideological bases between the coalition parties of the left and those of the extreme right. Yet, it is not surprising to see a relative united stand by the different parties in the context of policy formulations towards the Palestinians in particular, and the Arabs in general.

Many political scientists have done research in this field of multi-partisanship and its impact on political instability; however, their findings differed according to the typologies taken.

Morrison and Stevenson made a study on political instability in independent Black Africa. They attempted to clarify conceptual approaches to the study of political instability, conflict and violence by summarizing and comparing existing quantitative investigations of these phenomena in national political systems. They investigated empirical relationships between different kinds of

political instability in contemporary African nations. Finally, they measured instability by using factor analysis as a statistical tool to the various indicators selected like elites, communal groups (particularly ethnic), and mass movements. The result of their study found the interpretation of the turmoil factor being (strikes, riots, demonstrations, arrests) as perfectly admissible, and confirms the results reported.⁴

Another study by Michael Taylor and V. M. Herman on party systems and government stability, confirmed the correlation between the duration of cabinets and the fragmentation of the party system. However, they found that the more fragmented the party system is, the more unstable the cabinets are to be. Then, they looked at the effects of ideological differences between parties testing in particular the widely-held belief that the presence of large "anti-system" parties is a cause of instability.⁵

Taylor and Herman in their study, found that one-party governments are more stable than coalition governments. There were 137 coalition governments with a mean duration of 624.5 days, and 59 one-party governments with a mean duration of 11,107.9 days. An analysis of variance showed that the relationship between stability and the dichotomous variable "C" which takes the value "0" when the government consists of a single party, and the value "1" when the government is a coalition of two or more parties, is significant at the .001 level, and thus their hypothesis was well confirmed. This finding could justify the theoretical framework of this study, because Israeli cabinets had always been formed by the coalition of parties.

Yet, another political scientist by the name of Claude Ake, explained political instability in the new states along one or more of three related factors: cultural heterogeneity, multi-party system, and economic conditions.⁶ All the above mentioned indicators will be used in this study; however, the definition of each concept with its operational indicator will be explained.

Aim of the Study

This paper will study parties power concentration in the "Knesset" and the political infrastructure. However, party factionalism based on ethnic diversity has been considered as an input to political instability. Furthermore, this study will deal with several sub-problems, among which the parties' distribution of power in the economic structure (issue areas), like the "Histadrut" (The Labor Federation Union), and the Kibbutzim (Cooperative Collectives). Yet, another sub-problem considered, is to determine party factionalism on the basis of social and class structure reflected in ethnic differentiation between the "Ashkenazim", and the Oriental "Sephardim." Non-Jewish population, mainly the Arabs of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the Arabs of pre-1967 Israel

are not considered in this study.

The Hypotheses:

The major hypothesis is that political instability in Israel is relatively caused by the interdependent nature of its political, economic and social structures. A key indicator of instability is the multi-partisan structure, with the major parties' concentration of power in the governmental institutions. Yet, other indicators of instability like cultural heterogeneity and social differentiation are reflected along party lines.

- H1. The power distribution of the various parties and factions in the "Knesset" is an indicator of instability. It should be noted, that the political structure is directly affected by the interdependence of the economic and social set-up.
- H2. The uneven distribution of power and influence of the different parties in the key economic organizations, like the "Histadrut" and the "Kibbutzim" is another cause of instability.
- H3. Cultural heterogeneity reflected in multi-partisan structure, is a relative indicator of instability.

The Delimitations:

This study will not project the outcome of future elections in Israel. Moreover, it will not determine the future of the State of Israel in the Middle East. However, the author analyzed the political system according to the data available from 1948-1973. Finally, this study will reflect marginally the sub-problems mentioned earlier, due to the lack of complete data.

THE DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Multi-Party System:

It is a political system which has more than two parties controlling and influencing the decision-making process in a polity. The parties in Israel represent the left and the right and their members are comprised of secular and Orthodox Jews.

Party Factionalism

Party factionalism tends to lead to the immobilization of the population towards the goals of economic and social development, by being sporadic and

fluctuating. However, Israel has its political parties increasingly weighted at the left (Mapai-Ma'arach) and right (Likud bloc) and not towards the Center. Party factionalism will be operationalized by scrutinizing the power concentration of the various parties, and the number of seats that they hold, by using simple measurements like proportions and percentages to the total number of seats allotted in the "Knesset," "Histadrut," and the cooperative settlements (Kibbutzim).

Political Instability

Political instability is defined in terms of violence between political actors in conflict over the values governing the distribution of rewards in a society. Instability then, is perceived through discrepancies in the distribution of political power and wealth among the leading political parties.

Economic Discrepancy

The economic structure in Israel is based on agricultural cooperatives and petty industries. However, the bulk of the material wealth is mainly concentrated in the hands of the European Jews. Consequently, they are predominant in the "Histadrut" and thus control the markets, the consumers' commodities and products. This economic differentiation is based on ethnic diversity, which is reflected along party lines and identifications.

Cultural Heterogeneity:

In Israel, the different ethnic minorities like the "Ashkenazi" Jews and the "Oriental-Sephardim" Jews, constitute a cultural heterogeneous society. Not to mention, the Israeli-Arabs, Armenians, Assyrians and Greeks and other ethnic minorities who are not counted in this study.

Ashkenazi, (or "German") Jews, their origin goes back to the expansion of the Roman Empire into Central Europe, and to the settlement of Jews in the early Slavonic principalities to the north of the Black Sea. In the Middle Ages all these Jewish communities adopted a form of German ("Yiddish") as their language, and came to be called Ashkenazi (i.e., "German") Jews.⁷

Sephardi, (or "Oriental" Jews), mainly coming from the Middle East, Asia and Africa. The Sephardi-Oriental majority of Israel's population, upon entering the mainstream of Israel life, gave up almost a big portion of their cultural heritage. It is thus clear that by the early 1970s and 1980s the cultural absorption of the "Sephardi-Oriental" Jews by the "Ashkenazi" Jews in Israel has become an almost accomplished fact.⁸

Review of Related Literature

Von Der Mehden, in his book *The Developing Nations*, characterized political parties as being a sabotage to national unity, besides multiple parties

waste valuable time and manpower; inasmuch as party competition is neither necessary or natural.⁹ Samuel P. Huntington confines the stability of a modernizing political system on the strength of its political parties. According to him, a party is strong to the extent that it has institutionalized mass support.¹⁰ An aspect of party strength is organizational complexity and depth, particularly as revealed by the linkages between the party and social and economic organizations such as labor unions and peasant associations. In Israel such linkages greatly extend the appeal and bolster the organization of the major parties. Furthermore, the link between a multi-party system and a dominant party system often is hazy, and one reasonable common intermediate pattern is where one party is sufficiently larger than the other and located sufficiently in the center of the political spectrum. However, a competitive party system would rest on a foundation of class conflict.¹¹ This is true in Israeli society, which is heterogeneous, representing diversified ethnic minorities. However, Maurice Duverger traces the evolution of a party through the fluctuations of its role.¹²

Israel's democracy is characterized by a wide diversity of political and social viewpoints, given free expression in political parties, newspapers and a wide variety of social, religious, cultural and other organizations.¹³ The political diversity can be related to the European origin of nearly all parties represented in Parliament. Most Israeli political parties are offshoots of Zionist groups established early in the 20th Century. A republican form of government was established in 1948 combining the features of a multi-party system, with a parliamentary system in which the executive branch is the strongest.

The "Knesset," which approves all legislation, controls finance, and can remove the Prime Minister by a simple majority, is in theory the supreme political factor. But because of Israel's multi-party politics, parliamentary influence and prestige has been considerably weakened.¹⁴ The operative fact in Israeli politics is that none of the various parties has a majority in the parliament. It is therefore always necessary to form coalition governments. Along the history of Israel, all the governments were coalitions with the Mapai wing of the Labor movement forming the basis of all cabinets established since 1948. As a result, cabinet crises have been caused by splits in the government between the religious parties and the labor groups, over issues such as religious education in public schools, military service for women, and the legal definition of a Jew. One consequence of a coalition government is the subsequent apportionment of the government's administrative apparatus among the various political parties in the coalition.

Why Israel Has a Multi-party System:

One basic factor is that the Jewish community is a heterogeneous one, so

parties are of different social and cultural diversity.¹⁵ On the other hand, the Zionist movement itself perpetuated the Jewish multi-party system, since its survival depended upon its grasp of the fact that the Jews were not a homogeneous group. Another causal factor would be the division between secularism and orthodoxy among Jews. The Jews were always in conflictual differences about what was the best economic system for Israel. Some Jews, mostly from Russian and East European backgrounds, were socialists, but they never did agree on which type of socialism would best suit Jewish life and society. Another major reason for a multi-party system in Israel is the Jewish division between Nationalists and Internationalists.¹⁶ Proportional representation, which has characterized Jewish elections since the beginning of the Zionist movement, is another important factor.

The multi-party system has many implications for Israel — yet it necessitates the establishment of coalition governments which have become a basic feature of Israel's political system. So partisan politics in the "Knesset" and in the cabinet often results in the development of a national crisis. Since candidates for the "Knesset" are nominated by the political parties, the party machine acquires much power over its members in the "Knesset." The same condition helps intensify rivalries among the parties themselves.

Analysis of electoral politics in Israel suggests that the nature of election issues is conditioned by the need for and the process of conflict resolution among competing elite factions within the parties, and not merely the voter response proclivities to party appeals. The following analysis focuses on issues of electoral politics in Israel's 1969 elections and includes:

- a) The resolution of conflict among factions of the major parties through the issues debate.
- b) The location of issues (within a party of public debate).
- c) The goals of the parties in their choice of issues.¹⁷

There are three major parties in Israel. Each of these *three* parties represents an alliance of various factions that were previously independent parties.

The Major Political Blocs:

The largest Israeli political movement is the Labor Alignment (Ma'arach), which is constituted of two parties allied together.

**The Israeli Labour party*, composed of:¹⁸

- a) Mapai (the dominant component).
- b) Ahdut Ha'avoda
- c) Rafi
- d) The United Workers' Party, composed of Mapam

**The Nationalist Parties*:¹⁹

The nonsocialist, secular parties in Israel are divided into two groups:

The *Likud Union*, composed of:

- a) Herut party
- b) Liberal party } formerly the "Gahal bloc"
- c) Free centre (ex-splinter of Herut)
- d) State List (ex-Rafi)
- e) Mafdal

The Liberal Knesset bloc, composed of

- a) Independent Liberal party
- b) Civil Rights Movement

**Religious Parties*²⁰

- a) Religious Socialists: Hapoel Hamizrahi
Poalei Agudat Israel
- b) Religious Nonsocialists: Agudat Israel
Hamizrahi
- c) Religious non-Zionists: Neturei Karta (Orthodox Jews)

**The Communist Parties*:²¹

- a) Israel Communist or "Miflgat Komunistit Israelit" (Maki)
- b) Rakah: "Reshima Komunistit Hadash."

The critical issue in 1969 and even now is security. Both the Ma'arach and the Mafdal came close to actually breaking up because of interfactional disagreements about what their national security policy should be.²² Debate within the Ma'arach was dominated by questions such as the imposition of the Israeli judicial system on occupied Arab territories and formal annexations of certain areas during the 1967 war.

The most specific stand in the style-issue platform of the parties was a phrase on the need to reach agreement on strategic borders needed for Israel's security and the assurance that the cease-fire line of the prior to the Six Day War

War shall not be the borders of Israel. The origin of the conflict went back to the emergence of the young as a recognized faction at the party's convention in 1968.²³ Their demands included activating the party in social and economic matters, not merely in religious questions. Reforming the bureaucratized structure and changing the negative image of some of the party leaders, were other reasons the parties' strategies in electoral politics are often guided by their need to:²⁴

- 1) Redefine ideology for their safe partisan voters.
- 2) Provide an ideology for the floating voters.

However, the reasons for the Ma'arach's continuous leadership for four decades were two-fold:

- 1) Most of the people are wage earners, making a labour alignment only natural.
- 2) The employed ought to align against the right.

In the 1969 elections, however, economic matters were limited to elite discussions and focused on specific questions. For example, the wage structure and the constant inflationary wage demands were ascribed to the interlocking system which made the Ma'arach dominant in both the government and the Histadrut. During all the elections held in Israel, the major political competitors have skillfully avoided a number of loaded issues, such as discrimination against non-Western Jews.

It is important to discuss the empirical literature dealing with the measurement of instability, and party factionalism. However, in the introduction of this paper, I dealt very briefly on similar studies done on instability measurement of various political systems.

Empirical Literature.

Stevenson and Morrison in their study of political instability in independent Black Africa, dwelt on the operationalization and dimensionability of political instability. "Quantitative analysis of national political instability has relied heavily on factor analysis to reduce the complexity of language and events related to political instability to a parsimonious set of dimensions indicating the underlying phenomena."

The first major attempt to collect comprehensive information on turmoil and violence for cross-national research involved the coding from *The New York Times* of 13 variables for 113 countries for the years 1946-1959 (Eckstein, 1962). Eckstein inclined to view intranational political violence, or internal war, as undimensional, and factor analytic results based on these data

were not reported on the dimensionality of data gathered independently on 73 nations for the years 1955, 1956, and 1957 (Rummel, 1963).²⁶

According to Stevenson and Morrison, it is useful to compare these different attempts to define the empirical dimensions of political instability. Along their study of instability, they emphasized that the best defined concepts, and the most consistently intercorrelated set of measures, are those dealing with turmoil (strikes, riots, demonstrations). To talk of these phenomena as political instability is likewise unacceptable since, by themselves, none of these events constitute a direct breakdown of the political system. Relating these factors to the situation in Israel, they are important but not enough to topple down the whole political system. For Israel witnessed strikes, demonstrations and upheavals, but these were never serious to lead to a radical change in the government. This reflects uniqueness in handling all the conflictual interests being economic factors, ethnic diversities molded in the ideologies and policies of the parties presented in the government. The investigators found factor analysis as a guide to empirical theories of political conflict or instability. Aside from the independent dimensionality of the turmoil, there is not much that they can say about patterns of political instability as they are revealed in factor analytic results.

Their own use of factor analysis was designed to test the tenability of their theoretical distinctions between elite, communal, and mass instability, and to suggest useful measures of political instability in independent Black African nations. In order to investigate the consistency and coherence of factor solutions of their data for the nations and time periods, they analyzed the data aggregated for the following time periods: the year of independence to 1969; and the first six years of independence. The data for each of the 32 countries was summed by variable for each of the years included in these periods, and then factor analyzed.

Other studies have been made on the measurement of instability by Michael Taylor and V. M. Herman. They emphasized party systems and their impact on government stability. The thesis of their work is that the numerical structure of the party system in the lower house is a determinant of the stability of the cabinet.²⁷ They examined 196 governments which have occurred in all those countries of the World that have experienced competitive elections and uninterrupted parliamentary government in the post-war period until January 1st, 1969. They first examined the relation between the durability of cabinets and the "fragmentation" of the party system in the whole of the lower house; the result found was: "the more fragmented the party system, the more unstable the cabinets."²⁸

They looked at the effects of ideological differences between the parties, as a cause of instability, and used a measurement called fractionalization to

measure party system fragmentation. If N is the number of parties, n is the total number of seats held by the parties in the parliament, and f^1, f^2, \dots, f^N are the numbers held by each of the N parties, then fractionalization is defined as:

$$F = 1 - \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^N (f_i - 1)^2$$

In relation to this study, this proves that one can measure party factionalism through the parties' number of seats occupied in the parliament, which are based on proportional representation.

Their findings were as follows:

- 1) A fairly strong relation existed between governmental stability and the fractionalization of the party system.
- 2) One-party governments were very significantly more stable than coalition governments.
- 3) Majority governments were significantly more stable than minority governments.
- 4) Ideological division of the parliament into 'pro-system' and 'anti-system' parties had important consequences for stability.

All the above findings are supportive to the thesis of this study albeit, the same indicators are used with different statistical measures and methodological approaches.

METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

The methodology of this study is descriptive-analytical with the main concentration on the measurement of simple percentages of seats, allotted for different parties in the "Knesset", Cabinet and the Ministries. Moreover, simple measurement of the percentages of each ethnic minority identified with a party, from the total population in the various political, social and economic structures, will determine the power and influence of each.

TABLE I
RESULTS OF PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS
IN ISRAEL 1979-73 % (NUMBERS)

	1949	1951	1955	1959	1961	1965	1969	1973
Mapam	14.7% (19)	Mapam 12.5% (15)	Mapam 7.3% (9)	Mapam 7.2% (9)	Mapam 7.6% (9)	Mapam 6.6% (8)	Mapam 6.6% (8)	Mapam 6.6% (8)
Herut	11.5% (14)	Herut 11.5% (14)	Herut 12.6% (15)	Herut 13.6% (17)	Herut 13.7% (17)	Herut 13.7% (17)	Herut 13.7% (17)	Herut 13.7% (17)
Gen Zionist	5.2% (7)	(G.Z.) 16.2% (20)	(G.Z.) 10.2% (13)	(G.Z.) 6.1% (8)	(G.Z.) 6.1% (8)	(G.Z.) 6.1% (8)	(G.Z.) 6.1% (8)	(G.Z.) 6.1% (8)
Progressive	4.1% (5)	Prog. 3.2% (4)	Prog. 4.4% (5)	Prog. 4.6% (6)	Prog. 4.6% (6)	Prog. 4.6% (6)	Prog. 4.6% (6)	Prog. 4.6% (6)
Relig. Bloc	(16)	NRP 8.3% (10)	NRP 9.1% (11)	NRP 9.9% (12)	NRP 9.8% (12)	NRP 9.8% (12)	NRP 9.8% (12)	NRP 9.8% (12)
Communist	3.5% (4)	Comm. 4% (5)	Comm. 5.5% (6)	Comm. 2.8% (3)	Comm. 4.1% (5)	Comm. 2.3% (3)	Comm. 4.1% (5)	Comm. 4.1% (5)
Arab Parties	3% (2)	Arab 4.9% (6)	Arab 4.9% (6)	Arab 3.5% (5)	Arab 3.5% (4)	Arab 3.5% (4)	Arab 3.5% (4)	Arab 3.5% (4)
Other Parties	10.1% (7)	Other 3% (3)	Other 1.9%	Other 3.4%	Other 0.7%	Other 2.8% (1)	Other 0.7%	Other 0.7%
Ind. Lib	(4)	Ind. Lib. 3.7% (5)	Ind. Lib. 13.6% (17)	Ind. Lib. 13.6% (17)	Ind. Lib. 13.6% (17)	Ind. Lib. 13.6% (17)	Ind. Lib. 13.6% (17)	Ind. Lib. 13.6% (17)
Gahal	(26)	Gahal 21.3% (26)	Gahal 21.3% (26)	Gahal 21.3% (26)	Gahal 21.3% (26)	Gahal 21.3% (26)	Gahal 21.3% (26)	Gahal 21.3% (26)
Alignment	(51)	Align. 36.7% (45)	Align. 36.7% (45)	Align. 36.7% (45)	Align. 36.7% (45)	Align. 36.7% (45)	Align. 36.7% (45)	Align. 36.7% (45)
New Comm	(5)	New Comm 1.3% (1)	New Comm 1.3% (1)	New Comm 1.3% (1)	New Comm 1.3% (1)	New Comm 1.3% (1)	New Comm 1.3% (1)	New Comm 1.3% (1)
Union Likud	(39)	Union Likud 3.7% (5)	Union Likud 3.7% (5)	Union Likud 3.7% (5)	Union Likud 3.7% (5)	Union Likud 3.7% (5)	Union Likud 3.7% (5)	Union Likud 3.7% (5)

* In 1949 and 1851 Mapam included Ahdut Avodath. (Source: Knesset Election Results, 1949-69 are cited in David Bohar, Political Parties in Israel, pp. 119-120. However, the Eighth Knesset Elections, Dec. 11, 1973, is cited from the Official Gazette, Jan. 11, 1974.

Israel's political system is parliamentary like that of Britain with the "Knesset" being the chief law-making body comprised of 120 members, who are elected at least once every four years. The "Knesset" is formally the most powerful political institution in the state, for Israel has no written constitution, and the "Knesset is therefore entitled to passing any Law it sees suitable. It is worth mentioning, that the "Knesset" had included representatives from nine or more parties, yet it is not surprising to see that the largest of those parties controlled no more than 38 percent of the seats. Since a government must be supported by a majority of "Knesset" members in order to perpetuate its ruling, a coalition of parties based on compromise and consent is inevitable without a simple majority. Furthermore, no party in Israel ever had a majority in any national (Knesset) election; however Mapai always had a plurality of 32-38 percent of votes. Table I shows the results of parliamentary elections in Israel (percentage of seats won and number of seats in the "Knesset.")²⁹ This table reflects that Israel has a multi-party system, and that the aggregate voting behavior has not changed much over twenty-four years and during eight elections.

From the organizational point of view, one may argue from the data shown that parties of given strengths have the resources to recruit new voters in rough proportion to their strength; however, a party which begins with 5% of the vote is hardly likely to find the means to make converts of 20% of the new voters. From the structural point of view, one can account for the varying support given Mapai, Herut, and the General Zionists, by arguing that many voters disregard ideological differences and vote instead for or against the government. Mapai, of course, was perceived as the government, and Ahdot Haavoda was seen as the opposition in the elections to the Second Knesset; however, because it merged in the Coalition it lost its opposition status in the elections to the Third "Knesset", during which time Herut replaced it as the party of opposition.

Mapai party is mainly comprised of European-American immigrants (Soviet Jews), while Herut in coalition with Gahal forms the Likud bloc in opposition to the Ma'arach and has higher percentage of immigrants from North Africa, Middle East and Asia. This reflects that the European-American Jews have more power in the "Knesset." Whether the electoral system as presently managed sharpens or weakens differences among parties is an open question. However, the conventional literature on multi-party systems and coalition governments (as the case in Israel) argues most persuasively that they necessarily encourage differences and increase rigidity, because they force the parties to distinguish themselves sharply from each other in order to retain support. A coalition government introduces a measure of ambiguity into the system, consequently, it is not explicit who is responsible for what. In Israel, it is measured strictly by the number of Cabinet resignations (with an average of

one Cabinet per 1.5 years) which reflects somehow an impression of instability.³⁰

The only inference one can make from the data is that party factionalism exists in Israel and is explicitly based on ideological and ethnic differences. However, the only basic factor which perpetuates the political system from collapsing is the question of national boundaries and security. On the economic level, parties' distribution of power is uneven in the public sector: the Histadrut and the Collective Cooperatives (Kibbutzim).

The Histadrut

The Histadrut's main task is to concentrate on trade union and cooperative endeavors, and to organize the labor force in order to promote the welfare and development of the state.³¹

TABLE II
"Histadrut"

Year	Conference	Coalition of					Total
		Mapam	Mapai	Hashomer	Ha'oved Communist	Ha'oved	
		Poale Zion	Ahdut A'vodah	Maki	Israel	Hadati	Voters
		Hashomer	Hatzair	Hatzioni	Party	Hadati	Voters
1949	7th	286	172	19	13	11	139,007
1956	8th	463	218	42	33	15	410,451
1960	9th	444	248	46	22	14	504,687
1965	10th	480	280	58	28	17	669,270

Source: *Encyclopedia of Zionism and Israel* (New York, 1971)

The General Conference is the highest Histadrut authority, and its resolutions are binding on all Histadrut members and institutions. The Conference chooses a Histadrut Council, thus reflecting the relative party strength at the Conference, and in turn, exercises authority between conferences. Table II shows the distribution of power of the major parties in the Histadrut with Mapai (European-American Jews) having the largest number of seats in the Conference. However, major decisions in the Histadrut go by majority, and Mapai issues the resolutions in most cases to its favorite. This creates tension between Mapai and the other parties which culminates in dissatisfaction by the unrepresented and weakly represented parties. As a

result, there emerged the Black Panther movement which carried the slogans of equality of wages, occupation and education. The Histadrut in fact determines wage policy and employment conditions for the entire nation. Therefore it is a key source for the nation's economy. From modest beginnings, Histadrut grew to become the most powerful political organization in Israel. Through its control of the Histadrut, Mapai was at all times able to dominate political life (hence creating differentiation and instability). The Histadrut sector accounted for 20% of net domestic product and employment in the period 1953-1960 (according to the Falk Institute for Economic Research in Israel). The 2,000 enterprises of the Histadrut sector contributed about one-third of the new product of agriculture, construction (Solel Boneh), and transportation and communications. Besides, it controls one-fifth that of mining and manufacturing, one-sixth that of trade and services, one-tenth that of banking, finance and real estate. Banking and finance, controlled by the private sector, is predominantly controlled by the European-American Jews.

In general, the government's involvement in economic development and social welfare reflects the ideology of the Israel labor parties, which had dominated all coalition cabinets since the establishment of the state.³² According to J. Joseph Loewenberg: "Histadrut elections, on national and local levels, are conducted on a political basis. All political parties registered in Israel regularly appear on Histadrut ballots. Members cast their votes for a given party, and each party appoints representatives to Histadrut conventions and councils in proportion to the vote it received."³³ Histadrut elections are always conducted in close proximity to national government elections, thus enhancing the possibility of similar results.³⁴ No wonder party representation in national government leadership is invariably reflected among Histadrut leadership. It is justifiable then to infer that the relationship between the Histadrut and the government is close.

The Kibbutzim

On the other hand, in 1963 the alliance of Kibbutz movement comprised of all the federations, was formed to handle the Kibbutz movement in several fields along with the government and industrial institutions. Most of the Kibbutzim are organized into four federations with each federation providing important social, economic, and educational services to the entire Kibbutzim affiliated with it. For example, the Kibbutz has the benefit of special advisory marketing and financial services from its own federation and from the Histadrut, especially "Tnuva" and "Hamashbir Hamerkazi", the two immense wholesale cooperatives which are controlled by it.³⁵

TABLE III
 "Kibbutzim"

<i>Federation</i>	<i>Affiliated to</i>	<i>Kibbutzim, No. of</i>
Ichud Hakvatzat Vehakibbutzim	Mapai	76
Hakibbutz Ha'artzi	Mapam	74
Hakibbutz Hameuahad	Ahdut A'vodah	58
Hakibbutz Hadai/religious	Mafdal	12

Source: J. Shepher, "Familism and Social Structure: the case of the Kibbutz" *Journal of Marriage and Family* (Aug., 1969).

From the table, and the data shown, the major Kibbutzim are controlled by the labor party.

Israel's Economic Conditions

The economic conditions in Israel constitute a major cause of instability, thus the basic conflict in Israel had always been economic growth and economic independence. Economic growth generates strong pressure for increased imports and retards the expansion of exports, thus making the economy more dependent on capital imports. Yet, another conflict exists between the goal of price stability on one hand; and economic growth, full employment, and economic independence on the other. Basically, Israel suffers from spiral inflation; for this reason it is not surprising to see that price increases were particularly steep in the early years, doubling between 1951 and 1953. However, in the period 1955-66 prices rose by 5.4% as with 1.8% in the U.S. and 2-5% in European countries.³⁶

What exacerbates these goal conflicts is the constant rise in the defense burden, both in relative and absolute terms. Inasmuch as defense spending accounted for 50% of government consumption expenditures and for about 11% of total resources. The defense burden was and still is relatively higher in Israel than in almost any other country including the United States, which spent 9.4% of total resources on defense in the period 1955-64. Annual defense expenditures in Israel (excluding local purchases) grew by 16 times between 1952 and 1966 and they rose sharply in the 1960's, reaching a record of \$629,000,000 in the fiscal year 1968-69. Besides, the purchase of arms abroad and the expansion of military industries at home, are particularly elements in the total defense burden.³⁷

The economic situation in Israel cannot be disregarded as constituting a major input to the political system's instability. Although the Arab-Israeli conflict comprises a burden on Israel's economy, yet it helps the parties to form a United Front regardless of their ideologies, party platforms and social differentiation.

Ethnic Diversity: Cultural Heterogeneity

In Israel, the different ethnic minorities, like the Ashkenazim and the Oriental-Sephardim form a cultural heterogeneous society. The different parties are identified along this ethnic division, which could be a good indicator to the measurement of political instability. Moreover, immigration statistics from 1948-1966 show the percentage of total population in Israel from the four continents: Europe, America, Asia, Africa.

Table IV shows the statistics of Jewish immigrants to Israel, from May 15, 1948 to December 31, 1966, by continent of origin. In general, disregarding the shifts of the immigrants whether European or Asian in certain span; the African-Asian Jews comprise a relative majority of the population, yet they are underprivileged socio-economically.

TABLE IV
"Percentage of Total Immigrants from the Four Continents"

<i>Year</i>	<i>From Europe and America</i>	<i>From Asia and Africa</i>	<i>Total</i>
1948	85.6	14.4	101,819
1949	52.7	47.3	239,076
1950	50.4	49.6	109,405
1951	28.9	71.1	173,901
1952	28.4	71.6	23,375
1953	24.9	75.1	10,347
1954	11.3	88.7	17,471
1955	7.1	92.9	36,303
1956	13.3	86.7	54,925
1957	57.5	42.5	69,733
1958	55.7	44.3	25,919
1959	66.8	33.2	22,987
1960	71.0	29.0	23,487
1961	52.7	47.3	46,571
1962	21.5	78.5	59,473
1963	30.7	69.3	62,086
1964	58.2	41.8	52,193
1965	52.7	47.3	28,501
1966	56.0	44.0	13,451
<i>Tourists Settling 1948-67</i>	59.1	40.9	26,448
<i>Total: 1948-66</i>	<i>Europe-America 45.8%</i>	<i>Asia-Africa 54.2%</i>	<i>Total Population 1,257,471</i>

Source: *Encyclopaedia of Zionism and Israel*, Vol.1 (New York, 1971).

In dealing with cultural and social heterogeneity, variables of education, housing, earnings and occupation, and finally crime rate are used as major indicators to show inequality in the Israeli socio-economic structure.

A. Cultural Differences

TABLE V³⁸
Literacy, education, and occupation of
immigrants, by continent of birth and sex
1963 (percentages)

	<i>Africa & Asia</i>		<i>Europe & America</i>	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Literacy: all languages	81.7	56.4	98.3	96.1
Educ.: Median school year compl.	6.9	3.7	9.5	8.8
<i>Occupation abroad</i>				
Professional and Technical		6.0		23.0
Merchants, Agents, Sales		11.0		4.9
Unskilled Labor		6.0		3.2

There are various ways of indexing the cultural differences between Easterners and Europeans. One can point to literacy rates, educational attainment, occupational structure, or even nutritional habits. Data on such variables, presented in the table, reveal clear distinctions between the two major groups. Thus the literacy rate for male Eastern immigrants is 81.7%, and for females 56.4%; for European males it is 98.3%, and for females 96.1%. The figures for educational attainment are similar, with a difference between Eastern and Western Jews in the median number of 2.6 school years for males and 5.1 for females. In both cases, of course, it was the Europeans who had the educational advantage. Similarly, four times more Europeans than Easterners work as professionals or technical workers before coming to Israel; however twice as many Easterners were employed as unskilled laborers.

TABLE VI³⁹
"Education by Origin (Percentages) Pre 1947-1961"

	<i>Years of School</i>					
	0	1-4	5-8	9-12	13+	
Asia-Africa	28.3%	11.4	34.4	19.7	6.2	62.395
Europe-American	1.6	8.4	40.4	32.4	17.2	117.100
A-A	17,658	7,113	21,464	12,292	38,6849	179,495
E-A	1874.6	9836	47,309	37,940	20,141	

By using Lambda coefficients to measure the relationship or the degree of association, (.74) showed that there was a distinctive gap as to the difference in education between the two major groups. However, in 1967-68 higher educational institutions enrolled 3,178 students, who had been born (or whose

fathers had been born) in Europe and the Americas. Besides, of the Jewish population aged 14 and above, 27.8% of those born in Asia and Africa had nine or more years of schooling, as against 53.6% of those born in Europe and the Americas.⁴⁰ However, in the distribution of occupations the differences were explicit also.

TABLE VII
(percentages)
Distribution by Occupation in Israel of
Men under 60 (who were 25-54 at Immigration)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Asia-Africa	Professional Managerial Clerical	Traders Agents Sales	All White Collar	Blue Collar	Farmers
Total	14.6	9.1	23.7	51.6	24.8
Up to 1947	17.2	19.0	36.2	52.7	10.9
1948-54	15.6	9.4	25.0	51.6	23.5
1955-61	11.8	5.8	17.6	51.5	30.8
Europe-America					
Total	29.7	12.3	42.0	50.5	7.5
Up to 1947	37.9	12.6	50.5	42.9	6.6
1948-54	25.9	14.3	40.2	51.7	8.1
1955-61	28.9	6.2	35.1	57.8	7.0

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Population and Housing Census 1961, Occupation Abroad.

The above data shows that the European-American Jews were more concentrated in the professional and managerial positions, whereas the Asian-African Jews were more concentrated in the farming, albeit there was 50-50% (approx.) in the blue-collar workers. From this finding, one can infer that the education and the occupation are correlated, and because of the low level of education and unskilled labor coming from Asia and Africa, the European-American Jews had better occupational and material privileges. In addition, the material gap between both widened the differentiation. The lower educational and skill level of the Asian and African born Jewish population of Israel was reflected also in its lower earnings. In 1968-69 the net average annual income of an urban employee's family whose head had been born in Asia or Africa was IL9,802 (\$2,800), as against IL12,973 (\$3,706) for a household unit whose head had been born in America.⁴¹

TABLE VIII⁴²
(percentages)
"Comparison of Low Income Groups"

Country of origin of Family Head (Jewish families)	Poverty Group up to IL100	Near Poverty Group IL100-125	Rest Of Population Over IL125
Asia-Africa	59.8	60.1	31.6
Europe-America	33.3	33.1	54.2
Israel	6.9	6.8	14.2

Both low-income groups show a relatively high percentage of family heads born in Asian-African countries and relatively low percentages of those born in Europe, America, and Israel. Among the working heads of large families, the percentage of those born in Asia and Africa was relatively large.

A similar disparity was found in housing. In 1968, only 14.4% of the long-established settlers and 19.9% of new European and Asian immigrant families had one room for two or more persons; the corresponding figures for Asian and African families (45.3% and 55.8% respectively) indicated that the latter group lived under far more crowded conditions.⁴³

Crime Rates in Israel

Crime rates for Jews, by place of birth, rank as follows, in descending order: African born, Asian born, Israel born, European-American born. This order has remained stable over the years.

Since the mid 1950's the crime rates of the African born have been about four to five times higher than those of the European born and almost twice as high as those of the Asian born. The rates of the Israeli born, consistent with the composite origin of this group, have been between those of the Asian and African-born, on the one hand, and those of the European-born on the other.

TABLE IX⁴⁴
 "Jewish Offenders by Place of Birth — 1951-60 (percentages)'

<i>Year</i>	<i>Israel-born</i>	<i>Asian-born</i>	<i>African-born</i>	<i>European- American-born</i>
1951	16.8	25.5	13.9	43.8
1952	15.2	32.1	16.4	36.3
1953	14.5		50.4	35.1
1958	16.8	28.6	30.7	24.6
1959	16.5	28.7	30.9	23.9
1960	18.5	27.9	32.6	21.0

The ranking order of criminal behavior of foreign-born adults in broad groups and in descending order is as follows: Moroccan-born, Algerian, Tunisian, and Libyan-born; members of oriental communities from Asia; Asian-Egyptian born, Sephardim, Sephardim born in Balkan states, European and American born.

TABLE X⁴⁵
 "Adult Offenders per 1,000 of Specified Pop.: 1960-61"

<i>Country of Birth</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
All foreign-born	9.6
Morocco	33.4
Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya	18.5
Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt	10.6
Greece and Bulgaria	5.7
Hungary and Romania	5.3
European and American Countries	3.9
Asia	15.0

The large majority of offenders are described in the police records simply as unskilled laborers. The clue to the differential crime rates may be found in such differences as cultural levels and orientations. It may be that the clash between the cultural codes, norms, and values of these immigrants and those of the receiving community, causes a relative increase in the crime rates of such immigrants. A lack of relevant surveys and public opinion studies makes it impossible to give precise data about the actual attitudes of the Ashkenazim toward the Oriental Jews. Obviously, cultural differences could create a feeling of estrangement between the two ethnic groups and a definite preference for associating with persons of similar background and mentality is inevitable. It is important to note that the source of major tensions in Israel is not inequality per se but the fact that the inequality is closely linked to ethnicity.⁴⁶

Conclusions and Remarks

Basically, the major findings reflected in the simple correlation of percentages of the various variables used, have delved marginally in measuring the relative degree of instability through party factionalism. Political instability in this case is perceived, as the degree or amount of aggression directed by groups within the political system against the complex of office-holders in the government. However, the results of the basic criteria used in this study show relative indications that there is some degree of instability in the Israeli political system as reflected in its cultural heterogeneous society.

One of the major findings inferred from this study is that a multi-party system based on a coalition government leads to instability. Party factionalism in Israel based on the power concentration of the different parties in the political and socio-economic structures portrays a distinctive division of the major parties along ethnic lines. Consequently, the socio-cultural differences between the "Ashkenazim" and the "Sephardim," along the criteria of education, occupation, income and governmental positions are good indicators of discrepancy that eventually might lead to instability.

Instability, however, could be detected through the increasing crime rates of the unskilled-labor, the low-level educated of the Oriental-Sephardim; as has been shown by the above data — not to mention the direct control of the "Ashkenazim" of the means of production in the public and private sectors, as has been portrayed by the data produced on the "Histradrut" and the collective cooperatives. The European-American Jews comprising a potential minority in Israel during 1948-73, controlled the key positions in the government (Knesset) and economic sector, thus planting the seeds of future disruption in the fabric of the Israeli socio-economic and political infrastructure. This could lead to a direct confrontation yet to be perceived in the near future.

Furthermore, the symptoms of instability are growing, and a valid example is the present economic and political conditions that are in constant deterioration, which are widely exposed along the social political and economic differentiation of the major ethnic groups. In general, the symptoms of instability are in constant growth; however these symptoms are currently overwhelmed by the issues of national boundaries, security and the Arab-Israeli conflict. If peace ever prevails, the contradictions in the Israeli political system will be more explicit along party factionalism striving for the attainment of power in the government.

It is worth mentioning that the present Israeli political system, and especially after the 1977 elections, is acquiring new traits as to its perpetuation. In order to make this study more valuable and concrete, an updating of the various power distribution of the parties in the Israeli

government along its socio-economic structures is imperative. Moreover, one should take into consideration the recent political developments and the fluctuations in the parties alignments that could throw some additional light on the causal factors of the instability. As a result, the author is in the process of updating the issues raised in this study in order to give a more recent and comprehensive description of Israel's political instability as based on party factionalism and ethnic diversity. The author is conscious of the lack of available data that could support the sub-problems raised in this study. Finally, this study should be an opening avenue to future scholarly research in the field of ethnicity and political instability.

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