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Introduction

Citizenship and Urban Issues in Jordan

Myriam Ababsa

“Although one of the essential projects of nation-building has been to dismantle the historic primacy of urban citizenship and to replace it with the national, cities remain the strategic arena for the development of citizenship”. (HOLSTON & APPADURAI 1996 p. 187)

“The nation is divided into three lifestyles: those of urban residents, villagers and Bedouins “ (AL-DAJANI *et al.*, 1966, *Watani al-Saghir (My little country)*, p. 21; in NASSER 2005, p. 69)

This book addresses the extensively studied issue of national identity and citizenship in Jordan¹ through the City, examining the forms of integration and demarcation of the different components of the population in urban areas. It aims to reconsider the divisions between Jordanians of Transjordanian origin and those of Palestinian origin and between men and women, the latter being ‘diminished’² citizens. It will question the manifestations of these divides in terms of urban practices, political and community mobilization as well as discourses of identity in the neoliberal³ context of the early twenty-first century,

1. WILSON, 1987 ; AMAWI, 1991 ; LAYNE, 1994 ; BOCCO, 1996 ; ABU ODEH, 1999 ; LYNCH, 1999 ; JOSEPH, 2000 ; MASSAD, 2001 ; DROZ-VINCENT, 2004 ; ANDERSON, 2005.

2. Half the nation, i.e. women, must go through the mediation of men to exist as citizens. They cannot transmit their citizenship to their children and need the permission of male family members to obtain a passport, which makes them ‘reduced’ citizens who are forced to brandish their family status record book for any civil status procedures (AMAWI 2000, p. 159).

3. “Neoliberalism is in first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade” (HARVEY 2005, p. 2.).

which tends to turn citizens into consumers and creates major divides within Jordanian cities. This work takes a diachronic approach that presents the role of towns in Jordan's nation building, the management of urban spaces and the practices of individual urban residents, especially when these practices are detached from kinship affiliations. This is not a study of nationality (*jinsiyya*), but rather of citizenship (*muwatana*), in terms of (the desire for) citizen participation. Our goal is to reintegrate the City into discourse about the nation and citizenship in order to present the most recent forms of mobilization and inhabitant participation.

Because of its recent urban history, dating back to the late nineteenth century in Amman, Irbid, Madaba and Ma'an, and to the eighteenth century in Kerak and Salt, Jordan did not rely on its towns during the process of nation building, but rather on its countryside and *badia*⁴ where the army was recruited. Our hypothesis is that the Jordanian city has historically contributed little to nation building, or to the emergence of the citizen, the decisive factor being direct allegiance to the Hashemite monarchy. Urban spaces nonetheless became the setting for emerging citizen expression. In theory, thanks to the relative anonymity they offer, towns free individuals from their kinship ties. Urban public space is the best setting for 'modernity', defined as the coexistence of different modes of being⁵. However, not only have Jordanian towns contributed little to the emergence of 'the citizen', they actually play a decisive role in the reproduction of collective entities: families, religious communities and 'tribes' - in the sense of a hierarchical system of differentiated allegiance (CONTE 2010). The Jordanian city is not a favourable space for the expression of citizenship detached from primary affiliations⁶, if one considers the citizen as a legal person who forges contractual relationships with other individuals, with society and with the state. More importantly, the fact that half of the population (women) cannot transmit their nationality (*jinsiyya*) excludes the possibility of true citizen participation (*muwatana*). Just as the inequality of citizenship between members of the population of Transjordanian origin and those of Palestinian origin, complicates the existence of a federated nation. However, in the capital, city residents manage to launch initiatives for citizen

4. The semi-desert steppe inhabited by the Bedouins.

5. Presentation by Raphael Liogier, a sociologist of religion, entitled "Gender Equality: the ultimate challenge of modern citizen abstraction" at the conference on *Women's rights in Muslim Arab societies* organized by the IEP of Aix-en-Provence and the department of legal cooperation of the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, in Amman, 17-19 November 2009.

6. This idea was expressed in discussions during the first preparatory conference for this book, in Amman on September 6, 2006.

participation for the community, showing they belong to a post-modern urban elite (BEITO 2002) and even making the city participate in a form of “global citizenship”. Admittedly, these urban residents who are at the forefront of associative movements are often members of privileged social networks (with connections to the Royal Palace, capital and international organizations) that set them apart from the rest of society, but this does not make them any less active.

Jordanian towns have large morphological and historical differences, and Amman should be distinguished from the others. Its functions as the capital combined with the variety of its population (a core of Circassians and Bedouins plus Lebanese traders, Syrian officials and hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees, and more recently Iraqi refugees, many of whom are served by Asian servants and Egyptian labourers) lead Amman to fully play its urban role as a “place for maximisation of social interaction” (CLAVAL 1981, p. 4). Thanks to its shopping centres, parks and the public squares of the wealthier districts of the city, the inhabitants of Amman manage to escape the social control of a conservative society that keeps women and deviants under surveillance⁷. Within the camps and poor neighbourhoods of the capital, travel and movement is less free, high population density increases surveillance and the high cost of public transport reduces mobility. The small towns of Salt, Ajloun, Ma’an and Kerak which have very few Palestinian refugees are still organized around families and tribal clans, whose *madafa* (places of hospitality where social life and local politics are discussed) structure urban space (MAFFI 2004, JUNGEN 2009). Consequently, all travel and movements are tightly controlled in these small towns, and public space offers no real possibility for anonymity⁸.

Increasing urbanization⁹ poses new challenges to the regime: controlling urban sprawl, access to services for the poorest populations of Palestinian refugees in Amman, Zarqa and Irbid, as well as security issues at a time when tribal conflicts are on the rise in towns and splinter jihadist groups settled in Zarqa, Russeifa and Irbid over twenty years ago. Indeed, both Quietist and Jihadist Salafist movements are essentially urban phenomena. The jihadists

7. Many studies focus on the use of public space in the Arab world. In particular DEPAULE 1985, MÉTRAL, BEYHUM, DAVID 1993 ; HANNOYER 1994 ; TAÏEB, BEKKAR, DAVID 1997 ; NACIRI, RAYMOND 1997 ; BERRY, DEBOULET 2000 ; NAVEZ-BOUCHANINE 2002.

8. Merely walking on the same pavement as a young girl, without even speaking to her, created a conflict between two families in Kerak in 2010 (story reported by Christine Jungen).

9. With an annual population growth rate of 2.9%, and a construction growth rate of above 4% (ABABSA, *Atlas of Jordan*, Ifpo 2011).

are mainly based in the poorest neighbourhoods of Amman, Irbid, Russeifa and especially Zarqa¹⁰ (ICG 2005). While Quietist Salafists are more scattered throughout the city of Amman, with many sheikhs living in the wealthy neighbourhoods of Abdoun and Marj el Hammam or living in villas in Tabarbour¹¹.

The challenges of urban management in towns that are permanent building sites, and whose urban structure is segregated between poor areas built around Palestinian refugee camps, middle-class neighbourhoods and ‘gated communities’, are all the more serious because Jordan’s social contract is challenged by various opposition movements.

I. Jordan’s contested social contract

In October 2002 and July 2006, the Hashemite regime launched two campaigns: “al-Urdunn Awalan” and “Kulluna al-Urdunn”, designed to strengthen national cohesion around a single reaffirmed Jordanian identity, in a regional context which has been uncertain since September 11th 2001 and the second intifada (2001-2002). These campaigns are part of the complex history of the development of the Jordanian nation, which strives to integrate groups of diverse tribal and national origins: Palestinians, Syrians, Iraqis, Circassians and Bedouin tribes. This process of nation building has resulted in the enactment of successive laws relative to Jordanian Nationality (1954, 1984); the implementation of electoral laws (1989 and 1993); as well as the integration into the political arena of the kingdom’s large urban and rural ‘families’ (MASSAD 2001).

However, in spring 2010, the issue of national unity, which is a red line for all public expression in Jordan, was called into question by the manifesto of the “National Veterans’ Committee” which has sixty members, including former

10. A survey conducted in Zarqa by the Centre for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan after the death of the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Moussab al-Zarqawi, who claimed responsibility for the attacks on the 9th November 2005 in Amman, revealed that 30% of respondents regretted his death, and 7% shared his values; i.e. around 28,000 people in a city with a population of 400,000 in 2004 (<http://www.orient-expressbloggercom.blogspot.com/2010/04zarqaberceau-du-salafism-jordanien.html>). Orient Express Website accessed on September 25, 2010.

11. Romain Caillet notes that the Quietist Salafists, who are partners of those in power, have the right to preach on Fridays, and have dozens of mosques spread throughout the city, while the jihadists have no right to do so. Either they boycott State mosques, or they go to mosques where the imam is closer to their ideas although he is not jihadist, or else they make the most of opportunities to use public space: during weddings, funerals and talks during Ramadan evening events (see *infra*).

generals¹². Dated April 1st, this manifesto denounces the fact that Jordan has become a substitute homeland for Palestinian refugees, with the complicity of senior officials of Palestinian origin. It calls for the removal of the nationality rights of Jordanians of Palestinian origin and for their return to the West Bank, either immediately or after implementation of UN Resolution 194¹³. It also calls for the inclusion in the constitution of the severing of ties with the West Bank on July 31, 1988. Finally, it denounces corruption and calls for further economic reforms. Ahmad Obeidat, the former prime minister and also the former Director of Central Intelligence and of the National Committee for Human Rights, therefore launched in May a counter-manifesto signed by thousands of Jordanian personalities, of Transjordanian and Palestinian origin, calling for national unity but also for the breaking-off of the peace agreement with Israel (DAVID 2010). Following the atrocities of Israel in Lebanon (the war in the summer of 2006), in Gaza (bombing attacks from December 2008 to January 2009) and constant attacks in the West Bank, most of Jordan's population now rejects the peace accord signed in 1994. Citizens are concerned about rising food prices, the costs of electricity, fuel and housing, and are tired of corruption. On June 8, 2010 during his speech commemorating the Arab Revolt of 1916, on the national day celebrating the army, the king reminded the country that "national unity is a red line that he will allow no-one to cross" and called all attempts to do so *fitna*. *Fitna* is a strong term for it refers to the division of the Muslim Ummah (CURTIS 2010).

*Unequal and 'undifferentiated' citizenship*¹⁴

Citizenship is unequal in Jordan because for some members of the population it depends on the permanent status of Palestinian refugees. Since the

12. Full text in Arabic on the website of Kull al-Urdunn (<http://allofjo.net/web/?c=153&a=20972>) accessed on October 3, 2010.

13. Resolution adopted on December 11, 1948, which recognizes the right of refugees to return home.

14. The theory of "differentiated citizenship" was developed by Iris Marion Young concerning oppressed groups such as women, non-whites, workers, the poor, disabled people, the elderly, gays and lesbians in Western democracies. To resolve what she calls the "paradox of democracy" where social power makes some people more equal than others and equality of citizenship makes some people more powerful (YOUNG 1989, p. 259), she suggests we develop mechanisms for the representation of self-formed groups so they can express their specificity, calling into question the universality of citizenship. Differentiated citizenship would thus be « the best way to realize the inclusion and participation of everyone in full citizenship » (YOUNG 1989, p. 251).

severing of ties with the West Bank in July 1988, different colours of passports indicate unequal degrees of citizenship within the nation¹⁵. The Palestinians who arrived as refugees in 1948 in the West Bank and in Transjordan acquired Jordanian nationality in 1949, which was then formalized in 1954, and they have a national number (*al-raqm al-watani*). The 1967 war and the occupation of the West Bank by Israel led to the arrival on the east bank of the River Jordan of 300,000 ‘displaced’ Palestinians with Jordanian nationality. In July 1983 the Jordanian government introduced green and yellow travel documents for Palestinians - who became Jordanians in 1949 – from the West Bank (which has been occupied since 1967): green documents were for those who had stayed in the West Bank, yellow ones for those who had left and had settled on the east bank of the River Jordan. These documents were supposed to facilitate crossing the Allenby Bridge in both directions (in to Jordan for green cards and to the West Bank for yellow cards)¹⁶. In 1988, following the royal decision to sever ties with the West Bank, only those Jordanians living on the east bank of the River Jordan were able to keep their Jordanian nationality; those who lived in the West Bank (and had green cards) lost it¹⁷. Following the Oslo peace accord in September 1993, West Bankers acquired papers from the Palestinian Authority in 1994 (the first step towards Palestinian nationality). As well as these groups there are also the refugees from Gaza who only have two-year Egyptian travel documents (EL-ABED 2005, see *infra* al-Husseini).

15. As stated by Oraib Rantawi, director of the al-Quds Research Centre, in discussions during the second preparatory conference for this book, September 6, 2007 at al-Husseini Cultural Centre.

16. “In 1983 the Jordanian government issued yellow crossing cards, which represented full residency for Palestinian Jordanians (with full citizenship rights in Jordan) for those who had left the West Bank for the East Bank to reside permanently in Jordan before June 1 of that year and had family reunification cards. They also issued green crossing cards for holders of temporary two-year passports who have no right of residence for those who left the West Bank after June 1, 1983. Green card holders can visit Jordan for only up to a month at a time. Thus it is really no more than a travel document, of the type also issued to Palestinians by Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Israel. Jordan in 1996 announced that green card holders can apply again for five-year passports but such a passport does not constitute full citizenship. Families given green crossing cards had to give up their family book (which are given to Jordanian citizens to register their family members). As non-Jordanians, this group of green card holders, estimated at almost 725,000, stopped having access to public services. Their stay in Jordan requires them to apply for a residency permit. In some emergency situations – such as during the second intifada – their entry becomes even more restricted and conditioned upon issuance of a special permit of entry known as *adam mumana* (a ‘no objection’ document) issued by the Interior Ministry” (IDRC 2009, p. 13).

17. And therefore also Jordanians of Palestinian origin who hold green cards but who left the West Bank between 1983 and 1988, although the decision to sever ties only applied to West Bank residents before July 31, 1988.

However, since 2009, the Hashemite regime has decided to withdraw the Jordanian nationality of yellow card holders who have not renewed their residence in the West Bank under occupation. Jordan's position is firm: Jordan is not the substitute homeland for Palestine (*watan badil*) that Israel would like it to be, and the 280,000 Jordanians who have residence cards and property in the West Bank should keep them¹⁸. Thus, any Jordanian citizen who is deprived of his Israeli residence permit also loses his Jordanian nationality¹⁹. This complex and controversial issue of the position of citizens of Palestinian origin in Jordanian society explains the mistrust the regime shows towards large towns and their under-representation during legislative elections, since Jordanians of Palestinian origin are in the majority (Abu Roumman).

Citizenship and urban issues

The rebuilding of a Jordanian 'social contract' relates back to the urban issue. With 82% of Jordan's population living in urban areas, and almost half in the Greater Amman-Russeifa-Zarqa conurbation (2.9 million out of a population of 6.5 million in 2010²⁰), urban areas, and especially the cities of Amman, Zarqa and Irbid, are considered suspect because they house the majority of people whose allegiance to the Hashemite crown is regularly questioned, notably the Palestinian refugees in the camps (even though they acquired Jordanian nationality in 1949). While political office and most employment opportunities are concentrated in Amman, the Hashemite capital remains underrepresented politically. Due to the more diverse backgrounds of those living in large cities, particularly in the kingdom's capital, the political expression and representation of urban dwellers are highly controlled. The Hashemite regime has ensured, via successive electoral laws, that it relies on the entire country, especially rural areas, which historically support the

18. <http://jordantimes.com/index.php?news=23711>.

19. In February 2010, the publication of the *Human Rights Watch* report on this issue was controversial (<http://www.hrw.org/node/87906>). In this report, denounced by the Jordanian government, HRW condemned the withdrawal of nationality for around 2,732 Jordanian citizens who held yellow Jordanian papers between 2004 and 2008. Although in principle the government's position is understandable, the practical and symbolic consequences are tragic for those people who found themselves stateless overnight. The question is all the more sensitive since on April 13, 2010, the Israeli government enacted military measures that classify as "infiltrated" any Palestinian without an Israeli residence permit.

20. According to the Greater Amman planning and development programme published in 2008.

regime (Bocco 1996). Analysis of Jordanian elections since the fifties²¹, and in particular voting methods, reveals a phenomenon of political emergence and consolidation in rural areas, including within urban constituencies, which have been won by candidates from the countryside who settled in towns during the massive rural depopulation from 1960-1970²². After the victory of the Islamists in Irbid's municipal elections in 1999, and at a time when many Islamist opponents became members of municipal councils, a new municipal law was enacted in 2002 allowing the king to appoint the mayor of every town and half the members of municipal councils. This law was amended in 2007. And concerns only Amman since.

Yet the main urban rebellions that rocked the country occurred in small towns with a majority Transjordanian population, which traditionally support the Hashemite regime: Salt and Kerak in the 1970s, and Maan in 1988 and 2002 (ICG 2003, CSS 2003). As well as increased food prices in the context of structural adjustment policies called for by the IMF, each time the reason was their refusal to be ostracized from the spheres of economic and political decision making. Transjordanian populations were loyal to the monarchy but far removed from the regime and thereby had no advantage of access to employment. Furthermore, they did not have the substantial benefits of those refugee citizens registered with UNRWA (education, free health care, employment opportunities with UNRWA etc.). These Transjordanians sent a strong warning signal to the regime as a prelude to the resumption of parliamentary life in 1989.

Tribal conflicts in towns

Between the summer of 2009 and the summer of 2010, several urban riots occurred throughout the country: in Ajloun, Salt, Maan, Irbid and Amman, and forced the government to declare brief states of siege, blocking the cities concerned for one or two days. In most cases, the conflict arose from a settlement of scores between rival tribal clans, but more often from violent police actions resulting in the death of a man, which was subsequently avenged

21. Note that parliamentary life in Jordan was suspended from 1957 to 1989. During these years, only professional trade unions and associations, especially those of the Muslim Brotherhood, were able to continue structuring politics.

22. Thus, families from the villages of al-Bariha (Tbeishat and Kufa families) Eidun, Husun, Naimeh and al-Sarih from the Irbid countryside became the competitors of traditional notables in Irbid, the coalition of the Tell and Bataineh families, with whom they competed in the municipal elections of 1979 and the parliamentary elections of 1989 and 1993 (DROZ-VINCENT 2000, p. 277).

by his clan. What is new is the resurgence of such acts of tribal conflict, and the fact that police officers under investigation must in turn settle the conflict through tribal arbitration, even though they were performing their duties. In particular, the systematic use of clan arbitration during the *atwa*, the three-day truce agreed for conciliation and the paying of blood money, takes precedence over the law and further contributes to the weakening of the State.

The first urban riot took place in late August 2009 in Ajloun after the assassination of Ashraf al-Momani by his former brother-in-law who was a member of the Samadi clan (SCHWEDLER 2010). In retaliation, Momani clan members set fire to the house of the assassin and to the shops in town owned by the Samadi clan. Despite police intervention, the conflict lasted a week, during which the town of Ajloun was placed under siege, with entry points into the town being blocked by special police forces, *darak*. In early November 2009, the beating and subsequent death of Sadem Saoud, a twenty year-old pedlar in Hay Tafayleh, in downtown Amman, after an altercation with a city official, led to a riot in which six police officers were shot and wounded, a police booth was burned and several shops vandalized. The police retaliated with tear gas, sparking panic in a densely populated area filled with schools, in the morning. A few days later, the city of Ma'an was the scene of week-long clashes between the police and armed tribal groups, after the death of Fakhri Anani Kreishan, 47, who was killed by truncheon blows from a police officer because he was sheltering a man in his house who had written bad cheques. The road from Aqaba to Amman was blocked overnight by the rioters. The Interior Minister, Nayef Qadi said these were isolated events but that police officers who commit acts of excessive violence should answer for their acts (*Jordan Times*, November 16, 2009).

These riots are small compared to the urban rebellions of the late 1980s and 2002 which mobilized entire towns' populations and caused dozens of deaths. Yet their proliferation over a few months became a social phenomenon that alerted the authorities and intellectuals, especially since the conflicts between rival families spread to major universities in Jordan. On January 21 and 22, 2010, the Centre for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan held a forum entitled "*The Rule of Law and Rising Social Tensions*" in the presence of politicians, security officers, representatives of civil society and researchers²³. During the forum, the Jordanian Public Security Directorate announced that the number of "tribal conflicts" had soared in 2009 to 229, including 70 in the city of Amman, 38 in the north, 59 in the south, 47 in the central region, 10

23. <http://esc.jo/en/content/110> (site name)

in the Aqaba region and 5 within the Royal Bedouin Guards (ZAYDAH 2010). The upsurge in tribal conflicts should not be interpreted as a rise of tribalism, but rather as a sign of the breakdown of the tribal system. Clan members who have become wealthy, free themselves from tribal hierarchy and deal out justice themselves, until the conflict becomes so intense that traditional clan leaders are forced to intervene to arbitrate the situation²⁴.

The most serious consequence is the frequent use of *atwa*, tribal arbitration, instead of legal justice. The Interior Minister, Nayef al-Qadi stated during a forum organized by the University of Jordan that only law enforcement can maintain order and strengthen the State, and that tribal *atwa* is merely a parallel system that cannot be a substitute for the law. He added that clan leaders usually assist security forces to resolve conflicts. The danger is both the impunity of tribe members during *atwa* and the inequality of citizens before the law, an essential foundation of democracy. Even more worrying; police officers who commit violent acts also have to answer for their actions during *atwa* in the case of homicide. In which case, they are no longer the defenders of the law, but tribal members answering for their actions before their clans. This further weakens the State and law enforcement officers are therefore considered as a powerful tribal clan among others, according to Ahmad Abu-Khalil (ZAYDAH 2010). The global economic crisis that hit in 2008 and affected Jordan (whose external debt reached 60% of GDP in 2009), is certainly a decisive factor in the reinforced vigour of clans and extended families, whose members with influence in the economic sphere are able to help people find work, and at least help financially²⁵.

*

24. According to Mazen al-Qadhi: "reducing the influence of the clan over its members is behind this surge of clashes. The influence of the clan and the family has been replaced by that of economic leaders, businessmen and individuals with financial influence or interests with heads of companies." (ZAYDAH 2010).

25. In spring 2010, new tribal clashes took place in the city, blocking main roads to Amman. In April 2010, the town of Salt was cordoned off by police after a fight between two students at the Balqa Applied University which resulted in the death of one of them: Osama Abbadi aged 20 (*Jordan Times*, April 11, 2010). That same month, two families from Kerak: Thuneibat and Kafaween, fought over a land dispute, settling their score in Amman, on Jabal Nadhif, where one of the members was killed in his shop in retaliation for the assassination of a member of the opposing clan. The two families were driven out of Kerak by the government and relocated in two different governorates (*Jordan Times*, April 23, 2010). The latest riot occurred in the affluent neighbourhood of Khalda in west Amman, after an anti-narcotics police officer killed a 31 year-old man in his home: Abdul Salam Mthari Neimat, who was suspected of drug trafficking, during a violent search. His family then set fire to a police station on Mecca Street, one of the city's main thoroughfares, blocking it for several hours (*Jordan Times*, May 6, 2010).

In this tense context, this work aims to clarify the role of urban elites in nation building and the development of citizenship (in the first part), analyzing the challenges of urban management, which aims to open up the city's most disadvantaged areas and upgrade the services provided for them (second part), and finally to highlight the significant urban disparities between poor neighbourhoods, strongholds of the rise of extremism, the new downtown and the gated communities built in the outskirts of towns (third part). The book brings together some of the papers presented during two symposia titled *Towns and National Identity in Jordan* held on September 13, 2006 at the Intercontinental Hotel and on September 6, 2007, with the assistance of Rami Daher at the al-Hussein Cultural Centre (programmes included in the appendix)²⁶. This work pays tribute to its precursor: *Amman, city and society*, published by Jean Hannover and Seteney Shami in 1996 by the CERMOC²⁷ (HANNOYER & SHAMI 1996).

2. Citizenship Developed with Reference to the Hashemite Monarchy

Although some Jordanian intellectuals lament the lack of an unbiased modern Jordanian historiography which would be a source of national cohesion, it should nevertheless be noted that the history of Jordanian Nation Building has been studied extensively, both by Jordanian researchers such as Ali Mahafazah (1973) Adnan Abu Odeh (1999), Mustafa Hamarneh (1995) and Hani Hourani (2009) as well as by Western researchers such as Mary Wilson (1987), Marc Lynch (1999), Joseph Massad (2001) and Betty Anderson (2005). Most agree that the Jordanian national identity is in essence linked to the Hashemite royal family, which is the only family able to federate heterogeneous social groups²⁸. Yet their work also shows that Jordanian towns, even more so than

26. The first conference was funded by the Department for Cultural Cooperation and Action of the French Embassy in Amman thanks to the Alembert Fund for the debate of ideas. The second had the support of the Agence universitaire de la francophonie. On the eve of the first conference, a press report noted that while the subject of the conference was valid, it was nevertheless unfortunate that it was initiated by a French research centre. However, the second conference was inaugurated by the Deputy Mayor of Amman, Amer al-Basheer, demonstrating the importance of scientific debate on this theme during the preparation of the planning and development programme for the city of Amman. The articles written by Lise Debout and Romain Caillet were added due to their relevance to the book, to illustrate the management of urban services, and to present the public events of the Salafist movement; the most conservative branch of Jordanian society.

27. The Centre for Study and Research on the contemporary Middle East, which was incorporated into the French Institute for the Near East (Ifpo) in 2003.

28. Ali Mahafazah noted during the discussions at the preliminary conference in September 2006, that the Jordanian national anthem does not mention the name of Jordan.

Syrian towns, have been melting pots for the integration of migrants, who were mostly Palestinian and Syrian traders during the nineteenth century.

One feature of the Jordanian political landscape is that the kingdom's major families play a direct role, without necessarily being part of the strong urban solidarity groups; *`asabiyyat*,²⁹ that have shaped Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian politics. Unlike the other states which arose out of the *Bilad es Sham*, Jordan experienced less than its neighbours this system of "*politics of notables*" studied by Albert Hourani in the 1960s (HOURANI 1968), which is "the ability of an urban patriarch, with strong economic foundations, to exercise control, coercive or symbolic, over the urban population on the basis of relatively independent power, tolerated as a mediator between the State and the local population" (PICAUDOU 1996). The historian Eugene Rogan prefers to talk about "economies of notables", thus highlighting the different roots of the phenomenon of notability in Jordan compared with the rest of the Bilad al-Sham (ROGAN 1991 in DROZ-VINCENT 2004, p. 43). Jordanian notability is therein defined by its ability to establish direct links with the king. Accordingly, citizenship has developed in a space marked by the absence of urban spaces, solely with reference to the Hashemite monarchy.

Ali Mahafzah shows here that the absence of towns in Jordan is linked to the absence of the State. Political awareness is linked to the development of education during the 1950s. However, the 1957 martial law and the banning of parties led to an increase of the sense of belonging to a tribe, village and region, thus thwarting the development of a national civic consciousness. Moreover, the fact that many administrative positions have been occupied since the 1920s by Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese, under the British Mandate, has hindered the development of a national consciousness in Transjordanians, who are under-represented within institutions.

Philippe Droz-Vincent reminds us that studying the role of towns in nation building also requires the study of the countryside and the *badia*, where the State recruits its army. From the fifties, villagers and farmers supported the State. "In Jordan, family pride, which is preserved in urban families and

29. The *`asabiyya*, group solidarity, is the key concept of the theory of Ibn Khaldoun on the evolution of the State in the medieval Arab world. It was extensively used by Michel Seurat in his analysis of the Syrian State. Olivier Roy defined it as "*any group of solidarity based on personal relationships (genealogical, marriage, vote-catching or allegiance, etc.) whose purpose is precisely solidarity itself and not the implementation of an objective which justifies the creation of the group*", it remains a relevant form of data for the analysis of Middle Eastern societies in the late 1990s, "*(not as) the expression of the permanence of a traditional society in a modern state, but (as) a reconstruction of networks of allegiance in a political and territorial sphere which is permanently changed by the existence of the State. What remains, is not objects but a type of political relationship*" (ROY 1996, p. 6-8).

their institutions (*madafa*³⁰, family banquets etc), is echoed in other types of families (rural or Bedouin), who have often suffered from rural depopulation, have become rooted in the urban world and cultivate a family history. Towns seem more like a melting pot in which the elite of very different origins settle, rather than closed-in and exclusive environments seeking to protect their authenticity. The specificity of urbanism in Jordan is decisive here” (DROZ-VINCENT 2004, p. 289).

The allegiance of the oldest Jordanian towns to the Hashemites did not come easily. Irbid and Kerak, which are intellectual centres of the Arab nationalist left, have long been regarded as untrustworthy towns. Christine Jungen shows, however, that the spirit of rebellion that characterizes the town of Kerak is consistent with its firm commitment to Jordan. The inhabitants of Kerak build their sense of belonging and Jordanian identity not in reference to a collective identity, but in relation to the protection of their attachment to an institution: the Hashemite monarchy. For Kerakis, being Jordanian means being attached to the royal institution. The preservation of powerful local history reveals allegiance to the Hashemites, not to the nation.

Irene Maffi presents the stages of Jordanian national development through the creation of its museums. The Citadel Museum, established in 1951, asserts the separate existence of Transjordan, as independent from Palestine under mandate. Subsequently, the Palestinian element and the Transjordanian element were integrated in a shared Hashemite identity with the folk museum opened in 1971, one year after the events of Black September; followed by museums of ‘modern’ history, i.e. Hashemite history, the history of the nation, during the 1990s.

3. Urban Policy and Management of Citizenship

The historic weakness of Jordanian towns is reinforced by the high primacy index of the Hashemite capital, which is a refuge for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians and Iraqis. While the Municipality of Amman celebrated its centenary in 2009 by celebrating its status as a haven for all members of the national population, real problems of urban management prevail in poor and

30. The *Madafa*, or “place of hospitality”, is an ancient institution for hospitality, characteristic of the sociability of nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes of the Middle East. It was originally the tent in which the clan leader received the men of his group to drink coffee and discuss common problems every evening. It was transposed into town, where it is sometimes called a *diwan* (AL-HUSBANI 1997, MAFFI 2004, JUNGEN 2009, ABABSA 2009).

informal settlements, which are under-equipped in basic services, in contrast to the High Density Mixed Use areas of Abdali, Zahran, Wadi Abdoun and the Airport Road where most investments and services are concentrated (PRKER 2009). Amman alone draws 80% of direct foreign investment in Jordan, the rest being divided between Aqaba and the free zones. Forms of public-private partnership are developing for urban services, including refuse collection services which collaborate with well structured recycling companies (Lise Debout. However, municipalities are gradually being held to account by their residents, because they are now under pressure from urban activist groups made up of intellectuals and social workers, while Islamic charity NGOs are very active and based in the poorest neighbourhoods where they compete with Royal NGOs (such as the *Jordan River Foundation* and the *Jordan Hashemite Fund for Human Development*).

The extra-territoriality of Amman and Aqaba

In terms of management, Amman and Aqaba are treated as extra-territorial entities. Indeed, the two towns neither come under the control of the Ministry of Municipalities, nor that of their respective governorates. Aqaba, with a population of 80,000 inhabitants in 2004 and about 120,000 in 2010, is in an extreme situation since it has no municipal government and the governor has delegated all his duties to the ASEZA (Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority) which has been transformed into a management organisation with co-opted members. The management of the Greater Amman Municipality reports directly to the Prime Minister who is also Defence Minister. The Palestinian camps are managed by UNRWA (for housing, health, education and social services) and the Department of Palestinian Affairs (AL HUSSEINI 2003). The Palestinian camps were extra-territorial pockets within Jordanian towns for fifty years, until the launching of Community Infrastructure Programs in 1997 by the Housing and Urban Development Corporation HUDC (Jalal al-Husseini, see *infra*).

Since 1923, Amman has been the seat of power with the Royal Palace and parliament, yet the city has remained under-represented politically, compared with older Jordanian towns. Hussein Abu Roumman shows that three towns are underrepresented in legislative elections: Amman, Zarqa and Irbid. The first two because the majority of their population is of Palestinian origin - which tends to vote for the Islamist opposition - and the third because it was managed by the Islamists. 10,000 votes are needed to win a seat in Kerak, but 70,000 are needed in Amman (in the second district of Wahdat-Nazal).

The new imperative of “popular participation” (al-musharaka al-sha’biyya)

For the past five years, the Greater Amman Municipality has reconsidered the concept of local community participation in development projects. As early as the 1980s, residents of informal areas of the city were actively involved in the rehabilitation process of their neighbourhoods (Myriam Ababsa). The participatory approach was the social counterpart of the ultra-liberal, socially restrictive policies, which at the time were imposed on Third World states by international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Emphasis is placed on the idea of a consensual partnership between states and residents – focused on the exploitation of the so far untapped “capital” of the population: human, physical, financial and, above all, social capital. However, participation is limited to improving the built-up environment with, at best, token cooperation (information and consultation), which never becomes political participation or true partnership between government and citizens (HICKEY & MOHAN 2008).

However, apart from the rehabilitation of informal areas, the notion of participation is underdeveloped by national and municipal institutions in Jordan, precisely because the precondition of any participation is full, complete and undifferentiated citizenship. From his appointment as head of the Municipality of Greater Amman in June 2006, Engineer Omar Maani has worked to improve communication and create forums for debate concerning the preparation of the planning and development programme. Between September 2007 and March 2008, four-hour long sessions were organized around major themes: social housing, public transport and heritage. The Mayor met with the concerned ministers, the key architects and building contractors, experts in all fields (academics, engineers, consultants and researchers) and representatives of civil society (journalists, activists and students). Yet a true culture of participation is yet to be created: «we are asked to involve local residents, but we ourselves do not know what participation is», admitted the program manager for the urban regeneration of the old city centre in January 2010³¹.

The emergence of residents’ associations

In May 2006, the scandal of the sale of a plot of land set aside for the creation of a public park to a group of Gulf investors for the construction of

31. Seminar on the rehabilitation of informal settlements in Jordan, organized by the University of Jordan by Lucas Oesch, PhD student from the Graduate Institute, associated with Ifpo, in January 2010.

the *Jordan Gates*; two huge towers at the sixth circle, led to the dismissal of the former Mayor Nidal al-Hadid. In May 2009, the City Council was alerted by a protest movement led by important figures from Amman against the building of a wall around the citadel. The project, funded by USAID, aimed to develop one of the city's landmarks to make it more accessible to mass tourism. However, it included the construction of a wall which cut the citadel off from the houses which had been built informally on the slopes of Jabal al-Qalaa, and it was rumoured that a cable car was to be built, requiring the destruction of several houses. An association of residents and social workers, *Hamzet Wasel* (which means 'hyphen'), intervened to defend the rights of residents and demand that they be informed. The mayor held a debate on the site on June 6, 2009, announcing that the wall would be lowered and that no destruction was necessary. In autumn 2009, the Jabal al-Qalaa residents' committee was created to serve as an alternative to *Hamzet Wasel*. Since then, the proposed cable car project has been suspended, but the advocates of citizen participation remain on their guard.

Hamzet Wasel, set up in Amman, had no equivalent in Aqaba. Thus in order to free up valuable land on the coast, the Shallaleh district, inhabited by 20,000 people, half of whom were Palestinian refugees, was simply demolished in March 2010. The area's residents were given free housing in the district of al-Karama, located 5 km from the town centre. Their plight is complicated by the fact that residents of North Shalalleh³² are originally from Gaza, with Egyptian travel documents and thus devoid of Jordanian nationality. Yet the government had undertaken several programs to improve infrastructure in 1998 through the *Housing and Urban Development Corporation* and in 2003 through the ASEZA, while UNICEF had begun a four-year program to strengthen local communities and women's associations. However, pressure from property prices and financial interests disregarded the area's residents, who, alone, made up a quarter of the urban population (Rami Daher). The segregation of populations within the city of Aqaba has become a selling point. Residents of Tala Bay, a seaside resort of 400 luxury villas and apartments, ten swimming pools and a two kilometre-long private beachfront pride themselves on living in an "ideal community" (made up of the Jordanian elite that has benefited from liberal reforms) which gets together for the weekend, without visible religious differences; the resort has neither a mosque nor a church³³.

32. Those from South Shallaleh are Jordanians.

33. Interview with the owner of a villa in Tala Bay, September 2010.

Associations and corporate social responsibility

Some complain that the instruments for the building of citizenship: associations, unions, political parties and universities are obstructed in Jordan³⁴. Political parties, which were authorized by a 1928 law, prohibited in 1957 and authorized once again in 1989, suffer from an extremely restrictive law on funding, which has been widely studied³⁵. The 1966 law on the freedom of association, which already limited considerably the freedom of NGOs and banned all political activity³⁶ for them, was replaced in May 2008 by Law No. 51 (amended by Law 22 of 2009) which is even more restrictive. Under this new law, the Ministry of Social Development registers all NGOs and authorises any foreign funding; the ban on political activity is maintained and certain religious activities are prohibited. The government stresses that the new system of registration is favourable to non-Jordanians (Palestinians and Iraqis living in Jordan), thus strengthening public space, but the Human Rights Watch refutes this position (FREER, KUBINEC, TATUM 2010, p. 20).

In 2009, Jordan had more than 3,145 associations (110 women's associations, 337 sports clubs, 1,120 charities, 1,030 cooperatives and 387 cultural associations) as well as trade unions (17 labour unions, 14 professional unions)³⁷ and four chambers of commerce (HOURANI 2009). But most were created before 1980 and some are merely intermediaries for the State. Moreover, apart from the women's and Islamic organizations, these associations are devoid of political culture³⁸. Many royal NGOs (RONGOs) have succeeded

34. Communication from the lawyer and researcher Assem al Omari in September 2007.

35. The parties' law enacted in 1992 sets the highly contested system of one man one vote, which favours tribal votes at the expense of parties. It was amended on March 17, 2007, and again on May 20, 2010, before the November elections. Under the law of March 17, 2007, the government extends subsidies to parties, but requires control over their accounts, which must mostly come from known local sources. In addition, the law imposes a tenfold increase in the number of founding members for each party, i.e. from 50 to at least 500, who must come from at least five governorates. Consequently, the number of parties dropped from 36 to 14. The law of 2010 does not retract these highly contested conditions. It merely doubles from 6 to 12 the number of seats reserved for women.

<http://www.undp-pogar.org/countries/theme.aspx?cid=7&t=2>.

36. According to the law of 1966, the activities of NGOs must fall within a predetermined list which is under state supervision, which prevents any changes and prohibits certain activities - such as funding weddings. Furthermore, they undertake to have no political activity (WIKTOROWICZ 2001, p. 117).

37. Professional unions deliver professional license and administer pension funds of 160,000 members; one sixth of the population including women and children (LONGUENESSE 2007).

38. We must pay tribute to the remarkable work of Mizan (scales); the legal association for the defence of human rights created in 1998 by former Minister Asma Khader and managed by Eva Abu Halaweh. Mizan provides free legal services to all citizens, even in the most remote rural and steppe areas with legal aid buses, it launches citizen awareness campaigns on the radio and has opened secret shelters for abused women in several cities (ABABSA 2007, p. 150-159).

in presenting themselves as NGOs from civil society and as such manage to attract and drain funding from international agencies. Since 1989, which marked the beginning of democratic opening-up but also the imposition of the IMF's restrictive measures, family associations have developed significantly in Jordan. Anne-Marie Baylouni analyses this as a form of self-protection for Jordanian society which is confronted with the liberalization of markets, referring to the theories of Karl Polanyi (BAYLOUNI 2006, p. 350).

Since 2005, Jordan's associations have been supplemented by a new type of structure, based on the idea of corporate social responsibility, demonstrating that some beneficiaries of the system are willing to reinvest their profits into the most disadvantaged communities. Thus, a group of Jordanian businessmen, including the CEO of Aramex, came together in 2005 to create the NGO Ruwwad (pioneers) in the heart of Jabal Nadhif, located east of Amman's city centre, which is one of the city's poorest neighbourhoods. One of the first projects was the building of a police station for the neighbourhood, reflecting both local demand and private intervention in the security sector, which was a State prerogative. Three programs were implemented with the objective of community empowerment: 160 scholarships were awarded to young girls and boys of the area, in return for one day of voluntary work per week. A library and a children's centre were opened and discussions were organized for young people to express their aspirations³⁹. Ruwwad plays a mediating role between residents and the State, replacing traditional notables with more resources and therefore more potential for success. Nevertheless, the efforts of this NGO, innovative as they may be, benefit only a few hundred families whose extreme poverty impinges on their ability to be full citizens. Although they are encouraged by the regime, these social responsibility initiatives are still very limited in Jordan, because of a certain corporate culture that tends to keep profits within family and 'tribal' networks (FREER, KUBINEC, TATUM 2010, p. 34).

4. Urban Transformation and Social Disparities

This third theme deals with urban space as the symbolic medium for politics. It reviews both major urban development projects in towns, and the city as public space and the tensions that arise from the increasing segregation

39. www.ruwwad.net. Read the article by Christopher Parker and Pascal Debruyne "Reassembling the Political Life of Community", forthcoming.

between informal settlements, middle-class neighbourhoods and gated communities. In a democracy, these tensions can lead to urban violence and fierce claims to “rights to the city” (LEFEBVRE 1968) by populations which are admittedly relegated to the sidelines, but remain full citizens. In Jordan, however, these tensions are dangerously latent, both because the poorest residents are also those whose citizenship is the most fragile, and because police control is stronger.

Amman is the city that has been experiencing the greatest population and real estate growth in the Middle East since 2003. 200,000 to 300,000 Iraqis have fled Baghdad for Amman since the 1990s, bringing with them part of their financial assets. The Jordanian capital aspires to establish itself as a centre for services, like the city states of the Gulf. Amman works hard on its image as a modern capital at the crossroads of Western and Eastern influences (with shopping malls like those in the Gulf; European style terrace cafes, British style clubs, Lebanese restaurants etc.). The new urban centre of Abdali and the Jordan Gates project show that the city is the major new destination for investors from Lebanon, Iraq and the Gulf. But the flip side of these large projects is that they are intended for ‘elite’ city residents, who are major consumers and free to make decisions but who are the minority in a capital city with many poor areas (Rami Daher).

The impoverishment of the urban population increased during the 2000s, at a time when the government launched several campaigns to reduce pockets of poverty in rural and desert areas, where over a quarter of residents live below the poverty line. Ahmad Abu Khalil presents the progressive separation between the ‘rich’ and ‘poor’ in Amman as the city expands and becomes further segregated. In 2006, an active policy of social housing was launched by the Royal Diwan⁴⁰, giving homes to the poorest citizens, and creating working class suburbs of fifty brightly painted houses built on state land, outside urban centres (Zarqa and Marka). Although recipients display portraits of the king on their doors and windows as a sign of gratitude, they all emphasize their isolation and the lack of services (subsidized shops and public transport) that isolate them and stigmatize them as poor. This policy was reinforced in 2008 by the Royal campaign “*Sakan Karim li ‘Aysh Karim*”⁴¹ which aims to build 100,000 homes in five years for JD 17,000 (raised to JD⁴² 35,000 in 2010 which requires loans with prohibitive interest rates, even when lowered to 6%). These well-built homes are once again constructed in town suburbs,

40. The king’s cabinet where his closest advisers sit.

41. Officially translated into English as: “Decent Housing for Decent Living”.

42. The Jordanian dinar is pegged to the U.S. dollar: 1 JD = 1.4 U.S. dollar.

forcing residents to pay high transport fares. In order to fill these blocks of flats, the Diwan gave the fourth-floor apartments to the Ministry of Social Development, which gives them rent free to the poorest families on social security benefits (which range from JD 40 for a single person to JD 180 for a family of six or more). Yet since no mosques, schools or activity centres have been built in these new areas of local authority housing, which are isolated from town services, one wonders what form of society will develop there.

Islamists and Salafists in Jordanian public space

Due to its status as an association, and because it did not support the Palestinian Fedayeen in 1970, the Muslim Brotherhood was able to develop very early (from the 1960s and throughout the 1970s) an entire network of charities in Jordanian towns and even a large hospital in the heart of Amman. By winning 22 seats out of 80 in the general elections of 1989, the Muslim Brotherhood (and their political wing, the Islamic Action Front established in 1993) became the main opposition to the regime, especially after their rejection of the peace accord with Israel signed in 1994. In 2010, when they announced a boycott of the November elections, their charitable networks have grown considerably in the city: besides 14 clinics and two hospitals, the Muslim Brotherhood manage, through the Islamic Centre Society, fifty primary and secondary schools (the Dar al-Aqsa network, for 16,000 middle class students, judging from the costly school fees), 56 orphanages (for 12,000 children) and a university in Zarqa (CLARK 2004 ; STEMMAN 2008 ; FREER, KUBINEC, TATUM 2010).

However, since the 1980s, the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan has been faced with competition after the emergence of a Salafi movement which is opposed to it. Quietist and jihadist Salafists have made Amman a hotbed of ideology and training that spreads worldwide through blogs and sermons broadcast over the Internet. Romain Caillet thus reveals a discrete urban reality which has crept into the neighbourhoods of East Amman, Zarqa Russeifa and Irbid, but which has also infiltrated the most exclusive districts of the capital (Khaldia, Abdoun and al-Muqablain). For the past two to three years, the authorities have carried out a programme of religious marking of Jordanian public space, using signboards that call conservative society to prayer, despite the fact that, by definition, neither the jihadist Salafists, who support armed struggle, nor the Quietist Salafists, who are more conservative, wish to exercise their citizenship by participating in the political management of their city.

Amman: a global city tempted by 'global citizenship'

Amman has forged its own identity, resulting from the mixing of successive waves of migrants from Lebanon, Syria and Palestine, but also from the small towns in the interior of Jordan and the *badia*. The Ammani accent is proof of this, as is its cuisine, as noted by Ali Kassay. However, it is more difficult to find people who call themselves 'Ammani' (Rami Daher). During the debates of the second conference, minority voices testified to a form of urban integration (*indimaj*), which manifests itself by the fact that some citizens highlight their shared experience (*tajribe mushtarake*) over and above their different origins. Thus the two levels of identity confront each other when the football teams of Faisali and Wahdat meet, but they are united when the national team plays. This common urban experience appeared occasionally after the attacks of November 9, 2005 that struck three hotels in the heart of Amman. The demonstrations of solidarity for the victims that were organised in the city testified to national unity, and portraits of the king and flags were placed in the windows of cars and buildings.

On a smaller scale, an additional challenge for the Kingdom is that of establishing its capital following a 'world system'; Amman is in the process of globalization, which is synonymous with an emerging 'global citizenship' and a public space for protest. For citizenship is more than the right to participate in political life; it includes the right to participate in public, economic and cultural spheres, all of which are performative elements of one's belonging to a society (HOLSTON & APPADURAI 1996). Thus, groups of citizens communicate through their blogs, especially *Creative Jordan*, or organise associations, like *Hamzet Wasel* (hyphen), founded by the activist Raghda Boutros, who is the former director of Ruwwad. *Hamzet Wasel* organizes regular symbolic events, to reconcile the residents of Amman with their city; such as walking expeditions from one hill to another, which are filmed and blogged; workshops where children from the Citadel (Jabal al-Qalaa) make kites (October 2009); and discussions with intellectuals and cultural activists around the notion of public space in Amman (March 2010). Neighbourhood committees have thus been formed in recent years, trying to unite residents around projects which economically revitalize the old structures of Jabal Amman and Jabal al-Lweibdeh. An example is the Jabal Amman Residents' Association (JARA), which, in 2005, launched the Souk JARA near the first circle. The market is open every weekend from spring to autumn, with small stalls selling local handicrafts (sometimes made by the residents themselves: embroidery, mosaics, paintings, flower arrangements etc.). Another example is the Jabal Lweibdeh Association which set up a market on Fridays devoted to antiques. These projects are a real success, but a private security agency filters groups of

youths in the public space, thus excluding from this form of urban experience a wide group of society and creating more frustration.

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Although the inequalities of citizenship that characterize Jordan undermine any meaningful participation of the population in politics, be it in urban or rural areas, the fact remains that citizen groups are able, albeit in minor but remarkable ways, to organize themselves if not to manage at least to change their urban setting. “While in Arabic the concept of citizenship comes from the term *watan* (nation), the terms that refer to civil (as in civil society) or civility derive from the term *madina* (city)” (DRIESKENS & MERMIER 2007, p.13). The role of cities in nation building, the politics of notables, museums, urban management, citizen participation, social inequalities and conservative religious expression in the public arena; these are the entry routes into citizenship through urban channels which are examined in this book⁴³.

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