Arab Local Government in Israel

Majid Al-Haj and
Henry Rosenfeld

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A study in the project The Status and Condition of the Arabs in Israel under the direction of Professor Henry Rosenfeld

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The 750,000 Israeli Arabs are a national minority making up 17 percent of the population of Israel. In 1987 the International Center for Peace in the Middle East, together with Professor Henry Rosenfeld, director of the project, initiated a comprehensive research project on the status and condition of the Arabs in Israel. The focus of the research will be the Arabs' legal status, health and social services, and local authority in Arab communities. The books prepared by the project members report the empirical findings from the project and offer a penetrating analysis of the degree of social, economic, and political integration between Arabs and Jews, the extent of discrimination, and the degree to which rights and opportunities are shared by all.

Arab Local Government in Israel Majid Al-Haj and Henry Rosenfeld

In this book the authors present a historical analysis of local authorities in Arab communities prior to and since the establishment of the state of Israel. They discuss the workings of Arab local councils, municipalities, and national political groupings as well as the circumstances of internal conflicts in

Arab settlements. They also present comparative data on budgets in Jewish and Arab communities.

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Preface

The main purpose of this study is to discuss and to attempt to explain the situation of local administration among the Arabs of Israel As citizens of Israel, Arabs share with Jews specific administrative, political, legal, and other frameworks. However, as we have found in our work, formal structures may well be implemented differentially by the state and state agencies upon national, ethnic, sect, and other groupings; that is differentially for Arabs and for Jews. The state bears responsibility for many areas of inequality and discrimination that directly affect Arab local government. Meanwhile, social groups bring to radically new circumstances their histories, social and political structures, conflicts, aims, concerns, and so on; here, those specific ones around the founding of the state of Israel and the incorporation of a remnant Palestine Arab population into the state are of definite significance. Very often the tension between separate histories — and/or seemingly diverse backgrounds, structures, and values — and modern state frameworks is offered as an explanation for ongoing dissimilarities in life circumstances, levels of performance, and so on (for example, in local administration). In order to satisfy such claims, we approach our subject on Arab local administration in Israel in developmental terms. We discuss very briefly what we believe to be the key explanatory features of the Arab "local administration situation" prior to the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948; we then continue, here in greater detail, by discussing the processes of development of that situation within Israel, seeking out causal factors that help explain continuities, or seeming ones, with the past for Arabs, and those that point to similarities, convergences, and differences between Arabs and Jews over the past forty years.

Specifically, the book is built around five main chapters. The first chapter deals with incipient forms of local government in Arab Palestine during the Ottoman and British mandate periods with emphasis on the political and economic contexts

within which they operated. We introduce the second chapter, concerned with local authorities in Arab settlements after the establishment of the state, with a brief discussion of some of the relevant features of the Israeli political economy as we understand them and of the particular situation of Arab local councils within the overall structure of local government. The main developments on the one hand and the problems that hinder the functioning of Arab local authorities on the other are analyzed in detail. The third chapter analyzes in depth the effect of municipalization on the socio-political structures of six Arab villages and towns: The intersection of both local and national forces is taken into consideration in order to explain developmental processes in these selected communities.

Budgetary problems in Arab settlements are discussed in the fourth chapter, including the main problems and trends over time. A comparison is made between seven Arab sample localities and seven Jewish communities in order to highlight differences and similarities in budgets, expenditure, services, and so on. In the fifth chapter we trace the emergence of the National Committee of Chairmen of Arab Local Councils in Israel as roof organizations having direct effect on the activities of, and coordination between, local authorities: the tension between the Committee's involvement in both municipal and national issues, its attempts to counter discriminatory practices against Arabs as citizens of Israel while insisting on their Palestine Arab national identity, and the mutual impact of the local level on the national level of politics. In light of our research, we analyze the growth and main repercussions of local government on the Arab population in Israel in a brief conclusion.

Research Methods

Our study utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods: bibliographical, historical, and documentary analysis; comprehensive field work investigation of sample localities; interviews; and analyses of press reports and secondary

sources. Throughout, we give our interpretation of what we consider to be key processes. The comprehensive study of the sample localities was designed to gain an understanding of significant developments over time in Arab local government, of the social and political structure of village and municipal authorities, and of budgetary problems. For this purpose we selected Arab localities representing a cross section of the Arab local authorities according to municipal status, geographical location, population size, and religious composition. A parallel sample of Jewish localities was also selected for a comparative study of budgets. Our research on a Bedouin community in the Negev did not develop along the lines we had planned, and we do not include our findings here.

Documents were obtained from the state archives, local authorities, election platforms, minutes of meetings of the National Committee, and other private and official documents. Most important was the in-depth analysis of the minutes of the council meetings of Arab settlements in the sample described above; for some councils this involved a period of over thirty years.

We conducted extensive interviews with chairmen of Arab local authorities and the prominent figures in the National Committee of Chairmen of Arab Local Authorities. We also interviewed opposition council members from the sample localities. While dealing with the social history of the sample localities and their socio-political structure, we turned to local informants.

Michel Gantus served as a research assistant; Taghrid Ayyashi, Raida Khamis, Rawya Saliba, and Nadira Yunis contributed field work assistance. We wish to thank them. Nemir Murkus, Ibrahim Nemir, Ahmed Abu Asbi, Muhammad Mana, and Asad Azaizi — heads of local councils and municipalities — were superb instructors; we thank them also. We are in the debt of Heather Kernoff and Danielle Friedlander for their word-processing and editorial assistance and to the Research Authority of the University of Haifa for its generous support and the many services rendered us.

Arab and Jewish Sample Localities by Main Characteristics

	Locality	Geographical Area	Religious Structure	Population Size (1986)
Arab Localities				
1.	Shefar-'Am	Northern District	Moslems, Christians, & Druze	18,900 (according to local estim. 23,000)
2.	Iksal	Northern District	Moslems	6,300
3.	Daliet al-Karmel	Haifa District	Druze (and a few Moslems)	9,500
4.	Taiyibe	Central District	Moslems	19,500 (budgets only)
5.	Sakhnin	Northern District	Moslems & Christians	14,800
6.	Ar'ara	Hadera Sub-District	Moslems	6,300
7.	Fasuta	Northern District	Christians	2,000 (budgets only)
8.	Tamra	Northern District	Moslems	14,900 (socio-political structure only)
Jewish Localities				
1.	Zefat	Northern District		16,400
2.	Hazor HaGelilit	Northern District		6,600
3.	Nesher	Haifa District		10,500
4.	Pardes Hanna	Hadera Sub-District		16,200
5.	Qiryat Tivon	Northern District		11,400
6.	Zikron Yaaqov	Haifa District		5,600
7.	Shlumi	Northern District		2,400

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Arab Local Authority During the Ottoman and British Mandate Periods

The Ottoman Regime in Palestine

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the economy of Ottoman Palestine was essentially agrarian, land being the main form of wealth. Extensive tracts were under government ownership, and feudal-type political and social relations prevailed. For our purposes, the political system of control over the rural, mainly village dwelling Arab peasant population (estimated at 300,000 in 1800) is best understood in terms of its administrative-fiscal procedures. Greater Palestine consisted of two territorial-geographical regions, which also served as administrative units: the *eyālet* (province) of Sidon, and the southern *sanjaks* (districts) of the *eyālet* of Damascus; these were administered by *valis*—representatives of central government. The *eyālet* s and the *sanjaks* were divided further into sub-units, called *nahiya*s, for administrative purposes or *mukata as* in territorial terms.

These *nahiyas* or *mukata* as are important for our discussion. They were territorial, administrative and fiscal units, and consequently had military significance as well. The government delegated authority over a unit to whomever best served its major concerns of tax collection and preservation of law and order. In eighteenth-century Palestine, at the *nahiya-mukataʿa* level, the governor of the province appointed a *shaykh al-nahiya* as chief over a village or group of villages (see Cohen 1973; Abir 1975; Porath 1975; Baer 1982;

Rosenfeld 1983). But although this local shaykh served as the *multazim,* that is, tax farmer, for the government, he was essentially the semi-autonomous ruler over the area: "The position of shaykh was the hereditary privilege of specific families and on the whole the central government was unable to change that situation" (Baer 1982: 131). The reason was that in addition to farming taxes the *shaykh al-nahiya* stood at the head of kin military groups, uniting them into a strong clan (or group of clans), each with its own village or urban base providing the power that lay behind its traditional authority over an extended area of villages. Often the shaykh's operational base was a fortified hill palace. There is no doubt that the shaykh and his forces were in a constant state of conflict with neighboring forces over extension of authority, recognition by the government, etc. We should note that a powerful shaykh fulfilled a juridical function also, as arbitrator and judge in local disputes. He may be considered a patron-tax farmer in respect of dependent clients.

The *shaykh al-nahiya* commonly appointed an unofficial representative in every village, the *shaykh al-qarya* (village shaykh) to assist in the collection of taxes. For this "his remuneration was one-quarter of the profit of the *shaykh al-nahiya's* three percent, i.e., 0.75 percent of the taxes which he collected" (Baer 1982: 131).

Our concern is the local groups and peasant society and its social organization as a whole. The Ottoman regime, and presumably earlier regimes, also created a formalized and structured village unit, essential, as mentioned, for the state's central goals of tax collection, preservation of order, and conscription of men into the army. The village was perceived as a *unit,* bearing collective responsibility, primarily for payment of the land tax, which was imposed as a lump sum. The *vali* at the top of the structure, divided it among the villages in his *nahiya,* each village being held collectively responsible. The *shaykh al-qarya* fixed the tax burden of each of the villagers, who formed the bottom of the structure (Cohen 1973: 197).

In the final century or so of its existence, the Ottoman Empire experienced a succession of events that caused it to

seek reform. These included the inflow of European capital, the development of the Capitulations, and the concomitant increase in westernization; constant warfare; and the beginnings of social and intellectual ferment accompanied by the rise of nationalist concepts among the Ottoman subject-peoples. The attempts at change included the enactment in 1839 of the *tanzimat,* a set of constitutional reforms, the modernization of the judiciary system at the beginning of the present century, and other measures. In respect of Palestine, however, all these were largely ineffectual right up to the termination of Ottoman rule in 1917, mainly, perhaps, on account of the persistence of the political structure of the agrarian regime.

One administrative measure, aiming at greater centralization, was the Ottoman Law of the Vilayets of 1864. For our purposes, the key provision of this law was the appointment of *mukhtars* as village chiefs. The intention, not always realized, was to weaken the Palestine shaykhs and strengthen central control through the introduction of officials representing the government directly (Porath 1975: 362-63).

A British Palestine government report of 1941 described the situation as follows:

> For, whereas the sheikh was a traditional leader with a position of independence in relation to Government, the mukhtar merely had the status of a subordinate officer of Government at the bottom of a ladder of direct control. Here was the radical change introduced by the Vilayet Law, in that it set out to establish closer control by the central Government over local affairs (Report 1941:6).

Thus, the Ottoman regime established, and maintained until the British occupation in 1917, a system, of defined administrative units, in decreasing order of size: “the province (*vilayet),* the district (*sanjak*), the sub-district (gaza), the group of villages or large village of over 200 houses *(nahia),* and the village or village community, in which the principal administrative officers were respectively the *vali,* the

mutasarrif, the *qaimmaqam,* the *mudir* and the mukhtar" (Report 1941: 6).

Such appointments also draw attention to an incipient administrative structure at the lowest level, the village acquiring some recognition as a unit. However, the mukhtars, themselves villagers probably representing the largest lineage (hamuia) or religious sect in the village, were merely minor officials; the strength of the traditional shaykhs apparently remained intact. As we shall see, the power of the latter is best viewed as deriving increasingly from landownership, rent, commerce, the support of urban clans and kin networks—not simply "the power of traditional hold over an area." We may assume, moreover, that not all the mukhtars were independent of the local shaykhs:

> Administrative functions had been transferred to the new mukhtars, but the shaykhs continued to exert influence in the villages. In many cases this influence was exerted indirectly, sometimes, indeed, through the newly appointed mukhtars, many of whom were bound to the shaykhs of the important families by kinship ties or economic relations. In particular, the shaykhs continued to exercise their traditional function of arbitration. Only alter the establishment of the British Mandate did the effective power of the shaykhs disappear from the villages and the central government—and and to some extent urban notables—acquired influence and authority in their stead (Baer 1982: 133).

While the traditional shaykhs—notables were wealthy on account of their ownership of village lands and their role as tax farmers, it is doubtful that mukhtars were. Yet a mukhtar did possess some means, for he was not elegible for election to the post if he did not own property and pay "at least 100 *qurush* in direct taxes" (Baer 1982: 137).

Ostensibly the regime invited the existing village groupings —the hamulas and sects—to elect mukhtars to represent them. In practice, however, the mukhtars were appointed by the government as its agents to administer the village. There were

one, two or more mukhtars, depending on the size of the village, the number of sects in it, etc. Informally, a traditional group of elders (the so-called *ikhtiyariyya,* or Council of Elders), being the heads of hamulas and sub-hamulas, were consulted by the mukhtar; as noted, the latter himself probably represented the strongest or largest hamula or group. There had probably been a delicate balance of interests traditionally maintained between family and hamula groupings through the *ikhtiyariyya.* We surmise that this was made exceedingly fragile through the imposition upon the Council of one of its own members as government representative (mukhtar, etc.).

Among the mukhtars' primary functions was the maintenance of law and order in the village. "They were obliged to inform the Ottoman official in charge of a group of villages of any violent conflicts or murders in their villages and to assist in delivering the culprits into the hands of the government" (Baer 1982: 114). It was also their task to supervise field and other guards and watchmen appointed by the village elders.

Their role in preservation of order was clearly designed to guarantee the functioning of the taxation system, for it should be noted that the mukhtars were intended to replace the shaykh as *multazims* acting for the government:

> Prior to the era of reform, taxes were collected by the traditional village shaykhs who served as *multazim*s (tax farmers) or sub-multazims. The replacement of the village shaykh by the mukhtar as tax collector was designed to put an end to the *iltizam* which was legally abolished in 1839 and again in 1856. Indeed, in the 1864 Law of Vilayets, the mukhtar was made the agent of the government for the purpose of collecting taxes in the village, while the Council of Elders was to supervise the distribution of the tax burden among the villagers; and the 1871 Law of Vilayet Administration reiterated the duty of the mukhtars to collect taxes (Baer 1982: 117).

Nevertheless, agrarian feudal-type practices continued to dominate Ottoman Palestine. Despite the reform, tax farming

remained in force until World War I "and the mukhtars generally did not collect the taxes" (Baer, ibid). It seems that no matter whether the *ikhtiyariyya* or the mukhtar distributed the tax burden among the villagers, the village continued to be held collectively responsible for it.

Other duties of the mukhtar in the Ottoman reform period included transmitting news both ways between the government and the village: "He was required to publish in his village laws, regulations and ordinances, to inform defendants that they must appear in court…, to inform the competent authorities of births and deaths in the village, in particular of deaths of persons with heirs who were minors or absent and so on" (Baer 1982: 120). Extending hospitality to foreigners and government officials was also a function of the mukhtar, although not laid down by law.

Baer states that the Palestinian mukhtar did not act as recognized arbitrator in village conflicts or as judge with the acknowledged right to fine and punish villagers following village custom. According to Ottoman law arbitration of village disputes was not the domain of the mukhtar but of the village elders, "while trial and punishment were not mentioned at all in connection with any authority on the village level." That is, the mukhtar was charged with specific, limited executive duties but had no judicial power. Furthermore, the shaykhs were simultaneously "explicitly deprived of their judicial authority, including arbitration, in order to weaken the autonomy of the influential chiefs of powerful families" (Baer 1982: 122-123).

The reforms led not only to the appointment of mukhtars but also to the gradual reduction of *musha*, that is, land held in common by the village, and to the introduction of land registration, which caused an immediate expansion in private landownership. In its attempt to eliminate tax farming, the regime essentially sought a system where it could deal more directly with peasant owner farmer, in collecting its revenues. At the same time, "it also encouraged the formation of large landed estates with the hope of developing 'agricultural capitalism' so as to increase agricultural production" (Tamari ms.: 16).

In the second half of the nineteenth century, despite the evident growth of the townships, improvement in transportation, and greater security from nomadic marauders, etc., internal political and economic relations were still basically agrarian but with title to extensive tracts of land passing into the hands of a class of merchant-rentiers and urban notables. Valleys and plains with their tax-laden villages were bought cheaply by this often absentee landowning class, with merchants and senior officials often purchasing tax-farming rights from the government. In many instances the land was alienated from the peasants, who became sharecroppers on their own former holdings. Their burden grew heavier when demands were made for taxes and rents in cash, where previously they had been paid in kind. In social and economic terms, villager-clients became dominated by and dependent on urban-notable patrons. Hard-pressed tenants paid the tax farmer city merchants taxes or rents directly or worked for landowning urban notables for a share of the crop; both merchant and notable (who were often the same individual or from the same family) interceded for the peasant as his patron with government tax collectors, officials, etc. The landowner-rentier patrons usually stood at the apex of town clans. While the interests of the wealthy were often distinct from those of their extended kin lines, the latter were also dependent on the connections of the notable with Ottoman officials. The numerical strength of the urban patrons was further reinforced by dependent villager-clients; the latter also acted as support groups in the intermittent factional struggles (as between Qays and Yaman: see, e.g., Hoexter 1973), between contesting urban families over tax-farming rights, market opportunities, ties with government offices, and the like (and later, with expanding entrepreneurial openings especially during the Mandate period, in competition over government posts, trade and other concessions, public works, building and other contracts, etc.).

The foregoing reveals the limitations, of local administration during the Ottoman period. We find minor government representatives such as the mukhtars, themselves dependent, alongside kin and sect groupings equally dominated by a hierarchical, agrarian, patron-client, faction

ridden system. This situation is described in some detail, for a number of its features persist today in local government under an entirely different political system.

Any feudal-type agrarian regime rests on its peasantry. In the case of Ottoman Palestine the Arab village peasant social organization was essentially a structure superimposed by the regime so as to guarantee the systematic payment of taxes and rents. As for the scattered, semi-nomadic section of the rural population, the regime attempted to impose its order by confining these subjects to permanent settlements and by dealing with them in groups through a local leadership. A more profound effect of this was that the regime, while ensuring its own existence, also ensured that of the hamula and its leadership, and of other collective formations. While it obviously did not create the hamula or its leadership, which under various propitious circumstances of settlement are self-generating, the feudal-type agrarian regime controlled the "circumstances" and related to individuals in collective structural terms. Whether or not it retained an ancient pattern, it *applied* an ancient one, structuring what existed or what potentially could be structured, trimming first leadership and then descent, and so on, to their design and rendering them much of their content (See Rosenfeld 1983).

Hamula and village leadership were inseparable from and grew out of the same forces that imposed a structured "autonomy" on the village itself: put otherwise, the patrilineage and its leadership developed in tandem.

> In fact, it may be worthwhile to view village leadership not only as the key link in an historical and formal process that led to and joined the lowest administrative-fiscal unit, the collectively responsible ("autonomous") village, to the local power groups, but also, due to its advantaged representative position, this leadership equally served as the motor that structured lineages into politicized descent groups contesting for the imposed role itself and for economic privilege, security and status (Rosenfeld 1983: 160).

As stated, the village mukhtars were responsible to the shaykhs and/or government officials for the transfer of taxes and at certain times for the appearance of numbers of conscripts for military service or public works: they were also in charge of the village registers. The titles *shaykh* and mukhtar were honorifics for minor representatives of state power and order within the villages. The rewards of the mukhtar, certainly during the Ottoman period, often took the form of tax reductions, conscription exemptions, and some minor privileges; he also filled the role of overseer, shared in extortion, and was the informer against heads of competing hamulas.

Two interrelated points here are central to our discussion of the historical development of local administration and government in Palestine, and later in Israel. The first is the role of the state in fostering the hamula, sect or other social grouping as a separate unit, as stated, by imposing collective village responsibility on them and by giving them form and continuity; furthermore, in enforcing its control the state initiated and exacerbated conflicts among and within the groupings, thus advancing the process of separation still more. The second point, which follows from the first, is that in villages and in towns, often in neighborhood and sect quarters, hamulas competed among themselves for honor, status, titles, privileges, and security; at times several hamulas combined against others in factional struggles that were local but often were extensive, covering villages and geographically aligned groupings or sections of them as frequently mentioned in the literature (see Rosenfeld 1964 for bibliography). Often such factionalism was sparked off by conflicts between notable families in their rivalry over resources, means of production, ties to the regime, and the like; no less often it was encouraged by the manipulative divide—and—rule policies of the regime itself. In either case it was the peasants and ordinary townspeople who struggled in their daily lives for economic security, dignity, etc., through the ongoing factional strife.

Perhaps, owing to the agrarian nature of Ottoman Palestine, that is, a small, scattered rural population, with towns that were markets rather than urban centers, and with the majority

of the population organized in kin and fictive-kin groupings, the possibilities for the formation of political, ideological, or religious movements that could override factionalism were slight. Nevertheless, under certain circumstances (here, the common interest of the elite), opposed and conflicting groups occasionally joined forces:

> The new Egyptian measure [a plan of gradual conscription and disarmament in Syria and Palestine] would have broken the backbone of the "feudal" military power and would have literally deprived the chiefs of their last weapon. Consequently, the Palestine chiefs and notables, Qaysis and Yamanis alike, with the exception of the 'Abd al-Hadis, followed by the more than willing clients, rebelled against the Egyptian government in May 1834.
>
> Palestine and Syria had often known oppressive rule by various pashas. When Ottoman authorities went too far, and especially when they infringed on local privileges, spontaneous revolts had often occurred in different parts of the country. The rebellion of 1834 was something different. It had the blessing of the *ulama,* it was general, and the most bitter rebellion of all, as the chiefs of Palestine were convinced by now that the Egyptian reforms were about to eliminate them as a class (Abir 1975: 310).

It seems that as long as the political groupings (dominant shaykh-notable, later merchant-effendi, class), economic regime (Ottoman agrarian, taxation), and social organization (kin lineages, factional units patron-linked to notable families) survived, the uprisings, rebellions, joint activist movements, etc. were transitory and did not in themselves lead to fundamental change in the power structure. This applies to such "rebellions" as were initiated from "above"; that is, leadership and control began from within the local ruling groups, and remained there.

Clearly, certain longstanding overarching social formations cut across local divisions: the Muslim religion itself, and the Christian sects; yearly pilgrimages of religious groups from all over Palestine (e.g., Nabi Musa); while Qays and Yaman divided the population along one axis, they also united contingents from within each camp in alliances. Conflicts between groups indeed arose over class issues: in the second half of the nineteenth century the rising stratum of urban notables, who competing with *nahiya* shaykhs for tax-farming privileges and landownership rights, also vied with government *valis* for control over district councils (*majlis*) (Porath 1975: 358, 364-65). It is possible that some group

organization and the cumulative conflicts between leading groups and their followers did result in significant structural change, for example, the transition from the rule of tax-farming shaykhs to that of a merchant-effendi class.

Let us conclude this section with a few general words on the internal factional struggles at the local level. Competing hamulas seeking economic and status privileges from state representatives attempt to promote themselves as an alternative to the existing village and/or sect leadership. Traditionally, the main mechanism for this has been through a series of endogamous marriages that strengthen (and even given structural form to) a hamula from within, and then, as is usually necessary, through marriage alliances with other hamulas to form a stronger factional group able to compete with similarly organized alliances. Often factional groupings also juxtapose sects, or sects combine in alliances against a segment of sect that obstructs their path, as each competes for status, security and privilege.

The British Mandatory Regime in Palestine

In 1920, at the start of the British mandatory period that followed the Ottoman regime, the Arab population was approximately 600,000 (512,000 Muslims, 78,000 Christians); there were 67,000 Jews. Some 75 percent of the Arabs were rural peasants, and 70 percent of these were either landless or did not have sufficient land for subsistence living.

During the second decade of the century the Palestine Arab national movement remained narrow and elitist seeking to formalize its status and establish interests in the capitalist world. This movement widened its ideological base somewhat in the 1920s through its opposition to Zionist settlement, and now presented the British with its claim to become an Arab National Government. However, the social structure and organization of this power center did not alter; they served the

economic and political ends of a landed and merchant-rentier class, split into factions competing for privilege. Although the Ottoman *millet* system of administration of each religious community through its confessional head (the majority Muslim population holding higher status) no longer operated, the ruling class and the peasants remained divided along religious lines. Divisions also existed on account of the different economic, occupational and educational levels of Muslims and Christians—the latter benefitting somewhat from the intervention of European states on their behalf, on account of the competition for few jobs, government posts, etc., that were rationalized In religious sect or ethnic terms, and on account of the perpetual divisiveness within the religious hierarchy.

Meanwhile, material dependency, masked by factional quarrels over status and honor between blood lines within and between villages and towns, and encouraged by effendi-rentiers, continued to vitiate the peasantry's capacity either to play a more dominant role in the Palestine Arab national movement or to recognize a common cause in opposition to the ruling elite. Writing about factionalism and party politics Tamari remarks:

> The spontaneous peasant uprisings which marked the initial period of the revolt [1936] compelled the two main nationalist parties—the Arab Palestinian Party representing the Husseini faction, and the National Defense Party representing the Nashashibis—to merge in the framework of the Arab Higher Committee. [But] in that merger we had the *appearance* of factional politics de-factionalized. What happened however was simply the temporary suspension of factional politics at the national level of leadership, with the institutional linkages of the hierarchical pattern of vertical alliances remaining intact (Tamari ms: 22-23).

The potential for a national society based on alternative class had begun to arise by the 1930s. The Arab peasantry was then well on its way to becoming a proletariat due to the

demand created through British mandatory work projects, increased building and service opportunities, the expansion of port, railroad and transport facilities; the process of proletarization became definitive in the growth of industry, the oil refineries and British army camps during World War II.

The wealthy landowning class did not disappear; ramified as it was into trade, import-export agencies, and the entire range of bourgeoisie activities that blossomed during the war, it became more prosperous than ever during the mandate period. Although the urban-rural ratio did not radically change and the agrarian system of production remained backward, from the 1930s on one can no longer speak of a feudal-type regime. Many of the big estates were becoming smaller, many younger members of notable families were entering the professions and government positions, and were now forming an intelligentsia (Rosenfeld 1978: 377-381).

The peasants remained dependent on the ruling class, but as wage labor became extensive the tight grip of the wealthy landowners weakened somewhat. Thousands of peasants from different families and hamulas were working and living side by side outside their native villages. Still, the great majority of former peasants, now wage workers, remained village dwellers living in the frameworks of their hamula social organization, with backward agriculture, absence of local reforms, and the like.

We stress the political economy of the period and its changes, and the signs of possible alternatives, for in this setting local administration and government may be understood. We shall return to this subject shortly. Here we point out that beyond the village level, but reflecting on it as well, we find incipient organization of Arab workers, the rise of an urban intelligentsia, and some joint Arab-Jewish trade union and political party organizations (e.g., the Palestine Communist Party). Political, national and social (class) consciousness certainly were growing factors in peasant-worker considerations. As stated, the peasants supported the 1936 national strike and the 1936-1938 rebellion and may have been one of its most active elements. However, Arab political parties remained entirely divisive in structure and continued to

be led by a very thin stratum of notable families. Moreover, the British mandatory government dealt only with the Arab ruling class, and the Jews also conceptualized their policies in terms of that class and in terms of the British government.

The 1936 Palestine Royal Commission (Peel Report 1937) commented on local government (Jewish and Arab, but our concern is with the Arabs) in Palestine. It referred to the Local Councils Ordinance, 1921, whose aim was "to enable the High Commissioner to confer legal status and powers on certain communities" (1937: 257). Under the Turkish regime the village councils had been dominated by the mukhtars, thus reducing, in the opinion of the Peel Report, any possibility of effective wider representation. Meanwhile, the Report states, the Palestine Administration made no attempt "to investigate and revive any tradition there may have been of government by village elders, and the Councils bear the stamp of an alien polity *imposed from above"* (emphasis added). Arab local councils, now acting as instruments of Palestine Central Administration rather than as "real organ(s) of local self-government," were not considered a success (1937: 257). The Report observed that the villagers had little interest in the councils, were reluctant to pay rates for services, and found little to attract them in the councils. Since they found they served no useful function, a number of councils were disbanded at the villagers' request.

Indeed, the Royal Commission found that while the 1921 Ordinance served the development of autonomy in Jewish areas well: "There has not been the same need for the Mandatory Administration to encourage local autonomy among the Jews" it did not prove suitable for use in Arab rural communities. The Report speaks of "the conjunction of what are virtually two civilizations in one system" (Peel Report 1937: 257, 263).

Two additional points of criticism were "a lack of flexibility" in the compressing of "progressive townships (Jewish) and backward villages (Arab) within the limits of a single legal framework" and "undue centralization and artificiality, in that sufficient use has not been made of such

inherent self-governing impulses and institutions as the people possess" (Peel Report 1937: 259; Survey 1946, 1: 128-29).

Following the Peel Report, in 1940 a committee was appointed "to consider and recommend what steps should be taken to ensure the exercise of a proper measure of village responsibility" (Survey 1946, I: 129). In its report (Report of the Committee on Village Administration and Responsibility 1941), to which we return below, the committee recommended "separate legislation of greater flexibility more suitable of application to the more backward of the rural communities"; this led to the enactment in 1944 of the Village Administration Ordinance (Survey 1946, I: 129).

Meanwhile, and at a different level, criticism by the representative Jewish General Council (Vaad Leumi) of Government policy on local government in Palestine was quite sharp. The Council pointed out that while the (1921) constituent orders of the councils were framed on a democratic basis allowing for a great deal of local autonomy, over time they had become "more and more restrictive, until at present, the hold of the [British] Administration over the councils is no less absolute than over the municipalities" (Jewish General Council 1947: 5). As for the Committee appointed in 1940, the Council noted that not only was it exclusively official and that its sessions "were screened from public view" but also that its Report merely "repeats what the Royal Commission so strongly condemned. .. Not only does it not relax in any way the hold of the Administration over local government, but on the pretext of the need of 'flexibility'… the village councils are completely subjected to the absolute powers and unfettered discretions of the District Administration" (Jewish General Council 1947: 6).

The Council's criticism applied to the municipalities as well and it claimed that the recommendation of the Royal Commission (1936) on a comprehensive examination of the structure of local government "with a view to its complete overhaul … was not put into effect" and that in fact the government "delayed the issue of instructions implementing the said recommendations" (Jewish General Council 1947: 6).

True enough, the criticism by the Vaad Leumi came at a time when two (generally competing) national movements were each seeking national autonomy, and the British mandatory regime was doing its utmost to deny them this, while implementing, among much else, a colonial system of divide and rule. While the conclusion of the Vaad Leumi "that no local self-government or autonomy—in the true sense of the word—exists in Palestine" (Jewish General Council 1947: 9) must be placed in its correct historical context (the anti-colonialist national struggle, and that the Jews were essentially concerned with Jews), we raise these points here in order later to analyze and explain change and continuity in local authority for the Arab national minority in the non-colonial context of the Israeli regime.

In Palestine the High Commissioner appointed the mayors and deputy mayors of municipal councils from among the elected councillors, and he also had the power of dismissal. Similarly, the presidents and vice-presidents of local councils and the chairman and vice-chairman of village councils were appointed and could be removed by their District Commissioner (Survey 1946; 132; Jewish General Council 1947; 11 and see pp. 12-14 for powers of the High Commissioner and District Commissioners). The High Commissioner had the right of veto on every decision of the municipality and complete control of the budget (Waschitz 1947; 293; Shimoni 1947; 204). 'Every annual rate, tax, fee or charge of a local authority is subject to Government approval…. Every penny of expenditure by local authority is subject to direct Government approval…. The Administration holds at its mercy the whole life of every local authority in the country …" (Jewish General Council 1947; 15).

A significant expression of the high-handed control exercised by the mandatory government is that the municipal elections of 1934 held under the Municipal Corporations Ordinance of that year were, for various reasons of state, the last until 1946 (Survey 1946: 133; Shimoni 1947: 204). Grouped together with 'advanced communities such as Tel Aviv and Haifa" with populations then exceeding 100,000 inhabitants, were small rural townships, "little more than

market centers" such as Jenin and Beisan. Moreover, while the government reiterated in 1945 the need stated by the 1936 Royal Commission for the services of an "expert authority .. to undertake a comprehensive examination of the structure of local government", this examination was postponed under the adjoining proviso of "as soon as circumstances permit" (Survey 1946: 135). The Jewish General Council went further, stating bluntly in 1947 that not only had the 1936 recommendations not been implemented but that since that year "in some respects the position has deteriorated" (1947: 24).

The Vaad Leumi was primarily critical of the duplicity of the government for repeatedly stating the need for increased autonomy in local government while constantly increasing its control over local councils and municipalities; the main theme of the 1941 Government Committee Report, by contrast, was that in Arab communities the "body of elders," the "informal meeting of the heads of families or elders of the village," had in the Ottoman period been "the most potent force in the village" (Report 1941: 6), and it was this body that the Report (like earlier and later government Reports) found important to "revive" and "reconstruct."

This underlying assumption regarding the nature of local government is reflected in the Report by a quotation from the report of the Royal Commission itself: since the time of the British occupation, "The Palestine Administration … made no attempt to investigate and revive any tradition there may have been of government by village elders', and the authority of such elders has suffered increased diminution" (Report 1941: 7).

We may observe here that British colonial government had a tradition of seeking out what it considered traditional authority. Its concerns also undoubtedly touched upon the organic, internal potential of local practices, democratic procedures, the possibilities inherent in fostering "indirect rule," etc. As Ma'oz notes, the British probably followed the tradition of advancing forms of local government on the assumption that these would serve as the basis for self-government in the country (Ma'oz 1962: 233).* Moreover, in respect of our analysis, we recall

that while local chiefs certainly represented and enjoyed the support of their families and hamulas, they all were dominated by external forces (patrons, rentiers, British government officiais and the like), and were enmeshed in the factional intrigues they initiated; that is, the traditional forms were also traditionally controlled, and council elders, etc., found it difficult to deal with issues on a common ground and impossible to represent a truly autonomous, democratic community body. The writer of each successive report (Royal Commission, Report of the Committee…, Survey, etc.), acknowledged in a footnote his predecessor as a source for verification and idealized tradition, since it was tradition preserved in its existing form that served to maintain the control so dear to all.

* Ma'oz also points out that the mandatory government was following its 1922 League of Nations mandate to "encourage local autonomy as far as possible" (1962: 233).

In fact, we note again, the government did nothing to "reconstruct" (see Report 1941: 8-9 and elsewhere) the tradition it continued to laud. "Indirect rule" was important for the government only to the degree that it served the government's interest in direct rule. As stated, the government acted through the elite of the ruling classes and therefore control at the local level was effectively dominated by both.

Space permits us only to paraphrase some of the conclusions (pp. 18-20) of the 1941 Report. The basic accepted unit of administration was the village. The Committee members reiterate their recommendation that village councils conform, "as far as possible," to the traditional council of elders. They suggest that at a sufficiently developed stage of village councils, village courts be established to try minor cases arising in the village, village elders be granted legal recognition to serve as arbitrators in village disputes, and that the mukhtar be retained as the direct government representative in each village,** with a mukhtar for every village. The Report noted that in practice villages of between 1000 and 5000 inhabitants had more than two mukhtars, larger villages had from four to eleven, and the presence of several mukhtars could well be a factor in "party rivalry" in a village.

As Baer notes, the new Mandatory Ordinance to regulate village administration finally appeared in 1944, "but it left things more or less as they were before: every village would have a mukhtar or some mukhtars and assistant mukhtars—as required by the size of the village or other conditions" (1982: 110).

** The 1941 Report includes a comprehensive Draft Village Administration Ordinance that was later adapted as the Village Administration Ordinance 1944 and that details the duties and powers of the village council to carry out works, formulate by-laws, assist officers of Government, levy rates and fees, and raise loans. The Draft Ordinance also contains details of the structure and powers of village courts, etc., the general powers of arbitration of the village council, etc.; and the appointment of mukhtars and their duties. It further interprets such concepts as "village," "village councils," "village courts," "arbitration," "mukhtar," etc. There is also (Annexure D) a listing of the Statutory Duties of Mukhtars in Rural Areas, which states the duty and the authority upon which it is based.

Following Baer and the 1941 Report, we see that while the Ottoman Law of Vilayets (1864) provided for formal election of mukhtars, in practice they were appointed, the interest of the government coming first, "following the principle of direct control" (Baer 1982: 111; Report 1941: 7). While the Law of Vilayets remained in force until 1934, that is, almost a decade and a half after the establishment of the British mandate in Palestine, it was in 1942 that an order was issued providing for the *appointment* of mukhtars.

> In fact, however, not many elections to the post of mukhtar seem to have been held in Mandatory Palestine even prior to the new order. Usually the mukhtars were appointed and dismissed by the District Officers, and if the latter took into account the view of the village notables, they did not do so in any formal way. This situation was finally legalized in the 1944 Ordinance, which did not provide for elections at all (Baer 1982: 111).

In other words, the British mandatory government consistently followed the principle of its right to appoint and dismiss the mukhtars (at the same time praising local self-government), even though they were supposed to be elected by men who paid an annual 500 mil tax (Waschitz 1947: 295). Equally, it recognized that the mukhtar himself was only one among several family heads, the traditional leaders, and that he required their agreement in order to perform the duties that the government required of him. The underlying goal behind the government's desire to reinvigorate the council of elders was

to turn this traditional body into a functioning lower-level, administrative unit, and thereby enhance its own control.

It is of interest that collective village responsibility for payment of taxes remained in force for several years after the British occupation began, and the village mukhtars and elders commonly signed "an obligation of the village as a whole and afterwards [distributed] the burden among its inhabitants. Only in 1922 was the collective tax liability of the village abolished, and taxes were collected, from then onwards, from each peasant individually" (Baer 1982: 117).

The agrarian taxation practices of the Ottomans carried over into the early mandatory period, as evidenced by the fact that the British required the mukhtar and the elders to nominate a committee for tithe assessment; it was the mukhtar's task to inform the government of the harvesting of crops and their readiness for tax assessment, and together with the elders he was held responsible for crops stored or those at the threshing floor. The mukhtars were "to assist Government tax collectors in distraint proceedings"; "to certify the ability of tax defaulters to pay taxes due", "to prepare animal tax and numeration lists"; etc. (Report 1941: 50-52; Baer 1982: 117-118).

One of the mukhtar's most important functions was to pass on information from the government to the villagers. Another imposed by the mandatory government was to keep registers of births and deaths in the village (Report 1941: 51). Furthermore, the mukhtar had the authority to issue certain certificates in the village, for which purpose he kept a seal to be affixed to all documents requiring it. Such a privilege undoubtedly served to enhance his status as a representative of the government while also providing a source of income* (Baer 1982: 137). In view of the mukhtar's position as dual representative (of the government the village and vice versa: more the former than the latter—see Ma'oz 1962: 234) and the privileges open to manipulation, doubt was sometimes cast on his honesty in all matters (Waschitz 1947: 296).

* The Handbook of Palestine referred to the mukhtars as follows: "Under the District Commissioners and District Officers are the mukhtars, or headmen

of villages. Their powers and duties have not yet been codified, but included among them are:

a. to keep the peace within the village;
b. to send information to the nearest Police Station of any serious offence or accident occurring in the village;
c. to assist Government officers in the collection of revenue;
d. to publish in the village any Public Notices or Proclamations sent to them by the District Commissioners;
e. to keep a register of all births and deaths within the village, and to send a copy to the Senior Medical Officer once a quarter" (Luke and Keith-Roach 1930: 209-210).

Turkish concern had been for a government representative mukhtar who could aid primarily in tax collection and secondarily in the maintenance of law and order; the British mandatory government reversed the order of importance. An illuminating sentence appears in an extract from a 1930 confidential Report on the Palestine Police Force by Mr. (later Sir) H.L. Dowbiggin: "The Police will regard the Headman (mukhtar) as their best friend, and they will look to the Headman as their principal means for getting information as to what is going on in each village" (Report 1941: 56). Undoubtedly, out of such concerns flowed the hypocritical respect in which the government held "traditional councils" or, as we shall see, the award of a pompous "title" to "a prototype of traditional leadership."

Baer notes that:

> "The Village Administration Ordinance of 1944 again stressed the security functions of the mukhtar and did not leave any doubt that these were his major functions. Article 40, which deals with the mukhtar's duties, opens with his obligation to maintain order and security in his village, to inform the police about criminals, vagabonds, foreigners, or suspicious persons who are found in the village" (1982: 114).

While the 1930 Dowbiggin Report stated that "The mukhtar … is not today, in the majority of cases, the best man (for the task) in the village," the 1941 Report in its reference to this evaluation believed that it was due less to inadequate remuneration than to the failure of the government to enhance

the prestige of the office. In the Committee's opinion, the mukhtar had a large number of duties to carry out "but practically no powers in relation to the people of the village he is supposed to represent," and therefore he was not a "prototype of traditional leadership." Nevertheless, the Report continues, the office still was attractive especially to families that had traditionally held it, since not only did it carry a salary "commensurate with its duties" and "material advantages and privileges," but also such prestige as still clings to the title of "the chosen one" (Report 1941: 15-16}

There were 22 municipalities in existence at the time of the British occupation of Palestine in 1917. These had been established under the Ottoman Vilayet Municipal Law of 1877 and continued to operate under it until the enactment of the Municipal Corporations Ordinance in 1934. Until the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, only two new municipal councils (Tel Aviv and Petah Tikva) were formed during the British mandate. Formal local government, as summarized by the 1946 Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry, was described as follows:

> Thus, the functions of local government are today exercised by municipal councils, local councils and village councils under the authority contained in the Municipal Corporations Ordinance, 1934, the Local Council Ordinance, 1941, and the Village Administration Ordinance, 1944, respectively. Generally speaking the municipal councils are established in the intensively urban areas, the local councils in the smaller townships where development is not of a predominantly urban nature and the village councils in areas which are exclusively rural. Owing to historical circumstances, however, a number of the Arab local authorities have the status of municipal council although in size and degree of development they are inferior to several of the larger Jewish local councils; similarly, a number of the Arab local councils, which were established before the enactment of the Village Administration Ordinance are comparable in size and

> nature to those villages in which village councils have recently been created (Survey 1946: 129; footnotes in the original, not reproduced here, refer to each Ordinance).

In 1946, then, there were 24 municipal councils, of which 18 were Arab, two Jewish and four (Jerusalem, Haifa, Safad, Tiberias) mixed; 38 local councils, of which 11 were Arab, 26 Jewish (and one German Templar community); and there were 24 Arab village councils. By 1933 fourteen Arab local councils were functioning but ten years later the number had fallen to eleven. Moreover, of the nine village local councils that existed in 1945 three were in purely Christian areas, while one had a Christian minority; yet in 1941 there were only nine entirely Christian villages in all of Palestine. It is clear, therefore, that Muslim Arab villages benefited marginally at best from the existence of local councils (Miller 1985: 74-5).

While there may not have been "local self-government in the true sense of the word" in Palestine, there is no denying the differences between Jews and Arabs in social circumstances and in the forces at work in local government. The fact that voting and candidacy qualifications required a minimum tax payment,* and that these were higher in Arab and mixed municipalities than in the Jewish municipalities and local councils had a definite effect on the social composition of Arab councils. Waschitz points out, for example, that since the establishment of Jerusalem as a municipality by the Turks, the composition of its council revolved around five Husseinis, three Haladis, two Nashashibis, two Djanis, two Alamis (1947: 293); that is, exclusively around competing notable families. Shimoni remarks that the members of the municipalities, founders of corporations, members of government committees, heads of parties, clubs, and the like were the same people from the same families (1947: 200-201). Not only were Arab councils dominated by "the Effendi and well-to-do classes", but also "the number of persons who were qualified to vote at the first elections held under the Municipal Corporations Ordinance in 1934 was extremely small. In Shefar-ʿAm, for instance, which in 1931 had a population of 2826, no persons were qualified to be elected as municipal councillors" (Jewish General Council 1947: 10).

* According to the Municipal Franchise Ordinance, 1926 the qualifications for voters were "annual tax payment of at least 500 mils on immovable property … or payment of municipal rates to an amount of at least £P1"; and the qualifications for members of the council were "payment … of taxes of at least £P1 on immovable property … or of municipal rates of at least £P2" etc., etc. (see Luke and Keith-Roach 1930; 312-313).

There were other voting qualifications in addition to the minimal tax payment. These were the "census," which denied the voting privileges to the majority (Shimoni 1947: 203-04); the lower age limit of 25 years (Luke and Keith-Roach 1930: 312; Ma'oz 1962: 234); the exclusion of Arab women from the vote; and the domination of the system and the councils by wealth, which may well have caused apathy among the general Arab population. The numbers of Arabs who voted at the first elections in 1934 and at the second elections in 1946 therefore remained significantly small. The population figures and number of voters in seven Arab towns in the 1934 and the 1946 elections compared with the figures for five Jewish local councils in the 1947 elections are revealing.

Table 1.1: Population and number of electors in various Arab towns Elections 1934 Elections 1946

Name of Town	Number of inhabitants	Electors No.	%	Number of inhabitants	Electors No.	%
Gaza	17,046	840	4.9	34,170	1622	4.7
Nablus	17,189	747	4.9	23,259	1619	6.9
Nazareth	8756	458	5.2	14,200	1150	8.1
Acre	7897	718	9.1	12,360	1341	10.8
Majdal	6226	170	2.7	9910	329	3.3
Bethlehem	6815	331	4.8	8820	590	6.6
Jenin	2706	163	6.0	3990	327	8.1

As is seen, the percentages of Jewish voters were five and ten times higher than those of Arab voters; in addition, the Jewish municipal and local councils were also community councils with no financial or other restrictions on the right to vote (Jewish General Council 1947: 11). The conceptual framework in which the Jewish community as a whole related to local authority (and in which it carried on its struggle for autonomy), as well as its social composition, was basically democratic and egalitarian.

Table 1.2: Population and number of electors in various Jewish local councils

Name of council	Number of inhabitants	Number of electors	percent
Hadera	4500	2126	47.2
Kfar Saba	4320	2200	50.9
			94.5
Bat Yam	2300	2175*	-------
			47.3***
			42.6
Ramat Gan	12,200	5196**	-------
			30.0***
Ra'anana	3550	1800	50.7

* 50% of them are landowners, not residents
** some 1500 are landowners, not residents
*** of inhabitants only
Source: Jewish General Council 1947: 10-11

Let us note briefly some of the activities of the communities in Palestine. The Jewish community maintained a tradition of investment in education. Local bodies acted as the education authority, and local Jewish authorities had long imposed education rates to cover part of the expenses: This was less evident in the Arab community: "Only in recent years have the Arab local authorities become alive to their responsibilities in this direction; a number of them are now levying small education rates to supplement Government expenditure on education" (Survey 1946: 134).

While local authorities did not maintain any medical services in Palestine except in Tel Aviv, where there was a municipal hospital (Survey 1946: 134), the Jewish community operated extensive health and welfare services beyond those supplied by the mandatory government. Some of the factors behind this Jewish activity were philanthropic bodies, financial support by World Jewry, the Hadassah medical organization, the large number of Jewish medical practitioners in Palestine, etc.

Comparing revenues and expenditure for three Arab municipalities and three Jewish local councils of fairly similar populations in 1944, we see that Tulkarm (Arab: population 8090) had a revenue of £P13,500 and expenditure of £P13,000 while Rishon le Zion (Jewish: 8100) had a revenue of £P23,349 and expenditure of £P22,023; the revenue of Khan

Yunis (Arab: 11,200) was £P7739, expenditure £P449Q and the respective figures for Rehovot (Jewish: 10,020) were £P49,734 and £P49,934; the revenue of Ramallah (Arab: 5080) was £P5034, its expenditure EP4550 and the respective sums for Natanya (Jewish: 4900) were £P25,516 and £P22,811 (for a full listing, see Survey 1946: 137-39).

We see that the scale of differences was great, the per capita expediture in Jewish towns much higher; here we only point out that the Jewish "progressive townships," in the phrase of the 1936 Royal Commission, had a concern with, and a fairly developed system of, local services, while in many Arab communities this was not so.

The accepted view seems to be that Arab municipal councils were wanting in incentive, efficient organization (see Shimoni 1947: 204-05), professional skills, and qualified personnel during the mandate period. The lack seems to have been still greater at the middle and small local council level. Many seem to have existed only on paper. From time to time the mandatory government disbanded a local council and changed its status to a village council (Shimoni 1947: 205).

Despite certain formal beginnings during the second half of the nineteenth century under Ottoman rule, the effectiveness of Arab self-government by local authority was not great during the mandate period. There are exceptions, such as the successful cooperation within the joint Haifa municipality, where the population of some 150,000 was equally divided between Arabs and Jews; and while some Arab municipal and local councils were disbanded others of course functioned, although how well they functioned is open to question. As stated, they seems to have been largely ineffective.

While we lack clear explanatory data for specific Arab towns and villages, the minor budgetary outlays of Arab councils attest to the negligible number of development projects undertaken in them (Shimoni 1947: 204-05; Ma'oz 1962: 235). Even in Arab settlements with local councils, running water and electricity were not provided, there were hardly any roads, and health, welfare and education services barely existed. These facts indicate the dimensions of the

problem; furthermore, most villages did not have councils (Ma'oz 1962: 235).

In explaining the lack of effectiveness of local authority, we have emphasized the Arab political structure itself—the effendi-merchant-rentier class of notable families, now in the 1930s and 1940s found in government offices, the professions etc., that is, the domination of the system by a specific narrow stratum almost wholly lacking in concern for the public good. The elite ruling class hardly made any investment in reform, whether agriculture and modernization of the economy or developing local health, welfare and other services. This stratum was divided factionally in competing for power but it was not divided ideologically (see also Shimoni 1947: 200). it did not form distinct political parties in terms of class or ideological and material positions; moreover, it was a major constraining force, containing the growth of others in the country, for example, worker and peasant parties. It indeed actively generated the well-known factional strife that cut across all spheres of Arab village and urban life; in terms of our particular concern the class interfered directly in local politics, so that independent local authority and government were immediately and consistently obstructed.

Going further, we perceive that the British government actually promoted the system dealing only with the notables at the upper level while seeking "order" through mukhtars and councils of elders at the lower. Thus we can comprehend the "system" as total dominance by one element within which the so-called local authority was forced to function.

In a comment on the 1941 Committee Report Miller states: "Advances in self government were limited and confined to urban areas; no steps to develop local autonomy had been taken in the one thousand villages that contained 50 percent of the Palestinian population. Although councils of elders, committees of arbitration, and mukhtars continued to function, they had no legal status. The bulk of the report comprises suggestions for the revival and formalization of the prerogatives customarily ascribed to village leaders" (1985: 145).

Arabs themselves were aware of poor management, lack of efficiency, and of the failure to create local government responsible for public needs. Like various government commissions, many Arabs attributed this to the lack of authority and independence in municipal and local councils, which were dominated by a government whose heavy intervention in their affairs restricted local incentive and initiative. It was also widely accepted that factionalism, family, hamula and sect conflicts were inherent in Arab culture, so Ihat cooperative effort or general concern for local public affairs were quite impossible.

We may say that one approach—the one that we take—views the overall political economy as historically responsible for structures and behavior at the local level; another approach looks for the causes at the level of the local structure, tradition and culture; that is, it wishes to learn how they have functioned over time regardless of the "system" that defined them or under which they developed.

Summary

We have noted the major concern of the Ottoman agrarian regime for tax collection and order, and how this was reflected in the organization and administration of local communities. Centralization and reforms in the second half of the nineteenth century led to increased formalization, including the placing of the village and the village mukhtar in the hierarchical administrative structure. Power and control remained in the hands of a notable patron class of urban landowners, tax-farmers, merchant-rentiers and Ottoman military-administrative officials. Appointed village mukhtars had the task of imposing a collectivity ordained from above on villages composed of contesting, poor, weak and factionally manipulated lineage groupings and sects.

The British mandatory period was marked by the rapid transition of a peasantry into a peasant-laborer and wage-earning class. Meanwhile, the wealthy urban merchant-rentier

class ramified further into the professions and government offices. While political, national and class consciousness became more extensive throughout the Arab public, consciousness of local councils and of local government remained underdeveloped in comparison with that of the Jewish community.

The ability of the Government and of the Arab ruling class to manipulate within and among kin lines and sects and to further exacerbate factional tendencies within villages and towns was one of the main factors that incapacitated Arab local government.

Mayors and deputies of Arab municipal councils and chairmen and vice-chairmen of local councils were appointed by government district commissioners; all decisions, rates, etc., were subject to government approval. Meanwhile, the government played with the idea of "reviving" such traditional local groups as the "council of elders," while continuing to support the retention of appointed mukhtars as the direct government representative in each village, priority being given to law and order. Arab voting and candidacy qualifications required a minimum tax payment, the number of electors was small, Arab women did not vote, and male voters had to be least 25 years old; municipalities were dominated by the wealthy, but revenues and expenditures were extremely low. For over 900 Arab villages in Palestine in 1946 there were only 11 Arab local councils and 24 Arab village councils. The level of operation of local and village councils was low—often insignificant or ineffectual; many councils were disbanded.

2
Arab Local Government After the Establishment of Israel: Developments and Problems

Introduction

Here we briefly observe the place of Arab local government in the context of certain developments in the Israeli political economy. The elements of this context are the 1948 war and its aftermath, its meaning for the Palestinian Arab population that remained in Israel, Israeli policy following victory, and certain key political and economic transformation as they affected Jews and Arabs.

By the end of 1948 the Arab population, previously a majority, had become a small minority of 150,000 in Israel (160,000, or 13.5 percent of the total population of 1,173,900 at the end of 1949—SAI 1985: 32). For the Arabs, the war and the flight and expulsion of approximately 80 percent of the Arab population (some 650,000-700,000 people) from the area that now constituted the territories of the State of Israel, were a disaster. Refugees left behind families, kin, homes and property; almost the entire Arab population now inhabited some 100 villages and encampments. Previously there had been 434 Arab villages in the area of the State of Israel. It was the end of cities with mixed Jewish and Arab populations; of Arab citriculture and Arab agriculture in the mixed coastal zone; of urban Arab factories and workshops; and of Arab employment in British-controlled and operated heavy industry and general services (e.g., oil, ports, railroads). In 1946 there had been some 195,000 Arab city dwellers in Haifa, Jaffa, Lod (Lydda), Ramie, and Acre; at the end of 1948 there were fewer

than 20,000. Nazareth with its population of 18,000 and Shefar-ʿAm with 4,200 were the only all-Arab cities left in Israel.

With only few exceptions, the remaining Arab population was now concentrated in three areas: in the area north of Haifa and in Galilee (65 percent), in the Little Triangle from Hadera to Petach Tikva (22 percent), and in the Negev, where some Bedouin lived. The Arab population at the end of 1949 comprised 111,500 Muslims, 34,000 Christians, and 14,500 Druze. Some 75-80 percent of the Muslims were now rural, 80 percent of the Christians were urban, and the Druze were entirely rural.

Almost all the Palestinian Arab middle and upper classes—the urban landowing, mercantile, professional and religious elite—were no longer in Israel. The vast majority of Arabs in Israel were now placed under military government. In brief, what took place in 1947-1948 was not merely a break with the past for a fragmented Palestinian Arab population, but a total breakdown of, or severance from, every personal and group context.

Under the military government the Arabs were restricted in their movements to certain areas and often to their home villages. Travel restrictions were eased somewhat in 1957 but not entirely lifted. The Arabs' enemy status was made plain, as was during the economically difficult post-war period, their disadvantage compared with Jews in the search for work; the Arabs required travel permits, which often had to be renewed on a daily or weekly basis. Only from 1962 were travel permits valid for a year issued.

The military government intervened directly in local activities in all the Arab towns and villages: in the choice of mukhtars; in granting special privileges to certain individuals or groups, thereby granting them official recognition as a local political force; in placing informers in all villages, threatening those who aligned themselves with radical political parties or movements, and following a policy of divide and rule among kin groups and religious sects. Military government was maintained until 1966 on the claim of national security, even

though a majority of the Israeli population probably favored its abolition at least a decade earlier.

In almost four decades the Arab population has multiplied greatly and today numbers approximately 645,000 (excluding the 125,000 Arabs in East Jerusalem), of whom 484,000 are Moslems (75 percent), 87,000 are Christians (15 percent) and, 74,000 are Druze (10 percent). (The process of municipalization of Arab settlements is discussed in the following section.)

Following the 1947-1948 war, Israel fostered a nation-state ideology, *mamlachtiut* in Hebrew: in brief, a statist society that cast aside its earlier potential for establishing a socialist regime and economy. Under the guise of a non-class theory, the right-wing labor party Mapai (led by Ben-Gurion) promoted the nation-state as the keystone in an arch linking the Histadrut (labor federation) socialist sector with the private sector, while imposing on both the paramountcy of the public (state) sector. In fact, the economy was weighted on the side of the private sector; overtime a bourgeoisie grew and flourished, security requirements (successive wars, infiltrations, 20-40 percent of the budget allocated to defense, etc.) were provided the strictest patriotic interpretation, and religious parties (included in successive coalition governments) gave nationalism its sanctity. Meanwhile, by focusing on militarism as policy and in keeping with its military successes, the state inflated its own Jewish national character while diminishing—both locally and externally—Arab national claims at all levels (Rosenfeld 1978).

One of the sharpest expressions of Israeli statist nationalism lay in the transfer of Palestinian Arab owned land and property to Israeli state ownership. It is estimated that 60-70 percent of the land belonging to Arab residents of Israel alone, was expropriated (see Peretz 1958: 142; Cohen 1976: 48). This land takeover took place during the first years of Israeli statehood, when the Arabs were under the tightest controls and were especially weak, few in number and demoralized.

The fact that one-quarter to one-fifth of Israel's financing in the years 1949-1965 came from unilateral capital transfers and long-term loans, i.e., sale of government bonds to American

Jewry, reparations payments from the West German government, loans from the United States government, undoubtedly strengthened and then provided the underpinning for an extensive Israeli, essentially Jewish, affluent middle class. Over the last decade, as a military ally of the United States and as a link in its strategic policy in the Middle East, Israel has received $3.5-$5 billion annually in military and economic aid from the United States (Rosenfeld and Carmi 1976; Rosenfeld 1978; Carmi and Rosenfeld 1989).

Before 1948 Arab peasants sought paid employment in the towns of Palestine, especially during the last decade of the mandatory period with the opening of new work opportunities in British army camps, transport, ports, industry, services, and construction, in contrast with "Jewish agriculture" which has been one of the most developed economic branches in Israel, Arab agriculture remained backward and underdeveloped. Essentially, agriculture in the Arab "sector" has been excluded from state planning and investment, and this has been one of the reasons why it has continued to provide employment for only a fraction of those seeking work. Also, in view of the large scale appropriation of Arab-owned land, the search for paid work became a mass phenomenon among the Arabs in Israel.

The ensuing process of labor migration and of proletarization was and remains a major factor in the transformation of Arab life in Israel. It largely explains the standard of living in the villages, where most live, as well as the standard maintained by Arabs living in the cities. There are many other factors, such as family size, number of wage earners, job opportunities and barriers to Arab employment in most government ministries, many industrial enterprises, any area connected to "security," etc.; here we touch briefly only on some of these points.

At the start of the process of labor migration, villagers mainly found menial and manual jobs, mostly as unskilled laborers in building, agriculture and the services. Over time, a number of changes in occupational condition and economic status have taken place. Today perhaps one-fifth of the approximately 135,000 gainfully employed Arabs (excluding

East Jerusalem) are self-employed, while four-fifths are employees. The self-employed are to be found in transport and contracting and sub-contracting mainly for construction, while others are skilled artisans and craftsmen. Some self-employed are in private services, others are farmers or owners and/or operators of agricultural machinery: few have entered the middle class. Of the wage earners, the majority have become skilled workers in construction, transport, motor mechanics and machinery, while others are employed in private services. Employment remains almost entirely outside home locales. Clearly, part of the process of economic and occupational change is related to the fact that more than 100,000 Palestinian Arab workers from the occupied territories (the West Bank and Gaza Strip) have taken over many of the manual and menial jobs in services, agriculture, and construction (Rosenfeld 1976).

Israel is a centralists, militaristic, nationalistic state; within Israel there are strong components of a welfare system and of universal services, and parliamentary democracy is present. While a broad Jewish middle class has developed and prospered in such areas as finance, import-export, industry and entrepreneurship of every size and description, it is essentially a state-created and subsidized middle class that does not include Arabs—although some Arabs have entered its periphery and others share in its benefits. Similarly, Jews and not Arabs have become the directors and managers of big businesses, as well as the executives, professionals and senior and mid-level officials in the government, public, and Histadrut sectors (Rosenfeld 1978).

Arabs hold government spots only in the Ministry of Education, and then only as teachers and principals in Arab schools; otherwise, Arabs are hardly to be found in government offices. Nor do they obtain positions in the large network of security, military, aeronautic, electronic and other high-tech industries; their work is more in textile, food, and confectionary plants, where the wages are low, turnover rapid, and benefits marginal.

But the Arabs have experienced a marked rise in education level. Their illiteracy rate rapidly decreased from about 50

percent in the 1960s to 36.1 percent in 1970s, 18.4 percent in 1980 and 15.8 percent in 1986. There has also been an increase in higher education and, consequently, in the number of Arab university graduates. The rate of those with post-secondary education was 1.5 percent in 1960, 2.1 percent in 1970, 7.7 percent in 1980 and 8.4 percent in 1986 (SAI, 1987). At present there are about 10,000 Arab academics, and 4000 Arabs are currently studying at Israeli universities.

Over the past three years, more than 3000 Arab university graduates have entered the job market, as have some 13,000 high school and 2000 vocational school graduates. Out of the total Arab work force, only 2.4 percent are in professional positions requiring a college degree; only 1.7 percent are managers, while 6.3 percent hold office jobs. We may add that 3.4 percent are in financial and business services (Jews 10 percent) and 17.5 percent in public and community services (Jews 30.9 percent) (SAI, 1985, No. 36: 328-342).

As stated, Israel maintains a universalistc system for health, welfare and social services, and education. Arabs are included in this system, albeit not always under the same conditions as those enjoyed by Jews. (These topics are discussed separately in other studies in this project). These services, and their place within the Israeli universalistic system, clearly concern the functioning and financing of Arab local authorities. Over time, national-class problems have also come within the province of the Arab local authorities and have been raised to the level of political issues: land (ongoing attempts to confiscate Arab land), industry (which is essentially ‘Jewish’ and absent from Arab towns and villages), and employment (with most government offices, ‘developed’ industry, and etc., closed to Arabs).

Table 2.1: Arab Labor Force by Economic Branch (1985)

Economic branch	Percent
Agriculture	10.5
Industry	21.2
Electricity and water	(0.4)
Construction	19.4
Commerce, restaurants and hotels	12.9
Communication, transport, storage	5.6
Financing and business services	3.1
Public and community services	19.0
Personal and other services	7.9

* Source: SAI 1986, Table XII/19. p. 312.

Thus, as we shall see, an Arab public that has grown steadily in political awareness channels much of its activity through its local councils and local representatives. This in itself is a development, a process not yet complete. Many factors are involved; state power, state intervention in local affairs and the support of "traditional" elements, leadership, patterns of behavior, the tensions and conflicts between national groups and between Arab, Arab-Jewish, and Jewish political parties, and the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip with their Palestinian Arab population are only some of them.

We only mention here that the bonds between the Arabs in Israel and other Palestinians, in the setting of ongoing war and the failure of Israel to take steps towards the recognition of Palestinian national rights, has tended to sharpen conflicts between the Arabs in Israel and the Israeli establishment. As we shall point out, such conflicts are relevant to processes that have taken place in the development of Arab local authorities, in the organizational links among them, and in the nature of the problems on their agendas.

The Structure of Local Government in Israel

In Israel, local government includes three types of bodies: municipalities, local councils, and regional councils. Municipal authority is still based on legislation from the mandate period:

the Municipalities Act of 1934, and the Local Councils Act of 1941. In addition, orders have been issued by the Minister of the Interior (Order A for large local councils, Order B for small local councils, and the Regional Councils Order) granting greater powers to local government (Ludski 1958:6), and various amendments have been made to the mandatory acts granting more powers to the heads of local authorities (see Weiss 1972).

In fact, however, the powers of local government are greatly limited because of its dependence on central government. The ways in which the latter intervenes in local government leave it relatively little freedom of action. Israeli legislation tends to view local government as an agent responsible for the population with services. The decision-making of heads of local governing bodies is kept in check by the way budget allocations for local governments are determined, by central government's right to issue instructions binding on local governing bodies and to regulate and set standards for local government—even to act in its place—and by various regulations and practices (Minuhin 1979).

The pattern of dependence on central government varies according to the size of settlement, its municipal status, its ties with central government, and other political factors. Generally, large cities have more autonomy than small, and municipalities have more autonomy than local or regional councils. The extent of involvement of the residents in local affairs also affects the degree of autonomy of local government: greater involvement means greater autonomy (Gazieli and Barbi 1981). Local government may initiate local legislation, although this must be approved by the Minister of the Interior and is subject to limitations: the laws must be within the area of jurisdiction of local government, that is, they must accord with the powers enumerated in the Municipalities Act and the Local Councils Act; they may not contradict the laws of the land; they must be clearly and precisely formulated; and they must be logical and reasonable (Ludski 1958:19). Local government is aided by permanent and ad hoc committees that deal with services and problems that arise, submit proposals, and supervise the operations of government. The decisions of the

committees are presented at a general council meeting as recommendations, and the council may accept or reject them. The main committees are those dealing with administration, finances, water, equipment, agriculture, licensing, assessing, development, transportation, personnel, surveillance, health and sanitation, tenders, planning and construction, social services, and public works (Ludski 1958: 38-39). Local governing bodies may decrease or increase the number of committees as necessary. Often the number of committees is increased in order to satisfy the various factions on the council (this is discussed below).

The Ministry of the interior fixes the number of council members according to the number of residents registered on the day the decision is made to establish it. The Minister of the interior may subsequently change the municipal status of the authority or increase the number of council members, according to changes in size of the local population.

Israeli legislation made a basic change in conditions of eligibility for election to local authorities, whereby any individual aged twenty years or more on the day the list of candidates is submitted is eligible, provided he does not belong to any category of persons defined as ineligible: those whose permanent residence is not within the local authority; or who are mentally ill; members of the police force; state employees whose work involves matters of local government liable to cause conflict of interest; or employees of the same local council Elections to local authorities are like those to the Knesset: they are universal, direct, secret, and proportional (see Weiss 1972: 39).

Prior to the 1978 elections, the chairman of the local authority was elected by council members at their first meeting after being elected or appointed. The vote was open, and a majority was required. If the candidate for chairmanship failed to receive a majority, new elections were held, which also required a majority. This method was a cause of instability: local government was subject to “coups” and changes in coalitions, especially if the coalition had only a small majority. In such instances the council head was highly vulnerable to

political pressures on the part of council members owing to his heavy dependence on each of them (Weiss 1972; Ludski 1958).

In Arab local authorities the fierce internal competition between hamulas and other local groups was reflected in the large number of slates running in municipal elections and in the very high voting rate - between 85-90 percent (see Rekhess 1986). In many cases local coalitions were unstable because of the manner of election of local leadership. Election as chairman and vice-chairman of the local authority depended on the formation of a coalition, which encouraged various factions to contend for a privileged position by finding a suitable ally. In some instances every council member could potentially become council head because he could tip the scales in his favor, and coalitions were reconstituted several times in the course of one term of office. For example, the chairmanship of the Baqa al-Gharbiyye council changed hands five times during one term (1969-1973) owing to coalition changes. Three out of the five heads elected served for between 3 and 6 months (State Comptroller 1975).

In 1978 direct election of heads of local authorities by residents was instituted, replacing the method of voting for a party list. This method is intended to contribute to stability by allowing the local council head to control matters without constant fear of overthrow by council members. Moreover, the fact that the council head has won the confidence of a good part of the population of his locality gives him a feeling of security and strengthens his position with other local as well as outside elements principally the national parties. But the new method is no guarantee against crises in local government. Often there is a gap between the support for the council head and support for his list, and if he lacks sufficient seats to form a coalition the local authority suffers complete paralysis, often for months at a time. In such a situation the hands of the council head are tied, for he is unable to carry through important decisions concerning the budget, local taxes, government loans, and the like.

Today there are a number of definite material advantages to the position of local council chairman and, to a slightly lesser degree, that of deputy chairman. Minimum salaries are two to

three times the average in the economy, and there are further benefits in regard to expenses, outlays on travel, certain allowances for food and dress, pension, etc.

The Establishment of Arab Local Authorities in Israel

Local government in Arab settlements in Israel is influenced by general factors affecting all local authorities in the country, as well as by specific factors stemming from the status of the Arab population in Israel and the social structure of Arab settlements. Here we shall focus on trends in the development of local government in Arab settlements since the establishment of the state, the issues dealt with by local Arab authorities, and the main problems that affect their functioning.

As early as the beginning of the 1950s the Ministry of the Interior had taken the first steps towards establishing local authorities in Arab settlements. The declared purpose of the policy makers was to develop the Arab sector, to improve the level of services, and to give the Arab population an opportunity to increase their involvement and run their internal affairs. An additional goal was to foster relations between the Arab population and the central authorities of the state, as well as to create a safety valve for old hatreds and jealousies and for feelings of frustration caused by the sudden transformation from the status of majority to that of minority (Landau 1971:217).

In the period 1950-1954 Arab local authorities that had pre-dated the establishment of the state were reactivated; these included Shefar-ʻAm, which had been accorded municipal status in 1910, Nazareth (1877, renewed in 1934) and Kafar Yasif (1925). Eight new local authorities were created: Abu-Gosh (Jerusalem area); Fureidis, Baqa al-Gharbiyye, Taiyibe, and Tira (central region); Daliyat al-Karmel and Isifya (Haifa region); and Rame (northern region). In 1955 Qalansawe (central region) was added.

The decision to set up a local authority lay with the Minister of the Interior, often in consultation with the district commissioner and local elements (Weiss 1972). An examination of the list of settlements first accorded municipal status reveals that size, location and ethnic composition were important factors in the decision lo set up a local authority in any place. The settlements granted the status of local councils were scattered throughout the Triangle, the central region, and the Galilee. Policy makers were careful to grant municipal status to three similar villages—Tira, Taiyibe, and Baqa al-Gharbiyye— Moslem settlements in the Triangle—on the same date: 8 May 1952. Similarly, Isifya and Daliyat al-Karmel, two neighboring Druze villages located on Mount Carmel, were also declared councils on the same date: 25 February 1951.

The local authorities established in this period faced numerous problems. Most of the Arab settlements were under military rule, which also restricted the movements of their inhabitants. Many areas were declared closed, and entrance to and exit from them was also restricted. Military administrators had considerable influence on events in the settlements. Often they determined the composition and interfered in the internal affairs of local councils. For example, in 1955 the military governor intervened to break up the coalition formed in Taiyibe, which included the Communist list.

There were also organizational and administrative problems. Local council heads had to organize a system of administration from scratch, and also to appoint officials. Reports of council meetings in a sample of settlements show that the council heads themselves were uncertain of their functions and authority. The small budgets allotted to the local authorities and inexperience in drawing up budgets created formidable obstacles. This gave various government officials, particularly from the Ministry of the interior, constant opportunity to intervene in the affairs of the councils.

During the first decade after the establishment of the state, the mukhtars remained active, even where local councils had been set up to replace them. In many cases mukhtars who did not take an active role in local councils saw them as a challenge to their own status and tried to impede their

functioning, often circumventing the council head (see also Landau 1972). Moreover, the military government and officials of Jewish political parties, particularly Mapai, tended to maintain their contacts with representatives of various hamula factions within the same village, even if these were rivals, so as to strengthen their own positions independent of changes in the local regime. They thus exacerbated competition or created conflicts between leaders of different hamulas and even between leaders of factions within the same hamula.

Between 1956 and 1960, 14 additional local Arab councils were established, 5 in the Triangle and 9 in the Galilee:

	Settlement	Date established
1.	Mughar	4 October 1956
2.	Jaljulye	18 January 1957
3.	Mi'elya	12 December 1957
4.	Peqi'in	27 February 1958
5.	Kafar Qasem	14 May 1959
6.	Kafar Qara'	1 September 1958
7.	Jat	2 December 1959
8.	Tur'an	17 December 1959
9.	Yirka	18 December 1959
10.	Mashhad	12 May 1960
11.	Umm al Fahm	2 June 1960
12.	Iksal	1 August 1960
13.	I'billin	15 December 1960
14.	Yafi' (Nazareth)	17 December 1960

The second stage in the establishment of local councils began in 1959, when the Ministry of the Interior declared its intention to set up 10 local councils in settlements of more than 1000 inhabitants (5-14 in the above table). In Jatt, Tur'an, and Yirka an order establishing a local council was promulgated immediately upon creation of the local authority and there was no need for and elected council as a first stage (Ministry of the Interior 1959).

In the years 1960-1965, an additional 13 local councils were created, most of them in the Galilee. By 1965 about 70 percent of the Arab population in Israel resided in settlements with recognized local authorities. With the exception of Sakhnin and Arrabe, all were elected bodies.

It appears that Negev settlements run by mukhtars and the settlements for which acceptable notables were appointed by the military government can be regarded as having no municipal status.

In the 1960s the councils created during the previous decade became elected bodies. Some of them actually conducted elections twice, in 1959 and 1965. But the reins of local rule remained in the hands of the stratum of mukhtars and other traditional dignitaries This may be attributed to two factors: outside influences, that Is, intervention by the military government and the political parties; and the internal structure of the Arab village, in which the hamula constituted an important social and political unit (this point is treated in detail in Chapter III).

Table 2.2: Arab Population According to Status of Settlement, 1965

Municipal status	Population	Percentage of total population
Municipal authority	207,695	72.5
No municipal status	52,125	18.0
Mukhtars (Negev)	20,570	7.5
Notables appointed by the government	6280	2.0
Total	286,670	100.0

Source: Ministry of the Interior 1967.

Arab Local Councils Established Between 1961 and 1965

	Settlement
1.	Dabburye—1961
2.	Jisr Az-Zarqa—1961
3.	Kafar Bara'—1963
4.	Jish (Gush Halav)—1963
5.	Abu-Sinan—1964
6.	Basmat Tiv'on—1964
7.	Beit Jann—1964
8.	Kafar Manda—1964
9.	Majd al-Kurum—1964
10.	Ein Mahel—1964
11.	Arrabe—1964
12.	Sakhnin—1965
13.	Fassuta—1965

Arab Local Councils Established Between 1966 and 1975

	Settlement		Settlement
1.	Julis—1967	8.	Eilabun—1973
2.	Hurfeish—1967	9.	Kabul—1974
3.	Makr 1968	10.	Judeide—1975
4.	Nahef—1968	11.	Deir al Asad—1975
5.	Reine—1968	12.	Deir Hanna—1975
6.	Kafar Kanna—1969	13.	Sha'ab—1975
7.	Ar'ara—1970		

Source: Lahawani 1983.

The majority of Arab local councils active today had been established by the mid-seventies. In the years 1966-1975, a further 13 more local councils were established, as well as the Central Galilee Regional Council, which includes the Druze villages of Yanoch, Kafar Samiya and the Galilean Jatt.

Table 2.3 shows that about two-thirds of the Arab settlements in Israel have municipal status and that the most common form is the local and regional council. There are only three towns: Nazareth, Shefar-ʿAm, and Umm Al-Fahm. Over one-third of the Arab settlements in Israel still have no municipal status. Most of these are small settlements whose populations do not exceed 1000; 30 of the 151 settlements are encampments located in the Negev. Only 14 settlements without municipal status have populations exceeding 1000; the largest of these are Zalafi (1790), Muawiya (1260), Musmus (1750), Bir-Elmaksor and Makman (3080) and Ara (2380).

Table 2.3: Arab Settlements in Israel According to Status, 1986

	Municipality	Local council	Regional council	No municipal status	Total
Number	3	55	38	55	151*
Percentage of Total	2.0	38.0	22.0	37.0	100

* An additional 51 Arab settlements-encampments are not recognized by the government.

After 1985 the process of granting municipai status to Arab settlements slowed because almost all whose populations exceeded 2000 had already been accorded the status of local council. Since the mid-seventies only seven new local councils have been created in the Arab sector: Bineh, Rahat, Arab

Elshibli, Kawkab Abu-EI-Higa, Bieneh, Zemmer and Tuba. Umm Al-Fahm became a municipality in 1985 after a protracted struggle and considerable pressuring by the National Committee of Chairmen of Arab Local Authorities. It may be assumed that in the coming decade the struggle of Arab settlements with regard to status will be concentrated on two goals: the granting of municipal status to small settlements and the change of status of large settlements (Taiyibe, Tira, Baqa al-Gharbiyya in the Triangle; Sakhnin, Arrabe, Tamra and Daliyat al-Karmel in the Galilee and the Center) from local council to municipality (city).

Matters Dealt with by Arab Local Authorities

Examining the matters dealt with by Arab local authorities and their activities over time will help us to understand the changes that have taken place in local government in the Arab sector. For this purpose we analyzed the minutes of the council meetings of Arab settlements in the sample described at the beginning of the study.

One of the problems encounterd here is the brevity of the minutes of most meetings in the first two or three terms of office. In many cases they consisted of two or three lines summarizing the meeting, with no indication of any arguments or discussions. This fact is important in itself, for it sheds light on the functioning of the Arab local authorities at the very beginning of their history. In the First term, when council members were appointed by the Ministry of the Interior, there is practically no mention of disagreement among council members. In most cases the minutes report that decisions were taken unanimously. On checking we found that this had indeed been the case; but the reason was that appointed council members who were not happy with the coalition simply did not attend the meetings. Some came only when government representatives were present.

At first the following matters were dealt with by local Arab authorities: administration and organization of the work of local government, financing existing services (mainly educational), organizing tax collection, and planning various one-time events. Often entire meetings were devoted to matters that today appear marginal and not worth the discussion, for example, granting a license to a shopkeeper, installing a telephone for the council, or purchasing toys for the kindergarten.

Educational services took up a good part of the discussions by the whole council. Most concerned the provision of equipment and supplies and the planning and construction of additional classrooms to answer the urgent need resulting from the compulsory education law. Matters such as the preparation of tenders for construction, the appointment of an engineer, contacts with contractors and the budgets for all these also accounted for much of the local council meetings. In certain settlements compliance with the compulsory education law caused problems that found expression in council discussions. For example, at Daliyat al-Karmel, co-education aroused strong opposition from religious leaders. The local council held a number of meetings on the matter and at one of them (1 November 1962) it was decided to accept the report of religious leaders calling for segregation of girls and boys in accordance with the principles of the Druze religion.

Co-education was controversial at Shefar-ʿAm as well. Representatives of the Druze community in the settlement submitted a proposal for seperating the sexes in the schools. Matters nearly reached crisis at a meeting on 28 December 1966; the chairman left the meeting in anger because the discussion spilled over to subjects that were not to his liking. Finally, it was decided that the elementary school called "Shefar-ʿAm, A" School No. 1, which was close to the Druze neighborhood, would be a girls' school.

An analysis of the reports of the meetings of the Shefar-ʿAm Municipal Council show that in contrast to the above, the debate over the opening of a high school did indeed cause a crisis. The mayor, whose opinion was that the time had not yet come to open a high school, found himself alone; council

members were of the opinion that a high school should be established without delay. The mayor wrote to the Ministry of Education stating his opposition, and when the Ministry refused to open a high school several meetings were held (in July-August 1968) with the aim of ousting the mayor, who resigned a few months later.

From the start the subject of tax collection also took up no small part of the meetings of local councils. Our examination of reports found considerable uncertainty in some councils with regard to the form and extent of local tax collection. This may be attributed to inexperience in this area and to a desire to compromise between the demands of the Ministry of the Interior and inhabitants' ability to pay. In the first term some councils (Daliyat al-Karmel, Iksal, Tamra) considered bringing lawsuits against citizens in arrears in their tax payments. In ail local authorities local taxes were the main source of local revenues. They were levied on the basis of the number of rooms in the taxpayer's dwelling, not its area. At Daliyat al-Karmel it was even proposed (at a meeting on 7 April 1951) to levy a one-time tax on all residents over 18 years old to enlarge the council budget.

The Ministry of the Interior put constant pressure on local councils to improve their tax collection, and various proposals were submitted on this matter. One was to appoint Jewish tax collectors, on the assumption that they would be better able to enforce the law without having to consider the complex weave of social relations and the delicate situations that might develop. Several meetings of the Tamra council were devoted to this subject. In a meeting 6 January 1958, the chairman reported that at a meeting held in the Minorities Department of the Ministry of the Interior it had been decided to recommend to local Arab councils the appointment of a Jewish tax collector to solve the problem of tax evasion. However, he noted that there had been considerable improvement in tax collection over the previous six months and he therefore did not see the need for such a measure. He proposed postponing action but retaining the option of appointing a Jewish official should the need arise. Council members supported his position, and so it was resolved.

Council meetings often considered local water and sanitation services. Road construction and electrification were practically the only projects undertaken by most local Arab authorities, and numerous meetings were devoted to a discussion of how much the residents were to be charged and how the sum was to be collected. In certain places an original way of solving this problem was devised: a personal visit by council members to different districts, where each one was responsible for collection from members of his own hamula, neighborhood, and supporters. The issue of approving business licences also came up frequently. Other topics included approving the budget, obtaining loans from government ministries and banks, and the creation of council committees.

Until the mid-sixties, matters discussed at meetings of local Arab councils were mainly local in character. But external matters were also raised, often at the initiative of government officials or other outside elements. Independence Day celebrations came up for consideration in several local councils Opinion was of course unanimous concerning the necessity for holding such events; discussions centered on the budget to be allotted for this purpose and the content and location of the festivities. At the Druze local council of Daliyat al-Karmel the village's ties to the Israel Defense Forces were debated several times; at a meeting on 10 February 1952 there was a discussion on compulsory military service for Druze men and at another on 27 October 1955 it was decided to donate 200 Israel pounds to the IDF.

The Iksal local council held a special meeting on 1 June 1967 attended by council members, local school teachers and village leaders, to discuss the situation on the eve of the Six Day War. The council head reported on efforts by the council during that week to assist Jewish settlements and kibbutzim in the area, including help with the grain harvest by sending workers, tractors and other equipment. In addition, it was unanimously decided to send a telegram to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defense and the Police Commander of the Nazareth District. It read: "We the council head and members and officials of the Iksal local council hereby declare our absolute loyalty to the State of Israel and place all the means in

our hands at your disposal for the defense of the security of the country and the stability of the area."

In the municipality of Shefar-ʿAm, discussions of non-municipal subjects took the form of protest. For example, on 20 September 1961 there was a discussion on the murder on 17 September of three young Arabs from Haifa by the IDF when they attempted to cross the border into an Arab country. The council decided to send a telegram to the President of Israel, the Minister of Defense, and the Knesset Presidency expressing deep shock over the terrible deed. They stated that the event pointed to contempt of Arabs, and they asked that the matter be investigated and that those responsible be brought to trial. Moreover, the municipality decided to call a general strike in the town on 21 September. The council asked Christian religious leaders to ring church bells and Moslem leaders to read passages from the Koran during the strike. They also sent consolation letters to the parents of the dead boys.

Towards the mid-seventies qualitative as well as quantitative changes are observed in the discussions of the local Arab authorities; this is evinced by the types of subjects raised as well as the form the discussions took and the detailed reports of them. This change stemmed largely from a change in the leadership of local authorities; the traditional leaders were replaced by younger and better educated men. Accumulated experience also played an important role in the change. The reinforcement of the process of politicization among Arabs in Israel, especially after the Six Day War through contact with the Palestinian population in the occupied territories, along with sharper conceptualization of the Palestine national problem also injected a political-national element into the discusssions of local authorities. In addition to municipal matters, national issues affecting the Arab population of Israel and the Palestinians living outside the country began to be raised. The events of Land Day in 1976 and the establishment of a National Committee of Arab Local Authorities in 1974 brought local authorities into greater contact with each other and contributed to the adoption of a common line of action on various issues (see below and the following chapter).

In discussions on budget approval, a distinction began to appear between ordinary and extraordinary budgets. Development budgets became an issue, and in most authorities various proposals to increase these budgets were submitted so as to answer the urgent needs of residents. Many discussions also centered on broadening local services in education, health, and other infrastructure services. Also notable were discussions concerning planning and construction, increasing areas of jurisdiction, zoning plans and the establishment of industrial areas, especially in large settlements.

In contrast with the general nature of the discussions during the fifties and the sixties, in the seventies and eighties these focused on very specific issues. Instead of arising spontaneously, issues now passed through two stages: first they were brought up in committees, and then they were presented as recommendations for approval at a general council meeting. In most local authorities committees were set up to deal with specific issues. The main committees are:

Administration Committee (composed of members of each party to the coalition)
Planning and Construction Committee
Education and Sports Committee
Tenders Committee
Health Committee
Surveillance Committee (chaired by a member of the opposition)
Welfare Committee

In some authorities, committees were divided up or new committees created so as to satisfy council members or to fulfil a specific local need. For example, the Tamra local council has 15 committees. In addition to those listed above there are the Agriculture Committee, the Commerce and Workshops Committee, the Electricity Committee and the Appointments Committee. There are also representatives to the Council from the Union of Firefighters and Sanitation Workers.

As stated, at the end of the 1970s national issues began to assume a prominent place in the debates of local authorities.

Land Day, on 30 March 1976, in which six people were killed, forced many local authorities to adopt a position, for they were faced with widespread public pressure and an outburst of national feelings on the part of the Arab population of Israel. The Tamra local council coalition, for example, dissolved as a result of the firm position of the council head strongly opposed to the strike called for Land Day. Immediately after the council disbanded an "appointed committee" was set up, headed by the ousted leader.

Sakhnin was a focus of Land Day events, and at the local council stormy meetings were held on the subject. On 29 May 1977 a proposal to hold a special ceremony marking Land Day was discussed. All council members were in favor of holding the ceremony at the high school; the argument was over who would take part in it. The split between communists (and their supporters) and non-communists predominated, cutting across the lines of the coalition as well as the opposition.

The Koeriig Document (Israel Koenig was commissioner of the northern district until April 1986) was also the focus of stormy debates among the general public in Israel and particularly among Arabs for some time. On 1 March 1976 Koenig wrote a document classified top secret. The document, which came to bear his name, contained proposals on "how to deal with Israeli Arabs." it was leaked to the newspaper *Al-Hamishmar*, which published it on 7 September 1976. In the document Koenig suggested ways of dealing with the "demographic danger" of the Arab population in Israel: by thinning out existing population concentrations; by a policy of rewards and punishment within the law with regard to Arab settlements expressing any form of hostility to the state; by creating difficulties for Arab marketing agents so that the Jewish economy not be dependent on them; by reducing the number of Arab students at institutions of higher learning; by facilitating the departure of those who wished to study abroad and making it difficult for them to return; by increasing the presence of the police and defense forces; by increasing tax collection among the Arabs and strictly enforcing it.

The Sakhnin local council held a special meeting to disucss the Koenig Document. Council members strongly attacked the

document, which in their opinion perpetuated the policy of discrimination and oppression of the Arabs in Israel and aimed at expropriating their lands from them. On 4 December 1977 the Sakhnin council discussed the destruction of houses in the village of Majd Al-Kurum and resolved to strongly condemn this act and demand that the government set up a special commission to investigate the matter. On 2 December 1979, a special discussion was held on the exile of Basam El-Shak'a, then serving as mayor of Nablus in the occupied West Bank. The resolution adopted was that "the decision to expel El-Shak'a is damaging to the Palestinian problem and is also damaging to Israel and to chances for peace in the area." The council called on the authorities to cancel the expulsion order. In a debate between members of the coalition and the opposition, the latter leveled their criticism in several directions:

Chairman of the opposition: "The newspaper *al-Itihad* (organ of the Communist party) criticizes Shak'a several times, and after his arrest it suddenly turns him into a freedom fighter…" Another member of the opposition: "The subject is not within the authority of the council and should not be discussed."

Member of the coalition, from the Communist party: "The United Nations censured the deed and Sakhnin, one of the largest Arab villages, should also censure it."

The discussions of the National Committee of Heads of Arab Local Authorities influenced heads of local authorities from different political camps. Heads of local authorities defined as "moderate" or even "close to the authorities" declared their acceptance of the principles adopted by the National Committee which among other things dealt with the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people.

The massacres at the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in Lebanon in September 1982 are to be found on the agenda of almost all local Arab authorities, but not of those in Druze villages. On 20 September 1982, an emergency meeting was held at the Arara local council, where it was decided to adopt the decision of the National Committee calling for a general strike of the entire Arab population of Israel and for

limiting the celebration of the *Eid-el-Adha* festival that week to ceremonial prayers.

The municipality of Shefar-ʿAm convened a special meeting on 21 September 1982, at which it was unanimously resolved to condemn "the atrocities committed at Sabra and Shatila." The Nazareth municipality held a demonstration attended by thousands, in the course of which the police intervened, causing a confrontation in which dozens of residents were injured. The incident heated the atmosphere, and a number of meetings were held at the municipality to discuss the matter.

It should be noted that during the past five years the topics occupying most of the time of local Arab authorities have been tax collection and the payment of salaries. Economic conditions, budget cutbacks and budget freezes had an adverse effect on local government in Israel. This was especially severe in the Arab sector, owing to disparities between Jewish and Arab settlements (see the chapter on budgets). The minutes of the meetings in the settlements included in the sample reveal prolonged discussions on these matters and strenuous efforts to obtain financing for proposed projects, for the upkeep of existing services and for the wages of local authority employees. The issue of higher taxes is also prominent, in consequence of pressures by the Ministry of the Interior and the responses to this by the National Committee.

To illustrate the above we present a review of the minutes of the Tamra local council. In 1980-1984 there were 120 council meetings, which break down as follows: 22 focused on the subject of loans to the council, especially from the National Lottery, the banks, and the Ministry of the Interior; 15 centered on the ordinary budget and extraordinary budgets; 11 were devoted to taxes, tax collection, and tax exemptions; 21 to the firing of officials or the hiring of new employees, and only 8 to new projects. The other meetings discussed miscellaneous subjects, among them local legislation, the work camp for volunteers held every year, the issue of extending the area of the council's jurisdiction, as well as "national" issues (Land Day, etc.).

The educational system was still in its infancy and lacked classrooms, laboratories, and other infrastructure. This subject took up a good part of the discussions of Arab local councils. In the initial period (the fifties and sixties), most of the discussions centered on the provision of equipment and supplies to schools, while in the second period (the seventies and eighties), discussions revolved around building schools, opening kindergartens, and improving the service network, as well as other renovation activities. Councils had begun to deal with long-term matters involving numerous budgetary considerations. With regard to infrastructure, during the first period the councils discussed introducing water and electrical projects and paving main roads; in the second most attention and most development budgets were devoted to building schools and expanding the school system, extending the water system, and paving and asphalting internal roads.

Problems Obstructing the Functioning of Arab Local Authorities

Three main types of problem obstructing the functioning of Arab local authorities may be discerned: problems in the functioning of municipal government in Israel as a whole; specific problems connected with the situation of the Arabs in Israel; and internal problems originating in local variables. Relations between central government and local government have always been defined as relations of center and periphery. The great dependence of local authorities on central government leaves the former with very little autonomy (Weiss 1972). The fact itself that the basic regulations for the functioning of municipal government originate in mandatory legislation is indicative of a leaning towards centralization. This trend has inhibited the ability of local government to maneuver and make decisions.

Other elements in local government in Israel, as elsewhere, also work to the disadvantage of “weak” settlements; Arab settlements in this category are especially affected. Studies

have shown that the larger the city, the more specializations and commercial services it can support. It can increase its revenues through local resources, thereby reducing its dependence on central government (see Ben-Zadok 1983; Weiss 1972).

The "better-off" local authorities actually benefit from ambiguity in criteria for the allocation of budgets from government ministries, especially the Ministry of the Interior. For example, an annual deficit in the current budget is a recurring phenomenon that favors the better-off, for the deficit becomes an additional source of income and budget flexibility (Mevorakh 1981;1983). These factors work to the disadvantage of the Arab settlements, most of which are small or medium-sized and limited in their ability to put pressure on the central government (see the chapter on budgets).

Indeed, the criteria for budget allocation were established with the aim of assisting weak settlements, but these were not relevant to the Arab population. Two of the four criteria mentioned by Rottenberg (1957) for allocation of budgets and the general grant did not affect Arab settlements: one was the number of new immigrants residing within the local authority and the other was its definition as a border settlement. These criteria remained in force in the 1960s (Morag 1965).

Only recently (1986) have three Arab settlements in the north (Mi'elya, Jish and Arab al-Aramsheh) been designated "confrontation settlements."

In 1972-1976 no clear-cut criteria were applied in allocation of the general grant, which increased inequity in distribution and perpetuated the preference for better-off settlements (Doron and Mevorakh 1982).

Added to the general problems of local government in Israel are restrictions on the Arab sector that make the situation even more problematic, immediately after the establishment of the state, a military government was instituted in most of the areas where the Arab population was concentrated. This measure limited the movement of Arab citizens; anyone who wished to leave a settlement had to obtain exit and entrance permits from the military governor nearest to his place of residence. At first

such permits were granted for limited periods of time, and often the individual had to state the exact route he intended to travel, as well as the time of his departure and return. Only towards the end of the fifties were some of these restrictions relaxed. The military government also intervened in the internal matters of the Arab settlements, determining who would be responsible for running the settlement, who was entitled to the support and confidence of the authorities, and who was to be removed from the center of influence.

It was against this background that 41 Arab local authorities were set up by 1965, constituting more than two-thirds of the total Arab local authorities in Israel today. The military governor and/or local elements appointed by him were largely responsible for the appointment of the first council in each settlement. They continued to intervene in subsequent elections. As a result, the traditional leadership of the hamulas was strengthened and internal competition within the settlements increased (see Cohen 1965; Rosenfeld 1979). To satisfy the largest possible number of hamulas and factions within the settlement and to increase the "circle of the faithful," heads of hamulas that had not achieved such status in the past were added to the traditional leadership of the settlement, thus increasing the number of mukhtars in various settlements. For example, in a medium-sized village like Sakhnin, nine mukhtars were appointed (see the chapter on socio-political structure).

Thoughout the first decade following the establishment of the state, Arab settlements experienced serious economic and social distress. The social structure of many communities suffered in that a good part of the the Arab inhabitants of villages and other areas had become refugees outside Israel. Other villages took in persons who had become refugees within Israel - those who had been evacuated from their villages during the war or in its aftermath and had taken refuge in various settlements within the Green Line, most of them Arab settlements. This group of "internal refugees" became a burden on the Arab settlements because they arrived empty-handed. Their lands and property had been expropriated as a result of the 1950 Absentee Property Law. Under this law they were

considered “present absentees” and lost all rights to the property they had owned. The large number of internal refugees, which amounted to about one-fifth of the Arab population, aggravated social conditions, for most of them were without land, a home or employment (Al-Haj 1986).

The change from an agrarian to a wage-earning economy has made the Arab population dependent on work opportunities within the overall Israeli economy and has prevented an economic base from developing within Arab settlements. Industry has not been instituted in Arab settlements to any real extent despite the availability of a skilled Arab labor force and the rise in the educational level among the Arab population. The potential of local initiative for the development of industry in the Arab villages has been further limited by the lack of local capital and the failure of the government to make significant investments for local development. A survey (1986) revealed that 41 percent of the Arab localities lack work plants entirely. There are only 410 plants in all the Arab settlements; most of them are small, backward and with limited resources. Among them, 77 percent are sewing workshops and plants for construction materials. They employ only 6 percent of the Arab labor force, most of them women (Meir-Brodnitz and Shamanski 1986).

The lack of industrialization and of a local economic base has impeded development in Arab settlements and restricted the sources of finance available to Arab local authorities. The limited capital available to these authorities has also prevented the development of the network of local services that usually accompanies industrialization and growth.

The weak economic base in Arab localities is also a result of the expansion of metropolitan areas at the expense of villages and small towns, that is, most of the Arab settlements. Moreover, the Arab towns—Nazareth and Shefar-ʿAm, which provided services to the surrounding Arab localities until the establishment of Israel, have seen little growth in industry, district offices and services compared with Upper Nazareth, Acre and Haifa.

The budget has always been the main problem of local authorities in general and of the Arab sector in particular. Lack of budgets and local resources have often delayed and sometimes prevented the planning and development of services in accordance with the needs of the population.

The organizational problems that beset Arab local authorities were related to inexperience, lack of budgets and problems stemming from the social and general economic situation of the Arab settlements. It was some time before inhabitants began to feel the presence of the local authorities, for even after the latter received formal status there was no significant change in the provision of services and the council did not make itself felt as a socio-political force in the life of the community. In certain cases years passed before inhabitants even knew where the council was located. At Shefar-ʿAm, for example, which has held the status of municipality since 1911, the mayor handled the affairs of the city from his home during the first years of statehood (1948-1951). Residents in need of municipal services, mainly help in obtaining licences, knew that they had to go to the mayor's house. In other places local authorities were set up in rented rooms which had in the past served as storerooms or shops and which lacked the basic amenities. It was a long time before Arab local authorities moved to buildings constructed especially for them. Even today many Arab authorities are located in structures that also serve as residences. This is true for small authorities like Kawkab as well as for large ones like Sakhnin.

The report of the Geraisi Committee, which dealt with this matter, states among other things:

> After visiting a good many of the local authorities, the Committee found that most Arab local authorities lack suitable offices. The local authority is often housed in places which in the past served as shops, which lack windows and the minimal conditions for office work. In certain cases the office of the local authority is located in even worse structures. The construction of local council buildings has been delayed as a result of lack of resources

and support from government offices responsible for the same (Geraisi 1973:35).

An examination of the situation in the settlements in our sample shows that owing to lack of means the work of the council was usually carried out by two or three officials, each of whom served as a "Jack-of-all-trades":

1. Clerk-secretary—served also as treasurer and book-keeper;

2. Official in charge of collection, water works and other projects that arose;

3. Health supervisor-part-time.

A small number of authorities also employed a social worker, part of whose salary and expenses were covered by what was then the Ministry of Welfare, and a school janitor whose salary was partly covered by the Ministry of Education. This situation continued until the end of the seventies. A report of the Ministry of the Interior in 1962 stated that only three local authorities employed both a general secretary and a treasurer; in 12 authorities the general secretary also acted as treasurer. Moreover, 28 local authorities had a total of only 150 employees, among them 18 tax collectors, 28 school janitors, 32 sanitation workers, 16 clerks in charge of projects, and the rest general secretaries (Ministry of the Interior 1962). The picture did not change in the seventies. The Geraisi Report (1973) stated that one of the main obstacles to the functioning of Arab local authorities was limited personnel. This forced the few employees on the payroll to deal with numerous matters, most of which were quite unconnected with their main function.

In the mid-seventies, the Ministry of the Interior initiated a policy of expanding services owing to the concerted pressure of heads of Arab local authorities acting through the National Committee and the growing awareness on the part of government ministries of the financial distress of Arab settlements. This policy involved adding personnel, creating new positions, especially administrative, and redefining existing ones. For example, the posts of director for (council) departments of education and of youth and sports were added.

Until 1979 only the Nazareth municipality had a department of education; elsewhere education was dealt with by various persons, some of whom lacked professional qualifications, such as the chairman or vice-chairman of the local council.

In the period 1979-1984, departments of education were set up in about half the Arab local authorities. However, even then the director of one or another department of education remained a sort of general factotum, dealing with several areas at once. Following cutbacks in manpower, he has often remained the only official in the department, serving as the director of the departments of education culture, youth and sports, and kindergartens. Thus, five departments are combined in one and have one employee. At the second Conference on Arab Education held 23 May 1984, it was reported that there were only 19 departments of education with 23 half-time positions in the Arab sector as a whole, while (Jewish) Kiryat Ata alone, with a population of 30,000, there were 23 positions (see the Report of the Arab Committee of Directors of Education Departments 1984).

Another serious impediment to the functioning of Arab local authorities is planning and building. In recent years this issue has become prominent in the discussions of the National Committee of Heads of Arab Local Authorities (see the chapter on the National Committee) in their contacts with government offices. The number of structures defined as "illegal" has increased the importance of Finding a solution to this problem. The destruction of homes in Arab al-Khawalid (near Shefar-ʿAm) by the government and the threat to demolish illegal building in the Druze villages of Isifya and Daliyat al-Karmel stirred heated public debate and led to demonstrations and other protest actions. However, since 1976 the government has tried to address this problem through various official committees; the last was the Markovitz Committee, which submitted its report to the government in 1986 (see Pinkerfeld 1987). Aspects of this problem are examined below.

The very format of the Planning and Building Law of 1965, based on the Order for City Construction of 1936 issued in mandatory times, created a hierarchy of supervision at different levels — regional, district and local — and limited the

involvement of local elements, Jewish as well as Arab, in the planning process (Ben-Zadok 1983:250). However, the problem of planning and building is especially severe in the Arab sector. In addition to limitations inherent in the law itself, there are also specific problems stemming from the manner of development of Arab settlements. All the Arab settlements in Israel except those created for the Bedouin have existed for hundreds of years. The majority received municipal status only after the establishment of the state. Thus they grew without any plan for basic infrastructure services and the long-term needs of the population. Population dispersion in Arab villages extended outward from the core, and in most cases the new neighborhoods grew without planning (Anden and Soffer 1988).

Social changes in the Arab popuiation after the establishment of the state accelerated the building process; most of the building was private. The structure of the extended family underwent drastic change as a result of proletarianization, and this was reflected in the transition from agricultural employment in family economies to paid employment outside the settlement. The result was that the nuclear family became independent economically as well as residentially. Ties between fathers and sons and among siblings themselves assumed a new character; even if mutual obligations continued, they did not prevent them from establishing separate households. In addition to raising living standards, this fact changed patterns of consumption, especially with regard to residence (see Rosenfeld 1968, 1980; Al-Haj 1987).

In contrast to other developing societies in the Third World, for the Arabs in Israel the process of economic change was not accompanied by a process of urbanization reflected in migration from the village to the city. The Arab work force is a commuting one; a person working in the city continues to reside in the village. Moreover, there is no internal migration among Arab villages themselves. With the exception of the internal refugees of 1948 and the Bedouin concentrations created during the fifties and sixties, movement from one Arab settlement to another is marginal. The demographic

concentration in Arab settlements is especially salient in view of the high rate of natural increase; the Arab population has multiplied more than four times since the establishment of the state (Friedlander and Goldscheider 1984).

These processes increased pressure for available land, especially land zoned for housing. Moreover, land expropriations by various governments since the establishment of the state and the division of holdings as a result of inheritance caused a further thinning of land reserves. People were therefore forced to utilize all available land, whether family property or purchased plots, without consideration of the existing infrastructure (electricity, sewerage, etc.) or its possible development in the future. The fact that most land within the jurisdiction of local Arab authorities is private made it difficult for local authorities to appropriate land for public needs, for it was utilized mainly for building (Massarwi 1986).

Two additional factors aggravated the problem of planning and building in Arab settlements: these concerned area of jurisdiction and zoning (land use) plans. When a local authority is set up, the Minister of the Interior issues an order stating its area of jurisdiction; this area usually includes only a small part of the lands of the settlement, sometimes as little as 5 percent. The settlement is not entitled to levy taxes on the land lying outside its jurisdiction. Moreover, the local authority does not have the right to provide services, like water, protection or road paving, to these areas (Lahawani 1983). In many instances such areas were annexed to distant Jewish regional councils, despite the fact that they were adjacent to the built-up area of the Arab settlement and were owned by persons residing in it Thus, inhabitants had to pay high taxes to regional councils without being entitled to receive services from it. A typical case is the lands belonging to residents of Shefar-ʿAm that were annexed to a number of regional councils.

The mayor of Shefar-ʿAm wrote to the Prime Minister on 12 June 1952 about the matter as follows:

> In August 1950 I sent Your Honour a detailed letter concerning the situation of agricultural lands belonging to Shefar-ʿAm that were appropriated by the Ministry of

> Agriculture and leased to neighboring kibbutzim and moshavim for a period of 5 years, under the claim that they were fallow lands, despite the fact that God and all the people know that they are not fallow lands, unless they are to be made such by means of force. We contacted all the parties concerned but in vain Afterwards we decided to wait until the five years had passed and the lands returned to their owners… However, recently we were surprised to learn that the matter is much worse than decultivation of lands, that these are now under the jurisdiction of the Na'aman and Zevulun regional councils, and that they have already been divided up between the kibbutzim Mishmar Ha-Yam, Kfar Usha, Kfar Ha-Maccabi and Ramat Yohanan Each has a part in the spoils and is entitled to levy taxes as it sees fit without having to take the trouble to inform the owners of the same, till such time as the tax levied becomes greater than the cost of ttie land. So it was in the case of a man who wished to sell his land and discovered that he had to pay the kibbutz an additional sum which surpassed the price he was to receive for his land. .. This situation did not change, and in the end it led to confiscation of wide areas of land belonging to Shefar-ʿAm (see Al-Haj 1983).

Another example was the annexation of lands belonging to Arab villages in the Galilee to the Segev regional council (See the chapter on the National Committee).

The problem of jurisdiction was raised in interviews with heads of several local authorities; however, almost all stated that the situation had improved over the last four years (1982-1986) and that the areas of jurisdiction of Arab local authorities had increased considerably. But the problem of zoning is still a serious obstacle to planning in Arab settlements. From the late fifties, planning in Arab settlements began to be more orderly, and this trend received impetus from the Planning and Building Law legislated in 1965. Such planning includes regional as well as local plans (Meir-Brodnitz 1978).

The regional zoning plans relevant to Arab settlements are the following:

— Accelerated Urban Development in the Galilee
— Master Plan for Wadi Ara
— Master Plan for Tira, Taiyibe, and Qalansawe (in the planning stage) (Shmueli and Shnell 1980).

The regional zoning plans are inadequate because they were prepared without appropriate research and without sufficient resources. The same criticism has been made of local zoning plans prepared in the sixties that are unrealistic and fail to consider the development and the social structure of the Arab settlements (Bar-Gal and Soffer 1981; Alterman 1980). The majority of zoning plans were designed by Jews, or at least the local element was not the dominant one. As a result, they aroused both public and local opposition (Shmueli and Shnell 1980; Khamaisi 1986).

The non-participation of the Arab population of Israel in local and regional planning is expressed in the absence of Arab representation on central planning bodies. There is no Arab representation on the National Council for Planning and Building or on the Israel Lands Council, despite the complex web of day-to-day problems that confront the Arab population of Israel. Arab representation is also absent in the Israel Lands Authority, which by law is responsible for Waqf property and holds extensive areas under the jurisdiction of Arab settlements No Arab settlements are represented in the Committee for the Preservation of Agricultural Lands, which is principally concerned with lands belonging to Arab settlements. Similarly, Arab representation on district planning and building committees is small in proportion to the size of their population and the complexity of planning problems in Arab settlements. However, there have recently been attempts to set up local committees in planning areas containing concentrations of Arab settlements (Chernobroda *Al-Hamishmar*, 8 May 1986).

Up to the mid-seventies, only a small number of Arab local authorities had approved zoning plans. The Geraisi Committee (1973), set up by the Ministry of the Interior to examine the

subject of local government in the Arab sector reported the following facts:

—6 local authorities had approved plans,

—9 local authorities had plans in the submission stage;

—24 local authorities had begun drawing up plans years before but these had not yet been approved. Among them, 2 authorities had begun designing plans as early as 1954, 12 had begun in the early sixties, 6 by the end of the sixties, and 4 in 1970. The committee stated that there was "…a long delay in the approval of zoning plans which was unjustifiable… for how can we understand the fact that the zoning plan of a certain authority was not approved despite the fact that the process began 10 years ago…" (Geraisi 1975: 25).

Over the years some progress was made in the approval of zoning plans, but it was slow and limited. A check at the beginning of the eighties revealed that only 15 settlements had received final approval for their zoning plans, 14 had submitted plans, and 14 others were in the process of drawing up plans. In many instances the local authorities were involved in the design of the zoning plan, a very important factor, since they had first-hand knowledge of the needs, the way of life, and the patterns appropriate to the Arab population. Strange as it seems, in seven of the local authorities studied it turned out that local elements had not been involved in the planning process; the plan was the exclusive product of regional planning committees. In three other cases the plans had been initiated solely by the Israel Lands Authority, thus assuring control of lots and wide areas registered in its name rather than designating them for public projects and industries that might benefit the local population (Lahawani 1983).

In the absence of zoning plans, businesses and light industry were established in residential areas, creating a nuisance and constituting a negative factor in the quality of the environment. Even when the zoning plan for the settlement was approved, and appropriate areas were set aside, problems arose in moving businesses to new locations because this involved great losses to the owners. The absence of zoning plans indirectly encourages the erection of buildings in places that should be

earmarked for public purposes, industry, parks, and the like. It also encourages the taking over of roads within the settlement and the reduction of their area (Geraisi 1973).

"Illegal" building is a by-product of the absence of zoning plans and local planning committees. Today thousands of homes in the Arab sector are defined as "illegal structures" built without permit. Their owners can expect to be fined, after which the homes are liable to be demolished. Illegal structures have been torn down in a number of Arab villages, mainly Umm al-Fahm, Majd-al-Kurum, Deir Hanna and Arab al-Mukman (see *Al-Hamishmar*, 7 November 1980). In most cases the action was accompanied by violent clashes between police and border guards sent to supervise the demolition and local inhabitants attempting to prevent it and to protest (see *Davar,* 24 July 1986).

An illustration of illegal building in Arab settlements, and the reasons behind it, is the case of Umm al-Fahm, with a population of about 23,000. Although the housing situation in Umm al-Fahm is more serious than that in any other Arab settlement, the factors behind illegal building there are common to other settlements. The approved building area of the town covers about 1100 dunams, and about 2850 families reside within it at an average density of 2.6 families per gross dunam. This area was determined arbitrarily and unilaterally by the planning authorities in the last year of the military government, in 1965-1966, without any discretion being granted to local inhabitants or leadership. "The extent of building outside the approved area, which in 1979 constituted 17 percent of the total structures in the settlement, rose to about 30 percent of the total structures existing in 1986. Over the past seven years, construction outside the approved area has amounted to more than two-thirds of the total construction in the settlement… Building without permit is an expression of the housing needs of a large population which cannot be fulfilled through the framework and processes of of the Planning and Building Law in its present form" (see Chernobroda *Al Hamishmar,* 8 May 1986).

The above factors—budget, planning and building, etc.-often impede the functioning of Arab local authorities—public

bodies that carry little weight and that can be further weakened either by political manipulations "from the outside" or by hamula rivalries and internal factiousness. (For detailed analysis see the chapter on socio-political structure.)

Summary

We emphasized that Arab local government is to be comprehended in terms of the state framework in which it functions: Israeli nation-state ideology, with emphasis on the Jewish nation, centralism, and militarism along with strong components of universal services and parliamentary democracy. Within this framework we pointed out that in 1948 the Arabs became a small minority of some 150,000. The majority of the former Palestinian Arab population had become refugees (650,000-700,000). The weak and controlled status of the Arabs was highlighted by their being under a military government and by the fact that more than half their land was soon expropriated. The military government was immediately effective in appointing local mukhtars and/or to a great extent the operation and functioning of local councils. We then discussed the effect of wage labor on a former peasant society, the place of Arabs in the Israeli economy, changes in levels of Arab education, etc.

Our analysis of the functioning of Arab local councils within the structure of Israeli local government points to quantitative and qualitative changes over time. In the 17 years following statehood 36 new Arab local councils were established and in the subsequent decade 13 more; today there are three Arab municipalities and 55 Arab local councils in Israel.

In qualitative terms, the minutes of meetings of Arab local authorities show changes in terms of both local and national issues. While the discussions during the 1950s and the 1960s were brief and concentrated almost solely on municipal matters, since the mid-1970s national issues affecting the Arab population as a whole and the Palestinians living outside the country began to be raised.

The development of Arab local government has been restricted by different factors. The tight dependency of local on central government in Israel limits the autonomy of local authorities in general, particularly small and weak settlements, thus including most Arab localities. This dependency was reinforced by the continuity of some basic elements of the mandatory constitution regarding local government based on centralization. In addition, the financial distress, lack of zoning plans and the absence of local planning committees in most of the Arab local authorities have resulted in accumulated problems and often the inability to support local services. Therefore, they failed, to a large extent, to meet the needs and the rising expectations of their inhabitants.

Social and economic changes (health and welfare services, educational and occupational structures, etc.) that occurred among the Arabs in Israel, in addition to government legislation on the method of election to local authorities, have intensified competition over control of the local political system. This competition, however, did not always make for stability in the functioning of Arab local authorities.

This last point will be discussed in detail in the following chapter, which focuses on municipalization processes and the changing socio-political structure of six selected Arab localities in Israel.

3
Municipalization and Social-Political Structure

The Local Social-Political Structure

In this chapter we discuss the major changes which have taken place in the social and political structure of Arab towns and villages since the establishment of the state; the impact of municipalization on that structure; and the dynamic engendered between local and outside forces, especially national political parties. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first deals with the topic generally, referring to the existing literature and other secondary sources; the second analyzes the findings of field research into the social and political structure of some typical Arab towns, representing varying cross-sections of the Arab population by size, geographical location, ethnic composition, and period of municipalization.

Students of Arab social structure have emphasized a number of internal subdivisions within the social structure of Arab localities principally the divisions of neighborhood, hamula, and religious/ethnic affiliation. While the two former categories are found nearly everywhere, religious/ethnic divisions may be seen only in mixed towns and villages inhabited by several sects or communities Such places are found in the Galilee and central Israel; elsewhere, in the Triangle and in the Negev, the Arab localities are homogeneously Muslim.

Of these divisions, the most conspicuous is that of the hamula, particularly in the villages. Typically a village has 2-3 large hamulas and a larger number of medium and small ones. Hamula affiliation is not always based on patrilineal descent-line kinship with the hamula's founding father. In some places fictitious blood kinships are found among a portion of a large hamula's members. At various times in history members of small hamulas, or individual migrants who had come to settle in strange villages joined the big hamulas so as to win their protection. However, people distinguish between the

"original" and "stranger" branches of the hamula, the former enjoying greater prestige and higher status. In certain places such as Taiyibe, it is even the custom to call the original branch *assayad,* "masters," and the latter *abid,* "servants." The masters' branch includes the landowners and the hamula's representatives to the other hamulas. We shall see how this state of affairs underwent change following the establishment of the state.

Neighborhood divisions also form a basis for social distinction and affiliation. This division is determined by the direction in which the locale proliferates over an area. Where there are two such directions there are usually two neighborhoods, each named according to its geographical orientation. A neighborhood extending eastward will be called *Alhara A-Sharqiye* (the eastern quarter), while a neighborhood extending westward will be called *Alhara Al-Gharbiye.* Larger towns extending in several directions accordingly have more neighborhoods, namely *Alhara Al-Qibliye* (southern quarter) and *Alhara Al-Shamaliye* (northern quarter). A different division develops on hilltop sites: the core of the town, usually located on the crown of the hill, is called *Alhara Al-Foka* (upper town), while the section developing subsequently down the slope is called *Alhara Al-Tahta* (lower town). Neighborhoods where one hamula predominates numerically is still named after the hamula, as in Umm ai-Fahm: the Mahamid neighborhood is named after the Mahamid hamula, and the Mahaghane neighborhood is named after the Mahaghane hamula (Shmueli, Shnel, Soffer 1985).

The social areas of Arab towns and villages have undergone drastic change since 1948. Population growth and the rise in living standards have led to the expansion of built-up areas and the creation of new neighborhoods. In some places this has led to different hamulas and groups settling in the same area. But the new neighborhoods have still taken on a clannish character owing to the concentration of the hamula's landholdings in a particular area.

Researchers agree that the growth of the Arab town and villages has been due to natural increase rather than migration, and for this reason the urbanization process in the Arab community has been defined as "latent" (Meir-Brodnitz 1971). However, in-depth probes of a number of towns have indicated that two major waves of Arab migration have taken place since 1948. Starting in the early 1950s and continuing throughout the decade, there was wave of "internal refugee" migration by Arabs displaced from villages destroyed during the 1948 war or in the years immediately following who moved to other villages and towns inside the Green Line. According

to various estimates, nearly one in every five Arabs in Israel today is either a refugee or the child of a refugee family (Smooha 1984). In some villages, particularly in the north (Judeide, Kabul, Sha'ab, Tamra), refugees constitute a large segment—half or more—of the population.

The second wave of migration occurred as a result of the permanent resettlement of the Bedouin. This process began first among the northern Bedouin and later among the Negev Bedouin (Golani 1966; Shmueli 1976). Establishing the Bedouin in permanent rural or semi-urban settlements put an end to long generations of nomadism and herding, with a transition to forms of employment common among the rest of the rural Arab population. In places where the migrants constituted a sizeable group there was also a shift in the local power structure. The migrants joined in the jockeying for internal power and became a factor to be reckoned with, especially in local elections. A new social division was created in the Arab community: *ahel al-baied,* natives, vs. *ghurbiye*, strangers (Al-Haj 1987).

In studying how the status of the traditional social units in the Arab community were affected by the post-1948 changes, municipalization in particular, scholars differ as to the hamula's status following the establishment of the state. Some think the hamula was weakened by the modernization process, which included comprehensive occupational transformation, broad exposure to the communications media, a rise in the level of education, and contact with the Jewish population. Others find that the hamula emerged stronger after 1948: the occupational transformation led to the atrophy of the class structure of the Arab population, and consequently lessened class differences within the given hamula. The rapid growth in population—owing to the high rate of natural increase among Arabs—turned the hamula into a significant social unit in the village. The clan's influence is the greater because of its demographic concentration; there is no process of migration from the village to the city as in other societies. To these factors we should add the impact of the authorities, which strove to divide the Arab community internally along traditional affiliative lines, chiefly those of the hamula (cf. Cohen 1965; Rosenfeld 1972, 1978). A third group of researchers holds that the hamula structure has been bolstered in certain of its functions and weakened in others: while the hamula's political and social functions have gained considerably, its economic function has all but disappeared (cf. Al-Haj 1987).

Few studies have dealt directly with the effect of the municipalization process on hamula structure (see Abu Gosh 1965; Nakhleh 1975; Lahwani 1983). These studies agree that the institution of municipal government in the Arab community, under the aforementioned objective conditions and in the absence of any formai political alternative, led to the bolstering of the hamula structure and increased competition centering on the local government, Abu Gosh (1965: 4) contends that since the institution of the local (town or village) council a hamula's prestige has been measured by its ability to gain seats on that council. Thus, following the establishment of municipal government, the hamulas' consciousness of their status in their hometowns rose considerably. On the other hand Landau (1971) argues that the strong hamula structure preceded the municipalization process and even impeded the development of municipal government in the Arab community. He maintains that "perhaps the most important factor preventing the establishment and operation of local councils in the Arab community in Israel was the social structure of the Arab village itself." The fear of certain hamula heads lest their power be diminished drove them to vigorously oppose the creation of local government in their hometowns. Conflicting interests within the hamulas also delayed the establishment of local councils. This is attested in a speech by the Minister of the Interior at a reception celebrating the creation of the Kafar Karaʿ council. The Minister commented:

> The Arab villagers have been accustomed to having very little local government; they haven't had a chance to run their own affairs and ensure that they get what they need from vital services. Neither have they had any opportunity to benefit from government services and assistance… and that is why I have expanded the number of local councils in the Arab areas and in the other Arab villages in Israel.. However, I deeply regret the obstacles that have stood in the way of this good intention, due to the opposition of the Arab notables in certain villages… (Ministry of the interior 1959).

On the other hand, some researchers have stressed that apart from the social structure of the Arab towns and villages, "external" (state) factors also played a part in impeding the establishment of municipal government in the Arab sector (Nakhleh 1975; Rosenfeld 1978). Some have argued that from the start the authorities sought to create convenient footholds—or even weak points—in Arab local

governments by supporting the traditional leadership and encouraging hamula divisions (Mar'i 1974; Cohen 1965).

In any event, we would argue that in order to grasp the entire picture, Arab municipal government has to be considered in terms of two sets of interactions: with central (national) government and socially within the Arab towns and villages themselves. The link between them is the interaction between the internal forces the predominant state influences, including national political parties and the government's treatment of the Arab population in Israel.

Arab municipal government is doubly important in view of the special situation of the Arab population as a minority in Israel. Local government has perhaps become the only political context in which Arabs appear to have direct influence. Furthermore, because of the paucity of local resources among the Arabs, owing to their extreme economic dependence on the dominant (Jewish) center of the country, the local government becomes an important channel for the allocation of resources and benefits. The failure of the government ministries to hire university-educated Arabs turns local government into a major employer for a considerable portion of the intelligentsia, who are forced to compete for available jobs at home, most of which are under local government auspices. Examination of the situation in Shefar-ʿAm shows that the municipality controls about half the jobs there: municipal officials and high school teachers and other positions in the school system such as secretaries, janitors, teacher's helps, etc. Likewise, the projects carried out via local government serve as a considerable source of livelihood for local contractors. The granting of building and building permits is also an effective tool for affecting the course of community affairs (cf. Al-Haj 1983).

At the national level, control (or penetration) of Arab local government is important both to the national political parties and to extra-parliamentary (Arab) nationalist organizations. For the Zionist parties, the make-up and control of the local government are a factor affecting the number of votes the party will win in Knesset elections. "The national parties frequently back several competing lists in the same town or village, with the aim being reciprocal, aid to the lists at the local level in order to gain votes at the parliamentary level" (Landau 1971: 221). As for the nationalist organizations, the impossibility of establishing Arab nationalist political parties increases the value of local government as a legal means for organizing on a nationalist basis. Nakhleh gives this extreme expression in a series of articles in *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* (10-12 December 1980), commenting:

> Till now, we've been unable to make any impact on the political regime. There haven't been any Knesset members, apart from the Rakah Party MKs, who have undertaken to give voice to our oppression and discrimination. Thus we have been unable to take action for our interests in the Knesset. We must take over all the Arab village and town councils and turn them, as a *fait accompli,* into our supreme elected governmental institutions, according to the law, as they have been. However, they will acquire real substance…(See Israel, Prime Minister's Office 1981).

Our analysis so far explains the importance of both the indigenous and external forces for control within Arab local government. We will now assess the interaction between the national political parties and the local forces, and then examine the specific situation in the sampling of towns and villages under review.

The Clash Between Party and Local Interests

The national political parties play a decisive role in local elections among the Jewish population. This is evident in the conduct and the results of the election campaign, the composition of the leadership, the style of local politics, and its links to the center. A comparison between Knesset and local elections in the Jewish sector shows that the two are much alike: "The national political parties are present in every town and village, fighting for control of local government—and usually they succeed in proportion to their success at the national level" (Weiss 1972: 105).

Purely local lists accounted for 10 percent of all lists running in municipal elections in the Jewish sector in the 1970s. Such lists may be found particularly in the middle class and more established towns and villages. Sometimes fierce rivalry within a local party branch causes the aggrieved faction to run as a separate local list. At times the local lists are merely a cover for national political parties that for certain local reasons prefer to appear under a local name.

Studies show that this picture began changing in the late 1970s, especially after direct elections for the office of mayor (or council chairman) were instituted. Now the candidate's personality, relations with the community, achievements and public image came to play a major role in the level of support he won in the municipal elections.

In many cases the number of votes a candidate wins for the office of mayor far exceeds the votes won by his party-backed list (Weiss 1983).

In the Arab community the municipal government is officially non-partisan, although the various political parties have always played a significant role behind the scenes. These parties were mainly: Mapai, renamed the Israel Labor Party in 1965, which in 1968 was transformed into the Alignment between the Labor Party and Mapam (the latter left the Alignment in 1984); Maki, renamed the Israel Communist Party in 1965, which in 1969 became Rakah, the New Communist List, and in 1977 Hadash, the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality; Mapam; the General Zionists (until 1961); the NRP (Religious); the Liberal Party; Rafi (founded 1965); and Gahal, which later became the Likud (cf. Weiss 1972; Landau 1971; Al-Haj and Yaniv 1983).

Government policy from the very establishment of the state aimed at fostering traditional hamula leadership in order to gain control over an entire population through a few key people, while simultaneously maintaining the internal divisions among the Arab population so as to counteract the formation of a collective national identity or any rapprochement with the left-wing parties (see Rosenfeld 1978; Lustick 1980). During the 1950s and 1960s, the hamula, represented by its traditional leadership, was the major basis for organizing both Knesset and local election campaigns. When elections approached, the main political activity among the Arab population consisted of setting up ad hoc, Mapai-affiliated election lists on which Muslims, Christians, and Druze were proportionately represented, as were regional and various individual interests (Landau 1971).

These Arab lists adopted highly general names to emphasize their independence from the Zionist parties, particularly Mapai. The list headed by Salah Khneifis was called Progress and Labor—and it failed to win a seat in the 1959 Knesset when a dispute arose between Khneifis and Mapai. Even the NRP's support for the list did not help. To increase potential support for these affiliated lists, the ruling parties made sure to allocate solid representation to various groups in the Arab population, particularly the hamulas and the differing ethnic/religious groups. For example, the second-place slot on the Progress and Development list—headed by Saif Ed-Din Al-Zuabi, a Nazareth Muslim—was held by Elias Nakhleh, a Christian from Rame. Likewise, the Cooperation and Brotherhood list headed

by a Druze MK, Jabber Muadi, had in second place Diab Abid, a Muslim from the Triangle area (Landau 1971:194).

These Mapai-affiliated Arab lists reached their peak in the elections to the fourth Knesset (1959), when they won five seats (Landau 1973: 202-203). But by the ninth Knesset elections they suffered a severe setback, winning only a single seat (Harari 1978); and in the tenth Knesset they were not represented at all (Al-Haj and Yaniv 1983). In the 1984 elections no list of this type took part—evidence of the attentuation, indeed the complete disappearance, of this traditional political entity so long present in Israel's Arab community.

The number of Arab members of the Knesset has never exceeded 9 (out of 120). For the twelve Knesset elections from 1949 through 1988, the number of Arab members of Knesset was as follows, 3, 8, 8, 7, 8, 6, 6, 6, 9, 6, 6, 6.

The economic, social and political changes that took place among Israel's Arabs led to a significant change in their orientation, and thus in their political organization. The first signs of an awakening of Arab nationalist organizations, not necessarily affiliated with the Communist party, appeared in the late 1950s. In the summer of 1958 an organization called the Arab Front was founded in Galilee by a Nasserist pan-Arabist group. This name was subsequently changed to the Popular Front, which served as the basis for the establishment of the Al-Ard (The Land) Movement This organization applied for registration as a corporation, but the registrar, and subsequently the Supreme Court, to which the movement's founders appealed, rejected the petition on the grounds that the movement's aims undermined the existence of the State of Israel (Ansprenger 1978:108-110). When some of the group's leaders, particularly Salah Baransi and Mansour Kardosh, persisted in their activities they were several times placed under house arrest, and one of them (Baransi) was sentenced to several years in prison (*Ma'ariv*, 24 April 1981).

From 1964 to 1971 there were few signs of nationalist organization, but in the early 1970s a nationalist awakening began. In 1971 the Abnaa el-Balad (Sons of the Country) Movement was founded by a group of Umm al-Fahm intellectuals; it subsequently spread to other Arab communities in Israel, mainly the Galilee and Triangle area villages. A group of Hebrew University student activists established an organization called the Progressive National Movement to compete with the Communist party. Elsewhere, other nationalist organizations were founded, such as Al-Nahda (in

Taiyibe), Al-Saut (Nazareth), and the Organization for Fostering Our Heritage led by (the poet) Rashid Hussein.

The factors behind this organized nationalist awakening among the Arabs in Israel involved internal and external factors: the renewed contact between Israel's Arabs and the Palestinians on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip; growing PLO influence in the Arab countries and the world; and the awakening of the Palestinian nationalist movement outside the borders. Together these aroused political consciousness among Israel's Arabs. Furthermore, the abolition of the military administration (of Arab areas) in 1966, the rise in the level of education among the Arabs, the exposure to the media, the contact with the Jewish population and the altered economic base ail served to undermine the status of the traditional leadership and foster a new, better educated and younger leadership class. The traditional leadership class has not of course simply vanished or ceased to exert an influence; but this is felt more behind the scenes, through its support for a younger leadership that continued the practices of the older. This applies particularly to preserving links with the establishment parties, although these links have taken on a different character.

All the political parties have tried to penetrate Arab local elections but not all have succeeded. Among the major parties that have made an impact over time are Mapai, the NRP, and Rakah (now Hadash). The Likud entered the picture later The Progressive List for Peace (PLP) was only founded after the 1983 local elections, so it is too soon to judge its impact at the municipal level.

Below we will examine in some detail the role each major political party has played in this area. Our study was completed prior to the October 1988 parliamentary elections and the February 1989 municipal elections.

Mapai—The Labor Party

Mapai being the ruling party and in control of the military administration of the Arab areas, which persisted until 1966, it enjoyed the advantage of tremendous influence with the Arab community. Extremely important in this respect were the permits from the military needed by Arabs to leave villages in seeking jobs. Since the vast majority of the Arab local authorities were established during the period of military administration Mapai was able to

substantially affect the composition of the local councils by appointing its party faithful to the first council, which by law was to be appointed by the Minister of the Interior. Furthermore, we observe several instances where the Interior Ministry intervened in the internal affairs of Arab communities and installed officials with close ties to the authorities. In 1959 the Minister appointed one-third of the Yirka local council members, even though elections had been held there. The ministry claimed that only 25 percent of the inhabitants had voted, and the appointment of additional members was therefore meant to provide representation for those who had not. Ultimately the council was unable to function, and the Minister of the Interior dissolved it in February 1961 and named a provisional committee instead, in the village of Jaijulye two extra council members were appointed apart from those elected by the inhabitants in 1959, on the same grounds of granting representation to residents who had not voted. One of the appointees tried to obstruct the council's work and switched sides to the opposition. The Interior Minister dismissed him and appointed a replacement. In the end, a petition was filed with the Supreme Court, as a result of which all the council resigned and new elections were held on 23 January 1961 (Ministry of the interior 1962).

Mapai established its links first through traditional channels, namely the mukhtars and other Arab notables, (This topic is dealt with in full in the analysis of our sample.) Initial policy apparently did not aim to cause any drastic change in the existing leadership. In the localities we studied in depth, we found that the pre-state leaders who had remained in the country continued to represent their home constituency in dealings with the authorities. True, military administration reports divided these leaders into two main groups according to their attitude to the administration, i.e., "our people" and "not our people." In many cases new mukhtars were appointed in addition to those already serving so as to create new leadership and thereby increase competition and reinforce the trend toward cooperation with the authorities (cf. documents from the State Archives of the Minorities Ministry on Tamra (1981) and Shefar-ʿAm (1981), file nos. 1319/73, 297/80/Gimmel).

Mapai exerted its influence on events in the Arab community through its local supporters, in some cases it tried to block the path of young contenders who refused to toe the Mapai line. A vivid instance of this is recounted in an in-depth interview we conducted with one of the first young men to head a local council in the Triangle:

> I ran for council office in 1965, heading a list of young men who wanted to start a real change….The name of the list was Struggle and Labor. I was 28 at the time; the second man on the list was the same age, while the third was 22. My uncle headed another list; he lost, while I got two seats. My entire family voted for this uncle; they saw me as hurting my uncle. At the first session of the council, I was elected chairman. At that time I was affiliated with Mapam, which was in the opposition. The Labor Party saw that this was not the usual practice in the Arab sector: nowhere else had someone been elected council chairman who was not a member of the establishment… So one month later, members of the establishment—Labor Party officials, people from the Prime Minister's Office and from the Histadrut led by Ya'akov Cohen, started campaigning to oust me from the chairmanship. They came and took all the council members to Tel Aviv and pushed them to the wall, till they got everyone's signature on my ouster and replaced me with one of their trusty followers… I was ousted in January 1966; in October 1966 the man who had ousted me himself was ousted. We elected a new chairman, but a short time later he, too, gave up… It was then that they asked to speak to me—the very same people who had staged the coup against me… We met in Tel Aviv with officials from the Labor Party—then Mapai—the Alignment. Dr. Ginat, at that time director of the Tel Aviv office and Toledano's assistant, pressed me to agree to become council chairman. I said I was willing to do so for the good of my village, but on one condition: that none of you (Labor Party officials) so much as enters the village except at my invitation.

In time, the Labor Party succeeded in consolidating its standing among the Arab population via an extensive network of activists, of whom some belonged to the traditional leadership class and others to the younger, educated generation that had begun to occupy semi-public posts in the Arab towns, primarily as teachers and local Histadrut labor council officials. Aware of the growing politicization of the Arab community and the rise of Rakah as its biggest competitor, Labor was forced to step up its activities in the Arab community and to change its methods of persuasion. From emphasis on individual ties with the traditional local leaders, Labor now turned its attention to the larger public, stressing the interests of the

entire community. Even where ties with local leaders were still cultivated, stress was still placed on the interests of the community as a byproduct of those ties.

In campaigns for Arab local council seats over the past decade, Labor's election propaganda has repeatedly warned against "the danger of Rakah or other extremist forces gaining control." This danger is contrasted with the gains made in localities headed by leaders with close ties to the Alignment (Davar, 16 August 1983). Alignment activists were highly involved in the 1983 municipal election campaign and tried to help out at the local level, appearing at various public gatherings. Along with the two Arab Alignment MKs, Wattad and Khalaila, activists included MK S. Almozlino, chairwoman of the Knesset Interior Committee; MK O. Namir, chairwoman of the Education Committee; MK Y. Sarid, and other major activists.

The Alignment also used "moderate" council chairmen to reinforce this impression, among them Afu Fa'ur, head of the Sha'ab Council. In an interview (see Mansour, *Ha'aretz*, 17 October 1980) Fa'ur enumerated the gains made during his term as council chairman. He claimed that in return for the votes of Sha'ab's inhabitants, he became well received in government ministries and managed to solve the (villagers') problems with relative ease. He gave the example of a young villager who had been arrested following the Yom Kippur War as a suspect in the rape of a Jewish girl:

> I went to Sgt. — of the Acre Police Department, and he asked me not to interfere. I swore I would divorce my wife if I returned home without the suspect. That night I returned home with the boy. Now I heard he supports the (Democratic) Front. I stopped him in the street and asked him to look me straight in the eye; he swore he'd vote for me, but in terms of his convictions, he'd work for the Front.

Fa'ur ticks off a series of achievements affecting the entire community, such as approval of the village master plan, paving of roads, construction of fences around cemeteries, creation of a water reservoir, allocation of the village olive groves (from confiscated property), and implementation of the First stage of work linking the village to the national electricity grid. In his printed campaign literature, he also promises "to continue to maintain close ties with the proper authorities, so as to enable him to lobby them for the

benefit of his entire village, as well as for any individual inhabitant who gets into trouble".

In the 1983 local elections the Labor Party threw all its weight behind the election either of its supporters or of actual party members. Labor drew up a plan of campaign dividing the Arab sector into five sub-districts, each headed by a Labor MK, in addition to nationwide committee of 16 Laborites headed by Ra'anan Cohen, director of the Labor Party's Minority Affairs Section. The plan concentrated on three major areas: election propaganda, grassroots organization, and finding candidates or supporting independent lists (*Davar*, 7 December 1981).

Labor's municipal elections campaign team was active in the Arab sector right up to election day. Many meetings were held, campaign activities launched, and increased efforts invested in backing Labor-leaning candidates. Labor viewed these municipal elections as an indicator for the upcoming Knesset elections (which were held in 1984).

The emphasis was on the civic-municipal level, focusing on the major issues for both the local governments and the Arab community in general: industrializing the Arab towns and villages, providing employment opportunities for Arab university graduates, welfare services, cultural centers, municipal master plans, and expansion of the areas under Arab municipal jurisdiction—along with improving Jewish-Arab understanding and coexistence. The issue of equitable allocations of funds vis-à-vis the Jewish sector was also a main feature of the Labor Party's campaign (*Al-Anba*, 24 July 1983).

The ties local leaders maintained with the Labor Party, like their ties with other Zionist parties, were by no means to be taken for granted. In some cases, leaders who had been in the Labor Party now switched sides and joined another party, either following disagreements over personal interests or to show dissatisfaction with Labor's simultaneously supporting a rival clan or candidate. On the other hand, several council chairmen backed several political parties simultaneously, so as to remain on good terms with them all. One pro-establishment council head openly admitted that in the (ninth) Knesset elections, he had divided his followers' votes among three parties—the Alignment, the NRP and the Likud—because:

> …He personally was close to Labor, and the party's politicos had asked that he come across with 200 votes He saw to it that Labor got 300 votes at the polls. The NRP, aware of his good relations

> with District Commissioner Koenig (an NRP man), asked for and got about 100 votes He instructed his friends and neighbors to vote NRP. This piece of generosity reached the ears of the Likud's Max Steinitz, who was deputy mayor of Nahariya; he paid (the Arab council head) a visit accompanied by some Druze friends, who first brought greetings from mutual friends in key government ministry posts, and then asked for 50 votes. "I promised and I delivered," the council chairman says.. (But he says) he won't do likewise in the next elections; rather he'll divide his friends' votes between the Alignment and the NRP. He is sure they will return to power. *(Ha'aretz,* 17 October 1980)

This marked a new trend in the interaction between the ruling parties and the pro-establishment Arab leadership. Whereas in former times, principally the 1950s and 1960s, the Zionist parties had tended to back several rival local lists at once so as to win their support in the Knesset elections (cf. Landau 1971), the situation was now reversed: in several places local leaders took the pragmatic line of supporting (or at least staying on good terms with) several establishment parties at once, so as to promote their interests in the government ministries under these parties' control.

Even during the Alignment's period in opposition (1977-1984) it did not stop behaving like a ruling party, at least in the public mind. Local Arab leaders maintained their ties with Labor in the hope of its return to power and the enhancement of their own standing. Furthermore, Labor's continued control of the Histadrut labor federation gave it strong influence in the Arab towns and villages.

Mapam

Mapam was among the first national parties to penetrate Arab settlements in the early 1950s and was the first Zionist party to open its membership to Arabs (in 1954) and to integrate them in party activities. Since the elections to the second Knesset in 1951 the Mapam parliamentary faction has always included an Arab MK. These MKs were active in assisting Mapam's involvement in local elections, which was most marked first in the Galilee (Nazareth, Sakhnin, Tamra, Daliyat al Karmel, etc) and later in the Little Triangle. Unlike Mapai, which recruited its activists from the traditional leadership and the mukhtars, Mapam was active also

among the young, the educated and the politically committed (e.g., Abdel Aziz Zoubi, Rashid Hussein, etc.).

Mapam has undertaken activities in educational and social fields. The kibbutzim of Mapam established intensive relationships with Arab localities; the party founded the Arab pioneer youth movement in 1954, parallel to its Jewish youth movement Hashomer Hatsair, and hundreds of young Arabs received training in the latter's kibbutzim. Mapam still has an Arabic magazine, *Al-Mirsad* (Observation Post), which usually appears with great frequency before general elections. For over a decade (especially in the 1960s) Mapam's Institute for Arab Studies at Givaat Haviva was very active among Arabs, mainly teachers and academics. Through the institute various Jewish-Arab meetings and seminars were organized to attract new Arab members to the party.

One of the main problems facing the activity of Mapam among Arabs has been its vacillating position as a part of the establishment, especially over the last two decades. It joined most coalition governments headed by Mapai. "As a result, Mapam has generally had to go along with Mapai in its policy guidelines, including those applying to the Arabs in Israel" (Landau 1969:60). This problem became crucial when Mapam joined the Alignment with the Labor party (Mapai and Rafi) in 1965. This alliance continued until 1984 and ended only when Mapam refused to join the National Unity Government (the Likud and Labor parties together with Jewish orthodox religious parties).

Since 1985 Mapam has intensified its activity within the Arab population. This is reflected in the turnout of Mapam MKs at different social and political activities organized by Arabs. Most salient was Mapam's support for the general strikes of the Arab population on the "Day of Equality" (24 June 1987), and the "Day of Peace" (21 December 1987). This involvement may be of major importance for the reinforcement of Mapam, in particular after its noticeable decline in strength among the Jewish population.

The National Religious Party

The National Religious Party (NRP) is one of the best-entrenched of the ruling parties in the Arab sector. The party's long-standing control over the Ministry of the Interior has allowed it to exert maximal influence in the management of local Arab affairs, and has

enabled it to develop its ties with some of the Arab leaders, particularly the traditional leaders and hamula heads. The ministry's commissioner of the Northern District, Israel Koenig (himself an NRP man who served in this post until April 1986), worked intensively to promote council chairmen who were his protégés. Through them, the NRP expanded its influence over the Arab community yet further. An interview with the former chairman of the Baqa Al-Gharbiye Council (see *Ma'ariv,* 21 August 1983) went as follows:

Q: They say that, with the help of God and the NRP, you've built up quite a nice village here.

A: It's true, really very true. Look how the NRP has helped this village — though I, too, have done a great deal. We've installed running water and electricity, built nice schools, paved roads. We've really done a lot. The NRP, you understand, is the Interior Ministry; they're in charge of those budgets. That's why they're strong. And now they've got the Religious Affairs Ministry, too. A local council chairman, you know, isn't a member of Knesset; his job is to take care of his hometown—electricity, sewage systems, water, roads—not politics. So officially, I'm really not political, but unofficially, if you support the right people, they'll support you in return. The NRP got 120 votes here. In the next elections, I'm sure they'll get at least 250 votes. So long as the Likud and the NRP are in power together, Baqa Al-Gharbiye's got a good deal. A good politician, you know, knows how to ask for what he needs when he needs it—and also knows how to give something in return sometimes.

The Likud

The Likud began trying to expand its foothold in the Arab community mainly after coming to power in 1977. Here too the formula for relations with Likud protégés, in the Arab sector has been, "You scratch my back I'll scratch yours," with the Likud supporting and funding the local election campaign in exchange for its candidate's promise of his and his friends' support for the Likud in the Knesset elections.

Relations between Likud patrons and their Arab protégés are not always based on mutual respect, but rather on narrow interests, the Likud man fully aware that his party's nationalist Zionist ideology does not go down well with his Arab supporters. We may infer this

from an interview with MK Eitan Livni, who heads the Likud's Arab and Druze Affairs Section. Livni says: "I was a freedom fighter, whereas they (the Arab guerrillas) are just criminals. But I've learned to understand their way of thinking. It helps me to do my job." However, the Likud's Arab representatives sometimes have to support their party on ideological issues. In the same interview, MK Livni stated: "Some of our representatives in the Arab villages are highly educated people. Just to be on the safe side, though, I explain to them that the Likud is a nationalist Zionist party, with a clear political platform. Furthermore, I stress that they must support us on ideological issues, and not just on local village issues. .. I insist, for example, that they take part in demonstrations in favor of (retaining) Greater Israel and against partitioning Judea and Samaria" (*Ma'ariv,* 21 August 1983).

The Communist Party—Hadash

The foundations of the Communist Party were laid during the British Mandate. The Palestinian Communist Party (PCP) included both Arab and Jewish activists. This party was inconsequential for a time during the events of 1948, resuming activity as the Israel Communist Party (Maki) in 1949 foilowing the return of the top Communist leadership—Emile Habibi, Tawfiq Toubi, Hanna Nakara, and Emile Turna—some of whom had been in Lebanon and others in detention. Maki now encompassed the remnants of the (Arab) League for National Liberation and Jewish activists. At first the Jewish and Arab members were at odds over the issue of the diplomatic solution and the status of Israel's Arabs (Landau 1971: 84). But there was also dissent among the Arab members, with moderates facing off against their more radical comrades. In 1959 the party lost members in the debate over the stand taken by the Egyptian leader Abdel Nasser, who attacked the Communists and whose relations with Moscow then reached a nadir. Maki was also hard hit on the broader electoral front, winning only about 10 percent of the Arab vote in the 1959 elections as opposed to 22 percent in the previous campaign.

In 1965 Maki underwent one of its transformations when the Sneh and Mikunis camp contested Toubi, Habibi and Wilner. The latter group left the party and founded the New Communist List (Rakah). Very few Arabs remained in Maki, which gradually dwindled,

finally disappearing in 1983. The Jews who made the move to Rakah were included in the top party leadership, and in time a rough balance was struck between the Arab and Jewish elements in the party.

The year 1976 marked a shift in the political orientation of Israel's Arab community, although the events of that year were in fact the outcome of a process taking place for many years. This was the year when Land Day was marked, on 30 March 1976. The fact that Rakah was the chief organizer of events, both before and after the day itself, imparted very important status to it in the Arab community. Rakah's control over the National Committee for the Defence of the Lands also helped boost the party's standing among the Arab population.

Rakah found itself in a serious dilemma following Land Day. On the one hand it aspired to expand its electoral base in the Jewish community; and on the other it was working to bolster its standing as the major political organization giving expression to the Israeli Arabs' national aspirations. As a solution the party established a broad front called the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (Hadash). The new party was led mostly by Rakah stalwarts, but it included non-Communist and Jewish candidates too, such as Charlie Biton, one of the Black Panther leaders, and Hanna Muyas, head of the Rame Council. Meanwhile, Rakah also sponsored the establishment of several other national organizations, such as the National Union of Arab University Students and the National Union of Arab High School Pupils. The Druze Initiative Committee, too, joined Hadash, to no small degree because of Rakah's basic platform.

In the ninth Knesset elections in 1977 Hadash became the leading political organization in the Israeli Arab community, winning approximately 72,000 votes, or 50 percent of the total Arab vote in Israel. The party made only minor gains in the Jewish community that year, winning approximately 888 votes, or 1.1 percent of the total (see Jiryis 1979). Hadash's success in the Arab community was attributable to a number of factors, themselves a product of the Arab community's growing politicization. The Communist Party's grassroots organization along with the PLO's support and its messages broadcast over radio and published in the Palestinian newspaper *Falastin A-Thawra* urging the Israeli Arab community to vote for Hadash all helped bolster the party's standing. Now Hadash expedited its penetration of local elections in the Arab villages and

towns, with the aim of improving its status at the municipal level (Al-Haj and Yaniv 1983: 153-54).

Hadash's municipal campaign propaganda, like its Knesset election campaign, is high in national ideological content. In Hadash's opening salvo among the Arabs in the 1983 local election campaign, the party's MKs stated frankly that the main electoral battle would be fought by Hadash and the Alignment and that Hadash's weapon should be the stress on the Arab minority's national objectives. In their campaign the party leaders emphasized "the Hadash platform concerning the solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict— a platform that speaks of Israeli withdrawal from all the territories occupied since 1967 and of the establishment of an independent Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel, with Arab Jerusalem as its capital under the PLO leadership" *(Al-Hamishmar,* 7 August 1983).

This was also the line taken by the various local "fronts" in their campaign propaganda. For example, a leaflet distributed by the Democratic Front in Kafar Yasif on 6 August 1983, just prior to the local elections, stated: "The battle isn't for a road that still hasn't been built or for a project not yet done, but for the land on which we are developing and without which we cannot develop. The battle is for our existence as an entity, and for our homeland besides which we have no other. The battle is for equality and the end of the policy of occupation and military aggression; it is for the end of our people's tragedy. The battle is for a just peace and for the bolstering of the forces in Israel fighting for that peace." The leaflet attacked "the ruling parties," claiming that everything they did was aimed against the aforementioned objectives: "The ruling parties, including the Alignment which has taken upon itself to split our ranks under the slogan of 'the war against Rakah,' are trying and will keep on trying to blur the aforementioned principles and divide us into warring clans, sects, and groups. They don't want our people to have local authorities that see to our own concerns; they want 'Village Leagues' that can be bought for a few crumbs, so that they may perpetrate their designs."

Rakah attached a great deal of importance to the last municipal election campaign, an importance transcending municipal interests. The party therefore tried to drum up outside support in its campaign. The Palestinian radio stations and the *Falastin A-Thawra* newspaper called on Israel's Arabs to support Rakah in the local elections, Hadash (which, as explained above, incorporates Rakah) exploited

these endorsements to raise the level of support for its candidates in various locales (*Ha'aretz*, 24 October 1983).

Although Rakah does not control municipal funds wherewith to boost its own standing, it can take advantage of the resources at its disposal, primarily its ability to send students to study in Eastern European universities. A 1982 in-house memo circulated by the head of the Labor Party's Minorities Section noted that from 1967-1981, 514 students had been sent to study in Eastern Europe, of whom 60 percent (297) had gone during the period 1977-1981. The breakdown by country of destination was 30 percent to the USSR and the remainder to Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, East Germany, Yugoslavia, and Poland. The arrangements for those going to study in the Eastern Bloc are in the hands of the Communist Youth League. The requirements for winning a scholarship to the Eastern Bloc are at least three years' active membership in the Rakah party, an average grade of 7+ in the matriculation exams, and at least one other family member active in Rakah. Indeed, the Eastern Bloc alumni play a considerable part in both local and Knesset election campaigns. Over time, they become an important part of Rakah's grassroots organization in its various local branches, with most of them intensely active on a year-round basis. They also try to persuade their family and friends to join the Communist Party.

Although a large portion of the Communist Party's top leaders live in Haifa, the party stronghold undeniably lies in Nazareth. There the level of party consciousness is higher than elsewhere. Nazareth is a city whose mayoralty no single clan or neighborhood can win alone. This situation forces Nazarenes to seek out a broader affiliative framework, and in this instance the party is a central factor. Until the mid-1970s the main battle for control of the municipality was fought between Rakah and the lists supported by the ruling (national) parties. The upheaval came in 1975 when for the First time Rakah gained control of the municipality through the local Nazareth Front, whose creation Rakah had actively instigated. The 1983 election battle centered principally on Hadash and the Progressive List led by attorney Kamil Daher, the former deputy of Nazareth Mayor (and Hadash MK) Tawfiq Zayyad. Although the Progressive List constituted Hadash's main opposition, this role is rapidly being appropriated by the Islamic Movement, in the 1989 Nazareth municipal election, the Progressive list took only two seats with the Islamic Movement gaining six and the Front eleven.

The Progressive List for Peace

The first signs of a split in the Nazareth Front (established in 1975 by Rakah, local merchants, university graduates and other groups of Nazareth residents) appeared in 1981, when some of the university graduates broke away following a dispute with Rakah over control of the Front. The breakaway faction then founded the Progressive Movement in Nazareth, which ran in the 1983 municipal elections and won about 20 percent of the vote. The Progressive Movement subsequently sought to increase its power and compete with the Democratic Front (Hadash) on the national level too. Its leaders tried to found similar movements in other Arab towns so as to offer an alternative to the electors, "who are sick and tired of the way Rakah (i.e., Hadash) and the Zionist parties have been running things."

In the spring of 1983, immediately following Land Day, the Progressive Movement called a meeting in Nazareth in anticipation of the approaching Knesset elections. The meeting was attended by well-known leaders such as Shefar-ʿAm Mayor Ibrahim Nimr Hussayn, attorney Muhammad Miari, university-educated chairmen of local councils, and some of the leaders of the Al-Ansar movement, which is itself an offshoot of the Abnaa el-Balad movement. A decision was taken to establish the Progressive List for Peace, on the following platform: the struggle to obtain full equality of national and civil rights between Jewish and Palestinian citizens of the State of Israel within the boundaries of 4 June 1967; the fight against discrimination; mutual recognition of the right of both peoples, Jewish and Palestinian, to self-determination; and ending the occupation in all its ramifications (Israel, Prime Minister's Office, Bureau of the Advisor for Arab Affairs, 1984: 5).

Following negotiations with the leaders of the (Jewish) Alternative movement, it was decided to set up a joint Arab-Jewish list, the first slot being held by attorney Muhammad Miari (a former member of the Al-Ard movement), the second by Matityahu Peled (Alternative). The list won about 18 percent of the Arab vote in the eleventh Knesset elections, presenting serious competition to the Hadash Party, which more or less maintained its strength among the Arab population, garnering 33 percent of their vote. In the Triangle area the Progressive List won 36 percent of the vote to Hadash's 30 percent (adjusted), as well as winning 13 percent of the Bedouin vote. Its gains among the Druze community were negligible (cf. Stendhal 1985).

The 1983 municipal elections also reflected the emergence of the Islamic Movement, which has spread primarily through the villages of the Triangle, a homogeneously Muslim area. The Islamic Youth campaign propaganda emphasized the return to Islam and the observance of its precepts in everyday life—and in public life too. The Muslim Renaissance list (supported by the Movement) won the council chairmanship of Kafar Bara in the Triangle. In the Kafar Qasem Council the Muslim Youth faction is the largest. The Muslim Youth are also represented on the council of the largest Triangle village, Taiyibe. An article appearing in the Sharon-Samaria area edition of *Ma'ariv* (1 Feb. 1984) stated that the village's elected council chairman, a member of the Islamic Renaissance movement, had announced his intention of turning the village into a model of the Muslim religious way of life. The recent municipal elections (28 February 1989) took place after the completion of this study. The most significant result was the increased importance of the Islamic Movement in local government: the Movement took the mayorship of Umm el-Fahm from the Front, now heads four local councils and is represented on a dozen others.

Extra-parliamentary nationalist Arab circles have not been idle either. The absence of any realistic possibility of establishing Arab nationalist parties, or their unwillingness to run for the Knesset, increases the value of local government as a legal means of nationalist organization and of having an impact on the national level through control at the local level, especially through the National Committee of Arab Local Council Chairmen (see Chapter V). Nationalist circles (such as Abnaa el-Balad—Sons of the Country), which do not recognize Israel's right to exist in its current form and which therefore advocate boycotting Knesset elections, regard holding seats on a local council as a way of expressing and consolidating their electoral strength. In the 1978 elections an Abna Al-Baiad list ran in several towns and villages and made an impressive showing, garnering seven percent of the vote in Sakhnin, nine percent in Mi'elya, and 17 percent in Kabul (Harari 1978). In the 1983 elections, they fielded lists of candidates in Umm El-Fahm, Taiyibe, Kabul, and Shefar-ʿAm. We see that the nationalist groups view municipal government as an alternative way of making an impact on the political regime.

An incipient attempt toward an Arab national party was made by Abdlwahab Darawshe who recently established the Arab Democratic Party after terminating his Alignment-Mapai affiliation. He gained one seat in the November 1988 Knesset elections and his supporters

head two or three local councils and, following the 1989 municipal elections, are represented on several others.

Municipalization Processes in Arab Locales

So far we have offered an overview of the social and political structure of the Arab population and of the dynamic engendered by municipalization between internal (local) forces and external, these being mainly the national political parties. We shall now turn to an in-depth analysis of our sample of Arab locales, representing a cross-section of the Arab population in Israel.

Table 3.1: Distribution of Arab vote over time

			ARAB	VOTERS	BREAKDOWN OF ARAB VOTE											
					Arab-Jewish Parties								Labor Party			
					Communist Party				PLP**		Arab Lists		Mapai, Later		Total	
					Since 1977		DFPE				Aligned with		Alignment		Zionist	
Knesset	Total Eligible Votes	Eligible	%	Valid	%	No.	%	No.	%	Mapai*** No.	%	No.	%	Parties No.	%
1st 1949	506,567	33,250	6.6	26,332	79	5,750	22	-		7,383	28	3,633	10	-	-
2nd 1951	934,885	68,914	7.5	53,984	86	9,432	16	-		32,288	55	6,786	11	15,600	26
3rd 1955	1,057,795	86,898	8.2	77,979	90	11,847	15	-		37,761	48	10,829	14	18,089	23
4th 1959	1,218,483	96,608	2.9	81,764	85	8,813	11	-		34,353	42	8,046	10	21,164	26
5th 1961	1,271,285	104,884	2.3	86,843	83	19,308	22	-		35,376	40	8,558	20	25,499	29
6th 1965	1,499,709	129,909	8.6	106,342	82	24,618	23	-		39,394	38	13,353	13	28,963	27
7th 1969	1,748,710	146,823	8.4	117,190	80	34,858	28	-		46,374	40	20,746	17	32,200	27
8th 1973	2,037,478	173,292	8.5	133,058	77	49,326	37	-		35,699	27	17,065	13	38,000	29
9th 1977	2,236,293	198,137	8.9	145,295	74	71,713	50	-		23,502	16	16,327	11	30,756	21
10th 1981	2,490,014	242,748	9.8	164,862	68	60,397	37	-		20,590	12	47,379	29	74,988	45
11th 1984	2,654,613	276,973	10.4	199,968	72	63,397	32	35,214	18			51,546	26	100,936	50.4

* This study was in press before the elections for the 12th Knesset (1 November 1988). However, we can make the following points. As in previous elections, close to one-fourth (here 26%) of the Arab voters did not cast votes. The three predominantly Arab lists (DFPE, PLP and a new Arab party - Darawsheh) now received approximately 60% of the Arab votes; Proportionately, there are fewer Arab votes for Zionist parties. Nevertheless, the Civil Rights List quadrupled (from 1% to 4%) and the Likud increased from 5% to 7%. Apparently Mapam (which did not appear as a separate list in 1984) also received some 4% of Arab votes. That is to say, Alignment was the main loser of Arab votes (from 31% in 1984 to 17% in 1988).
** Progressive List for Peace (only in 1984 elections)
*** There were no Arab lists in the 1984 elections

I. Shefar-ʿAm

Our discussion of Shefar-ʿAm will go into particular detail for several reasons. Shefar-ʿAm is a kind of microcosm of the Arab population in Israel, encompassing different groups that together constitute the main elements of the Israeli Arab population: Muslims, Christians, and Druze; refugees who came to the town in 1948 and Bedouin who settled there during the 1960s and 1970s. These groups and sects are divided along well-defined hamula lines. Shefar-ʿAm has an urban or semi-urban population made up of the original settlers and a rural population consisting mainly of those who moved there from the surrounding villages following the establishment of Israel Furthermore, Shefar-ʿAm is an ideal place to examine the link between municipalization and economic, social and demographic processes. The fact that Shefar-ʿAm was awarded municipal status as early as the beginning of this century enables us to closely follow the struggle for control of local government, the changes that have taken place in the town's political structure and level, and the interaction with outside influences. Shefar-ʿAm was the field study site chosen for the doctoral thesis authored by Al-Haj (1983). In that research a large amount of documentary material was gathered from the citizens and from the municipal archives, enabling us to assemble a complete picture of the subject treated here. Owing to its sociological importance Shefar-ʿAm is explored in more detail than the other locales, with the aim of avoiding wherever possible redundancy in our study.

Shefar-ʿAm is located on the western fringes of Lower Galilee, in the centre of a triangle formed by the cities Haifa and Nazareth, and Acre, about 18 km distant from each, Shefar-ʿAm's population is estimated at 23,000, and it is considered the second largest Arab city in Israel. During the Ottoman period Shefar-ʿAm was a district center serving 22 surrounding villages. In 1911 the town benefited from a 1908 Ottoman law stipulating that any town serving as a district center should be administered by an elected municipal council. Shefar-ʿAm thus become the first town in the north of the country to be granted municipal (city) status.

Shefar-ʿAm's historical centrality dates back long before its proclamation as a city. It was particularly prominent during the reign of Daher Al-Omar (1698-1775), who made Shefar-ʿAm an economic and administrative center for the entire northern area. Otttman, Daher's son, built Shefar-ʿAm's fortress in 1772. This building subsequently became the headquarters for government officials who administered the area under the Ottomans. During the mandate

period the fortress served as a police station, a role it continued to fill until 1970.

Shefar-ʿAm's location at an important crossroads between major cities and its administrative centrality affected other aspects of life there. The town managed to gain control of broad tracts of agricultural land. Its residents took over the lands of about 24 small villages in the area that had been abandoned for various reasons, with the result that Shefar-ʿAm became one of the richest cities of all Palestine in terms of land holdings. By the 1933 land registration, Shefar-ʿAm's holdings amounted to approximately 120,000 dunams. The city was a center for the provision of services; commerce developed, as did the manufacture of tools, shoes and clothing. These conditions attracted many immigrants throughout the various historical periods.

Analysis of the social make-up of the core of Shefar-ʿAm's inhabitants confirms what the city elders say — that the Druze, along with a few Christian families, were the first to settle in Shefar-ʿAm. The Muslims were the last to arrive, settling there only in the eighteenth century, principally during the rule of Daher AI-Omar. There was also a small Jewish community in Shefar-ʿAm until 1920. Throughout the Ottoman and British Mandate periods, the Christians maintained their numerical superiority, making up about 45 percent of the population. The Muslims were the second largest group with about 38 percent, while the Druze accounted for about 17 percent.

Drastic demographic and social changes took place in Shefar-ʿAm following the establishment of the State of Israel. In consequence of the 1948 war, 494 of the city's inhabitants (474 Muslims and 20 Christians) departed for Arab countries. The Druze who had left the city at the start of the war returned as soon as it ended, because all without exception had managed to obtain Israeli identity cards. Meanwhile, 548 refugees moved to Shefar-ʿAm from neighboring villages destroyed in the fighting. By 1953, the population of Shefar-ʿAm had more or less stabilized in the following ratio: 2336 Christians, 1620 Muslims, and 958 Druze, totalling 4,919 inhabitants. But in subsequent years the population ratio underwent significant change. Today Muslims are the largest group and account for about 50 percent; the Christians make up 33 percent and the Druze about 17 percent. This shift in proportions has been helped by the Muslims' high rate of natural increase and by a constant influx of internal refugees and Bedouin, the majority of whom are Muslim.

The Bedouin began making permanent homes in Shefar-ʿAm in the early 1960s. They settled there as part of a project to place the Bedouin in concentrated areas — partly voluntarily and partly on the instruction of government bodies, mainly the ministries of Housing and Agriculture. At first the Bedouin tended to settle on the outskirts of the city, far from the center, owing to the availability of land there, which was important because many of the Bedouin still engage in small-scale farming next to their homes. Today the Bedouin constitute about 6.5 percent of Shefar-ʿAm's population and about 13 percent of its Muslim community.

The ethno-religious divisions in Shefar-ʿAm were given clear expression in several areas. The various sections of the city were divided along ethno-religious lines, with the Christians and Druze sharing the original core area of settlement. The southeastern section was inhabited by the Christians, the western by the Druze, and the north and northeastern by the Muslims. After the state was established, these areas began to expand. Several neighborhoods established in the eastern and western parts of the city became ethnically mixed when Muslim immigrants (Bedouin and internal refugees) settled on the available land, some of which belonged to the Druze and Christians. The inter-group differences also came into play in the relations which members of each group maintained with people and groups from outside Shefar-ʿAm. The Christians had ties mainly to urban communities in Haifa, Acre, Jaffa, and even Beirut. These ties, which proliferated over time, led Shefar-ʿAm Christians to emigrate to the other communities. In the 1946 voters' roster we found the names of eight Christian families that had left Shefar Shefar-ʿAm for Haifa, Acre, and Jaffa in the 1940s. Our informants tell us that affluent Shefar-ʿAm Christians used to go to Beirut for their entertainment.

The Muslims, on the other hand, maintained ties mainly with the inhabitants of nearby villages. These took the day-to-day form of commercial contacts, exchanging visits, and attending various events together. In one diary we found a detailed description of intense personal ties between Shefar Shefar-ʿAm Muslims and Muslims from other villages. Apart from these interactions at the individual level, there were also collective ties between Muslim villages and the Muslim population of Shefar-ʿAm.

The members of the Druze sect, meanwhile, established close connections with the Druze villages on the Golan Heights, in Lebanon, and on Jebal Al-Arab in Syria. The diary of a certain

Druze shaykh contained a description of regular visits between Druze from Shefar-ʿAm and these other villages. We also found a great deal of correspondence between them. The Lebanese and Syrian Druze were very interested in what was happening to their fellow Druze in Shefar-ʿAm. in 1937 a Druze dignitary from Jebal Al-Arab sent a letter to the head of the Arab Bank in Haifa, requesting his personal intervention with the Muslim population in Shefar-ʿAm to urge the latter to improve their relations with their Druze neighbors.

In addition to this intercommunal social division, there were also social divisions within each community. Before 1870 all Shefar-ʿAm's Christians had belonged to the Catholic sect. That year there was an incident involving two of the large clans, and in consequence one of the hamulas declared itself Protestant. This community built its own church in 1873. Later they split again, with some of their members joining the Latin Maronite community. In 1890 a further schism occurred in the Catholic community when one of the hamulas protested its lack of representation on the district council, an august body attached to the Ottoman district administration. The disgruntled hamula established the Greek Orthodox Christian community of Shefar-ʿAm and thus won the right to have its own delegate on the district council, representing the Greek Orthodox Christians of Shefar-ʿAm, Ibillin, Sha'ab, and Biruweh (villages in the Shefar-ʿAm district).

Apart from the Christian division by sect there is the division by hamula. The most economically established are the Talhami, Haddad, and Karkabi hamulas. We may suppose this to be due to their being the oldest hamulas in the city, a status that enabled them to gain control of a large portion of the lands defined as *musha'a* (communal). In terms of size, the Jarrous, Imbaraike, and Abbūd hamulas are the largest

but their settlement in Shefar-ʿAm at a later date placed them in a marginal position in terms of land holdings. The Abbūd hamula was the last to arrive before 1948, and its members are therefore still regarded by some of the other Christian hamulas as *ghurbiye,* outsiders.

The Muslim community's inner divisions were based on geographical location of the quarters. The eastern part of town was settled by the landowners of the Hamadi, Yassin, Nefa'a, and Hattib clans, while the western section was settled by landless families. To this day this part of town is called *Harat Il-Huwareh,* the landless

quarter. Its first settlers arrived with Ibrahim Pasha's troops from Egypt early in the nineteenth century. As elsewhere, the soldiers who remained in Shefar-ʿAm were the ones who were landless in Egypt and therefore had no economic or social reason to return home; a rich town like Shefar-ʿAm could offer them work. They were employed at first on Christian and Druze farms.

As for the Druze, their inner divisions were less obvious than those of the other communities, although they too were composed of various hamulas and were scattered through two principal quarters, the area around the fortress, *Harat Al-Kala'a*, in the original heart of the town, and the Marshan quarter, which developed later, in the 1940s. The blurring of internal divisions in the Druze community sprang from that community's uniting in self-defense against the threats of the other communities both in Shefar-ʿAm and outside, particularly by the Muslims. Relations between Muslim and Druze became marked by conflict from 1925, when the Druze asked Salah Effendi to rescue their lands from the Muslims who had taken them by force. Muslim-Druze relations turned violent during the major Arab uprising in 1936. In 1939 bands of Muslim rebels took revenge on several Druze who had not joined in the uprising. Relations worsened after several Muslim-owned homes were demolished by the mandatory authorities following Druze complaints about what had occurred. In consequence, the Druze families who had lived for dozens of years inside the Muslim quarter abandoned their homes and moved to the Druze quarter. Since that time the various quarters of the city have taken on a well-defined ethnic or sect character.

The ethnic distinctions of the Ottoman and British Mandate periods were also apparent in the economic sphere, particularly land ownership. Before the mandate government's 1933 Lands Registry Law most of the cultivated land was *musha'a* and it was divided among the religious communities every five years, the Christian community getting one half, the Druze and five Muslim families sharing the other. The internal allocation of land within each community was by family, not hamula. As a result, there were different types of landholding status within each hamula even before abolition of *musha'a.* Registration of land ownership merely reinforced this differentiation between the ethnic communities. The Christians and Druze, who had owned land from the beginning, consolidated their status and in many cases were even able to enlarge their assets. Interviews with informants revealed instances where Muslims had registered their lands in the names of Christians

or Druze, at times even using force to compel the latter to agree, in order to avoid paying taxes.

The Christian community had primacy in landownership, holding 50 percent of the land while constituting 45 percent of the population. The Druze held the largest area of land relative to their population size — 8 percent of the land for 17 percent of the population. The Muslims were at the bottom, holding only 12 percent of the land despite comprising about 38 percent of the population. It should be noted that besides owning the land, the Christians also controlled the commerce and minor industries that grew up in Shefar-ʿAm.

We may therefore say that by the end of the British Mandate two forms of economic dependence had developed, one inside and one outside the town. The Druze and Christian communities were at the core, the former based on agriculture, the latter on both agriculture and commerce and manufacture. The Muslim community was economically dependent on the others; it supplied most of the hired labor, only a small number of Muslim families being able to live off their own farms. Economic relations between Shefar-ʿAm and the surrounding Arab villages took the form of employing hired hands from these villages, along with commercial ties and various services provided to the rural peasants who maintained close ties with the place.

Shefar-ʿAm underwent the same demographic and economic changes experienced by the Arab population of Israel following the establishment of the state. The town's administrative centrality had begun to dwindle at the close of the Mandate era, and this decline now accelerated. No government office capable of attracting people remained in Shefar-ʿAm. Existing official services are now local, not regional. This small town lost the important function it had retained throughout various historical periods. The gradual proletarization of the Arab population in general had its effect on Shefar-ʿAm too. Today approximately 80 percent of the town's labor force consists of hired workers, more than half employed outside the town, mainly in the Jewish sector. These changes also affected internal relations. The town's social structure, formerly based on religious affiliation, changed drastically. Most working members of the three religious groups became laborers employed outside the town; the internal economic dependence among the groups took second place to the dependence of all upon outside employment. Even this underwent sweeping change, from interdependence between Shefar-ʿAm and the surrounding villages to one-way dependence of the Arab towns

and villages including Shefar-ʿAm on the dominant Jewish center of the country.

Political Life in the Pre-State Period

The first Shefar-ʿAm city council was appointed in 1910. The Ottoman *mudir* (district administrator) named five Christian council members, including the mayor, and one Druze. No Muslims were nominated. These appointments underscored the differences in status among the communities, associated first with the Ottoman authorities' stipulations and later, during the mandate period, with the linkage between city council membership and tax-paying landownership (Maoz 1962: 233).

After a four-year interim, the first city council elections were held in March 1915. Thirty-two candidates ran for office: six Druze, 10 Muslims, and 16 Christians. Candidates ran on a personal basis, each voter choosing seven names from the list. Analysis of the list of candidates and of the election results highlights several points. The number of contenders for office was large relative to the number of voters. In an interview, former mayor Jabbūr Jabbūr (who served from 1933-1969) said that in this first election nearly every wealthy family fielded its own candidate. It is interesting to note that in a fair number of hamulas several members competed for seats on the council. Two members of the Hamadi hamula ran for office; another candidate (Nimer Husayn) was a relative of the Hamadis. The Hattib hamula fielded three candidates, while the Elian, Talahmi, El-Haddad, Mish'al, and Abu Rahme hamulas put up two candidates each. The basis for competition centered on the family, not the hamula Nearly all the big hamulas split into competing families, each seeking to consolidate its status in the city's political life. This picture runs counter to the conclusions reached by Cohen (1965), who claims that the hamula played an important political role in the Arab community until the breakup of the *musha'a* in 1933. Our analysis of the data indicates that the extended family, and not the hamula, was the main political unit prior to 1933. This conclusion is reinforced by the fact that five out of the seven winning candidates (Karim Al-Gubran, Khalil Nakhoul, Hanna El-Haddad, Saliman Abu Abid, and Yussuf Zeitun Mish'al) belonged to relatively small hamulas. Karim Al-Gubran, who collected the largest number of votes, belonged to an extremely small hamula comprising just one

family, but he was a wealthy landowner and popular among the inhabitants of Shefar-ʿAm and vicinity, so he won the support of members of other hamulas.

The composition of the city council reflected two levels of power. At the intercommunal level the Christian community was the strongest and the influence it wielded in the municipality reflected its political and economic predominance in the town. The Druze and Muslim communities were on the fringes of power, the former because it was a numerical minority and the latter because of its inferior economic position and its heavy dependence on the other communities. At the communal level the rivalry as stated was between families, and those who won council seats were either themselves the wealthiest people or belonged to the wealthiest families. This pattern persisted throughout the Mandate period.

It should be noted that the 1915 elections were the only elections to the Shefar-ʿAm town council held prior to the establishment of the state. After that election, council members were chosen by general consensus among the male inhabitants.

Shefar-ʿAm's internal political structure remained stable during the entire pre-state period for two principal reasons. The first was the strong economic dependence among the communities, which perpetuated the weakness of the Muslims. Their inferior standing kept them from achieving proportional representation on the council. Apparently they made no demand (prior to the establishment of the state) to alter this situation. The Druze, on the other hand, held a strong economic position, as reflected in their landholdings; but they nonetheless occupied a weak minority position in political life owing to their small numbers in the town population and indeed in the area as a whole.

The second factor was the marginal impact of the municipality on community life. Examination of municipal records for 1911-1946 shows that the municipality did little and its influence was extremely limited. Apart from granting of business permits the municipality had almost no means of exerting influence on events in Shefar-ʿAm. There were only three municipal officials: the treasurer, a doctor employed part-time, and a *gofer*. All three were Christians from the town. The educated classes, mainly from the Christian community, held government jobs in Haifa and other cities; the municipality lacked resources and positions in which to employ them. The municipality served as an agent for the mandatory authorities and the local inhabitants in hiring workers to pave the roads in and out of

town. But even in this mediation there was competition from the mukhtars to obtain internal and external influence.

Political Life Since the Establishment of the State

All activity by the Shefar-ʿAm town council was halted in 1948. The Israeli authorities asked Mayor Jabbūr to oversee local affairs and serve as liaison between the authorities and the citizens. In 1951 a nine-member council was appointed. As elsewhere, the mukhtars were appointed to it almost automatically. Two councillors were the former mukhtars of the Muslim and Druze communities and one the son of the of the former Catholic mukhtar. Most of the appointees were older, had a partial secondary education, and came from wealthy Shefar-ʿAm families. The appointments were supposed to grant representation in proportion to the division of power in the town and to give some boost to new groups not previously without a strong position. But in fact the makeup of the new council was clearly intended to strengthen the Druze community. The latter as stated were in an inferior social and political position than the others Following Israel's establishment in 1948, a group of Druze leaders with close ties to the authorities arose. This group mediated between the authorities and the traditional leadership both in Shefar-ʿAm and other nearby Arab towns. The elevation of the Druze community, a process that had commenced toward the end of the mandate period and that gained enormous momentum after 1948, led to an increase in Druze power. In Shefar-ʿAm Druze representation on the council (three seats out of nine, or 33 percent) exceeded their proportion in the population (18 percent).

Second Term of Office (Post-Establishment): 1955-1959

The first municipal elections after Israel's establishment were held in 1955. Six lists of candidates ran in this election: four Christian, one joint Druze-Muslim, and one Communist. The lists other than the Communist, which had links to the national Communist Party,

were purely local in character and were based on family, hamula and community membership. It is noteworthy that the Druze instigated the move to replace Christian control of the municipality by a joint Druze-Muslim list; it won four seats as a unified bloc, unlike the four separate seats won by the different Christian lists. The Communists took the ninth council seat.

Analysis of the list of election winners indicates simultaneous change and continuity. Four of those who had served on the appointed council were now returned to their posts by election. These included the incumbent mayor, two Druze councillors, and the mukhtar of the Muslim community. Only one of the newly elected members was older (around 50); the rest were in their thirties. While most of the members of the appointed council had been landowners who either cultivated or leased their lands, the elected council contained more wage-earners and members of the non-agricultural professions. One of the two new Christian members was a carpenter, the other a mechanic. The Communist member, a merchant, was a former teacher who had been dismissed on political grounds.

Attempts to form a coalition were drawn out as there were two equal blocs of four members each. The Communist member thus held the balance, and each bloc sought to obtain his support; but he refused to join any coalition. Interviews with people then politically involved reveal that the Communist councillor — a Christian — had been inclined to support the Christian bloc that was formed, but ultimately refrained in order not to fall into the ethnic community cauldron. After much negotiation, a coalition was formed between the two blocs, leaving the Communist member as a minority of one. The former mayor, Jabbūr Jabbūr, was again chosen as mayor, and one of the Druze members was named his deputy. There were no changes in the coalition makeup throughout its term of office and it served until the 1959 elections.

Third Term, 1959-1965

Seven lists — five of them based on hamula-religious affiliation — ran in the 1959 elections. A sixth list, *Al-Shabab* (Youth), was based not on hamula but on ethnic community membership. Only the Communist list comprised members of various hamulas and ethnic communities.

The Druze-Muslim alliance from the previous term did not survive; in this election, the two communities fielded separate lists. There were no changes in Druze representation; the two Druze councillors who had served in the previous term were returned to office. These two represented the two largest Druze hamulas, (Khnefis and Elian), as well as the two main Druze neighborhoods, Marshan (Khnefis) and Al-Kala'a (Elian).

Muslim representation, on the other hand, underwent considerable change. The Al-Safafra hamula, which encompassed the large Nimer and Hamadi families, split into two. The councillor from the Nimer family, in office since 1951, was now replaced by a Hamadi. The Muslim ll-Huwareh neighborhood insisted on its right to be represented on this council (as it had been on the appointed council), and succeeded in seating its delegate to it.

In these elections the Christian youth also demanded the right to be represented on the council. They put together a list whose name indicated their intentions. But the attempt failed and their list did not receive the required number of votes.

The new council members did not differ much from their predecessors in terms of age, education and occupation. The incumbent mayor was able to form a coalition soon after the elections, the three seats held by his list were augmented by the two Druze seats, one Christian and one Muslim. Thus the opposition comprised the Communist and the councillor from the (Muslim) Hamadi family list. During the coalition negotiations Mayor Jabbūr showed a leaning towards the Druze Elian hamula over the Khnefis. As in the previous term the post of deputy mayor was given to the Elian hamula representative. The Khnefis representative remained in the coalition without receiving anything noteworthy in exchange. Shaykh Salah Khnefis, who had been a Labor-affiliated MK until 1959, whose sway over his hamula was unchallenged, and who exerted considerable influence over the Druze community of Shefar-ʿAm and the larger area, was not pleased at being overlooked. Even then, in the late 1950s, he began to undermine Christian control over the council by fostering closer ties between the Druze and Muslim communities.

Fourth Term, 1965-1969

The 1965 elections generated far-reaching changes in the subsequent balance of power in the city. Eight lists competed: the same seven as in the previous election and a Druze list formed as a result of the split in the Druze ranks. The Elian hamula, backed by the Druze of the Al-Kala'a quarter, put up its own list, called Partnership and Brotherhood. The other Druze hamula (Khnefis) ran a list sponsored by Rafi, the Israel Workers' Party. There were no real changes on the other lists.

Most notable were the changes occurring in the Muslim community. The internal refugees who had come to Shefar-ʿAm during the 1950s and 1960s now began arranging for permanent settlement, having despaired of returning to their villages or any change in the situation (Al-Haj 1985). One method of integrating into their new environment was to exploit the political potential of their increasing numbers, which by the mid-1960s accounted for about 20 percent of Shefar-ʿAm's population. Their sense of solidarity was promoted by the fact that despite their presence in Shefar-ʿAm for about two decades they were still regarded by the indigenous population as *ghurbiye,* outsiders. The nascent leadership of this group tried to turn this to their advantage, calling on all *ghurbiye* to unite so as "to ensure their rights and defend their honor" (interview with one of the refugee group leaders). They drew up a list led by a refugee who was also a Muslim cleric. The move was strongly criticized by both the indigenous population and some of the "outsiders" themselves, who felt that the move "could ruin relations with the locals, relations which are still in their infancy." The man believed to have instigated the creation of the refugee list said in an interview:

> After we reached the point where it looked like we might lose the election because of disagreements within the refugee community, we decided to include several Shefar-ʿAm natives on our list. One of the people who I was convinced would make a good council member was a native of the town, a cafe owner; I thought his contacts with the public via his cafe, along with his belonging to the large Nimer hamula, could help us attract votes from the indigenous population as well. As things turned out, the cafe owner (later mayor of Shefar-ʿAm and chairman of the National Committee of Local Council Chairmen) agreed to join the list on condition that he head it. Our election campaign centered on the theme of Muslim unity, to enable us to play a

> major role in local politics. In those days, we never for a moment dreamed that we might be in the running for the post of mayor….

The list ran under the name Partnership and Reciprocity and won a seat on the council.

The election results placed the Christians in the minority. Three Druze, two Muslims, and four Christians were elected to the council. The Communists did not win a seat this time, whereas the Youth list won two seats and joined the council for the first time. The coalition formed subsequently included representatives of all of Shefar-ʿAm's ethnic-religious communities. Mayor Jabbūr Jabbūr's strong personality (as described by the present mayor, then his deputy) held the majority of the council members together. In addition, neither the Muslims or the Druze then had a reasonable chance of winning the mayoralty. The coalition thus comprised four lists: the Christian led by Jabbūr, the Muslim led by Ibrahim Nimer, the Druze led by Fahim Elian, and the Rafi list. The Youth list sat alene in the opposition, despite the fact that its two elected representatives were Christians.

During this term of office Jabbūr Jabbūr's political star began to dim. There were protracted conflicts with the other coalition members (particularly with his deputies) beginning in 1968, three years after the coalition was formed. These conflicts, coupled with the demographic changes and factional unification of Muslims, indirectly favored the efforts of the latter to form a coalition with the Druze in order to change a power system that had lasted over 60 years.

Fifth Term, 1969-1973

The collective awakening that had been taking place in the Muslim community since the previous elections received a considerable boost prior to the 1969 elections. It was clear to the Muslim leaders that all the prerequisites for a change in the balance of forces in the town — particularly in control of the local government — were now in place: the demographic growth of the Muslim population, drawing level with the Christians (each approximately 40 percent of the total); the resignation of Mayor Jabbūr Jabbūr, who had been considered a major force for Christian

unity; the support of a significant segment of the Druze community for a coalition with the Muslims; and the weakness of Rakah (Communist Party), which had not even held a council seat in the previous term.

Approximately 80 persons, representing all the factions and hamulas in the Muslim community, met at the home of the Muslim shaykh. All the speakers emphasized the need for Muslim unity in order to "gain an honorable place among the town's communities." In a vote the participants resolved to establish a Muslim list under the name *Al-Tawaoun W'al-Wafa* (Partnership and Reciprocity). Those who would run on this list were also elected, their position determined by the number of votes each received. The top three candidates were veteran hamula and neighborhood leaders. The refugees' candidate, a younger man by profession a teacher, was assigned only the fourth siot, considered an unrealistic position. This naturally left the refugee contingent dissatisfied. A solution was quickly found with the third-ranked candidate yielding his slot to the refugee candidate.

The Druze ran in this election on their hamula-neighborhood lists, as previously. The Christians, were deeply divided. Following Jabbūr's resignation the representatives of the various factions had sought to fill the vacuum. For the first time in years there was an internal contest in the Christian community over the leadership. Although some called for uniting the Christian ranks in the face of the "danger" posed by Muslim unification, these calls were overridden by hamula loyalties and the three Christian lists presented to the voters were patently clannish in nature. As for the local Communist Party branch, it, too, was extremely active in the election campaign. The Communist list was headed by the party's branch secretary, Shafiq Khouriye, who was also a former councillor and a long-standing community activist. The list was naturally a mixture of representatives from the various communities in Shefar-ʿAm, but the Christians clearly predominated.

The composition of the council in its fifth term differed from that of previous terms. Three members of the new council had a high-school education: the Communist representative, who had served on previous councils, and two young men in their first term of office. The occupational picture was also much more varied than before: only one of the councillors engaged in agriculture, while the rest were either self-employed in various areas or were wage-earners. This situation reflects the occupational transformation discussed above.

The council's composition expressed the change in the balance of power in the town, as well as the internal changes taking place within each individual sect. For the first time the Muslim list included a representative of the internal refugees, which reflected the effect this group had begun to have in the town. Clan-consciousness was very strong among the Christians, and their electoral lists were overtly clan-based: each list was backed by several hamulas which had formed an alliance for this purpose. The Druze lists likewise maintained their hamula or neighborhood basis. Thus, while the hamula factor was gaining among the Christians and the Druze, among the Muslims the notion of the larger Muslim community was gaining at the expense of these other factors.

For the first time in Shefar-ʿAm's history the key to forming a coalition now passed to the Muslims, who had the largest and most united list on the council. With three representatives of their own, they needed only two more to form a coalition and win the mayoralty. It was clear from the start that the Khnefis hamula representative would join a Muslim-led coalition, for this was a natural sequel to the alliance that Shaykh Salah Khnefis had sought as far back as the early 1960s with the aim of changing the balance of power in the town and thus gaining greater influence over events. Now, with four councillors already in the coalition, each of the remaining members became a potential candidate for membership — with many inducements being offered, including the post of deputy mayor. According to the man later chosen as mayor, the negotiations with the Christian members were extremely exhausting and difficult; not one of them was willing to join the coalition, even if an agreement were to be reached to rotate the office of mayor between the Christian member and the Muslim mayor-designate. In the mayor's words, "This was because the Christians were finding it hard to accept the drastic change that had taken place in the balance of power in the town. Each of the Christian representatives also feared lest the others say that he had been the first to betray them, by abetting a change which could have far-reaching consequences for the balance of power among the several communities." In the end, it was the other Druze representative who joined the coalition under heavy pressure from close associates and friends inside and outside Shefar-ʿAm,

A council meeting held on 1 December 1969 was attended only by coalition members, joined by the Communist representative. Alt three Christian councillors boycotted the meeting, at which Ibrahim Nimer Husayn was elected mayor, while Yusuf Khnefis and Fahim

Elian (both Druze) were chosen as deputies. As the mayor was entitled to name only one deputy (relative to the number of inhabitants), it was agreed that the two deputies would split the deputy mayor's salary.

The changeover in control of the council infuriated the Shefar-ʿAm Christian leaders, who saw it as upsetting the status quo that had prevailed for decades. The sudden rise of the Muslims encountered strong Christian opposition because for years the Muslims had not even dared demand this right; their economic dependence on the other religious-ethnic communities had placed them in a weak position. When the occupational picture changed (as indicated above) and Muslim dependence on the Christians consequently declined, the Muslims seized the opportunity to realize their electoral potential as the largest and most united single group in the city. The Christian representatives found it hard to accept this. In a letter to the Minister of the Interior (brought to our attention by some council members of that period), the Christians requested that the election of a Muslim to the mayoralty be invalidated, observing that it was unthinkable for the taxpayers (i.e., the Christians) not to retain control of the council as they had done since its creation.

For a year (1969-1970), the councillors from the three Christian lists boycotted council meetings and refused to cooperate with the mayor in any way. The Municipalities Law provides for the dismissal of any council member who either is absent from council sessions for a period of three consecutive months, or (where fewer than three meetings have been held over a three-month period) who misses three consecutive meetings, unless he is absent for reasons of illness or has special permission. However, the mayor took a lenient view and continued to invite these councillors to meetings even though he should have replaced them with the candidates holding the next slots on the electoral list. This was one of the points criticized by the State Comptroller in his report on the Shefar-ʿAm municipality published in 1973 (State Archives, Comptroller's Report on Shefar-ʿAm 1973).

In June 1970 the council voted to grant the Christian members special permission retroactively to miss previous council sessions, and to continue to be absent from all council sessions until the present dispute was settled, even though one of the three absentees had already missed 21 consecutive meetings and the other two had missed 27. Two Shefar-ʿAm residents, one of whom had run in the elections, petitioned the Supreme Court to compel the municipality to revoke the absentees' council membership. The Court ruled that

the municipality's decision (to grant retroactive permission to the absentees) did not stand the test of law, as it had been passed after the absentees had in fact ceased to be council members under law, and the permission granted them retroactively was therefore without any legal force. The municipality then summoned all the election runners-up from one of the lists; but they too refused to take part in council meetings, until one by one all the members of the list were disqualified. The number of council members stood at eight. The Interior Ministry did not appoint a ninth member and this state of affairs continued until the end of the term.

Sixth Term, 1973-1978

Before the elections for the sixth term the Ministry of the Interior enlarged the council to 11 members. These elections were marked by a sharp increase in the religious-ethnic factor. The unity displayed by the Muslims in the previous elections now spurred the Christians and Druze to close ranks. The Christians tried to heal the rifts between their various sects and hamulas so as to regain control of the council. Delegates from all Christian hamulas and factions gathered at the local Catholic church to discuss how to unify their community. They agreed to hold a secret ballot among Shefar-ʿAm's Christian voters to choose the candidates for a united list, to be called *Shefa'mer Al-Ahaliye* (the Sons of ʻAm). The results of the balloting reflected the balance among the local Christian hamulas. The top vote-getter, (Elias Jabbūr), belonged to a very small hamula but was backed by the large ones, mainly the Saliba, Jarrous, Imbarike, and Azzam hamulas. These hamulas had also once supported his father, who was the second mayor of Shefar-ʿAm. The other three candidates belonged to large hamulas, and they also had the backing of some of the other Christian hamulas.

The Druze established a united list called *Al-Ukhuwa* (Brotherhood), which brought the two main rival factions of Khnefis and Elian together for the first time. A draw taken resulted in Yussuf Khnefis heading the list with the Elian hamula representative in second place; there would be automatic rotation in each subsequent election campaign. A majority of the local Druze community backed this arrangement, but a few Druze hamulas felt that their share in the agreement was marginal or nonexistent and so formed two or more lists, one led by the Hassun hamula and the other by the Abu Hamud

hamula. Neither attracted much support and neither won a council seat.

The Muslims ran with the same united communal list as in the previous elections. The top four places now included a representative of the Yassin hamula, one of the oldest Muslim hamulas in the town. The first three slots were held by the same candidates as before.

The Communists put up a list of mixed ethnic origin, which they called *Wahdat Shefa'mer* (Shefar-ʿAm Unity) to symbolize the need to cast off reiigious-ethnic ioyalties and shore up the unity of all the communities in the town. The list was headed by a Christian from the Talhami hamula, one of the oldest and wealthiest in Shefar-ʿAm. Although the list seemingly lacked any communal orhamula affiliation, the latter in fact played a considerable role in determining the order of the candidates on the list. The strong communal solidarity apparent on all the other lists placed the Communist's electoral success in jeopardy. The top man on the list therefore made a point of calling together all the elders of his hamula and obtaining their blessing for his candidacy. They promised him their support for the Communist list.

The election results accorded with the relative size of each community in the town. The members of each religious-ethnic community voted almost without exception for their own ethnic list. The Muslims thus won four council seats; the Christians four; the Druze two; and the Communists, surprisingly, won one seat. The Communist vote was scattered through the various hamulas and communities, apart from two main points of concentration, namely, the Talahmi hamula (to which the list's leader belonged) and Dar Hamadi, a rival faction in the hamula of the Muslim list's leader. As soon as the votes were counted it was apparent that the coalition would be formed by the Muslim and Druze lists. On 7 February 1974, a council session was held to elect the mayor and his deputies. There were two candidates: Ibrahim Nimer Husayn, who won six of the eleven votes, and a Christian candidate, Shukri Abbūd, who won three votes. The two Druze councillors were chosen as deputies to the mayor.

Immediately after these elections, a rift developed within the Christian community. The top man on the Christian slate was forced to resign because he was a social worker employed by the municipality and disqualified by law from serving on the council that employed him. But behind this formal reason lay disagreements

between him and his number two man, Shukri Abbūd, who now took over the top position on the list. The Christian community was split in two, half continuing to support (as before) the list once led by Jabbūr Jabbūr, while the other half only began to coalesce later on. Jabbūr's old list was backed by the large Christian hamulas while the other faction drew the support of the small and medium hamulas, with the Abbūd hamula, still considered "outsiders" or at least not "native," at their center.

Seventh Term, 1978-1983

Several major changes occurred in the seventh term elections, held on 28 October 1978. Although to all appearances the religious-ethnic character of the lists persisted, the head of the Christian list tried to change things by creating a list comprising members of all groups. He contacted various members of the Muslim and Christian communities, and in the end managed to place one Druze and one Muslim candidate in realistic places on the Christian list. The Druze candidate was a young physician in his thirties from the Hassun hamula, known for its long-standing rivalry with the other Druze hamulas, who drew up the united Druze list. The Muslim candidate, a man in his forties who worked as a driver, had served as a council member at the end of the previous term but had withdrawn from the list in a dispute over his unrealistic place on it. The inclusion of these two candidates did not deprive the Christian list of its religious-ethnic character, and it still drew its main support from the Christian community. A large portion of the rival faction within the Christian community abstained from voting, while a small minority of that faction even voted for other lists.

The Muslim candidates were chosen and the order of the list was arranged by a 16-member committee representing the various Muslim factions. The final list gave no representation to the internal refugees, but the latter had not requested it. The Bedouin, on the other hand, felt unfairly treated: their numbers had grown, and they now had about 500 voters who together could put one man in the council. They called a meeting at the home of a Bedouin leader from the Suwaid tribe (the largest Bedouin tribe in Shefar-ʿAm) to find ways of obtaining representation on the Muslim list; otherwise they threatened to run an independent Bedouin list. The Muslim leaders

decided to accede to their demand, and a Suwaid tribe member was given a realistic position on the list.

These selections indicate a general phenomenon especially evident in particular in the Arab settlements, namely the distinction between national voting and local elections. The DFPE (Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, whose major element is Rakah — the Communist Party) received 751 votes in Shefar-ʿAm in the national elections for the Ninth Knesset (1977), but one year later the DFPC candidate received only 281 votes in the election for the mayoralty of Shefar-ʿAm. (These were the first elections in which the mayor was voted into office directly by the electorate.) This is because religious divisions and other local considerations played a decisive role in determining the contest for the municipality.

The Communist list expanded and as elsewhere it entered the elections as part of the DFPE, which aspired to include people from other, non-Communist groups. The list was headed by a relative of Shefar-ʿAm's Muslim mayor. This placement was intended to reduce the Muslim candidate's chances of winning the mayoralty, or at least, to bring about a second round of voting, in which the Muslim candidate would stand less chance.

The Druze list in these elections bore the initials DSh, or Druze of Shefar-ʿAm. It was composed along the same lines as in the previous elections. The Druze did not put up a candidate for mayor, as they had an agreement with the Muslims to back the latters' candidate. The results at the polls were a crushing victory for the Muslim-Druze coalition. Four council seats were won by the Muslim list, three by the Christian list (which included one Druze, and later, following the death of the one of the Christian councillors, a Muslim too), and two by the Druze. The DFPE won one seat. The Muslim candidate, Ibrahim Nimer Husayn, was elected mayor for the first time (by the electorate) with a majority of 56 percent.

An analysis of the election platforms of the various lists shows that each (with the exception of the DFPE) underscored local issues affecting both its respective religious group and the interests of the entire town. The Muslims stressed the need to consolidate the Muslim community and drew attention to its contribution to Shefar-ʿAm's development. The Druze list also emphasized the need for unity in the community's ranks. The Christians, for their part, underlined the importance of unity among all the religious communities. Their election poster showed a church, a mosque, and a *hilweh* (Druze place of worship) to symbolize their intentions. The

DFPE however included both local and national-level issues in its platform. It contained the basic economic guidelines of the national movement, noting the role of the "Arab masses" in shaping the future and in steadfastly resisting the authorities' schemes. The platform stressed the need for unity under the Front's leadership to thwart attempts by the authorities to divide the Arab population into separate communities, hamulas, and other groups "as part of its policy of divide and rule." There was also a statement concerning the need for a just and lasting peace that would guarantee the legitimate rights of all peoples in the region, including the Arab Palestinian people.

These election results led to a major change in council membership. Only four of the 11 councillors had served on previous councils, the others being elected for the first time. This satisfied various factions within the different communities, in that it responded to the changes that had taken place in the local population. Furthermore, the attempts of the Christian list and the DFPE to expand their ranks had brought in new council members not heretofore known by the public.

Eighth Term, 1983-1989: The Era of Communal Balance

The mayor of Shefar-ʿAm, whose career had been strongly marked by inter-communal conflicts and tensions, observed in an interview:

> After a period of more than ten years in which the Christians weren't represented in the municipal leadership and had apparently been deprived of any influence over city affairs, we have thought it proper to have them play an active role. We have been helped by the fact that we ourselves have already consolidated our own standing, and some of the Christians have learned to accept the fact that the mayor can also be a Muslim or a member of another community. There are three communities living in this city, and each one should be represented in municipal bodies in proportion to its population size.

This viewpoint marked the beginning of the process whereby a "communal balance" has been instituted in Shefar-ʿAm. The lists

that ran in the elections held on 23 October 1983 also reflected this agreed principle of communal balance. Even before the elections the Muslim and Druze lists had agreed to include the Christian list in the municipal division of power.

The 1983 elections also marked the emergence of a trend which will probably have wide-ranging implications for future competition for local power. The main contest has moved from the inter-communal to the intra-communal level. Now that the boundaries of each community have become just about impenetrable by other communities, the battle for votes has become purely an internal matter for each community. The fact that local leaders have been in office for decades has turned them, for at least some of the public, into "traditional leaders." One Druze councillor has been on the council for over thirty years; the other has served for about twenty, the Christian and Muslim leaders longer. Meanwhile new forces have sprung up, or old forces have begun to reorganize after failing to win proportionate representation. The issues too have changed, and increasingly there is a call for leadership reflecting change. But inter-communal rivalry acts as a force preserving the status quo and perhaps impeding change. The concern of each community to secure its position on the local scene works to discourage any drastic transformation.

A group calling itself *A-Shabab* (Youth) formed in the Druze community. It included young men from different hamulas, small ones that till then had played a marginal role taking the lead. The group challenged the traditional Druze leadership which, it felt, had not benefited the community. At first the members tried to negotiate with the united Druze list, but they emerged dissatisfied and therefore decided to run as a separate list in the elections backed by the national Shinui Party, principally by Shinui MK Zeidan Atshe, a Druze.

Meanwhile, the "strangers" in the Muslim community began gaining strength. These internal refugees, together with the Bedouin and other migrants, today account for more than 65 percent of the Muslim community. The old established Muslim hamulas have become a minority within their own community. This shift spurred a Muslim university graduate, a teacher from a refugee family, to announce both the creation of a new list and his own candidacy for mayor. He ran on the concept of "strangers" vs. locals, trying to win the support of the heads of refugee families, but he failed. Nonetheless, this experience led to another attempt at splitting Muslim ranks. The Yassin hamula, along with a section of the

Hawara quarter — both part of the old-established Muslim community — sought fitting representation on the Muslim list. Not getting this, they created a separate list and for the first time since the 1969 elections two separate lists competed in the Muslim community.

In the Christian community two rival factions competed. The first was led by the Abbūd hamula representative, the second by the son of former mayor Jabbūr. This contest too bore some characteristics of a clash between long-established residents and immigrants, owing to the factors indicated previously. The latter faction got a boost when the leaders of the Druze and Muslim lists announced that it would be included in the coalition and that its leader would be given the top post of vice-mayor. The younger Jabbūr therefore did not run for mayor but only for a council seat. He pledged his supporters' votes to the Muslim candidate, who was favorite for the post of mayor. This move was attacked by the Abbūd list's backers, who charged that "Jabbūr had sold out the Christian community so as to win a position for himself." To reinforce this claim, Abbūd's supporters declared his candidacy for mayor, even though he knew that his chances were slim. In retrospect it became clear that this move had been wrong and had done nothing but harm; for a third faction now sprang up in the Christian community, one that did not identify completely with either of the two rival factions, but only demanded that the Christians hold some position of power in the city.

In the election the joint Muslim list won four seats; the joint Druze list, the Jabbū list, and the DFPE list won two seats each, and the Abbūd list won one seat. Some features of this election campaign are noteworthy. In the past the Communist Party, Rakah (later the DFPE), had incorporated the national issue into its local election propaganda, but in this campaign all the lists did so. The incumbent mayor, who was also the head of the National Committee of Arab Local Authority Chairmen, sought to have his (Muslim) list included in its platform a section describing in detail its national political stance. The platform proclaimed support for the line taken by the National Committee of Arab Local Authority Chairmen advocating the right of self-determination for the Palestinian Arab people and the right of all peoples in the region to live in peace. This step reflects the growing poiiticization of the Arab population in Israel, wherein the Palestinian factor has become central. The DFPE has clearly served as a catalyst in this process, and the issues which

it raised have, over time, effected structural change within the Arab population as a whole.

The mayoralty was won by the head of the Muslim list, who won 56 percent of the vote in the first round. As anticipated, the municipal coalition was formed by the three lists mentioned: Muslim, Druze, and one of the two Christian lists (that led by Jabbūr). Only three councillors remained in the opposition: the two DFPE representatives and the representative of the other Christian faction (Abbud). The council meeting of 12 December 1983 chose two Druze deputies to the mayor and a Christian vice mayor, as agree before the elections. We may also note the educational status of the present council members: one with academic education (the acting mayor), two with secondary education, and eight with elementary. There has been some decline in the average level of education, possibly the result of the strong internal competition within the religious groups on the basis of the hamula and the faction.

II. Tamra

Tamra is a large Arab village in western Galilee. Its entirely Muslim population stood in 1986 at 14,000. Tamra's social structure is a mixture of neighborhood and hamula divisions. Before 1948, the village was divided into five main sections or neighborhoods, some of which were identified exclusively by hamula:

1. The Diab section, inhabited mainly by the Diab hamula, but with a few other small hamulas (Ourabi, Sheikh Ali, Arshid, Abu Na'ama).
2. The El-Hejaira section, which incorporated a number of small and medium hamulas (Nasser, Yassin, Shama, Kena'an, Natour, Amar, and Muhsin).
3. The upper section of town, *Alhara Al-Foka,* housing a mixture of several hamulas.
4. The Hejazi neighborhood in the center of the village, populated mostly by the Hejazi hamula.
5. The Awwad neighborhood, inhabited almost exclusively by the Awwad hamula.

Following the establishment of the state significant changes occurred in the populations of these neighborhoods, for two

principal reasons: the expansion of the built-up area as a result of a natural increase and change in family patterns; and the massive influx of internal refugees, mostly from nearby villages destroyed in the 1946 war. The refugees settled wherever they could, thereby creating new neighborhoods which in time came under the Tamra council's jurisdiction.

The Diab hamula, the largest and most powerful in Tamra, long held the leading position in the village. There are, however, various factions within the hamula, and the diplay of solidarity within the factions is no less important than the display of solidarity by the hamula as a whole.

Following Israel's establishment the neighborhood-hamula division served as an organizational framework that played a prominent role particularly in local elections (see below), which led to the formation of new alliances between various hamulas, factions and groups in the town. The hamula did not function as an integral political unit but broke up into camps as time passed. This was especially true of the Diab. The small hamulas now appear to be more united, for only in this way can they exert any influence over local affairs.

Until 1956 the village was run by mukhars appointed by the military government. The two main mukhars were from the Diab hamula and an elite formed about them. Called *al-za'ama* (the leadership), this elite consisted mainly of heads of families from the Diab, although there were also leaders from other, smaller hamulas in it. Together with the mukhars, this group served as the unofficial village council. They intervened in internal disputes, arranged for formal reconciliations between feuding residents, and exerted their power and influence on village affairs. This arrangement suited the military administration, as it had from the start distinguished the so-called "important" leaders (belonging to the large, wealthy hamulas) from the "unimportant" leaders of small hamulas. A Minority Affairs Ministry report (State Archives, file no. 1319/73) on the situation in Tamra following the Israeli takeover stated: "An unofficial committee has been established under the mukhar, Farid Jad Mustapha Diab, a 42 year-old property owner and farmer who has been village mukhar for the past 16 years. He is the village's representative. The refugees who have moved to Tamra also support him."

First Council Appointed, 1956

The first council was appointed by the Minister of the interior on 7 July 1956, in fact a direct continuation of the committee set up by the military administration in the first years after Israel's establishment. The Diab hamula received three of the 11 council seats, the Hejazi hamula two seats, and the six small hamulas received one seat each. The council's composition generally reflected the various affiliations The two principal sections of the town—the Upper (Al-Foka) and Lower (Al-Tahta)—were each represented: the several factions within the large Diab and Hejazi hamulas were also satisfied. The internal refugees who had arrived in the 1950s from nearby villages destroyed in the fighting, Damūn, Ruweis, Mi'ar, and El-Hadathi, were the only group not represented on the council. They were still on the economic and social fringes of village life, and therefore wielded no political influence. True, a representative of the llhija hamula, himself Tamra bom, was related to some of the refugees from Ruweis and El-Hadathi, but this was not enough to afford the refugees any representation. In any event, our interviews show that the refugees themselves did not insist on their right to be represented on the council.

The profile of Tamra's appointed councillors was very similar to that of other appointed local councils. The average councillor was in his late forties, had at best an elementary education, and represented some faction within the town. The man chosen as chairman was a member of the Diab hamula who had served as mukhar until then and who was known to have close ties with the authorities before and after Israel's establishment.

The council minutes show that there was hardly any opposition. Most decisions were taken unanimously, and no emergency session was ever called. A meeting was held every month or two months. The issues were nearly all related to services provided to Tamra's residents. No meeting was devoted to the council's composition; neither were the chairman or his deputy ever forced to stand the test of winning their colleagues' confidence. But tension rose among the council members as the scheduled date for the first council elections approached. The period from 5 January to 26 September 1959 may be regarded as an interim during which an election committee was appointed. Half the latter's members were local councillors, the rest persons associated with the various factions, particularly that of the council chairman.

Second Term, 1959-1965

The election for the second term resulted in the continuation of the first appointed council, the Diab hamula retaining dominance and the other hamulas (mainly the Hejazi) not playing any significant role. However, the Abu llhija and Yassin hamulas won the smaller hamulas' support and thus increased their representation from one seat each to two. The internal refugees were also noticeably active in this campaign, and for the first time some of them, mainly the Ruweis refugees, began organizing as a pressure group which the various lists would have to take into consideration.

The coalition comprised six councillors: three Diab hamula representatives, one Hejazi hamula member, and the two Alhija hamula representatives. There were Five opposition councillors: two from the Yassin hamula and one each from the Hejazi, Abd-el-Hadi, and Abu Rumi hamulas. The Hejazi hamula was thus split between supporting and opposing the Diab hamula which retained its hold on power. But the latter was not completely united: during this term cracks began to appear in the hamula's ranks. The major factions in the hamula jockeyed for leadership of both hamula and village. The minutes from this period indicate that Diab dominance of Tamra was not then questioned; thus the Diab factions were striving to establish their own standing within the hamula, not the hamula's standing as a whole.

In these first local elections several national (Zionist) parties openly supported certain local lists The main parties active were Ahdut Ha'avoda, Mapai, the NRP (National Religious Party), Mapam, Herut, and the General Zionists. Only the protégés of the first three won a seat on the council: Ahdut Ha'avoda and Mapai had a connection with the Diab hamula (indeed, Mapai tried to support several rival factions at once within that hamula) while the NRP backed the Awwad hamula.

The new council members were similar to their predecessors in age, education, and occupation. The average age was 43, ages ranging from 33 to 61. Eight of the members were in agriculture, two in commerce, and only one—the youngest—worked as a hired laborer outside the village. Although the social and economic profile of the newly elected councillors did not differ much from that of the first group of appointed council members, there was a large turnover in council membership. Only four of the first council members continued to serve on the newly elected council; the other seven

were all new. Some of the old members apparently resigned of their own accord, while others were either replaced by other hamula members or given unrealistic positions on their lists in order to satisfy the factions within the given hamula.

Third Term, 1965-1969

Six lists competed in the elections for the third term. The involvement of the national political parties continued and expanded in these elections. For the first time, the Jewish orthodox Poalei Agudat Israel party penetrated the Tamra council via the Hejazi hamula. The Awwad hamula ran a list bearing the NRP's name and won a seat on the council. The Diab hamula split in two: the larger faction included the two former council chairmen, one of whom (Yussuf Abed Diab) had also served as a Member of Knesset on a Labor-affiliated list. The local list won three seats but failed to put together a coalition and win the council chairmanship. They were opposed by a rival bloc organized by the Labor Party that included representatives from various hamulas. Several persons who witnessed this contest told us the Labor Party had been aware that its man from the Diab hamula represented a minority in that hamula and therefore it made sure to give places to members of the Hejazi, Radi and Shaqir hamulas. This list won four seats and put together a coalition with the Poalei Agudat Israel (Hejazi hamula) and NRP (Awwad hamula) lists, along with a local list called Progress and Development (Abu Rumi hamula).

The internal refugees ran their own list in these elections. It was led by a refugee from the Abu llhija hamula which originated in the village of El-Hadathi, destroyed in the war. The list was named Success, and its poll slip was marked with the Hebrew letters Aleph-Hey, probably signifying the name of the hamula. The refugees won a seat on the council and they remained in the opposition together with the three Diab hamula representatives as no meaningful position on the council was offered them.

It should be noted that the average age of the council members rose in this third term, 48 as against the previous term's average of 43. There was no real change in educational level, apart from the fact that for the first time one of the elected councillors (the NRP representative from the Awwad hamula) had a high school education and was an elementary school principal. Two of the councillors

worked as hired laborers outside the town, while the rest were engaged in agriculture or else leased their lands to tenant farmers.

Fourth Term, 1969-1974

While there were no changes in the lists that ran in the elections for the fourth term, the results caused an upheaval in the coalition ranks: the incumbent chairman, a Labor Party man, was forced into the opposition and his place was taken by a rival member of his hamula, who had also served as council chairman in the second term.

In this term too the organization of pre- and post-election affairs was aided by hamula affiliations but the hamula itself did not serve as a united political unit. Indeed, the sharpest conflicts on the council were between rival factions of the Diab hamula, whose members headed both coalition and opposition. The various Diab factions had already been serious rivals in the previous term of office, each of the two main factions enlisting several smaller hamulas or representatives of other large hamulas, to its side. Hamula factionalism may also be seen in the participation of the Abu Rumi hamula in these elections on two competing lists, part of the hamula supporting its representative on the Labor Party list, the rest backing the hamula list. The Awwad hamula likewise had two rival representatives, one in the coalition the other in the opposition. Nor was the Abu llhija hamula without its own factionalism, although the background was different; instead of hamula subdivision by family, the Abu llhija hamula was divided between its refugee contingent, which arrived after 1948, and its indigenous segment, which was considered to have been among the village's original settlers. The representative of the refugee branch of the Abu llhija hamula needed only a few more votes to gain the second seat; he failed because a large part of the rival faction in his hamula failed to support him.

Fifth Term, 1974-1976

In terms of balance of power, the election results for the fifth term were the most problematic since the council's establishment. The

coalition was once again led by a Diab clansman, the same man who had been in opposition in the fourth term after serving as chairman in the third. The coalition included representatives of the Hejazi hamula and of the smaller Shama, Yassin, and Abu Rumi hamulas. The opposition consisted of the three representatives from the main Diab hamula faction, along with the two representatives of the Abu llhija hamula. For the first time a Communist Party representative, also from the Abu llhija hamula, won a council seat. The opposition in this instance was more solidly united than was the coalition, which created constant tension and instability in the council.

Only four of the fifth-term council members had served on the previous council; the rest were all newcomers, although some had served as far back as the first term, for example, a Diab hamula member who had been first chairman of the appointed council.

The events of Land Day on 30 March 1976 did nothing to increase the chairman's popularity. His, after all, had been one of the strongest voices against staging a general Arab strike on that day. The head of the National Committee of Arab Local Authority Chairmen told us that the committee held an urgent session in Shefar-ʿAm on 25 March 1976 so as to adopt a united stance regarding the planned strike. Two persons dominated this meeting: MK Zayyad (Rakah), who threw his weight in favor of the strike, and Tamra Council Chairman Diab, who did all he could to prevent it.

On 5 April 1976 six Tamra councillors (two from the Hejazi hamula and one each from the Yassin, Abu Rumi, Shama and Abu llhija hamulas) sent a letter to the council chairman expressing no confidence in his leadership and calling for his immediate resignation. The council met one week later and elected an acting chairman and paid deputy. All present except for the Communist member supported the motion. The Yassin and Shama clansmen were chosen as deputies to the acting chairman.

In the wake of these events, and since the ousted chairman's chances of putting together a new coalition were negligible, the Interior Minister disbanded the council on 29 April 1976 and appointed a committee to govern in its stead. This was headed by the ousted council chairman and included two members of the disbanded council and two Arab government officials (the district budget officer and the deputy director of the social services bureau). This governing committee served for nearly four years, new elections for a local council being held only on 23 January 1980.

Sixth Term, 1980-1984

Seven lists of candidates ran in the sixth term elections: the DFPE, the Labor Alignment, and five hamulas. The DFPE had been established prior to the elections along the lines of the fronts formed in other Arab towns and led by Rakah (Communist Party). The Tamra front included members of the Communist Party, of the university graduates' union and of the smaller hamulas. Yet this mixture did not cancel out the hamula factor: at the core of the Tamra front lay the Hejazi hamula, which had never led the village and which had so far exerted only minor influence in the council. The front's election campaign in Tamra was similar to that waged by the DFPE in other Arab municipal elections: while the supporters of the outgoing chairman stressed their candidate's ability to obtain government aid for Tamra thanks to his close ties with the authorities in the various government ministries, the DFPE candidate's supporters pointed out that the government-appointed committee had been named against the wishes of Tamra's inhabitants and with the aim of keeping them down. The DFPE further stressed that only a public struggle would win Tamra's inhabitants their rights and promote the village's interests.

The election was hotly contested, approximately 95 percent of the 5200 eligible voters participating. All the villagers took the day off and stood about waiting impatiently for the results to be tallied. While the outcome came as no surprise in view of the electoral forecasts, the DFPE's victory was still astonishing. Its candidate for chairman got 63 percent, thereby winning office in the first round of voting. The DFPE list as a whole won five of the 11 council seats, while the list headed by incumbent chairman Diab won only two seats and the Alignment list did not win any.

The average age of the new council members (45) was slightly higher than in previous terms, but their level of education and their occupations were significantly different. A greater number of members had a high school or university education. In respect of occupation too there was a noticable difference. In previous terms most council members had been engaged in agriculture, but the sixth term council embraced a wider variety of professions: teacher, craftsman, laborer, and professional politician, as well as farmer The DFPE-led coalition members were relatively better educated than their opposition colleagues, who were headed by the so-called

traditional leadership that had led Tamra since the establishment of the first local council.

Seventh Term, 1984-1989

Elections for a seventh council term were held on 25 December 1984. Although local factors were of primary importance in this campaign, the national political parties were nonetheless noticeably present. The DFPE, headed by the incumbent council chairman, was the strongest list. It was opposed by the new Progressive List for Peace (PLP) list. (This list had been encouraged by the PLP's showing in the national Knesset elections held the previous summer, when the PLP garnered 22.5 percent of the vote in Tamra to the DFPE'S 39 percent.) The Alignment and the NRP backed their own hamula lists, but these stressed their independence. The internal refugees played an active part in these elections. Apart from running some of their candidates on the DFPE list, they also backed two lists bearing initials indicative of their refugee identity: Aleph-Hey (Abu llhija, the hamula behind the list), and Daled-Nun, the list of refugees from Damün, one of the villages destroyed in the 1948 war.

The DFPE again won a stunning victory, its candidate for council chairman won 63 percent of the vote in the first round. The DFPE list won five of the eleven council seats, and formed a coalition with the Abu llhija hamula representative immediately following the elections. The Diab hamula list, in partnership with the Magdoub hamula won two seats; the list representing the upper section of town (*Alhara AI-Foka*) won one seat; and the Awwad and DamOn (refugee) lists also won one seat each.

The splits within the hamulas were highly evident in these elections. For example, the Abu llhija hamula split in three main directions: some voted for the Aleph-Hey (Abu llhija) list, others for the DFPE, and still others for another hamula list that failed to win a council seat. The Diab hamula likewise split its vote among various lists. The Hejazi hamula was the most united of all, evidently motivated by its fear of losing the reins of local power which it had won in the previous elections.

III. Iksal

Iksal is a Muslim village in the Marj Ibn Amir-Emek Yizrael valley about ten kilometers north-east of Afula. The population of Iksal (1986) is about 6500.

The village is divided into two main sections, eastern and western. With the growth of the built-up area following Israel's establishment, these two sections expanded, and a third area, called the "central section," was added. This new area was not a factor of any particular political significance; its population did not correspond to village hamula divisions but included families from various hamulas. In the internal balance of forces in Iksal this third neighborhood did not serve as a rallying point for political identification, unlike the other two parts, which are both clearly identified with specific hamulas. The Derawsheh hamula inhabits the eastern section of Iksal, while the Shalabi hamula inhabits the western part. But with the expansion of the built-up area these neighborhoods too became mixed. The western part of town is now inhabited by the Derawsheh, Shalabi, and Abed El-Hadi hamulas, and the eastern part by the Shedafneh, Shalabi, and Derawsheh hamulas.

The factions within the Derawsheh hamula correspond to four principal families within the hamula: Yussuf, Yehia, Hattib, and Khwarane. As we shall see, this factionalism plays a part in the vying for control over the local government and in other local events. It is noteworthy that Yehia and Hattib families have always maintained an alliance within the hamula. The other large hamula in Iksal, the Shalabi, is subdivided into three main families: Waja, Samhan, and Shalabi. This hamula has always shared power in the village with the Derawsheh hamula. In addition, there are a number of small hamulas the most prominent being Ashkar Jazzar, Manasra, Abu Al-Bandora, and Yassin. During both the Ottoman and mandate periods Iksal had two mukhtars: one from the Derawsheh and the other from the Shalabi hamula. These two mukhtars effectively represented their sections of town as well. However, the Derawsheh hamula held a certain predominance over its sister hamula, and its mukhtar was recognized also as mukhtar of the entire village.

The post of mukhtar was officially discontinued following the establishment of the Iksal local council in 1960, but the mukhtars' influence on village affairs by no means ended. Indeed, interviews conducted with some of the principal pre-1960 leaders revealed that the Israeli administration continued to support the traditional Iksal leadership, which thus retained decision-making power over local affairs even after the council's establishment. The two mukhtars still

intervene in local affairs and sometimes even dictate what moves the council will make. Interviewees observed that the Derawsheh mukhtar from the eastern section of Iksal still intervenes in local political life and in Knesset elections. His ties to the authorities remain strong, and he thereby promotes the interests of his hamula and other residents of the village. The second mukhtar (from the Shalabi hamula) likewise enjoys a strong position: despite his advanced age (85), he still makes decisions in hamula affairs, including choosing which members of the hamula will represent it in local elections and what coalition they will join. There has on occasion been a division of labor between the local council chairman and the two mukhtars, the latter two handling social affairs that do not fall under the aegis of the council chairman. In cases where a *sulha* (formal reconciliation) must be held between feuding hamulas, or there is some unexpected violence in the village, the hamula heads meet to decide what to do.

The first Iksal local council was inaugurated by the Minister of the Interior on 21 July 1960. The appointment came one year after its publication 2 July 1959 (Ministry of the Interior 1959) In our study of Arab local government, we found that this was the case in several places: the actual appointment of the council took place quite a long time after the appointment had been published in the ordinances. This delay may indicate the authorities' ability to execute their decisions as and when they saw fit. In the case of Iksal the power struggles were between the internal factions of the Derawsheh hamula and not between the various hamulas, all of which (including the large Shalabi hamula) accepted the predominance of the Derawsheh.

The appointed council represented a continuation of the traditional village leadership from the Ottoman and mandate periods. The members were either hamula and faction leaders, or persons chosen to represent them. The average age was 43, the oldest member being 52, youngest 30. The level of education was more or less uniform, all members having 0-8 years of schooling. The overwhelming majority of the council membership owned land and engaged in agriculture.

This council spent five years in office until the first elections were held. During this period, there were no changes in the membership or the coalition, apart from the departure of one Shalabi hamula member, who resigned on 29 July 1963 on the grounds that he represented no one in the Shalabi hamula. The council minutes show that the members cooperated: nearly all decisions were made

unanimously. The chairman was extremely active, making formal proposals which the members then approved. Hamula feuds were greatly in evidence during this first term, and unlike in the other councils treated above no groundwork was laid in advance of the coming elections Several councillors even lost interest before the conclusion of their term of office, while the Habashi and Shedafneh hamula representatives did not attend even one council meeting. This state of affairs could well be the result of the total dominance exercised by the Derawsheh hamula and its strong-willed representative who was council chairman. Furthermore, the importance of the local council was not sufficiently felt during its first term, because, as stated, its composition was very much an extension of the social and political order that reigned in the village and involved no significant alteration that might have stirred up new conflicts.

Second Term, 1965-1969

The elections for a second council term were marked by the entrance of the national political parties into the Iksal local arena. The Communist Party was the main party to do so. At first the party had few supporters, who did not dare to come out publicly for fear of the authorities and of criticism from the traditional elements in the village. But by the early 1960s the number of Communist Party supporters had grown to the extent of having foothold in all the various hamulas.

All the lists that ran in this election were of hamulas, with the exception of the Communist Party list which comprised members of different hamulas. Other national political parties, particularly Poel Mizrahi and Mapai, gave their tacit backing to a particular list. We were told that Mapai actually gave simultaneous backing to two competing lists, one of the Shalabi hamula and the other of the Derawsheh hamula.

The number of council members was reduced by nearly half, from 11 on the appointed council to seven on the newly-elected body, the number being determined by the size of the village. The inflated number of councillors on the first (appointed) Iksal council had been aimed at placating all the hamulas and factions. Apart from the incumbent chairman, all the councillors were new. The average age on the new council was relatively young, 35. The NRP backed

SalahYehia Derawsheh, a 23-year-old teacher; the Derawsheh hamula also had a young representative (24), who was the son of a major hamula leader. The councillors' occupations were little changed: one was a teacher, one (the Communist candidate) a construction worker, and the rest were engaged in agriculture. At the 29 November 1965 session, Ahmed Derawsheh was elected council chairman with the support of six members (only the Communist member opposing). This council served its term without mishap.

Third Term, 1969-1973

Apart from the Communist list, which again comprised members of different hamulas, the competing lists were all hamula-affiliated but represented segments of their hamula only. For instance, part of the Derawsheh hamula backed a Mapai-sponsored list, while another part voted for an NRP-sponsored list. The Shalabi hamula likewise fielded two lists, while the Habashi hamula ran its own. The names given the lists were attractive but at times ran counter to reality. The so-called "Independent" list was in fact overtly dependent on the NRP. "Solidarity" was backed by Mapai and was still headed by Ahmed Derawsheh, who had been village mukhtar for many years and had been appointed to the first council.

The outcome of this election was largely a continuation of the previous council, with one change: the Communist Party doubled its representation from one seat to two, while the Habashi hamula lost its representative. There was a large turnover in the actual council membèrship: only two of the incumbent councillors were returned to office. This turnover was aimed at placating various factions, using a hamula or party 'key." It also indicates a lack of individual interest in the local council. This prevailed mainly at the collective level, i.e., it was sometimes important to a hamula or group to be represented on the council; it mattered less by whom The new council differed little from its predecessor in terms of age, occupation and education.

The first meeting was held on 27 November 1969; the incumbent chairman was re-elected for a third term, opposed only by the two Communist members. The latter also opposed electing Abdel Hamid Shalabi deputy chairman. This third term of the Iksal council was the first in which there was an active opposition, led by the Communist Party. For example, at the 4 December 1969 meeting the

two Communist councillors voted against the composition of all the council committees. They also opposed the tax rate voted for fiscal year 1971/72, as well as the annual budgets for three years running (until 1973). They did, however, vote for village projects such as the installation of electricity and running water, the paving of roads, and the protection of village lands. Judging from this, the two Communist councillors were trying to win the residents' favor by supporting decisions that affected their rights and opposing those that place a burden on them or exacted a duty. However, the two Communists did support motions seen as meeting Iksal's interests, for example, to fine delinquent taxpayers (meeting of 15 April 1972).

Fourth Term, 1973-1978

Prior to the fourth term, the Interior Ministry decided to expand the council from seven members to nine, so as to keep in step with the growth in Iksal's population. There were 1444 voters in the local elections of 31 December 1973, with 1409 ballots declared valid (Harars 1975). The same lists ran as in the previous election: Solidarity, Independent, Reform, the Communists, and a Habashi hamula list. Of the nine councillors-elect, seven had served in previous terms. The two additional council members were Mahmoud Derawsheh, a 33 year-old building contractor, and Khaled Derawsheh, also 33, a farmer. The average age thus rose in this term to 39.

Formation of a ruling coalition in this term was a time-consuming process that went through many phases. The incumbent chairman, Ahmed Derawsheh, could not find a partner on any of the other lists despite the fact that he headed the largest single faction on the council (4 members) and thus required the support of just one additional councillor to establish his coalition. Finally, Saleh Yehia, the leader of another Derawsheh hamula faction, agreed to join the coalition on condition that the position of council chairman be rotated between the incumbent and himself.

Accordingly, the council convened on 7 March 1974 and re-elected the incumbent council chairman Ahmed Derawsheh, also choosing Saleh Yehia (the NRP candidate) as his deputy. Two years later, on 7 March 1976, the council reconvened to elect Saleh Yehia chairman in Derawsheh's stead. Seven councillors supported this

rotation, only the two Communist delegates opposed. Interestingly, Saleh Yehia subsequently abandoned the NRP and joined the Communists in establishing the Democratic Front (DFPE) in Iksal.

Fifth Term, 1978-1983

In the fifth term elections in 1978, Iksal's council chairman was chosen directly by the electorate for the first time. As noted above, Saleh Yehia (Derawsheh), who for ten years had been the NRP's candidate, now turned to the Communist Party (Rakah) and joined them in founding the DFPE in iksal. Asked the meaning of this drastic switch in political affiliation, Yehia told us that his alliance with the NRP had been based not on ideology but on convergence of interests: according to him, his government job had placed him under pressure from the Zionist parties, and he had preferred to go with the NRP because they held the Interior Ministry and thus controlled the flow of funds into local governments. However, Yehia ultimately realized that the DFPE way was the only way for Israel's Arabs, particularly after Land Day in 1976. Yehia's political switch won him broad support, and he won 49 percent of the first-round ballots for council chairman (Lahwani 1983).

Five lists ran for the village council: the DFPE (with the Communists at its core), the NRP, Solidarity, Brotherhood, and the Independents. The NRP list was now headed by Sa'id Yehia, nephew of the chairman-elect, a 38 year-old high school graduate employed in government. The younger Yehia is typical of a number of young Arabs who became the NRP men in several Arab localities. Some of them managed to attain key positions. The DFPE list, meanwhile, comprised members of various hamulas, though the Yehia faction of the Derawsheh hamula was predominant. Solidarity, which for years had been led by first council chairman Ahmed Derawsheh, remained under Derawsheh control; but Ahmed himself retired from official political life, engaging (according to several interviewees) in "unofficial politics." In fact, he still determines the makeup of the Solidarity list and its policies following election. Brotherhood and the Independents retained their old format in these elections.

The newly-elected council contained four representatives from the DFPE, two from Solidarity, two from the NRP, and one from Brotherhood. The profile of the members differed from that of

preceding councils: this council was better educated, younger, and engaged in a wider range of professions, including a mechanic, two laborers, a government official, a teacher, a farmer, a contractor, a merchant, and a municipal official.

Immediately following this election, Solidarity filed a Supreme Court petition challenging the results and charging that the Independents had falsified a portion of the results in their favor. The election was subsequently invalidated, and new elections held in January 1979. The results of this second ballot were very similar to the first and brought no real change in the council's composition.

Efforts were made at the 3 June 1979 meeting to include six councillors in the coalition: the four DFPE representatives and one Solidarity and one NRP representative. The NRP man subsequently quit the coalition and went into opposition. He stated in an interview: "I was the only opposition on the council, so I made certain to criticize any decision I didn't like." And indeed, a look at the record shows that he voted against just about every council decision. Later that year he resigned his council seat in order to become head of Iksal's education department. Sa'id Yehia's appointment was made possible by a court ruling, as the council had previously decided to name someone else.

Sixth Term, 1983-1989

Elections for a sixth term were held on 25 October 1983. Six lists competed for office: the DFPE, led by the incumbent council chairman and containing representatives of various hamulas (Abed El-Hadi, Shalabi, and Sa'adi); the NRP, led by a representative of one of the Derawsheh hamula factions and by a member of the Abed El-Hadi hamula; Solidarity, led by a second Derawsheh faction with Habashi hamula participation (the Habashi subsequently quit Solidarity and established an independent hamula list of their own); Brotherhood, led by the Shalabi hamula; the Independents, led by the Shedafneh hamula; and Hope, under the leadership of yet another Derawsheh faction.

The NRP received only 114 votes in this election and failed to win a council seat. The list of elected councillors shows that neither age nor education played any significant role in their election. When we considered the complete lists of candidates, we found that although most had included younger, better educated men these candidates

had been given unrealistic slots The top slots on each list were taken by well-known figures in the town, veteran leaders of factions or hamulas, or persons of good economic standing. But it is noteworthy that in Iksal as in other Arab municipalities the wealthy landowner had now been replaced by the building contractor, the teacher, the farmer, merchant, and laborer. The average age of this council's members was relatively young (43) and the average member had an elementary school education.

Incumbent council chairman Saleh Yehia, running on the DFPE list, won 49 percent of the vote in the first round. He formed a five-man coalition immediately following the election: three from the DFPE, one from Solidarity, and one from the Hope list. Two deputies were also chosen at the first meeting of the new council, one from the DFPE and the other from Solidarity. Muhammad Abed El-Hadi was elected as vice-chairman unanimously by both coalition and opposition, whereas three councillors (from the Shalabi and Habashi hamulas) voted against the Solidarity leader (a member of the Derawsheh hamula) as the second deputy.

The records of council meetings reveal that nearly all motions have been passed unanimously by the council members, and in many cases the presence of an opposition is hardly felt within the council.

IV. Ar'ara

Ar'ara is a Muslim village in the northern Triangle, located just south of the Wadi Ara highway that runs from Hadera inland to Afula. The current population (1986) is approximately 6100. There are six large hamulas in the village, and even more small hamulas. The Massarweh hamula is the largest, accounting for about 35 percent of the total population; however, this hamula is split into 11 smaller lineages, some of which are not even related to one another by blood ties. What they have in common is their Egyptian origin, their ancestors having arrived in the country with the troops of the Egyptian commander Ibrahim Pasha (son of Muhammad Ali Pasha) in the first half of the nineteenth century. They settled in Ar'ara, and being entirely without means earned their living as tenant farmers and hired hands for the Yunis family, which controlled all the village land The names of the various branches of the Massarweh family recall the occupations they followed, for example, Jamal (camel-driver). The second group of hamulas in Ar'ara is called *Al-Fellahin*

(the peasant farmers). This group is considered to be of higher status because it settled in the village before the Massarweh hamula and thus was able to gain control of land and act as landowner vis-a-vis those families arriving later. Of this *fellahin* group, the largest family is the Yunis family, which constitutes about 20 percent of the village population. The Milhem, Akel, Massoud, and Mar'i hamulas each account for 6-10 percent of the population. It is worth noting that over time, a number of individual families have joined the ranks of the Yunis family despite there being no actual blood ties between them; their purpose in joining was to gain the Yunis family's protection. These unrelated families account for a relatively small portion of the Yunis family, and they have gradually been fully absorbed into its ranks.

The structure and leadership of the various hamulas underwent major change following the establishment of Israel. Some of the hamulas emigrated, moving either to the West Bank or to Arab countries. Prominent members of the Yunis and Milhem families were deported to Jordan and Syria. The Yunis hamula nonetheless remained the main one in Ar'ara. It played a prominent role in leading the village immediately after the establishment of the state. However, from the outset, the Israeli military government tried to dictate the precise nature of the hamula's leadership to suit its own convenience.

Until 1950 all Ar'ara's mukhtars came from the Yunis family. The last, Ali Salama Yunis, was forced to resign his post due to disagreements with the military government in Israel's early days. Ali Salama's family told us that he had played a role in arranging *sulhat* (formal reconciliation ceremonies) throughout the country, and had been a wealthy landowner with properties even in southern Lebanon. During the mandate period he had wielded broad authority and handled the internal and external affairs of the villages of 'Ara, Ar'ara, Wadi ll-Kasab and Ain El-Sahleh. He held the position of judge in these villages and settled various disagreements between their residents. Following his dismissal the administration tried to redraw the political map in Ar'ara, boosting the Massarweh family as its client and counterweight to the Yunis hamula. The new mukhtar came from the Massarweh family; he served in this office until the establishment of the first local council.

This first council was appointed by the Minister of the Interior by special order on 20 August 1970. The authorities' support for the Massarweh family was highly evident in this appointment: five of the 13 councillors named were from that family, while only three

were from the Yunis family. The smaller families (Saif, Mar'i, Milhem, and Akel) were also represented. A Massarweh was chosen as council chairman, and the Saif and Mar'i representatives were named deputies. The Yunis contingent did not get any of the top positions on the appointed council. The average age of the members was 53; there were two 70-year-old councillors and one aged 74. These eiders were the heads of Ar'ara's large hamulas. But the majority of the councillors were in their forties. The average level of education was elementary; one councillor was illiterate, three had some primary schooling, six had completed elementary school, and three had some high school education.

This council served for two years and four months, during which there were constant (and sometimes very strong) disagreements between the Massarweh-led coalition and the Yunis-led opposition. During the council's last year in office, the opposition members were absent from most council meetings.

Second Term, 1973-1978

The first local election was held in Ar'ara in conjunction with the nationwide local elections on 31 December 1973. The council had meanwhile been reduced from 13 to 11 by the decision of the Ministry of Interior. Seven lists ran in the village, most of them hamula-based; only two lists, the Communists and the Youth, called on residents to vote without regard for the hamula factor. The results showed that the balance of forces which the authorities had tried to institute in appointing the first council had not lasted long. The Yunis family, joining forces with the Akei family, regained power, pushing the three Massarweh delegates into the opposition together with the representatives of the Milhem and Mar'i families.

A comparison of the profiles of the first (appointed) council and of its elected successor reveals little real difference in terms of age and education: the new council members were still on average advanced in years (near 50) and had on average an elementary education. Six of the appointed councillors were now elected back into office; five others were newcomers.

Th upheavals began soon. At the 15 February 1975 meeting the Akel family representative crossed to the opposition in exchange for his election as council chairman. For the first time, someone from a small family was elected to a major position of power in the village,

owing to the conflict between the two big hamulas, Yunis and Massarweh. On 8 October 1975, another personnel changeover was effected, not in the council chairmanship but in the two deputy chairmanships, both from the Massarweh family. The Yunis family promised its support to the Massarweh representative and his return to the previous alliance, and once again a new council executive and committees were chosen. On 16 May 1976 there was yet another upheaval, when the Mar'i representative moved from the coalition to the former opposition in return for his election as council chairman. This switch also brought about a change in the council executive: the deputy and the vice-chairman were replaced, new members were empowered to sign checks, and new council committees were formed.

On 19 May 1977, there was yet another council revolution—the fourth—with the Milhem family representative defecting to the opposition in exchange for his election as chairman. The vice-chairman and deputy were again replaced, as were other key figures. Seven months later the same thing recurred: this time the Abu Halal family representative switched sides and joined the opposition in exchange for being made chairman. A new council executive was once again chosen.

Third Term, 1978-1983

Nine lists ran for office in Ar'ara, all local, hamula-affiliated. Apart from the Halal hamula list, they had general names: Hope and Reform, Equality, Progress and Brotherhood, Independents, Peace, Solidarity, Brotherhood, and Village Youth. The chairman chosen by the electorate was a high school graduate, a landowner in his fifties, from the Yunis family. All but two of the third term councillors were new to local politics. The new group was better educated than its predecessors: five were high school graduates and six had an elementary education. They were also generally younger than members of previous councils, the average age dropping from 50 to 40.

The new group began its term in a spirit of cooperation, and at its first meeting (23 December 1978), the chairman-elect spoke, asking that old hamula feuds be put aside and that everyone remember that they all came from the same village, whose welfare should be placed first. The council executive was voted in unanimously, and various

issues raised at subsequent meetings were similarly settled. On 9 August 1979 the chairman died; his passing was followed by attenuation of the unity that had prevailed during his tenure.

The new chairman, also from the Yunis family, remained in office until the 1983 elections. The same lists ran as in previous elections, with one major difference: the DFPE (led by the Communists) supported a Yunis family member, and also got one of its most prominent supporters a seat on the council. The chairman, who until then had served in his capacity as acting (vice) chairman, was now returned to office by election with the support of the DFPE. This council, which is still serving (1989), resembles its predecessor in average age and education of its members.

V. Sakhnin

Sakhnin, a large village in Lower Galilee, fails under the jurisdiction of the Acre District. Its population, which was approximately 3000 in 1948, stands (1986) at 16,000, 90 percent of whom are Sunni Muslims. The remaining ten percent are Christians, divided equally between the Catholic and Orthodox sects.

The village is divided into four main quarters or neighborhoods. Each is inhabited by one large and 2-3 small hamulas. The village elders say this division dates back to the Ottoman period. In the western quarter of Sakhnin the Khalaileh hamula lived, along with several smaller hamulas, the largest of which was the Shewahneh. The eastern quarter of town was inhabited by the large Ghanaern and Otman hamulas, along with the smaller families of Abu Yunis, Abu Saleh and Bashir. The southern quarter was the home of the large Abu Raya hamula, along with the smaller Tarabiye, Shal'ata and Badarneh families. The northern quarter of Sakhnin housed the large Zbeidat hamula, the Shewahneh family, and the Christians.

These neighborhoods are separated by a road running through the viliage. This dividing fine persists to this day, and one's residence in a particular quarter of the town is a fact of great social significance. Each resident of a given neighborhood must share in his fellow-resident's occasions of joy or sorrow. For example, when there is a wedding, two celebrations are held, one on the day before the wedding for the neighborhood and the other on the wedding day, for the entire village.

The neighborhood also has political significance in local elections. The residents of each quarter are determined to defend their honor and prove their strength in the town. In times of mourning or on some other critical occasion, the men of the neighborhood gather at the victim's home to discuss how to defend their honor. If a resident of one quarter tries to harm a resident of another, the entire neighborhood regards the issue as its collective responsibility.

The second level of social organization in Sakhnin is the hamula. There are 17 hamulas, five large (1000-3500 persons), five medium (500-1000), and seven small (up to 500). There are also individual families of immigrants and refugees who came to Sakhnin from villages destroyed in 1948 or after.

There are about 1000 Christians in Sakhnin, as stated equally divided between the Orthodox and Catholic sects. Each sect zealously guards its own character, and relations between the two are minima! in both social and political terms. There have been only five instances of intermarriage between the two sects since 1948. During the mandate period there was one mukhtar for the entire Christian community, but since 1948 each sect has had its own mukhtar. The two sects maintain separate churches.

The Christians are the best educated of Sakhnin's population groups. The town's first physician was a Christian, a fact which lent the community great prestige. Most Christians are employed in business and commerce, office work, and the free professions. Although there are five Christian hamulas, loyalty is greater at the religious than the hamula level, because of their small minority status in a Muslim town. The Christians' good relations with the authorities have enabled them to gain representation on the various town bodies and institutions. They continue to live together in two areas, namely the north and north-west parts of town.

During the mandate, village affairs were managed by the mukhtars of the larger hamulas, who acted as mediators between the government and the local population. Each mukhtar dealt primarily with his clansmen's concerns and those of his neighborhood. Some mukhtars had more power than others, and the Khalaileh hamula mukhtar was the most powerful of all. Sakhnin residents, regardless of hamula affiliation, would approach him with any urgent business. Each neighborhood had its own *diwan* where the local dignitaries would gather to discuss business or simply to pass the time. The two biggest *diwans* were in the western quarter of town (where the

Khalaileh lived) and in the eastern quarter (where the Ghanaern lived). The southern part of town had a *diwan* belonging to the Abu Raya hamula, while the Christians in the northern part maintained a *diwan* next to the church. These meeting-places were used to make decisions on neighborhood business and sometimes on matters concerning the entire town.

In the 1950 the Israeli authorities appointed more mukhtars, whose number now reached nine. This was in order to placate the smaller hamulas, which hitherto had not enjoyed such status. Each mukhtar was given an official seal, and he acted as middleman between hamula members and the authorities. For policemen, income tax officials, land registry officials, census registrars, and others these mukhtars were the sole channel for dealing with the local population.

First Local Council, 1965-1968

Mukhtar administration of the village continued until 1965, when the first local council was named. The appointees included representatives of hamulas not yet granted any representation in village government. The interests of the various political parties were also clearly evident here: Mapam and the NRP had one representative each, and the chairman-designate was affiliated with Mapai.

Thirteen men were named to this first council on 11 July 1965: two representatives each for the Khalaileh and Ghanaem-Otman hamulas two for the Christians, one each for the Zbeidat, Abu Raya, Tarabiyeh-Khiyadre, Badarneh and Abu Yunis hamulas and as stated, one representative each for Mapam and the NRP. By the criterion of population size, the Minister of Interior should have appointed a council of only nine members. The additional four were appointed to satisfy the interests of the chief social and political divisions in the village.

The first meeting of this councii elected the mukhtar Awwad Khaiaileh as council chairman and Muhammad Ghanaern, mukhtar of the other major harmila, as his deputy. This had been expected: one way or another the two largest camps in Sakhnin would have to find a place on the council's executive. The Otman and Zbeidat hamulas, dissatisfied by this situation, boycotted council meetings for the rest of the term, leaving 11 effective councillors. This

coalition split into two camps, the chairman's faction (seven members) and the deputy's faction (three members). The Mapam representative remained neutral throughout. The aim of this factionalism was to lay the groundwork for the future. The chairman and his deputy each tried to bolster his respective camp by placing his adherents on council committees and disbursing various gratuities.

Second Term, 1968-1972

The result of the first elections to the council, whose membership was reduced to nine, was very much a continuation of the appointed council. Eight of the village mukhtars retained representation: six were re-elected and two were replaced by their sons. The Khalaileh, Ghanaern, Zbeidat, Tarabiye, and Badarneh hamulas, as well as the Christians, maintained their same relative strength. The only real change was the election of a Communist Party representative. The coalition was headed by the incumbent chairman, the mukhtar Awwad Khalaileh, supported by the Abu Raya, Zbeidat, Tarabiye, and Abu Yunis hamula representatives. The opposition was led by the Ghanaern mukhtar who had been deputy on the appointed council. Thus it emerged that Sakhnin's two largest hamulas, Khalaileh and Ghanaern, formed the two major poles of local political life towards which the smaller hamulas gravitated. Notably, the Communist councillor abstained from voting when the council elected its chairman at the first session (27 June 1988).

As regards level of education, apart from the six mukhtar councillors (who were mostly illiterate or had partial elementary schooling), three of the newly-elected councillors had been employed as teachers. This was a significant change from the educational level of the first (appointed) council, even though the three men were elected for reasons of hamula affiliation being the sons of the mukhtars who had served on the first council.

Third Term, 1972-1976

The third term of Sakhnin's council was marked by a major upheaval: most of the village mukhtars were thrust into the

opposition; only one mukhtar remained in the coalition. The new chairman was from the Tarabiye family and had served as deputy chairman in the previous term; although he came from a medium hamula, he had the support of the large Ghanaern and Abu Raya hamulas. The Khalaileh hamula, which for decades had been supreme, was now swept aside. This was a serious blow to the hamula, both because of the symbolism entailed in the other hamulas' rise and because of the very tangible effect of their ouster from chairmanship on their ties with the establishment authorities, which until then had enabled the Khalaileh to promote their own interests and exert influence over the residents of Sakhnin. We learned from the council chairman of the time that the hamula viewed its overthrow as an act of treachery and much time passed before they again felt secure on the council. The upheaval led to a new political situation in the town, hamulas previously secondary now forming partnerships.

Fourth Term, 1976-1979

The fourth term elections were notable in several ways. The factionalism that prevailed in the large hamulas was apparent in the Ghanaern hamula's fielding two rival hamula lists. The Communist Party put together a "front" of a mixture of small hamulas. The young men of Sakhnin formed a list comprising members of several hamulas, naming it Renewal to symbolize their rebellion against the reactionary forces in the town, principally the large hamulas that for so long had held predominance.

Analysis of the list of councillors elected shows that this time the mukhtars lost the last of whatever influence they still had in the council. Only one mukhtar of the eight or nine who had once served remained. The new blood on the council was evident in the councillors' relatively low average age (40) and in the fact that four of them had a university education. Nearly all the members were employed either as laborers or in white-collar jobs, apart from the single remaining mukhtar, Muhammad Ghanaern, a farmer. This is in contrast to previous councils, the majority of whose members were engaged in agriculture or commerce in Sakhnin. The protelarianization of Israel's Arab population now began to appear in the council's makeup.

The new coalition comprised eight members led by the incumbent council chairman, himself a university graduate. To satisfy the various factions no fewer than four deputy chairmen (two of them paid) were chosen. The Khalaileh, Abu Raya, and Zbeidat hamula representatives remained in the opposition.

The events of Land Day on 30 March 1976 had a tremendous impact on the sympathy Sakhnin residents felt for their council chairman. Sakhnin was the major national focus of attention in these events owing to the violence that occurred there. On the eve of Land Day (29 March), Sakhnin, Arrabe and Deir Hanna were ail placed under curfew; the army entered these villages and a violent confrontation with the residents followed. The curfew was extended on the following day and the violence mounted. Soldiers entered people's homes and spread out through the various sections of Sakhnin and the inhabitants tried to resist them by force. In the shooting three residents were killed and about 70 wounded. The chairman's stand in support of his fellow-townsmen raised him to the status of a nationalist leader and boosted Sakhnin's sense of solidarity with him. He subsequently adopted a leftist line and formed a union with the Communist-dominated Democratic Front for Peace and Equality. The nationalist image of this council was reinforced; Sakhnin became the "Red Village" and is now one of the main sites where annual ceremonies commemorating Land Day are held. A monument to the victims of the Land Day violence was erected in the local cemetery.

Fifth Term, 1979-1983

In the elections held on 5 February 1979, the incumbent chairman was re-elected, this time directly by the electorate under the new municipal election system instituted in 1978. The trends observed in the previous term continued: there was now not a single former mukhtar among the council members. Four councillors (including the chairman and his deputy) were re-elected. In this term, too, it was the DFPE that set the tone. The new council greatly resembled its predecessor in terms of age and education.

But even in this fifth term the hamula factor continued to play a part. Althought the names of the various lists (Renewal, Vanguard, Proof, Betterment, Progress and Development, and Brotherhood) were general in nature and indicated an intention to work for the

good of all, they in fact represented hamula memberships. The DFPE list was the only list that bore the appearance of a political party, and even it was not entirely devoid of the hamula element, being a union of several small hamulas which had wielded no influence in the past.

A coalition was formed only after the courts had ruled on the election's validity, for in the course of the ballot count one of the ballot boxes was burned, and each side claimed it would have won on the strength of those votes. The court ruled in favor of the incumbent chairman (a member of the Tarabiye hamula) and awarded him the right as chairman-elect to form the coalition. The coalition now consisted of seven members, including the DFPE members, a representative of the Tarabiye hamula, and one of the Ghanaern hamula's two delegates. The other Ghanaern clansman chose to remain in the opposition along with the Khalaileh and Abu Raya hamula representatives. This coalition served for five years.

Sixth Term, 1983-1989

In the fifth term elections on 25 October 1983 (municipal election day), the competition between the Ghanaern hamula and the DFPE list was very strong. Each tried to gain as much support as it could from the other local groups. The Christians, who constituted a small minority, also wanted to increase their chances of representation in the council. The composition of these lists was therefore much altered: Christians ran on the same list with Muslims; the Progress and Development list included members of the Ghanaern, Khalaileh, Badarna and Shal'ata hamulas; the DFPE list included members of both large and small hamulas.

A shift occurred in the local power structure as a result of these elections. For the first time a representative of the Ghanaern hamula was elected chairman of the local council. He was supported by the Khalaileh hamula. The DPFE list gained four seats, but they were in opposition.

VI. Daliyat al Karmel

Daliyat al Karmel has a population of 8410, the overwhelming majority Druze, with a few Muslim and Christian families. The Muslims are either refugees or Beduin who once wandered the area. The village lies on the slopes of Mount Carmel, about 13 kilometers south of Haifa. According to one historical account, the village was founded about 250 years ago by a Druze family from Aleppo (Syria) who built on the remains of an ancient settlement. The stream of migration from the Aleppo area to Daliyat al Karmel ceased with the establishment of the State of Israel, and the subsequent growth of the Halaby hamula has been due primarily to natural increase. This hamula now accounts for about 40 percent of the village population. The size of the hamula may disturb its unity, for it is not always possible to reconcile the expectations of the several factions within it. The hamula's sense of being in the majority may also indirectly work to weaken its unity, since its members do not feel any threat to their predominance in the village.

The economic structure of the village differs somewhat from that of other Arab towns and villages. A considerable number of Daliyat families earn their livelihoods either in tourism or in earthwork contracting and army service. The village is a well-known tourist attraction, drawing both Israelis and foreigners who come to buy handwoven rugs, embroidery, and copper utensils. Following the Six Day War the contracting business also began to flourish. Young men who tried their hand at work in the Sinai or the ports quickly became major contractors employing dozens of workers.

The village's situation on a mountain led to the gradual creation of two main geographical sections: the upper section *(Alhara Al-Foka)* where the Halaby hamula is concentrated, and the lower section *(Alhara A-Tahta)*, inhabited by the Hassun hamula and several other small hamulas.

The Halaby hamula, as noted is Daliyat's largest, is a good example of a group whose formation was based not on any biological kinship but on a shared place of origin. The name Halaby is shared by several families who originally came from the Aleppo (Haleb) region and settled under varying circumstances in Daliyat al Karmel. In the beginning, the families of the Halaby hamula could still be recognized individually but as time passed they intermingled and the dividing lines faded. Nevertheless, one can still discern a factional division within the hamula corresponding to the original family divisions.

Besides these original families, other small ones subsequently arrived and were absorbed into the Halaby hamula even though they bore no biological kinship to the families comprising the hamula. The Khalifa "Halaby" and Ahmed Assad Awwad families are examples.

Affiliation to family (*dar*) is stronger at times than larger hamula affiliation and, as we shall see, this fact comes into play in local elections. In certain cases Halaby hamula families have formed alliances with other hamulas out of common interests instead of displaying hamula solidarity, with the aim of defeating some other faction of their own Halaby hamula. Each family is busy trying to establish its own status within the larger hamula, and thence its standing in the village leadership.

The second largest in Daliyat al Karmel is the Hassun hamula, followed by a number of large and medium hamulas: Nasser Ed-Din, Wehbeh, Hasisi, Makladeh, Al-Natour, Farhat, Al-Dakasa, Kadour, Mariah, Farou Al-Shami Abu Hamoud. There are also some small hamulas such as Abu Hatoum, Shahin, Al-Basha and Birani.

First Council Appointed

Daliyat al Karmel and Isfiya were the first Druze villages to be awarded municipal status after Israel's establishment. The order appointing a local council in Daliyat was issued on 25 January 1951 and went into effect on 13 March. The first council was appointed by the Interior Minister in consultation with local forces and with officials from the ministry's Minority Affairs Department. The appointed council comprised the local dignitaries. The two largest hamulas (Halaby and Hassun) led the village, with the former representing the upper part of town and the latter the lower part.

In the Mandate era the village had had two mukhtars, Kuftan Halaby and Sammy Hassun. Halaby had been named to the post at age 35, while Hassun had succeeded his father when he was only 18. Immediately after the State of Israel was established the authorities added two more mukhtars, Kassem Rifat Halaby (then aged 40) and Yussuf Salah (45). But these mukhtars did not have much chance to exercise their official powers, as the Daliyat local council was appointed just two years later.

As stated, the local dignitaries were reaffirmed in their positions of prominence by this appointment, with one small change, namely, the inclusion of some small and medium hamulas alongside the Halaby and Hassun hamulas.

The first council session on 25 February 1951 was attended by a representative of the Interior Ministry Minority Affairs Branch. This official advised the councillors to choose one of their number as chairman, and Kuftan Halaby was elected unanimously. The appointed council did not serve for long. Only two years after its appointment, the first elections were held. The council's short term in office was apparently due to pressures exerted by certain factions in the Halaby and other hamulas that had not been represented on the appointed council.

Analysis of the lists that ran in the first election shows two main factors at work: hamula factionalism and political partisanship. At times there was a correlation between these two factors. As expected, the biggest split occurred within the Halaby hamula, which put up no fewer than three separate lists. The first, led by the incumbent council chairman and backed by Mapai, was called Progress and Labor so as to give it a local flavor without entirely concealing its partisan affiliations. It was challenged by another Halaby faction, which had the backing of a Mapai-affiliated Arab Knesset list, namely, that to which MKs Jebbir Muadi (from Yerka) and Saif Ed-Din Al-Zuabi (from Nazareth) belonged. The third Halaby list was backed by the NRP. The other large hamula, Hassūn, split into two factions, each of which fielded an independent list.

Although only four of the elected council members had served on the previous (appointed) council, their social and economic profile did not differ significantly from that of the newly-elected councillors. But these elections exposed serious disputes over who would take the leading role in Daliyat. The council now included members of the Wehbeh and Kadour hamulas which had not been represented on the appointed council. The representatives of the hamula factions were also divided over the issue of supporting the coalition. Kuftan Halaby, the incumbent chairman who was now trying to put a coalition together, did not have the support of the Halaby hamula's other three councillors, who preferred to be in the opposition. Similarly, one Hassūn hamula representative supported the coalition while the other backed the opposition. Both Wehbeh and Kadour backed the coalition, while the Nasser Ed-Din clansman stayed neutral. In this situation, with a 4-4 faceoff, it was difficult to establish any leadership for the local council or elect a new

chairman. To resolve the situation and not be forced to disband the council, the members decided to rotate the chairmanship between the two rival Halaby representatives, who would each serve two years. This arrangement prevented any upheavals during the council's second term.

Third Term, 1957-1959

Elections for a third term were held on 20 August 1957. Now national political parties entered the local Daliyat al Karmel scene. Of the ten lists that ran, six were openly and directly affiliated to the national parties. Parties that had been active in the previous election campaign (Mapai, NRP) were now joined by Mapam, the Independent Liberals, and Hapoel Hamizrahi. These parties exploited both inter-and intra-hamula rivalries to get a foothold in the village. Besides the already faction-ridden Halaby and Hassūn hamulas, as well as the Kadour hamula, now split, one faction running on a Mapam ticket, the other being backed by Hapoel Hamizrahi. The Halaby hamula managed to retain its four seats on the council, but each was won on a different ticket, supported indirectly by Mapai. The Kadour hamula gained a second representative; the Hassūns lost one of their two seats; and the Nasser Ed-Din hamula retained its seat, now occupied by Amai Nasser Ed-Din who ran on a Mapai ticket.

The third council members did not differ much from their predecessors: of the nine elected, six had served on the previous council. The main difference lay in the occupation of the three new members, who now joined the coalition: they were building contractors, a relatively new profession compared with the traditional agricultural occupations of earlier council members.

The first session of this council was held on 19 September 1957, when the members voted 5-4 to re-elect Kuftan Halaby as council chairman. Interviews with people close to events at that time revealed that Mapai (then the national ruling party) had played a major role in healing the breaches among the rival factions and in welding together the coalition. Certain councillors came under heavy pressure to join the coalition, while others were pressed to remain in the opposition and await their moment.

Fourth Term, 1959-1965

The fourth term election, held on 3 November 1959, was distinguished by the large number of lists that ran: 13, the largest number since the council's creation. This profusion attests to the factionalism that had taken root particularly among the large and medium hamulas. The demographic growth of the hamulas (due mainly to natural increase) played a major role in the expansion of their social network and also increased the potential for splits owing to conflicting interests. The economic and occupational changes following Israel's establishment (discussed eariier in this study) also led to the emergence of new forces which hitherto had made no mark on the local scene. These new forces sought to make their power felt by running for local office.

The entry of the national political parties into local Daliyat politics had also played a major part in this multiplication of electoral lists. Many parties were trying to gain a firmer foothold in the village, and saw their opportunity in supporting hamula members for council office. The number of lists from the last election was now enlarged by three seemingly independent tickets: Carmel, Farmers, and Free Youth. From the interviews we conducted it transpired that these tickets were all indirectly backed by Mapai and one of Mapai's Arab Knesset factions.

Of the nine councillors-elect, five were returning members. The average age was 43, the average education elementary. There was little difference in terms of occupation from previous councils; and hamula representation likewise remained steady, with the same coalition continuing to rule as in the preceding term. This continuity strengthened the council, and it remained in office for six years without crises.

Fifth Term, 1965-1969

In this election campaign the number of lists dropped by nearly one-half, from 13 to seven. In several respects this election represented a turning-point for Daliyat al Karmel. Although some of the lists crossed hamula lines, their hamula character was nonetheless marked, as the first names on a ticket indicated its nature. Thus the Halaby hamula concentrated its efforts on two main

lists; the Kadour hamula also ran on its usual two lists; and the Nasser Ed-Din, A-Shami, and Wehbeh hamulas each ran its own ticket. Six of the seven lists won at least one council seat. Of the tickets backed by national political parties, Herut won three seats, and Mapam, Hapoel Hamizrahi, and another Mapai-affiliated list won one seat each. The remaining three seats were won by independent local lists.

It is interesting that apart from Badi Ali Hasisi, who was on the Herut ticket, all the other members had served on the previous council. Thus, although there was continuity in terms of local leadership, a drastic change took place in terms of partisan affiliation. The most obvious change was the switch from Mapai to Herut, for reasons indicated previously. The coalition was made up almost exclusively of the representatives of the national political parties: Herut, Hapoel Hamizrahi, and Mapam.

At the 25 November 1965 session, one councillor moved to re-elect Kuftan Halaby council chairman. Two councillors opposed the motion, noting that Kuftan now belonged to the Herut Party, which was opposed to the workers' interests. Kuftan Halaby nonetheless won the support of seven members and became once again council chairman.

Sixth Term, 1969-1973

The sixth term elections saw yet another shuffling of party affiliation among the contending lists. Kuflan Halaby, who in the last elections had broken his pact with Labor to head a Herut-sponsored list, now returned to head the Labor ticket, taking with him all the other candidates from the previous Herut list. The Hapoel Hamizrahi party was now represented by the Wehbeh hamula, not the Kadour hamula as in earlier campaigns. The HassOn hamula, which had not held a seat on the council for several terms, now had one of its members elected. Thus the three Herut councillors from the fifth term now moved over to Labor, while Mapam and Hapoel Hamizrahi held one seat each. The remaining four seats were won by independent hamula list candidates. Only four of those elected had sat on the previous council.

Comparing the new councillors with their predecessors reveals a drop in the average age and a somewhat greater variety of professional occupations, which now included earthwork and

building contractors, bank clerk, taxi driver, and shopkeeper. None of the new council members was engaged in agriculture, reflecting the decline of this branch as the main source of livelihood. While in previous terms the local landowners had wielded considerable impact both on the council and outside it, this term saw the entry into the local political arena of well-to-do persons who had not made their money from land but from private enterprise in the earthmoving, building, and other contracting trades that had begun to flourish outside the village, particularly in the Jewish sector. This was expressive of the broader economic change taking place among the Arab population in Israel.

The coalition was put together from the Labor, Mapam, and Hapoel Hamizrahi delegates, with Kuftan Halaby once again the moving force behind its formation. But this time he ran into considerable difficulty in assembling his coalition: he was able to persuade two councillors to join his core group of three Labor councillors only by acceding to the condition that the chairmanship be rotated between himself and the Mapam delegate.

Kuflan Halaby died soon after the election. The council meeting of 2 January 1970 declared a week of mourning in the village of Daliyat al Karmel for the man who had served as chairman since the council's creation. On 9 February 1970 Rushdi Halaby was elected chairman; he served in this post for two years until April 1972, when the council met and named Abed Kadour, the Mapam delegate, as the new chairman under the coalition agreement.

Seventh Term, 1973-1978

Six lists ran in the election on 31 December 1973. Of these, two had ties to the Labor Party and one was independent. The following were elected: three Labor-affiliated candidates, two Herut candidates, two Mapam candidates, one NRP candidate, and one independent. The coalition was formed by two councillors from Labor, one from Herut, and one from the NRP. The opposition consisted of one councillor from Labor, one from Herut, and the two Mapam delegates. Thus the individual tickets were split in their support (or lack of it) for the coalition. The split was the result of hamula and factional disputes. Both the Labor and Herut parties naturally tried to make their representatives take a unified position, but in vain. The council served out its five-year term.

Eighth Term, 1978-1983

In the election held on 7 November 1978, the residents of Daliyat al Karmel elected their council chairman by direct ballot for the first time, as in all local elections. Incumbent chairman Nuwaf Halaby won this election on the first round of voting, winning 58 percent of the total (Lahwani 1983). The chairman-elect was on an Alignment list, which captured the largest number of votes (1581) and thus won four council seats. The rival Likud ticket won 914 votes, which translated into three council seats. Mapam won 442 votes, entitling it to one seat {Harari 1979). The ninth council seat was won by an independent list with had some ties to the NRP.

The members of these party lists came from different hamulas. The Labor list, for example, was headed by a Halaby clansman, but also included members of the Hassun, Makalada, and Wehbeh hamulas. The Likud ticket, headed by a Nasser Ed-Din clansman, also included Halaby and Hassun hamula members.

The conflicts of interest that marked these parties at the national level (in the Knesset) came to expression at the local level as well. Although the chairman had won his personal election by an absolute majority, he remained in the minority throughout the council's term of office because no councillor on any other list agreed to join a coalition under his leadership. Matters reached such a pass that MK Amai Nasser Ed-Din sent a letter to the Interior Minister requesting that the council be disbanded on the grounds of its failure to function properly. This move seems to have brought a majority of the council members rallying around their chairman.

Ninth Term, 1983-1989

The ninth term elections in Daliyat were held on national municipal election day, 25 October 1983. Six lists ran, three of them local and the other three national party tickets. The Alignment ticket was again headed by Nawaf Halaby, the incumbent council chairman, and included members of the Hassūn hamula. The Likud ticket was headed by MK Amal Nasser Ed-Din and included candidates from the Makladeh hamula. The Shinui Party ran for the first time in this election, at the inspiration of Shinui MK Zeidan Atshe, a native of the neighboring Druze village of Isifya. The three

independent local lists were: Labor and Recovery, headed by Assad Amin Hassūn Partnership and Development, led by Salah Wehbeh; and Friendship and Brotherhood, led by two members of a Halaby hamula faction.

The list of those elected to this ninth council indicates no real change from preceding councils in terms of the members' age, education and occupations. Apart from one Makladeh hamula member or the Alignment list who had a university education, all the councillors had either partial or full elementary schooling. The average age actually rose, because five members continued to serve from previous terms.

Summary

From the foregoing, we see that the social and political structure of the Arab localities in Israel has undergone profound changes since the establishment of Israel. These changes are the outcome of a dynamic interaction between internal processes on the community level and external forces on the national state level. Municipalization, which was introduced to most of the Arab localities in the 1950s and the 1960s, has not necessarily caused a weakening of local social divisions in Arab villages and towns. The lack of Arab national parties has encouraged local leaders to use local groups as potential frameworks for political activity in municipal elections. Therefore, kinship, religious and other descent groups have been re-organized and have become well integrated in the modern municipal system.

The shift to a participant society as a result of democratization within the local political system and the narrowing of the class structure among Arabs has exposed the local system to new forms of competition. Groups which had hitherto been at the periphery began moving towards the center and participating in the struggle for political control. Small hamulas and previously marginal groups have become active and exert considerable influence on local coalitions. Localization (minor urbanization, minor migration between Arab settlements, etc.) and demographic increase have contributed to factionalism within the local groups.

In the course of time a shift has been observed from inter-group to intra-group competition. Direct election for local authority chairman has also increased the need for coalitions between different lineages

and groups. Factions in large hamulas have become significant partners for potential coalitions, whether with other local factions and hamulas or with national political parties.

Until the mid-1960s there was clear continuity of the former traditional mukhtar leadership. The military government and the national parties played a central role in reinforcing this trend as a means of exerting control or influence within the Arab population. Since then, marked changes have occurred. Proletarianization and the rise of the level of education among Arabs have resulted in the presence of a young and educated leadership which has successively replaced the traditional one. Political awareness that developed within the Arab community as a whole, partly owing to the active role of Rakah and other parties (e.g., Mapam in the 1950s and 1960s), reinforced the tendency of the voters and the representatives to address local municipal matters as well as national ideological matters. The separation between these two spheres that local councils maintained until the mid-1970s is no longer possible, certainly, since Land Day in 1976 if a date need be specified. Nevertheless, a distinction still exists between the national Knesset elections and the municipal elections. Despite poiiticization among the Arabs, local divisions and considerations continue to play an important role in the local political system.

These arid other points are reflected in our analysis of the social and political structure of the sample localities. Since the establishment of the municipal council in Shefar-ʿAm (1910), two main levels of competition have been observed, within and between the religious groups. Different hamulas and factions competed within each religious group in order to represent it in the struggle over the control of the local political system. Since the establishment of Israel the political parties have become partners in the competition.

The major change in the group status structure in Shefar-ʿAm occurred only in the later 1960s, when Muslims replaced Christians at the center of power after a long period of being the marginal group in the community, both economically and politically. The Druze also benefited from the change in the status structure and have become a powerful group in the municipal council. Since the early 1980s the competition has moved from the inter-religious to the intra-religious level. However, the boundaries of each group remained closed and impenetrable by others.

Tamra also represents the dynamic change in the status structure. The traditional leadership based on land ownership and connections with officials was replaced by a young and educated leadership. The competition however remained on the hamula base. The internal refugees, who moved to the village in the early 1950s, have become an active element in the competition for the local council. The demographic concentration of the refugees was used by their leaders as a potential and actual source for deriving power and reinforcing their status in the village.

Unlike Tamra, in Iksal the main competition remained between different factions within the largest hamula. Each faction was supported by other local groups with the backing of the national parties. The traditional mukhtars have lost their formal position since the second terms of the local council in the mid-1960s. Nevertheless, they still play an important role in local political life through their effect on the youna leadership of the hamula.

Ar'ara is a good example of hamula affiliation not necessarily based on kinship alone but also on fictive relations (albeit defined in a kinship idiom). This was shown in the compostion of Yunis hamula: the factions that joined the hamula have become an integral part of it. This hamula came into power gradually despite the official support given to the competing hamula (Massarweh) during the military government.

The typical internal social division in Arab localities, examined at the beginning of the chapter, comes to expression in Sakhnin village. Here neighborhoods and lineages not only have social meaning but political meaning also. Over the course of six terms of office nearly all of the hamulas switched sides and coalitions. The hamula factor has been decisive in the support an individual gives a certain list, although hamula discipline was not demanded. Most members of a given hamula vote for the hamula of their association, but a small number of its votes are always scattered among various lists. Neighborhood residence likewise has played an important part, with two major blocs forming around the western and eastern section of village.

The Druze village of Daliyat al Karmel has many common features with the other villages in terms of the social structure, where neighborhoods, lineages and factions are main social divisions. The affiliation to the largest hamula (Halaby) was not based on biological kinship but on a shared provenance—Aleppo (Haleb). The demographic increase of the hamula interfered with its

unity. Different factions within the hamula competed over control of the local council, by forming coalitions with other lineages and factions.

It should be noted that in Daliyat al Karmel a mutual pragmatism has been developed between the local forces and the national parties. On the one hand, national parties supported different competing lists in order to increase the potential votes they may receive in the Knesset elections. On the other hand, some local leaders switched their affiliation from one party to another according to their individual interests.

The impact of leadership changes in Arab local authorities on issues of budgets and local services and the main budgetary problems of budgets as compared with those in Jewish local authorities are discussed in detail in the following chapter.

4

Arab Local Authority Budgets: A Comparative Study

The financial difficulties of the Arab local authorities have generated much public interest in recent years. The heads of Arab local authorities have placed the issue before the Ministry of the Interior and various other ministries, the Knesset interior and Finance Committees, and with the Center for Local Government (an independent association of all local authorities in Israel). The National Committee of Chairmen of Arab Local Authorities (the National Committee) has held conferences and seminars on the topic. The records of National Committee meetings together with reports in the press show that during the six years 1979-1985 there were 26 general strikes by Arab local authorities, 20 of them in protest against their financial plight and the manner in which the government bureaus handled the issue.

The Weak Bargaining Power of Arab Local Authorities

A number of factors have arisen over the years to weaken the bargaining power of the Arab local governments with respect to their budgets, and consequently their financial distress has steadily grown worse. Some of these factors are of a general character, deriving from the nature of relations between national and local government in Israel, and some are specifically related to the situation of the Arab minority in this country.

a. The size and age of the locality. A study by Weiss (1972) demonstrated that differences exist mainly between the larger, older, more established towns and villages and other, less prominent ones. Large municipalities are less dependent on government participation in their budgets than are local councils, especially those of small communities. In the 1950s, the Ministry of the Interior was already aware of the disproportionate treatment of large and small

population centers. Consequently, criteria were established for disbursing the grants that took into account the locality's financial situation, location, age, etc. Population size was credited with one point per capita; immigrant towns received two points per capita; and towns whose population was spread over a large area received 2.5 points (Ludski 1958:30). However, discrimination against the smaller towns remained, since the more heavily populated cities still absorbed the greater part of the grant.

Of the 96 Arab localities with municipal status, only three have been granted the status of a city; 55 are in the category of local councils; and 38 are classified as being attached to regional councils. The great majority of Arab towns and villages are therefore small and poorly established. As mentioned, the occupational transformation in the Arab towns was the movement of the labor force from local agricultural work to hired labor, primarily at jobs outside the worker's hometown. The change to day labor was not accompanied by the creation of an indigenous economic base in the Arab localities. The industries that developed were small-scale and employed few workers. Most of them were unplanned and the result of purely local initiative.

These factors harmed the Arab local authorities' potential for generating their own funds and weakened their position in negotiations with the government over the allocation of government funds and investments.

b. National considerations. When planning the allocation of funds to the local authorities, security requirements and other national considerations come into play. Certain zones, defined as development areas or areas of high national priority, receive larger budgets than others.

The Law for the Encouragement of Capital Investment creates three classes of zoning in Israel for the purpose of development projects. Investment in zone A areas is assigned the highest priority and is offered the best incentives; zone B areas rate second, and offer such incentives as reduced rent for industrial buildings, lower rates for working capital and grants for industrial site development. Locales classified as zone C (the "central" zone) offer no incentives at all. Upper (Jewish) Nazareth is classified as zone B whereas neighboring (Arab) Nazareth is classified as zone C (Rosenfeld 1987:54).

As mentioned in previous chapters, the Arab minority in Israel is excluded from the national consensus in various fields. Many

programs aimed at achieving national goals do not consider the needs of the Arab population. On the contrary, Arab towns are sometimes required to contribute to these programs with no real benefit for themselves. An example is the project for developing the Galilee, which later became a project for the Judaization of the Galilee, aimed among other things at combating the "demographic threat" posed by the Arab population by encouraging an increase in the Jewish population of the region. This policy, which openly favored the Jewish population, was accompanied by the expropriation of Arab land to establish new Jewish settlements. Arab local authorities in the Galilee were later adversely affected by the annexation of large tracts of their land by the Misgav Regional Council and by other Jewish settlements there (see Chapter 5).

c. The local authority's starting point. Local authorities that start out with large development funds at their disposal tend to overspend and become involved in projects that leave them in debt. The national government does nothing to halt this process, but in fact finds itself obliged to become involved by covering some of the deficit in order to save the municipality from utter economic collapse (Weiss 1972: 61; Mevorach 1981).

In the previous chapter we noted that the majority of Arab local councils were established in the 1960s and 1970s at a difficult starting point, burdened with planning and development problems requiring huge investments but having hardly any available resources (Geraisi 1973). It also took the the Arab municipalities many years to become organized administratively and they long lacked competent personnel to cope with the work. Most municipalities had no qualified personnel who could plan budgets and find ways of improving the financial balance.

d. Personal connections. The extent of government participation in local budgets is much dependent on negotiations between government officials and local representatives. "Accordingly, the kind of ties that exist, the presence or absence of sympathy, the partisan structure of the municipal coalition, and so forth, are all of substantial significance" (Weiss 1972). This has resulted in discrimination among the Arab towns and villages themselves. Council chairmen with closer ties to the establishment have enjoyed preference in financial support and other benefits. This was especially apparent prior to 1983, when budgets were determined primarily through negotiations between the chairmen of local councils and the Interior Ministry's district commissioners (see below).

However, despite the prolonged financial plight of the Arab local governments, Arab leaders have raised the issue only in recent years. This can be explained by a number of internal and external factors. Most Arab local authorities, as we have noted, had been in existence for only a short while in the early 1970s. About two-thirds of them were established during the period of military government, which is a clear pointer to the nature of their relations with the governing authorities and the degree of freedom they were allowed when putting forth demands. It is doubtful if the traditional clan leadership that headed the Arab municipalities then was aware of the financial issue. As we have seen, the records of local council meetings in the localities in our sample indicate concentration on a limited number of issues in the early 1970s, and budgeting was restricted to covering the running costs for a minimum of basic services such as education, waterworks and road maintenance.

In the late 1970s, a younger and better educated leadership began replacing the traditional leadership. Although most of the competing groups in Arab municipal elections retained a clan character, the hamulas had to place well-educated nominees at the head of their lists in order to increase their chances of success. Contact with the Jewish sector also contributed to raising the expectations of the Arab population in Israel. Comparison with the Jewish local authorities made the Arabs aware of the unequal status of the two populations and confronted them with the necessity of closing the gap. Increased political consciousness among the Arabs and their exposure to the Jewish population strengthened their awareness of the need for an organized lobby that would employ all legitimate means available to advance their interests. From the mid-1970s several nationwide Arab organizations began to form: the Committee for Defense of the Land, the National Committee of Arab Students, the Druze Initiative Committee, and others. The major organization was the National Committee of Chairmen of Arab Local Authorities (the National Committee; the subject of Chapter 5). The National Committee was the main body behind the demands of the Arabs local authorities and it elaborated ways of conducting a public struggle for them.

The Financial Crisis in Arab Local Authorities

A memorandum on the financial situation of the Arab local authorities presented to the government by the National Committee on 13 December 1985 listed the major causes of the financial difficulties faced by the Arab municipalities. The main points of the memorandum were the following:

1. From the founding of the State of Israel until 1976 national government participation in grants to the Arab local authorities was based on a per capita allocation of IS0.70 a year, whereas in the Jewish sector national government participation was based on services provided with a per capita allocation from 5 to 50 times higher than that figure.

2. Before the opening of credit lines in 1979 the Arab sector received nothing for development apart from construction funds allocated by the Ministry of Education and the national lottery. This meant that all government ministry doors were closed to the Arab public and its governing bodies; the Jewish municipalities, however, were receiving development funds from all the government ministries (such as Housing and Defense) as well as special grants and donations from various Jewish institutions and agencies, some of which acted in cooperation with the government. An example of the latter is Project Renewal, the urban renewal program, which since 1977 has operated in underprivileged Jewish areas but only recently has been extended to include some Arab neighborhoods in mixed-population cities. The share of loan repayment in the regular municipal budget is 5-7 percent in Arab municipalities while in Jewish municipalities it is 20-25 percent.

3. Since 1977 all Jewish municipalities have expanded their budgets on a “basket of services.” The Ministry of the Interior together with the local authorities determined the level of services according to local needs in education, health, public parks, and basic infrastructure (roads, sewage, etc.). The Interior Ministry recognized the costs of maintaining and developing these services and allocated budgets accordingly. In the same period Arab sector budgets have been drawn up according to the declared policy of expanding services rather than a “basket.” There has indeed been a certain improvement in services in the Arab sector during these years, but the rate of improvement in the Jewish sector has been even faster. The discrepancies have remained much the same as before, and in certain cases have even grown wider. The main difference remained in the allocation of development budgets. These are still not being allocated according to the needs of the Arab localities, as had been proposed by the local authorities.

4. Since 1984 municipal budgets have been drawn up according to a budget framework based on the budgets approved in 1983. This framework allows for no expansion of existing services or for the recognition of any new ones; it freezes provision of services at the 1983 level. But in fact, because the cost of providing these services has risen in excess of the amount budgeted for them there has been a significant decline in both their quality and quantity, even though hardly any basic services are provided in most Arab municipalities and even sanitation and streetlighting are scarcely maintained. The many declarations about budgets not being cut and about the expansion of services in the Arab sector are neither serious nor true, and their object is purely rhetorical.

5. The argument that the Arabs do not pay taxes is groundless. Property taxes make up 18 percent of the budget in the Jewish municipalities and 15 percent in the Arab municipalities; but in reality only 12 percent of municipal income is collected in this manner in the Arab sector, compared with 11 percent in the Jewish sector.

6. During fiscal years 1983-1985 the real value of Arab local authority budgets declined by one-third in US dollar terms.

7. The self-generated income of the Arab local authorities increased from 20 percent of the regular budget in 1984 to 30 percent in 1985, while government participation in grants decreased from 30 percent to 20 percent in the same period.

A number of facts indicate the disparity in the budgets of Arab and of Jewish municipalities:

a. The total budget for local municipalities was NIS1.3 billion in 1985, of which the Arab municipalities received NIS30 million, or about 2.3 percent of the total. The Arab population living under the jurisdiction of the Arab municipalities comprises 12 percent of the total population of Israel. The annual sum per capita in the Arab sector was thus NIS60 (NIS = New Israeli Sheqalim).

b. The average sum budgeted per capita in Arab municipal budgets is 25-30 percent of that in the Jewish municipal budgets.

c. The development budget per capita in the Arab sector did not exceed NIS5 in 1985.

d. The sum total of the budget for the Arab municipalities amounts to less than 10 percent of the sum that the Arab public pays into the state's treasury. For these and other reasons, deficits have accumulated and the Arab local authorities' debts amount to more

than NIS20 million. (This figure is based on the report to the Ministry of the Interior bv the Arab municipalities in November 1987).

For several years, this situation has prevented many municipalities from paying their employees on time, which has led to prolonged strikes in many of them. Since hardly any development work has been carried out during these years, the continuation of the few municipal services currently supplied in the Arab sector is seriously threatened (Memorandum of the National Committee of Chairmen of Arab Local Authorities 1985).

Government officials and public figures have became increasingly aware of the Arab municipalities' financial crisis. In a speech to the Knesset on 5 September 1984, MK Shoshana Arbeli-Almozlino (chairwoman of the Interior Committee in that Knesset) stated:

> It is urgent that the municipalities in the Arab and Druze sectors be advanced, and the Interior Minister ought to devote special attention to this problem and its solution, for upon this largely depends their integration into Israeli society and their feeling that they have equal rights and are entitled to receive what is deservedly theirs. During my term as chairwoman of the Interior Committee of the Tenth Knesset, I have visited many Arab villages, and both I and many other MKs have presented their problems to the Interior Committee, as have representatives from the Center for Local Government and council chairmen from the Arab sector. To my great regret the problems have not yet been solved and the Arab local authorities are extremely concerned by the financial straits in which they find themselves. I recently visited Jisr Az-Zarqa several times… It is to the great shame of the State of Israel that in… the 1980s there is still a village so neglected that it has a budget of NIS 35,000, no development budget, no development plans and "no nothing". Why should not this village receive assistance so it may contend with its problems and solve them, at least to provide services on a minimal level?

We shall now attempt an understanding of the various aspects of Arab local authority budgets by analyzing data published by the Ministry of the Interior, the Central Bureau of Statistics and the State Comptroller, in combination with our interviews with the heads of Arab local authorities. First we shall compare the Jewish and the

Arab populations on the national level and then we shall make specific comparisons between the seven municipalities in the Arab sector and seven in the Jewish sector, as a representative sample. Despite the similarity in the overall structure of budgets for all municipalities in the country, there are notable differences between the budget items in the two sectors. As previously mentioned, one of the main factors in determining the size and scope of a budget is the level of municipal services provided. Many services are not provided by the Arab municipalities. "Most Arab towns lack, for example, a sewage system, a swimming pool, decent playgrounds, sports gymnasiums, day care centers, and dental clinics" (*Ha'aretz*, 31 July 1981). Nor do Arab municipalities bear any part of the cost of local religious services. Another example is the item "advertising and public relations," which appears in the budgets of most Jewish municipalities (see State Archives, State Comptroller's Report 1985) but can hardly be found in the budgets of Arab municipalities.

The typical regular budget consists of five categories of income and five of expenditure.

INCOME	EXPENDITURE
1. Municipal taxes	1. General and fiscal administration
2. Local services	2. Local services
3. State services	3. State services
4. Projects	4. Projects
5. Participation	5. Funds and deficits

The categories of income could be reduced to two major ones if we consider the source of income: local revenues and revenues transferred from external sources such as government participation (including loans and special grants given for the purpose of balancing the budget). Local revenues chiefly consist of property taxes, fees and levies. The property taxes are of two kinds: property rates and business taxes. The fees are payments to the local municipality in return for particular services such as the furnishing of permits, health services, property maintenance, etc. The self-income of the local municipalities is also supplemented by the populace's participation in the financing and maintenance of municipal projects such as water supply, markets, slaughterhouses, industrial centers, trade centers, etc.

The Arab municipalities like the others derive their revenues come from two sources: local revenues and income from national government sources and various other transfers. Local revenues are primarily from taxes, especially property tax. The business tax is very low compared with the Jewish sector because of the limited

number of well-developed industries and enterprises in the Arab towns. Local revenues also include income from fees for services. The Interior Ministry participates in the regular budget and with grants. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs contribute to covering the expenses of state-provided services. The Ministry of Housing participates heavily in financing projects for the Jewish population while hardly contributing to Arab municipal budgets apart from tiny allocations to several Druze towns. It need hardly be stated that the Ministry of Defense has virtually nothing to do with Arab localities.

Budgets over the Long Term in Arab Local Governments*

* The data in this section are based principally on figures from the Central Bureau of Statistics.

Analysis of the budgets of Arab local authorities as compared with Jewish local authorities shows that overtime, both qualitative and quantitative changes have occurred. Although the Arab population comprised 32 percent of the total population of Israel administered by local councils in 1970, the Arab population received only 6 percent of the budget set aside for the local councils. The proportion of the general grant to local authorities that the Arab population received was even smaller—3 percent. The grant constituted 10 percent of the total regular budget in the Arab municipalities that year as compared with 20 percent in the Jewish sector. On the other hand, taxes accounted for 29 percent of the regular budget for the Arab municipalities, compared with 18 percent for the Jewish municipalities (Table 4.1).

By 1975, the proportion of the Arab population in the total population of Israel's local councils had grown to 34 percent. The proportion of the budget allotted to the Arab municipalities also increased: 10 percent of the total budget and 6 percent of the grant. However, the gap between the Jewish and the Arab local councils in terms of the share of taxes in the total budget narrowed. An investigation found that there was no relationship between a town's size and its tax revenues as a proportion of its total budget in either the Arab or the Jewish sectors. On the other hand, the proportion of the grant in the budget is greater in the smaller localities in both sectors, in small towns and villages, the income from local revenue

is negligible, so that the share of the grant in the budget increases {Appendix, Table 4.1).

By the early 1980s the situation of the local councils as described had not significantly changed. The discrepancy in the income levels of Jewish and Arab cities was no less marked than the income and budget discrepancies between Jewish and Arab local councils. It is primarily a difference between those benefiting from local revenues and those not. The three Arab cities, Shefar-ʿAm (18,000), Nazareth (45,000), and Umm al-Fahm (21,000), are small. Their population consists mainly of laborers; enterprises, industrial, commercial or administrative, all of which would be liable for business taxes, are few. Income from property taxes is also low, accounting for 8 percent of the local budget as compared with 20 percent in the Jewish cities. It is primarily due to these circumstances that the proportion of the government grant in the municipal budgets is relatively larger in the Arab cities: 31 percent as compared with 21 percent for the Jewish cities. This means that although Arab local authorities receive only 4 percent of the total government grant, they are nevertheless extremely dependent upon it to supplement their very meager local revenues (Appendix, Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 reveals a complex picture. The population under the jurisdiction of the Arab local councils steadily increased and by the early 1980s comprised approximately 40 percent of the total population of the local councils in Israel. The Arab population's share of the budget for local councils also grew, from 6 percent in the 1970s to 17 percent in 1982. The relative growth in the budget of the Arab local councils was greater than their growth in population. But it is still far below the share they merit: only 17 percent of the budget for 40 percent of the population. The discrepancy is greatest when the three largest Arab municipalities (cities) are added to the picture, but since most of the Arabs live in "villages" we shall concentrate on the local councils. These have enjoyed a real growth in their share of the total grant. In 1970 they received 3 percent of the total; by 1982 their share had grown to 13 percent. Calculating for the growth of population during that period, this means a doubling of the Arab share in real terms since the 1970s. But the disparity between the Arab local councils' cut and their Jewish counterparts' is still considerable. The Arab councils receive one-third of the share of the grant to which they should be entitled. In other words, if these funds were allocated according to population size the Arab local councils would receive three times the amount allotted them at present.

Comparison between 1982 and 1984 indicates a steady, if very slow, improvement in the budgets of Arab local councils. This trend is particularly evident with regard to the grant. The share of the Arab local councils increased from 13 percent to 18 percent of the total grant. However, this is still less than half of the amount they should be allotted according to their proportion in the total population. Although the Arabs account (1984) for 42 percent of the population under the jurisdiction of local councils in Israel, they still receive only 19 percent of the total budget of the local councils (Table 4.2).

Before the 1980s, then, the Arab local council budgets hardly underwent any real change despite an increase in the Arab population. This change eventually came about following certain measures that were implemented by the Interior Ministry in response to the continued demands of the Arab municipalities. Establishment officials attribute this shift to the understanding they have shown for the needs of the Arab population. The then chairman of the Knesset Finance Committee, MK Shlomo Lorincz, said in a 8 November 1982 press release that these facts should be made public along with any problems still outstanding. In fiscal year 1981 local government

Table 4.1: Budgets of the Arab councils in 1970 and the percentage accounted for by taxes and government grants compared with Jewish local councils (IL 000s)*

	Arab Local Councils				Jewish Local Councils				
	Taxes		Government Grant			Taxes		Government Grant		
Total Budget	Amount	% of budget	Amount	% of budget	Total Budget	Amount	% of budget	Amount	% of budget	TOTAL
10,210	2,981	29%	980	10%	169,759	29,789	18%	32,520	20%	
Population	182,200 (32%)					381,200 (68%)				583,400 (100%)
Proportion of total budget	6%					94%				100%
Proportion of gov'nt grant	3%					97%				100%

Table 4.2: Revenues of Jewish and Arab local councils over time according to type of Revenue (in %)

	Total Population*		Total portion of national budgets		Total portion of government grants		Portion of council budget acc'td for by: taxes		property taxes		government grants	
Year	Jewish	Arab	Jewish	Arab	Jewish	Arab	Jewish	Arab	Jewish	Arab	Jewish	Arab
1970	68%	32%	94%	6%	97%	3%	--	--	18%	29%	20%	10%
1975	66%	34%	90%	10%	94%	6%	17%	21%	4%	9.5%	35%	19.5%
1982	60%	40%	83%	17%	87%	13%	14%	13%	7%	7%	41%	30%
1984	58%	42%	81%	19%	82%	18%	13%	12%	--	--	37%	34%

* 'Total Population' refers to the total populations under the jurisdiction of the local councils in Israel, not to the entire population of Israel.

N.B. The table includes data about local Councils. It does not include the data pertaining to municipalities and regional councils, either in the Jewish or the Arab sectors. In the data for the year 1984, there is no longer any distinction between property tax and other forms of taxation. Property tax accounts for approximately 95% of the total taxes collected by the councils.

budgets were cut by 7.5 percent, and in 1982 there was a further cut of 5 percent. This curtailment did not affect the Arab local authorities, which even enjoyed a real increment of 10 percent in their budgets. "While during these years there was a manpower cut in the Jewish sector, there was a 5 percent increase in the Arab sector workforce; in 1981 the government grant was raised by an average of 80 percent in the Jewish sector, while in the Arab sector it increased by 155 percent; in 1982 the grant to the Jewish sector was cut by 15 percent, whereas in the Arab sector it grew by 11 percent."

In our interviews with local Arab leaders they noted that there has indeed been an improvement with regard to budgets. Ahmed Abu Asba, Chairman of the Jatt Council, points to several achievements:

> There has been a real improvement of services in the Arab sector over the last four years. We have attained a real increase in the level of services, 18 percent on average, in the last few years there has been a real addition of 10 percent to the budget for improvement of services, and we have also made real progress regarding development; we have received special development budgets in addition to the regular budgets; we have received a special credit line for development; and some of us have received large sums and have developed quite a number of services. Most of the Arab local councils have even received an allocation for sports activities, unheard of in earlier times… These achievements have been attained since the National Committee was organized and began to function as a pressure group in the government ministries.

The chairman of the National Committee endorsed this statement:

> It is only by closing our ranks that we have managed to attain substantial achievements. The unified stand taken by the Arab municipal leaders in support of the National Committee has forced government officials to listen to our demands. Those Arab heads of municipalities who have had close ties with the establishment and kept their distance from the National Committee have also benefited indirectly from the Committee's actions: establishment functionaries have made efforts to reward them for their cooperation (see Chapter 5).

Nimmer Murkous, chairman of the Kafar Yasif Council, observed:

> Indeed, there has been a certain improvement in the level of services and budgets, but the gap between the existing state of affairs and that desired is still great. When I take stock of my situation, I compare myself to my Jewish neighbors, not to my difficult situation of several years ago. Any comparison with the Jewish sector will show that there is still an enormous difference between the Jewish and Arab populations, and that drastic measures still must be taken in order to bridge this gap.

In any event, the representatives of the establishment and the Arab population agree on many points: progress has been made, but the discrepancy between the two populations persists and further steps must be taken to improve the situation.

A weakness in the Arab local government budgets preventing them from developing their services is the development budget. Until 1976 the budgets of a number of municipalities were practically without any item specifically assigned to development; the regular Interior Ministry budget allocated on a per capita basis was small. In 1976 the situation changed somewhat. As mentioned, in the Jewish sector the Ministry of the Interior began speaking of budgets drawn up on the basis of a "basket of services," while with regard to the Arab sector a policy of "expansion of services" was adopted. This expansion was also calculated according to the size of the population. The introduction of the basket of services in the Jewish sector enabled budgets to be increased substantially, since they were allocated according to the costs of the services provided. The discrepancy between income and expenditure was covered by a grant.

In 1979 the Interior Ministry introduced a “line of credit” for the Arab local councils. This is constituted as a loan on a per capita basis and is uniform for all Arab municipalities. The line of credit was not intended solely for the Arab municipalities but was conceived primarily for municipalities without a regular, assured source of development funds. However, the development budgets for the Arab municipalities are provided nearly exclusively by the Interior Ministry, whereas in the Jewish sector, as noted, other government ministries contribute substantially to the development budgets. Hence the differences between the municipalities of the two sectors persist, despite the fact that they receive an identical sum of about NIS5 per capita via the line of credit.

It is also the case that in many Arab villages and towns the Interior Ministry does not acknowledge a part of the residents as such, even though they receive all the services provided by the municipality. In the absence of zoning plans for the Arab localities, unlicensed construction has spread outside the limits of municipal jurisdiction. Various groups, mostly refugees from other villages or Bedouin, often settled or were settled on the outskirts of the towns. Although they receive such local services as education, water, health and so on, the Interior Ministry does not take them into account when calculating the municipal budgets. For example, the municipality of Shefar-ʿAm is allocated its budget on the basis of a population of 17,000, the statistic accepted by the ministry. Yet various municipal records show that 22,000 residents are receiving local services. Thus the municipality has to absorb the difference between the actual number of residents and the official figure.

Local Budgets: A Comparison Between Seven Arab and Seven Jewish Selected Localities

To illustrate more vividly the social and political significance of the local budget, let us now turn to a sample of seven Arab localities, representing a cross-section of all the Arab municipalities. For comparison we have also selected seven Jewish towns of roughly the same size as their Arab counterparts and that belong to the same Interior Ministry administrative district. (See a description of the sample in the Preface.)

The data for 1970 are incomplete because we could not gain reliable figures for the budgets of Iksal, Ar'ara, Fassuta and Sakhnin. Therefore the comparison will concentrate on the remaining three pairs of settlements: Shefar-ʿAm—Safed, Daliyat al Karmel—Nesher, and Taiyibe—Pardes Hanna.

The average ratio between the budgets of these localities is about 13:1 in favor of the Jewish councils. The smallest difference in this sample is between Pardes Hanna and Taiyibe (5.1:1), the greatest between Nesher and Daliyat al Karmel (16.4:1). The gap separating similar-sized Arab and Jewish towns and villages in the same district is enormous. It is even more strongly accentuated in the distribution of government grants, which favors the Jewish councils by an average ratio of approximately 14:1. (The difference between a local authority's income and expenditure was covered in the past by loans and is covered in the present by grants from the Interior Ministry.)

The low budgets and the small grants of the Arab councils tend to increase the share of municipal income accruing from local taxes. In Shefar-ʿAm and Safed the proportion is equal; 24 percent of the total. The figures for the other pairs in the sample are: Daliyat al Karmel 40 percent/Nesher 21 percent; Taiyibe 32 percent/Pardes Hanna 15 percent (data are absent for the other pairs) (Table 4.3).

The average budget gap between the Jewish and Arab local councils narrowed in 1975, yet the ratio remained strongly in favor of the former (8:1). As in 1970, the discrepancy between the government grants offered the two sectors in 1975 was even greater than that between their respective budgets, reaching a ratio of 14:1. At the low end, Pardes Hanna and Taiyibe registered 3.4:1 for their budgets and 8.2:1 for their grants. The largest gaps were found in the Hatzor—Iksal pairing: 15.9:1 for their budgets and 26.5:1 for the grants.

In 1975 the share of local taxes in the municipal budget was again larger in the Arab councils, as in 1970. The Jewish local councils collected a larger sum in taxes per capita than did the Arab councils: in 1970 the resident of a Jewish locale paid on average four times more in local taxes than the resident of an Arab locale; but the local services the Jewish councils provided their residents were eight times the value of the local services provided to Arab residents.

Cases of discrimination can also be found within each of the sectors being compared. For example, among the Arab localities in our sample, the 1975 budget of Taiyibe was larger than that of Shefar-ʿAm even though the latter holds the status of a city and the

two populations are approximately the same size, Ar'ara's budget is larger than that of Iksal even though their populations are of similar size. Discrimination also exists in the distribution of government grants within each sector. The grant to Fassuta is higher than that to Ar'ara although the population of the latter is 2.5 times larger than the former. Sakhnin's population is larger than that of Daliyat al Karmel, yet the latter receives a larger grant. These disparities hint at the possibility that the government treats different towns and villages on a discriminatory basis. Among the corresponding Jewish towns, the discrepancy between Nesher and Kiryat Tivon is worth mentioning, Nesher enjoying a larger budget and government grant even though Kiryat Tivon has a larger population. The budget of Safed is 1.5 times the budget of Pardes Hanna, although they have the same number of residents. On the other hand, the difference between the grants to these two towns is small. It would appear that the discrimination among the Arab towns and villages in the sample is relatively greater than the discrimination practiced among their Jewish counterparts (Table 4.4).

A significant improvement in the budgets of local councils has been made over the last decade, starting in the mid-1970s and gaining momentum in the 1980s. The discrepancy between the budgets of the Jewish and Arab local councils in our sample has steadily diminished, and by 1982 it stood at a ratio of 3:1 for their respective budgets and 5:1 for government grants. (Table 4 5). The most recently received data concerning the budgets of the sample local councils for 1984-85 indicate a continued narrowing of the gap between Jewish and Arab local councils; but that gap still stands at 2.5:1 for their respective budgets and 3.5:1 for government grants.

It is observed that the greatest improvement (or narrowing of the discrepancy) is concentrated in specific locales or regions. The information at our disposal indicates that the economic, political, and legal criteria that have always guided official policy in the Jewish sector, that is demarcation of development zones, security zones, underprivileged neighborhoods, etc., have not been applied in the Arab sector. Here decisions about allocations to a particular community are not made in a public, legal manner but on a personal basis at the administrative level, and as such are subject to the whims of individual Interior Ministry bureaucrats.

Table 4.3: Revenues of Arab local authorities in sample, 1970, compared with sample of Jewish local authorities* (ILOOOs)

Jewish Local Authorities						Arab Local Authorities						Ratio of budgets of Arab: Jewish local authorities	Ratio of gov't. grants to Arab: Jewish local authorities
Local Council	Total bdgt.	taxes	% of bdgt.	gov't grant	% of bdgt.	Local Council	Total bdgt.	taxes	% of bdgt.	gov't. grant	% of bdgt.		
Safed	6134	1474	24	1350	22	Shefar'Am-	857	209	24	132	15	1: 7.1	1: 10.2
Hatzor	2375	140	5	398	17	Iksal	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Nesher	4822	991	21	869	18	Daliyat al Karmel	293	117	40	54	18	1: 16.4	1: 16
Pardes Hanna	5432	831	15	1190	22	Taiyibe	1051	340	32	94	9	1: 5.1	1: 12.6
Kiryat Tivon	3221	936	29	88	3	Sakhnin	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Zichron Ya'akov	2712	736	27	458	17	Ar'ara	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Shlomi	795	38	5	267	34	Fassouta	--		--	--	--	--	--

* Complete data were not available from several of the Arab local councils in the sample.

Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Local Authorities in Israel, 1970-71: Fiscal Data*, No. 387, pp. 13-19.

Table 4.4: Revendes of Arab local authorities in sample, 1975, compared with Jewish local authorities in sample (ILOOOs)

Jewish Local Authorities						Arab Local Authorities						Ratio of bdgts of Arab:Jewish Local Authorities	Ratio of gov't. grant to Arab: Jewish Local Authorities
Local Author-ity	Total Budget	taxes *	% of bdgt.	gov't. grant	% of bdgt.	Local Authority	Total Budget	Taxes *	% of bdgt.	gov't. grant	% of bdgt.		
Safed	33,806	768 6576	2% 19%	8240	24%	Shefar-'Am	5,903	259 819	4% 14%	1552	26%	1: 5.7	1: 5.3
Hatzor	15,468	145 634	1% 4%	6404	41%	Iksal	969	135 292	14% 30%	241	25%	1: 15.9	1: 26.5
Neshcr	20,830	1159 3621	6% 17%	8050	39%	Daliyat al Karmel	2,632	245 682	7% 26%	718	27%	1: 7.9	1: 11.2
Pardes Hanna	22,618	1039 3939	5% 17%	7163	32%	Taiyibe	6,595	630 1433	10% 22%	870	13%	1: 3.4	1: 8.2
Kiryat Tivon	17,067	1163 3646	7% 21%	5683	33%	Sakhnin	3,223	223 532	7% 16%	681	21%	1: 5.2	1: 8.3
Zichron Ya'akov	9,671	622 3197	6% 33%	3351	35%	Ar'ara	1,620	196 349	12% 21%	140	9%	1: 6	1: 23.9
Shlomi	6,115	16 277	1% 5%	2492	41%	Fassouta	404	46 88	11% 22%	208	51%	1: 15.1	1: 12
TOTAL						TOTAL						1: 8.0	1: 14

* The item 'taxes' relates separately to property taxes (the lower figure) and to 'other forms of taxes' (the higher figure).

Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Local Authorities in Israel, 1975-76: Fiscal Data*, No. 554, pp.45-50.

Table 4.5: Revenues of Arab local authorities in sample, 1982, compared with Jewish local authorities in sample (ISOOOs)

Jewish Local Authorities						Arab Local Authorities						Ratio of bdgts of Arab: Jewish Local Authority	Ratio of gov't. grant to Arab: Jew Local Authority
Local Author-ity	Total Budget	taxes *	% of bdgt.	gov't. grant	% of bdgt.	Local Authority	Total Budget	taxes *	% of bdgt.	gov't. grant	% of bdgt.		
Safed	220,180	15,130 31,139	7% 14%	100,439	46%	Shefar-'Am	77,828	4,945 10,155	6% 13%	19,439	25%	1: 2.8	1: 5.2
Hatzor	90,628	1,675 6,863	2% 8%	53,000	58%	Iksal	16,459	1,310 2,087	8% 13%	4,139	25%	1: 5.5	1: 12.8
Nesher	99,171	14,374 24,745	14% 25%	33,534	34%	Daliyat al Karmel	35,239	1,926 4,038	5% 11%	15,382	44%	1: 2.8	1: 1.2
Pardes Hanna	137,796	11,114 26,007	8% 19%	52,113	38%	Taiyibe	87,491	5,386 10,003	6% 11%	22,217	25%	1: 1.6	1: 2.3
Kiryat Tivon	98,273	19,654 27,306	20% 28%	35,756	36%	Sakhnin	44,813	2,769 5,692	6% 13%	5,817	13%	1: 2.2	1: 6.1
Zichron Ya'akov	55,093	8,113 18,803	15% 34%	13,921	25%	Ar'ara	31,941	821 2,050	3% 6%	10,969	34%	1: 1.7	1: 1.3
Shlomi	36,777	1,008 3,146	3% 9%	25,061	68%	Fassouta	6,967	593 1,005	8% 14%	4,096	59%	1: 5.3	1: 6.1
Overall average												1:3	1:5

* The item 'taxes' relates separately to property taxes (the lower figure) and to 'other forms of taxes' (the higher figure).

Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Local Authorities in Israel, Fiscal Data*, 1982-83.

We have noted that an improvement in the situation generates various types of discrimination. The budgets for the years 1976-1983 were drawn up by the "persuasion method," whereby negotiations were conducted between the local council chairman and the Interior Ministry district commissioner. The chairman of the Dabburiye council, known for his close ties with former district commissioner Israel Koenig, describes that period as "the heyday of those who could persuade, the movers, who knew how to get things done… Whoever headed a council and knew his business could promote his interests." In interviews with the heads of the Sha'ab and Baqa Al-Gharbiyye councils (referred to in the previous chapter), they specifically mentioned the importance of having connections with the establishment political parties as a means of obtaining benefits and promoting local interests.

Until 1983, the district commissioner enjoyed extensive powers in determining the size of the local councils' budgets and grants. Many of the Arab councils suffered during this period from what they call *sayasset a-shatib* (cancellation policy). The district commissioners (especially in the northern district) or their representatives, used to cancel many items from budget estimates submitted to them as they

saw fit. Occasionally the proposed budget was slashed by 50 percent or more. For example, the budget estimate proposed by the municipality of Shefar-ʿAm for the fiscal year 1980/81 amounted to IL212 million, of which only IL79 million was authorized—a real decrease of 25 percent compared with to the previous year (*Al-lttihad*, 18 August 1980). That same year a district commissioner slashed 40 percent of the budget proposed by Kafar Yasif (the estimate came to IL 56.4 million). The per capita budget decreased from an average of IL17.000 in Fiscal year 1979/80 to IL10.000 in 1980/81. In a public statement circulated on 1 November 1982 by the National Committee (Memoranda of the National Committee of Chairman of Arab Local Authorities 1983) as part of the preparations for a subsequent strike, the manner in which the district commissioners handled budgeting, which caused much damage to the municipal administrations, was strongly criticized. "Each district commissioner determines the budget as he sees fit, and not according to the council's position. Nor do the approved budgets materialize on schedule, which either paralyzes the municipality or else pushes it deeper into debt."

Taxes and Local Income

Government bureaucracy, and the Ministry of the Interior in particular, generally put the blame for the financial crisis on the local administrations: "The rate of taxes and fees in the Arab sector is low, and the Arab councils do not make enough of an effort to intensify their collection. There is also the widespread claim that the financial difficulties of the Arab councils are the result of deviations from the authorized budgets" (*Davar,* 12 October 1982).

Clearly, political arguments of this sort are too complex to be conclusively proven or disproven. But our available information indicates that negligence and financial irregularities are not at all characteristic of the Arab councils.

Fixing the rate of property tax, the main source of tax revenue, is problematic and inconsistent in the municipalities. For example, the property tax on a residence is subject to three criteria: the size of the house (in square meters or number of rooms), the type of structure, and the neighborhood. These criteria are flexible and largely dependent on the assessment of the local authority. Some municipalities (Arab and Jewish alike) have continued to fix the tax

rate according to the number of rooms; others have switched to a system based on the total area (in square meters). Taxation by number of rooms causes many injustices because the size of the rooms is not considered. The State Comptroller called attention to this inequality on several occasions after investigating certain municipalities, and requested that the property tax be calculated according to area. Most local authorities in Israel have in fact already changed to the recommended system, but in both the Jewish and Arab sectors there are still some localities which persist in using the old system (State Archives, State Comptroller's Report 1985, 922-23).

Business taxes, which account for a significant portion of local government revenues, are still of marginal importance in the Arab sector. As noted, this is because most Arab municipalities are local councils with few taxable businesses under their jurisdiction; and inquiries into local government budgets have shown that businesses that did exist were charged a very low rate until the mid-1970s (State Archives, State Comptroller's Report on Shefar-ʿAm 1981: 42). Since then the rate of taxation has steadily risen in accordance with government directives. For example, the State Comptroller's investigation of the Nazareth municipality revealed that the tax rates fixed in a November 1966 amendment to the municipal by-laws had remained unchanged for eight years, until the end of 1974. Under an amendment promulgated in January 1975, the tax ceiling was raised from its previous level of IL2,000 to IL10,000. A subsequent amendment to the by-laws from September 1977 raised the tax ceiling to IL20.000 and the tax rates for various types of businesses were raised by 30-50 percent (State Archives, State Comptroller's Report on Nazareth 1980: 65).

In a public statement circulated by the National Committee, the Arab local authorities were asked to raise property and business taxes to the maximum rate allowed by law. Records of National Committee meetings of the early 1980s show that constant stress has been laid upon the necessity of raising the tax rates and intensifying tax collection procedures, in order to increase the Arab local budgets. In various places taxes were raised by 200-300 percent, in some places even by 500 percent (*Davar*, 12 October 1982).

In a report on the village of Arrabe, the State Comptroller noted that in fiscal year 1982 the council fixed a general property tax of IS15 for all buildings within its bounds, and IS51 for every dunam of land. In December 1982 the council decided to impose a surcharge on the property tax of IS4.50 for every square metre of

building and IS1.50 for every dunam of land. For Fiscal year 1983 the property tax was set at IS40 for every square metre of building, IS20 for every dunam of land serving industrial purposes, and IS15 for each dunam of agricultural Sand. This source of revenue accounted for about 6 percent of the council's total regular income in fiscal year 1982 (State Archives, State Comptroller's Report on Arrabe 1984: 29).

We have already observed that tax revenues constituted a larger component in Arab local government budgets than in Jewish local government budgets until the 1980s. At present there is a convergence between the two sectors.

The share of property taxes as part of the total budget has been in decline in recent years because of an increase in income from other sources, especially government allocations. In 1982 property taxes accounted for an equal percentage of the budgets for both Jewish and Arab local councils.

A customary index of the efficiency of local taxation is the percentage of taxes collected out of the total annual levy. In the second half of 1984 the State Comptroller's office investigated collection of property taxes and water and sewage fees for the fiscal years 1981-1983 in several local councils in the central, northern and southern districts (State Archives, State Comptroller's Report 1985: 916-924). The data show that in the 1983 there was a real increase in the sums being levied by all local councils. The property tax rise in the Arab local councils was among the highest. In Umm El-Fahm, there was a 53 percent real rise in levies in 1982 over 1981, and in 1983 the increase was by 79 percent. In Deir Hanna there was a 67 percent increase in 1982 and a 33 percent rise in 1983. Apart from the Jewish local council of Sderot (where there was a real increase of 271 percent in 1982 and of 214 percent in 1983), the tax rises in the Arab local councils were the highest. In the Jewish local councils of Azur and Kiryat Malachi there was even negative growth in the amount of taxes collected.

The tax collection rate in all the local councils investigated was low, and the State Comptroller recommended taking concrete steps towards enforcing tax collection. A comparison between Arab and Jewish local authorities indicates that the collection rate in the former group is at the center of the scale, the lowest collection rates being found in a number of Jewish local authorities. In Ofakim, for example, only 33 percent of the annual levies were collected in 1983, and the percentage of the total amount for collection was 21

percent. The respective figures in Gedera that year were 44 percent and 37 percent, while in Netivot the collection figures reached lows of 17 percent and 15 percent. Analysis of the statistics regarding collection of the annual fees levied for water and sewage systems conveys a similar picture.

The second charge, which attributes the Arab local authorities' financial straits to their cumulative budget deficits, shows a lack of understanding of the situation in Israel and municipal administration the world over. Closer scrutiny reveals that a large annual deficit does not usually indicate a more serious financial situation in the local authority, which depends on its ability to procure loans on easy terms to cover its deficits. At times the annual deficit becomes a source of income for the local authority, when it is financed at one stage or another by grants, consolidation loans and deficit-financing loans offered on easier terms than those prevalent in the market. But the Ministry of the Interior has no clear criteria for making decisions on the financing of budget deficits. The pattern that the authorization of deficit expenditure seems to follow favors the wealthy local authorities and discriminates against the impoverished ones (Mevorach 1981: 268).

The Arab local authorities belong to the "impoverished" category. Their cumulative budget deficit harms them as they are riot provided with grants or advantageous loans, and deficit financing is very costly. In the years of high inflation, the situation worsened owing to delays in the transfer of government funds to local authorities, particularly to the Arab local councils. A review of the correspondence between the National Committee and the Ministry of the interior reveals that this issue has been among the main topics raised by the heads of Arab local government in discussions of their financial straits The same issue also surfaced during most of the meetings that representatives of the Arab local authorities held with officials of the Ministry (see Chapter 5).

Table 4.6: Property Tax as a Proportion of Total Budget in Jewish and Arab Local Councils

Year	Property tax as percentage of total Jewish local budgets	Property tax as percentage of total Arab local budgets
1970	18	29
1975	4	9.5
1980	4.5	9.5
1982	7	7

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics,Fiscal Data: 1970-71; 1975-76; 1980-81; 1982-83.

Local Expenditure and Services Provided

The expenditure of the local authorities is briefly considered here in relation to the type of services provided, such as general administration, local services, state services and other projects, and in relation to the expense items: wages and salaries, operational expenses and others. The services categorized as local and those designated as state services account for the greater part of expenditure of the local authorities. The distinction drawn between local and state services is in fact unclear. Sewage, sanitation, street lighting, certain registration services, local planning, security, public properties, roads and sidewalks, the fire department, interior lighting, maintenance of public places, landscaping, municipal supervision, and the like, are considered local services. Education, culture, health, welfare and religious services are considered state services (cf. Weiss 1979; Ludski 1958). The item "projects" usually includes the following: water, slaughterhouses, assets and factories, commercial enterprises, workshops, residential neighborhoods, stadiums, the electricity grid and so forth. "General administration" includes the salaries of the municipality's chairman and deputies and of the senior administrative staff (secretary, treasurer, accountant, cashier and tax collector), as well as running costs such as car allowances, office equipment etc. Although the "state services" that the local government offers are meant to be covered for the most part by the national government, they frequently become the responsibility of the local authorities in both the Arab and Jewish sectors, for a number of reasons. Whereas the Ministry of the Interior and other ministries set quite distinct standards for the handling of municipal services, there is some vagueness about the

state services. There are substantial differences in this matter between one local authority and another. Government assistance does not usually cover all the costs of state services, and these give rise to a large deficit in local authority budgets. Even when the government does remit its share to cover the costs of these services it is often only after a considerable delay. In the extremely inflationary conditions that prevailed in Israel in the mid-1980s, the local authorities were obliged to take bank loans to cover, albeit temporarily, the government's share.

Such measures took up a large slice of the regular budgets of the local authorities since they had to pay triple-digit interest on the loans. Because the government does not acknowledge responsibility for interest resulting from its delay in transferring its payments, the local authorities must absorb the cost of this interest themselves. A large part of the deficit is in fact interest on arrears (*Al-Ittihad* 1985).

The Ministry of the Interior has shown its awareness of the problem of delayed payments for state services administered at the local level. Director-General of the Ministry stated in an interview that such conduct towards the local authorities "cannot be justified, since they must offer state services which cannot possibly be postponed and therefore, any delay in the payments to which they are entitled actually causes an increase in their expenditure." He observed that the delays in government payments were deliberate, arising from national economic policy of minimizing expenditure (Shtark 1984).

Arab local authorities have been harmed by the postponement of budget approvals and the Interior Ministry's directives that the municipalities operate within the same budgetary bounds as in the previous year. Sometimes budget approval has been delayed for over eight months after the beginning of the fiscal year. Until the new budget was approved the local authority was permitted to spend a monthly sum equalling one-twelfth of the annual budget of the previous year. Once the new budget was approved, the government ordinarily did not delay payment of the difference for the months already gone by (Memorandum of the National Chairman of Arab Local Authorities, November 1982).

We analyzed expenditure in the same way as we have analyzed income, with a close examination over a period of time and a comparison with Jewish municipalities on the national level and in a selected sample of Arab and Jewish localities.

Table 4.7 shows a significarti difference in the share of different services in the total budget and in type of activity between the large urban municipalities and the smaller local councils. In the former, local services consume a far greater part of the total expenditure than in the latter. In the Jewish sector, local services constitute 29 percent of the municipalities' total expenditure as opposed to 19 percent in the local councils; in the Arab sector the figures are 30 percent and 17 percent respectively. In the large municipalities, Jewish and Arab alike, salaries account for a greater portion of expenditure than in the local councils. The figures for the Jewish sector are 44 percent in the municipalities compared with 38 percent in the local councils, and in the Arab sector 53 percent compared with 38 percent, respectively.

In the Jewish urban municipalities state services take up a far greater part of the budget than in the Arab urban municipalities—49 percent as opposed to 33 percent. By contrast, expenditure is quite similar in composition in both the Arab and Jewish local councils in terms of type of services and type of activities. The difference lies in the sum expended per capita. Since most Arab local authorities are local councils, we shall here concern ourselves with a comparative summary of expenditures by Jewish and Arab local councils over a period of time.

Table 4.8 shows that the expenditure structure was similar for the two population groups over a period of time with regard to the type of service, except in the category of local services. In the case of Jewish local authorities, local services expenditure is almost double that for the Arab population. As for the type of service, the principal difference between the Arab and Jewish sectors lies in the amount budgeted for wages and in the catch-all item "other expenditures". The wage item takes up more of the budget in the Arab local authorities. While this item took up 38 percent of the total expenditure of the two sectors in 1970, the Jewish local councils spent only 30 percent on it in 1975 as opposed to the Arab local councils' 45 percent. In 1982 the figures were 38 percent and 44.5 percent respectively. In 1984, the Arab local councils expended 60 percent of their budgets on wages, as compared to 41 percent in the Jewish sector. In concrete terms, this means that in the Arab sector the bulk of the budget has become a burden on the Arab local councils at the expense of services.

On the other hand, the Jewish local councils allocated a greater part of the budget to the item "other expenditures." This item includes participation in expedient costs, donations, loan payments, principal, interest and linkage to inflation. In 1984/85 about 24

percent of Jewish local government budgets went to the repayment of loans already received for development of local projects. This item accounted for only some 10 percent of the total expenditure of Arab local authorities.

Jatt Council Chairman Ahmed Abu Asba stated in an interview:

> Nowadays a large part of the Jewish municipal budgets is listed for the repayment of loans for services that have already been developed, while we (Arabs) are given minuscule sums for development. At the Ministry of the Interior we are told that we do not need special funds because we do not have a lot of outstanding loans. This means that we are discriminated against twice over: first when the development funds are handed out and again when we do not receive the special grant for loan repayment which the Jewish local governments receive, on the argument that we do not have a deficit resulting from such loans.

The expenditure of about half of the Arab local council budget on wages, in contrast to the low sums on services, seriously harms Arab local government operation. In our interviews several heads of local councils expressed their dissatisfaction at having become mere clerks whose main and sometimes sole responsibility was to ensure that local authority workers got their salaries. One said: “Without development funds and with services frozen at their present level the successful council chairman these days is one who can make sure that the employees receive their salaries on time, or at least before the next strike.” Tawfiq Zayyad, mayor of Nazareth since 1975, charged that “he and his deputies had been employed, since their election to office, as clerks in every respect, being endlessly required to see to it that the municipal employees’ salaries arrived on time” (*Ha’aretz*, 31 July 1981). One of the resolutions passed at a meeting of Arab local government chairmen on 19 September 1982, stated: “We cannot resign ourselves to a situation where the main concern of the council chairman is to see that salaries are paid on time to the employees of his authority, usually without success.”

Table 4.7: Local authority expenditure by municipal status and type of expenditure among Jews and Arabs, 1970 (in IL)

	Type of Service										Type of Activity						
	Municipal Status	General Administr.		Local Services		Government Services		Other Projects		Total	Wages and Salaries		Operational Expenditures		Other Expenditures		Total
JEWS	Municipalities	54,013	7%	230,531	29%	386,617	49%	120,627	15%	100.0	352,162	44%	152,835	19%	286,791	37%	100.0
	Local councils	16,602	9%	32,992	19%	92,241	53%	31,610	19%	100.0	65,698	38%	41,441	24%	66,306	38%	100.0
	Total	70,615	7%	263,523	27%	478,858	50%	152,237	16%	100.0	417,860	13%	194,276	20%	353,097	67%	100.0
	Type of Service									Total	Type of Activity						Total
ARABS	Municipalities	931	15%	1,875	30%	2,068	33%	1,384	22%	100.0	3,323	53%	1,413	23%	1,552	22%	100.0
	Local councils	1,390	14%	1,679	17%	4,487	45%	2,451	24%	100.0	3,808	38%	2,723	27%	3,480	35%	100.0
	Total	2,321	14%	3,554	22%	6,555	40%	3,835	24%	100.0	7,127	44%	4,136	25%	5,002	31%	100.0

Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Local Authorities in Israel, Fiscal Data*, 1970-71, pp. 108-113.

Table 4.8: Summary of expenditure by Arab and Jewish local councils over time, by type of service and type of activity (%)

	Type of Service										Type of Activity					
Year	Total Budget		General Administr.		Local Services		Government Services		Other Projects		Wages and Salaries		Operational Expenditures		Other Expenditures	
	Jews	Arabs	Jews	Arabs	Jews	Arabs	Jews	Arabs	Jews	Arabs	Jews	Arabs	Jews	Arabs	Jews	Arabs
1970	100%	100%	9%	14%	19%	17%	53%	45%	19%	24%	38%	38%	24%	27%	38%	35%
1975	100%	100%	14%	11%	22.5%	13.5%	53.5%	60.5%	10%	15%	30%	45%	29.5%	27.5%	40.5%	27.5%
1982	100%	100%	18%	19%	23.5%	11%	48.5%	54%	10%	16%	38%	44.5%	35%	34%	27%	21.5%
1984	100%	100%	26%	22%	20%	15%	46%	52%	8%	11%	41%	60%	35%	30%	24%	10%

Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Local Authorities in Israel, Fiscal Data* 1970/71; 1975/76; 1982/83; 1984/85.

Table 4.9: Income and expenditures of Jewish and Arab local councils over time (1970-1984)*

Fiscal Year		Jewish Local Councils			Arab Local Councils			Income Ratio (per capita)	Expenditure Ratio (per cap)
		Total Budget	Population (in thousands)	Budget Per Capita	Total Budget	Population (in thousands)	Budget Per Cap.	Jewish: Arab Local Councils	Jewish: Arab Local Councils
1970	Income	167,759	381,2	440	10,120	182,2	56	7.8:1	8.1:1
	Expend.	173,445	381,2	455	10,120	182,2	56		
1975	Income	687,952	421	1,634	75,005	220	340	4.8:1	5.2:1
	Expend.	690,144	421	1,639	69,413	220	315		
1984	Income	67,105,844	498	135	15,910,831	350	45	3.0:1	3.6:1
	Expend.	89,052,022	498	179	17,525,236	350	50		

* Total budget figures for 1970 and 1975 are in IL000s, whereas those for 1984 are in New Israeli Shekels (NIS).

Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Local Authorities in Israel, Fiscal Data*, 1970/71; 1975/76; 1984/85.

To perceive the discrepancy between the level of services enjoyed by the Arab and the Jewish citizen, one must compare not only internal budget structure but most importantly the average per capita expenditure in each of the two sectors.

Table 4.9 demonstrates a considerable difference in both income and expenses of the local authorities of the two sectors, Arab and Jewish. The ratio was 1:8 in the early 1970s, decreased to 1:5 by the mid-1970s and dropped to 1:3 by the mid-1980s. Preliminary figures we have received on the current situation indicate the same ratio (1:3). Unlike the Jewish communities, until the mid-1970s the Arab local councils took care to keep within the budgets allotted them. In 1982 we can see that both population sectors have deviated somewhat from their budgetary frameworks, accumulating budget deficits. But the deficit in the local councils is relatively small compared with the urban municipalities. As noted, a budget deficit is actually advantageous to the larger and wealthier local authorities (cf. Mevorach 1981).

The difference in local government expenditure in the Jewish and Arab sectors is most prominent in the category of local services. In the local councils the ratio was 1:9 in the early 1970s, 1:8 in the mid-1970s and 1:5 in the early 1980s (Appendix, Table 4.3).

It is noteworthy that in 1975 the value per capita services in the Arab local authorities had increased by some 300 percent compared with 1970, but the discrepancy between the Arab and Jewish populations remained owing to the concomitant increase in the level of services in the Jewish sector. In 1984 there was an enormous real increase in per capita services in both the Jewish and Arab sectors, with a greater increase in the Arab sector. The gap narrowed from a ratio of 1:8 in 1970 to 1:3.6 in 1984, although this is still large. (Table 4.9).

The central problem, as the mayor of Shefar-ʿAm put it, is

> the initial backwardness of services in the Arab communities. Whereas the Jewish local authorities had established themselves and developed their local services years earlier, the majority of Arab local authorities had only taken their first steps by the 1970s. Instead of the government giving a boost to the Arab authorities, it only allocated minor sums that barely sufficed to pay salaries to local employees. In addition, until 1976 we hardly ever received development budgets, while the Jewish sector received huge sums from various sources.

The low level of services is an immediate consequence of the low budgets that the Arab communities receive. The great differences that persisted between the two population sectors until the mid-1970s affected the level of services made available to the citizen. Since then there has been a real improvement in the services provided to the Arab population but the budget cuts and freezes have seriously harmed the Arab local authorities, since the weaker elements are inevitably those most affected by such cuts. Yet the policy in recent years of minimizing the extent of budget cuts in the Arab sector has partially, though not entirely, succeeded in closing the gap.

A comparison between a sample of Arab localities and a parallel sample of Jewish localities reveals a picture like that already described at the national level. To demonstrate we shall look only at the data for 1982. In that year the share of local services in the total budget in a sample of Jewish local authorities was larger than in a sample of Arab local authorities (almost 1.5 times more), while wages in the Arab local authorities consumed up a greater part of the total than in the Jewish—64 percent as opposed to 37 percent (almost 1.7 times more).

This can be explained by the fact that within the constraints of the small budgets that the Arab local authorities receive, a large part of the budget had to go on salaries, especially those of employees in the education system. Thus, state services took up 60 percent of the total expenditure of Arab local authorities compared with 49 percent in Jewish local authorities. In the (Arab) village of Fassuta, state services made up only 30 percent of the total budget because there was no high school there, and therefore the share of the local services was increased.

Further investigation reveals that education services accounted for 50-60 percent of the Arab local government budget, a large share of the outlay being on salaries, as mentioned. Since the local authorities are legally bound to supply education services because they are state services, the local education system becomes a burden on the budgets of the Arab local authorities. It cannot be said that education services are properly developed in the Arab communities; on the contrary, payment for rent of classrooms and for renovation, in addition to salaries, use up most of the budget Only four Arab localities (Tamra, Isifya, Shefar-ʿAm, and Umm El-Fahm) have community centers. Many services taken for granted in Jewish schools are lacking in the Arab schools, for example, psychological

services, social workers, parole officers, and others (Ministry of Education, Director-General's Committee Report, 1985).

In any event, local authority expenditure cannot be understood only from absolute percentages of the total budget; the per capita expenditure for each item must also be taken into account. Again taking the 1982 figures we see that while the average per capita expenditure for local services in the sample of Jewish local authorities was IS2699, the figure for the Arab local authorities was IS642, for a ratio of 4.2; 1 in favor of the Jewish population. With state services, the average per capita expenditure was IS5750 for the Jewish local authorities and IS2410 for the Arab local authorities, for a ratio of 2.3:1. Hence, the difference between the two sectors was greater in local services than in state services, for the reasons stated above. The biggest difference exists in the item "other expenditures". The average per capita outlay here was IS3940 for the Jewish local authorities compared with IS410 for the Arab—a ratio of 9.6:1. The difference in operational costs (maintenance of existing services) was relatively small (3.2:1) while the difference in expenditure on projects was larger (10.3:1). These statistics reinforce our conclusion that the main difference between the Jewish and Arab communities is at the level of local services. The larger amount of funds available to the Jewish local authorities and the greater opportunity for receiving development funds, including loans and grants, have led to a large discrepancy in the level of services provided by the local authorities of each sector of the population (Appendix, Table 4.4.)

The smallest difference between the Jewish and the Arab local authorities in per capita expenditure is found in salaries (the ratio is 1.7:1). This strengthens our conclusion about the large share of the Arab sector budget consumed by this item. The strikes that paralyzed Arab local authorities in recent years were usually in protest against delays in payment of their salaries. We found that in the early 1980s hardly any Arab local authority escaped strikes or labor disputes declared for that reason. The Arab local authorities where strikes were the most frequent are: Umm El-Fahm, Kabul, Arrabe, Nazareth and Judeide.

Summary

The fiscal economy serves as a good indication of the relationship and degree of interdependence between the local authorities and the central government. This dependence is especially noticeable in the case of the Arab local authorities, owing to nationwide factors stemming from the nature of local government in Israel and to specific factors arising from the minority status of Arabs. Most Arab localities have the status of small and medium-sized local councils, which in itself makes them "backward" on account of meager resources, a poor starting position, and limited room for maneuver with their budgets. Furthermore, Arab local authorities are excluded from many projects defined as national priorities by the state: development, the Judaization of the Galilee, Project Renewal (slum rehabilitation), the assistance and support given to development areas, etc. Dependence on the Ministry of the Interior as almost the sole source of funding restricts these local authorities' capacity for maneuver still more and increases their reliance on the Ministry bureaucracy.

The figures show that income breaks down into more or less similar categories for the Jewish and the Arab sectors, the main difference being in the size of the budgets, especially the development budgets, which as late as the 1980s favored the Jewish population in a ratio of 3:1. Expenditure, on the other hand, breaks down differently for the two sectors. Most of the budget of an Arab municipality is spent on its employees' salaries, which reduces the chief administrator to the level of a minor official almost entirely concerned with ensuring prompt payment of wages to the workers. Education services, which are state services, take up the greater portion of the expenditure, despite their low level in the Arab schools compared with the Jewish sector. Most of the education costs also accrue from payment of salaries.

The Arab local authorities are obliged to cope with the ever-increasirig needs of the Arab population arising from the social and demographic changes described in previous chapters. These include rapid population growth, increasing demand for local and state services, and a heightened level of expectations, themselves caused by higher levels of education and intensive contact with the Jewish population, which enjoys a far higher level of services. The new generation of Arab municipal leadership founded a nationwide organization as far back as the early 1970s in order to form a lobby and increase their chances of influencing central government. This step led to the formation of the National Committee of Chairmen of Arab Local Authorities, to which we turn in the following chapter.

5
The National Committee of Chairmen of Arab Local Authorities

A significant point was reached in Arab local government in 1974, when the Arabs in Israel established a countrywide organization called the National Committee of Chairmen of Arab Local Authorities {Arabic: al-lajna al-qutriya leruasa⊃ as-sultat almahalliyya al-ʻArabiyya; Hebrew: Havaad Ha'artsi ierashei harashuyut hamekomiyot Haʻarviot; hereinafter the Committee, or the National Committee).* The Committee has gained the capacity to act as the acknowledged representative of the Arabs in Israel and it is sometimes called the "parliament of the Israeli Arabs" (Rekhess 1983:140). This is true in regard to the mainly local issues of concern to the Arab minority such as budget allocations affecting services, health, education and so on, but increasingly also in regard to issues of wider and clear-cut national importance such as the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the fate of Palestinians beyond the green line. Quite often, the latter issues are then also reflected in the activities of different local authorities.

* We use the term National Committee, even though a no less suitable translation could be General Committee. The intentions of the Committee, we believe, are somewhere close to both meanings; depending on the situation, the members could well choose one or the other. At this point in time, we believe the majority would approve of 'National Committee.'

We believe, therefore, that the growth and development of local councils is not to be separated from that of the Committee. With this understanding, we have attempted a comprehensive study of the Committee's history and development, while pointing to some of the groups involved in its affairs, its strengths and weaknesses, the tensions and conflicts that confront it, and the nature of its impact on Arab

local authorities. The research here is based on a systematic examination of the discussions and practices of the Committee since its inception as expressed in the records of its meetings, interviews with a number of its leading figures, and in documentary research. Our analysis returns to our interpretation of political processes taking place within the Arab public and within Israel in general.

A comprehensive understanding of the emergence of the Committee requires us to recall very briefly some points (mainly in the area of demography and municipalization) noted earlier in this study. In 1949 only 160,000 Arabs remained from within what were later to become the boundaries of the State of Israel. Most of the remnant Arab population was now in some 104 villages and some tens of encampments, mainly Bedouin. The majority of villages had fewer than 1500 inhabitants; one village had a population of over 5000. Nazareth alone, with a population of 20,000 could be regarded as an Arab town.

Today the Arab population in Israel is over 645,000 (approximately 75 percent Moslems, 15 percent Christians, 10 percent Druse), not including 125,000 residents of east Jerusalem; that is, Arabs are 15 percent of the 4,000,000 Israeli population. Nazareth has close to 50,000 inhabitants. There are ten Arab villages with populations of over 10,000, 36 villages with more than 5000 persons; there are 20,000 Arabs in Haifa, 10,000 in Jaffa. In 1951 there were two Arab municipalities and four local councils. There are now three Arab municipalities and 55 Arab local councils; 38 Arab settlements are attached to regional councils, 55 have no local councils.

It is not our purpose to detail or analyze the subject of lack of equality for Arabs, or of discrimination, in regard to land confiscation, employment, education, housing, social services and so on; their pertinence is clear in this and other studies in the overall research project. Without doubt, underlying the formation and rise of the Committee are the demographic changes over the last decades that transformed small Arab village communities, and the process of municipalization of these settlements within the Israeli governmental,

administrative framework. As we shall discuss, it is at the intersection between such demographic and municipal changes on the one hand, and discrimination against Arabs as a national minority on the other hand, that a number of other factors central to the emergence of the Committee are to be comprehended.

Processes in the Formation of the National Committee

The development of the National Committee is more complex than its formal history indicates. Chairmen of Arab local councils had already begun to organize several years before the Committee was established. At the first regional conference in June 1970, the council heads of Arab local authorities in the Galilee formed as a pressure group to promote their demands before the Center for Local Government (an independent association of all local authorities in israel), the Ministry of the Interior, and other relevant government offices.

Their concern was with purely local matters: speeding up the process of organization of local government in Arab towns and villages, obtaining grants and budget allocations, promoting the educational system, pressing for zoning plans, bringing electricity and industrialization to Arab villages. These issues attracted the council heads of Druze local authorities as well, and the latter became full participants in the activities of the "Chairmen" and adopted their recommendations.

Eventually, a special committee was appointed to examine the problems of the Arab local authorities, presenting its recommendations to the Ministry of the Interior in 1973 (Geraisy, 1970). The findings of the committee lent support to the view that consolidation of their organization was the only way to promote their local interests (Chairmen of Local Authorities in the Galilee, Public Statement, 1974; all

quotations are from Files of the National Committee and Memoranda of of the National Committee).

After the municipal elections of 1973, the promoters increased their activity. At the beginning of 1974 fifteen local council heads from the western Galilee held a conference, which elected a special committee of six that prepared the founding congress of the National Committee of Arab Local Council Heads held in Nazareth in February 1974. Council chairmen from the western Galilee, the eastern Galilee, and the Triangle were invited. Interviews with some of the founders still serving on the Committee revealed that the Advisor on Arab Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior gave their blessing to the effort and even tried to persuade hesitant council chairmen to join.

The Prime Minister's Advisor on Arab Affairs, Toledano, Director General of the Ministry of the Interior, Kovarsky, and a representative of the Center for Local Government were present at the founding congress. It is reasonable to assume that the above bodies supported the creation of a general committee as a means of countering Rakah, (the Israel Communist Party), which had further increased its strength within the Arab population in Israel following the Yom Kippur War in 1973: it received 37 percent of the Arab vote in the elections for the Eighth Knesset in 1973.

The leaders of the National Committee came from rural towns and villages in the Galilee and that they consisted of a combination of veteran and young leaders, most of whom were allied with Establishment parties. The mayors of Nazareth and Shefar-ʿAm (the two towns in Israel populated solely by Arabs; Umm al Fahrn received municipal status in 1985). did not play a prominent role. Nazareth was then being administered by an interim committee appointed by the central authorities to serve until the local elections of 1975, and the presence of Rakah and extra-Parliamentary nationalistic elements was hardly felt. Until then the activities of Rakah had been focused on the national level, i.e., on elections to the Knesset. The party had representatives in the various local committees, but hardly any local council head was either a formal member of Rakah or identified with it. This fact gave

representatives of the establishment reason to assume that such an organization not only might serve as a counterforce to the Communist Party but would also help divert interest from national to municipal issues; it may be assumed that they viewed organization of Arab heads of local councils as inevitable and they preferred to be involved in its formation from the outset to influence goals and activities.

The Nazareth congress was the first collective effort of Arab local council heads from different parts of the country, and decisions were taken on the further consolidation of their organization. At a meeting at Yaffa on 17 June 1974, a Central Committee composed of the council chairmen from the Galilee and the Triangle was elected. A telegram was also sent to the Minister of the Interior and the Center for Local Government concerning the establishment of the Committee.

A review of the records of the meetings of the Committee shows that the Arab local council chairmen adopted the strategy of acting in the framework of the Center for Local Government in Israel. At a meeting with representatives of the Center on 11 July 1974 the chairmen requested that their committee be recognized as an official body of the Center. This request was accepted, and members of the Central Committee in turn became representatives of Arab local authorities in the Center. However, this step did not prevent the Arab local council heads from continuing their own organizational activity. In practice, they operated on two fronts: formally, and in contacts with representatives of government agencies, they worked through the Center for Local Government. At the same time, they continued to hold meetings open to all heads of Arab local authorities, at which plans of action of the National Committee were formulated.

The National Committee began its contacts with the establishment in December 1974 with a memorandum to Prime Minister Rabin raising the main problems of the Israeli Arab population: the need for agricultural development; a solution to the distressing condition of the Arab educational system, including the need for additional classroom space, the development of infrastructure services in Arab schools, and the hiring of educated Arabs in government service; the need

for grants and budget allocations for development; housing problems and industrialization in Arab villages; and the problem of the status of Arabic as an official language of the country. On 19 March 1975 the Prime Minister's Advisor on Arab Affairs sent Arab local council heads the reactions of the various government offices to their demands, promising to correct the situation to the benefit of the Arab population.

Arab local council authorities began to formulate guidelines for action by the National Committee following a February 1975 congress in Nazareth. Then, at a meeting held on 31 May 1975, the following decisions were taken: monthly meetings would be held to discuss urgent problems, and the various local councils would alternate as hosts, with the council head of the host authority serving as temporary chairman; the Committee would continue to serve as an internal committee of the Center for Local Government, if the Center undertook to finance its activities; and a secretary was appointed to coordinate Committee activities.

Some of those present at this meeting expressed opposition to the Committee's dependence on the Center for Local Government This position was not accepted, and the Committee continued to operate through the Center for Local Government. However, for the first time, it was decided to formalize the activities of the National Committee by creating three sub-committees: the Education and Information Committee, the Budget and Social Services Committee, and the Agriculture and Industrialization Committee.

Expansion of National Committee Activities in Clashes with Government Agencies and over State Policy

The subject of land and the struggle against land confiscation became an important subject of discussion at meetings of the National Committee as early as 1975, before the first Land Day (1976) and before the creation of the

National Committee for Defence of the Lands by Rakah. On 6 September 1975 Muhammed Zaydān, the provisional chairman of the National Committee, sent a letter to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin which included the following statement: "The Arab National Committee, acting as a part of the Center for Local Government in Israel, decided at its last meeting to communicate our protest against the government policy of 'Judaization of the Galilee.' We have no objection to any measure aimed at the development of the Galilee if it serves the common interests of both the Jewish and Arab sectors, which is after all for the good of the state. Land confiscation at this time increases the gap between the two peoples, and we view it as incorrect." Copies of the letter were sent to the Ministers of Finance, Interior, and Agriculture, and to the Center for Local Government.

The National Committee increased its activities on all fronts in order to persuade government ministries to change the zoning plan for the Galilee designed to increase Jewish presence in the area, a development that would be accompanied by considerable land confiscation. The Committee also carried out an extensive campaign among Arab local council heads, calling on them to oppose the zoning plan.* Representatives of the National Committee held a meeting with the Minister of Agriculture and his staff (7 November 1975) at which they raised the problem of land confiscation and requested that Arab lands under the jurisdiction of local Arab authorities not be annexed to Jewish local authorities. In the course of the meeting, an argument arose between representatives of the National Committee and the head of the Israel Lands Authority, Zorea, on the issue of the lands defined as state property. The Minister intervened, summarizing the discussion with two points: with regard to lands under litigation, he stated that the decision would have to be left to the courts; on the other hand, he expressed readiness to act within the government after making a study of the problem of Arab lands. The intensive discussions which the National Committee held with various government ministries did not succeed in bringing about any changes in the government's decisions but, by raising the issue, the

Committee increased Arab public awareness and strengthened the voices calling for a public confrontation on the issue.

* On September 8, 1975, a letter on the subject was sent to all local Arab authorities by the head of Arab and Druze affairs, Husni Abid, at the Center for Local Government, suggesting that they send the following letter to the General Director of the Ministry of the Interior:

"Following the communicate you sent to us regarding the zoning plan for the Galilee, a number of local authority heads, accompanied by engineers, examined the map, and unfortunately they were not able to determine the jurisdictional limits of their settlements because the map did not include lot and plot numbers, which would enable them to ascertain the amount of harm or benefit of the proposed map.

The Israel Communist Party played a central role in the organizing public protest, calling regional and local meetings to explain the issue. Some of the local council heads were perplexed by the developments, and later differences of opinion arose between them concerning how the struggle was to be carried on. The debate reached a climax in a meeting held at Shefar-ʿAm on 25 March 1976 five days before Land Day, when the first Arab general strike was called in protest over confiscation of Arab-owned land. The meeting broke up without the leaders of the Committee reaching agreement. The violence between the police and the crowd gathered around the meeting hall added fuel to the fire, and from then on it was clear that the reins of leadership had passed from the hands of the Committee to Rakah, through the Committee for Defence of the Lands.

After Land Day (30 March 1976), the National Committee tried to organize and renew its activities as a sub-committee of the Center for Local Government. At the same time, it consolidated itself even further, became more aggressive in its activities, and for the first time national issues found their way into the agenda. This can be attributed to the fact that on Land Day, when six people were killed and many were injured or arrested, the chairmen of Arab local authorities found themselves in a difficult position because of the marginal role they played in events. Restoring confidence in the National Committee required taking a harder line and focusing on the main issues that concerned the Arab population at the time: land and the (national) status of Arabs in Israel.

These issues were raised at a meeting held with Prime Minister Rabin on 24 May 1976. This meeting, which some of the participating council heads now consider of decisive importance, was a turning point for the National Committee. Ibrahim Nimer Husayn (the mayor of Shefar-ʿAm who was present at the meeting and who had had reservations about the Land Day strike, stated in an interview with us:

> Therefore, we ask you to consider this letter a protest against the map, and we hope that you will redraw it in such a way as to give us a clear view of the area of jurisdiction of each village."

> Immediately after Land Day, moderate Arab local council heads tried to harden the line of dialogue with government agencies to prove that this strategy would achieve more rights than violent protests like a general strike (Land Day). We tried to meet with the Prime Minister and other relevant ministers through the Center for Local Government in the hope that we would come out with something concrete and thereby restore the image of the National Committee among Arabs. Heads of local councils who opposed the strike, and there were quite a few of them, found themselves in a difficult position, especially after the violent incidents in which a number of persons were killed and many injured, and mass arrests were made among those taking part in the demonstrations. Therefore, some of us contacted one another the day after Land Day, and we discussed the strategy we had to take in light of what had transpired.

The meeting was attended by the eleven local authority heads who had led the National Committee up to that time, as well as the Director of the Department for Arab and Druze Affairs at the Center for Local Government. Representing the government were the Prime Minister, the Minister of the Interior, General Director of the Office of the Prime Minister, the Head of the Israel Lands Authority, the Acting General Director of the Ministry of the Interior, three District Commissioners, and the Prime Minister's Advisor on Arab Affairs. In view of its importance, we present a detailed

account of the memorandum delivered to the Prime Minister at the meeting, the demands by the local authority heads, and the response of the Prime Minister, as well as a letter sent later by the National Committee to the Prime Minister in reaction to what he had said at the meeting.

The memorandum shows that for the first time the leaders of the National Committee placed the general status of Arabs in Israel at the center of concern, relating it to the problem of the conflict in the Middle East and to confiscation of Arab lands. The subject of the Muslim *waqf* was also raised, along with the demand to transfer its administration to Muslims. The memorandum included the following passages:

> The Arabs are citizens of the state and believe that there is no substitute for living together in peace and full understanding between Jews and Arabs in the country of Israel and in all the countries of the Middle East… The incidents of 30 March (Land Day) were, to a great extent, an expression of the problems that have accumulated among the Arabs of Israel.. The Arabs of Israel remained on their lands trusting the sincerity of the promise of full equality made in the Declaration of independence. We turn to the government through you, Mr. Prime Minister, with the following request…
>
> A. Suspension of all confiscations announced for the Galilee and the Triangle.
>
> B. Transfer of all state lands within the jurisdition of local authorities to the ownership of local authorities.
>
> C. Transfer of all Muslim *waqf* lands to a Muslim committee appointed by Arab local authorities.
>
> D. Closing down of all Arab Departments, which are, in the eyes of Arab citizens, a symbol of discrimination and an obstacle to the integration of Arabs into the country. The establishment of an Advisory Committee on Arab Education in the Office of the Minister of Education to be composed of elected Arab members rather than appointed officials.
>
> E. The establishment of a Coordinating Committee in the Office of the Prime Minister which will include representatives from selected Arab local authorities, for the purpose of dealing with the neglected issues of the Arab population of Israel.
>
> F. Closing the police files on individuals who took part in the events of Land Day.
>
> G. Establishing a national investigating commission to look into the events of Land Day.

In his reply, Prime Minister Rabin stressed the fact that Israel was a Jewish state and that it was obliged to grant the

Arabs full rights as a unique cultural and religious entity. He further stated that:

> With regard to the demands raised, which constitute a sort of accusation against us for our failings, I do not intend to argue with you. However, I would like to bring one example: the income tax payments of the Arab citizens amount to 1.4 percent of the income of the state, while the state pays some 500 million Israel pounds to Arab citizens in the form of social welfare… and therefore I do not want to go into the details. Each side is partly responsible for the situation, and not only the government. Still, we should act to guarantee equality, and I admit that we have not done enough to integrate the Arabs into the life of the country and to consult with you in order to achieve the goal for which we are striving.
>
> Therefore, the government has decided to set up three committees:
>
> 1. A Ministerial Committee whose task will be to examine the issues raised.
>
> 2. A Committee of Directors General, whose task will be to carry out the decisions of the Ministerial Committee.
>
> 3. A Public Committee (in which all segments of the public will be represented) to be constituted of 60-70 members, including both Jews and Arabs. This committee will formulate general lines for dealing with the problems at hand.

Rabin refused to make any commitments concerning land, not even with regard to confiscations planned for the future. Nor did he promise anything concerning the arrests of those who had taken part in Land Day. He categorically rejected the demand to set up a commission to investigate the events of Land Day, for in his opinion "the Police and the Army have already carried out an investigation, and we will find the solutions in light of the errors made."

Rabin's response did not satisfy representatives of the Arab local authorities. Moreover, his emphasis on the Jewish character of the state and the description of the Arabs in Israel as a cultural and religious minority (and not a national minority) were considered too pointed. The reaction was a detailed letter sent on 17 June 1976, and signed for the first time not by the Center for Local Government but by the National Committee of Chairmen of Arab Local Authorities. The letter contained three parts. The first two sections constituted a combination of the national and civil demands of the Arab population in Israel. They stated, among other things:

> Your Excellency's clear response that Israel is a Jewish state whose purpose and aims are the realization of Zionist

> yearnings while safeguarding the equal rights of the Arabs in the areas of culture and religion leads us to fear that this declaration regarding our status as an Arab nation in Israel, this incomplete perception, will lead to treating the Arabs as subjects and not as citizens with equal rights. We feel, and we ask your Excellency to respect this feeling, that we are equal partners in the country, and that the Israeli-Arab conflict can in no way justify any lessening of the right of the Arabs to equality and the recognition of their national affiliation, which is a historical fact.

The second part had to do with land confiscation, and expressed the disappointment of the National Committee at the refusal of the government to rescind the most recent confiscation orders, as well as the government's unwillingness to make any commitment to suspend expropriation of the remaining Arab lands.

The final paragraph of the letter clearly emphasizes this fact:

> We have great confidence in the victory of democracy and justice, and we believe that co-existence in peace and brotherhood in Israel between the two nations is an historical imperative and should be realized in such a way as to serve the interests of peace. We should decrease existing points of conflict and find solutions to them. The major point of contention which is liable to lead to the danger of the two nations drawing further apart is the denial of our status as a national minority and the failure to recognize our right to keep the land on which our forefathers lived, as well as the lack of concern for promoting the level of local services on the basis of equality, and the absence of coordination with the Arab local authorities regarding the subject of planning and development in our villages in the areas of agriculture, industry, and housing.

Combining Civil-Municipal Issues with Those of National Status

Following the disappointment of Arab heads of local councils with Prime Minister Rabin's statement, they began to strengthen the National Committee as an independent Arab organization. Hanna Mowis, local council head of Rameh, was elected chairman. The Center for Local Government tried to continue its association with the National Committee under the old arrangement. To this end, a meeting was held between Committee representatives and the General Secretary of the Center for Local Government to discuss the situation of local Arab government and the behavior of the District Commissioner, Israel Koenig, towards a number of local Arab authorities in the north. (The meeting was on 17 August 1976.) However, publication of the Koenig Document, which presented a crude reward-and-punishment approach to dealing with and supervising the Arab population, (ʿ*Al-Hamishmar*, 7 September 1976), lent support to those heads of local councils who insisted that the Committee should act as an independent body. On 22 September 1976 a conference of Arab local council heads was held in Nazareth in protest against the Koenig Document. The conference decided to hold a two-hour protest strike on 28 September 1976. The announcement circulated by the National Committee calling for the strike was an accurate reflection of the new approach Among other things, it instructed local council heads to "hold the strike for two hours, as agreed. .. Stand on your honor, protect your rights and your existence and solidarity…. Proclaim to the whole world that you are a nation with roots which… hates discrimination and oppression and aspires to peace, justice, equality and peaceful co-existence between two nations."

In this explosive atmosphere, heads of local Jewish and Arab authorities in the Galilee contacted one another to decide on common action. These efforts resulted in a meeting of all Galilee council heads in Tiberias on 28 December 1976, when a joint committee of twelve members, six Arab and six Jewish, with two chairmen, one Jewish (the mayor of Tiberias) and

one Arab (the chairman of the National Committee) was chosen. At the conclusion of the meeting two main points were emphasized, which were, in fact, the principles guiding the actions of the National Committee. The first was a strategy of Jewish-Arab cooperation to improve relations between the two peoples. The second was to safeguard the independence of the National Committee as the sole representative of the Arab local authorities. The principles of maintaining the solidarity of the Arab population as a pressure group on the one hand, and cooperation with elements in the Jewish population on the other, crystallized further after Land Day and still constitute the main components of the strategy of the struggle of the Arab population. However, the joint forum of local Jewish and Arab heads of local councils met only a few times and it did not have much impact. In no small part, this was because some of the leaders who had initiated the idea were not re-elected in the municipal elections of 1978.

The Intricacies of Seeking Formal State Recognition

As mentioned above, government representatives, among them the Prime Minister's Advisor on Arab Affairs and the General Director of the Ministry of the Interior, were prominent at the founding meeting of the National Committee in 1974, symbolizing as they did recognition of the Committee on the part of the establishment and encouragement for its operation. Moreover, we will recall that between 1974 and 1976 a series of meetings was held between government officials and Committee representatives to discuss the problems of the Arab population and the Arab local authorities.

After the Likud came into power, in 1977, government ministers and directors general flatly refused to meet with representatives of the Committee, insisting that each local authority would have to meet with them individually, and if the case involved the Arab population as a whole it was to be

dealt with through the Center for Local Government *(Ha'aretz,* 2 December 1979). Among those who spearheaded the attack against the National Committee and its recognition was the newly appointed Prime Minister's Advisor on Arab Affairs, Gur-Arieh. His main contention was that "representatives of the Arab population exploit their position for political ends" *(Ma ʿariv*, 30 December 1979).

There were continuous attempts by government officials to discredit the National Committee by labelling it a radical organization whose members were allied with Rakah or more extreme groups. Efforts were also made to cause dissension between the "radical" and "moderate" Arab heads of local authorities who were often described as "positive" and "negative" elements (*Ma ʿariv,* 3 December 1979).

Another strategy employed in order to weaken the National Committee was to try to persuade "moderate" heads of local councils to refrain from taking part in the activities of the Committee or in the strikes it called from time to time. In a successful example, 14 Arab local authorities boycotted a strike fixed set by the National Committee for 28 and 29 December 1981 to protest the fact that the promises of the Ministry of the Interior concerning the budget had not been fulfilled. *(Ma ʿariv*, 29 December 1981). The boycott caused a split in the Committee and forced the chairman to call a special meeting to make peace between the camps. The meeting was held at the beginning of February 1982. Members of both factions took part: the chairman of the Committee, two members of the Committee who belonged to the Democratic Front, and four local council heads who had opposed the strike. Good will prevailed at the meeting, and the participants decided that for the sake of achieving equality between Jews and Arabs "we should act wisely and avoid political declarations and slogans and coordinate every step with the Center for Local Government, which has recently come to recognize the claims of the Arab sector." The participants received an unequivocal declaration from the chairman of the Committee that the latter was far from being either a political body or a party, and that he himself would not allow any

political party or other political group to dominate the Committee" (*Davar*, 4 February 1982).

Attempts to divide the ranks of the Committee did not cease after the above meeting; one of the measures taken by the Prime Minister's Advisor on Arab Affairs to further this aim was to hold separate meetings with some of the "moderate" local council heads. In one such meeting held in Acre, Advisor Gur-Arieh explained his purpose: "I decided to hold this dialogue between the authorities and representatives of the Arab population to discuss incidents of extremism which cannot be quietly dismissed and which are liable to be to the detriment of the Arab public." He called on the "positive forces" to take the reins and to restrain the radical forces. However, the local council heads expressed reservations about such meetings, whose purpose was to cause a split among Arab leaders and contended that the dialogue should be open and include all Arab local council chairmen (*'Al-Hamishmar,* 22 October 1982).

The leaders of the National Committee did not relinquish their demands for recognition, emphasizing that the Committee had been established to fight in an organized manner against all forms of discrimination against the Arab population. As the chairman stated, the moment the Arabs attained full equality with the Jews with regard to civil rights, the Committee would disband on its own initiative. After the 1983 elections, the establishment accorded de facto recognition to the National Committee, and the Center for Local Government also consulted with the Committee before choosing representatives from Arab local authorities. The Arab voting members of the Center for Local Government were selected by the Committee, and for the first time an Arab vice-chairman was elected, on the initiative of the Committee.

The National Committee also determined who would represent it in meetings with government authorities. One of the most important of these meetings on 20 November 1984 was with Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Minister Ezer Weizman, who held the minorities portfolio, and was also Director General of governmental ministries. Opinion in the Labor Party (formerly the Mapai led Alignment) was divided

concerning recognition of the Committee. This was clear from the minutes of a meeting held on 10 December 1983 in Nazareth attended by 20 local council heads allied with the Labor Party. The Chairman of the Minorities Department of the Labor Party (Raanan Cohen) stated that "the National Committee is an existing fact and is in no need of recognition." He made it clear that the Labor Party had no intention of breaking up the Committee or acting against it. However, his statement was in conflict with that of Member of Knesset Arbeli-Almozlino, Chairwoman of the Knesset Committee of the Interior and also a Labor Party member, who said, "There cannot be one council for Arab authorities and another, the Center for Local Government, for Jewish authorities." She added that she would neither recognize the Committee nor invite its members to meetings with members of her committee (ʿ*Al-Hamishmar,* 11 December, 1983).

It was at the 20 November 1984 meeting that Peres declared for the first time that the position of Advisor on Arab Affairs would be abolished. At the same time, Peres and Weizmann announced that the government would re-evaluate issues connected with the Arab citizens of Israel. "The purpose of the reorganization is to provide them treatment comparable, from the standpoint of government offices, to that of Jewish citizens of Israel." The representatives of the National Committee present at the meeting did not hide their enthusiasm. Member of Knesset Tawfiq Zayyad (Rakah) stated that this was the first time since the establishment of the state that the Prime Minister of Israel had received a delegation of Arab heads of local councils (ʿ*Al-Hamishmar*, 21 November 1984). Following the meeting, representatives of the Arab delegation stated that the fulfillment of promises would constitute a kind of breakthrough in the realization of civil equality for the Arabs of Israel (*Zu-Haderekh,* 28 November 1984.

When Arens (Likud) was appointed Minister for Arab Affairs after the rotation between the Likud and the Alignment in October 1986, the attitude towards the Arab population in general, and the National Committee in particular, changed. Minister Arens differed from his predecessor Weizman; he held the view that the Arabs in Israel were not unique, and he

declared his intention of dealing with them together with other "minority groups in Israel." From the outset, he stated that the matter of military service would be an important factor determining the rights to be granted to the various groups. In like manner, he announced his intention of advancing the Druze because of their special ties with the state. Minister Arens and Prime Minister Shamir also held separate meetings with representatives of the Bedouins in the north and in the Negev, the purpose of which was to discuss the special problems of that group (*Yediot Ahronot,* 13 February 1987).

Specifically, Arens declared (hat he had no intention of recognizing the National Committee of Chairman of Arab Local Authorities and that he would discuss the municipal problems of the Arab population either through the Center for Local Government or at separate meetings with Arab heads of local councils. The National Committee viewed this approach as a threat to its status and at a special meeting on the the matter, prohibited all its members from meeting separately with Minister Arens (*Jerusalem Post*, 7 November 1986). Later Arens retracted his declaration concerning the National Committee and met with its representatives through the Center for Local Government.

The sequence of events testifies to the strength of the National Committee, for after the Minister's declaration of non-recognition the chairman of the ʿAlabūn local council cancelled his invitation to the Minister to visit his village. We interviewed one of the Arab local council chairmen belonging to the Likud Party concerning his conversation with high-ranking officials in the Minister's office: "I told them unequivocally that their decision would result in a loss of status for the Likud among the Arab population and the loss of a large number of votes in the Knesset elections. I also stated that after such a decision I could not face the Arab local council chairmen and the National Committee, for who would be on my side and what would people think of Arabs who allied themselves with the Likud."

In fact Arens' meeting with the National Committee should not be considered recognition of it but rather the continuation of the policy of pragmatism in contacts with representatives of

the Arab population. The same vacillating approach is still being taken, and most regular meetings with government authorities take place through the Center for Local Government and not directly with representatives of the Arab population.

Organizational Processes and Tensions in the Balance of Political Power in the Committee

The balance of political power in the Committee reflects the political orientation of the Arab population, itself characterized by increasing politicization along with differentiation in political identification. The politicization expressed in ideological and existential terms not only in acceptance of Israel's right to exist, readiness to integrate into Israeli society, regarding the future of Palestinian Arabs as linked to the future of the Israeli state, and in readiness to fight for civil rights by legitimate democratic means; there is also a gradual increase in Israeli Arabs' self-definition as Palestinians, and a more or less generally accepted ideological position that peace can only be based on the self-determination of Palestinians and their right to establish a state of their own alongside that of Israel.

Between 1977 and 1981 a number of changes took place that greatly affected the organization and actions of the National Committee. As we noted earlier, the Communist Party established a broad front called the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (Hebrew acronym: Hadash). The new party was dominated by Rakah, but it included non-Communist and Jewish candidates. In the ninth Knesset elections, in 1977, Hadash became the leading political organization in the Israeli Arab community winning about half of the Arab vote in Israel. The party's success also strengthened Hadash's efforts to penetrate local elections in Arab villages and towns. The reinforcement of the status of

Hadash was reflected in the National Committee. As a result, a power struggle started within the Committee between members of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, and those who were defined as "non-Front." The debate between the two camps intensified after the chairman of the Committee, Hanna Mowis, was elected member of Knesset representing the Democratic Front in the 1977 elections. At a metting on 22 February 1979, when an eight-member Secretariat was formed, four were elected from each camp. Hanna Mowis was re-elected chairman and Ibrahim Nimer Husayn, who belonged to the "non-Front" group, was elected vice-chairman (*Al-lttihad*, 23 February 1979; *Ma ʿariv*, 3 February 1979).

Another development was that Druze heads of local councils resigned from the Committee to establish a separate organization called the "Committee of Druze Local Council Heads." Representatives of Druze local authorities rejected the idea of continued participation in the National Committee on the grounds that the problems of Druze local authorities were entirely different from those of Arab This step was undoubtedly influenced by continuous pressure and persuasion on the part of the establishment to strengthen the idea of a separate identity for the Druze in Israel, efforts which had begun in the early fifties and involved actions like making Druze youth eligible for compulsory military service in 1956, giving Druze Shari ʿa courts independent status in 1962, and setting up a special committee on Druze education in 1975 (Lustick 1980:194-206). Such measures had their effect, and more and more Druze local council chairmen began to view their alliance with the Arab population as damaging their chances of improving their own status. At the same time, the politicization of the National Committee, reflected in its emphasis on maintaining an independent status and on combining national demands with civil demands, was disturbing to some of the Druze heads of local councils at a time when the particularism of the Druze population was being reinforced.

The National Committee took the first steps towards institutionalization in 1981, when by-laws were proposed for

approval at a meeting of all heads of Arab local authorities. The by-laws emphasized that the National Committee represented all the Arab local authorities in Israel, that it was an independent, non-partisan organization operating in coordination with the Center for Local Government, and that it represented the Arab local authorities in all formal and informal bodies. The by-laws further established the structure and composition of the Committee including the tasks of four sub-committees, rules for the convening of meetings and for taking decisions, and outlined the Committee's purposes.

After the 1983 municipal election Arab local authority heads were divided almost equally between two camps—the "Front" and the "non-Front." The first group included all those who were themselves members of Rakah or the Democratic Front, or persons elected with the direct aid of the local branch of the Democratic Front. The second group included all those who do not identify with the Democratic Front—members of the Alignment (Mapai or Labor dominated), those who were supported by other Zionist parlies, and those who considered themselves independent. The first group was better organized than the second, and the political line that bound them was clearer, although after the elections some declared themselves independent rather than members of the Front (for example, the local council heads of Taiyibe and Makr). Members of the second group organized among themselves, mainly in order to prevent Rakah from gaining exclusive control. This struggle was especially marked under the present composition of the Committee, in view of its having become the main representative body of the Arab population and in light of some of the guiding political premises mentioned above. Immediately after the elections, two meetings were held in Nazareth, one of Front people and the other of non-Front people. In common was a declaration of loyality to the National Committee as the representative of the interests of the Arabs of Israel and their obligation to view the decisions of the Committee as binding. Both meetings criticized the discriminatory policy towards Arab local authorities and expressed willingness to fight until equal rights were achieved. Finally, both meetings declared their desire to re-elect Ibrahim

Nimer Husayn, the mayor of Shefar-ʿAm, an independent, chairman of the National Committee for another term. (Ibrahim Nimer Husayn had been elected chairman of the National Committee following the death of Hanna Mowis) (*Al-lttihad*, 12 December 1983).

"Non-Front" members sent to the Committee chairman a petition signed by 24 council heads identified as "moderate" stating that the people of the Front and Rakah should not continue to dominate the Committee as they had won victories in only 18 local authorities (*Hamodia,* 28 December 1983). However, the Front people (led by MK Tawfiq Zayyad), claimed that they represented the majority of Arab council heads and therefore demanded 10 out of the 16 seats on the National Committee.

An analysis of the minutes of the last meeting of the outgoing Committee on 16 December 1983 reveals that there were salient points of contention, even though all those attending—new and outgoing alike—agreed on the importance of the National Committee and praised the solidarity demonstrated by members over time. In the discussion of the new composition of the Committee there were evident differences of opinion. The points of contention were geographical representation, the representation of the Arab cities and the large settlements, the representation of Arabs from mixed cities, and most important, representation of the major camps. No agreement could be reached and it was decided to establish a sub-committee headed by the chairman of the National Committee to formulate a proposal agreeable to both camps. The proposal submitted was that the Committee be composed of 16 members, equally divided between the camps, and that the chairman be "non-Front." Moreover, it was decided to accept the sub-committee's recommendation to choose a seven-member Secretariat as well as three vice-chairmen: two from the Front—the mayor of Nazareth and the head of the local council at Tira—and one from the "non-Front" camp—the head of the local council of Sakhnin. It was also decided to choose representatives of Arab local authorities to the Center for Local Government. The position of vice-chairman of the Center for Local Government

was a point of dispute between the camps; in the end rotation was decided upon, in which the local council head of Jatt, a "non-Front" candidate, would be the first to serve, followed by the local council head of Tira, a Front man.

Despite the political differences between the two camps, the minutes of the Committee meetings attest to the general agreement of the members on the matters of concern: budgetary problems, the fact of discrimination, the need to close the gap between the Jewish and the Arab sectors, and other municipal problems. The differences of opinion always focused on the means, not the ends of the struggle: while the Front people demanded more aggressive tactics, including closing down local authorities, the other camp was in favor of the more moderate tactics of discussion, prolonged negotiations with government authorities, and "waiting for time to take its course." More than once, this debate resulted in the boycott of strikes called by the Committee to protest the financial situation. In such cases, the so-called "positive" council heads lost no time in proclaiming, through the media, that they wanted no part of the strike. Government officials took advantage of this division and accused the striking local councils of acting out of political rather than monetary considerations (ʿ*Al-Hamishmar,* 13 July 1986). Committee members themselves emphasized that their actions were prompted not by political considerations but by financial distress and their inability to fulfill even the minimal obligations towards residents of local authorities. It should be noted that in one of the week-long strikes (August 1986), it was the "moderate" or "positive" heads who pressed for increasing sanctions and continuing the strike.

It is reasonable to assume that this change was due to a change in the nature of the interaction with district commissioners, especially the Commissioner of the Northern District, Israel Koenig. Beginning in 1984-5, the budget for local authorities was determined primarily by the Ministries of Finance and Interior in Jerusalem, leaving the district commissioner very little say in the matter. Thus, the "carrot-and-stick" tactics previously used by district officials to put pressure on Arab local authorities, which resulted in special

privileges for some, were gradually replaced by a method of budget allocation which placed some local council heads in a more difficult position than formerly. This is not to say that certain local council heads no longer had the edge in the matter, but rather, as many of those interviewed claimed, that preference is now determined by the political identification of the local council head and not by his personal relations with district commissioners. As evidence, they cite the fact that when the Ministry of the Interior freed some of the sums promised to Arab local authorities after the prolonged strike of 1984, authorities allied with the Likud received the lion's share. Basmat Tivon and Biʿneh, both small villages, and identified with the Likud, received 50 million (old) shekels each, while Shefar-ʿAm, which is a municipality, received only 20 million shekels, ʿArrabeh, a large village whose council head is a Front man, received 10 million shekels, and Dir Hanna, also allied with the Front, did not receive anything at all.

If the two camps are divided in terms of representation on the Committee and on the tactics to be employed in civil matters, there is much greater consensus on national matters. There is no doubt that the Committee's present orientation on national issues, on the local as well as the external level, follows the political line of the Front. In this context, it should be noted that the situation has changed over the past decade. While at the beginning and end of the seventies those defined as "moderate" tried their best to prevent the National Committee from discussing national issues, this is no longer the case. The picture has become blurred, and it is now difficult to differentiate between "moderate" and "radical" local council heads, for the declarations made concerning national issues by those belonging to the Front are not much different from those made by local council heads who are supporters of the Labor Party (formerly Alignment). This change is in part the result of demands stemming from within the Arab population. The method of direct elections for local council heads, instituted in 1978, also puts the latter individuals under a certain amount of pressure to win the confidence of the voters. As stated, the Arab population of

Israel has become increasingly politicized and has, in turn, forced council heads to take a stand not only on municipal matters but on national ones as well.

Areas of Concern of the National Committee

As mentioned earlier, the Committee was established primarily to promote local services in Arab settlements. In its first years it dealt almost exclusively with municipal matters. However, from 1976 the Committee increasingly concerned itself with national-political subjects affecting Arabs in Israel, Palestinians in the occupied territories, and the general problem of the Palestinians. While an examination of the minutes of the meetings of the National Committee reveals that the major part of its discussions focused on municipal problems, mainly financial distress and development budgets for Arab local authorities, national-political matters took up no small part of its time, with entire meetings often being devoted to them.

Political Action: Civil and Municipal Issues

In the early seventies the struggle over municipal affairs centered on increasing budgetary allotments for Arab local authorities, but this was done in an individual rather than a collective manner; in his own way each council chairman tried to obtain financing for local enterprises, which in most cases had only recently been set up. Towards the end of the decade the National Committee became more sophisticated in its methods, and its budgetary demands were based on statistical comparisons with the Jewish authorities. This can be seen in a memorandum sent to the Minister of the Interior on 10 January

1983, which stated: “As the representative of local Arab authorities, we declare, in our own name and in the name of those we represent… we have not found the answer to the serious problems afflicting local Arab authorities: lack of government financing for development, regular budgets, the jurisdictional areas of the local authorities, zoning plans and illegal construction, the disbandment of local councils elected by the people, and the treatment of Arab authorities at government offices.”

In addition, the National Committee devoted considerable energies to the problems of education, culture, and youth. The year 1980 can be described as “Arab Education Year” for the Committee, since it held a special convention on the subject of education, at which special attention was paid to the problems of lack of school buildings and classrooms. Later, a general strike of schools was also called by the Committee to protest lack of action in this area. The National Committee held a conference for Arab education in 1984, when a follow-up committee was formed to handle all the issues concerning Arab education and culture in Israel.

Financial problems are of course the main concern of chairmen of local authorities in Israel, especially in the Arab sector. The minutes of the National Committee show that most of the negotiations concerning budgets took place between the Committee secretariat and the Ministry of the Interior. From the outset, the Committee was active in budgetary matters, but it was especially so from the time when Arab heads of local councils began grounding their claims in statistics and comparisons between Arab and Jewish local authorities.

One of the achievements of the National Committee was its role in the determination of a uniform ceiling for municipal tax collection in the Arab sector. The high tax increases instituted by the Ministry of the Interior for the 1985/86 fiscal year put the chairmen of local authorities in a difficult position, especially those with a small tax base and those who did not have the support of the majority of the local council (a chairman sometimes had to confront a council which did its best to frustrate his efforts). To relieve such pressures the National Committee suggested that Arab local authorities raise

taxes by a uniform rate—about 170 percent. This step legitimized the tax raise and strengthened the position of the Arab heads of local councils in their own communities.

Another example of the Committee's acting to lend legitimization to heads of Arab local councils was the recommendation it made that the municipality of Umm al-Fahm sign an obligatory note to the Ministry of the Interior in exchange for a large one-time grant for the purpose of solving a financial crisis. The township took up the suggestion, sending the Ministry of the Interior a letter on 16 October 1984 in which it promised to stay within the budget, to be scrupulous about submitting financial statements, to refrain from commissioning further works, and to fix the rate of local taxes in coordination with the Ministry of the Interior.

More than once the National Committee s clashes over budgets involved serious confrontations with government offices, sometimes prolonged and accompanied by strikes. Only in rare instances did these strikes meet with understanding on the part of the authorities. In most cases the latter emphasized the pointlessness of the strikes, the hardship they caused local residents, and the political motives they saw behind them. For example, after a strike on 29 December 1981, in which most Arab local authorities took part, the Ministry of the Interior claimed that the strike "was politically motivated, and the main strikers were the local authorities dominated by Rakah" (*Ha-aretz*, 30 December 1981). The most prolonged strike carried out by Arab local authorities in connection with budgetary matters was in the summer of 1986. It lasted more than two weeks, and in the course of the strike protracted negotiations were held with government authorities without any practical results *(Davar,* 13 July 1986). However, after the strike the Minister of the Interior made an unprecedented statement: "Arab local authorities are discriminated against with regard to the budget."

As mentioned above, the National Committee's activity on municipal topics involved many topics besides budget allocations and financial distress. Among the main ones were planning, construction and lands in the Arab settlements. The bitterest struggle, which led to a general strike of Arab local

authorities, was fought over the annexation of Arab lands to the Segev Regional Council in the Galilee. The subject was raised by the head of the Majd al-Kurüm Council at a meeting of the National Committee on 26 October 1982. He reported that Regulation Series No. 4416 of 7 October 1982 proclaimed the annexation of Block 237, which contained lands belonging to Arab villages in the Galilee, to the Segev Regional Council (composed of 23 Jewish settlements). The annexation was carried out on the authority of the Minister of the Interior, in accordance with Articles 1 and 2 of the Order Concerning Regional Councils of 1958. The National Committee decided to set up a special committee to look into the matter, to hold a press conference, and to declare a warning strike.

The National Committee also conducted a prolonged struggle over high land betterment and municipal tax on Arab lands. A letter sent to the Minister of the Interior on 10 November 1981 stated:

> The Planning and Construction Committees have recently begun to implement the above law. The vast majority of the Arab population is hard hit by the execution of this law … The average resident is unable to put together the money needed to build a home, buy the land necessary for the same and pay land betterment taxes that amount to tens of thousands of shekels … The outcome of the execution of this law is to strangle private construction in the Arab sector, which will result in building without permits, and the latter will bring still more tragedies upon Arab residents … Therefore we request his Excellency to order the cessation of actions under the above law and to reconsider it.

The promotion of the process of granting council and municipal status to Arab settlements also constituted an important topic in the discussions of the National Committee. It involved three major areas: pressure to establish local councils in Arab towns and villages lacking municipal status, resistance to the intention of the Ministry of the Interior to disband elected Arab councils, and following the elections of

1983 and 1989 the encouragement of broad coalitions in settlements with special problems.

As the National Committee is the body most representative of the Arab population of Israel, it is also the central element in all Arab public committees set up to deal with specific problems. Some of these are dominated by Rakah, and others represent the entire political spectrum. The most important are the following: the Committee for Defence of the Arab Lands, the Supreme Surveillance (or Follow-up) Committee of Arab Members of Parliament, the Committee on Arab Education, the Surveillance Committee for Arab Health Services and the Surveillance Committee for Social Services.

The Committee for the Defence of the Arab Lands was established at the initiative of Rakah at a meeting held in Nazareth on 18 October 1975. The committee consists of 121 members representing most of the sectors of the Arab economy: merchants, doctors, workers, students, lawyers, land-owners, peasants and heads of local councils. At first, the committee operated separately from the National Committee. However, after Land Day they began to work more closely, and this tendency was strengthened after the chairman of the Committee, Hanna Mowis, was elected to the Knesset as a member of the Front. Coordination and cooperation between the two bodies continued after the death of Mowis and the election of Ibrahim Nimr Husayn as his successor. Over the years the National Committee and the Committee for the Defence of the Arab Lands have cooperated in Land Day activities.

On 30 October 1982 the National Committee convened to discuss the financial situation and the budgets of Arab local authorities. Arab members of Knesset from the Alignment, then composed of Mapai (later the Labor Party) and Mapam, and from the Democratic Front were also invited. This meeting was the beginning of a new Surveillance Committee, consisting of National Committee members and Arab members of Knesset. The latter promised to organize a lobby in the Knesset to pressure the government to close the gap between Jewish and Arab local authorities. They also promised to piace the demands of the National Committee

before the relevant authorities. For those belonging to the Alignment, this new committee was very important, for it brought them into contact with the mainstream of the Arab public in Israel. Front members had less to gain from it, but non-participation would have put them in disfavor with the Arab public.

This committee was reorganized to include all the representatives of the Arab population in Israel on official and public bodies. Therefore, it was renamed the Higher Surveillance Committee for the Affairs of the Arab Population. This committee was responsible for the countrywide strike held on 24 June 1987, designated the Equality Day strike; the main issues were opposition to the demolition of illegal Arab building, demand for construction of additional classrooms in Arab schools and demand for equality in budget allowances for Arab and Jewish local councils. The Minister of Arab Affairs, Arens, condemned the strike as Communist inspired and organized. This was the fourth general strike ever held by the (Palestinian) Arabs in Israel. In 1976 there was a protest strike against land confiscation. On 30 March 1982, (the sixth anniversary of Land Day 1976, when six people were killed and many injured) a strike was declared in protest against repression in the occupied territories and especially in regard to the attack on the Al-Aqsa Mosque, where several people were killed and injured. The third strike, on 22 September 1982, was in protest against the Sabra and Sfiatila massacres in Lebanon (see *Al-Fajr*, 28 June 1987).

Political Awareness as an Attribute of the National Committee: National Issues

Throughout its existence, there was disagreement over whether the Committee should involve itself with broad political matters or limit itself to municipal issues. As stated, the main opponents of a politicized Committee were the council heads defined as “moderate” or “positive.” However,

in recent years this internal debate has lessened, as all factions in the National Committee have come to agree that national political matters are inseparable from municipal ones. "Even our bread is mixed with politics," said one of the local council heads who used to belong to the "positive camp." The chairman of the National Committee left no room for doubt concerning its position: "We Arab heads of local authorities are elected by the public and not by government officials; we have to raise all the issues affecting the Arabs in Israel. We cannot separate the national question from the question of civil rights, for our constituents expect us to discuss current political policy issues. We are obliged to do so for our people."

The role of the National Committee in increasing the general consensus among the Arabs of Israel in national matters is important, in light of the great differentiation in political orientation among Arabs. Today no single party can claim to be the sole representative of the Arab population of Israel. (See Chapter 3). More than any other, the Democratic Front had made this claim in the late 1970s, after receiving 50 percent of the Arab vote in the elections to the ninth Knesset (1977). Although it is still the party with the largest following among Arabs, its strength has decreased and over the last two elections the DFPE has received approximately one-third of the Arab vote. In the 1988 Knesset elections the three predominantly Arab lists (DFPE, PLP, and the new Arab party 'Darawsheh') received approximately 60% of the Arab vote; the Alignment dropped to 17%, the Likud increased to 7%, the Citizens' Rights Movement and Mapam each approximately 4%, and the National Religious Party 3%.*

* As well, in keeping with its gains in the recent (28 February 1989) municipal elections, the Islamic Movement was allotted three seats on the National Committee at the latter's first session (29 May 1989) following the February elections; the Arab Democratic Party ('Darawsheh') gained two seats, the Progressive List one. These three groups along with the 'Front' (8 seats) and the 'Independents' (formerly 'non-Front') (6 seats) now represent a new, and slightly less balanced, constellation of political and party forces within an expanded National Committee of 20 members. To what degree the religious orthodoxy of the Islamic Movement will bring it into conflict with others on the National Committee remains to be seen.

As we pointed out earlier in this study, the fight against land confiscation and the plans to turn the Galilee into an area of

Jewish settlement gave local Arab authorities no choice but to deal with the national issue, linked as it was to the municipal one. The national awakening of the Arabs in Israel, which began long before Land Day but was reinforced by it, hastened the politicization of the moderate members of the National Committee and enabled it to present itself as a united body.

In time, the National Committee became the instrument of protest for the Arab public against actions considered threatening and against laws or proposed laws liable to injure their status. For example, on 30 August 1979 Arab local authorities held an hour-long strike to protest the statement of General Ben-Gal, that "the Arabs are a cancer in the body of the State". (ʿ*Al-Hamishmar*, 31 August 1979). At a press conference called by representatives of the Committee in Nazareth they stated that they considered such declarations damaging to the relations between the two peoples. In the public statement that they distributed, Arab heads of local authorities demanded that Ben-Gal be dismissed on the spot and brought to trial. An examination of the minutes of the Committee meetings reveals that in the course of the past five years every law proposed in the Knesset considered discriminatory against the Arab population was discussed by the Committee. Examples of such laws include the "Katzav Law," which gives preference to those who have served in the army for university grants and scholarships, and the Large Families Law, which stipulates that those who have served in the army or studied in religious academies (yeshivas) are to receive higher allowances from the National Insurance.

In recent years the Committee joined the fight against racism; the struggle against the "phenomenon of Kahanism" (the racist ideology of Meir Kahana, the Ultranationalist former member of the Knesset) was raised, as were Kahana's attempts to "visit" Arab towns and villages. In a number of instances, Committee meetings were moved to the locations of the planned visits in a demonstration of identity and support. In a meeting in the village of Tireh on 28 May 1985, members of the Committee expressed their support for the strong stand taken by the village of Taiyibeh against the connivings of

Kahana, and called on the Israeli public to denounce the manifestation.

It is noteworthy that at this meeting a line of political action was proposed and later followed by the National Committee, namely, a call for recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian nation and the establishment of its state alongside the State of Israel. Other principles that were emphasized: cooperation with democratic Jewish forces and a strengthening of ties with the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and its chosen representatives.

The important role played by the National Committee in national issues was especially prominent following the invasion of Lebanon in 1982. At a meeting held on 18 June 1982 a statement was issued which included the following: "With deep concern for the future of peace in our area and the future of the relations between the two nations, the Palestinian Arabs and the Israelis, we hereby express strong protest against the destructive war the government of israel has been waging for the last two weeks against Lebanon and against the Palestinian Arab people there.

At a meeting on 20 September 1982 attended by 25 heads of local councils it was decided to cancel the planned agenda and to devote the entire meeting to a discussion of the massacre in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in Lebanon. After the meeting, the National Committee issued a statement, which had wide reverberations amongst the Arab public in Israel and declared a general strike to be held on 22 September 1982. The statement said, among other things: "We protest the terrible collective massacre in the refugee camps of our people, the Palestinians in West Beirut, which resulted in thousands of victims including women, children, the elderly and the hospitalized. We Dlace the full blame on the Government of Israel"

The increased political activity of the National Committee received considerable impetus at the conference of Arab local authorities held at Shefar-ʿAm on 8 February 1984, which approved proposals that were in fact the political guidelines of the Committee Later on, there was disagreement among heads

of local council themselves and between them and the establishment over these principles. A number of local council chairmen claimed that they had not agreed to the proposals and that they had not seen them until the meeting itself, when they had not had sufficient time to study them. However, the chairman of the National Committee stated in an interview that "Not one local council head expressed disagreement in the discussions held concerning the proposals. Although some asked questions, in the end all agreed to approve the proposals. Later a number of heads of local authorities changed their minds because of various pressures applied to them ."

In light of the importance of the above decisions and their implications for the political orientation of the Committee and the Arab public in general, we quote a number of the key points linking political demands and civil issues:

> The Arab masses in Israel are an integral part of the Palestinian Arab nation, and it is important for them that they realize their legitimate national rights…. an end to the situation of occupation from which they [the Palestinian people] suffer…. At the same time, the conference emphasizes that the masses of Arabs in Israel are an integral part of the state, that they share a common fate with the Jewish masses in Israel in a common homeland…. The Arab masses in Israel live in their homeland by legitimate right and not because of charity. Since the establishment of the state, they have faced a formal policy based on discrimination and limitation of opportunity based on their nationality … First and foremost is the matter of budgetary allotments and development budgets, which are unequal to those received by Jewish authorities, and also the fact that they do not receive development and industrial enterprises… The conference emphasizes decisions taken by the National Committee since its inception. .. based on the well-known slogan, Equality and nothing less than equality, which unites Arab local authorities and the entire Arab public in Israel…. The

> realization of a just and stable peace in the Middle East based on the end of the 1967 occupation, the realization of the right of the Arab Palestinian nation to self-determination and the establishment of an independent state alongside the state of Israel, under the leadership of their sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization …

A Summation and Some Interpretative Conclusions on the Committee

We have pointed to certain demographic and administrative-municipal changes as basic to other processes-mainly discrimination against Arabs at the local level—that led to the emergence of the Committee. The rise of a young, educated leadership seeking means to overcome internal divisiveness, and with a political awareness going beyond the confines of village particularism, led among other things to novel forms of competition (between reform groups, party-attached groups, etc.) for "power" at the local level. Such developments and tendencies began to make themselves felt at the beginning of the 1970s, even before Land Day. Land Day, which took place in 1976, was indeed the result of the strengthening of political awareness amongst the Arab population. While this event is considered by many to be the turning point in the political history of the Arab population, in fact it was an expression of a tendency which had its origin in lengthier historical processes.

Before Land Day most of the Committee's activity was centered around municipal demands, mainly increasing budgetary allotments and improving the level of services. All contacts with government ministries were maintained through the Center for Local Government by negotiation, without protest measures or even the threat of them. The National Committee did not take any significant part in the decision to hold a general strike on Land Day. On the contrary, most of its members opposed the strike, and the outcome was a split in

ranks. It was the strengthening of both radical and national oriented forces in the Arab population after Land Day that induced the Committee to take a stand. As a result, the National Committee began to operate as an independent body rather than as a subcommittee of the Center for Local Government. The resignation of the Druze local council chairmen from the Committee undoubtedly advanced internal political solidarity, since the claims of the Druze from the establishment and their special ties to it (military service, with its accompanying privileges, etc.) often led to divisiveness among the Arab population and potentially within the Committee.

However, the formation of the National Committee at this time was not exclusively or at all the outcome of or a direct response to a novel set of events and problems (e.g., Land Day), but was a process: the response to an ongoing set of political and national problems exacerbated by new events and circumstances, not the least of which were the opportunities and contradictions present within Israeli parliamentary democracy.

Over time, various factors have converged to make the National Committee the representative body of the Arab population in Israel. For example, the institution of direct municipal elections increased the self-confidence of heads of local councils in their role as representatives of the Arab population. The fact that the Committee was non-partisan gave it the legitimacy to decide on controversial matters, and thereby to conciliate between the various political allegiances of the Arab population, with the Establishment as well as with political parties on the Left. However, many compromises had to be made to satisfy the various factions and to maintain solidarity, as reflected in Committee decisions. The Committee was important not only because it was a pressure group for the promotion of the demands of the Arab population but also because it added to the strength of Arab council chairmen in their own constituencies; for example, Arab local council chairmen saw to it that decisions concerning tax increases be taken by the National Committee in order to legitimize the measure in the eyes of their constituents.

The position of the authorities towards the National Committee has not been clear-cut, alternating between de facto recognition and non-recognition, depending somewhat on the positions of the various governments and on the approach of the persons charged with dealing with Arab matters (the Prime Minister's Advisor on Arab Affairs, and since 1984 the Minister of Arab Affairs). However, there is no doubt that over time the guiding principle of the government has been non-recognition of the Committee as a body representing the Arab population, especially as the Committee also deals with national issues and stresses the fact of the Arabs being a national minority and not merely a cultural-religious one. In any case, it cannot be ignored that the prominent place given to national issues in the discussions of the Committee is the result of increasing political awareness amongst the Arab population.

The Arab minority is a weak political factor in Israel. The fact that Arab Knesset members belong to different political parties may add to that weakness but it does not explain it. The extreme difficulty, if not impossibility, of all Arab political persuasions joining forces for Knesset elections (and the wisdom of the establishment of such a single national party) is to be taken into consideration (e.g., the already existing tensions and conflicts with Jewish nationalism) However, this situation in itself did contribute indirectly to the prominence of the local-level political system, and the development of the National Committee as a political force.

It is not simply that Arabs in Israel are a (weak) minority that defines, or can only define, its status locally. Most important, and as we pointed out at the beginning of this study, Israel is a centralist state that has become more nationalistic, defining claims in strictly Jewish nation-state terms (Rosenfeld 1978; 1988).

At this state center-level, in parliamentary circumstances, Arabs have had to rely on existing democratic practices in Israel to achieve goals; for example, closing gaps in such areas as education, health and welfare services. When questions of "nation-state policy" are in the forefront (such as the invasion of Lebanon, occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip)

certain parties and groups may or do express opposition to such policies. However, such parties and groups (e.g., the Communist party, certain Socialist-Zionist, socialist, radical and other parties and groups) are also weak, their numbers relatively small in comparison with the two major political parties (the Alignment-Labor Party and the Likud) that represent state power and policy. In short, over the last four decades the (true) "center" has been increasingly closed off in Israel, by strong militaristic and nationalistic forces; at present the impact of the total opposition is minimal and that of the Arabs alone (those who support and those in opposition to Government policy) is still less.

To a large extent, the Committee should be comprehended not only as a politically organized response to national discrimination but also as an historical continuity, or offshoot, of organizations, or parties, and movements that preceded it in time. For example, prior formats of the Palestine, and then Israel, Communist Party (e.g., PCP, Maki, Rakah), no matter their transformations, are links in the theoretical and practical positions adopted by some members of the Committee today; a certain structural continuity exists. Others on the Committee ideologically have been influenced by or are present or past members of long established (e.g., Mapam) and more recent (e.g., Al-Ard, the Progressive List) movements, parties, and groups with a strong involvement in Arab and Jewish national and/or class problems.

Of importance, especially for the local-level ("chairman of Arab *local* authorities") format of the Committee, is the understanding that there is not an Arab "center" and an Arab "periphery" in Israel (as distinguished from circumstances prior to 1948 in Mandate Palestine when Arab effendi-rentier-merchant political elites were almost exclusively urban or were tied to urban ruling class elites). As stated, Israeli state power is at the "center". The Arab population remains essentially 75 percent rural. But rural does not mean backward Most Arab villages in Israel are no less politically conscious, active and sophisticated than those in towns and cities, even when certain differentials in educational levels and occupational structure may be present. Arabs from villages,

cities and encampments work throughout Israel and are an integral part of the economy; the country is small, transportation rapid. Infrastructure, investments and planning in Arab neighborhoods in both towns and villages, are most often lacking. Education, health, welfare and other social services are available countrywide, although as stated there are differences in how they are applied to Jews and to Arabs; there is (national) discrimination.

Moreover, in regard to the "local" aspect of the Committee's formation, it is precisely villagers (former peasants) who are "territorialized" (Rosenfeld 1978). The stake that they have in land, house-plots and homes—despite the state's ongoing confiscation of Arab land-property—is a strong factor in rural, community solidarity. Arab community "territorialization" is the historic social and economic base for the organization of families, kin lines, neighborhoods, and now local councils and joined councils. Indeed, the struggle against de-territorialization (e.g., Land Day) now further orchestrated through the Committee as a common undertaking, contains the potential to counter local factionalism.

Meanwhile, additional factors have been important in developing political consciousness and in diminishing the effects of factional manipulations: as mentioned, the educational opportunities in Israel, and the increasing numbers of young Arabs who complete secondary school and attend universities; increasing security for Arabs as wage workers and self-employed, especially in specific branches (mainly building trades, transport, certain services, maintenance, etc.) of the Israeli economy. Here the "historic" and "structural" links to political awareness are operative at the individual level: Committee members, as well as other local political leaders and council heads, are members of political parties (or are independents on political grounds) and adherents of ideologies whose histories pre-date the state of Israel, have attended training courses, gained skills and professional administrative capabilities, have come through the educational system, the occupational-work system, and so on.

Nakhleh's pessimism concerning the possibility of developing political consciousness among Arabs in Israel

(with only some exceptions in regard to membership in Rakah): "This affiliation has produced 'positive' political consciousness only in some cases," brings him to conclude "very limited" alternatives. In brief, he states "…the almost total absence of a high level of political consciousness". This is the opposite of our understanding, as developed in our study. It is never wise to close off alternatives indiscriminately. The same year that Nakhleh prepared his article saw the Committee organizing and then, over the decade, taking precisely the path of "criticizing," "publicly opposing," and of forthrightly stating the case "for Arab aspirations and ideals" (Nakhleh 1975: 513-514).

It must be pointed out that the emergence of, and developments associated with, the National Committee are not necessarily politically conclusive. Clearly, political sophistication and discretion is required. Multiple hazards and tensions face the Committee, the extent and outcome of which only the future will determine. We mention three only: (a) the state is quick to declare radical Arab political activity as subversive, a danger to security, etc.; today's strident Jewish Israeli nationalism places limitations on national claims of (Palestinian) Israeli Arabs, (b) Rakah remains the central "Arab" party in Israel and is certainly a motive force in the Committee. Its core membership is highly organized, careful to maintain its constitutional, parliamentary, and party framework. Party discipline on political issues is a potential source of conflict between Rakah members, "Front" supporters, and "non-Front" members on the Committee, (c) The State of Israel has played an active role in creating, manipulating and/or deepening existing factionalism within Arab communities; the Israeli party system has also exploited factional circumstances within villages and towns. While the Committee, as a roof organization, and a counterweight to sect and party differences and to village divisions, has been a factor in somewhat dampening factionalism, conditions of insecurity along with prevailing local opportunism and State pressure are conducive to its ongoing presence, a potential threat to Committee solidarity.

The achievement of the National Committee may be summed up as the ability to overcome limitations (factionlism and imposed factionalism, external controls, threats in regard to anti-Establishment political activity, etc.), and to be capable at the local level (especially village, but also town) of dealing not only with taxes, electric grids, zoning plans etc., but also with such class and national contexts as land expropriation implemented against Arabs alone, discrimination in financing, allocation of resources, work opportunities, level of services, etc., and of considering the question of Palestinian national identity and national issues, events and circumstances as they arise (the invasion of Lebanon, the occupation etc.).

We emphasize, therefore, that given the domination of political circumstances at the highly centralized state level in mainly Jewish national terms, the transfer by the Arab population (not the replacement of existing parties and groups, not without internal conflicts along class, party, sect lines, etc.) of key political questions to the local level and local leadership headed by a roof organization—the National Committee—represents an important indigenous Arab political development in Israel.

6
Local Authority in Arab Settlements: Summary

In this monograph we discussed developmental processes of change over time in Arab local authorities. We emphasized the role of appointed Arab village mukhtars in regard to the main concerns of the Ottoman agrarian regime: tax collection, law and order. Here the mukhtars served as representatives of the collectivity imposed on contesting, but poor, weak, and factionally manipulated hamula-lineage groupings and sects in villages and towns. Power and control were entirely in the hands of a class of town landowners-merchants-rentiers and the regime's military-administrative officials.

The British mandate marked the beginning of a transition of an Arab peasantry into a peasant-worker and wage-earning class. This class continued to be politically and economically dominated by the wealthy Arab urban rentier-merchant class, now extending also into government offices, the professions and so on. This narrow stratum was regarded as the representative of the Palestine Arab population by the mandatory power. While political, national and class consciousness grew throughout the Arab public, local government and local authorities and councils remained underdeveloped and inconsequential, mainly because of elite class domination and the colonial government's set of priorities: preserving order, security and the status quo. Mayors and mukhtars were appointed, the government concerned itself with supporting and "reviving tradition," women did not vote, restrictive voting qualifications existed, revenues and expenditures were minimal; out of over 900 Arab villages in Palestine in 1946, there were only 11 local councils and 24 village councils, and these were not very effective. Villages were faction ridden and the dominant class and the mandatory power continued to manipulate within and between lineage, religious and sect groups; nevertheless, in regard to certain issues and certain events (the Arab rebellion, etc.) such groups might temporarily find common ground.

The Palestine Arab population in Israel became a small minority of 160,000 in 1949 (there were over one million Jews). The weak and controlled status of the now Israeli Arabs was complete: their

prior political and religious leadership was gone, they were under military government, and during the early years of the 1950s more than half their land was confiscated. Jewish nation-state ideology dominated, the state became increasingly centralists and militaristic. Within this framework the military government determined the functioning of local village administration, in part through appointed mukhtars and through its direct influence on village groups and individuals.

However, the Israeli state maintained parliamentary democracy and instituted universal services (health, welfare, education). While the latter operated differentially for Jews and for Arabs, their effect on the Arab community was extensive. There are now three Arab municipalities in Israel and 55 local councils; 38 Arab localities are associated with regional councils. Formally, Arab local authorities operate within the framework of regulations that hold for the administration of all local government in the state. All persons over the age of 18 have the right to vote.

In itself, the extensive process of municipalization that has occurred in Israel is an indication of additional complex processes of change, and the forestalling of change, for the Arab national minority. Thus, dozens of new local councils underwent significant changes in their class-occupational structure, in the level of education of their memberships, in the muting of comprehensive hamula interests and pressures and/or their diversion into more openly political conflicts, alongside the deepening of political party concerns. At the same time, infrastructure, economic growth, and services in Arab communities have developed at levels far below those of Jewish communities. In our study we emphasized the dynamic interrelationship between state and local factors in regard to the activities and opportunities of Arab local councils; we found that state factors dominate.

In fact, more and more of the so-called local factors reflect to the imposition of localism, a set of limitations stemming more from Israeli state policy than from tendencies inherent in Arab social relations and council structures. Several factors have affected the functioning of the Arab local authorities. The unique circumstance of the Arabs' becoming a powerless minority under Israeli military government established an immediate relationship of control and dependence. The dependence between central and local government in Israel restricts the autonomy of local authorities as a whole, in particular the small and weak localities among which Arab settlements are prominent. The rapid process whereby Arabs quickly

became wage workers outside their home villages and towns was not accompanied by the creation of a substantial local economic base. As a result, Arab settlements with their very limited resources remain almost totally reliant on the state for their development. Further, although the Arab population is regarded as an important potential pool of voters for the establishment parties, Arabs hold no part of the centralized Israeli state power system.

We analyzed the minutes of Arab local authority meetings: most significant is that today both municipal and national (e.g., Palestinians outside the Green Line, etc.) concerns are considered, while during the first two decades the issues were exclusively local. This change is associated with the politicization of the Arab public as a whole, along with the direct role taken in council affairs by a young and educated leadership.

In addition, social and economic changes (e.g., extensive population growth, proletarizaron, the narrowing of the class structure, etc.), along with increased democratization and government legislation providing for election of local authorities and direct elections of chairmen, have altered traditional structures and to some degree, local voting behavior. Competition takes the form of novel coalitions led by leaders of local groups (sect, hamula, party); formerly peripheral groups within the traditional structure have assumed active political roles; national political parties are active elements within local affairs and elections, etc.

We observed that being outside the Israeli power system, Arab villages and towns are generally underdeveloped and Arabs are not employed in most government offices and under-employed in others. Budgetary allocations showed sharp differentials between Arab and Jewish local councils, that is, they were subject to national discrimination. Until 1976 per capita allocation in the Jewish sector was five to fifty times higher in the Arab sector, prior to the opening of credit lines in 1979 the Arab sector received nothing for development, apart from construction funds allocated by the Ministry of Education and the national lottery; since 1977 all Jewish councils-municipalities have based their budgets on a “basket of services” (a standard decided by the Ministry of Interior together with the local authorities recognizing the costs of maintaining and developing services—education, health, etc.), while the Arab sector budgets were drawn up according to expanding services. At best, the discrepancies between the two remained. Since 1984 municipal budgets have been drawn up on the basis of budgets approved in

1983; this allows for no expansion of existing services nor the recognition of new ones.

Recent figures (1985) show that the sum total of the budget for local councils-municipalities was NIS1.3 billion, of which the Arab local authorities received NIS30 million, or about 2.3 percent of the total. The Arab population living under the jurisdiction of the Arab local councils comprises 12 percent of the total population in Israel. The annual per capita sum in the Arab sector was thus NIS60; the average per capita sum budgeted in Arab municipal budgets is about one-third of that in Jewish municipal budgets.

The per capita development budget in the Arab sector did not exceed NIS5 in 1985. Yet Jewish councils-municipalities have been receiving development funds from government ministries also, along with special grants and donations from various institutions. It need hardly be stated that "most Arab settlements lack a sewage system, decent playgrounds, sports facilities, day-care centers, community centers, school psychological services, social workers, dental clinics, industry…" Our sample of Jewish and Arab locations of equal size indicates some improvement: in 1970 the average differential in the budgets of these villages-towns was about 13:1 in favor of the Jewish councils, while in the distribution of government grants Jewish councils were favored by an average ratio of approximately 14:1; the discrepancy between the budgets of the Jewish and Arab councils diminished, and by 1982 it stood at a ratio of 3:1 for the respective budgets and 5:1 for government grants. By 1984 there had also been a real increase in per capita services in both the Jewish and Arab sectors but the gap between them remained almost the same, with just a slight improvement for the latter.

A number of the structural changes and apparent continuities were discussed in detail in a historically oriented field-work investigation of six selected sample Arab settlements. The dominance of mukhtarship, and/or of a leading hamula-lineage in a village, which followed the dictates of the military government, characterized almost all Arab localities well into the mid-1960s. The struggle for recognition and privileges (travel permits, employment possibilities, etc.) provided by the military government sharpened internal factionalism. The role of the dominant political party of this period —Mapai—in this respect was noticeable. Although ideological parties (e.g., Maki, Mapam) operated in the Arab community at this time, they could not provide material privileges or advantages to their supporters. Other national Jewish political parties from all streams quickly entered Arab settlements with the offer of specific

rewards (jobs, welfare benefits, etc.) according to the ministerial offices they controlled and in the hope that they could obtain part of the ever-growing vote of the Arab population in national elections.

The national political parties also exploited the (actional potential existing among and within hamulas, sects and religious groups, and their vote-getting quest had wide local repercussions. These were not only factional in nature, but also served, and here the radical ideological parties were more effective, in further drawing the attention of an already politicized community to national issues. Although the Arab community distributes its votes throughout most of the party spectrum in parliamentary elections, (including the parties such as Mapam and the Citizens' Right Movement on the Zionist left), overwhelming support goes to parties believed to best represent its national interests (Rakah and now to a lesser extent, the PLP and the Arab Democratic Party); other support goes to political parties (i.e., Labor, the NRP, Likud) representing traditional, non-radical concerns and especially those that can provide concrete protective benefits through state agencies and ministries under their control.

While some parties (especially Rakah) nave some success with a following that cross-cuts hamulas, religious groups and neighborhoods (especially in the Nazareth municipality), in many settlements local hamula-supported lists and/or factions within hamulas and religious groups in different coalitions and combinations continue to dominate in local elections. For example, Shefar-ʿAm has been marked by a change at its political center from Christian control to Muslim domination with the Druze also increasing their influence. While a sophisticated leadership has replaced an old and traditional one in Tamra, competitors, who also include organized "internal" refugees, rely on hamula supporters. In Iksal, lineage factions within the dominant hamula itself compete, with the support of other local groups and national parties, for dominance in the local council. Fictive relations have created a hamula power group in Ara'ra that allows it to compete successfully with the traditionally (military government, etc.) supported hamula. Hamulas and neighborhoods of hamulas in Sakhnin maintain internal solidarity for the most part, when they form a list or switch their allegiance from one list to another. (These are never total phenomena, since there are always individuals who vote according to individual concerns and evaluation.) In Daliyat al Karmel shared origin joined individuals into a dominant hamula organization. Over time, population growth, internal divisiveness, etc., have created

factional groups within this hamula each of which seeks allies from other lineages and factions. Meanwhile, national parties have supported this or that factional list; factional lists have shifted their allegiance from one national party to another. We recall also that the Islamic Movement has had some striking gains in the 1989 municipal elections. Clearly the Movement's importance in future elections, and within the 'Israeli Arab' scene, will reflect developments in the Israel-Palestine situation along with Middle East power relationships.

While such factional conflicts continue to mark internal relations and often the rise and fall of local council groupings, they do not constitute the entire picture and, we believe, no longer the most significant feature of social and political organization in Arab settlements. Local administration has become more and more aware and effective in dealing with budgetary problems, the lack of available services, the need for development plans, infrastructure, industry, and the like. That is, despite internal differences, today local council members join forces to deal with a range of problems and issues that were not even raised a decade or two ago.

The formation of the National Committee of Chairmen of Arab Local Authorities in 1974 (in a process that began several years before that), as a roof organization linking Arab local councils for joint activity, provided a key to understanding the new political dimension and level of activity in Arab communities. Individually, local councils are weak and can achieve very little without the protection of a party in control of a ministry. Today it is impossible to fully separate the activities of almost any local council in Israel from the existence of the Committee and its position in regard to both municipal and broader political concerns.

In general, the Committee owes its formation to, and has the support of a politicized Israeli Arab public and a sophisticated and educated leadership. The Committee was primarily designed to solve problems directly related to differences in budget allocations between Jewish and Arab settlements and problems of local municipal discrimination in all forms. Since then the Committee has directly addressed national issues also. The emergence of the Committee also reflects continuities in pre-State political parties and ideological movements as well as the extensive growth in the number of Arab local councils in Israel. The Committee itself comprises individuals with party associations from both the establishment and the left, and today from the Islamic Movement. In many instances its decisions and activities lessen and settle factional

disputes in Arab villages and among religious groups and different political parties to which Arabs belong. The weight of decisions taken in the Committee (e.g., on tax increases, etc.) lends support to similar decisions taken in individual local councils. For its part the Committee is also sensitive to general opinion within the Arab public, and is capable of calling for overall Arab political action (e.g., "Land Day", "Equality Day" and numerous other general strikes).

There are definite disputes on ideological grounds between political parties in which Arabs are dominant (i.e., between the Communist Party and the Progressive List for Peace) and between them and other less prominent, political movements (e.g., Abnaa el-Balad, the Islamic Movement, etc.). Awareness of such divisiveness has been a factor for increasing unified political action within the National Committee, and it has broadened its political effectiveness through the formation of the Higher Surveillance Committee for the Affairs of Arab Population representing not only the Chairmen of Arab local authorities but also representatives of all political groups within the Arab populace.

Successive Israeli governments have attempted to divide, separate, and isolate Arab communities, lineages, sects, and religious groups, and now especially, local councils; that is, to keep their activities separate and local. The Committee's role in repelling "imposed localism" is striking. As recently as February 1988, in an emergency meeting held in Taiyibe, and with the support of twelve local council heads, the Committee condemned an irresponsible act of violence perpetrated by a "peripheral group" in that township {*Ha'aretz*, 12 February 1988). The establishment generally denies the Committee recognition since it represents an organized Arab public, and especially when it take a stand on national issues (Palestinians in the occupied territories, the Lebanon invasion, etc.). The establishment is mainly disturbed by the major support that Arabs give radical parties in national elections. It is in these terms that the establishment threatens the Committee from time to time, and the Committee, knowing its own weaknesses, is careful not to aggravate the powerful state. However, the major Israeli parties also want a share of the large potential (12-13 Knesset seats) in the Arab vote and compete for Arab electoral support; therefore, establishment political parties are careful not to antagonize totally the Committee and its representative local council chairmen.

APPENDIX Table 4.1: Budgets of Arab local councils 1975 (in ILOOOs) and the proportion of the budget accounted for by tax revenues and government grants compared with Jewish local councils

Municipal Status	*Jewish Local Councils*					*Arab Local Councils*					Total Local Gov't Bdgt. in Israel (1+4)	Total Gov't Grants (3+6)
	Total budget (1)	taxes (2)	%	gov't. grant (3)	%	Total budget (4)	taxes (5)	%	gov't. grant (6)	%		
Large local councils	557,152	90,103	16	173,998	31	43,235	9,013	21	7,654	18	600,387	181,652
Small local councils	130,800	26,033	20	50,536	39	31,770	7,339	23	7,193	23	162,570	57,729
Percentage of the Total	90%			94%		10%			6%		(4+1) 100%	(3+6) 100%
Population in thousands	(66%) 421					(34%) 220					Total population (100%) 641	

Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Local Authorities in Israel, 1975-76, Fiscal Data*, No. 554, pp. 45-49.

APPENDIX Table 4.2: Budgets of the Arab and Jewish local authorities, 1832 (ISOOOs), and the revenues from property tax and government grants

Municipal Status	*Jewish Local Authorities*					*Arab Local Authorities*					Total Local Gov't Bdgt. in Israel (1+4)	Total Gov't Grants (3+6)
	Total budget (1)	taxes (2)	%	gov't. grant (3)	%	Total budget (4)	taxes (5)	%	gov't. grant (6)	%		
Municipalities	25,404,202	5,078,270	20	5,399,406	21	252,517	19,066	8	77,795	31	25,656,719	5,477,201
Large local councils	4,042,320	319,085	8	1,515,876	38	808,814	54,137	7	218,998	27	4,851,134	1,734,874
Small local councils	1,197,253	63,184	5	649,263	54	287,149	16,428	6	116,127	40	1,484,384	765,390
Regional councils	5,760,467	271,231	5	1,996,076	35	--	--	--	--	--	5,760,467	1,996,076
Total	36,404,242	5,731,770	16	9,560,621	26	1,348,480	89,631	7	412,920	31	37,752,722	9,973,541
Proportion received by each sector	96%			96%		4%			4%		(4+1) 100.0	(6+3) 100.0

Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Local Authorities in Israel, Fiscal Data*, 1982-83

APPENDIX Table 4.3: The gap in per capita expenditure by Jewish and Arab councils on local services

Year		Population governed by local councils (in thousands)	Total budget for local services*	Per capita amount* disbursed	Proportionate gap in services to Jews: Arabs
1970	Arabs	182.2	1,676	9	9.6: 1
	Jews	381.2	32,992	87	
1975	Arabs	220	9,812	45	7.6: 1
	Jews	421	145,130	345	
1982*	Arabs	323	163,132	505	5.1: 1
	Jews	482	1,251,181	2,596	

*The amounts for the year 1982 are given in thousands of shekels. Previous years are in thousands of Israeli pounds.

Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Local Authorities in Israel, Fiscal Data* 1970/71; 1975/76; 1982/83.

APPENDIX Table 4.4: Expenditures by Arab local councils, as compared with a parallel sample of Jewish local Councils, 1982(ILOOOs) - by type of service and type of activity

			Breakdown by Type of Service										*Type of Activity*			
Local Council	Popu-lation	Total Budget	General Administr.		Local Services		Government Services		Other Projects		Total	Wages and Salaries		Operations		Other Expenditures	
Safed	16,500	220,180	39,579	18%	56,867	26%	91,308	41%	32,426	15%	100.0	90,724	41%	42,661	19%	86,795	40%
Hatzor	6,600	104,975	22,211	21%	15,371	15%	56,385	54%	11,008	10%	100.0	34,177	33%	27,893	27%	42,815	40%
Nesher	10,200	119,019	15,957	13%	22,206	19%	67,558	57%	13,298	11%	100.0	49,719	42%	38,708	33%	30,592	25%
Pardes Hanna	16,200	145,775	17,386	12%	29,956	21%	81,896	56%	16,537	11%	100.0	52,127	36%	59,494	41%	34,154	23%
Kiryot	11,400	105,143	22,107	21%	28,099	27%	46,268	44%	9,127	8%	100.0	37,303	35%	31,195	30%	36,645	35%
Tiv'on	5,400	60,746	7,886	13%	19,173	32%	27,166	45%	6,521	10%	100.0	23,119	38%	17,360	29%	20,267	33%
Zichron Ya'akov																	
Shlomi	2,400	44,510	10,839	25%	11,615	26%	18,758	42%	3,298	7%	100.0	10,211	23%	16,899	38%	17,400	39%
TOTAL	68,700	800,348	135,965	17%	183,287	23%	388,881	49%	92,215	11%	100.0	297,380	37%	234,300	29%	268,668	34%
Shefar-'Am	18,900	76,886	9,956	13%	16,056	20%	41,939	55%	8,915	12%	100.0	45,012	59%	23,747	31%	8,107	10%
Iksal	6,100	16,459	2,675	16%	1,773	11%	10,364	63%	1,647	10%	100.0	8,594	52%	6,128	37%	1,737	11%
Daliyat al Karmel	9,300	32,023	6,844	21%	3,226	10%	18,267	57%	3,686	12%	100.0	15,697	49%	10,023	31%	6,303	20%
Taiyibe	19,000	63,219	6,910	11%	14,366	23%	37,353	59%	4,590	7%	100.0	45,319	72%	13,865	22%	4,035	6%
Sakhnin	14,400	49,869	6,615	13%	4,342	9%	34,964	70%	3,948	8%	100.0	34,860	70%	10,171	20%	4,838	10%
Ar'ara	6,200	30,087	3,609	12%	2,495	8%	22,026	73%	1,957	7%	100.0	22,010	73%	6,315	21%	1,762	6%
Fassouta	2,000	6,699	2,616	40%	1,369	20%	2,039	30%	675	10%	100.0	3,527	53%	2,129	32%	1,043	15%
TOTAL	75,900	275,222	39,225	14%	43,627	16%	166,952	60%	25,418	10%	100.0	175,019	64%	72,378	26%	27,825	10%

Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Local Authorities in Israel, Fiscal Data*, 1982/83.

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