CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: Democratic Outcomes and Associational Life

Across the third world, the discourse on civil society has remained a key feature of democracy promotion initiatives. Scholars evaluating the potential for democracy in these developing states and activists seeking to effect democratic reforms have focused much of their attention on civic associations. They argue that civil societies help to hold states accountable, represent citizen interests, channel and mediate mass concerns, bolster an environment of pluralism and trust, and socialize members to the behavior required for successful democracies.[1]

International organizations have also clearly accepted the premise that strong civic groups will promote democratization and political stability, and they have enthusiastically funded projects deemed useful for enhancing activities leading to civil society. For over a decade now, international organizations have tried to influence democratization through civil societies. Such organizations have the tools—money, influence, and the backing of the international community—to affect the growth of civic associations around the world. In 1990 there were an estimated six thousand international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); by 1999 that number had grown to twenty-six thousand (World Bank, 2000). Of World Bank–financed projects approved in the fiscal year 1995, for instance, 41% involved NGOs compared with an average of 6% for projects approved between 1973 and 1988.[2] According to Amy Hawthorne, "The majority of [US] democracy aid for the Middle East from 1991–2001—$150 million dollars—went to projects classified as civil society strengthening."[3]

[1]Ottaway and Carothers, *Funding Virtue;* Hoogh and Stolle, *Generating Social Capital;* Henderson, *Building Democracy in Contemporary Russia;* May and Milton, *(Un)civil Societies;* Krishna, "Enhancing Political Participation in Democracies"; Kenneth Newton, "Trust, Social Capital, Civil Society, and Democracy," *International Political Science Review* (2001); Letki, "Socialization for Participation?"; Hearn, "Aiding Democracy?"; Finkel, "Can Democracy Be Taught?"; Gibson, "Social Networks"; John Clark, "The State"; Hadi, "Decentralized Cooperation"; Blair, "Donors, Democratization, and Civil Society"; World Bank, *National Endowment;* Global Policy Organization (1996); Abu 'Amr, "Pluralism and Palestinians"; Norton and Ibrahim, "The Future of Civil Society in the Middle East"; Ibrahim, "Democratization in the Arab World"; Huntington, *The Third Wave.*

[2]World Bank, "New Paths to Social Development."

[3]Hawthorne, "Middle Eastern Democracy."

Further, a significant number of the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) programs implemented in 2002 channeled their monies to civil society programs. If participation in civic associations grows, the argument goes, so too will democratic forms of government—and all from grassroots efforts.

In the West Bank, ruled ostensibly by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) since 1993, Palestinian association leaders are no exception to the worldwide enthusiasts who have applauded the potential democratizing role of civil society. Leaders emphasized their commitment to achieving social improvement through associations. As a Palestinian association leader commented in 1999, "These goals [building civic associations] are important so that we can accomplish an overall development and obtain the building of a democratic society that offers all the opportunities in work and education and the availability of all the services and social equality."[4]

These leaders were enthusiastic because associational life in Western democracies reinforces patterns of civic engagement that mediate democratic practices and forms of participation. Several key features of these democratic institutions are directly related to the viability of civic organizations. Democratic governments, for instance, do not normally promote their own interests at the expense of the public, and citizens have avenues of political recourse for holding public officials accountable for misuse of public office for personal gain. Citizens of democratic polities, moreover, can participate in both politics and an associational life that is directly political. Implicit in current examinations of the effectiveness of associational life for the promotion of attitudes, activities, and belief systems favorable to the sustenance of democracies, however, is the understanding that associations and their immediate surroundings are supported by existing democratic structures, laws, and practices.[5]

Yet these same Palestinian leaders also expressed concern about the ability of civil society to influence democratic change. According to their accounts, the PNA was by 1999 creating conditions that stifled their progress. More broadly, many scholars of the rest of the Arab world began to question whether an active and vibrant civic polity would induce democratic change at all.[6] This clear difference in practice and context begs the

[4]Interview of associational leader by Amaney Jamal, summer 1999.

[5]Piatonni, *Clientelism, Interests, and Democratic Representation,* 3. Clientelism and corruption do exist in democracies; however, according to Simona Piatonni, "[e]xisting democracies strike different compromises between the protection of particular interests and the promotion of the general interest, hence represent different mixes of particularism and universalism."

[6]Schlumberger, "The Arab Middle East and the Question of Democratization"; Ismael, *Middle East Politics Today,* 74; Bellin, "Contingent Democrats," 175; and Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East."

question of whether civic associations in the service of political reform can travel from the democratic West, where states are not embedded in societies as they are in the rest of the world. But in states where government extends into all facets of civil society, as is characteristic of many nondemocratic and state-centralized nations, governments intervene more directly in associational life; they promote specific agendas, fund certain programs, and monitor associational activities. Particularly in nondemocratic polarized polities (with strong pro-regime and anti-regime cleavages) like those in Palestine and other Arab countries, ruling governments extend their influence by promoting associational agendas that directly serve their political mandate to the detriment of the general interests of the polity and of basic democratic procedures.

Hence the question of this book is whether or how civic associations can promote democratic attitudes and behaviors useful for democratic governance. Despite their role in Western democracies, civic associations—regardless of whether they are church societies or sports clubs—reproduce elements of the political context in which they exist and structure themselves accordingly. Where associational contexts are dominated by patron-client tendencies, associations, too, become sites for the replication of those vertical ties.

By examining associational realities in the context of the West Bank during the height of the Oslo Peace Process (1993–99), this book offers key insights into the political conditions that promote or depress "democratizing associationalism." The book also extends its findings to Morocco, Egypt, and Jordan, arguing that the relationship of associations to clientelistic and authoritarian governments is dramatically different from that between associations and democracies. In authoritarian contexts, associational life cannot be expected to yield the types of democratic values and outcomes associated with associationalism in Western democracies. In particular, this book examines the relationship between associational life in the West Bank and levels of civic engagement among the Palestinian citizenry. But before we address this issue, it is worth examining the argument championing civic associations in the democratic West, especially in the United States, more closely.

Associations in Western Democratic Contexts

It is difficult to argue with the proposition that civic associations—the YMCA, the Elks Club, church clubs, bowling leagues, trade unions, and so on—form the bedrock of modern Western democracies. The habits of association foster patterns of civility important for successful democracies.[7]

[7]Tocqueville, *Democracy in America.*

Civic organizations serve as agents of democratic socialization. In *Democracy in America,* Alexis de Tocqueville attributes the success of American democracy to its rich associational life. Associations serve as "schools for civic virtue." "Nothing," Tocqueville asserts, "is more deserving of our attention than the intellectual and moral associations of America. . . . [In associations,] feelings and opinions are recruited, the heart is enlarged, and the human mind is developed, only by the reciprocal influence of men upon each other."[8] Scholars who follow Tocqueville posit that citizens who participate in civic organizations are more likely to learn the importance of tolerance, pluralism, and respect for the law. Associational members not only learn that they have a right to be represented by their governments, but they also learn more about their potential political roles in society.[9]

The argument that higher levels of civic engagement are a product of associational life is the cornerstone of most contemporary literature on civil society. Active civic participation and engagement are necessary to sustain competent, responsive, and effective democratic institutions. Larry Diamond argues that "a rich associational life supplements the role of political parties in stimulating participation [and] increasing the political efficacy and skill of democratic citizens."[10] Hence, in democracies, especially Western ones, associational life helps instill values and practices essential to democratic governance.

Associational life also seems to increase the levels of social capital (networks and interpersonal trust) among members. In *Making Democracy Work,* Robert Putnam argues that trust and norms of reciprocity increase within organizations, thereby augmenting the likelihood of cooperative ventures among members of society as a whole. This increase in social capital in turn encourages people to "stand up to city hall" or engage in other forms of behavior that provide an incentive for better government performance. In Putnam's formulation, the density of horizontal voluntary associations among citizens (in contrast to the vertical associations under the dominion of the state) correlates with strong and effective local government: "strong society; strong state."[11]

Associations also foster democracy by mobilizing ordinary citizens in the political process. They and other civic networks can serve as political catalysts, bringing constituents into mainstream politics. The competition among these organized groups in the public arena results in public policy initiatives. In this view, associations are critical in a representative democracy. They funnel constituency preferences to mainstream policy

[8]Ibid., 200–201.
[9]Diamond and Plattner, "Toward Democratic Consolidation," 232–33.
[10]Ibid., 232–33.
[11]Putnam, *Making Democracy Work,* 176.

debates.[12] Civic organizations also reduce the costs of collective action by serving as collectivizing forums that bring citizens together.

Finally, civic organizations with substantial memberships can place the necessary constraints on authoritarian impulses within the government. Civic organizations serve as key sites for political mobilization, recruitment, and expression, working as counterweights to centralized governing apparatuses and encouraging sectors of society to oppose authoritarian tendencies. Associational life is particularly important in helping to hold states accountable, pressuring them to make more democratic concessions and checking the powers of authoritarian leaders. In Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, for instance, civic organizations contributed to the downfall of communist regimes.[13] This idea has been at the center of much of the literature on mobilization, opposition-regime relations, social movements, and revolutions.

The relationships between associational life and democratic outcomes reveal an underlying theme: a convergence of changes in attitude among individuals at the association level and increasing political participation within society as a whole, both of which are supportive of democratic outcomes. Associational members with higher levels of social capital exhibit a "self-interest that is alive to the interests of others" and therefore tend to care more about local community affairs. This in turn drives associational members to express their concerns through appropriate political channels.[14] Active association members with high social capital are also more likely to cooperate with others in ways that support democracy. When local concerns arise, members are more likely to take their complaints to local government officials rather than develop clientelistic ties. When attitudes and behaviors converge through active civic participation, democratic institutions become more effective.

Associational life, the argument goes, not only promotes and consolidates democracies but also makes democratic institutions stronger and more effective. But little attention has been paid to the fact that most of the research linking associational life to broader and more effective forms of civic engagement relies on evidence from democratic, mostly Western states, where autonomous interest groups already exist and are able to influence government in bottom-up fashion.[15] These studies conclude that,

[12]Huckfeldt, Plutzer, and Sprague, "Alternative Contexts of Political Behavior"; Rosenstone and Hansen, *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy;* and Verba, Nie, and Kim, *Participation and Political Equality.*

[13]Huntington, *The Third Wave;* Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market;* and Evans, "The Eclipse of the State?"

[14]Putnam, *Making Democracy Work,* 88.

[15]Seminal works in this vein include Putnam, *Making Democracy Work;* and Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, *Voice and Equality.*

in democracies, associational life is important in enhancing the generation of specific qualities important for democratic citizenship, such as political efficacy, interpersonal trust, moderation, and support for democratic institutions and forms of political participation. The assumption that democratic institutions and autonomous interest groups *already exist* is embedded in the causal mechanisms linking individuals, at the associational level, to broader and more collective forms of participation that support institutional democratic outcomes. But how could higher levels of civic engagement lead to more conscientious voters if the right to vote freely, for example, is not already guaranteed?

The causal mechanisms that link associational members to broader forms of political participation within democracies depend on the availability of democratic participatory institutions. The posited relationship between civic associations and democracy is a circular and self-reinforcing relationship. Democratic socialization, the promotion of social capital that enables broader forms of democratic participation, and the mobilization of interests through democratic channels are all based on an unexamined norm of democracy: associations will promote the attitudes and behaviors important for members to make use of *existing* democratic political institutions.[16] Higher levels of civic engagement and more effective democratic governance, therefore, shape and reinforce one another in an endogenous relationship. Democratic institutions shape the way associations link their members to broader forms of political participation. Associations also instill attitudes and behaviors supportive of the available democratic structures in society.

The Tocquevillean strand of the literature on democracy and civic engagement focuses on what happens within associations. The acts of meeting, discussing, and debating generate qualities and predispositions compatible with democratic citizenship. That the internal dynamics of associations alone may create qualities that bode well for democratic citizenship is compelling, especially if these very qualities are reinforced and supported beyond the confines of associations. What happens outside an organization, however, is as important as what happens within. This means that exporting the idea of participation in civic associations to promote democracy in nondemocratic states is considerably more problematic.

In democratic societies, the merits of exercising one's rights democratically may reinforce habits of the heart that prefigure democracy. In nondemocratic societies, too, citizens may realize the importance of moderation, tolerance, and care for the local community. When the topics of

[16] The fourth claim, that associations can serve as counterweights to the state, is also applicable only in settings where civic sectors will not face harsh retaliation for advancing agendas that contradict or undermine the rule of the regime in power.

discussion within their associations also center on the nondemocratic context of the society at large, however—such as corruption among public officials, the lack of political recourse available to citizens, and the scarcity of general government service provisions—habits consistent with democratic citizenship may diminish. If members come to realize, through active civic participation, that the representation of particular interests through nondemocratic means is the norm and not the exception, that the government will promote and supply representation to only interests that correspond with its rule, and that those interested in general welfare polices can potentially be blocked from representation and participation, then the promotion and reinforcement of associational habits and predispositions should be dramatically different from those patterns which emerge in democracies.

Putnam has found that interpersonal trust is valuable for enhancing behavior that supports democratic rule. Higher levels of interpersonal trust also work to reinforce democratic rule, but they may be less applicable to nondemocratic societies. Indeed, in nondemocratic societies it is not clear how social capital can enhance the democratic governance of a regime. Social capital in democratic settings may create opportunities for citizens to collectively seek the help of democratic institutions and thus legitimate these democratic institutions. This may also be true in nondemocratic regions, where higher levels of social trust can enable citizens to seek out local public officials through any available avenue—whether formal (directly through the state) or informal (through clientelistic channels). Seeking the help of local public officials in this manner, however, similarly legitimizes authoritarian state behaviors and clientelistic channels. Just as associational life in northern Italy promotes civic engagement in ways that are important for the efficiency of northern Italy's local governance, so too does associational life in southern Italy promote civic engagement in ways that sustain the inefficiency of local governance in southern Italy. Does the lack of social capital in southern Italy promote ineffective democratic institutions? Or do ineffective democratic institutions promote levels of civic engagement, including social capital, supportive of nondemocratic procedures and institutions? If the latter is true, I posit, then social capital can be important in the reinforcement of any government in power, regardless of whether it is democratic or nondemocratic.

In Western democracies, states are not embedded in their societies, and they differ from nondemocratic states in the Arab world (and elsewhere) in important and marked ways. Most notably, in Western democracies, autonomous interest groups already exist; channels of political participation are already guaranteed; and blatant clientelism, patronage, and corruption play a less important role in everyday political life than they do

in the Arab world. What, then, is to be said about the role of associations in enhancing levels of civic engagement in nondemocratic settings, such as the West Bank, where existing political institutions do not support the types of civic participation associated with more effective democracy?

Open to question, then, is the premise that civic associations will promote democracy unequivocally and across the board. Putnam, for one, argues that "those concerned with democracy and development in the South [Italy] . . . should be building a more civic community."[17] In Putnam's argument, such a community should result from a higher degree of associational participation. Implicit in this argument is the correspondence of higher levels of social capital with higher levels of support for democratic procedures and norms. Other scholars make the same point, with similar implications. Larry Diamond writes that "associational life can . . . promot[e] an appreciation of the obligations as well as the rights of democratic citizens."[18] It is inconceivable, however, that Putnam meant to correlate higher levels of social capital with support for anti-democratic procedures and norms—indeed, with anything other than democratic institutions and procedures, if the goal is more effective democratic institutions.[19] Furthermore, the improvement of democratic governance through civic engagement depends on the existence of associational life within democratic contexts where political institutions are both available and responsive. Otherwise, how would interest in local affairs promote democratic outcomes in areas where the channels of expression or the ability to lobby local representatives are either limited or inaccessible? In such areas, higher levels of interest in community affairs do not necessarily correlate with broader forms of political behavior that advance democracy or shore up democratic norms. The means to do so in each context are simply too different.

Associations, in these formulations, serve as vehicles for citizen representation. In democratic states, where channels exist for voicing citizen concerns and where government institutions are responsive, attitudes about the importance of government as a representative body can be solidified within associations, especially where citizens seek governmental intervention for problems that may arise in their daily lives. Associations in nondemocratic regions can attempt to link citizens to states, but again, the ability to do so depends on existing political institutions that differ from those in democracies. On the one hand, if associations directly seek

[17]Putnam, *Making Democracy Work,* 185.

[18]Diamond and Plattner, "Toward Democratic Consolidation," 230–31.

[19]Fukuyama, "Social Capital, Civil Society, and Development," 11. As Fukuyama says, "[a]n abundant stock of social capital is presumably what produces a dense civil society, which in turn has been almost universally seen as a necessary condition for modern liberal democracy (in Ernest Gellner's phrase, 'no civil society, no democracy')."

government channels but find they do not have access to government offices or to clientelistic ties, they may develop attitudes about participation that do not conform to the anticipated generation of political attitudes in democratic states. They may instead become rebellious. Having been shut out of government institutions, these associations and their members may not seek government help. On the other hand, if the association has strong connections to government through clientelistic channels, members may learn that in order to derive benefits, resources, and responses from the government, they need to seek informal, clientelistic channels of representation. In these cases, associations can very capably reinforce clientelistic tendencies within a given polity and further muster support for clientelistic forms of participation.

The argument that civic associations can serve as monitors or counterweights to the state again depends on the context. Many states severely restrict freedom of association specifically to prevent associations from assuming watchdog roles. In democratic settings, the freedom granted associations invites a multiplicity of interests and views to enter the mainstream and support broader democratic policies and forms of participation. In nondemocratic settings, by contrast, an association's ability to operate freely often depends on its agenda and other programmatic activities. Those that have the potential to disrupt the status quo often find themselves facing restrictions on their operation—if they are not disbanded altogether. Conversely, associations supporting the nondemocratic regime in power enjoy rights and privileges not guaranteed to associations in opposition. What type of civic engagement, then, do these pro-government associations encourage? First, associations endorsing the current nondemocratic regime may promote values that are not critical of the regime's policies; second, they can also reinforce clientelistic behavior. Both possibilities are at odds with studies finding that associational life promotes democratic citizenship and effective democratic institutions.

The overall political context in which associations operate, I argue, shapes the ways in which associations may or may not produce democratic change. Too often, associations that house civil society are credited with heroic accomplishments without specific attention being paid to the ways that preexisting state-society relations mediate associational activities and patterns of operation.[20] For example, in institutions where the survivability of associations is linked to regime endorsement, then the

[20]For discussions on the ways in which civic associations may operate against democracy, see Berman, "Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic," 401; Fung, "Associations and Democracy"; Dylan Riley, "Civic Association and Authoritarian Regimes in Interwar Europe: Italy and Spain in Comparative Perspective," *American Sociological Review* (2005).

political regime—whether democratic or nondemocratic—will find civil society beneficial. In many parts of the globe, civil society can and does reinforce existing political regimes and not democracy per se.

Because political institutions shape civic engagement and civic attitudes, both the content and the form of civic engagement will differ across varying political contexts. People engage their surroundings, which in turn shape attitudes and beliefs about civic participation. And although higher levels of civic engagement in democratic frameworks may lead to patterns of participation conducive to or supportive of democracy, in nondemocratic settings higher levels of civic engagement may not necessarily lead to similar trajectories of participation. Thus, the absence of accessible channels of political participation will not only hinder some forms of participation but also shape one's attitudes and beliefs about participation. Individuals will develop opinions, attitudes, norms, and perceptions influenced directly by the political context in which they operate. Since patterns of political participation differ in nondemocratic settings, patterns of civic engagement should differ as well. Even within similar contexts, variation will exist among members' civic engagement according to associational interactions with the political world around them.

Associational Life in Palestine

Palestine is a particularly rich area in which to examine the effectiveness of civic membership on democratization. After nearly thirty years of living under Israeli Occupation, and after eight years of the first Intifada,[21] Palestinians began experiencing a new relationship to their governing apparatus, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). Although most Palestinians in 1999 were living under the direct rule of the PNA, the Israeli Occupation persisted in the majority of lands on the West Bank. By 1999, the majority of Palestinians had been living under the rule of the PNA for nearly six years. Had the Israeli Occupation ended and a peaceful agreement been reached, Palestinians would have been on the road to building a state.[22] Studying associational life in Palestine, therefore, offers

[21]The first Palestinian Uprising started in December 1987 and ended in 1993, with the signing of the Oslo peace accords between Israel and the Palestinians. The current Intifada II or Aqsa Intifada started in September of 2000 and ended after Arafat's death in November 2004. Please note that data were gathered for this project between 1998 and 1999.

[22]Some might argue that the Palestinian case is not an appropriate one for this study, because the Palestinians lack a state. I disagree. My examination of associational effects on attitudes and behaviors of members assesses attitudes about the "government" in power and not the "state." Max Weber's criteria for a constituted political community require that the government rule in a territory and possess the physical force requisite to dominate that

us an examination of the ways in which civil society can plausibly influence democratic and state-building processes.

In 1999, the PNA, though ostensibly democratic, in truth mirrored much of the rest of the Arab world. It was a classic authoritarian regime that reinforced the centrality of the government through a network that included both formal and informal patron-client relationships. The increasing authoritarianism of the PNA left supporters and opponents at odds and thus resulted in a growing polarization at the societal levels between these two sectors. Supporters were right to point out that Arafat had very little choice but to centralize his power. Arafat and the PNA were still dealing with the Israeli Occupation. In essence, the Oslo stipulations demanding security for Israelis at all costs meant that Arafat needed to consolidate his power immediately and turn a blind eye to human rights abuses when collective punishments were enforced. This, of course, did not impress the Palestinian people, but significant sectors of the population were willing to give Arafat's PNA a chance. After all, Arafat's PNA controlled only 17% of the West Bank. Not only did the Israeli Occupation persist, however, but it became painfully clear that Israel was single-handedly determining the parameters of a future Palestinian state: one that would be divided and segregated with bypass roads and new Israeli settlement projects. Arafat was in a bind. On the one hand, he wanted to deliver a Palestinian state. In return however, Arafat was getting very little. The Palestinian state seemed all the more elusive. Unable to deal with growing Palestinian frustration, Arafat began curbing and limiting the channels available to these oppositional elements. Furthermore, Arafat was able to build a very elaborate, overinflated bureaucracy. Critics pointed out that this was a pattern all too paramount in the Arab world. Arab states have managed authoritarian consolidation through state patronage for decades. In response, supporters pointed out that Arafat was only helping, by providing much-needed jobs to the Palestinian people. With Israeli closures on the West Bank and Gaza, jobs were needed. And finally, supporters of Arafat claimed that opponents were chipping away at Arafat's credibility in the face of very difficult negotiations with Israel and the United States. It was bad enough that the United States and Israel consistently blamed Arafat when anything went wrong; he did not need Palestinians to endorse the biased patterns of the Israelis and the Americans. Therefore, what emerged in Palestine under Arafat's PNA was a highly centralized regime, where Arafat rewarded followers and sanctioned defectors. He was able to do

territory. The PNA also possessed key characteristics of power in a political community, namely, a monopoly of the legitimate use of force and implementation of the legal order. See Weber, *Economy and Society.*

so because he skillfully instituted a system of clientelism and patronage that permeated society.

In 1998 and 1999, I set out to better understand the nature of state-society relations in Palestine. Because my focus is on state-society relations, this book offers a glimpse of civil society in 1998–99 that juxtaposes Palestinian civil society with the governing PNA (and *not* the Israeli Occupation). By focusing on this dimension of regime–civil society relations, I am not attempting to downplay the overarching and pervasive role the Israeli Occupation plays in the everyday lives of ordinary Palestinian citizens. Rather, the purpose of this book is to explore the ways in which regime (PNA) and civil society interactions shaped patterns of civic engagment more broadly during the Oslo period (1993–2000).

In focusing on the nature of PNA–civil society relations in Palestine, I feel that it is imperative to clarify that the PNA, while not a state, was very much a governing authority. The Israeli Occupation however remained crucial in shaping the ways in which civil society interacted with the PNA. In order to contextualize the Palestinian case carefully, the Israeli Occupation will be present in much of the analysis in this book. However, this book is not about the relationship between Palestinian civil society and the Israeli Occupation. Although this is a topic of great importance and significance, the terrain of this book is limited to the relations between Palestinian civil society and the PNA. Throughout the book, I reference the ways the existing and ongoing Israeli Occupation shaped Palestinian regime-society relations, but I do not discuss, in depth, the overall implications of the Israeli Occupation on Palestinian civil society.

My goal is to understand the democratic effects of associational life in contexts where existing regimes are embedded in societies. Therefore, I focus on the relationships between the authoritarian PNA and Palestinian civil society. The type of regime–civil society relations I discuss here are not limited to the context of the Palestinian case. And although the Israeli Occupation, many will argue, served Arafat's attempts to consolidate authority, similar external threats have served the same purpose in other Arab states. Pan-Arab nationalist countries have used the logic of external threats to further consolidate regime rules. Even today, while democracy promotion initiatives garner much applause and enthusiasm, these initiatives also give governing structures more legitimacy to build security measures (against politicized sectors) that often require further regime centralization and consolidation. Therefore, the implications of my book travel beyond the Palestinian context and apply to state-society relations in other Arab countries as well. I demonstrate that parallels exist between the Palestinian case and those of Morocco, Jordan, and Egypt. Whether existing efforts to promote democracy in the Arab

world, including Palestine, succeed has yet to be determined. In the interim, this book offers a glimpse at the role civil societies can possibly play in these transitions, given the existing conditions on the ground in the Arab world.

The Associational Puzzle

Associational life continued to flourish during the Oslo period. During the 1980s the strategies of political mobilization employed by local Palestinian elites dramatically expanded associational life in the West Bank. In the 1990s international donor assistance contributed to the growth of the voluntary sector as well. Although participation in these associations had enlivened civic engagement and increased levels of interpersonal trust (a measure of social capital), the relationships between these main dimensions of civic engagement (political knowledge, civic involvement, and community engagement), interpersonal trust,[23] and support for democratic institutions *were not directly related to one another.* Using data from two surveys, one from the general Palestinian population and the other from association members and in-depth qualitative interviews with over sixty association leaders, I found that patterns of civic engagement, political knowledge, community engagement, civic involvement, and support for democratic institutions were inversely related to levels of interpersonal trust. Contrary to the expectations of existing theories derived from Western democratic settings, these findings pose an important empirical question. What explains this divergence in civic engagement indicators among Palestinian association members?

The answer this book puts forward lies in the nature of state-society relations. In centralized clientelistic settings, associations that support the regime will exhibit higher levels of interpersonal trust and lower degrees of democratic forms of civic engagement. Conversely, associations not linked to the regime will hold lower levels of interpersonal trust and higher levels of democratic civic engagement. The results here provide a counternarrative of the civic processes and pathways that instill, reinforce, and promote specific attitudes at the expense of others. In semidemocratic or authoritarian states, these aspects of "civic culture" do not, in fact, correlate with one another. In the West Bank, these attitudes and behaviors are not linked. This chapter aims to make further sense of the sources that underlie this inverse relationship in dem-

[23]In this study, I employ the phrase *interpersonal trust* to denote trust in others as well a sense of responsibility toward others in society.

ocratic indicators among associational members in the West Bank and in authoritarian states more broadly. Using the existing literature as a conceptual guide, I offer a more particularized explanation of these determinants and the plausible outcomes of the existing relationships among these indicators.

Briefly, in polities with strong patron-client relationships that function under state influence, associational life mediates levels of interpersonal trust, civic engagement, and support for democratic institutions differently. The polarization (and further segmentation) of the Palestinian political polity into pro- and anti-PNA factions determines the impact of civic life on civic attitudes. Levels of interpersonal trust are higher among members of pro-PNA associations, while support for the PNA inversely correlates with levels of support for democratic institutions. Further, support for democratic institutions strongly correlates with higher levels of civic engagement.

Clientelism and Patronage

The existence of clientelism today "defies the modern notion of representation, where all citizens should be guaranteed equal political access" by mere virtue of citizenship.[24] Instead, clientelism provides clients with paths to exclusive services and influence in return for their support of their patron. It subverts the democratic process: the client who receives money to vote in a certain way; the individual who is granted political access because he supports the party in power; the woman who pays lip service to the state in return for benefits—the list is endless.[25] The PNA was rife with such relationships, which take the form of a pyramid-shaped clientelistic network characteristic of strong, one-party states. The major beneficiaries of clientelism in these states are regime affiliates. (The second arrangement is what I will call the diffused clientelistic model, and it relies on a less centralized government apparatus. In this latter model, clientelism permeates virtually all social arenas. Electoral clientelism, factional clientelism, and business clientelism are examples of scattered clientelistic networks.[26] Power relations in these settings are distributed among numerous leaders. In the diffused clientelistic network, there is no one centralized nucleus of authority that controls political access.) In the

[24]Roniger and Gunes-Ataya, *Democracy, Clientelism, and Civil Society,* 9.

[25]Ibid., 9; Fox, "The Difficult Transition from Clientelism to Citizenship: Lessons from Mexico," 151; Kitschelt, "Linkages between Citizens and Politicians."

[26]Craig, "Caste, Class, and Clientelism." See, for example, India.

pyramid model, the state is the premier patron, and secondary and tertiary patrons are directly linked back to the state.[27]

The impact of state clientelism in state-centralized regimes (those that extend to all domains of civil society) on the democratic effects of associational life is multidimensional. The parameters of this political context constrain associational life at many junctures. Primarily, state-sponsored associations receive immediate political access and benefits not accorded to nonstate associations. Clientelistic networks further reinforce vertical linkages between state leaders and citizens, at the expense of horizontal linkages among associations. This dual effect of centralized clientelism structures the ways in which associations interact with their political environment and with one another. Where associations derive resources and benefits from the state, they are more likely to endorse government initiatives—even if those initiatives are nondemocratic. Further, because associations are linked to the state, they rely less on one another.

As a conceptual term, *clientelism* has come to encompass the various relationships between individuals and power brokers at either end of vertical and hierarchical networks. Clientelism is about mutual trust and reciprocity, beneficial to both client and patron, and it is a worldwide phenomenon. While it is prevalent in the nondemocratic world, it is not foreign to democratic countries, several of which—including Brazil, Mexico, South Korea, and India—exhibit considerable levels of clientelism.[28] In fact, client-patron relations are quite common among parties and constituencies in more developed democracies as well.[29]

Although some alternate forms may exist across political contexts, the way clientelism structures state-society relations depends on the locus of power from which it emerges. The power structure underlying clientelistic relations in return determines the degree of a client's autonomy. In more democratically diffuse clientelistic settings, clients possess more autonomy because they have more patrons to choose from. In state-centralized clientelistic settings, the narrow clientelistic superbroker—the state—limits clientelistic options and thus reduces the autonomy of

[27] For discussion of the importance of centralization for clientelistic linkages between citizens and states, see Powell, "Peasant Society and Clientelistic Politics"; Kohli, "Centralization and Powerlessness"; and Hagopian, "Traditional Politics." This definition largely incorporates Jonathan Fox's definition of authoritarian clientelism in "The Difficult Transition from Clientelism to Citizenship: Lessons from Mexico." His definition captures clientelistic relations "where imbalanced bargaining relations require the political subordination of clients and are reinforced by the the threat of coercion." My definition extends beyond that of Fox to encompass the centralized nature of authoritarian clientelistic regimes characteristic of many Arab states. Similar patterns are found in India's rule under the Congress Party in the 1950s and in Brazil under Arena until the mid-1970s.

[28] USAID report.

[29] Kitschelt, "Linkages between Citizens and Politicians."

clients. The autonomy of actors—or in this case, civic associations—depends on the overall political regime. Hence, in state-centralized regimes, where clientelism serves to replicate and extend the power of the state, civic associations enjoy less autonomy than civic associations in more established democratic settings.

State-centralized clientelism is characteristic of many states in the Arab world, and not just in the West Bank. Many regimes encourage "the formation of a limited number of officially recognized, non-competing, state-supervised groups," extending government influence to all facets of society.[30] Arab countries tend to fit this category of states that exhibit both control over and support for civic organizations. "It is textbook knowledge and hardly contested that Arab socio-political systems are characterized by strongly neo-patrimonial political rule and thus by asymmetric relation of superiority and subordination," argues Oliver Schlumberger. "This is paralleled in society at large by networks of patronage and clientelism that pervade not only the political realm but societies as a whole." States across the Middle East are so deeply embedded in clientelistic relations that, as Schlumberger goes on to argue, Arab civil societies are "in no position to impose reforms or even exert pressure to an extent beyond the control of the state."[31]

Centralization is possible because of the coercive, centralized capacity of the state.[32] Atul Kohli argues that "when the polity is organized as a democracy coercion definitely cannot be the main currency that leaders utilize to influence socioeconomic change."[33] In the Arab world the state is not held accountable, because there are very few mechanisms through which non-regime-supporting associations can do so. Opposition is swiftly quelled or defeated. In these formulations Arab societies are either in government-supporting networks or they are not. Ismael argues, "Throughout the region, states attempted to impose hegemony over civil society through oppressive and coercive measures administered through juridical, administrative, or security channels. In regimes that oppress and persecute political opposition, there is little room for autonomy."[34] Without autonomy, there can be little room for viable and competitive civil organizations outside government networks. Organizations outside state-

[30]Anoushiravan and Murphy, "Transformation of the Corporatist State."

[31]Schlumberger, "The Arab Middle East and the Question of Democratization," 114, 117; and Hamzeh, "Clientelism, Lebanon."

[32]Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East." According to Tareq Ismal, "Of the nineteen states in the Middle East, only eleven are signatories of the United Nations convention against torture, and most of those who are signatory have expressed strong reservations with Articles 21 and 22, which require the state in question to submit to examination whenever grievance petitions are filled."

[33]Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East."

[34]Ismael, *Middle East Politics Today,* 74.

centralized relations are economically deprived and cannot depend on formal institutions to represent their interests. Because these associations exist in centralized authoritarian settings, their ability to produce change is next to impossible.

Further, state centralization and the lack of democratic accountability cultivate corrupt, rent-seeking behavior among public officials. One study of Morocco finds that regime corruption suits only the longevity of the state, and resources are devoted to patronage and diverted from other useful purposes such as productive investment strategies.[35] While patron-client relations need not be corrupt, a sentiment echoed in clientelistic studies in Western democratic settings,[36] "patronage and corruption overlap" in Morocco. All this has clear implications for the role of civic associations in the Arab world.

In the absence of viable democratic institutions that separate and decentralize authority, the same patterns of civic engagement that pave the way to more effective democratic institutions in already democratic settings may generate attitudes and behaviors in settings like that of the West Bank that either reinforce the prevailing political status quo or distance citizens from the regime in power. Furthermore, where centralized governing institutions, clientelistic ties, and local corruption restrict associational life, civic associations—depending on their relationship to their immediate political surroundings—will shape patterns of civic engagement that reflect an association's position within its political context. Thus, in some cases associational life may produce dimensions of democratic citizenship, such as support for democratic institutions; however, in other cases it may produce dimensions of engagement that support authoritarian rule, specifically that of the ruling authoritarian government. I argue that the way organizations orchestrate and negotiate relationships with the political institutions around them influences the way organizations affect patterns of civic engagement, interpersonal trust, and support for democratic institutions among their members.

The existence of patron-client relations between the PNA and Palestinian society reinforces the polarized and politicized context of the West Bank. Both associational clients and nonclients are affected by their political context, albeit in different ways. Clientelistic associations vertically link their members to the larger political environment. Absent a clientelistic linkage to the PNA, the leaders and members of these associations work among themselves to fulfill their associational goals. These nonclientelistic associations are more horizontally organized. Leaders depend on their members, and they do not see themselves as key links

[35]Waterbury, "Endemic and Planned Corruption," 537, 555, as cited by Hutchcroft, "The Politics of Privilege."

[36]See, for example, Kitschelt, "Linkages between Citizens and Politicians."

between government and member constituencies. Because these associations do not enjoy the benefits of government privilege, they find it expensive and dangerous to expand their horizontal networks to other like-minded associations. Although horizontally structured, these associations remain marginalized.

Patron-client relations, however, allow for vertical ties within the organizational schema of associations. Among those associations that have close ties to the ruling government in power, vertically structured relations ensue. Because clientelistic leaders have close ties to government, they can deliver services and favors directly to their members, who become increasingly dependent on their leaders.

The type of relationship that the leaders have with existing political structures acts as a template framing the attitudes and behaviors of associational members. Where leaders enjoy special status because of strong ties to government, members, too, derive resources and benefits that reinforce the image of a benevolent PNA. By contrast, leaders who are critical of or in opposition to the PNA will reinforce member attitudes and behaviors that are similarly critical of the government. Supporters and critics of the PNA will therefore structure the civic engagement of their members differently. On the one hand, those who are supporters—who are part of the PNA "in crowd"—reveal to their members the tremendous opportunities associated with the PNA. The message to members is one that motivates involvement in PNA institutions in order to reap the benefits and rewards of loyal participation. On the other hand, critics will urge their members to be skeptical and cautious in their relationships with PNA institutions and discourage members from approaching these "corrupt" institutions. This is the case that led to Hamas's electoral victory in the 2006 Palestinian Legislative Council elections. Hamas, during the Oslo period, remained skeptical of the PNA and for the most part refused clientelistic ties to the PNA while it continued to mobilize its constituents at the civil society level.

When deciding to allocate voluntarily one's capital for the common good of the community in the West Bank, it becomes readily apparent that involvement in pro-PNA associations offers better benefits and perquisites than involvement in non-PNA-supporting associations. Because pro-PNA associations are in close vertical proximity to the governing institution, they can deliver more of the material benefits potentially supplied by those associations. As a result, one tends to see a greater number of pro-PNA civic associations. In settings where citizens depend on associations for basic services like food and shelter, dependency on associations increases. Members who choose not to join pro-PNA associations sometimes do so on the basis of strong ideological, if not factional, grounds.

It is not surprising, then, that in 1999 pro-PNA groups dominated the associational terrain in the West Bank. By partaking in associations that are supportive of the PNA, members feel that in some way they are not only aiding the national leadership but also adhering to—not necessarily "reinforcing"—a set of norms that is already established. Where associational leaders are already clients of the PNA, they appeal to their members' sensibilities on the grounds of aiding Palestinian society by supporting the leadership that is working toward larger national aspirations of liberation. Through supporting the nationalist project, these members reap pertinent benefits for their involvement. Conforming to the status quo makes these volunteers materially happier than those members who challenge the prevailing status quo. Those non-PNA members who look on as pro-PNA associations prosper are shocked, frustrated: they must struggle to offer meager programmatic initiatives, whereas pro-PNA associations seem to bask in clientelistic ease. They feel that their voluntary efforts are futile, for they continue to witness the manifestation of patron-client ties in Palestinian society.

The nature of clientelism in the Arab world today is particular to this historical juncture. Although during the height of Oslo, Palestine was less authoritarian and repressive than other Arab countries, with the onset of the PNA similar patterns of state-centralized clientelism began to take root and permeate state-society relations. A more detailed discussion of the political context is provided in chapter 2, which offers a detailed historical analysis of the emergence and evolution of associational life in the West Bank. There, I illustrate the underpinnings of the political context polarized between PNA-supporting and non-PNA-supporting associations.

Based on ethnographic interviews conducted with associational leaders in 1999, chapter 3 captures the multidimensionality of this polarization. Attitudes about the PNA extend beyond resource maximization and immediate material benefits. Ideological inclinations that encompass nationalistic sentiments, convictions about social justice that address such issues as the alleviation of poverty, and firm principles about democratic citizenship all play salient roles in associational identification with the government in power. And although associational life is related to higher forms of civic engagement, the various indicators of civic engagement do not correspond to one another.

Chapter 4 breaks down associational types by carefully examining leadership roles and government affiliations in associations. Using survey data collected from association members and a national survey of Palestinians administered by the Jerusalem Media Communications Center in Jerusalem, this chapter tests the overall hypothesis of my study that linkages to existing political institutions mediate civic engagement. The

weakness of the rule of law in the West Bank has resulted in nonresponsive governing institutions; in the absence of responsive governing institutions, local elites promote clientelism to play an important role in responding to citizen demands and needs. Leaders, therefore, can either connect their members to existing political institutions or further distance their members from political and public spaces altogether. This location of members vis-à-vis their immediate political surroundings directly influences the consistency of civic engagement.

Chapter 5 extends the findings of the detailed case study of the West Bank to Morocco and then offers a glimpse of associational life in Egypt and Jordan. Using World Values Survey data, this chapter offers evidence that supports my overall conclusion that not all associations are beneficial to democracy: associations more supportive of governing, nondemocratic institutions cultivate patterns of civic engagement different from those cultivated by less supportive associations. Civic engagement in and of itself need not be associated with positive democratic externalities. Subjecting levels of civic engagement to an analysis of the role that political realities play in shaping such engagement provides us with a more nuanced and accurate assessment as to when attitudes and behaviors normally seen as useful for democratic promotion in democratic settings are also beneficial for democratic outcomes in less democratic settings.

Chapter 6 examines the role of civic engagement, interpersonal trust, and support for democratic institutions among association members in the context of the West Bank. Interpersonal trust is in fact related to effective democratic outcomes, although its usefulness in state-centralized settings is less clear. By mapping social trust onto other forms of civic attitudes deemed important for democratic citizenship, this chapter seeks to offer new insights on how and when social capital aids democratic outcomes.

Civic associations, regardless of whether they are church societies or sports clubs, will reproduce elements of the political context in which they exist and will structure themselves accordingly. Where associational contexts are dominated by state-centralized, patron-client tendencies, then associations, too, become sites for the potential replication of those vertical ties. Belonging to a vertical associational context does not necessarily require that members "actively" choose to reinforce "hierarchical" and less "democratic" relations within their organizing communities. Rather, it signifies the ways in which available opportunities shape citizen choices about civic participation.