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*Palestinian Voting in The
West Bank:
Electoral Behavior
in a Traditional Community
without Sovereignty*

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THIS PAPER ANALYSES the effect of non-sovereignty on the electoral behavior of the West Bank Arab community.

Since the annexation of the West Bank by Jordan in 1950¹ the Palestinians there became the only Palestinian population in the Arab world to enjoy citizenship and the right of political participation through an electoral process.² They differed from other concentrations of Palestinians in other respects as well. The West Bank Arab community was the largest concentration of Palestinians anywhere, and the only one not in minority, being twice as large as Jordan's original population. Half of the 900,000 Palestinians under Jordanian rule in 1948 were refugees.³ They were socially

* This research was supported by the Tel Aviv University Research Project on Peace. We are also grateful to Abraham Fattal, Maya Liquornik and Daniel Rothstein for their aid in collecting and processing the data.

¹ On the political and the legal aspects of the annexation see Aqil H. Abidi, *Jordan: A Political Study* (Bombay and New York: Asia Publishing House, 1965), 82-84; E. Theodore Mogannan, "Development in the Legal System of Jordan," *The Middle East Journal*, VI (Spring 1952), 194-206.

² Another Palestinian Arab community with the right to vote is the Arab minority in Israel (See J.M. Landau, *The Arabs in Israel: A Political Study* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969). However, this minority's influence on the political system in Israel and on the community at large is minute. Such was not the case in Jordan.

³ In 1950, the United Nations Economic Mission to the Middle East estimated the

and economically more advanced than the predominantly Bedouin East Bank population.⁴ Since there was no immigration into the West Bank from other Arab countries, the Palestinian community there remained entirely homogeneous until 1967. Since then several thousand Israeli Jews have settled in the area.

Despite their uniqueness the West Bank Palestinian population has maintained a strong sense of identity with the larger Palestinian community. Political tensions and social gaps between them and the East Bank helped to reinforce their unity and their awareness of lack of sovereignty. Jordanian citizenship and the right to participate in Jordan's political life did not diminish attempts by West Bank political groupings to express their particularistic Palestinian loyalties through the electoral process or other political means.

Since the Israeli occupation of the West Bank in 1967 the political behavior of the Palestinian Arab population there has assumed special salience. Most international and regional political factors see the West Bank as the territory in which the Palestinian problem is to be solved. Consequently, political significance transcending the local level has been attached to the two elections to local councils that have taken place under Israeli rule. Even greater significance will be, no doubt, attached to the elections that will take place in the framework of the autonomy planned for the West Bank in the Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement.

It should be noted that current political development in the Gaza Strip cannot be discussed within this framework. The Palestinian

number of Palestinian refugees as 100,905 in the East Bank and 431,000 in the West Bank. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) estimated the total number of refugees in both banks on August 31, 1950 as 485,000. See United Nations, General Assembly, *Assistance to Palestine Refugees: Interim Report of the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East* (Office Records: Fifth Session, Supplement 19(A/1451/rev. 1), 1951), 4.

⁴ For socio-economic details on the Palestinian Arab population in different Arab states see, for instance, Don Peretz, "Palestinian Social Stratification: The Political Implications," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, VII (Autumn 1977), 48-74; United Nations, General Assembly, *Report of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, 1 July 1974-June 1975*, 30th Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/10013). For similar details on the Palestinian population of the West Bank see Naseer Aruri, *Jordan: A Study in Political development (1921-1965)* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972), 34-37; Shaul Mishal, *West Bank/East Bank, The Palestinians in Jordan, 1949-1967* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 3-5; Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society, Modernizing the Middle East* (New York: Free Press, 1958), 54-65.

population has been excluded from electoral processes under Egyptian rule, and—in keeping with the general policy of the Israeli occupation to continue past practices in the occupied areas—there have been no elections there after 1967 either.

ELECTORAL BEHAVIOR IN THE ABSENCE OF SOVEREIGNTY:
SOME THEORETICAL ASPECTS

Absence of sovereignty may expose the population to other political powers and allegiances beside the central government, which may use the electoral process to motivate the population to confer legitimacy on its rule and to identify with its political values. Competition with the central government may come from expatriate groups seeking to encourage the population to challenge the central government's authority, and from groups enjoying locally strong positions which may also constitute alternative foci of political allegiance.⁵

In non-Western communities, the traditional power bases tend to influence the political effectiveness of the central government, expatriate groups and local power foci.⁶ According to Pye, in such communities ". . . the lack of a clear political sphere . . . places severe limitations on the effectiveness of those who come from the outside to perform a political role, be it that of an administrative agent of the national government or of a representative of a national party. . . . The fundamental framework of non-Western politics is a communal one, and all political behavior is strongly colored by considerations of communal identification. . . . This essentially communal framework of politics makes it extremely difficult for ideas to command influence in themselves. . . . Under these conditions, it is inappropriate to conceive of an open market-place where political ideas can freely compete on their own merits for support."⁷

⁵ For such a competition between different sources of power in non-sovereign traditional communities see, for instance, W.J.M. MacKenzie and K. Robinson, eds., *Five Elections in Africa: A Group of Electoral Studies* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960).

⁶ See, Clifford Geertz, "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States," *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 255-310.

⁷ Lucian W. Pye, "The Non-Western Political Process," *The Journal of Politics*, 20 (August 1958), 469-470. For similar conclusions see, for instance, J.F. Engholm, "Kenya's First Direct Elections for Africans," *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 10 No. 4 (Autumn 1957), 424-433.

The type of relations that will develop among the different political sources as well as their respective influence on electoral behavior will depend to a great extent on the resources at their disposal and the use they make of them. Using Lehman's tripartite classification, these resources may be identified as coercive, utilitarian and normative. Coercive resources are "capable of doing violence to [another's] body or psyche". Utilitarian resources comprise material benefits with which the individual may better his situation. Normative resources ". . . are symbols, the primary significance of which is that they point to shared values, beliefs and sentiments, rather than to material rewards or physical threats."⁸

Each political source will try to diversify its resources. In the Palestinian case, however, as in other non-Western communities, the population perceives the power of the central government as deriving primarily from its ability to use coercive resources. The expatriate elements on the other hand—even though they may threaten to or actually use violence against those who depart from their line—owe their support primarily to their normative resources. The local/traditional elements derive their power mainly from their ability to influence the allocation of utilitarian resources.⁹ Table 1 indicates the main resources used by each of the different political sources, as perceived by the population whose allegiance they are seeking.

In the analysis of voting behavior the proportion of votes received by different political parties is conventionally adopted as the operational expression of the dependent variable.¹⁰ However, in traditional non-sovereign communities political differences are often ex-

⁸ Edward Lehman, "Towards a Macro-Sociology of Power," *American Sociological Review* (August 1969), 454-456. See also A. Etzioni, *The Active Society* (New York: Free Press, 1961), 338-342.

⁹ On this phenomenon as demonstrated in similar cases, see, for instance, B. Keith-Lucas "Electoral Reform in Sierra-Leone," *Political Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (June 1955), 97-108; G. Bennett, "The Gold Coast General Election of 1954," *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 7, No. 4, (Autumn 1954), and C. C. Niven, "Elections in Northern Nigeria," *Corona*, Vol. 4, No. 5 (1952).

¹⁰ See, for instance, D.H. Butler and R. Rose, *The British General Elections of 1959* (London: Macmillan, 1960) A. Campbell, P. Converse, W. Miller and D. Stokes, *The American Voter* (New York: John Wiley, 1960); A. Alford, *Party and Society*, (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1963). For the rational school, see also A. Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957); V.O. Key, Jr. *The Responsible Electorate: Rationality in Presidential Voting, 1939-1960* (New York: Random House, 1968).

TABLE I
ORDER OF TENDENCY TO USE TYPES OF RESOURCES BY DIFFERENT
POLITICAL SOURCES

Types of Political Sources	Types of Resources		
	Coercive	Utilitarian	Symbolic-normative
Central government	1	2	3
Local-traditional	2-3	1	2-3
Expatriate	2-3	2-3	1

pressed by other means than political parties.¹¹ In the absence of significant party politics in the West Bank we shall operationalize "voting behavior" in terms of electoral support for different sources of allegiance. We shall therefore classify the candidates for election as "pro-system candidates," "anti-system candidates" and "fence-sitters." In the first category are those who support the central government—Jordanian or Israeli. The second category comprises candidates who express expatriate political values, e.g., those of the PLO. The fence-sitters are those who avoid overt support from either central or expatriate sources. We shall use the same classification to distinguish among three categories of voters who support each candidate group respectively. Our experience shows that this classification—developed by Sartori to study political behavior in sovereign polities¹²—is adequate for analysis of political behavior in non-sovereign settings as well.

Other variables conventionally used for explanation of voting behavior may also have to be changed in the case of traditional, non-Western, non-sovereign community. Thus, e.g., social status is useless as an explanatory variable in the West Bank because those of lower social status are precluded from voting by the Jordanian property requirements. Similarly, ethnic origin, known to be an effective predictor of voting behavior elsewhere is, of course, irrelevant to the analysis of electoral patterns in a homogeneous traditional

¹¹ See for example, the in depth analysis of the Israeli political case pre-1948, in Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak, *The Origins of the Israeli Polity, The Political System of the Jewish Community in Palestine Under the Mandate* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), ch. 4.

¹² C. Sartori, "European Political Parties: The Case of Polarized Pluralism," in J. LaPalombara and M. Weiner, eds., *Political Parties and Political Developments* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 148.

community.¹³ Under such circumstances it is rather the changing local, regional and international political constellations that should be expected to affect variation in voting patterns.

THE WEST BANK AS A NON-SOVEREIGN COMMUNITY

We shall begin our attempt to explain the electoral behavior of the non-sovereign West Bank Palestinian community by a description of the political environment in which this community has been living since 1948 and of the ways in which it has been able to express its political sentiments.

Conflict and Multi-Affiliation

The 1948 Arab-Israeli war did not bring about the realization of the Arab Palestinians' political aspirations. Instead, it enhanced the political status of Jordan's King Abdullah and improved his military position.¹⁴ The appraisal by each party of the consequences of the war for its own situation has naturally affected their respective definitions of their political goals. Whereas the Palestinians sought to reverse the war's political results and bring all Palestine under Arab rule, the Jordanian government preferred the status quo.¹⁵ Thus the West Bank Palestinians, or more precisely, the politically active groups among them, found themselves within a political system with goals different from their own.

Political circumstances in the West Bank after 1948 were not favorable for expression of total opposition to the political order. Most West Bank political groups recognized that the number of options open to them became limited owing to lack of resources needed to gain power positions necessary to change the status quo. Conse-

¹³ See, J.H. Kautsky, *Political Change in Underdeveloped Countries*, 4th edition, (New York: John Wiley, 1965), ch. 2.

¹⁴ On political differences between King Abdullah and the Palestinian Arabs see, for instance, Abidi, op. cit., 24-60; Yoseph Nevo, *Abdullah and the Palestinian Arabs* (Tel Aviv: The Shiloah Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, 1975, in Hebrew); Clinton Bailey, "The Participation of the Palestinians in the Politics of Jordan," (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1966), Part I.

¹⁵ Despite internal conflict over a broad range of issues, Palestinian leaders in or outside the West Bank unambiguously agreed on the need to preserve the Arab character of Palestine. Consequently, they were unanimous in their desire for some Arab political authority, to include the entire territory of Palestine within the Mandatory boundaries, though the exact form and modus operandus of this authority was a subject of controversy among the various political streams.

quently, most groups cooperated—at least to some degree—in both political and economic spheres¹⁶ with the Amman regime, which they recognized as a source of civil order, even though they did not identify themselves with it. The West Bank political circles tended then to differentiate between their political affiliation with Jordan (and their consequent acceptance of Jordanian citizenship) and their Palestinian and pan-Arab allegiance anchored in their affiliation with local frameworks or forces outside Jordan. From the mid-1950s, the latter were mainly identified with the Nasser regime or the Ba'ath Party in Damascus, and later with the PLO and other Palestinian organizations.

Multiple affiliations were characteristic of most political circles in the West Bank. However, there was a great deal of variety in the attitudes of the different groups toward the components of their political identity. Those Palestinians who joined the Jordanian establishment and were considered reliable by the regime tried to emphasize their Jordanian identity and their pan-Arab values. On the other hand, opponents of the Hashemite rule, and above all, those identified with radical parties, emphasized their Palestinian identity along with their pan-Arab values.

Israeli occupation of the West Bank in June 1967 did not change this pattern. Viewing its military rule in the West Bank as temporary, Israel considered herself responsible mainly for ensuring normal civilian life until a political solution could be reached.¹⁷ Thus all the elements which had taken part in shaping the West Bank political life during Jordanian rule continued to operate under the Israeli rule. Side by side with the Israeli military government, Jordan continued to supply instrumental needs, while Palestinian organizations, supported by radical Arab regimes, provided the West Bank population with normative resources.

Multi-Affiliation and Elections

During the 1960s, multi-affiliation among the West Bank Palesti-

¹⁶ On the willingness to cooperate with the government in Amman, see, Eliezer Be'eri, *The Palestinians Under Jordanian Rule - Three Issues* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1978, in Hebrew); Gadi Zilberman, "Economic Changes in Nablus in the Years 1948-1967," mimeographed (Jerusalem: The Institute of Asian and African Studies, 1972, in Hebrew).

¹⁷ For more details see, Nimrod Raphaeli, "Military Government in the Occupied Territories: An Israeli View," *The Middle East Journal*, XXXII (Spring 1969), 177-190; Mordechai Nisan, *Israel and the Territories* (Ramat-Gan: Turtledove Publishing, 1978), 64-67.

nian Arabs became more pronounced. The rise of the concept, "Palestinian entity," in 1959, the establishment of the PLO in January 1964, the beginning of guerilla warfare against Israel by the *Fatah* organization in January 1965, and the Israeli occupation of the West Bank in June 1967, increased the political significance of the struggle among the competing political affiliations. Until 1967, this struggle was expressed mainly on the national level, through election campaigns to the Jordanian House of Representatives, and through political activity within Palestinian or pan-Arab organizations in or outside of Jordan. However, already in the late 1950s the struggle began to manifest itself on the local level as well. Severe restrictions on political parties reduced the significance of the national and increased the importance of the municipal elections.¹⁸ This trend culminated under Israeli rule when activity on the local level became the only legitimate means of political expression.

Israeli occupation strengthened the political status of the municipal organizations in yet another respect. Israel suspended the district echelon (*muhafatha*) which had existed under Jordanian rule. This change increased the importance attached to municipal and village councils by the population and the council members, and later also by Jordan and the PLO. The status of the local councils was further strengthened by the fact that Israel refrained from direct intervention in their composition, although the Municipal Elections Law of 1955 empowered the central government to select the mayor and to appoint two council members in addition to those elected.¹⁹ Finally, two amendments to this law, introduced by Israel before the 1976 elections, enfranchised women and changed the municipal taxpayers registration system.²⁰ Although the high ratio of minors and people who do not pay taxes has kept the percentage of eligible voters rather low, the extension of franchise did further increase the importance of the municipal institutions.

The growth in the number of voters and the military government's policy of non-involvement in the personal composition

¹⁸ Kamel S. Abu Jaber, "The Jordanian Parliament," in Jacob M. Landau, ed., *Man, State and Society in the Contemporary Middle East* (New York: Praeger, 1972); Ammon Cohen, "Political Parties in the West Bank Under the Hashemite Regime," in Moshe Ma'oz, *Palestinian Arab Politics* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Academic Press, 1975).

¹⁹ See, *The Jordanian Official Gazette* No. 1225, May 1, 1955.

²⁰ For more details, see, Moshe Drori, "Second Municipal Elections in Judea and Samaria Under Israel Administration: Legislative Change." *Israel Law Review*, XII (1977), 526-531.

of the municipal councils has made these bodies much more representative than they had been under Jordanian rule. They became the sole representative local political bodies, enjoying considerable recognition by Israel, Jordan, the electorate, and even the PLO, and thus a reasonably accurate reflection of political trends.

We have consequently concentrated on the analysis of the West Bank electoral behavior in the 1972 and 1976 elections, relating it for comparison to the municipal elections of 1963. The 1972 and 1976 elections were of greater political significance than those of 1963. The factors involved, apart from the local candidates and the Israeli military government, included the Jordanian government and the PLO and its supporters among the Arab states.²¹ To what extent did the election system enable these elements to attain their respective objectives? To answer this question we must first describe the characteristics of the electoral system and its impact on the West Bank Palestinians' voting behavior.

The Municipal Elections System

The Jordanian government kept several options for control of the composition and operation of and elections to the municipal councils. Electoral zones were determined by the Minister of the Interior. Usually the entire municipal area formed a single zone, but it was the minister's prerogative to subdivide it. The central government also determined the number of council members, while bodies acting on its behalf determined the eligibility of the voters and the candidates. All this, together with the right to appoint two additional council members and to select the mayor, allowed the government a considerable influence.²²

Municipal elections were in principle personal. Officially, candidates were forbidden to organize themselves into lists. However,

²¹ For more details on the 1972 election see Michael Yizhar, "Municipal Election in Judea and Samaria," *State, Government and International Relation*, (1974) 119-126 (in Hebrew); Shaul Mishal, "Anatomy of Municipal Election in Judea and Samaria," *Hamizrah Hehadash* (The New East), XXIV, 1-2 (1974), 63-67 (in Hebrew). On the 1976 election see Michael Walzer, "Israeli Policy and the West Bank," *Dissent*, 23 (Summer 1976), 1234-1236; Mark Allen Heller, "Foreign Occupation and Political Elites: A Study of the Palestinians" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 1978), 274-289.

²² See Ori Stendel, "The Municipal Election in the West Bank (1951-1967)," mimeographed (Jerusalem: Judea and Samaria Area Command, 1968, in Hebrew); Allan Gerson, *Israel, the West Bank and International Law* (London: Frank Cass, 1978), 119-120; Mishal, 106-107.

even though there was no legal provision for it, the candidates frequently joined forces on the same list so as to make the campaign more manageable. The elections were thus generally contested by two such lists as well as by single candidates. The latter were usually either the strongest candidates or those who were thought to have no chance and who, therefore did not attract partners. Although in some cases the lists had a clear political character, they generally centered around strictly apolitical platforms and often included candidates representing different ideological leanings. The lists were usually formed for purely pragmatic purposes just before the elections and dissolved immediately afterwards.

When the number of candidates was identical with the number of seats, all candidates were appointed as council members without elections. Such a settlement (*tazkiyah*) was usually the result of negotiations among the candidates in order to limit their number. If we ignore settlements of this type made in the small communities, *tazkiyah* was achieved only three times since 1948: in Hebron in 1955, in Nablus in 1959, and again in Hebron in 1972.²³ Although one may argue that the *tazkiyah* reflects the influence of traditional politics within the *hamula* (extended family) framework, its infrequency permits us not to include it in our analysis.

As already mentioned, the franchise was limited. The voting procedure required each voter to write on a ballot the names of his preferred candidates, whose number was not to exceed the number of seats, the surplus names were erased from the bottom of the list. The representatives were appointed according to the number of times their names appeared on valid ballot slips.²⁴

VOTING TRENDS AMONG THE WEST BANK PALESTINIANS: AN EMPIRICAL PERSPECTIVE

We shall now attempt an analysis of the effect of these circumstances on the voting trends in the West Bank.

²³ Hebron's ex-mayor, Sheik Muhammad Ali al-Ja'bari's efforts to prevent elections through the means of *tazkiyah*, in 1976 also, failed. It caused his withdrawal as a candidate and the non-participation of his followers in the elections.

²⁴ From time to time, the validity of the elections was questioned. For instance, in 1951 a case became known wherein one voter from Hebron complained that when, being illiterate he had asked the election official to help him write down his candidates, the official wrote down other names on his slip—a complaint which caused the cessation of the elections in the city. See Stendel, 10.

Method

The use of public opinion polls, commonly employed in analysing voting intentions and floating votes, proved impracticable in our case since the fact of living under military occupation created in the voting population social and political pressures which affected its willingness to cooperate. We have therefore based our investigation on an aggregative analysis of fluctuations in voting patterns in municipal elections. Our sources included election results published by the Israeli military government and by the Jordanian government, non-structured interviews with candidates, local dignitaries and Israeli officials in contact with the West Bank population, other published and unpublished surveys and research papers, and press reports.

Our research focused on voting behavior in the West Bank's eleven largest towns: Beit Jallah, Beit Sahur, Bethlehem, El Birah, Hebron, Jenin, Jericho, Kalkelia, Nablus, Ramalla and Tul Karem. The remaining thirteen smaller towns were excluded. In all the three election campaigns analysed, the population of the eleven cities accounted for almost 80 percent of the urban population and 40 percent of the entire population of the West Bank. In 1972 it accounted for 85.3 and 1976 for 81.4 percent of the eligible voters.²⁵

Participation in the municipal elections was rather high: 62.8 percent of those eligible voted in 1972, 69.3 percent in 1976. It should be remembered, however, that in 1963 and 1972 only slightly more than 10 percent of the urban population were eligible to vote. In 1976, following the amendments to the Municipal Elections Law of 1955, the proportion of eligible population increased to 27.3 percent. The enfranchisement of women, who in 1976 constituted 36.8 percent of the electorate, increased the number of eligible voters by 179 percent. The number of eligible males increased by 76 percent.

Under section 7 of the 1955 Municipal Elections Law, the number of council members varied between 7 and 12 irrespective of the size of the electorate or the population. Although in 1976 for example, Hebron's population was only 45,000 and Nablus' 80,000, of whom

²⁵ Data on population, voting participation, and the division of voters is based on official publication of Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics, on reports by the military governments concerning the occupied territories, and on data which appeared in the Arabic newspapers *al-Kuds* and *al-Anb'a*, published in Jerusalem.

11,244 and 19,447 respectively were eligible to vote, each city elected a municipal council counting ten members.

The total number of voters in the towns studied was 18,331 in 1972 and 49,918 in 1976. To calculate the proportion of the votes given to candidates in each category, we divided the number of votes of each candidate in each town by the number of the town's council members. However, since voters did not always utilize their right to vote for the full complement of council members, the *N* in our tables is less than the total number of voters given above. This discrepancy does not, of course, affect the percentages.

Findings

Analysis of the 1963, 1972 and 1976 West Bank municipal election results points to two seemingly contradictory tendencies: electoral stability, reflecting a tendency toward traditional behavior, on the one hand, and electoral mobility, reflecting a readiness for change in the political map; on the other.

The tendency towards stability and a traditional voting pattern is clearly apparent in Table 2. Its salient feature is the massive support for the candidates of the leading veteran *hamulas* in all three elections. It should be noted in this connection that although members of the leading veteran *hamulas* sometimes ran for office as independent rather than *hamula* candidates, most of the independent candidates were from refugee families. The votes given to *hamula* members who did not enjoy the sport of *hamula* leaders are listed in our table among non-*hamula* votes. The *hamulas* accounted for a much smaller proportion of the population than the support for their candidates would suggest. In other words, *hamula* candidates gained massive support from a voting community outside the extended family.²⁶ The stability indicated by the consistent support given to *hamula* candidates is especially remarkable in the light of the fact that *hamulas* frequently switched their candidates.

The religious vote (Christian or Moslem) does not reflect the proportion of the two groups within the population either. Christian candidates were never elected in cities with a Moslem majority and Moslems were only rarely elected in cities with a Christian majority.

²⁶ See for example, Binyamin Shidlovsky, "Ramalla al-Birah, Sociopolitical Survey," mimeographed (Jerusalem: Judea and Samaria Area Command, 1970), 10-23 (in Hebrew).

TABLE 2

THE PALESTINIAN VOTER'S SUPPORT FOR CANDIDATES OF
DIFFERENT SOCIAL ORIGINS

	1963*	1972	1976
Votes given to <i>hamula</i> candidates	90.7%	83.9%	85.7%
Non- <i>hamula</i> votes	9.3%	16.1%	14.3%
Votes given to Moslem candidates	71.8%	70.4%	79.9%
Votes given to Christian candidates	28.2%	29.6%	20.1%
N**	8,067	7,945	22,152

* The late elections which took place in 1964 in Ramalla and Beit-Sahur and in 1967 in al-Birah are included in this table and the following tables under the heading 1963.

** The number of votes in each city was divided by the number of council members. As most of the voters did not indicate all their preferences, this number grew smaller. So that, for instance, the number of actual voters in 1972 was 18,331 and not 7,945 as indicated in the table.

In predominantly Christian towns Moslems received 0.9 percent of the votes in 1963, 2.8 percent in 1972, and 4.9 in 1976. This despite the fact that in some towns the religious minorities constituted a considerable proportion of the population. Thus, e.g., in Christian Ramalla the proportion of Moslems after the 1967 war was about 45 percent;²⁷ yet only two of the nine council members elected in 1976 were Moslems. The drop in the proportion of total votes given to Moslem candidates in 1972 is probably due to the fact that there were no elections in Moslem Hebron that year.

The voting pattern shows, then, two simultaneous tendencies: (a) a preference for *hamula* candidates, reflecting support for local traditional power foci; and (b) support for locally dominant religion.

We have used Cramer's measure of relationship (V) to calculate the relationship between support for candidates of each religion and support for *hamula* candidates. In 1963 the coefficient reached 0.13, with the tendency to support family candidates especially marked among votes for Moslem candidates. The same, though much less pronounced, tendency ($V = 0.05$) was evident in the 1972 elections. In 1976 the relationship between the religious and the *hamula* vote was even more tenuous ($V = 0.04$). This time the tendency to support the *hamula* candidates among supporters of Moslem candidates was even weaker than among voters for Chris-

²⁷ See Shidlovsky, 8.

tian candidates. The decline, over the years, in the differential preference of the Moslem as against the Christian voters for *hamula* voting can probably be attributed to the fact that exposure to growing political pressures, especially after 1967, had a greater impact on the originally more traditional Moslem groups than on the more modern Christians.

With reference to our theoretical framework, the above findings seem to show the relative dominance of the local/traditional power elements (the *hamulas*). These findings should now be further investigated in relation to mobile voting patterns and the electoral power gained by the central government and the expatriate candidates.

As already hinted, political mobility, i.e., the tendency to support candidates who had not been part of the outgoing council has been extremely strong. In 1972, 49.3 percent of the votes went to new candidates, and in 1976 support for new candidates reached 82.5 percent.

Table 3 shows the relationship between social and demographical characteristics and voting mobility, calculated with the help of Cramer's measure.

The relationship between voting mobility and the religious vote declines in strength but maintains its direction: Moslem voters consistently show a greater tendency to support veteran candidates. Once again, this conservatism of the Moslems may perhaps be explained by their greater vulnerability to outside pressures. Another finding is the tendency to support veteran candidates among voters for *hamula* candidates. Conservative tendency is thus reflected both in *hamula* voting and in continuing support for the same candidates.

The strongest relationship found by us was that between voting mobility and geographical location. Although Israeli authorities divided the West Bank into seven administrative regions, it was politically more meaningful to relate here to two main areas: the northern part, where political leadership usually comes from Nablus, and the southern part, most of whose leadership comes from Hebron. Surprisingly, voters in the more developed northern region have shown a stronger tendency to support veteran candidates than voters in the south. Yet *hamula* voting was more frequent in the south than in the north (Cramer's coefficients of 0.20 in 1972 and 0.22 in 1976). Thus, although on the whole, conservatism in the sense of *hamula* loyalty goes together with conservatism in the

TABLE 3

THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE MOBILITY OF THE ELECTORAL SUPPORT AND SOCIAL VARIABLES

The Relationship between the Mobility of the Electoral Support and the Variable:	1972	1976
Support for religious candidates	0.41	0.02
Support for <i>hamula</i> candidates	0.08	0.16
Regional belonging of the voters	0.39	0.65

sense of loyalty to veteran candidates, *hamula* affiliation is clearly stronger in the south, while support for veteran candidates is stronger in the north. This fact may be explained, perhaps, by different levels of modernization in the two regions. One is tempted to speculate that whereas the voter in the more developed north compensates for his lost sense of loyalty toward the *hamula* by consistent electoral support for veteran candidates, the *hamula* commitment of the more traditional southern voter has not been undermined.

Table 4 presents our findings on the inter-dependence between election results and the three foci of power typical of non-sovereign traditional communities. The analysis of these findings is essential to our understanding of the emerging West Bank political map.

The term "anti-system voters", i.e., those who support candidates identified with expatriate elements, refers in 1972 and 1976 to supporters of candidates affiliated with the PLO. "Pro-system voters" are the supporters of candidates sympathizing with the Jordan regime, while "fence-sitters" support non-committed candidates.

In all elections prior to 1976 candidates who gained most support were those identified with the Jordanian government: In 1972 they received even more support than in 1963, which may have been the result of special political conditions under which the elections took place. In 1972 support of pro-Jordan candidates could be interpreted as a demonstration of non-reconciliation with the Israeli occupation. Another relevant factor may have been the weakness of the PLO after the September 1970 civil war in Jordan. The PLO did not actively participate in the 1972 elections. Its main course of action at that time was armed struggle against Israel. Consequently it called on the population to abstain from voting as an act of passive resistance and made no significant attempt to promote radical candidates.²⁸ Israel, on the other hand, tried to create con-

²⁸ Abraham Sela, "The PLO, the West Bank and Gaza Strip," *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, 8 (Summer 1978), 73-74.

TABLE 4

THE POLITICAL AFFILIATION OF THE PALESTINIAN VOTER

Political Affiliation	1963	1972	1976
Prosystem voters	54.6%	69.8%	27.6%
Antisystem voters	23.2%	11.7%	39.8%
"Fence-sitters"	22.2%	18.5%	32.6%
N	8,067	7,945	22,152

ditions that would discourage voters from support of anti-system candidates. This attempt explains the continuation of the Jordanian tactics of spreading election dates so as to increase the authorities' ability to control, or at least to limit, possible radical influences. The 1972 elections were held in the northern region at the end of March and in the southern region early in May. Israel also supported the *tazkiyah* in Hebron mainly because she considered it a pro-system arrangement.

During the 1976 elections a radical change in voting trends became evident. For the first time the anti-system voters, although failing to gain absolute majority, emerged as the largest single group. The new trend may be attributed to the political developments since 1972. In March 1972 King Hussein suggested a political solution to the West Bank issue: the West Bank, the East Bank and the Gaza Strip were to become autonomous districts in a federative framework with Jordan.²⁹ This proposal intensified the competition between Jordan and the PLO for control of the West Bank, leading the PLO to adopt a new approach. The federation plan awakened the PLO leadership, which had until then considered armed struggle the key element in their strategy in the West Bank, to the need to counteract Jordanian strategy by political action. The developments following the October 1973 war provided further inducement to the PLO and the West Bank to think in terms of a political solution. Political bargaining followed by the agreements signed by Israel with Egypt and Syria during 1974 and 1975, which provided for Israeli withdrawal from some territories,

²⁹ On the Jordanian federation plan see Zvi Elpeleg, *Hussein's Federation Scheme: Factors and Reactions* (Tel Aviv: The Shiloah Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, 1977, in Hebrew); Asher Susser, "Jordanian Influence in the West Bank," *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, 8 (Summer 1978), 53-65.

fed PLO hopes that Israel would withdraw from territories in the West Bank too. Hence the decision reached at the 12th session of the Palestinian National Council in June 1974, whereby a "fighting Palestinian national authority" would be established in any area liberated from Israel. Though explained as a tactical change, it marked a real shift in the PLO attitude toward the occupied territories; unequivocal support for military struggle has from now on been supplemented by willingness also to consider political means towards the goal.

This change, in turn, called for a modification in the PLO's attitude towards the activities of the West Bank population. Although originally it demanded a pattern of passive resistance and reduction of contact with the Israeli authorities to the barest minimum, the PLO began now to realize the expedience of political involvement in the West Bank for ensuring the loyalty of its population in future developments. The decisions of the Arab Summit meeting in Algeria (November 1973) and Rabbat (October 1974), recognizing the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people, and its success in the international arena, including the UN, further strengthened the PLO's position among the West Bank residents.³⁰ It implied a parallel decline in Jordanian and Israeli prestige among that population.

So far, we have dealt with the changes in the West Bank's political map in general terms. We shall now analyze the directions of political allegiance in the three election campaigns and their relation to the other variables: voting mobility, support for religious candidates, support for *hamula* candidates, and regional voting patterns.

There was a positive relationship between voting mobility, i.e., voting for new rather than veteran candidates, and support for the currently prevalent political trend (defined in terms of allegiance to one of the three competing foci of power). In 1972, e.g., when pro-system voting was the dominant trend in the West Bank, 82.6 percent of support for new candidates came from pro-system voters, while these voters accounted for only 57.4 percent of the support for veteran candidates. In 1976, when the anti-system sentiment became pre-eminent in West Bank voting, the anti-system voters accounted for 43.0 percent of the support for new candidates as against 24.5 percent of the support for veteran candidates. These

³⁰ Sela, 71-73.

TABLE 5

THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN POLITICAL ALLEGIANCE, VOTING MOBILITY AND SOCIAL VARIABLES

Relationship between Political Allegiance and the Variable:	1963	1972	1976
Voting mobility	-	0.32	0.13
Support for religious candidates	0.16	0.26	0.30
Support for <i>hamula</i> candidates	0.09	0.14	0.06
Regional belonging of the voters	0.16	0.33	0.20

percentages indicate that, although the supporters of veteran candidates too changed their voting in the direction of the overall shift in the election trend (table 4), they did so to a lesser degree than those who supported new candidates.

In all the three campaigns pro-system voters supported non-*hamula* rather than *hamula* candidates: 66.3 vs. 53.4 percent in 1963, 84.1 vs. 67.1 percent in 1972, and 32.9 vs. 26.8 percent in 1976. These percentages may have been owing to the fact that in order to attract votes the non-*hamula* candidates had to demonstrate control over utilitarian resources, which, in turn, necessitated some sort of affiliation with the Israeli or the Jordanian authorities. *Hamula* candidates, on the other hand, control such resources simply because they represent a *hamula*. Consequently *hamulas* can afford to put up radical candidates, counting on voters' confidence that support of a *hamula*-based radical candidate is not likely to hurt their material interests.

Analysis of the relationship between the political and the religious vote reveals that "fence-sitters" consistently tend to support Moslem rather than Christian candidates. The tendency of the Christian voters to take a more committed stand is probably a sign of their being less conservative than the Moslems. This tendency, in turn, can be explained primarily by the higher level of sociopolitical modernization among the Christians because of their greater exposure to Western cultural influences. Moreover, Christian political radicalism may be related, in the Palestinian case as well as throughout the Arab world, to the fact of their minority status in a Moslem environment. Perpetually driven to prove their loyalty, they tend to identify with secular national causes rather than with religious groups.³¹ A relevant point in this connection is that in

³¹ See D. Tsimhoni, "The Christian Communities in Jerusalem and the West Bank, 1948-1967," *Middle East Review*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Fall, 1976), 44-45; also, D. Tsimhoni,

1963 the Christians gave less support to pro-system candidates than the Moslems (48.1 and 57.2 percent respectively), probably owing to the Moslem character of the Jordanian government.

Analysis of regional voting trends in 1976 indicates that the more conservative voters tended to continue fence-sitting. In the southern region, considered more traditional, 34.8 percent voted for non-committed candidates, as against 25.5 percent in the northern region. However, in the earlier elections southern region voters showed a stronger tendency to vote for pro-system candidates than voters from the northern region: 93.8 vs. 61.3 percent in 1972 and 58.3 vs. 52.0 percent in 1963. The decline in the support for pro-system candidates may be due to the increased political pressures on West Bank voters. Fence-sitting, then, enables the traditional voters in the southern region to cope with these pressures by effectively postponing real decisions.

Summary

We hope that our findings and analyses help in the understanding of how the Palestinian voter succeeded in integrating social conservatism with political mobility. The absence of sovereignty tends to expose a traditional community to pressures from several sources of political power and allegiance. These sources may differ in their policies with regard to the problem of non-sovereignty, as well as in the type of resources at their disposal and the way they use them. The unwillingness and often the inability of the population to forego the different resources encourages electoral behavior which tends to set up a balance among different, sometimes incompatible, demands and pressures.

We identified three sources of political inspiration: central, local-traditional and expatriate. From 1948 to 1967 Jordan constituted the central authority in the West Bank, a role now performed by Israel. The formal authority of both derived mainly from their ability to use coercive resources. The *hamulas* in the West Bank cities acted as a local-traditional focus of allegiance, deriving their support chiefly from their ability to participate in the pragmatic processes of allocation of utilitarian resources. The expatriate groups were primarily sources of normative resources, although the

"The Arab Christian and the Palestinian Arab Movement during the Formative Stage," in G. Ben-Dor, ed., *The Palestinians and the Middle East Conflict* (Ramat Gan: Turtledove Publishing, 1978), 73-90.

PLO used coercive and utilitarian resources as well. The West Bank population needed all three types of resources and consequently tended to adopt a pattern of political behavior that would permit simultaneous allegiance to all three foci of power.

We propose that through a careful selection of candidates, the *hamulas* as a local-traditional power factor offer the voters a way of reconciling conflicting political pressures. Their success is apparent from their consistent ability to mobilize support from voters outside the *hamula*, as well as from the central government and/or from expatriate groupings. Our interviews show that the *hamulas* tend to select people who reflect the balance of power between the other two political sources, as perceived by the voting population. When this balance leans towards the pro-system candidates, the number of *hamula* candidates with a pro-government orientation grows. When the influence of the expatriate elements increases, the *hamula* puts up more candidates sharing the anti-system orientation.

The 1976 election results show that the *hamula* was thus able to face the conflicting pressures coming from the central government on the one hand, and the expatriate elements on the other. Many of the *hamula* candidates demonstrated support for and ideological identification with expatriate elements, i.e., PLO. Despite their radical ideological outlook, however, they did not commit radical acts, but rather tended towards a balanced set of actions guided by utilitarian considerations; actions which sometimes required partial affiliation to Amman. The *hamulas'* ability to maintain their status by adopting patterns of political accommodation and political compromise is deeply rooted in the West Bank's traditional cultural and political characteristics. It is plausible to assume that in other non-sovereign traditional communities, too, social frameworks such as the extended family may be fulfilling this balancing function among competing foci of power. Furthermore, such institutions might develop in communities in more advanced stages of modernization as well. They would take the form of political parties, to whose mediating character Michels has drawn our attention in his *Political Parties*, or the form of other voluntary organizations whose role was described by Kornhauser in *The Politics of Mass Society*.

Another factor that helped the extended families to keep their dominant position in the electoral process was the attitude and behavior of the central authority and the expatriate elements. For most of the period under examination, the Jordanian government, Israel, and the PLO have avoided undermining the *hamula's*

political status. None of them saw the West Bank's political leadership as an autonomous partner for negotiations over the region's political future. Rather, they considered support for the local leadership as a way of maintaining influence. Such latent cooperation among competing foci of power might develop in other non-sovereign, traditional communities. It should be noted, however, that the relations of the central government and expatriate elements with and their impact on the local-traditional leadership are not always direct, monolithic or consistent. Israel's wage, employment and welfare policies, for example, contributed to the modernization process on the West Bank, thus weakening the *hamula's* power. Similarly, some leftist PLO elements (especially the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine) exhibited explicit anti-traditional orientations.

Over the years, and especially under Israeli rule, the political tension between the *hamulas* and the other power foci has increased owing to three factors: (a) diversification of power elements to which the *hamula* has been exposed; (b) growing demands made by each of them on the *hamulas*; and (c) the increasing importance of the municipal elections. Even so, the *hamulas* have succeeded in maintaining a balance among the conflicting pressures. If these pressures increase still further, are the *hamulas* likely to retain the support they are enjoying today? Considering the strong traditional position it has managed to maintain under conditions of increasing pressures so far, the *hamula*, one may expect, will retain its influence. The existing data point to the fact that the *hamula* appears to maintain its entrenched position even among relatively modern voting groups.²¹ It is also possible that the *hamula* may adopt a more determined rather than a mediating-balancing political stand. Such a shift would reflect a real or perceived change in the balance among the resources at the disposal of the power foci.

Research Notes **P**

²¹ Shimon Shamir, Rina Shapira, Eli Rekhess, Shira Tibon, Israel Shtockman, *The Professional Elite in Samaria, Summary of Findings* (Tel Aviv: The Shiloah Center For Middle Eastern and African Studies, 1975), 20-35.