



Do Natural Antagonists Ever Cooperate in Legislation? Jewish and Arab Legislators in the Israeli Knesset

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Abstract

A superficial look at Israeli society might cause one to conclude that there are few situations in which Jewish and Arab legislators in the Israeli parliament (Knesset) would cooperate. Using data about the initiation and co-sponsorship of bills in the Knesset, we test this common wisdom and determine that such is not the case. As our results demonstrate, Arab MKs understand that the only way to pass legislation that benefits their community is to cooperate with their Jewish colleagues. We examined two different kinds of cooperative strategies between Arab and Jewish MKs: intra-party cooperation and cross-national cooperation. The most frequent cooperative strategy that occurs between parties takes place when Jewish MKs initiate a bill and Arab MKs co-sponsor it. The most frequent cooperative strategy with regard to cooperation within parliament is when Jewish MKs initiate a bill and Arab MKs and Jewish MKs co-sponsor it. However, the two patterns that result in the highest degree of legislative success are different. In intra-party cooperation, it happens when Arab and Jewish MKs initiate a bill and Jewish MKs co-sponsor it. In cooperation within parliament, it occurs when Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiate a bill and Arab MKs co-sponsor it. Our contribution to the literature is the form of the analysis we created to map the various cooperative strategies that MKs use. Testing this approach in other contexts is important for validating its usefulness.

Keywords: co-sponsorship, cooperation scale, intra-party cooperation, cooperation within parliament, Jewish and Arab MKs, Israel, legislation.

"Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?" (Amos 3: 3)

Amos, the biblical prophet, maintains that cooperation between two or more people is intentional rather than accidental. Legislators in modern democracies tend to cooperate with each other when they have common goals. This study investigates whether this cooperation exists between Arab MKs and Jewish MKs in the Israeli parliament (the Knesset). It contributes to the literature on political representation in Israel and, more broadly, to the understanding of the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation. It also sheds light on the strategies used by Arab MKs to advance the interests of their voters despite their minority status. We maintain that even though it seems that Arab MKs and Jewish MKs will never cooperate, when it comes to substantive representation, both sides choose cooperative strategies in order to advance their goals on behalf of their voters. We identified two types of cooperation: intra-party and within parliament, which we called cross-national cooperation.

The article proceeds as follows. First, we discuss the meaning of descriptive and substantive representation. Second, we describe the cooperative strategies of representatives. Third, we analyze the meaning of being a minority in a democracy with a special focus on the Arab minority in Israel, and finally we review legislation and co-sponsorship as cooperative strategies for minorities in democracies.

Substantive and descriptive representation

What are the main demands of representatives, and how can we measure their success or failure in fulfilling these demands? Most scholars agree that the puzzle of representation revolves around its content and the fact that its definition implies the paradox of a person's being present without being physically present (Miller and Stokes 1963; Pitkin 1967, 2004; Eulau and Karps 1977; Fenno 1978; Hall 1996; Rehfeld 2009). Pitkin (1967) argued that the cornerstone of representation is responsiveness to the will of the voters. Studies about responsiveness are nearly always about the relationship between constituents and representatives, and focus on both the representatives' behavior and their reelection as the electorate's reaction to their representatives (Grant and Rudolph 2004).

Representation as responsiveness can be divided into two components: *descriptive* and *substantive*. By descriptive, scholars mean the true reflection of the essential characteristics of the voters in terms of their gender, race or ethnicity (Pitkin 1967; Eulau and Karps 1977; Box-Steffensmeier et al. 2004; Swers 2005;

Devlin and Elgie 2008; Wangnerud 2009). The *substantive* component is more complex. Pitkin's (1967) *substantive* component deals with the actual activities of the representatives in their daily work in the House or in their constituency. Eulau and Karps (1977) disaggregated the substantive component into three dimensions: *policy*, where the target is the great public issues that agitate the political process, *service*, which involves the efforts of representatives to secure particular benefits for individuals or groups in their constituency and *allocation*, which

refers to the representatives' efforts to obtain benefits for their constituency. The current research concentrates on the *substantive* component of representation by examining legislation initiated and co-sponsored by Arab MKs and Jewish MKs in the Knesset.

The cooperative strategies of representatives

Cooperative strategies, although not a new phenomenon, are becoming important in multiple research fields such as economics, management, education and politics. However, there is no theory of cooperation at the meta level acceptable to scholars from the different fields (Child et al. 2005; Nag et al. 2007; Carter et al. 2008). While an exploration of the broader theoretical questions involving cooperation is beyond the scope of this paper, we will focus on two patterns of political cooperation: cooperation within parliament and intra-party cooperation.

Theories such as game theory, strategic management theory and origination theory provide some partial descriptions of cooperative strategies. The existing studies on the topic focus on the sources, benefits and implications of cooperation, as well as methods for achieving it (e.g., Contractor and Lorange 1988; Faulkner 1995; Lau 2004; Child et al. 2005). For example, the strategic management theory emphasizes that firms cooperate to expand and grow, and are motivated to do so when transaction costs are minimized (Faulkner 1995). Lou (2004) identified four different forms of cooperation: partners, adapters, solo players and contenders. In the political field, scholars have examined inter-parliamentary cooperation, cooperation within parliament and intra-party cooperation (Slaughter 2004; Kiiver 2006; Porter et al. 2005; Crum and Fossum 2009; Soroka et al. 2009; Tam-Cho and Fowler 2010; Marangoni and Tronconi 2011). They suggested that the incentives to cooperate within parliament could be the representatives' constituency, their desire to be re-elected or their social networking. Hence, we can say that the decision to cooperate with others is based mainly on the desire to achieve goals framed previously.

Schlesinger (1966) was the first to claim that "an ambitious politician must act today in terms of the electorate of the office which he hopes to win tomorrow" (p. 6). In other words, unlike later scholars who argued that the goal of most representatives is to be re-elected (Mayhew 1974), Schlesinger sees the representative as a multi-dimensional actor. Representatives have multiple objectives that may often conflict with one another (Fenno 1978). These objectives lead them to adopt behavioral strategies based on the procedures of their parliaments (Strøm 1997). Schlesinger (1966) identified three forms of ambition among representatives: *discrete ambition*, *static ambition* and *progressive ambition*. Discrete ambition is about being in politics for a defined period and then returning to private life. Static ambition is about a long-term career in one stable position, while progressive ambition is about a long-term career that involves successively improving positions. The last ambition is the one that motivates most politicians.

To achieve this goal, candidates, and afterwards, representatives, need to distinguish themselves from their co-partisans (Carey and Shugart 1995). Hence, we might expect representatives to be uncooperative with each other. However, studies show that representatives do use various cooperative strategies depending on the interests they want to advance (Soroka et al. 2009; Tam-Cho and Fowler 2010; Marangoni and Tronconi 2011). As mentioned previously, that cooperation can occur at the inter-parliamentary, intra-parliamentary and intra-party levels.

Most studies on inter-parliamentary cooperation have investigated the EU. This research posited that the goal was strengthening national parliamentary power in Europe through inter-parliamentary cooperation by creating parliamentary networks with other parliaments. Inter-parliamentary cooperation enables parliaments to increase their control over their governments (Judge 1995; Slaughter 2004; Kiiver 2006; Crum and Fossum 2009). Kiiver (2006) claimed that successful cooperation across parliaments requires a certain amount of trust and overlap of interests, but inter-parliamentary networking is bound to remain of limited importance.

Crum and Fossum (2009) claimed that EU inter-parliamentary relations resemble a parliamentary network, which is useful for describing how previously independent bodies have become linked in a horizontal structure with functional relations between them. However, the flexibility of the parliamentary network limits its analytical utility. Crum and Fossum said that the horizontal orientation of the network notion makes it difficult to incorporate the distinctive vertical, multilevel dimension that shapes inter-parliamentary relations in the EU.

Cooperation within parliament can be based on several incentives, the first of which is the representatives' constituency. If cooperation promotes the representatives' interests in the eyes of their constituency, they will do so (Pitkin 1967; Soroka et al. 2009; Marangoni and Tronconi 2011). For example, Marangoni and Tronconi (2011) found that MPs with strong territorial roots behave as agents of the local community, promoting its interests and demands in their parliamentary activity. The second incentive is re-election. When cooperation enhances their re-election possibilities, they will do so. Bowler (2010) determined that the number of private members bills initiated by British MPs was both influenced by the electoral margin from the previous election and positively associated with electoral performance in the subsequent election. The third incentive is social networking. When the potential partners are part of their social network, legislators will cooperate with them (Porter et al. 2005; Tam-Cho and Fowler 2010). Congress is an example of a social network (Porter et al. 2005), a social entity in which the actors are interdependent and have relationships with others in the network.

Intra-party cooperation can be based on party unity or being part of the majority party. When cooperation is a demand of party unity or the majority party (Cox and McCubbins 2005; Martin and Vanberg 2008; Pedersen 2010; Crisp and Driscoll 2012), legislators will comply with the demand. Cox and McCubbins (2005) claimed that the

"cartelization" of the majority party makes strategic use of cameral procedures and the distribution of resources to ensure that those bills that reach a vote for final passage will not divide the government coalition and will preserve the image of the ruling party for the good of its members. Crisp and Driscoll (2012) examined the strategic choice of voting procedures and their relationship to maintaining party unity. Representatives choose their strategies based on the reasoning that some items have different value than others. Martin and Vanberg (2008: 514) claimed that the logic of the coalition's behavior appears to change gradually over the life of the government from one of cooperation and compromise to one of electioneering and position taking. Finally, Pedersen (2010) examined the impact of intra-party politics on the behavior of political parties in the coalition. He found that the ability of parties to convert parliamentary representation into actual influence on parliamentary decisions is conditioned by their internal distribution of power.

In addition to these three areas of cooperation, there is one more incentive to cooperate--personal attitudes. When cooperation is part of the legislators' personal attitudes (Searing 1994; Crisp et al. 2004), they will do so. For example, Crisp et al. (2004) found that the bills initiated by individual legislators reflected their personal vote-seeking incentives in terms of their focus on national versus local goals.

In the Israeli context, some of these explanations such as constituency (Israel has just one constituency) or the electoral system are less relevant. However, other explanations such as the demands of party unity, the social network or personal attitudes can be relevant to the Israeli context.

The minority in a democracy and the Arab minority in Israel

It is common wisdom that democracies must balance minority rights with majority rule. Indeed, as democracy is conceived today, the minority's rights must be protected no matter how singular or alienated that minority is from the majority society. Otherwise, the rights of the majority lose their meaning (Cohen-Almagor 2002). The danger of majority tyranny is the oppression of minority groups in society based solely on criteria such as skin color, ethnicity or nationality, religion, or sexual orientation (Donovan and Bowler 1998; Haider-Markel et. al. 2007). Hence, in a democracy, effective mechanisms for protecting minority rights are essential to the success of any resolution of disputes (Eisenberg and Spinner-Halev 2004; Weller and Nobbs 2010).

The focus of the current research is on majority-minority relations in a unique context, the Israeli parliament (the Knesset), which includes representatives of the Arab minority and the Jewish majority. What makes this relationship unique is that Israel is the only country in the Middle East in which Arabs are a minority. At the same time, the Jewish majority in Israel is a minority in the Middle East, and the state is surrounded by hostile Arab countries. Hence, the Arab minority in Israel differs from the majority both in terms of nationality and religion, in addition to its connection to the global Arab world.

The nature of the relations between Jews and Arabs has affected the formation of the Israeli Arabs' identity in a manner that has been a source of ongoing academic argument. Some say that the Arab minority in Israel is undergoing a process of Israelization (Smootha 1989; Ghanem and Ozacky-Lazar 1990), while others claim that the Arabs in Israel identify with the Palestinians in the territories (Lustick 1985). Furthermore, the Arab minority in Israel has undergone significant social, cultural, economic and political changes (Smootha 1984; Schueftan 2011) through their adoption of Western norms, values and lifestyles (Rekhess 1993; Schueftan 2011). Thus, the self-identity of the Arabs in Israel is not static, and is influenced by social and political conditions (Amara 2003; Schueftan 2011). Furthermore, they are torn between their national Palestinian and civic Israeli identities.

In order to understand the Arab minority and their participation in Israeli politics, we need to look at three areas that interact with one another: the characteristics of the Arab minority, their political behavior and the role the Arab parties play in the Israeli political system. There have been dramatic changes in all three of the areas from the time of the establishment of the State of Israel until today. We can point to four main changes: historical events such as wars and peace agreements, the policy of the Israeli government towards its Arab citizens (some might say the absence of a policy), the development of the national identity of the Palestinians, and the modernization of the traditional culture of the Arab minority. In the following pages we will analyze these three areas based on the four dramatic changes they have undergone.

Israel was established as a Jewish state, with the Arab minority outside the boundaries of the national identity (Frisch 2011; Ghanem and Mustafa 2011; Haklai 2011). Ben-Gurion adopted a policy of separation and domination vis-à-vis the Arab minority, which was suspected of affiliation with those with whom the Israeli state had troubled relations (Haklai 2011; Peleg and Waxman 2011). Some scholars have claimed that in order to analyze the identity of the Arab minority in Israel, we must understand that it cannot be separated from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Ghanem and Mustafa 2011; Peleg and Waxman 2011).

Hence, the question is, what is the best way to describe the identity of the Arab minority in Israel--Israeli Arabs or Palestinians Arabs? The answer is not simple, given that the collective identity of the Arabs in Israel is complex, multifaceted, fluid and has changed over time in response to numerous internal and external developments (Ghanem and Mustafa 2011; Schueftan 2011). During the early years of Israel's existence from 1948 to 1967, an Israeli-Arab identity prevailed, and very few Arabs in Israel publicly identified themselves as Palestinians (Ghanem 2001; Frisch 2011; Peleg and Waxman 2011). During these years, most Arab elites were concerned with guaranteeing immediate local interests and complied with the practices of the ruling stratum. Ethno nationalist

claims were made only by a handful of unorganized intellectuals. From the perspective of political parties, the Communist party was the single most popular political organization among Arab voters (Rekheess 1993; Ghanem 2001; Frisch 2011), in addition to satellite Zionist political parties that represented the rest of the Arab citizens (Frisch 2011). Given that martial law existed until 1966, the Arab minority experienced only minor social changes. Therefore, we can conclude that in the first two decades of the State of Israel, the Arab minority tried to cope with the new reality of being a minority in the Jewish state.

The decades following the 1967 war with Israel's conquest of the territories created a new reality for the Arab minority and the Jewish majority in Israel (Ghanem 2001; Rekheess 2007b; Schueftan 2011). The transformation of the political behavior of the Arab citizens and the strengthening of the choice to protest that arose from the reunion between the Arab citizens and the Palestinians in the territories led to a gradual emergence of a self-identified and distinct Palestinian national minority in Israel. It was during this time period that Palestinian nationalism gained strength among the Arabs in Israel (Ghanem 2001; Frisch 2011).

Changing patterns of mobilization were accompanied by changing political demands. Thus, when the Communist party came to the forefront of the independent Arab mobilization, it articulated political demands at the national level that largely focused on the distribution of resources (Haklai 2011). At the same time, social changes occurred among the Arab minority. The modernization process that included urbanization, increased educational opportunities, economic expansion, and occupational transitions produced a new elite that established new political organizations and acted as mobilizing agents (Ghanem 2001; Haklai 2011). Since the Oslo agreements, the political discourse of the Arab minority in Israel has moved from the level of individual achievements to the politics of rights on the collective level, and to the politics of identity (Ghanem and Mustafa 2011). Furthermore, in the 1990s the young Arab generation began to participate in Israeli political activity. During this period, two new trends developed in Arab political life, exemplified by the National Democratic Assembly (Balad) and the Islamic movement with parties such as the Arab Democratic Party, the United Arab List, and the Arab Movement for Renewal. Some of the parties combined their lists of candidates. Nevertheless, competition among the Arab minority parties vying for the Arab vote led to an outbidding dynamic whereby each party needed to prove its credentials as the best representative of the Arab minority's interests (Jamal 2001; Frisch 2011; Haklai 2011). Each one of the parties tried to differentiate itself from the others. However, new data from a recent survey conducted by Nohad Ali and Asad Ghanem indicates solid support for the need to unite all of the Arab parties into one Arab bloc.

What is the current situation with regard to the characteristics of the Arab minority, their political behavior and the role the Arab parties play in the Israeli political system? Today, the Arab community in Israel perceives itself as a national minority and increasingly demands to be recognized as such (Ghanem 2001; Frisch 2011; Ghanem and Mustafa 2011; Peleg and Waxman 2011). Furthermore, despite the heterogeneity of Arab society, Arabs in Israel are a singular minority with a shared collective identity that differs from that of Israeli Jews as well as from the Palestinians outside of Israel. Indeed, they are 'Palestinians in Israel' (Peleg and Waxman 2011). They want both individual equality and national equality with Jewish Israelis. Furthermore, they are not prepared to wait until the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is over for these demands to be met (Ghanem and Mustafa 2011). The vast majority of the Arab minority in Israel wants to coexist with Israeli Jews, remain citizens of the State of Israel and overwhelmingly prefer peaceful protest over violence to create change (Frisch 2011; Peleg and Waxman 2011). The majority of Israel's Arab citizens still work within the system. They seem to be cognizant of both the economic and democratic benefits derived from citizenship in the Jewish state despite recent legislative efforts to constrain the Arab political elite (Frisch 2011). The Arab minority has always had to deal with the Jewish ownership of the state. However, only in recent decades has Arab minority politics challenged the state's foundational principles as a Jewish state and demanded a distinct and expansive autonomous space (Haklai 2011).

Israel's Arab citizens have almost unbounded freedom in choosing between boycott and abstention, voting for Arab parties with different ideological profiles, or voting for an array of Jewish parties. The choices they make accurately reflect their affinities, tastes, and interests (Rouhana, et al. 2004a; Frisch 2011; Schueftan 2011). There has been debate about whether the voting patterns of Arab citizens have been influenced by the political changes between 1988 and today (e.g., Rouhana et al. 2004a; Schueftan 2011). The Oslo agreements encouraged a pragmatic approach among the Arab parties, but the outbreak of the Intifada in 2000 reduced the voting rates of Arab citizens. Most of them vote for the Arab parties, with only 5% to 7% voting for the Jewish parties (Rouhana et al. 2004a). Furthermore, the Arab turnout in the general elections is relatively low (around 50% compared with 67% in the general Israeli population) and can be considered a vote of no confidence in the Arab parties and their representatives (Frisch 2011; Schueftan 2011).

Some have asked, why run for a seat in the Knesset? What can an Arab MK do for his or her voters? (Rouhana et al. 2004b; Schueftan 2011). Schueftan (2011) is the first scholar who delved deeply into the political behavior of Arab MKs and looked for answers. He asked what the Arab members of the Israeli parliament should do in order to advance their civil, collective and national issues, and categorized the responses into two areas: normative and political-utilitarian. The current research examines the content of the actual parliamentary activities of Arab MKs and the ways in which they represent their voters.

Minorities and legislation

Given their limited presence in parliaments, minorities have a difficult time passing legislation. The solution to this problem is to find partners with whom they can team to co-sponsor the bills they want to pass. Studies about minority activity in legislatures found that because they are excluded from the decision making process, they tend to favor tools with fewer restrictions and more public prominence (Koger 2006; Rocca 2007). Most of the research regarding minorities in parliaments concentrates on African American Congress people (Mansbridge 1999; Cobb and Jenkins 2001; Tate 2003) and, to a lesser degree, Hispanic Congress people (Hero and Tolbert 1995).

Sponsorship has become a very important part of the legislative process worldwide. It is unique because sponsorship is not about voting on legislation. Members of Congress invest a great deal of time convincing their colleagues to sponsor their legislation (Koger 2003; Fowler 2006; Tam-Cho and Fowler 2010). Even though sponsoring bills has no formal effect on the legislative process, the sponsorship enables legislators to take a position (Campbell 1982; Woon 2008) and can have policy implications (Kessler and Krehbiel 1996; Rocca and Sanchez 2008). Sponsorship also gives political leaders low cost information about the political gains they can reap from legislation (Koger 2003), and roll call and co-sponsorship data are both used to make assessments about ideal policies (Aleman et al. 2009).

From our perspective, using sponsorship to measure minority activity helps us determine their positions (Schiller 1995; Koger 2003) and the kinds of policies they favor (Kessler and Krehbiel 1996; Talbert and Potoski 2002). The strength of sponsorship is meaningful for minorities, so it is interesting to understand how they use it. Nevertheless, a recent study about minorities in the US Congress found that they use sponsorship less frequently than their non-minority colleagues (Rocca and Sanchez 2008).

What pattern do Arab minority MKs follow with regard to cooperation and co-sponsorship in legislation? Our research hypothesis is that Arab MKs are rational actors, so they will choose both cooperation within parliament and intra-party cooperative strategies with their Jewish MKs colleagues to advance their goals for their voters. By rational actors we mean that they assess the benefits and disadvantages of engaging in a particular behavior, resulting in choices whose consequences affect significant numbers of people. In other words, to act rationally means to choose better alternatives over worse ones (Brams 2014). Scholars have also maintained that being rational means being strategic (e.g. Quirk 1989; Hitt and Tyler 1991; Riker 1996; Cox 1997; Ostrom 1998; Doron and Sened 2001; Rabin 2004; Woll and Jacquot 2010; Powell et al. 2011; Brams 2014).

Methodology

In order to address the research hypothesis, we gathered data from the 18th Knesset, which was elected in February 2009. We decided to choose this Knesset term for several reasons. First, the coalition was composed of parties from the right wing and the senior partner was *Israel Beteinu*, whose electoral campaign focused on the distinction between citizens who are loyal to the state and those who are not. Some argue that this distinction implies a certain degree of racism and discrimination against the Arab citizens in Israel. Second, beginning in February 2009 up until now there have been more than 40 newspaper articles about racism legislation in the Knesset and about protests against it. Third, the senior Arab MKs noted in their interviews that there has been an increase in the racist atmosphere in the Knesset, evident in the topics discussed in committees and on the floor, and in the way those debates take place. Fourth, according to the annual report of the Mossawa Center for Equality, in 2009, 21 racism and discrimination bills were presented (in 2007 - 11 bills and in 2008 - 12 bills). Thus, the 18th Knesset can be an interesting time period in which to examine cooperative strategies in cross-national legislation.

With regard to the descriptive aspects of representation, the Israeli parliament has one chamber with 120 MKs. There have been Arab MKs in the Knesset since its inception, a reflection of the Arab presence in Israeli society. However, their numbers have always been less than their percentage in the population. For example, in 1949, there were three Arab MKs, accounting for 2.5% of the total number of MKs, while the Arab population was 13% of the total Israeli population. Over the years there has been an increase both in the Arab population and the number of their representatives in the Knesset. In the current 18th Knesset there are 14 Arab MKs, accounting for 11.66% of the total number of MKs, while their share in the total population is 24%.

The database from which we derived our information contains all of the private member bills presented in the Knesset since February 2009. We classified these bills and all of the private bills that passed based on the likelihood of cooperation between Jewish MKs and Arab MKs both intra-party and within parliament. Table 1 presents the results. During 2011, we also conducted in-depth interviews with current Arab MKs (10 out of 14) to obtain their perspective on representation and cross-national legislation.

Our study uses a mixed method of both qualitative and quantitative analysis. First, we assessed the number and composition of the cooperative strategies both intra-party and within parliament. Then we analyzed the content of the bills presented, the interviews and the content of the bills that passed.

Cross-national legislation – Does it exist?

From the beginning of the 18th Knesset in February 2009 until August 2012, Israeli MKs initiated 4090 private bills. Some might say that such a number indicates a high level of productivity on the part of representatives, while others will argue that the real measure is the number of bills that actually passed (Matthews 1960; Frantzich 1979;

Howell et al. 2000; Wawro 2000; Anderson et al. 2003; Alder and Wilkerson 2005; Garand and Burke 2006; Cox and Terry 2008). This study considers both questions.

Patterns of cooperation

As Table 1 illustrates, we divided the cooperation between Arab MKs and Jewish MKs into eight possibilities. Furthermore, we defined various degrees of cooperation based on the interviews we conducted with the Arab MKs and the literature mentioned above. When MKs from only one group initiated or co-sponsored a bill, we considered it a low level of cooperation. In such cases, co-sponsorship means that the initiator asked another MK to add his/her name to the bill. Doing so requires almost no investment of time on the part of the co-sponsoring MK, other than to ascertain who else is signing on to the bill. There are times when some of the co-sponsors suggest other MKs as co-sponsors too.

The degree of cooperation increases when both sides need to sit and talk about the bill that is going to be presented. Hence, there are three patterns of medium cooperation. A high degree of cooperation occurs when the initiation of the bill comes from both Jewish MKs and Arab MKs, and there is at least one option of co-sponsorship. In this case, both sides need to discuss the essence of the bill and agree on it. All of these activities demand time and the willingness to cooperate. A very high degree of cooperation results when both the initiation and the co-sponsorship involve Jewish MKs and Arab MKs.

Table 1: Possibilities of cross-national cooperation (cooperation within parliament)

	Degree of cooperation
Jewish MKs initiation + Arab MKs co-sponsorship	Low
Arab MKs initiation + Jewish MKs co-sponsorship	Low
Jewish MKs initiation + Jewish MKs and Arab MKs co-sponsorship	Medium
Arab MKs initiation + Jewish MKs and Arab MKs co-sponsorship	Medium
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation without any co-sponsorship	Medium
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation + Arab co-sponsorship	High
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation + Jewish MKs co-sponsorship	High
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation + Jewish MKs and Arab MKs co-sponsorship	Very high

Findings

In Table 2 we can see the distribution of the number of bills without any co-sponsorship.

Table 2: Initiation of bills by nationality without co-sponsorship

	Number of private bills	Percentage of total private bills
Jewish MKs initiation without any co-sponsorship	2556	62.5%
Arab MKs initiation without any co-sponsorship	99	2.42%

More than half of the private bills--2556 out of 4090 (62.5%)—were initiated by Jewish MKs alone without any co-sponsorship. In contrast, only 99 bills (2.42%) were initiated by Arab MKs alone without any co-sponsorship. Thus, in the 18th Knesset there were 2655 (65%) private bills that were presented without any cooperative strategies, be they intra-party or within the parliament. Here we can see that Israeli MKs prefer to work individually and without any kind of cooperation. This pattern can be explained by changes in the candidate selection method that occurred during the 1990s and since then has become part of the Israeli political debate (Hazan 1999).

We first describe the intra-party cooperation between parties with only Jewish and Arab MKs and then discuss cooperation within parliament between Jewish and Arab MKs from different parties. We excluded cooperation between Jewish MKs within the same party or within parliament as well as cooperation between Arab MKs within the same party or within parliament from the analysis. As a result, we removed their 730 bills from the total of 4,090.

Intra-party cooperation

Two parties initiated and co-sponsored the most bills by cooperating within the party: *Hadash*, which is an Arab communist party with one Jewish MK, and *Israel Beteinu*, which is Jewish party with one Arab MK. The third party is *Kadima*, a Jewish party with an Arab MK that presented only four bills. Table 3 illustrates the distribution of the intra-party cooperation. As we can see, the most frequent pattern of cooperation is when a Jewish MK

initiates a bill and an Arab MK co-sponsors it (57.5%). The second most common pattern is when an Arab MK initiates a bill and it receives Jewish and Arab co-sponsorship (30.33%).

Table 3: Intra-party cooperation (parties with Jewish and Arab MKs).

	Number of private bills	Percentage of the total private bills (n=4090)	Percentage of the total intra-party cooperation (n=426)
Jewish MKs initiation + Arab co-sponsorship	245	6%	57.5%
Arab MKs initiation + Jewish co-sponsorship	4	0.097%	0.93%
Jewish MKs initiation + Jewish and Arab co-sponsorship	38	0.93%	8.9%
Arab MKs initiation + Jewish and Arab co-sponsorship	129	3.15%	30.33%
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation without any co-sponsorship	1	0.024%	0.23%
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation + Jewish co-sponsorship	9	0.22%	2.11%

The findings accord both with the literature and the in-depth interviews we conducted. The party is the basic unit for representatives. When cooperation is a demand of party unity or the majority party, the representatives will respond to this demand (Cox and McCubbins 2005; Martin and Vanberg 2008; Pedersen 2010; Crisp and Driscoll 2012). The Arab MKs who are part of Jewish parties and the Arab MKs who have Jewish MKs in their Arab parties indicated that the party is the first and the natural arena in which to cooperate using all of the parliamentary tools available to them: committees, legislation and motions for the agenda. Therefore, when they initiate legislation, it natural for them to ask their party colleagues to co-sponsor their bills. Similarly, they will co-sponsor bills if their party colleagues ask them to do so.

Cooperation within parliament

We maintain that Arab MKs will tend to cooperate with their Jewish colleagues even though they do not share the same party in a process called cooperation within parliament, or what we called cross-national cooperation. Table 4 demonstrates the pattern of this cooperation with the scale we created to map the different degrees of cooperation.

In the 18th Knesset, 4090 bills were presented. Of these, 2655 bills had no joint sponsorship, leaving us 1435 bills with four options of cooperation based on nationality. Given our focus on intra-party cooperation between Arab and Jewish MKs and cross-national cooperation, we excluded those bills that involved cooperation between Jewish MKs and other Jewish MKs only, and Arab MKs and other Arab MKs only. Thus, our final analysis contains 426 bills involving intra-party cooperation between Arab and Jewish MKs and 279 bills involving cross-national cooperation. The latter figure represents 39.57% of the 705 bills, demonstrating what we consider a high degree of cooperation in cross-national legislation.

Table 4: Cooperation within parliament (cross-national cooperation)

	Degree of cooperation	Number of private bills	Percentage of the total private bills (n=4090)	Percentage of the total cross-national cooperation (n=279)
Jewish MKs initiation + Arab co-sponsorship	Low	14	0.34%	5%
Arab MKs initiation + Jewish co-sponsorship	Low	1	0.024%	0.35%
Jewish MKs initiation + Jewish and Arab co-sponsorship	Medium	171	4.18%	61.3%
Arab MKs initiation + Jewish and Arab co-sponsorship	Medium	12	0.29%	4.33%
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation without any co-sponsorship	Medium	40	0.98%	14.33%
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation + Arab co-sponsorship	High	1	0.024%	0.35%
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation + Jewish co-sponsorship	High	20	0.49%	7.17%
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation + Jewish and Arab co-sponsorship	Very high	20	0.49%	7.17%

The most frequent cross-national cooperation is when Jewish MKs initiate a bill and both Jewish and Arab MKs co-sponsor it (61.3%). We assessed this degree of cooperation as medium. The second, but much less common phenomenon is when Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiate a bill without any co-sponsorship. We rated this cooperative strategy as medium too. Only 14.69% of the bills involved what we considered a high or very high degree of cooperation. Hence, our findings confirm the research hypothesis that Arab MKs tend to cooperate with their Jewish colleagues even though they do not share the same party. These data are consistent with the literature about the way minorities use co-sponsorship to take positions and define their policies (Schiller 1995; Kessler and Krehbiel 1996; Talbert and Potoski 2002; Koger 2003; Rocca and Sanchez 2008).

Given the clear dominance of the Jewish majority, the Arab MKs adopted a realistic approach in order to promote their agenda. Furthermore, the fact that majority members and minority members sit together and invest time in order to present a shared bill is an important step in cross-national legislative cooperation.

Given that we have data for only one Knesset term, we cannot draw conclusions about whether the patterns of cooperation have changed, and if so, in what direction.

Interviews with Arab MKs

The Arab MKs we interviewed indicated that not only they do not rule out cooperation with Jewish MKs from other parties, they actually consider it an excellent means of promoting their agenda, which is generally impossible to pass with the support of just the Arab MKs. With regard to the content of that agenda, the Arab MKs noted that around 80% of the issues are not controversial. They are social issues that are relevant to all citizens of Israel regardless of their gender, nationality, religion and other affiliations. It is interesting to note the cooperative strategies and serious work that is invested in the legislation beyond ideological disagreements between the Arab MKs and the Jewish MKs. Furthermore, we can see that all of the incentives that appeared in previous studies about cooperation within parliament are relevant: the desire to be re-elected and social networking when mutual interests exist. Given the fact that Israel has only one constituency, the third incentive – the representatives' constituency – is less of a factor. However, the Arab legislators regard themselves as the representatives of all Arab citizens (Jamal 2011), so we can consider the constituency incentive a relevant one.

Legislative success

Presenting a bill is necessary but not sufficient for the legislative process (e.g., Wawro 2000). Scholars have defined legislative productivity as success in passing bills (e.g., Frantzych 1979; Cox and McCubbins 2005). Therefore, in the next stage, we analyzed the rate of passage of the bills to determine how cross-national cooperative strategies contributed to legislative success. However, first we will explore intra-party cooperation between parties that have Jewish and Arab MKs.

Of the 426 bills that showed evidence of intra-party cooperation, 11 of them passed (2.58%). Previous studies about the Israeli parliament have demonstrated that since the establishment of Israel in 1948, on average, 10% of the private bills are passed. This study is the first to offer a different look at the initiation and passage of legislation, an approach based on both intra-party cooperation and cooperation within parliament between Jewish and Arab MKs. Table 5 presents an analysis of the pattern of cooperation evident in the bills passed. Columns 1 and 2 show the number of bills that were initiated and passed. Column 3 analyzes the percentage of the bills that passed compared to the bills that were initiated using the same cooperation pattern.

Table 5: Intra-party cooperation (parties with Jewish and Arab MKs) in bills that passed.

	Number of private bills initiated	Number of private bills passed	Percentage of legislative success
Jewish MKs initiation + Arab co-sponsorship	245	6	2.44%
Arab MKs initiation + Jewish co-sponsorship	4	0	0%
Jewish MKs initiation + Jewish and Arab co-sponsorship	38	3	7.89%
Arab MKs initiation + Jewish and Arab co-sponsorship	129	1	0.77%
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation without any co-sponsorship	1	0	0%
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation + Jewish co-sponsorship	9	1	11.11%

The subjects of the legislation are social and economic issues, and are prompted by the desire to improve the quality of people's lives. Only one of the bills can be considered controversial—an expansion of the definition of the expenditures of governmental bodies or institutions that receive government financial support, which is currently not allowed.

The intra-party cooperation strategy that is most successful is that in which Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiate a bill and Jewish MKs co-sponsor it (11.11%). The second most common pattern is when Jewish MKs propose a bill and Jewish and Arab MKs co-sponsor it. Two cooperation patterns have no success at all in passing legislation: when Arab MKs initiate a bill and Jewish MKs co-sponsor it, and when Arab MKs and Jewish MKs propose a bill without any co-sponsorship.

Of the 279 bills that involved cooperation within parliament, 26 of them passed (9.31%). Table 6 presents an analysis of the pattern of cooperation evident in the bills that passed. Columns 2 and 3 show the number of bills that were proposed and passed. Column 4 analyzes the percentage of the bills that passed compared to the bills that were initiated using the same cooperation pattern. Column 1 presents the degree of cross-national cooperation as we defined previously.

Table 6: Cooperation within parliament (cross-national cooperation) in bills that passed

	Degree of cooperation	Number of private bills	Number of private bills passed	Percentage of the total cross-national cooperation (n=279)
Jewish MKs initiation + Arab co-sponsorship	Low	14	0	0%
Arab MKs initiation + Jewish co-sponsorship	Low	1	0	0%
Jewish MKs initiation + Jewish and Arab co-sponsorship	Medium	171	13	7.6%
Arab MKs initiation + Jewish and Arab co-sponsorship	Medium	12	0	0%
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation without any co-sponsorship	Medium	40	6	15%
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation + Arab co-sponsorship	High	1	1	100%
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation + Jewish co-sponsorship	High	20	3	15%
Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation + Jewish and Arab co-sponsorship	Very high	20	3	15%

Those bills in which there was little cooperation were unsuccessful. A medium degree of cooperation in which Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiated a bill without any co-sponsors had a 15% rate of passage. The two patterns involving a degree of cooperation in which Arab MKs and Jewish MKs proposed the bill and Arab MKs co-sponsored it or Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiated the bill with Jewish MK co-sponsorship were the most successful strategies. In the first case, 100% of the proposed bills passed, and in the second case, 15% of them passed.

The results are consistent with the in-depth interviews we conducted with Arab MKs. The cooperation between Jewish MKs and Arab MKs is based on ordinary, daily problems the entire public faces. The problems are cross-national, making cooperation a necessary, natural, rational act. Nevertheless, from the Arab MKs' point of view, cross-national cooperation is the only option for passing legislation that is of concern to their constituents. Hence, we can say that our research hypothesis has been confirmed. Arab MKs are rational actors, so they choose cross-national cooperation with their Jewish MKs colleagues in order to accomplish the goals they seek for their voters.

What does the data tell us about the cross-national cooperative strategy? First, it is win-win situation to cooperate cross-nationally. The Arab MKs can set their agenda with regard to social issues, while the Jewish MKs collect more votes for their social initiatives. Second, as the majority, the Jewish MKs use the strategy in order to set their agenda. Third, Arab MKs need to choose between their pride and being realistic. Only the latter offers the possibility of legislative success. In the interviews some of the Arab MKs noted that they chose not to engage in cross-national cooperation and were willing to pay the price of legislative failure. Fourth, most of the subjects on the Knesset agenda are not controversial, and cooperation is the main route adopted in the Knesset.

Conclusion

The context of this study is minority representatives, a very unique minority, Arab MKs in the Israeli parliament. As mentioned previously, the Arab minority in Israel has undergone significant social, cultural, economic and political changes through their adoption of Western norms, values and lifestyles. Thus, the self-identity of the Arabs in Israel is not static. It is influenced by social and political conditions, and they are torn between their national Palestinian and civic Israeli identities. Given this context, we wondered whether Arab MKs

would choose cooperative strategies involving both intra-party cooperation and cooperation within parliament, and initiate and co-sponsor legislation with Jewish MKs.

A superficial look at Israeli society might cause one to conclude that there are few situations in which Jewish and Arab MKs would cooperate. However, such is not the case. As our results demonstrate, Arab MKs understand that the only way to pass legislation that benefits their community is to cooperate with their Jewish colleagues. Second, their bills usually deal with ordinary, non-controversial issues, making cooperation an easy matter. Third, using sponsorship to measure minority activity helps us see their positions and the policies they favor. Fourth, the most frequent cooperative cross-national strategy is when Jewish MKs initiate a bill and Arab MKs and Jewish MKs co-sponsor it.

However, the three patterns that resulted in the highest degree of legislative success were different: Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation with Arab co-sponsorship (100%), Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation with Jewish MKs co-sponsorship (15%), and Arab MKs and Jewish MKs initiation with Jewish MKs and Arab MKs co-sponsorship (15%).

Our contribution to the literature in the form of the cross-national cooperation scale we created helped us map the various cooperation strategies that MKs use. We differentiated between cross-national cooperation and intra-party cooperation. Testing the cross-national cooperation scale in other contexts is important for validating its usefulness. Our study is limited by the fact that it uses data from only one term of the Knesset, even though it seemed to be a particularly anti-Arab term. It would be interesting to use data from other terms to see if our conclusions hold. Finally, in answer to Amos' question, yes, the two nations walk together in legislation and they have agreed to do so.

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