WOMEN'S CHANGING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

IN JORDAN

By

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ABSTRACT

This study examines women's changing political participation
in Jordan, focusing on the interplay between three major
factors: Islam, the state, and feminism. The analytical
framework is intended to enable the contribution of each
factor to the development of women's political participation
to be assessed. A detailed comparative analysis tracing
women's political experiences and their overall political-
legal status throughout the Arab world is also presented.
Field research and interviews with Jordanian activists and 70
women at the grassroots level were conducted in Jordan to
supplement and highlight women's views on political, social,
legal, economic, and other key issues. The field research
demonstrates that women seek changes in Jordanian laws that
will further enable them to improve their participation in
politics and in public life.

Strategies to enhance women's political participation in
Jordan are presented, thus providing a link between the
reality of women's political status and what can be done to
empower them politically. The study concludes that the
analytical framework adopted constitutes a useful tool for
explaining women's political participation as it has developed
in Jordan in the contemporary era.

To the memory of my mother

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM, METHODOLOGY, AND THE OUTLINE OF THE STUDY.

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the Arab countries, most studies on the role of women have concentrated on their role in the labor force, and the relationship between women and Islam (especially the question of the veil).[1] However, there has been negligible research on the role of women in politics.

So far, the absence of women in politics in the Arab countries has been taken for granted. This is especially true in Jordan, one of the Arab countries where the absence of women in politics has not been studied in much detail.

The low participation of Jordanian women in the electoral process and the weak support for women candidates appears, on the surface, to confirm the Western stereotype of Arab women as apolitical. An example of the low participation was the 1989 election in Jordan when women were allowed to participate in national elections for the first time. What appeared to be a momentous breakthrough for Jordanian women turned out differently from what had been expected. Despite the fact that there were 12 women candidates, no women were elected. In the election of 1993 one woman won one of the three seats reserved for the Circassian minority. But overall, what the Jordanian elections suggest is that political change initiated from the top, via the modern state, can only be successful if

there is a sufficient groundswell of support at the lower levels of society.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the changing political status and political participation of Jordanian women during the contemporary era. It is useful to examine the factors influencing women's political participation and test how these may or may not apply in Jordan.

A number of related hypotheses will be explored in this study. They are:

Time available for women to participate in politics

Hypothesis 1: As women are able to have others take care of their children, they have more time to spend doing other things-including participating in politics.

The role of education

Hypothesis 2: As the education rate of Jordanian women increases their political participation will increase.

The role of women in the labor force

Hypothesis 3: As Jordanian woman enter the labor force, they will be more interested in politics and will increase their political participation [this hypothesis assumes that if women are economically free they will protect their interests as working women, and that an economically independent woman is more likely to take independent political decisions].

Women's organizations

Hypothesis 4: As women's organizations bring issues about women to the government, and into public attention, this will help increase women's participation.

The state as agent of change

Hypothesis 5: The state plays a key role in promoting women's political participation. [The state can, for example, give women the right to vote. The state allows (or can forbid) women to be candidates for public office. As the state empowers women with regard to political participation, women respond accordingly, and increase their political activity].

The legal framework

Hypothesis 6: Some laws discriminate against women, and women feel they are not a part of the political process.

The personal status laws and social life

Hypothesis 7: The personal status laws restrict a woman's private life, and as a result discourage public activities such as political participation.

This study examines all of the hypotheses listed above. These hypotheses will be tested empirically, as described below. (P.12)

2. **DEFINITIONS OF TERMS**

2.1 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Political participation, according to Sidney Verba is "the legal activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take".[2] This definition includes only legal activities, and excludes riots and demonstrations. Myron Weiner on the other hand, defines political participation as "voluntary action, successful, organized or unorganized, episodic or continuous, employing legitimate, or illegitimate methods intended to influence the choice of public policies".[3] Weiner excludes government activities from this definition. For example, organizations or attending mass rallies under government order are excluded. He also excluded elections with single candidates because the citizen has no choice in the selection of public officials.

In evaluating women's political participation in Jordan, this study uses a broad definition of political participation. Most studies of women's political participation have concentrated on traditional assessments of women's voting patterns. Jordanian women have a low level of participation in formal conventional politics, such as voting and campaign activities, which, if considered alone, would suggest that women are apolitical. In Jordan, however, as in other Arab countries, women's participation can be seen in less conventional politics than voting or activities in electoral campaign, at the grass-roots level. Other forms of

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participation include the activities of women in liberation
movements, ad hoc politics, and women's associations, whether
official or unofficial. The latter associations can be seen
as institutions that have advanced women's political
participation, and are relatively organized and permanent.
They usually appear to be apolitical. But in fact they may
empower women through charitable and social service functions,
and at the same time play a role in bringing women's issues to
the attention of politicians and the public. In this study,
political participation is defined as political activity,
including informal and indirect action, and any activity
intentionally to influence the making of public policy. The
study will not focus on formal activity like voting. It
recognizes as political participation involvement in ad hoc
political campaigns that are relatively short-lived, such as
food riots, and anti-war demonstrations (such as over the Gulf
war), which are directed against the political authorities and
may be illegal or violent.

2.2 THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC POLICY ON WOMEN'S STATUS

The study gives particular attention to the influence of
public policy on women's status. The constitutions of most
Arab countries, including Jordan, provide that all citizens
are equal in their public rights and duties, and specify that
people are equal before the law[4], but the reality may be
different. In Jordan, women are under the authority of two
contradictory laws. The first is a public law which does not
distinguish between citizens on the basis of sex or religion,

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and gives them human and civil rights. The personal status
laws on the other hand, do not give men and women equal
rights. They give a man the right to divorce his wife
immediately if she goes against his orders. Also in the 100
days after the divorce, a husband has the right to ask his
wife to return to the marriage. This right is known as the
bayt al-ta'ah (house of obedience). If she refuses, she will
lose her rights to a hundred days' alimony. The husband also
has the right of polygamy.

This study will consider how Jordanian laws have affected
women's status, and the potential for change through law. The
law can deny Jordanian women the right to property and income,
but it can also direct public resources in ways that improve
women's status - for example integrating women into
development plans.

The research for this study has taken into account the
primary focus on the interplay among three major discourses
affecting women's political participation in Jordan: Islam,
the state, and feminism.

2.3 ISLAM

Islam will be considered not as a set of abstract beliefs
concerning relations between individuals and a putative divine
being, but as an ideological system that enjoins and
legitimizes forms of social practice. Politically, this study
will view the personal status laws in Jordan as laws emanating
from the shari'ah that affect women's political participation.

2.4 STATE

Arab states after independence must be seen in the context of the historic expansion of state power. The state took increasing control over economy, education, and health. Of equal importance were forms of state intervention in the realm of personal relations, particularly in family structures and practices, and in the wider processes of social and economic transformation.

2.5 FEMINISM

In the Arab world, the earliest articulation of women's feminist consciousness is widely considered to have been in the 1890s with the rise of women's journalism and salon debates. The new awareness was not yet called feminism; in fact the term "feminism" was not used in Egypt until the early 1920s.[5] This study uses the definition of feminism given by Margot Badran "feminism is broadly construed to include an understanding that women have suffered forms of subordination or oppression because of their sex, and an advocacy of ways to overcome them to achieve better lives for women, and for men, within the family and society".[6]

CONCLUSION

This study examines how the interaction of three major factors - Islam, state power, and the feminist movement - has shaped the political participation of Jordanian women.

The study neither attacks nor justifies the existing
situation, but rather analyses. No attempt is made to compare
the role of Middle Eastern women with that of women in the
West or elsewhere.

3. **REVIEW OF FIELD RESEARCH ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL
   PARTICIPATION IN JORDAN**

There is a lack of social science literature on female
political participation in Jordan. Nonetheless, the available
literature, however flawed or incomplete, enables one to
generate or test hypotheses on women's political
participation. This section will briefly discuss the work
that the researcher has been able to locate.

In the journal Dirāsāt Hilmi Sārī suggests in his study
"Dawr wasa'il al-ittiṣāl fi al-sulūk al-intkhabi: Dirasah
tahlīlīyah fī susyūlūjya al-ittiṣāl fī al-mujtama' al-Urdunī"
(The role of communication in the election procedures:
Analytical study in sociology of communication in the
Jordanian society) that women in Bedouin areas are less
interested in elections than either settled rural or urban
women. However, he does not give sufficient explanation as to
why Bedouin women have had less interest in elections than
their rural or urban counterparts. He also argues that mass
media played an insignificant role in the 1989 elections,
compared to direct personal communication among citizens.[7] He
suggests that in future candidates should put more emphasis on
personal communication.

An article by 'Abd al-Majid al-'Azzam "Ittijahat 'ayinah mukhtarah min al-mujtama' al-Urduni nahwa al-musharakah al-siyasiyah: Dirasah maydaniyah" (Opinion of selected sample from Jordanian society toward political participation: field study) also in Dirasat, uses a sample of which only twenty percent are female. He justifies this because, in Jordanian culture, "the men do not let their wives fill the questionnaire".[8] If he is correct, then the question remains, what is it about Jordanian culture that inhibits women from participating in and even discussing politics?. To say that one's sample is sufficient because the culture inhibits interviewing, as al-'Azzam does, particularly when one is studying political attitudes, only complicates the issue of what types of political participation are legitimate, and whether those women who did fill out al-'Azzam's questionnaire were either betraying their husbands or were in some other way unusual.

Al-'Azzam's problems are compounded by his poor questions design. First, he uses a questionnaire, and not person-to-person interviews. Second, many of the questions are poorly worded, and there are no questions asked only to women. While the study does not purport to be solely on Jordanian women, it is important to ask certain questions solely to women, especially when one considers the cultural norms which al-'Azzam describes.

The Research Department of Jordan's Parliament conducted a study "Al-mar'ah al-Urduni wa al-intkhabat al-niyabyah"

(Jordanian women and parliamentary elections) from April 15 to May 14, 1993. The objective of the study was to find out why many Jordanian women did not participate in the 1989 election, and to assess how many would participate in the 1993 election. The study used equal numbers of men and women, and the 1025 respondents were a representative cross-section of Jordan.[9] Their research conclusions were not especially, convincing as two of their conclusions (5 and 6) contradict each other, their conclusions were:

1. More people would vote in 1993

2. 78.44% opposed the quota system that guarantees seats for women in Parliament

3. The media plays the major role in elections

4. Voters prefer women candidates who are outspoken

5. More women would be elected

6. Most people consider women candidates to be unsuitable

7. The official program to increase women's participation is effective

This shows there are still major barriers to women's political participation in parliamentary election.

Another study in 1993 by Mousa Shtawi and Amal al-Daghstani was entitled "Dirasah miydaniyah hawla musharakat al-mar'ah al-Urduni fi al-hayat al-siyasiyah" (Analytical study about participation of Jordanian women in political life). The objective of this study was to investigate the roles of Jordanian women in social and political life. The

study sought to examine the attributes of both men and women politics, to analyze the political participation of women and the obstacles to their participation, to determine the position of women and their role in society, and to assess the role of political institutions.

The data was collected between July 26 and August 6, 1993. The sample was drawn from two Department of Census "replicates"; every replicate includes 50 areas spread over Jordan. The researchers randomly chose a block from every area, 22 families from every block and one or two persons over 19 from each family. The sample contained 2,050 people: 1,018 males and 1,032 females.[10]

Their research findings were that:

1. Men have more opportunity to participate in politics than women

2. Voters chose male candidates on their merit not on their sex

3. Half the sample said there were obstacles facing women in politics

4. Many women did not have enough time to participate in election

5. Many people did not accept women working in politics

6. Many people believe that the legislation on women's issues is fair

7. Most people used T.V. to find out about the election

While these two studies (that of the Research Department of the Jordanian Parliament and that of Shtawi-Daghstani) deal

with Jordanian women, there are no specific questions directed toward women and both have designed their questionnaires for both men and women. Also, the studies use no theoretical framework or hypotheses. In addition, there are no questions about the personal status laws.

4. **PROCEDURE**

4.1 INTERVIEWS WITH LEADING JORDANIAN WOMEN

Several informal interviews were conducted with women activists in Jordan. These are presented in Chapter Five, but the women are not part of the sample.

4.2 THE SAMPLE

The focus of this study is Jordanian women and I have chosen to limit my interviews to Jordanian women. The study is also limited to urban women, in Amman. According to the Department of Statistics in 1991, the number of people living in Amman stood at 1,328,200, accounting for 34.2 per cent of the total population of Jordan (3,888,000).[11]

The lack of census data and archive material about women made generating an interview sample difficult. Rather than hoping a random sample gives sufficient numbers in each category, I decided to employ my personal network to find a set of interviewees which was heterogeneous along class, education and ethnic lines. The goal was to interview Jordanian women with different educational, social and ethnic

backgrounds, and varying ages. The sample consists of 70 women. In term of social class, women from each of the following categories were interviewed:

1. professionals - especially women in medicine, dentistry, law, journalism, and engineering;

2. businesswomen who own and/or manage medium-to-large-scale enterprises;

3. government bureaucrats who work in top positions in the ministries of Education, Health, or Social Affairs;

4. government bureaucrats who work at lower levels in the Education, Health, or Social Affairs ministries;

5. government bureaucrats who work as clerks or secretaries;

6. women working as janitors or maids; and

7. housewives who are married to men working in each of the above-named occupations.

4.3 COLLECTION OF DATA

While I limited myself to interviews in Amman, it seemed important to interview women who live in different neighborhoods in Amman. The study draws on a personal network as the basis for meeting selected individuals. The following paragraph explains this technique in greater depth.

There are inherent difficulties in convincing Jordanian women to be interviewed. Responding to interviews of the sort carried out in this project is not common. To stand on a street corner and ask women to take a few minutes to answer

questions about politics would be virtually impossible.
Gaining trust is an important part of the interview process.
I began by interviewing people I knew, specifically female
lawyers whom I had befriended over the past decade. After
interviewing them, I asked them if they could suggest other
persons who they knew. I specifically asked them not to
suggest persons who would be likely to give me any particular
answers. Rather, I sought women who would agree to being
interviewed. It is my belief that asking interviewees to name
potential interviewees was the preferred way to expand my
interview base, and more importantly, to gain the trust of
those whom I wished to interview.

4.4 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire included closed-ended questions suitable to
easy codification and open-ended questions where women were
encouraged to express freely their opinions without the
observer leading or limiting their answers. This technique
was designed to gather as much information as possible.

The study used formal, structured interviews, with all of
the individuals in the sample.

4.5 THE ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The questions were not precoded, since it was impossible to
predict the patterns of responses; but such data still had to
be coded before any analysis would be undertaken.[12] My
analysis of the interview data attempts to prove or disprove
the hypotheses described earlier. Rather than simply provide

statistical data about the interviews, my analysis will be more descriptive and contextual. My goal is to explain, not describe, why and how women participate. (The full questionnaire is given in Appendix 1).

5. **ORGANIZATION OF THIS THESIS**

Chapter One is an introduction. It states the problem, the methodology, and the outline of this study.

Chapter Two presents the framework of the theoretical study of women's political participation. This chapter discuses the three major factors - Islam, the state, and feminism - which have affected the status of women and their political participation.

Chapter Three examines the history of women's political participation in the Arab World and discusses the historical legacy of women's roles such as the feminist movement in the early twentieth century in the Arab world, specifically in Egypt, Algeria, and Palestine. In this discussion, the feminist movement will be viewed as part of the national liberation movement. The study also examines the post-colonial regimes' policies that affected women. It considers the reform of the personal status laws in Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia and Yemen. It also examines the struggle of women in Bahrain and Kuwait for more progressive laws, such as the right to vote.

Chapter Four examines women's roles in Jordanian society, the development of political institutions, education, the labor force, and laws. First, we will examine Jordanian society -- Bedouin women, women in villages, and women in urban areas. Second, we discuss how the development of the Jordanian political system affects women. Third, we examine Jordanian women's associations -- whether official or unofficial -- and how these associations have advanced women's participation. Last, we consider changes in women's level of education, their role in the labor force, treatment under the laws, and activities in politics.

Chapter Five uses the results of field research to evaluate Jordanian women's opinions. This chapter will assess the validity of the study's hypotheses.

Chapter Six summarizes the main themes of the study, gives strategies for empowering women to pursue political roles in Jordan, and suggests some directions for future research.

6. **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE THESIS**

This thesis seeks to contribute to a better understanding of why women hold few public positions of power or influence in the Arab World. The situation is taken for granted by most people rather than examined and explained. I will highlight the strategies that women could pursue to enhance their political roles in Jordan and other Arab countries. It will thus provide a link between the reality of women's political

status and what can be done to empower them politically.

7. NOTES ON THE TRANSLITERATION

The transliteration for the Arabic words in this study is based on the Library of Congress Romanization System.

Letters of the Alphabet

Initial	Medial	Final	Alone	Value		Initial	Medial	Final	Alone	Value
ا	ا	ا	ا	ā		ض	ض	ض	ض	ḍ
ب	ب	ب	ب	b		ط	ط	ط	ط	ṭ
ت	ت	ت	ت	t		ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	ẓ
ث	ث	ث	ث	th		ع	ع	ع	ع	ʻ
ج	ج	ج	ج	j		غ	غ	غ	غ	gh
ح	ح	ح	ح	ḥ		ف	ف	ف	ف	f²
خ	خ	خ	خ	kh		ق	ق	ق	ق	q²
د	د	د	د	d		ك	ك	ك	ك	k
ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	dh		ل	ل	ل	ل	l
ر	ر	ر	ر	r		م	م	م	م	m
ز	ز	ز	ز	z		ن	ن	ن	ن	n
س	س	س	س	s		ه	ه	ة ه	ة ه	h³
ش	ش	ش	ش	sh		و	و	و	و	w
ص	ص	ص	ص	ṣ		ي	ي	ي	ى	y

Vowels and Diphthongs

ﹷ	a	اﹷ	ā⁴	ىﹷ	ī	
ﹹ	u	ىﹷ	á⁵	ﹷوْ	aw	
ﹻ	i	وﹹ	ū	ﹷىْ	ay	

Letters Representing Non-Arabic Consonants⁶

ك گ	g	ج	ch	ف ڤ	v
پ	p	ج ژ	zh	پ	

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NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. For labor force see Hijāb, 1988; for women and Islam see Keddie, 1979, 1992; Aḥmed, 1992.

2. Verba, (1978). p. 46-47.

3. Weiner, (1971). p. 164.

4. Al-Sa'dāwī, (1988). p. 9.

5. Kandiyoti, (1991). p. 9.

6. Bādran, (1991). p. 202.

7. Sārī, (1991). p. 287, 292.

8. Al-'Azzām, (1991). p. 184.

9. Research Center, (1993). p. 27-31.

10. Shtawī and Dāghstānī, (1993). p. 2.

11. Al-Ḥawamdeh, (1992). p. 3.

12. Ibid.

CHAPTER TWO

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

INTRODUCTION

Through different periods, the Arab states have generated contradictory discourses and policies regarding women. The state has characteristically imposed its own agenda, and in so doing, has attempted to manipulate the status of women to suit its own political ends. To combat the state's opportunistic approach, feminists have developed their own forms of political participation. In the early twentieth century, the feminist movement called for better education for women, believing that education would lead to an improvement in their social status. After independence most of the Arab countries integrated women into the labor force and most Arab countries gave women the right to vote. This phase is characterized by women asking for more political participation. In the last decade, many Arab women have called for greater "cultural loyalty," and hence have resumed wearing the veil as a statement of cultural pride.

In this chapter, I will discuss the three major factors - - Islam, the state, and feminism - which have affected the status of women and their political participation. At the outset, it should be noted that "official Islam" has been controlled by the state; the official Islamic establishment has had to negotiate with the state. However, fundamentalist

Islam has confronted the state by a show of Islamic strength in the area of gender relations. To avoid confrontation the state has adopted conservative family laws. Also, the recent phenomenon of veiling women in most Arab countries is a manifestation of the adoption of conservative values, exemplified by revivalist thinkers as a form of Islamic toughness.

The veil is not a mere article of clothing. There are two contradictory aspects of veiling: it can signify women's protest against a situation that threatens their identity and status; or it can signify women's acceptance of a view of women as sexually untrustworthy and needing to be bound to the home.

Below, my analysis of the political structure of the state in the Arab countries will show that the impact of oil has changed the geopolitics of these countries, and that this has affected the position of women. I will examine the effects of international influences such as those exerted by the International Monetary Fund, and the effects of the United Nations Decade for Women (1975-1985).

1. **PERSPECTIVES ON ISLAM**

In the West, Islam has been viewed as the major element in the oppression of Arab women. In examining Islam and comparing it with other religions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Hinduism, it is clear that most other religions contain some form of discrimination against women. Hence, it is not Islam alone that oppresses women.

Islam has had "progressive" tendencies within it throughout history. For example, in pre-Islamic societies, most tribes were patriarchal. Some of these societies practised female infanticide (killing girls at birth because of their gender). With the coming of Islam this practice was prohibited: and Quranic verses condemned infanticide.[1] In his teachings, the Prophet Muhammad defended the rights of women.[2] Islam thus had some socially revolutionary aspects at its beginnings. However, when its revolutionary phase was over and Islam had become part of the established social order, it was then used to defend the ruling class and thus the patriarchy.

Throughout history, religion has been used as a tool of convenience by governments and politicians to justify particular positions. Islam has often been adapted to suit current political tides. In Egypt under the 1952 regime, Gamal 'Abd al-Nasir tried to introduce socialist measures and laws. The Islamic clerics were quick to pick verses from the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad and from the Qur'ān which would accord with a socialist system.[3] Islamic clerics backed socialism because the government was adopting it. When Egypt abandoned socialist policies in favor of capitalism and relations with imperial powers, Islamic clerics began to quote verses from the Qur'ān to show that Islam was in favor of capitalism, profits, laissez-faire, "freedom of the individual", and so on.[4]

In the early 20th century in Arab countries, as formal schooling for both boys and girls spread, the issue of women

in society became a widely debated topic in the upper classes.
It was conducted within the large argument of reforming
society as a whole in order to adjust the principles of
religion to the needs for modernization. The liberal Islamic
reformists of the nineteenth century, such as Rifa'ah al-
Ṭahṭawī, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, and Muḥammad 'Abduh believed
that there was a need for education so that Muslims could
adjust to the modern world.[5] The questions posed by these
reformists remain relevant today.

Rifa'ah al-Ṭahṭawī was one of the first nineteenth-
century reformists to write about the need for the education
of women. In 1899, the mufti of Egypt, Muḥammad 'Abduh, and
his follower the writer Qasim Amin also called for this. The
liberal nationalists followed Amin's arguments. These liberal
nationalists believed that, if a society in the Arab world was
to modernize itself, such a society would have to borrow from
European societies those elements which strengthened Western
cultures: democratic governments, individual rights, and
equality of rights under the law for all citizens, including
women.[6] The liberal nationalists used Western political
concepts in association with quotations from the Qur'ān, in an
attempt to meld these Western political concepts into an
Islamic framework.[7]

On the other hand, conservative nationalists believed
that the only way an Arab society could survive the attack of
Western values was by preserving its traditions. Indeed, many
conservative nationalists believed that foreign colonialists
had encouraged women's liberation. These conservatives viewed

women's liberation as an attack on the core of Islamic culture: the family. Saudi Arabian rulers, clerics and politicians were the most conservative on this issue, arguing that the West used the issue of women's liberation to attack the fundamental structures of Arab society.[8] It is my contention that the conservative view was echoed in Jordan, as Jordanians engaged in similar debates over whether the infiltration of the women's liberation movement was designed to undermine the basic pillars of the society.

1.1 ISLAM AND STATE

It is instructive to further examine the application of Islam within Arab society. My aim here is to present only the general characteristics of fundamentalist fikrah (thought) and 'aqidah (ideology), which most Sunni Islamist movements of the Arab world have come to share. These characteristics are mostly drawn from the teachings of al-Banna, Qutb, Mawdudi, Hawwa, Faraj, and al-Utaybi.[9] Islam is viewed as a total system of belief, universally appropriate to all times and places, including heaven. Unlike Christianity, the separation of din (faith) and the dawlah (state) is inconceivable. Hukm (rule) is inherent in Islam; the Qur'an gives the law, and the state implements the law.[10]

The bases of Islam are the Qur'an and the sunnah - the practices of the Prophet Muhammad, and the al-khulafa' al-rashidin (four caliphs). Islam is defined as the ultimate truth. Muslims' primary duties in life are 'ibadat, (obedience to God), and the spreading of Islam.[11] The aim of

the good Muslim should be the establishment of Allah's sovereignty over the whole of mankind. Thus, in order to establish the authority of God, all people must apply his law shari'ah.

The main argument is over whether the shari'ah is the center of an Islamic order and government which controls society, or simply a set of norms and values that regulate human life. The latter interpretation leads to the pivotal distinction between al-asl or al-thabat - the untouchable and immutable core, which is defined by God - and the al-far' or al-mutaghyir (flexible), which has human reason at its core, following the rules of ijtihad (interpretation of Islamic jurisprudence).[12] However, Muslim scholars generally agree that the shari'ah is simultaneously comprehensive and flexible, and is suited to all times and places.

The Egyptian scholar 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq in his 1925 book Al-Islam wa asl al-hukm (Islam and the Roots of Government), maintained that Muhammad was not a politician but a prophet. Further, he claims that Islam should have nothing to do with politics because it is a religion and not a state.[13] Gudrun Kramer points out that the separation of religion, and state is grounded in Islamic fiqh (legal theory), which separates the 'ibadat -- a person's bond with his or her God (essentially the five pillars of Islam the profession of faith, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and the pilgrimage) -- from the mu'amalat, which covers all other aspects of economic, political and family life.[14] While the 'ibadat is timeless, the mu'amalat can be adapted to the changing

conditions of duration and place. Hence, spirituality brings
nas (people) to the shari'ah (Islamic Laws).[15] Thus, argue
Kramer, there are two separate spheres of concern: one hinges
on the spiritual and the other on material concerns.
Spiritual concerns are based on the Qur'an and the Prophet
Muhammad's practice and sayings, and material concerns are
governed by the al-'ulama' and al-fuqaha' (Muslim theologians
and jurists) who interpret the shari'ah, from which the
personal status laws originated.

An opposite hypothesis to 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq is proposed
by the conservative 'ulama' and the Muslim Brothers. They
state that for the shari'ah to be exercised requires social
organization and a state. Further, government and politics
are part of the mu'amalat which is to work for the collective
good of the people. Under Islamic convention proposed by the
'ulama' and Muslim Brotherhood, although the state is
considered to be central to Islamic law, its form and
organization are declared to be secondary to Islam.[16] This
appears to suggest that the acceptance of non-Islamic values
is possible, as long as it does not lead to ignoring or
violating Islamic values.

1.2 THE FUNDAMENTALIST MOVEMENT

The 1970s and 1980s are considered to be the years of the
"Islamic revival".[17] This phenomenon included a return to the
basic foundations of the Islamic faith as seen by
fundamentalists. However, the fundamentalist movement did not
stress a return to the "pure" lifestyle of the Prophet

Muhammad. In fact, the fundamentalist movements in various

Arab countries attempted to integrate new practices such as

technology and industrialization in order to strengthen their

relevance to modern life. Thus, the ideological orientation

of contemporary Islamist movements has been influenced by

modern sociopolitical programs, such as socialism and

capitalism.

It is important to mention that Islam is not a single,

stagnant entity; there are a number of factors influencing it

as indicated by 'Ali El-Kenz:

> 1) The religious element is intervening more and
> more in the morphisms of collective identity that
> determine the social actors. Compared with the 1960s
> there is an unmistakable "reactivation" of the
> religious dimension that participates increasingly
> in the social movement. 2) The weight of the
> religious element is increasing everywhere, but much
> more rapidly as one moves away from the production
> sphere. It reaches its maximum in two spaces: that
> of the role of women in society and that of
> legitimacy of political power. 3) From these two
> observations one may conclude that religious
> discourse, present and expanding everywhere though
> in differing manners, is tending toward hegemony.
> It transverses all the social categories (the
> transversal hypothesis) and elicits responses from
> all domains of collective activity: economic,
> social, cultural, etc. 4) But a still more detailed
> observation of the field shows that the religious
> element differs according to the society's large
> groups and embraces, like any ideology, the broad
> lines of the society's "horizontal" structure.[18]

There are three divisions within Islam recognized by El-Kenz.

The first is popular Islam, which is weakly linked to textual

interpretation of the accumulated scriptures, but is open to

social change. He calles this "Islam as a language of

practical life", the common Islam into which the bulk of the

people are integrated.[19] The second division is official

Islam, in which the 'ulamā (theologians) perform all

interpretations of Qur'anic Law or <u>hadith</u>. The 'ulamā are
drawn primarily from the middle class, who include many
teachers and public servants. The third Islam is political
Islam, and political groups usually require formal
membership.[20] The three groups co-exist under Islam. The bulk
of analyses of the "rise" of Islam in current Arab societies
assign only slight relevance to the two first divisions
mentioned above, instead focusing their concern on political
Islam. According to El-Kenz the failure or breakdown of
national development led to the awakening of political Islam.
Soon, it developed into mass parties. El-Kenz offers some
useful explanations that in concentrating primarily on
political Islam we neglect religion's other roles: as social
practice, part of daily life. Hence, we muddle the political
dynamism of beliefs based on religious foundations. Also
Muḥammed 'Abd al-Jābrī says that the "rise of Islam as the
solution" is the result of development, urbanization and mass
education. He analyses the theree generations involved: 1)
The elites who participated in independence movements which
were influenced by the West, and were interested in improving
education and mobilizing citizens. 2) The revolution rulers
with their central planning and industrialization of the
country. 3) The fundamentalists who say that the failure of
the revolution to achieve its promises led to the rise of
Islam as the solution.[21]

The identity of Arab societies is often seen as the most
pressing problem facing the Arab countries. According to
Fatimah Mernissi, Muslim fundamentalism is a declaration of

identity in the face of rapid social change threatening
existing government relations, and a reaction to the
peripheral problems formed by colonialism, new technology,
consumerism and economic dependency.[22] Fundamentalists are
trying to limit women's rights in an attempt to preserve their
familiar culture in the midst of great turbulence.
Fundamentalists call for the return to the veil, as there are
many women who do not wear the veil. Indeed, fundamentalists
and non-fundamentalists hold sharply conflicting views, and
this puts the relation between Islam and women's rights back
in the forefront.

1.3 THE USES OF VEILING

The veil is the obvious sign of the Islamic revival. The word
"veil" in English is loosely used to refer to a wide variety
of head and face coverings. In Saudi Arabia, for example,
women use a gauze-like type of black material that covers the
face and body called 'abāyah. Younger women in the rest of
the Gulf cover their hair and body but leave their faces free,
and some girls are gradually letting the 'abāyah slip to their
shoulders as a first step towards removing it. Women of the
older generation in the Gulf use a leather mask to hide the
face - a type of veil that is dying out. Some Arab women in
North Africa use the traditional type of veil there, a white
light weight sheet covering nearly all the face and body. In
the rest of the Arab countries, older women feel more
comfortable with a scarf covering their hair; and there are
many women who never wear a veil or imagine wearing it.

The fundamentalists have introduced the "Islamic headdress", the hijāb, which covers the women's hair with a scarf that is ordinarily white, leaving the face exposed. The whole body is usually covered with a loose dress in dark colors, with buttons from top to bottom. Women typically wear Western clothes beneath this dress, which they take off, along with the scarf, when they are in the company of women only.

In order to make sense of the veil as a social phenomenon one needs to inspect other types of women's dress that are distinguishable from the veil. Those women who have gradually modified their dress, from non-veiled to veiled, are in general the urban lower and middle classes. Professionally, they work as civil servants, school teachers, secretaries in private enterprise, bank employees, nurses or university students. They are usually young, in their twenties and early thirties.

Previously, the veils that women wore were black and covered the face and body. This is the type of veil that Huda Sha'rawi removed in 1923. This garment could only be afforded by the upper classes and it was a sign of seclusion and restriction. In contrast, the Islamic headdress of today is used by university students and by women who work. It makes a statement that tells the public, particularly the male public, that a woman has left the house to study and work.

Arlene Macleod states that many women who wear veils are educated, working, and modern. They have abandoned Western dress and turned to the long dresses and head-scarfs of the muhajabah (covered woman). She argues that women are

determined to resolve gender inequality. Women are engaged in

a struggle to resist the limitations of power, an action she

has called "accommodating protest".[23] She points out that the

new veiling in Cairo is not a section of traditional culture

or a response to customary patterns, but a form of "hegemonic

politics in a modernizing environment".[24]

Macleod agrees with Fatimah Mernissi that infitah (Anwar

al-Sadat's economic opeining) encouraged consumerism.

Families of the lower-middle class pushed women into the

workplace to gain extra income. But both women and men

believe that women belong in the home, where their natural

order of business is caring for the husband and children and

managing the household. One woman in an interview by Macleod

in Cairo, said that wearing hijab gave her freedom at work and

that the hijab makes a statement that, "I am a Muslim woman,

and that I am here working because my family needs my help,

not for myself....I am here because I love my family and we

need some things for our home". Another women stated that

"When I wear this dress, men will respect me", and a third

said "The hijab is a protection from annoying people on the

street....I don't have to worry that men in the cafe or on the

street are talking about me every day as I pass".[25]

Nevertheless, veiling presents a double standard; it both

signifies women's protest against a situation that threatens

valued identity and status, and it signals women's acceptance

of a view of them as sexually untrustworthy and naturally

bound to the home. Thus, the veil conveys a woman's desire to

accommodate as well as resist.[26] Use of the new veils thus

inevitably links protest with accommodation.[27]

In recent decades, the wearing of Islamic dress has shown a broad increase. In fact, it appears that Western dress is associated with secularism and feminism, acceptable only to the urban middle class. On the other hand, Islam and veils are associated with the grass-roots level. The new dress code is neither a return to the old customs nor a demand for complete freedom but an expression of the "new" Islamic woman.

In this way the veil represents a cultural identity and the demands of women to acquire equality through employment; but at the same time it signifies acceptance of the legitimate exercise of power by males.

2. **PERSPECTIVES ON THE STATE**

To improve our understanding of the relationship between the state and women's political participation, and the implications of development for both the state and women, we must first define the state. The state can be defined "as government, as the ruling class, as a bureaucratic, coercive, and legal order, or as a normative order".[28] There are three dominant theoretical approaches to the state in the social sciences: Liberal-pluralist, Marxist, and Statist. I will discuss these approaches briefly to define the nature of the state in the Middle East.

The pluralist approach views government as the mediator between competing social and economic interests. The state, presumably, is ignorant to gender. Theoretically, under the liberal-plural view, women should have equal opportunity in

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the politics of allocation. The challenge for women is to get access to control over decision making.[29]

Marxist theory, on the other hand, argues that the state is the apparatus of the dominant capitalist class. There is some disagreement between classic and modern schools of Marxist thought as to their interpretation of the role of the state. In Engel's classic interpretation, the state adopts the role of mediator in class conflict. The state is capitalist, trying to manage with natural contradictions (even if it means resisting the capitalist class) in order to maintain the viability of the capitalist state. Classical Marxists were interested in the way in which the division of labor within the family was linked to the growth of private property and ultimately to the subordination of the people.[30] In the structural Marxist view, on the other hand, the state does not attempt to regulate relations between classes. Both groups were assuming that with the abolition of capitalism there would be equality for women and men.

The Statist approach is based on Weberian theories. Max Weber, in his analysis of the state, argues that the state serves to define and legitimate norms.

> In contrast to the Liberal-pluralist and Marxist approaches to the state, the Statist approach places greater emphasis on institutional constraints, both formal and informal, on individual behavior...Actors in the political system, whether individuals or groups, are bound within these structures, which limit, even determine, their conceptions of their own interest and their political resources.[31]

Weber's analysis of the structural functions of state apparatus defines the institutions of society as an organic unit which integrates both individuals and groups into the

state structure. In addition, Weber says that the state demonstrates

> an administrative and legal order subject to change
> by legislation, to which the organized activities of
> the administrative staff, which are also controlled
> by regulations, are oriented. This system of order
> claims binding authority, over the members of the
> state, the citizens....[32]

The state becomes a compulsory institution in the formalised order of society, and via the exercise of the legal framework the state legitimizes its role.

For this study, I have chosen a Statist approach because it takes into account how individuals and communities resist or cope with the expansion of state power. There is a strong emphasis on the nature of state-society linkages. This enables us to analyze the role of women without ranking them as simply an uninfluential group or pushing gender into the background.

The state often issues conflicting policies regarding the role of women within society in order to respond to both internal and external threats and opportunities. During periods of conflict or instability a state may call upon women to seek an active role within society and will legislate in order to see this successfully accomplished. These provisions may be repealed during periods of economic growth or stability.

The important question for women is how much the state repays their political participation. Clearly, the answer depends on the definition of political participation and on the characteristics of states as they develop at different political moments.

2.1 THE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARAB STATE

In order to understand the position of women, it is necessary to examine the development of the Arab state. The political development of the Arab countries, including Jordan, has been affected by many important events, such as the decolonization of the region, the creation of the State of Israel, the focus around and attempts toward unification, and the transformation of the region into a place of strategic confrontation between the two superpowers.

Between the breakdown of the Ottoman Empire and World War II, much of the Arab World was occupied by European powers. Many countries tried to have a portion of influence. In the Arab East, France and Britain shared mandates -- France in Syria and Lebanon, Britain in Iraq and Jordan. Also, Britain had effective control of Egypt, Sudan and the small principalities of the Arabian Peninsula. In the Maghrib, Algeria became a department of France, while Tunisia and Morocco were under French protection.

World War II ended with the creation of new nation-states.[33] The Arab world entered contemporary history already shattered: weaker in economic and social structures and political organizations than the developed ex-colonial powers. The new states were divided. Many of those countries that had rebelled forcefully against the former colonial powers adopted a socialist state ideology. The more conservative were those states that negotiated their independence from the countries that occupied them. The countries that gained independence by confrontation were: Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Algeria. Others,

who negotiated freedom, included Jordan, and Morocco. The
latter nations, plus Saudi Arabia, were content with a neo-
colonial type of independence capable of ensuring the security
of the new monarchies and containing mass movements.

After independence, Arab countries were influenced by a
number of major trends: nationalism, developmentalism,
socialism, democracy, and Islamism. Islamism has been
discussed earlier in this chapter. It is instructive to
examine the other factors.

Many Arab countries used nationalism as an important
unifying force. Albert Hourani states that pan-Arab
nationalism was the foremost ideology of the Arab World for
half the twentieth century, from the end of world War I to the
late 1960s.[34] Egypt, Algeria, Syria and Iraq all used
nationalism. Many governments nationalized foreign economic
interests, redistributed large amounts of land, and made a
series of five-years economic development plans. These
processes resulted in the strengthening of the public sector,
which also promoted social laws benefiting the masses.

Socialism was the preferred form of government in many
Arab countries. Although some ideas were taken from the
Soviet Union, the governments concerned tried to combine these
ideas with Islamic concepts. The socialist regimes generally
states allowed greater access to education and employment, and
reformed the personal status laws affecting the role of women.

There has recently been a growing demand for democratic
reform. Several Arab states -- including Algeria, Tunisia,
Egypt, Morocco, Jordan and Yemen -- have held multiparty

elections and have permitted opposition in the political
sphere. The reforms that have occurred, however, scarcely
warrant the label "democratic," in the sense of allowing for
popular or majority rule.

People tend to equate "democratization" with
"liberalization," but the terms refer to two distinct
concepts. Democracy denotes a governing mode in which
decision-making power is shared by "the people" instead of
being concentrated in the hands of a small circle of
leaders.[35] "Liberal," in the classical sense, refers to
limitations on the power of a state to intervene in the
individual and collective lives of people.[36]

After the second Gulf War in 1991, the Arab regimes had
to cope with economic and social crises. Political reform is
now on the agenda in key Arab states because important sectors
of the population forcefully put it there. These societies
have become more complicated, and that complexity has not yet
found institutionalized political expression.[37]

2.3 OIL'S IMPACT ON THE ARAB STATE

The emergence of the new oil states in the 1970s, and their
promotion to the forefront of world trade and finance has led
to the development of the concept of rentier economies within
the Middle East. Oil has drastically changed the weaker state
structures as it has brought generous financial rewards.
During the 1970s, the effects of oil on the role of the state
and on economic behavior in general were so important to the
Arab world that they need to be explained. The effects were

felt throughout the Arab world. The oil boom created
employment for migrant labor which resulted in wealth
generated from outside the native economy and also a marked
redefinition of the role of women within these societies. The
idea of a "rentier economy" is used to explain the economic
factors in the oil economies in the Arab region.

Hazem Beblawi says that there is no such thing as a pure
rentier economy, rather that there are elements of rent in any
economy. His definition of a rentier economy is "one where
rent situations predominate".[38] Beblawi argues that an
external rent can sustain the economy without a strong
productive domestic sector. The majority are only involved in
the arrangement of it. A rentier economy is thus an economy
where the creation of wealth is centered around a small
fraction of society. The rest of society is only engaged in
the distribution and utilization of this wealth.[39]

The government is the principal recipient of external
rent and it creates different layers of new beneficiaries. As
Beblawi argues, "The whole economy is arranged as a hierarchy
of layers of rentiers with the state or the government at the
top of the pyramid, acting as the ultimate support of all
other rentiers in the economy". Beblawi adds that "the
rentier nature of the new state is magnified by the tribal
origins of these states. The long tribal tradition of buying
loyalty and allegiance is now confirmed by an estate
providence, distributing favours and benefits to its
population".[40]

Thus, in a rentier state there is no requirement for

taxation, as the state allocates its income received from the rest of the world. However, ambitious overspending by governments have forced them to start introducing taxation. Previously, citizens saw the state as benevolent, and saw little need for political participation. However, there are growing calls for democracy in the Arab world as elsewhere. As a result, people are refusing taxation without representation to enable them to make demands on government.

Jordan and other non-oil states have gained location rent from neighboring oil producing and exporting countries. Workers' remittances, moreover, are becoming one of the major foreign exchange sources in some non-oil states such as Egypt, Yemen, and Jordan. The economies in these countries have been called "semi-rentier". In Jordan, for example, a successful trade has been developed around workers' movement to the Gulf countries. Also, money dealers have made huge businesses in processing workers' remittances.

The semi-rentier nature of non-oil states has strong effects on the role of the state and on citizens' behavior. Governments provide welfare state subsidies for education and basic needs. The routing of aid from oil-rich countries such as Saudi Arabia to Jordan, Egypt and Yemen has influenced policy in these aid-dependent countries. Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf nations have strengthened their cultural and political influence by distributing money to these states. Hence, there has been much accommodation of Islam in aid-dependent countries. The influence of the oil-rich Arab states has had the effect of maintaining the status quo.

Women with education have benefitted from the migration
of the male labor force to the oilfields of the Gulf. Being
left behind to continue the family concerns has meant women
taking the role of decision makers and breadwinners. Also it
has resulted in a shift from traditional modes of female
employment - agriculture and the service industries. However,
it has also been the experience in Jordan that the importation
of labor from Egypt and Sri Lanka has left uneducated women
unemployed.

2.4 THE EXTERNAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFLUENCES UPON ARAB COUNTRIES

In the international context, two important factors have
influenced women's status. First the International Monetary
Fund, the World Bank and various development projects
sponsored by Western donor agencies have imposed policies that
shifted parts of the economy to the private sector, and
allowed foreign investment.[41] This policy greatly increased
the number of women in the labor force, especially in the low-
paid casual and non-unionized sectors of the economy.[42]
Second, the International Women's Year in 1975 and the United
Nations Decade for Women (1975-1985) raised awareness at the
national and international levels of the role of women in
combating poverty, illiteracy and high birth rates, and to
eliminate all forms of legal discrimination based on sex.[43]
Despite that the UN described the overall achievement as
"modest". [44]

3. **FEMINISM**

The colonial domination of the Arab countries and the post-colonial reliance on the West have created an area of cultural resistance around women and the family. Layla Ahmad addresses the dilemma of feminists in the Arab world as follows:

> It is only when one considers that one's sexual identity alone (and some would not accept this) is more inextricably oneself than one's cultural identity, that one can perhaps appreciate how excruciating is the plight of the Middle Eastern feminist caught between these two opposing loyalties, forced almost to choose between betrayal and betrayal.[45]

The early feminists were affiliated with nationalist groups for liberation movements and worked for better lives for women within an Islamic framework. Hence, women did not blame seclusion and the practice of polygamy for the subordination they faced. Male reformers, on the other hand, strove to advance modernity. The family form that most suited this goal of modernity was the nuclear family. And the nuclear family was based on stable monogamous unions, the free choice of spouses, and companionate and egalitarian relationships among family members.[46]

The involvement of Arab women in politics beyond the local level has usually involved participation in the struggles for independence from foreign domination, as in Egypt, Algeria, and Palestine. Women can break traditional boundaries and engage in militancy; but once the war ends women are reassigned to domesticity. The nature of the women's participation (as auxiliaries or replacements for men), implicitly restricted the growth of a feminist

consciousness, reinforcing the non-autonomous and attachment-
like nature of women's organizations. During the struggle
against colonial domination, the nationalists used tradition
as the embodiment of cultural authenticity. They manipulated
traditional ideology, a prominent mobilizing force against
colonial domination.

After independence most of the Arab countries did not
have a clear ideological position on the role of women in the
new states. The new Arab states were seeking to industrialize
in order to modernize, and there was a need for female labor.
Most of the Arab states planned to integrate women into
economic development.

The most important issue for feminists is reform of the
personal status laws, Tunisia and Yemen (until 1994) have had
the most progressive personal status laws in the Arab world.
Algeria and Egypt have also modified their personal status
laws. Although these changes were carried out by the state,
they were made as a result of pressure from feminists.
However, the feminists held little real influence over the
state, which either abolished independent women's
organizations or made them manageable auxiliaries of the
ruling state-party.

CONCLUSION

The issues of cultural identity and the related questions of
who can represent women are still points of controversy. The
rise of Muslim fundamentalism in the region, compounded by the
economic, political, and moral setbacks imposed upon the Arab

masses after the second Gulf War, highlighted the importance
of women's participation. Also, in the new pluralist
democracies, the parties are competing for women's support.
In addition, the growing feminist movement started calling for
more rights for women.

To elaborate on this theoretical framework, Chapter Three
will address in detail women's participation in liberation
movements in Egypt, Algeria, and Palestine. I will explore
their ability to organize and act in search of broader goals,
which may not be directly related to their gender interests
but do affect their role as citizens. As we will see, women
have been able to embrace political policies and movements to
further their own common gender interests. More importantly,
women are not passive victims of patriarchal domination. They
are fully-fledged social actors. Women's organizations span
the whole political range, from liberal nationalism and the
communist left to radical Islamist movements within a more
pluralistic framework.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. Al-Qur'ān, (N.D.). Surāh 16.

2. Ibid, Surāh (al-Nisa').

3. Arab women and feminism an interview with Nāwāl al-Sa'dāwī in <u>Race and Class</u>, (1980). p. 175.

4. Ibid.

5. Hourni, (1983).

6. Hijāb, (1988). p. 47.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid, p. 47.

9. Al-Bannā, (1951). p. 102-103. Also 'Abd al-Qadir Awda, (N.D.). p. 55-63.

10. Ibid.

11. 'Abd al-Halim, (1979). p. 40-42.

12. Ibid, p. 5.

13. Kramer, (1993). p. 4.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid, cited Khalid Muhammad Khalid, (1985). <u>Difa' 'an al-Demuqratiy</u>. Cairo, p. 267.

17. Hijāb, (1988). p. 46.

18. Al-Kenz, (1991). p. 109-110.

19. Ibid, p. 110.

20. Ibid.

21. Al-Jābrī, (1993). p. 30.

22. Mernissi, (1985). <u>Beyond the Veil</u>. p. 8-11.

23. Macleod, (1992). p. 54.

24. Ibid, p. 56.

25. Ibid, p. 70-71.

26. Ibid, p. 73.

27. Ibid.

28. Krasner, (1984). p. 224.

29. Charlton, (1984). p. 4.

30. Angels, (1970). p. 231.

31. Krasner, (1984). p. 225.

32. Weber, (1968). Vol. 1, p. 56 ; Luciani, (1990). p. xviii defined the state in the Arab countries "as the authoritative political institution that is sovereign over a recognized territory".

33. Harik, (1990) argues that "A quick look at the history of the eighteen Arab countries clearly shows not only that they are old societies but also old states", p. 3.

34. Hourani, (1991). chapter 11.

35. The democracy agenda in the Arab world editorial in M.E.R.I.P, (1992). p. 3. See also Niblock and Murphy. (1993).

36. Ibid. See for more details Penrose, (1993). p. 3-4.

37. Ibid, p. 4.

38. Beblawi, (1990). p. 87.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid, p. 89. See also Luciani, (1990). p. 75.

41. See for more details Niblock and Murphy. (1993).

42. Kandiyoti, (1991). p. 13. See also Afshar (1992).

43. United Nations, (1985). p. 22.

44. Ibid.

45. Ahmad, (1984). p. 122. Also see for more discussion about "culture loyalty"; Mernissi, (1985). Beyond the Veil; Hijab, (1985). Womenpower: The Arab debate on women at work.

46. Kandiyoti, (1991). p. 12.

CHAPTER THREE

THE HISTORY OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN THE ARAB WORLD

INTRODUCTION

Conventional studies of political participation (voting,
activities in an electoral campaign etc.) have centered upon
participation within formal, government-oriented institutions
or procedures. That approach ignores a large amount of
political behavior which influences decision-making in
society. A misleading view of women's participation has thus
been presented. For example, there is evidence from the
literature that women have become involved with men in
politics under the flag of nationalism. Women's struggles for
independence in relation to national liberation, however, have
not been highlighted in the literature although women have
even participated in armed struggles to achieve national
liberation.

This chapter will discuss the political participation of
Arab women in relation to their political mobilization and
nationalist struggle for independence. To do this, I will
describe the role of the feminist movement, which first
emerged in the writings of women of privilege and education
who lived in urban areas. This "feminist movement" (a broad
collection of organizations and individuals working to improve
women's rights) simultaneously grew and was repressed by
nationalist efforts. The cases of Egypt, Algeria, and
Palestine are excellent examples to illustrate this. The

situations in these Arab nations not only reflect but have affected the development of women's political participation in Jordan, which shares so much culturally and historically with its Arab neighbors, and also is sensitive to instability in its neighbors. Although Jordanian women have not been as involved in liberation movements as their counterparts in the states I will discuss, they participated in demonstrations supporting the liberation of Algeria, Palestine, and Egypt.

Since the emergence of the Arab states, the role of women in the Arab World has been at the center of a conflict which has involved feminists, Islamists, the state, and international pressures, and has influenced priorities and policies. I will address Personal Status Laws -- family laws -- particularly in Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia and Yemen. Egypt and Algeria will be examined first, as they have much more conservative family laws than Tunisia and Yemen, which are more progressive. Then, I will discuss the struggle of women in Bahrain and Kuwait to gain such rights as voting, and the effect of the Second Gulf war on women in Saudi Arabia. My hope is to give a broader picture of women's political involvement across the region. Throughout, I will describe the situations in these nations in terms of how opportunities are given and taken, implying that the role of women in the end is a matter of political expediency.

Feminists have insisted upon radical changes in gender relations. They have persevered despite state repression of feminist ideology in the Arab World. Since independence, women have had a difficult time achieving rights, not because

the climate is more difficult, but because they are making
more specific demands than before independence.

I. **THE EARLY ROOTS OF FEMINISM AND THE NATIONAL**
    STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE IN THE ARAB WORLD

1. **POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN EGYPT**

1.1 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN EGYPT UP TO
    1920

The feminist movement grew early in Egypt because Muhammad
'Alī, who ruled from 1811-1841, had a desire to modernize the
country to European standards. Muḥammad 'Alī sent a large
number of students to study in France in order to construct a
generation of elites for the new state he was determined to
build.[1]

Among the first generation to benefit from Muḥammad
'Alī's modernization policies were Rifā'ah al-Ṭahṭāwī (1801-
1873). Al-Ṭahṭāwī wrote in his book <u>Al-Murshid li'l-Banat</u>
<u>wa'l Awlad</u> (A Guide for Girls and Boys) "Girls must learn
reading, writing, mathematics, and grammar, to raise their
awareness.... Work prevents women from leading sinful
lives".[2] Muḥammad 'Abduh (1849-1905) and al-Ṭahṭāwī studied
in the West and later returned to Egypt, calling for changing
society within the Islamic context.[3]

To understand how the feminist movement grew, we must
discuss how the British presence affected attitudes among

Egyptians. Some social groups in Egyptian society benefitted

from British administration policies. For example, irrigation

projects which the British began extended the amount of

cultivable land, helping landlords and peasants as well as the

colonialists and the European manufacturers.[4] However, many

of the British colonial attitudes were discriminatory,

creating hostility toward the British influence. The British

held exclusive political control; British officials held all

the key administrative positions and filled the top ranks of

the civil service.[5] The split between the British and the

Egyptians grew more severe over time and this tension laid the

basis for the 1919 revolution.

It is worth examining the contributions of leading

feminists in more detail. In the early twentieth century,

Qasim Amin was inspired by Muḥammad 'Abduh's leadership of

reform. Also educated in the West, Qasim Amin in 1899 wrote

in Tahrir al-Mar'ah (Women's Emancipation) "Women must remove

their veils, and must become educated, otherwise they will

become a commodity"[6], and in 1901 he wrote Al-Mar'ah al-

Jadidah (The New Woman). Amin was the first to advocate

women's rights to education, but his reasoning was that they

could be better mothers and daughters.[7]

The first Egyptian magazine for women was published in

1898 and was edited by a woman. The editor, Hind Nufal, a

Syrian Christian woman, was from a family of journalists. The

magazine was named Al-Fatat (The Young Woman). In the first

editorial, the journal declared its dedication to advancing

the women of Egypt along the path that European women were
taking.

Malak Ḥufnī Nāsif (1886-1918) was the first Egyptian
woman to be awarded a teacher's certificate. She worked as a
teacher but also wrote articles for newspapers and magazines
under the pen name of Bāhithat al-Bādiya. In 1911, she
presented a petition to the Egyptian Legislative Assembly
asking that women be given more and better education.[8] She
did not demand the full and equal participation of women in
public life. Nāsif's position in her writing was against
unveiling and against the Westernization of Arab women.
Instead, she advocated education for women because it would
help them perform better in the traditional roles of mother
and wife.

The beginning of women's political participation in the
Arab world is usually identified with the thousands of veiled
upper-class women who, led by Hudā Sha'rāwī, marched in 1919
as part of the first Egyptian demand for independence from
Britain.[9] Women who participated did not call for women's
rights, but instead supported the nationalist position that
Sa'd Zaghlul be allowed to present the views of Egyptians.
Sa'd Zaghlul had been forbidden from leaving the country.
Nurīyah al-Sādanī, however, does not agree. She argues that
women became activists not in March 1919, but exactly two
years earlier. In 1917, Palestinian women demonstrated
against the Balfour Declaration, giving Jewish people the
right to have a state in Palestine.[10]

1.2 THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT IN EGYPT AFTER 1920

The feminist struggle continued after the 1919 revolution, and issues of women's rights came more into the public sphere. On March 16, 1923, Huda Sha'rawi (1879-1947), established the Al-Itthad Al-Nis'ai Al-Masri (Egyptian Women's Union [EFU]). The EFU began the Arabic-language journal, Al-Masriah (The Egyptian Women). Sha'rawi fought for women's suffrage after the constitution that was endorsed in April 1923 limited suffrage to males. Layla Ahmad writes that in May 1923, al-Sha'rawi, her friend Sizya Nabarawi, and Nabawiyya Musa publicly removed their veils after returning from a conference in Rome. Nabawiyya has a famous story about a confrontation in 1908 with Douglas Dunlop, the British adviser to the Ministry of Education. He refused to allow her to take the Secondary School Examination because she was a woman. This was reported in the newspapers Ahmad says that Nabawiyya Musa took the examination later and passed.[11]

Both Nasif and Sha'rawi believed that society should enable women to pursue education to the limit of their abilities. Nasif's background was more acceptable to most Arabs. Sha'rawi was from an aristocratic family and was raised to be bicultural - being educated in French. Despite their differences in background, the mutual cooperation between them improved women's lives.

Muniyrah Thabit wrote in the magazine Al-Sufur (Unveiling) and Al-Ahram under the pen name Al-Mar'ah al-Masriah (Egyptian Woman) in October 1922 and May 1923, asking indirectly for political rights for women. However, in her

magazine <u>Al-Aml</u> in 1925, she explicitly asked for women's rights to vote and to be elected to public office.[12]

Although she was from Nazareth, Mayy Ziyādah (1886-1941) lived in Egypt. Mayy Ziyādah was from a Christian Arab family. She never married, which was rare for men as well as for women at that time. Ziyādah was a writer, an intellectual, and a feminist. She was one of the first women to host a weekly salon which attracted many distinguished intellectuals and politicians, and she used these to raise questions regarding feminism.

Durā Shafīq (1914-76) graduated from the Sorbonne in 1940 with help from al-Sha'rāwī, and won a scholarship to study in France. Shafīq, after returning to Egypt, worked in different positions, first as a teacher and later in the Ministry of Education. After leaving the government, she worked in journalism, co-founding in 1948 a journal called <u>Bint al-Nil</u> (daughter of the Nile). The periodical appeared regularly from 1945 to 1957. The objectives of Bint al-Nil were political equality between men and women and the abolition of illiteracy.[13] The <u>Bint al-Nil</u> organization, according to Aḥmad, took its first revolutionary action in 1951 when Shafīq led 1,000 women in a demonstration to the Egyptian parliament. They dispersed when the presidents of both chambers promised to support their demands for representation in parliament.[14]

Shafīq and her followers continued to work for women's suffrage even when all parties were abolished after the 1952 revolution. In 1954 she went on a ten-day hunger strike which

ended when the new Egyptian government promised her that the new constitution would give women the right to vote.[15]

The constitution, which was finally ratified in 1956, did grant women the vote, but only if individual women requested suffrage. Shafīq protested against the limitation of that law, and held a hunger strike at the Indian Embassy to win the right for all women to vote. During that hunger strike, she also announced to the foreign press that she was against Israeli occupation of Egyptian land, and against the dictatorship as well. Her associates at <u>Bin al-Nil</u> disagreed with her tactics, forced her to resign and, along with all other women's associations in Egypt, publicly denounced her as a traitor.[16]

Shafīq and Ziyadah both had tragic endings, Ziyādah had a mental breakdown and died in 1941; her body was discovered in the flat she occupied by herself three days after her death. After suffering many mental breakdowns, Shafīq killed herself in 1976.

Zaynab al-Ghazālī, a contemporary of Shafīq (b. 1918), was in many ways the exact opposite of Shafīq. Whereas Shafīq propounded women's rights and human rights in the language of secularism and democracy, al-Ghazālī -- the daughter of a wealthy cotton merchant with an Al-Azhar education -- placed the Islamic heritage at the cornerstone of her teaching. Furthermore, she committed herself to native culture and pursuing feminism in indigenous terms. Although al-Ghazālī started her political life working for Huda Sha'rawi, she had her own ideas about women's issues. At the age of eighteen in

1936, she started her own organization, <u>Al-Akhawat al-Muslimat</u> (the Muslim Sisters). The association helped women study Islam and carry out welfare activities. Hasan al-Banna, the leader of the Brethren, tried to convince al-Ghazali to affiliate the association to his Muslim Brethren movement, but she refused because she wanted her movement to be independent.

An interview with al-Ghazali by Layla Ahmad in 1985, al-Ghazali said it was "a grave error to speak of the liberation of women" in an Islamic society.[17] She believed that Islam provided women with "everything -- freedom, economic rights, political rights, social rights, public and private rights, "but that these opportunities were unfortunately not manifest in Islamic societies. The goal of the Muslim Sisters was

> to acquaint the Muslim woman with her religion so she would be convinced by means of study that the women's liberation movement is a deviant innovation that occurred because of the backwardness of Muslims... We consider Muslims to be backward; they must remove this backwardness from their shoulders and rise up as their religion commands.[18]

The arguments of al-Ghazali are still echoing in the 1990s. She was imprisoned and tortured for six years (1965-72) at the hands of the Nasir regime for her alleged support of the Brethren cause.

Like al-Ghazali, Fatimah Rashid was a friend of al-Sha'rawi but left her mentor and started the first Egyptian women's party in 1944. The party's constitution demanded that Egyptian women should have the right to vote and be elected as members of parliament.

From this illustration of early contributions to the feminist movement, the influence of the West and the tensions

that resulted are obvious. On the one hand, Western ideas
helped create the feminist movement. On the other hand, these
ideas threatened the Islamic tradition which many women
embraced. Hence, we see the beginnings of the conflict within
the women's movement that is still alive in today's Arab
world. This will be discussed later. Despite the conflicts,
these women provided much of the inspiration for future
generations through the Arab world. Without their struggle,
the present -- and indeed the future -- would be different.

2. __POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN ALGERIA__

2.1 <u>POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN ALGERIA</u>

<u>BEFORE INDEPENDENCE</u>

The feminist movement in Algeria was started by French
Algerian women reformers who edited journals like <u>La Voix des</u>
<u>Humbles</u> and <u>La Voix</u> during the 1920s and 1930s. In these
journals, they (Jeanne Faure-Sardet, for example) addressed
the most controversial questions of the times -- the
instruction of Muslim girls, arguments for and against the
veil, marriage, divorce, and polygamy. The journals also
carried reviews of the writings of Qasim Amin of Egypt and
Tahir al-Haddad of Tunisia, who both defended the emancipation
of women as compatible with Islamic traditions.[19]

Peter Knauss writes that the Algerian feminists were
students, teachers, or free-lance writers. He argues that
unlike their upper middle class counterparts in Egypt, their

living conditions did not give them as much material resources and spare time to contribute to the feminist movement, and that they faced social rejection and were called traitors to the Muslim people. He says they were considered to be unfit to marry Muslim men and were disqualified from any inheritance.[20] An alternative explanation is that the struggle against French domination took precedence over the struggle for women's rights. French colonial domination against the people of Algeria victimized both men and women. It insisted on instilling French language and culture. The only way to attack French cultural imperialism was by using the strengths of Muslim national patriarchal identity. That led to the proposition that the Algerian nation and Islam must prevail over other competing claims to loyalty. Further, it was emphasized that the Arabic language would preserve the ideology of national identity. This nationalist effort prevented the feminist movement from becoming stronger. One individual contribution was that of Rosalia Bentami, whose L'infer de la Casbah (The Casbah Hell) was a popular novel published in Algeria in 1936. In her book, Bentami described the conditions of women in the Algerian Casbah.

In 1939 thousands of veiled women marched for the first time in Algeria, asking for "Land, Bread, and Freedom."[21] They believed that their freedom would come through the liberation of their country. On November 1, 1954, the National Liberation Front (FLN), called for the formation of an Army of National Liberation (ALN). Women began joining the ALN in

January 1955, when some women volunteered as nurses. They
described their role as:

> 1) moral support for the combatants and resistance; 2)
> provision of information, liaison, food and clothing, and
> safe shelter; 3) aid to families and children of the
> maquisards - (resistance fighters) and of those
> imprisoned and interned.[22]

The decision of the FLN to involve women as an essential part
of the revolution reflected an attempt not to alienate half of
society. During the war of independence, which took the form
of a _jihad_ (Holy war), Islam had unified Algeria's Berbers and
Arabs. The male fighters were called _mujahidin_, the female
ones _mujahidat_, and in the countryside the colonists were
called _kafir_ (unbeliever). This meant the politics was based
around Islam which integrated and internalized the legacy
shared by the vast majority of Algerians. Independence was
won on July 5, 1962.

In 1978-79 Djamila Amrane, an Algerian social scientist,
conducted an empirical study of 10,949 women who had
participated in the war of independence, based on the files of
the Algiers Ministry of Combat.[23] The Amrane study shows that
the role of Algerian women in the liberation movement against
the French, in contrast to that of men, was a task that was
not rewarded with military glory or heroism. Only 205 of the
3,271 for whom there is reliable data served in "military"
capacities with the ALN. Over 95 percent of the women
performed nursing, cooking, and laundering functions.
However, there were at least two women who served as
"political commissars" and one as an "armed fighter". Of the
10,949 women involved in the war effort, 1,343 were imprisoned

and 949 were killed; one out of every five female revolutionaries suffered imprisonment or death. Fifty one percent of the women were under twenty years of age, and 84 percent of the female military personnel were under thirty. The most well-known female militants, at least to the West, were Djamila Bouhriyred, Djamila Boupacha, and Zohra Drif Bitat - all of whom were tortured.

Amrane's study was based on the official records, and excluded those women who assumed responsibilities for village affairs which had been abandoned by men. Many women were either taken by the French as forced laborers or arrested and tortured for collaboration with the nationalists. In the end, the French army even took to indiscriminately shooting women as well as men on the streets of Algeria.[24]

Although women were relegated to subordinate roles, they made active contributions to the Algerian national independence movement. This participation opened the door for women to assume a more active role in politics after the nation's eventual independence. Unfortunately, much of the current literature on Algerian women does not reflect their heroic efforts. Again, their example inspired the cause of women in other Arab countries.

3. **POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PALESTINE**

3.1 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PALESTINE UP TO 1960

Palestinian women, like Algerian women, were in demand for armed struggle, and also began to participate in mass demonstrations. In 1920 -- when the first major Palestinian demonstration against the British Mandate in Palestine occurred -- about 40,000 men and women marched in the streets of Jerusalem and Yafa.[25]

The first Federation of Palestinian Women was formed in 1929 by Ruqyah Murad and Maryam al-Khalq.[26] It was held in Jerusalem and was attended by 300 women. Resolutions were passed demanding the withdrawal of the Balfour Declaration and the prohibition of Jewish immigration into Palestine. On May 4, 1936, the Federation called for a general strike. Six hundred students responded and on May 6, 1936, women demonstrated in Jerusalem against immigration.

The agenda of the early feminist movement was centred on political struggles. The Egyptian Feminist Union (EFU) conference, which met in Cairo in 1938 and hosted representatives from many of the Arab countries, dealt not with feminist causes but with the immediate nationalist concerns of the Palestinian people. The political resolutions called for an end to the British Mandate in Palestine, an end to Jewish immigration, an end to the transfer of Arab lands to

Jews in Palestine, and a rejection of any plan to divide Palestine.[27]

Palestinian women participated in the fight by also transporting weapons under their clothes to the Palestinian fighters to bypass the British inspection. Further, women collected money to help the people who had suffered from the war. Several women died from British bullets and became heroines. Fātimah Ghazāl, Jāmilah Aḥmad, 'A'ishah Abu Hasan, and 'Azbah Salamah all perished after British attacks. In 1948, other women fell victim to the British: Julit Nayif, Hayat Al Bulbisi, Jāmilah Salaḥ, Zaynāb 'Atiyah, and Hulwah Zaydan.[28]

The year 1948 saw a major blow to the women's movement. The quick exile of the Palestinians after Israeli occupation left the movement splintered between women in the refugee camps and women who remained inside Palestine. Peasant women, middle class women, and elite women became refugees overnight. Not until 1967 did the movement fully recover.

3.2 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PALESTINE AFTER 1960

The recovery began with the formation of the Palestine Liberation Organization in 1964. PLO leaders wanted to create a mass-based organization which would represent the majority of Palestinian people. The women's movement was reconstructed and officially made part of the larger national body in that year.[29]

After 1967, more women joined political organizations. Fath organized the General Union of Palestinian Women, which was and is open to all Palestinian women. Its second conference in Beirut in 1974 was held under the theme "Organizing the efforts of the Palestinian women is essential for the Battle of Liberation".[30] As members of the PLO, women were (and are) involved in national liberation in the fields of politics, education, health, and hygiene. Also, they served as agents in secret operations. Still, however, women's issues were subordinated to the PLO's main focus. The PLO needed popular support; its main purpose was to let the refugees know they are part of the uprising.[31]

Some of the leftist groups such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), were more progressive in terms of women's rights. Both organizations called for a more reformative stand on women.[32]

From the late 1960s, until 1982 the Palestinian Liberation Organization in Lebanon recruited women and instituted a variety of social services to empower rural and refugee women through education, leadership training, employment, and the availability of child care. Julit Peteet described the role of Palestinian women during the 1976 siege of the Tall al-Za'atar refugee camp by the Maronite Lebanese Forces. She argues that peasant women nursed the wounded and organized assistance activities for the sustenance of the fighters. Notable numbers of women fought alongside men. Many died from snipers' bullets while bringing water from

wells during the siege.[33] Currently, women work in PLO
factories and various PLO enterprises in Lebanon, especially
in social work.

The Palestinian women in their political struggle,
confirm the Western feminist slogan that - "the personal is
political." Palestinian women cook not only for their
families, but for the fighters and to raise funds. They sew
traditional dresses emphasising the revival of Palestinian
identity. In the winter of 1988 women knitted 5,000 sweaters
to show solidarity with prisoners of the intifadah, the
uprising which started in 1987. Also, they sewed thousands of
Palestinian flags as symbols of the Palestinian struggle.[34]

Few women, however, hold leading positions in the
organization. In 1986, the Palestine National Council (the
Palestinian Parliament in exile) had 33 women members out of a
total of 428, and there were no women on the PLO's 15-member
executive council.[35] Recently, however, there have been gains
in representation, particularly in positions of influence.
For example, in 1991 Hanan 'Ashrawi became the spokesperson
for the Jordanian-Palestinian delegate to the peace talks in
Washington, D.C.

Palestinian women can not demand immediate changes in
their legal status because they are stateless -- despite the
declaration of a Palestinian state in November, 1988. Their
main focus is the ending of Israeli occupation and the
creation of a Palestinian state. Peteet argues:

> Palestinian women, by becoming politically active in
> such a manner as to maintain their commitments to
> domesticity, have not posed a fundamental challenge
> to the asymmetrical division of labor between men

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and women. Indeed, their activism has engaged the domestic sector for political purposes and intensified existing labor-sharing relations between women of different generations and classes. Palestinian women that have participated in militant national politics may initiate the process of challenging those patriarchal structures and ideologies that confirm and legitimize women's assignment to the domestic sector and men's exclusion from it, but it does not ensure any permanent and comprehensive sort of transformation.[36]

This discussion is valuable, and one could add to this analysis that the Palestinian case differs from other Arab countries, for example Egypt and Algeria, for several reasons. First, Palestinians have had a longer period of struggle that has affected women's rights. Second, Palestinian women are scattered across the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and other Arab countries. They face a double burden of struggle for the independence of Palestine and for survival. However, both in Palestine and in other Arab countries the political mobilization of women and nationalist movements are connected.

II. THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN THE ARAB WORLD AFTER INDEPENDENCE

1. THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN EGYPT

1.1 THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN MODERN STATE-BUILDING: EGYPT SINCE 1952

The Egyptian revolution of 1952, led by young military officers of the lower middle class, received support from the majority of the Egyptian people. Among the supporters were

the Muslim Brothers, who hoped for a new era of more freedom for their organization. Later, however, Islamists were seen as dangerous to the state. The leader of the Muslim Sisters Association, Zaynab al-Ghazali, was imprisoned in 1964 and released only after Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir's death.

In the late 1950s, Nasir introduced economic reforms such as land reform and industrialization, challenging the old class system. Nasir also called for social equality and justice for all citizens, aiming at pan-Arab and Third World solidarity. The social state was secular, but it accommodated religion.

The first confrontation between feminists, the state, and official Islam, came during the review of the Electoral Law in the 1953. Dura Shafiq published <u>Al-Kitab al-Abyad wa Huquq al-Mar'ah al-Misriyah</u> (The White Book and Rights of Egyptian Women). She summarized the views of pro-suffrage women and of others within the Islamic establishment. The Constitution proclaimed all Egyptians equal in civil and political rights, but the government position, she said, agreed with official Islamic doctrine and thus opposed political rights for women. In 1953 the Constitutional Affairs Committee of the Senate rejected women's suffrage, as did the <u>fatwa</u> Committee of <u>al-Azhar</u> – the highest religious scholars in Egypt. But <u>al-Azhar</u> Shaykh Hasan Makhluf replied that Islam does not oppose political rights for women. However, the Muslim Brothers held a conference and demanded that the government discontinue discussion of women's political rights, arguing that women's suffrage runs counter to religious doctrine.[37]

Because there were no women in the committee to discuss the new constitution, women had to take their protests to the public. They occupied the Journalism Association and went on a hunger strike that began at noon on March 12, 1954. Shafīq was among 14 other women in Cairo, members of the <u>Bint al-Nil</u> organization in Alexandria, who participated in the hunger strike. The women finally ended the strike after the governor of Cairo stated that full political rights would be given to women.[38]

Five years later, in 1959, the revolutionary government granted Egyptian women the right to vote, but it limited this right only to women who asked for it. Women had to apply formally to vote, in contrast to the automatic and obligatory character of male suffrage. In the same year the state made the National Women's Union organization by disbanding all other feminist groups.

Despite the attempts to hinder women's efforts, Nāsir's education policies opened opportunities for them. Nāsir's regime adopted mass education and employment policies which enabled many women to graduate from college and join the labor force. The state was interested in increasing its scientific and technical capacities, so it implemented policies to further this goal. In the middle of the 1960s, the state supported a birth control program and enforced policies to encourage greater enrolment of women in the applied sciences at universities.[39]

1.2 FEMINISM AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

Margot Badran says that the post-independence period produced
two woman scholarly writers, 'Aisha 'Abd al-Rahman, who wrote
under the pen name bint al-shāti (The daughter of the shore),
and journalist Aminah al-Sa'id. 'Abd al-Rahmān became a
professor of Islamic thought at Cairo University, and a
prolific writer of articles and books. Her work includes a
series on the lives of the wives and female relatives of the
prophet Muhammad. She was held up as a model for those who
were neither feminists nor fundamentalists, was respected by
the regime and received many awards.

From 1956, al-Sa'id was the editor of Hāwā (Eve), a
popular magazine for women. Al-Sa'id's magazine discussed
liberal feminism in the socialist state. Al-Sa'id used the
writing to promote women's causes within the framework of the
Arab socialist revolution.[40]

The state policy on education and work, formulated in
1952, brought large numbers of women from middle and lower
class families into the ranks of the educated and employed.[41]
However, the partial change did not bring equality to women.
This inequity led to the emergence of new feminist and
Islamist activists, such as Nāwāl al-Sa'dāwī (b 1930), and
Safināz Kāzim. Once again, the political situation produced
two diametrically opposed women leaders, as al-Sa'dāwī was
left-wing and Kāzim was Islamist and conservative.

Al-Sa'dawi, after graduating as a medical doctor in
1955, devoted her writing to the physical and psychological
health problems of distressed women. Her work focused

especially on the practice of circumcision in Egypt and the obsession with female virginity in the Arab World. In her writings, she discussed the connections between patriarchy, class, and religion, and the oppression of women. Her first book, in which she put forward her views, was <u>Al-Mar'a wa al-Jins</u> (The Woman and Sex), which was published in 1971. She also discussed the sexual oppression of women connected with everyday customs. Al-Sa'dawi brought Arab women's sexuality to the public. She smashed a cultural taboo and led the way to a new generation of feminist discourse. Yet, her work did not go unpunished by those who resented her immodesty. Her books and writings were blacklisted and banned by the state. She was forced to recede from public life.[42]

A contemporary to al-Sa'dawi, Kazim was educated in the United States from 1960-1966, receiving an M.A. from New York University. While studying in New York, she was inspired by the book, <u>Al'Adalah al-Ijtima'iyah fi al-Islam</u> (Social Justice in Islam), which was written by the Muslim Brother, Sayyid Qutb. In that book, Qutb argues that Islam is a force of unique awareness. Believing that Islam is an identity, Kazim took up Islamic dress and went to Mecca for a pilgrimage. In the 1970s she met Zaynab al-Ghazali. Both shared the same view of Islam as <u>din wa dawlah</u> (religion and state), and "the desire to see an Islamic state in Egypt".[43]

It is worth mentioning that in the 1957 parliamentary elections, five women ran and two women were elected -- Rawiyah 'Atiyah and Aminah Shukri. In 1962, Hikmat Abu Zayd became the first woman to be appointed to the Cabinet as

Minister of Social Affairs.[44] She was a teacher from a lower
middle class family from Upper Egypt and had benefitted from
the expanded educational system. Naṣir appointed Abu Zayd
after she challenged him publicly to appoint a woman to prove
he was really serious about liberation for women, as was
expressed in the National Charter.[45]

In 1962 the Arab Socialist Union took control of the
women's movement from the government. Women from government
served as the leaders. They strove to mobilize women at the
grass roots level in developmental programs. The women in the
ASU were mainly interested in social concerns, such as family
planning, health systems, and literacy programs in the
villages.[46] The state encouraged educated women to join the
workforce to reinforce the notion of a socialist state.

1.3 SADAT'S INFITAH AND ITS EFFECT ON EGYPTIAN SOCIETY

In the 1970s and 1980s, Egypt, ruled by Anwar al-Sādāt and
Husni Mubarak, continued its practice of using feminism as a
pawn to further unrelated political goals. Both leaders
promoted feminist and Islamists view points to further their
own objective of creating a capitalist state.

When Sādāt came to power in 1970 the country was
traumatized by the defeat of 1967 in the war with Israel.
Sadat depended on, and hence encouraged, the religious revival
that followed the war. This was in direct opposition to
Nasir's Arab socialism. The Islamic fundamentalist movement
revived after the 1973 war and Sādāt's victory. The popular

view was that Egypt had been victorious in 1973 because
Muslims had embraced again the proper practice of religion.
The state encouraged this movement, but later offered less
accommodation to radicals.[47]

Sādāt's _infitah_, or Open Door economic policy, of 1974
was a fundamental shift from socialism and anti-Western
imperialist rhetoric to one of a careful laissez-faire policy
with the government reserving its right to exercise control
when perceived necessary.

In 1979 the Arab Socialist Union was formally abolished.
The new political framework of the regime was that of a multi-
party system. Three political organizations emerged to run in
the 1979 election right, left, and center. The right -- the
Liberal Socialists -- could claim only 14 members of
parliament and 35,000 members. On the left were the Unionist
Nationalist Progressives, who numbered only three members of
parliament and had about 20,000 members. The center, which
was the largest organization, had 293 members of parliament
and several hundred thousand members. Each of these groupings
had its own Women's Committee.[48]

1.4 THE DECREES AFFECTING WOMEN UNDER SĀDĀT RULE

On June 20, 1979, President Sādāt issued two decrees affecting
women's rights. The first decree involving the reform of the
personal status laws is commonly known as "Jīhan's Laws".
Jīhan al-Sādāt, wife of President Sadat, supported women's
causes. Inspired by the United Nations' decade of women
(1975-1985), the state encouraged her campaigns. At the same

time, the state contained the radical feminism promoted by Nawāl al-Sa'dāwī and others. In an interview in February 1989, al-Sa'dawi argued that Jihan al-Sādāt ordered the repression of feminists because she wanted to be the supreme champion of women's causes in Egypt.[49]

These reforms included the right of the wife to a divorce, if her husband took a second wife without her approval. The other changes were as follows:

1. The wife must be informed in the event of divorce.

2. The mother has the right to maintain custody of children until boys are ten and girls are twelve years of age.

3. A women must receive alimony during that time.

4. The woman can stay in the marriage house until she remarries or until her period of custody of the children expires.

Women still were not equal to men, but they had more rights and security than before the 1979 law.

In the second of Sādāt's decrees, 30 seats specifically for women were added to the Egyptian parliament. A similar quota system for women's representation had already been instituted in Sudan in 1976. Also, 20 percent of the seats on the local, district, and provincial elected councils were allocated to women. In the 1979 election, women responded enthusiastically; 200 women candidates competed for 30 local seats. Three women defeated men for the other seats. Two of

these women long-term members from the urban areas, and third was the minister of social affairs, Amal 'Uthman.[50]

These two decrees were issued behind the back of parliament. The "emergency clause" allowed the president to issue -- in the absence of the Assembly -- decrees in circumstances requiring immediate action. His decrees contradicted the constitutional stipulation of equality of all Egyptians.[51]

In 1979 was the institution of a second parliamentary chamber, Majlis al-Shūrā (The Consultative Assembly), whose members simply advise when they are asked. Two-thirds of its 210 members are elected, the other third nominated. No seats in this body were set aside for women, but two women were elected from the governing party, and five were appointed by the president.[52]

The year 1979 also saw Sādāt's regime carrying out conflicting policies. First, Sādāt signed the Camp David treaty with Israel, isolating Egypt from the Arab World and outraging both leftists and conservatives at home. Second, he made changes in the personal status laws and provoked Muslim conservatives.

In the autumn of 1981, there were massive arrests of women and men. People from across the political spectrum, including feminists and fundamentalists, were arrested for opposing government policy. Ironically, the police arrested both Nāwāl al-Sa'dāwi and Safināz Kāzim (Kāzim had been imprisoned two times before: in 1973 and 1975). After these arrests, Sādāt was assassinated by a Muslim fundamentalist and

the two women were released along with others by the new
president Mubarak.

1.5 WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS IN EGYPT UNDER MUBARAK'S RULE

Sadat's reform of the personal status law was eventually
challenged in the court system. On December 12, 1982, the
case moved from a circuit court to the Higher Constitutional
Court. The case was resolved on May 4, 1985 when the Higher
Constitutional Court declared the 1979 amendments to the
Personal Status Laws unconstitutional on the grounds that the
original emergency decree, which announced the laws, was
issued in the absence of a genuine emergency. Hence, the law
was not valid.

Egyptian women then went into action. At a meeting on
May 9, 1985, women activists decided to form a delegation to
protest at the parliament. There was a broad spectrum of
participants, which included women from the women's committee
in the Arab Lawyers' Union, the Arab Women's Solidarity
Association, a coalition of leftists, and Nasirists. The
unified group issued a statement, reproduced in the May 15,
1985, edition of Al-Ahali newspaper. The statement said:

> Although Law No. 44 of 1979 does not fully achieve
> the interests of Egyptian society, the stability of
> the family, or the hopes of Egyptian women, its
> cancellation at this time will cause grievous damage
> to the Egyptian family unit and the stability of
> relations between its members. It is not possible
> to return to the laws of 1920 and 1929 which were in
> force half a century ago in social, political and
> economic conditions radically different from those
> of today.[53]

The unified group called for a family law that would meet the needs of the times, without conflicting with the shari'ah Islamic Laws, and asked for open debate on the subject. The debate grew strong in the newspapers.[54]

In 1985, the Mubarak regime made a compromise between fundamentalists and feminists by supporting new revisions to the personal status laws. The changes were passed in 1985, just in time for the United Nations ending the women's decade conference in Nairobi in July 1985. The Egyptian Government may have been wanting to convey a "modern" image at the meeting. There had been strong pressures from both sides. After the law was passed, a wife no longer had the automatic right to divorce if her husband took a second wife. This satisfied some of the fundamentalist demands. From the feminist perspective, however, the new law granted a woman adequate housing if she had custody of her children. Hence, one feminist demand was satisfied.

The revision, Law 188, eliminated the allocated seats for women, retained seats for farmers and workers. It also reinstituted the principle of independent candidacy.[55]

The new election to parliament was held on April 6, 1987. Because of the absence of guaranteed seats for women, the number of women in parliament dropped. Women had to be elected on their own merits. At first, the loss of guaranteed seats appeared to energize the activists outside parliament to make a concerted effort to preserve their rights. However, after the election, the smaller number of women MPs had less influence in parliament. Two years after the 1987 election,

the activists did not look to parliament in general, or its women members specifically, for solutions to their problems.

1.6 ARAB WOMEN'S SOLIDARITY ASSOCIATION

The Arab Women's Solidarity Association AWSA was established in the early 1980s, al-Sa'dawi and her followers. Al-Sa'dawi, an independent feminist, had gained a local and international reputation for her efforts. She organized the significant number of highly educated women who espoused feminism and were in the professions. They practised law and medicine, taught at universities, worked in business, and were active as writers and journalists. In 1985 al-Sa'dawi finally succeeded in registering the AWSA as a non-governmental organization with the United Nations.

In 1986 AWSA held its first conference. Under the title "Unveiling the Mind", their theme was "Challenges Facing the Arab Woman at the End of the 20th Century. Al-Sa'dawi emphasized the contradiction of the laws that give women equality in public rights and duties, yet narrow the distinction between a person's "public" and "private" lives. According to al-Sa'dawi this distinction was established solely to subjugate women to men's control, and to impose duties upon women without giving them rights. She told the conference that "the labor laws give women equal rights to work as men, but women can not actually practise this right because of marriage laws -- for it is a woman's husband, not she, who possesses the right to make decisions in this matter".[56] At the same conference, Fatimah al-Mernissi stated

that "peculiar to the Arab World is not the form assumed by the patriarchal system which is similar to most societies, but rather the perpetuation of this system as an uncontestable model and an ideal, while in other societies it is open for discussion."[57]

It is worth mentioning that the Egyptian government closed down the AWSA in 1989 and has refused to take al-Sa'dawi to court. It is her contention that the organization is a United Nations funded body and not under the jurisdiction of the Egyptian government.

1.6 CONCLUSION

In Egypt, Islam has been controlled by the state, and has remained the main force regulating family life. State leaders have thus had to defend the social and political changes they introduce as being compatible with Islamic values.

Throughout the history of the women's movement in Egypt, many disagreements have arisen as women from both the feminist and Islamist groups have gained more influence. The state has also pursued contradictory policies to further its own goals. On the one hand, it has promoted new roles for women, for practical and ideological reasons; on the other, it has only done so when men have permitted such changes. At all phases of state-building -- liberal, socialist, and _infitah_ capitalist periods -- women have made political gains and losses. However, the state has never addressed gender inequality.

2. **THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN ALGERIA AFTER INDEPENDENCE**

2.1 THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN ALGERIA UNDER AHMAD BIN BILLA

The declaration of Algerian independence occurred on July 5, 1962. The new constitution, which was adopted on September 10, 1962, made Islam the official state religion and declared Arabic the official state language. The government adopted socialism and seemed to assure equality and justice to women within the framework of Arab and Muslim values. The FLN was the only political party allowed to operate in the country. The National Union of Algerian Women UNFA was set up by the FLN in 1962.

The new constitution guaranteed equality between the sexes and granted women the right to vote. The constitution listed the states objectives with regard to women as follows:

> Article 5: To work for the realization of the rights
> of women in creating the conditions permitting her
> to fulfil the role of mother, worker, and citizen.
> Article 6: To promote better harmony in the
> relations between man and woman in work, the family
> and society.
> Article 7: To protect the child and to work for his
> [sic] development.
> Article 8: To safeguard and favor the development of
> our Arab-Islamic values which are the foundations of
> our personality.[58]

Articles 5 and 7 show the traditional view of women in the UNFA constitution as mothers and child-raisers.

Ahmad Bin Billa, the first president of Algeria, first made peace with the conservatives by issuing a decree that the

Rāmadān fast and the Muslim charity offering be made
compulsory for believers on January 26, 1963. Also he
prohibited the use of alcohol by Muslims, closed down cafes
that served liquor, and raised taxes on alcohol. Bin Billa
called on his religious foundation, Tawfiq al-Madani, to
provide a rationale in Islam for "socialism". The 'ulamā'
found different citations from the Qur'ān and an
interpretation to support Ben Billa's thesis that socialist or
collectivist values formed the basis of early Islamic
doctrine. In spite of Bin Billa's efforts to accommodate the
conservative Muslims, he remained under attack.[59]

Bin Billa's regime faced high unemployment and demands
from feminists for the employment of women. Official
declarations were made encouraging women to obtain employment
and thus take their share in nation-building.

2.2 THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN ALGERIA UNDER HUWWARI BU MIDYAN

On June 18, 1965, Huwwari Bu Midyan successfully carried out a
coup d'etat. The first group publicly to support the coup was
the 'ulamā' (the higher religious scholars). With the help of
the technocrats, Bu Midyan expanded the role of the state in
the economy, education, and industry, and helped to develop
new political institutions. Under Bu Midyan's rule, from 1965
to 1978, Islam remained the moral foundation of the society.
Women were to continue to play their special role as protector
of the family. The state policy for mass education and the

rapid industrial development later became forces of change in
Algeria.

The UNFA was integrated into the FLN in 1968. According
to Peter Knauss, the integration did not increase women's
participation in politics. There were no women in the party's
Central Committee under Bu Midyan, and no women were nominated
to the National Council of the Revolution, the leading
decision-making body. There were a few women in the National
Assembly, but they were "removed" in 1965. In the 1977
elections for the National Popular Assembly nine women won
elections out of a total of 261.[60]

Women also became active in regional political
assemblies. In the first elections for the Popular Communal
Assemblies held in 1967, 99 women were elected out of a total
of 10,852 municipal council members elected nationwide.[61] In
the election held in 1969 for the Popular Provincial
Assemblies at the regional level, 78 women stood for the 665
seats, and 20 were elected. [62]

2.3 THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN ALGERIA UNDER AL-SHADLI
    BIN JADID

Algeria, by the time of Bu Midyan's death in December 1978,
had an unemployment rate of around 20 percent. To counteract
this problems, the government of al-Shadhli Bin Jadid -- which
came to power in February 1979 -- adopted a program entitled
"For a Better Life". The program, striving to battle poverty,
instituted a new five-year plan in 1980 that placed stress on

nonproductive investments sacrificed for a decade: transportation infrastructure, urban housing, etc.[63]

In 1984, the FLN party congress adopted a new theme indicating a new perspective it introduced the slogan "Work and Self-restraint to Guarantee the Future". To accompany the change, school textbooks were revised to lay emphasis on nuclear families. Pharmacies were free to sell birth control pills, and hospitals were authorized to perform abortions. A moral revolution had begun, but at the same time a family code of conservative orientation was adopted.

Feminists argued that women had done enough to earn full equality during the revolution, and hence the personal status law should be corrected to create more equality. Women had played an active and prominent role in the revolution. After the regime adopted socialism, women immediately received full civil rights, like the right to vote and to be elected, but personal rights remained an untouched grey area.

2.4 THE PERSONAL STATUS LAWS

In 1980 the government started discussing changes to the personal status laws. The drafting of the law was veiled in secrecy during the Boumedienne years. No women had participated in the intra-governmental discussions on the law, and they protested against this exclusion. Respected militants from the days of the revolution -- like the legendary Djamila Buhired whose story of resistance and steadfastness under torture became a symbol of perseverance throughout the Arab World -- led a march in December 1981 to

protest against the secrecy surrounding the subject. The new laws, were finally passed in 1984.

When they did receive the details of the personal status laws, Algerian women were angered to learn they would become perpetual legal minors under the law needing the permission of male guardians to work or travel. Polygamy would be somewhat restricted, but women still would not generally have the right to divorce. A Le Monde article of January 9, 1982 reported that about 100 women gathered in the Algiers town center carrying banners reading "No to silence, yes to democracy" and "No to socialism without women's participation." In the end, the police broke up the demonstration.[64]

The 1984 personal status laws insisted that Algeria must remain faithful to its Arab-Islamic heritage. Hence, the law that was passed in 1984 defined marriage as a consenting contract between the two partners, at which the woman's legal guardian had to be present. The guardian could not prevent the marriage, and a judge could authorize it if the guardian opposed. The dowry had to be fixed and was the woman's property. The marriage had to be registered, and both parties could insert any stipulations they wished into the contract. A widow or divorcee had to wait out the legal period before remarrying (three months, to ensure that the woman is not carrying the former husband's child). A Muslim woman could not marry a non-Muslim unless he converted to Islam, although a Muslim man could marry a non-Muslim woman.[65]

Women strongly protested against the adoption of a the family law bill in 1984.[66] This text appears to be a striking

expression of how a woman should behave with her husband and his kin. She could be married off by a guardian, divorced by a husband's oath, thrown out of the conjugal home, or receive only a sixth or eighth part of an inheritance. Frankly, she was made into a minor subject. The legislation expressed the stubborn traditionalism of the political and legislative structures, as well as the survival of patriarchal culture.

2.5 ALGERIA AFTER 1984

In 1984 the government appointed a woman minister of social affairs to the cabinet for the first time, Mme Zohor Wanisie. One Algerian woman commented:

> The government put Mme Zohor Wanisie .... there to shut us up, and then we have UNFA (Union National des Femmes Algerians), the only women's organization in this country, which does absolutely nothing for women. It even accepts that men are allowed four wives. UNFA is an official organization; that is why it doesn't do anything which the government might dislike, and the government is made up of men. Men aren't going to fight for us; we have to fight for ourselves.[67]

The interview suggests that this woman believed the system betrayed women, and also that the official organization of women did not represent women.

Algeria was to experience yet another political upheaval. In October 1988, a group predominantly made up of students rioted in Algiers, protesting against unemployment and price rises. The main political powers in Algeria were not the FLN, but rather the army, the president and the politicians of the FLN party.[68] The riots resulted in a new constitution,

ratified in 1989, which introduced a process of political

democratization and economic liberalization in Algeria.[69]

In contrast to the liberalization that was occurring in

government and the political system, the 'ulamā' were moving

to create a conservative national identity. In the shadows of

the colonial system, the 'ulamā' provided educated Algerian

administrative and economic elites with a philosophical and

political culture that they could find neither in the colonial

culture nor in traditional religions.

This division in culture remains today. Currently, the

Islamic Salvation Front FIS, which has explicitly rejected

democracy as an alien value and practice, has made a clear

demand for the establishment of an Islamic republic whose

constitution would be the Qur'ān and the sunnah. The new 1989

Constitution adopted multiparty elections at the national

level, the FIS won many seats in the June 1990 municipal

elections. The FLN was taken by surprise.

On December 26, 1991, the election was canceled by the

Algerian government after the victory of the FIS. The

consequence was a high army presence and civil war with

Islamist opposition.

On January 2, 1992, Algerian feminists demonstrated

against FIS and their victory in the national election. Their

target was the Islamist assault on women's rights and the

threat of violence against women.[70]

2.6 CONCLUSION

In Algeria, as in Egypt, it is clear that the role of the state is the key variable, and most useful barometer, for explaining the changes in women's status. State arbitration is not only responsive to economic or class-based demands, it is also shaped by the political guidelines of state stability or unity.

In Algeria state formation has affected the position of women in society in several ways. In particular, the state has mediated gender relations through the law. The government mainly uses legislation to foster or inhibit social change, to maintain existing arrangements or to promote greater equality for women in the family and the society at large. As it regulates marriage, divorce, individual rights and responsibilities, and the transmission of property through inheritance, family law is a prime example of state policy affecting women.

3. THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN TUNISIA

3.1 THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT UP TO 1956

The political participation of Tunisian women in the liberation movement against the French started on April 8, 1938. Women's national awareness developed strongly, particularly after the lively debate caused by Tahir Haddad, who defended the emancipation of women as compatible with Islamic traditions. The political movement called Neo-Destour

called for women to fight in the field. The situation led to
the founding of the first Tunisian women's association, the
Women's Islamic Union, set up in 1938 by a group of women who
had become aware of the importance of the role of associations
in integrating the women's political and moral causes into the
liberation struggle.[71] The women's movement enabled women to
demonstrate their fighting spirit and their readiness to
sacrifice themselves for their country's freedom.

Women were inspired by the nationalist order to
demonstrate against the colonial power. On April 9, 1938 some
women joined the nationalist resistance network which held
secret meetings in hospitals, Turkish baths, and Zawiyah the
locations of famous religious people's graves.[72]

Habib Burgibah, leader of the Neo-Destour and later the
first president of Tunisia, stressed the importance of Islamic
values at the nationalist meeting in 1939, where one woman had
taken off her veil:

> Is it in our interests to hasten, without caring for any
> transitions, the disappearance of our ways, of our
> customs, bad or good, and of all those little nothings
> which as a whole whatever one might say constitute our
> personality? My answer, given the very special
> circumstances in which we live, is categorical: No! [73]

To Burgibah it was important for Tunisia to maintain its
personality as part of the struggle against the French.

In 1930, the Tunisian religious scholar Tahir al-Haddad
published a book on the status of women, Imra'atuna fi al-
Shari'ah wa al-Mujtama' (Our Women in Law and Society). Even
though Haddad was a defender of Islam, he said:

> I believe, without a shadow of doubt, that Islam is
> innocent of the accusation of arresting reform but
> that, on the contrary, it is the ... inexhaustible

> source of reform. The collapse of our (social)
> structure is but the result of illusions we have
> believed in, of pernicious and terrible customs we
> have tied ourselves to... (Islam) is the religion
> which holds to the principle of gradualism in
> legislating its laws according to (limiting)
> capacity. There is nothing which states or
> indicates that the stage achieved during the
> Prophet's lifetime was the hoped-for final (stage)
> after which there would be no end since gradual
> (evolution) is linked to the difficulties of those
> issues for which gradual (steps) are to be taken.[74]

Al-Ḥaddad considered men and women equal and their rights and

duties balanced.[75]

The women's movement within the Liberation struggle

continued to expand. In 1950, the Neo-Destour organization

founded its first official women's section. Women took part

in mass demonstrations such as that of March 3, 1952, and a

large number of women militants were arrested.[76] Women's

participation in the struggle for independence gave them a

chance to become actively involved in a nationwide movement,

an opportunity to break out of their shells and show their

abilities.

The National Union of Tunisian Women (NUTW) was formed in

1956. The NUTF gradually set up regional and local branches,

thus actively contributing to the mobilization of women in the

building of the nation. Feminism has never become an

independent political force in Tunisia, and the NUTW is the

only group to provide useful social services - reducing social

isolation for some women while creating service opportunities

for others.

3.2 <u>THE NEW PERSONAL STATUS LAWS</u>

After Tunisian independence in 1956, the nationalist strategy was to operate through a powerful party extending throughout the whole country. The state proceeded in large part without reliance on the political leadership of kin-based communities. The goal of the state was to break kin-based solidarities, which had already lost much of their political leverage.

The personal status laws passed on August 13, 1956 were used in Tunisia as an instrument of change. Habib Burgibah, the first president of Tunisia, played a key role in the development and declaration of the laws.

After independence, Burgibah felt that Tunisia was ready to raise the question of women's political rights. He felt strongly that there was a need for social justice and the need for a rational effort to adjust Islam to suit the modern world. He faced criticism by the conservatives because of the new personal status laws, but this was not as harsh as the attack on al-Haddad had been.

The most important reform introduced by the Personal Status laws PSL was undoubtedly the abolition of polygamy. Article 18 of the PSL specified that the taking of a second wife was a crime punishable by a fine, a term of imprisonment, or both. The PSL thus created a precedent in the Islamic world by making polygamy a crime.[77]

The PSL goes on to set the legal age for marriage: 20 for the man and 17 for the woman. Marriage below these ages required special permission from a judge, and could only be allowed with proper justification. Most significantly,

according to article 30 of the PSL, both the male and female could file for divorce. Divorce could only be granted if the judge made every effort possible to reconcile the two parties, but if divorce is granted, the woman benefits as well as the man. A divorced woman is thus guaranteed a pension as well as custody of the children, ending the male privilege of keeping the children from the age of 7 in the case of boys and 9 in the case of girls.

In the question of inheritance, article 143/2 lays down the primacy of restitution, by which daughters and grand-daughters in the paternal line take precedence in inheritance over certain agnatic relations, such as the brothers of the deceased, paternal uncles, and their descendants, as well as the treasury. The effect of this clause was to improve dramatically the position of women with regard to inheritance. It became possible for a woman to receive the entire estate if she is the sole survivor.[78]

The PSL specified the following: marriage could only be performed with the consent of both spouses, and the dowry had to be fixed; women had the right to contract marriage on their own behalf and did not need a guardian; custody was decided in the interests of the child, and mother and father had equal claims.

Traditionally, women in the Arab World could be lawyers but not judges. However, in Tunisia, along with Iraq, Morocco, and South Yemen women can serve as judges. Ironically, women are still regarded as legal minors. For example, two women are needed as witnesses in the place of one

man. This stems from the Qur'anic verse 280 in Sura 2, "The

Cow",

> And call in to witness two witnesses, men: or if the two
> be not men, then one man and two women, such witnesses as
> you approve of, that if one of the two women errs the
> other will remind her.

3.3 WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AFTER 1980

Women in Tunisia, like most of the Arab countries, are equal

in their public rights and duties, and are equal to men before

the law. Women's political participation was poor, and women

were noticeably absent in community and political life. Since

the 1980s, a woman has been elected vice-president of the

Chamber of Deputies several times. In 1980, the first woman

mayor took office. Ministerial responsibilities have also

been entrusted to women: Minister of Health from 1983 to 1987,

Minister of the Family and Promotion of Women from 1983 to

1986, Secretary of State for Social Affairs since 1987 and

Secretary of State in charge of Women's and Family Affairs

since 1992.[79] In the Chamber of Deputies, women have been

making slow but sure progress, moving from 1.12 percent in

1957 to 4.26 percent in 1989. In municipal councils, women's

presence has achieved a far higher rate of increase, from 1.29

percent in 1957 to 14 percent in 1990.[80]

3.4 CONCLUSION

Like Egypt, the state is the main actor that affects the

position of women in Tunisian society. In particular, the

state mediates gender relations through legislation. The

passage of new laws is a key element for fostering or inhibiting social change. Also, legislation has been used alternately to maintain existing arrangements -- perpetuating the status quo -- or to promote greater equality for women in the family and the society at large, altering the norm. The PSC gives greater rights to women and decreases the legal control of male kin over them. The law came from above rather than as a response to pressure from below. It was formulated by the government, the result of political choices on the part of the social groups in power.

Tunisia is an interesting case study because the absence of a bureaucratized state in the pre-colonial period allowed the modern state apparatus to control effectively the whole territory. Unlike Egypt, the state does not rely on kin-based communities, and thus has not been faced with resistance from Islam. Perhaps unusually, these dramatic legal reforms were made without resistance from conservatives.

4. THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN SOUTH YEMEN

4.1 THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT FROM 1967

Five years of guerilla fighting ended the 128 years of British colonial rule in South Yemen in November 1967. The National Liberation Front came to power in March 1968. Influenced by the left of the party, the NLF was committed to taking a revolutionary stand. It advocated the creation of a revolutionary people's army, espoused an anti-imperialist foreign policy, and proposed a radical land reform.

Nevertheless, this policy did not become reality until a new group -- calling themselves the "corrective move" -- adopted a socialist bloc policy.

The state took a leading role in economic life, advocating radical changes to the economy and society along socialist lines. Industry was given greatest priority, and trade was brought under government control. The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, according to the 1970 constitution, would allow working people to exercise their opinions through their representatives in the Supreme People's Council, which was a 111-member body that assessed laws and approved state policies.[81] Land reform was decreed in 1970.[82]

Women in South Yemen were traditionally restricted by local customs and religious practices in general. In the city of Aden, however, the situation for women was more progressive than in rural areas. Women from the wealthier classes returned home after finishing their education in Beirut or Cairo and entered the labor force. Unveiled women were more noticeable.

According to Maxine Molyneux,

women were almost totally excluded from positions of social influence, which were generally in the hands of elder males. But in some regions they played an important role in agriculture, and in many parts of rural Yemen were unveiled, although restrictions and segregation still operated.[83]

Like Algeria's women in the independence movement, national liberation was regarded as the overriding priority. In Yemen the Women's Union, which emerged from the national liberation movement, had integrated itself thoroughly with the

Yemeni revolution while raising the special demands of women within it.

Women were given the right to vote and to run for office for the first time in 1970 but the first elections were in 1977. Then, a special effort was made to ensure that some women candidates ran.

In July 1974, the first Congress of the Women's Union placed great emphasis on the full incorporation of women in the political, economic, and social life of southern Yemen. Women increasingly participated in the People's Militia and the Women's Union served to mobilize women.[84]

4.2 THE NEW PERSONAL STATUS LAWS OF 1974

The government wanted the state to become a higher authority than either the kin group or religion. However, not until the announcement of the family law in 1974 was any notable progress made in transforming the legal position of women within the family.[85] Before it was announced, the Family Law was discussed in the press and in open meetings around the country. The first draft of the law was prepared in 1971 and the Yemeni family law was passed in 1974.

The law has many progressive statutes. It restricts but does not ban polygamy. Men and women have equal rights when it comes to divorce. Other provisions include: both spouses' consent to the marriage; setting a limit to the dowry; sharing the cost of running the household between husband and wife; and favoring the mother for custody of the children even if

she remarries; although in the end the court has to decide in the child's best interests.[86]

It is worth mentioning that after the Law passed the divorce rate became higher, and increased even more after 1978, when a civil law bill was passed granting the marital home to the wife if there were children from the marriage. The government tried to make divorce more difficult to gain by asking the People's Council (the Legislature) to revise the article to give the courts more power in the resolution of these situations. The Women's Union or the Popular Defense Committees acted as marriage counselors and tried to reconcile couples.[87]

In fact, the radical changes in the law still maintained inequalities between men and women. For example, the man could take a second wife on the grounds the first wife was infertile, but women could not ask in the same situation. A 1984 symposium held by some women asked for more egalitarian inheritance laws, but the proposals were crushed by the legislature.[88]

4.3 WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AFTER 1990

Saudi Arabia used Yemeni exiles to cause internal opposition to legislation favorable to women's rights.[89] The Saudis accused the Yemeni government of being against Islam. With other conservative Arab states, such as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia condemned the PDRY and its efforts to emancipate women contravening religious customs. They criticized the appointment of women as judges. This, they argued, was in

violation of the Qur'an, which qualified that being male is among the ten stated required of judges.[90] With underground opposition organized by the Muslim Brothers with funds from Saudi Arabia, the PDRY was under pressure from both internal and external forces to break into the open in 1990.[91]

In May 1990, North Yemen YAR and South Yemen PDRY merged and became the Unified Republic of Yemen URY. In the YAR women had such rights as:

> pregnancy leave, voting, driving, travel, running for office and property ownership, and several women were prominent television broadcasters. In most Northern cities and districts women covered their faces, left school early, and avoided public places. The prevailing ethic was that only dire economic necessity would drive women into markets, factories, or offices. In the countryside, of course, women's contribution to farming and herding was vital.[92]

In contrast the PDRY's women were more progressive. After the integration, women maintained all legal rights enjoyed under previous regimes. Conservatives, however, challenged the notion of female judges.[93] The problem was resolved when one woman was appointed to the newly-created 15-judge Supreme Court. Women also held the positions of deputy minister of information, dean of education, department heads in education, health, social affairs and other ministries, and a few parliamentary seats.[94]

The first elections in the unified country were held April 25, 1993. A multiparty system was implemented for the first time for residents of both the north and south, and the outcome was a three-way coalition of the Congress Party, the more modernist Yemeni Socialist Party -- which governed Marxist South Yemen -- and the Islah Party, a fundamentalist

Muslim movement. <u>Islah</u> won 62 seats and the Socialists won 56. Several smaller parties won the remaining seats. The victory of the <u>Islah</u> party raises the question of whether Yemen is moving closer to fundamentalism. However, of 50 women nominated for election, only two won seats.[95]

4.4 <u>CONCLUSION</u>

The personal status laws were conceived by the Yemeni government to provide greater rights for women in an effort to improve society. The law constitutes a form of intervention outside the economic realm to meet certain social policy objectives. The government -- using legal reform -- assisted in the social, political and economic repositioning of women.

III.   **THE STRUGGLE FOR POLITICAL RIGHTS IN KUWAIT AND BAHRAIN**

INTRODUCTION

Since the late 1940s, the beginning of oil's political and socioeconomic impact on the Middle East, the Arab Gulf states have undergone a notable transformation. Regimes have actively promoted a wide-ranging process of economic development. The Gulf countries differ noticeably from one another because of their different degrees of urbanization, the strength of existing religious influences, and the shock effect of change according to the length of time the

communities have been exposed to oil income and socioeconomic
development.

1. **THE STRUGGLE FOR POLITICAL RIGHTS IN BAHRAIN**

Several women's organization played key roles in raising
women's issues in Bahrain. The first women's society
Jam'iyat Nahdat al-Fatah al-Bahraniyah (Bahraini Women's
Advancement Society), was formed in 1954 by upper class women,
to provide and assist poor families.[96] Politically the group
supported the liberation movements in Algeria and Palestine.
It also asked for women's suffrage in the early 1970s. The
Jam'iyat al-Tufulah wa-al-Umumah (Motherhood and Children's
Welfare Center) was founded in 1960, by wives, daughters, and
sisters of the al-Khalifa ruling family as well as high-level
civil servants and middle-class women who wanted to play a
more active role in community affairs. Also, two other
women's associations made significant contributions. The
first, the Jam'iyat Awa'il al-Nisa'iyah (Women's Society), was
founded in 1969, and was composed largely of young, unmarried
women, many of them teachers. The other, Al-Ruf'ah
Association, was founded in 1970 and was composed largely of
young graduates and intellectuals. The group regularly
sponsored talks from guests about current issues.[97]

Bahraini women were the first to enjoy education in the
area. The first girls' primary school opened in 1928 and the
first in Kuwait was in 1937. The first secondary schools for
girls in both countries were opened in 1951. Qatar's first
girls' school opened in 1955 and girls' education in Saudi

Arabia began in 1960.[98] Bahraini women entered the labor

force in traditional areas such as education. Also, a

Bahraini woman was the first female in the area to be a

teacher in a school for boys.

There are few females in key positions in the Bahraini

civil service. Two women are directors in the Ministry of

Education, as well as several section heads. In 1989, five

women were serving as section chiefs in the Ministry of Social

Affairs, but none of them were directors. There were only

five female employees in the Directorate of Social Affairs

(including the director) out of a staff of 180-200.[99]

During pre-election meetings in August and September

1972, Bahraini women actively protested against restrictions

from voting. The Bahrain women's clubs circulated a petition

signed by supporting groups demanding that women be given the

right to participate in the political life of the country.

Also, the petition rejected the reasons advanced for denying

them the right to vote. The women's groups presented the

petition to the ruler on November 20, 1972.[100] The issues of

women's suffrage declined in prominence when the assembly was

dissolved in 1975.

1.1 THE PERSONAL STATUS LAWS

In contrast to Tunisia and Yemen -- which had progressive

state laws based on a liberal interpretation of shari'ah law -

- the personal status law in Bahrain was still based on

traditional shari'ah doctrine. According to the female

lawyer, Hayah Rashid al-Khalifah, in an interview in the

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government-owned magazine <u>Al-Ba<u>h</u>rain</u> on May 2, 1984, a man can initiate divorce, but a woman has to be divorced, either by her husband or by the judge. She continued to say that in practice the judge does not use his authority to divorce the woman without conditions. Instead, judges tended to divorce a woman by <u>khal'</u>, hence requiring her to repay the husband for what he had spent on her, sometimes including the dowry. In other words a woman bought her freedom. Al-Khalifah adds that this was not legal in Islam nor was it legal to force the woman to give up custody of her children.[101]

Women disapproved of how family law was practised in Bahrain. Unlike Kuwait, the debate over Family Law was held in public. The discussions lasted for two years in the National Assembly before the law was announced in 1984. Originally, the committee drafting the law wanted to give women the right to include in marriage contracts whatever clauses they wished. However, the members later reversed this decision and the amendments proposed by women's organization were neglected.[102]

2. <u>THE STRUGGLE FOR POLITICAL RIGHTS IN KUWAIT</u>

The Kuwaiti women's movement started immediately after independence in 1961. The first women's association was established in January 17,1963, named <u>Jam'iyat al-Nah<u>d</u>ah al-'Arbiyah al-Ni<u>s</u>aiyah</u> (Society for the Advancement of Arab Women). In 1971 -- under the new name <u>Jam'iyat al-Nah<u>d</u>ah al-Usariyah</u> (Society for Advancement of the Family) -- the society presented a petition to the national assembly to

consider women's suffrage. However in 1973, women went further than discussion. A bill that would give women the vote but exclude them from office was introduced in 1981.[103]

The bill was blocked by Islamist elements in 1982. Led by Lula al-Qattami, the women's organizations went to the National Assembly in January 1982, to push for the inclusion of women's issues on the legislative agenda. Yet, some groups of Kuwaiti women resisted female suffrage. Ironically, the heir's wife Shaykhah Latifah came out against women's voting rights, basing her argument on the fact that few of the women involved in politics "have the necessary understanding in this regard." [104] Her statements are in great contrast to the Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdullah's words in 1980 that the "time has come to take note of the position of the Kuwaiti woman and her effective role in society, and to put forward the matter of the vote for study and discussion".[105]

There was a strong public debate about women's suffrage and considerable resistance to women's voting rights. In 1984, the opponents of women's rights issued a _fātwā_ interpretation by Saudi _'ulamā'_ against coeducation and women's right to vote in Kuwait. These were distributed outside _masājid_ (mosques). Also, a Kuwaiti _fātwā_ against women voting was presented in the National Assembly in 1985 by a combination of Islamists, including the Social Reform Society (Muslim Brotherhood), and liberals.[106] It is surprising that the Kuwaiti liberal groups supported this _fātwā_.

Interestingly, on February 11, 1984, Kuwaiti women activists started a new strategy in their fight. They charged

that the government's denial of their right to vote was sexual discrimination, and thus a violation of the constitutional guarantees of democracy as well as the equality of all citizens. The women's activists took a step ahead by trying to register at the election registration offices, but they were rejected. Another 13 women tried again, and eight of them reported the rejection to the police.[107]

The women tried to initiate a legal case and also to raise the issue to the public to gather support. The women's strategy was to lobby for their case. Nevertheless, after the election, a group of representatives brought a bill to grant women the right to vote. The members were uncompromising opponents of women's suffrage and called on the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs to help them fight the case. The Ministry issued a _fātwā_ announcing that "the nature of the electoral process befits men, who are endowed with ability and expertise; it is not permissible that women recommend or nominate other women or men."[108] The rationale behind the conservative action was that they were afraid that the liberal women would not vote for them. They used an Islamic interpretation to serve their own electoral interests. When the assembly was suspended in July 1986 the issue died with it.

CONCLUSION

Kuwait and Bahrain have had the longest exposure to development and social change in the Gulf, and women there are likely to obtain more political rights than elsewhere in the

Gulf. At the same time, restraints on increased women's participation are also determined by the degree and strength of historical traditions in each Gulf society. The enormous expansion of education has broadened the perspectives of women as well as men, and created new employment opportunities for both. The newly created institutions such as national consultative bodies in Kuwait and Bahrain brought the questions of women's participation to the surface. The issue of women's suffrage in the other Gulf countries loses much of its immediate importance because men do not have the opportunity to vote either.

The women's organizations in most countries in the Gulf play a prominent role in addressing issues involving women's concerns and social activities. Primarily, women's organizations serve mostly as welfare associations involved in establishing women's libraries, collecting for the needy, training women in household tasks, advocating cultural events and lectures, and fighting female illiteracy. They are also instrumental in questioning traditional ideas about women's education and work.

3. **THE EFFECT OF THE SECOND GULF WAR ON WOMEN IN SAUDI ARABIA**

During the second Gulf War of 1990-1991, women were highly visible in the media. After the war there was an assumption that women would gain more rights, and women activists used foreign media such as CNN to present their case for political freedom. In fact, the Saudi women took advantage of the

presence of outside press to defy the unofficial ban on women's driving. On November 6, 1990, 47 women took over the keys from their drivers and drove in a convoy of about twenty cars through the streets of Riyad until stopped by police. The women, who included university professors, a photographer, an author, and other well-educated women from all parts of the country, were sent home.[109] Within days, however, the Interior Ministry made the ban on women's driving official, and also issued a ban on all political activity by women in the future. The Ministry ruling was based on a <u>fātwā</u> from the head of the state-funded Directorate of Islamic Research, Shaykh Abd Allah bin 'Abd al-aziz Baz. He ruled that women should not be allowed to drive motor vehicles; the <u>shari'ah</u> instructs that the things that degrade or harm the dignity of women must be prevented. The Ministry and the <u>'ulamā'</u> both called for punishment. The women and their husbands had their passports confiscated and were forbidden to leave the country. Ironically, there were many women in the UN forces fighting to liberate Kuwait; the Saudi rulers ridiculously classed them males with female features'.[110]

Although Saudi women did not make gains, the election held in Kuwait in 1992, in fact, fulfilled the women's optimism that the war would bring change and meet their expectations. Women did not receive immediate satisfaction of their demands, but in the long run women increasingly assumed positions that might be classified as public roles. For example, women turned to education as means self-improvement.

Women are television and radio announcers and newspaper opinion columnists.

3.1 CONCLUSION

The women's struggle for more rights in Saudi Arabia and cannot be ignored any more, especially with the external pressure. There are reasons to assume that the future will find women playing broader and less restricted public roles in society and wielding considerably more influence on the political systems of Saudi Arabia.

CONCLUSION

Women now have more rights than before. For example, women can now divorce (Tunisia, Yemen), refuse arranged marriage, work and vote. Further, they can seek the assistance of mass organizations. On the other hand, men lost certain rights and privileges that they previously enjoyed (polygamy, divorce).

The consequence of these legal reforms is that the state has become the major authority, weakening kin-based, class-based, and tribal control over women. The state's goal was to promote the nuclear family to help construct less private, traditional, identities. Legal reforms also made it easier for women to enter the legal profession and politics.

The extension of full citizenship to women can be seen as part of the process of creating a new state. The state, as agent of change, created policies in education and employment to further development. Even though the reform was introduced from above in more progressive countries (Tunisia, Yemen), in

Egypt and Algeria the feminist movement worked to gain rights beyond what the state offered. Islamic and customary law was challenged by the state in Tunisia and Yemen, but in Egypt and Algeria the state accommodated Islam.

In the Arab world, governments have interpreted the shari'ah law to encourage or to hinder women's interests, depending on their own needs. The women's suffrage movement was attacked through questions about the morality of women who engaged in politics. The overall issue, however, was not morality, but a government's desire to manipulate political movements.

Feminists were competing with both the state and Islam. Women's organizations were more active in less progressive countries like Egypt and Algeria than those in Tunisia and Yemen.

The way a ruling power defines women's roles depends upon the way the state defines its mission. Also, the way a state juggles the competing interests of women, Islam, and international politics greatly affects women's political participation and rights.

Chapter Four examines how Jordan not only faces the same difficulties but has been greatly influenced by policy in other Arab countries. The Jordanian government has engaged in similar manipulation to advance its own political ends. Also, Jordanian leaders have had to contend with the demands and influences of Islam, much the same as other Arab countries have. However, as we will see in the next chapter, Jordan

differs from its Arab neighbors in that it has not had a particularly strong feminist movement. Although women's associations have succeeded in gaining ground in the areas of social policy and political involvement, the Jordanian feminist movement is much weaker than the organized women's forces in the other Arab countries. This weakness is the result of a variety of social, political, and historical forces, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1.   Aḥmad, (1992). p. 170.

2.   Ṭahṭāwī, (N.D.). p. 31.

3.   Sullivan, (1986). p. 26.

4.   Ibid.

5.   Ibid.

6.   Amin, (1899). p. 15.

7.   Sullivan, (1986). p. 26.

8.   Ibid, p. 28.

9.   For more discussion, see Ahmad, (1992) p. 174-178 ; Sullivan, (1986). p. 28-29.

10. Al-Sadani, (1983). p. 20.

11. Aḥmad, (1992). p. 171.

12. Al-Sadani, (1983). p. 29.

13. Ahmad, (1992). p. 203 ; Sullivan, (1986). p. 33.

14. Ibid.

15. Sullivan, (1986). p. 33.

16. Ahmad, (1992). p. 205.

17. Ibid, p. 197.

18. Ibid, p. 198; Noel J. Coulson and Doreen Hichcliffe, "Women and Law Reform in Contemporary Islam," <u>Women in the Muslim World</u>, ed. Back and Keddie.

19. Knauss, (1987). p. 50-51 and 54.

20. Ibid, p. 55.

21. Lobban, (1980). p. 239.

22. Knauss, (1987). p. 75 ; Harbi, Muhammad, (1980). <u>Le FLN: mirage et realite</u>. Paris: Editions J. A, p. 179.

23. Amrane, (1982). p. 123-135.

24. Ibid.

25. Al-Sadani, (1983). p. 21.

26. Ibid, p. 21.

27. Lobban, (1986). p. 238.

28. Ibid, p. 21.

29. Najjar, (1974) citing the PLO. Information Bulletin.

30. Ibid.

31. Peteet, (1991). p. 22-23.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. PFWAC (Palestinian Federation of Women's Action Committees).

35. Najjar, statistics obtained in October 1989 by Nuhah Ismael from Marsson Sh'ath, PNC member. p. 145.

36. Peteet, (1986). p. 24.

37. Badran, (1991). p. 216. For more details about Shafiq.

38. Ahmad, (1992). p. 205 ; Also see Khalifa, (1973) for more details.

39. Howard-Meriam, (1979). p. 256-271.

40. Badran, (1991). p. 219-220.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid, p. 221. (Interview with Nawal al-Sa'dawi, Cairo February, (1989).

43. Ibid, p. 221. (Interview with Safinaz Kazim, February (1989).

44. Haward-Merrim, (1990). p. 23.

45. Ibid, p. 23, (Interview with Hikmat Abu Zayd, May (1974).

46. Ibid.

47. Badran, (1991). p. 222.

48. Cooper, (1982). p. 193.

49. Badran, (1991). p. 222.

50. Howard-Merriam, (1990). p. 28.

51. Ibid, p. 27, Interviewed Nabila Ibrashi, member of Majlis al-Shura in 8 April, 1987, and Zaynab Afifi, a member of the 1984 - elected parliament and occupying one of the 30 reserved seats, 14 March, 1987, Cairo, Egypt. "There was general comment among several women activists that president Sadat's use of "emergency power" to promulgate these reserved seats for women backfired. Could one legitimately call this law an "emergency?" And had there been a general women's demand for these seats? Quite a few feminists replied in the negative".

52. Ibid, p. 28.

53. Hijab, (1988). p. 32. She stated that there is a long debate in the newspapers.

54. Ibid.

55. Howard-Merriam, (1990). p. 33.

56. Al-Sa'dawi, (1986). p. 9.

57. Mernissi, (1987). P. 36.

58. Knauss, (1987). p. 99. (undated, probably drafted in late 1962. The first UNFA president was a former freedom fighter, Nefissa Lalliam. In Gordon, (1968). p. 55).

59. Ibid, p. 101-102.

60. Ibid, p. 109.

61. Ibid, citing (Helene Vandevelde. (1971) "Condition feminine: L'emancipation est freinee par le conformisme sociale", Le Monde, January 24-25, p. 26).

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid.

64. Hijab, (1988). p. 27.

65. Ibid, p. 29.

66. Ibid.

67. Sha'ban, (1988). p. 188. (An interview with an Algerian woman).

68. Temcani, (1990). p. 15.

69. Ibid.

70. Slyomovics, (1995). p. 8.

71. National Union of Tunisian Women, (1993). p. 51.

72. Ibid, p. 14.

73. Hijab, (1988). p. 22.

74. Salem, (1984). p. 149. "Al-Tahir al-Haddad was born around 1899 to a relatively modest family living in Tunisia. He enrolled in the famous Zaytunah University, Tunisia'a al-Azhar, in 1911 and, in 1920, obtained his tatwi diploma, equivalent to junior college level. He joined the Destour in the same year. Soon after, he became involved in the movement initiated by Muhammed 'Ali al-Hammi (also originally from Gabes). Basically he believed in stages in social progress, concentrated in the socio-economic field".

75. Ibid.

76. Ibid, p. 15.

77. National Union of Tunisian Women, (1993). p. 18.

78. Ibid, P. 148.

79. Ibid, p. 47.

80. Ibid.

81. Ibid.

82. Molyneux, (1991). p. 244.

83. Ibid, p. 250.

84. Lobban, (1980). p. 244.

85. Hijab, (1988). p. 24. In the Arab countries uses for -- family law-- "Personal Status Law", the "Code of Personal Status" and the "Family Law".

86. Hijab, (1988). p. 24; Lobban, (1980). p. 244; Molyneux, (1991). p. 258-259.

87. Ibid.

88. Molyneux, (1991). p. 261; Hijab, (1988). p. 24.

89. Ibid, p. 261.

90. Ibid.

91. Carapico, (1991). p. 15.

92. Ibid.

93. Ibid, p. 15.

94. Ibid.

95. Boustany, (1993). p. A10.

96. Al-Sadani, (1982). p. 35; Peterson, p. 38. He indicated
     that the first women's organization in Bahrain was in 1955.

97. Peterson, (1989). p. 38.

98. Al-Misnas, (1985). p. 37.

99. Peterson, (1989). p. 48. An interview in Bahrain in 1986.

100. Ibid, p. 45. He cited Nakhleh, Bahrain, p. 142-143 "the
     rationale for denials centered on the assumptions that 1)
     a woman is veiled and that it is difficult to ascertain her
     identity and 2) a woman is uneducated and has no independent
     opinion so that a man can influence her vote".

101. Hijab, (1988). p. 36. She cited Sura IV an Women "Mankind,
     fear your Lord, who created you of a single soul, and from
     it created its mate, and from the pair of them scattered
     abroad many men and women: and fear God by whom you demand
     one of another, and the wombs; surely God ever watches over
     you. Give the orphans their property, and do not exchange
     the corrupt for the good; and devour not their property with
     your property; surely that is a great crime, If you fear
     that you will not act justly towards the orphans, marry such
     women as seem good to you, two, three, four; but if you fear
     you will not be equitable, then only one. And give the
     women their dowries as a gift spontaneous; but if they are
     pleased to offer you any of it, consume it with wholesome
     appetite."

102. Ibid, p. 26.

103. Peterson, (1989). p. 43-44.

104. Ibid, p. 43; also see al-Sadani, (1983).

105. Ibid.

106. Ibid.

107. Ibid, p. 44.

108. Ibid.

109. Radio Arab News, November 14, (1990).

110. Ibid.

CHAPTER FOUR

WOMEN'S ROLE IN JORDAN: JORDANIAN SOCIETY,DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL INSTTUTIONS, EDUCATION, LABOR FORCE, AND LAWS

INTRODUCTION

To understand the status of women in Jordan it is necessary to examine the societal, and political roots in the country. The structure of Jordanian society has undergone major changes over the past decade chiefly as a result of migration and urbanization. Politically, the country has gradually moved toward liberalization. In addition, relations with neighboring countries have had a major impact on Jordan's political and economic condition. Wars, refugee flows, and external aid all profoundly affected Jordan's economic development.

This chapter will analyze Jordanian society, focusing on the bedouin, the village, and the city. The development of political institutions will be discussed to provide a context for understanding the political participation of women. It also, discusses the background to women's political participation in Jordan, and Jordanian women's associations -- whether official or unofficial -- exploring how these associations were used to advance women's participation.

A major concern of this study relates to the level of education of women, their participation in the labor force, and their treatment under the laws. Each of these issues is

examined in this chapter.

I.   SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF JORDANIAN SOCIETY

The bedouin tribe, the village, and the city are the three
essential elements of Jordanian society - just as they are to
most Arab societies. While each of these elements is distinct
and represents a basically "secure" society for its members,
as will be shown below, there are economic and political
motivations for them to interact and socialize. For example,
the city in particular and the bedouin tribe to a lesser
extent have always been dependent on the food production of
the village. These three components also are critical for
understanding the role of women in Jordanian society.

1.   THE BEDOUINS IN JORDAN

Most of Jordan is desert, and humans have traditionally been
able to sustain themselves only by raising animals, such as
camels, able to live in such a climate for at least part of
the year. Because of the desert climate, farming is not an
adequate means of year-round support in most of the country.
In the northwest of Jordan, there is an area of settled
farming, and camel husbanding is steadily giving way to sheep
and goat herding. In a process of sedentarization, some
bedouin (a term which refers to inhabitants of the desert)
have today turned to village life and full-time farming.

The Jordanian nomads classify themselves in several ways.
A broad distinction is made between the sedentary population
of villagers and townsmen alike, who are called hadar, and the

ruhhal (nomads). In the opinion of the nomads, only they

themselves have the right to be called Arabs - a name

indicating (to them) people of noble blood and applicable only

to tent-dwellers. They further distinguish, among themselves,

between those groups whose main herds consist of camels and

those who primarily raise other animals.[1]

1.1 TRIBAL STRUCTURE

The Jordanian bedouin tribal structure is basically the same

as elsewhere in the Arab world. The size of the tribe is very

important. Some tribes may include only a few families, as

occurs in the Jordan Valley. Others can be very large and

include thousands of people.

The qābilah (tribe) is usually subdivided into ʿashaʾir

(subtribes). An ʿashaʾir contains several fakhd, and each

fakhd in turn is customarily divided into two or more parts.

The hāmulah, a further subdivision, consists of two or more

connected extended families. Throughout the tribal structure,

kinship is based on male lineage.[2]

1.2 LEADERSHIP IN TRIBAL SOCIETY

The leader in a nomadic tribal society is the shaykh. No

strict rule of inheritance governs the actual selection of the

leader within the family. It is not felt, for example, that

the first-born son of a shaykh should always succeed him. If

the shaykh is ill, old, or weak, the tribe will be intensely

preoccupied with the question of succession, and out of the

deliberations of the elder men a consensus emerges as to which

of the <u>shaykh</u>'s sons or other close male relatives is suitable to fill his place.[3]

The <u>shaykh</u> is assisted by the <u>majlis</u> (tribal council). Composed of the heads of the various subdivisions of the tribe, the <u>majlis</u> meets daily in the guest tent of the <u>shaykh</u>; usually it discusses such questions as when to break camp, where to find grass, news of other tribes, and cases of litigation. No vote is taken in the council.[4] The <u>shaykh</u>, in his capacity as chairman, makes any final decisions and influences the council's deliberations. The <u>shaykh</u> is also responsible for representing his tribe, ruling on water rights, and acting as arbiter and judge in litigation. In matters involving consent to marriages and divorces, protecting the weak, receiving guests, breaking camp, protecting the honour of the tribe, and working to ensure its welfare, the <u>shaykh</u> is assisted by a <u>ḥakim</u> (tribal judge). The recent growth of government has added to the <u>shaykh</u>'s duties; he must now collect taxes in the tribe and assist government tax collectors, as well as serve as a representative to the state.

1.3 <u>BEDOUIN LIFE NOW</u>

The influences of the 20th century are bearing down hard on the bedouins and causing major social changes to long-established nomad traditions. Jordan adopted a purely voluntary policy for sedentarization of the nomads.[5] However, modern economic forces are altering the traditional foundations of bedouin life: the village or town now seem

unavoidable (if not appealing) options. The replacement of
the camel caravans by motor vehicles and railways has greatly
decreased the role of the nomads in the economic life of
Jordan. In the transition to sedentarization, distinguished
by established villages with permanent houses, and near-
complete dependency on agriculture as a means of livelihood,
the newly settled groups have found themselves in a
relationship with peasant neighbors whom they had never
encountered before. Economic cooperation and social
interaction between nomads and peasants has slowly resulted in
intermarriage.

The historic ideals and images of nomadic society remain
powerful influences on popular standards in Jordan and in the
rest of the Arab world. However, translating these values
into meaningful terms in the context of modern Jordanian life
has been difficult. The nomadic past remains only as a
nostalgic tradition and the values and ideals which once
governed nomadic society are of limited practical use in the
earth-bound existence of the agricultural village.

1.4 WOMEN IN BEDOUIN SOCIETY

There are two conflicting views in the literature on the
position of women in bedouin society. On the one hand, it is
contended that women are viewed as having a high position in
society based on customary law. On the other hand, it is
maintained that women are treated as second - class citizens,
because they are seen as weak emotionally and their sole
purpose in life is deemed to be reproduction.

In the second view, women also need to be protected and taken care of. If a woman does not have male children she can easily be divorced. She can be blamed even if it is the husband who is impotent. The concept of honour for bedouin men is very strong (and a man's honour can easily be impugned by any comments about his wife's or a related female's reputation). Usually the status of a woman in a bedouin society is based on the position of her tribe vis-a-vis other tribes, and the number of male children she has. The bedouin woman has no say in tribal decisions. She has no right to inheritance; in the best situation, she will be given a sum of money only to placate her.[6]

The other view, holds that a bedouin woman has a high position in her society, as she is not required to veil her face. In addition, she traditionally does men's work such as chopping wood and herding sheep, as well as maintaining and keeping house. She is free to move from place to place and sit with men according to bedouin customs.

These two views seem to be diametrically opposed, yet they are accurate in that bedouin women have a high status but limited rights.

1.5 BEDOUIN CUSTOMS

Customs are key to bedouin society and help shape daily life and mens' relationship with women. There are laws that govern marriage, engagement, adultery, inheritance, and crime. The most important things that concern women in bedouin customs concern marriage and honour. In the case of marriage, bedouin

customs do not give women any opportunity to refuse or accept her future husband -- except in rare cases, which depend on the woman's economic or social status. For example, if a woman refuses to accept a potential suitor, she can go to the head of the tribe and he will intervene, either deciding to force her to marry against her wishes or to let her choose a husband. The dowry of the woman is paid to her father and she does not have the right to use it (usually the dowry consists of a sum of money or a piece of land or livestock). The amount of the dowry depends on the woman's position in the tribe.[7]

In bedouin society, it is a custom for two families to "intermarry." For example, if a man chooses a girl from another family, his brothers and sisters are also obligated to choose husbands and wives from that family. This has far-reaching implications, since the initial marriage is the determining factor of the success or failure of all the other marriages; the destiny of one couple is the fate of all others. If one man decides to divorce his wife, all the other marriages must also be dissolved. It is very easy for a man to divorce his wife. A man can divorce a woman if: she cannot bear children; if she has only daughters; if after seeing his new wife, the husband finds that she has a physical defect or imperfection; if she talks too much or is too loud; if she does not serve her husband or his family; or finally, if she is stubborn, gossips, or is not thrifty with money.[8]

Cases of divorce and polygamy do not always follow religious laws. The man can have more than four wives, yet

the woman can not ask for a divorce even if her husband is impotent. If the wife leaves her home, she will be called <u>al-tumuh</u>, (someone who can not be controlled). In this case she can not be granted a divorce and is unable to marry again until she can obtain permission from the head of the tribe (who can force the husband to divorce her). The father of the girl is then obliged to give back to the husband all of the dowry.

It is worth mentioning that all marriage and divorce contracts are done orally, but witnesses must be present. Under Islamic law, a woman cannot be granted a divorce or remarry until waiting 90 days to ensure that she is not pregnant. However, in bedouin society there is no period of waiting and the woman may marry as soon as the divorce is agreed upon. Of course the children remain with their father and the woman has no right to her children.[9]

In cases involving the important concept of honour, bedouin and customary law is not taken lightly and is a reflection of bedouin heritage. A woman can be killed if she does anything to defame a man's honour. For example, if a girl goes with another man, custom says she must be found and killed along with him.[10] Bedouin customs also lay claim to the right to seek revenge upon anyone harming or killing a member of one's family. However, not all cases involve blood revenge. Generally speaking, the laws and customs are very biased against women and all the responsibility for a man's honour is placed on the shoulders of a woman. However, a man will defend a woman's reputation and honour; for example, if

one man talks about any female member of another man's family, men in the latter family have the right to have the offender's tongue cut out or the offending man can offer money in lieu of his tongue.[11]

In bedouin law, the responsibility for a woman's actions does not end with her husband or immediate male family members. It extends to the fifth line of the male's extended family.[12] A woman is not allowed to take revenge against the crime of another woman in the case of a killing.

Custom also dictates that harming a woman is not allowed. The husband has the right to hit her only if it is to "straighten her up", but men are not allowed to injure women. Because of this, women are often sent to negotiations between tribes, due to their protected status.[13] If a woman is killed, a man has the right to either blood revenge in the form of four to eight men, or diyah, which means the accused offers money to the other tribe in place of his life. In the case of a pregnant woman, exposure to any conditions that would cause her to lose her child is repayable in blood revenge of one man, or diyah.[14] To the bedouin man, the worth of a woman is always equated to her reproductive value.

One of the worst fates that can befall a women is to be offered as part of a gift (ghurrat al-diyah), along with money to another tribe to make peace and prevent revenge.[15] Her position in the new tribe is no more than that of a slave. She must remain within the new tribe with no hope of ever seeing her former family -- except if she produces a male child. Her former family may then ask to take her back on the

condition that she leave her son behind. The son is then considered to be a replacement for the male that was killed.

1.6 CONCLUSION

Even though bedouin society has changed and such concepts as ghurrat al-dīyah no longer exist, the conditions that created such customs are very much still the foundation around which bedouin life revolve. The original inhabitants of Jordan were of bedouin background. Some began to settle rather than maintain their nomadic lifestyle. Jordanian society has maintained many bedouin ideas and these constitute the basis from which the society has grown.

2. **THE VILLAGE IN JORDAN**

In Jordan, peasants constitute the majority of the total population. The importance of the fallahyn (village cultivators) rests on the fact that their labor feeds both the towns and the nomads. Over time, the villages have grown with the increasing sedentarization of the bedouins.

Three factors affect the preferred location of a village: access to water, soil fertility, and defensibility. It is not always possible to meet all three conditions. In some districts there is no ground water; the soil differs in productivity from place to place; and villages in the flat lands lack natural defensibility -- the secured village, in fact, is remarkably uncommon in Jordan. The typical Jordanian village is composed of a close group of houses and other buildings, surrounded by fields. Most villages have sahah

(open space) where biweekly or monthly markets are held and which serves as a social gathering place. The village mosque is often situated at or near the sáhah, as are whatever stores or coffeehouses the village may have. In larger villages, or in those in which more than one religious sect is well represented, there may be more than one sáhah, each with its own mosque or church.[16]

Jordanian rural society shows little economic stratification. There is little real social organization in the village. Because of the harsh and dry land, most Jordanian villagers live on an economic scale that does not set them very far apart from each other -- whether it is a peasant working his own plot of land or a small landlord seasonally employing a few laborers. The few who have obtained real wealth have moved to the towns.[17]

Socially, however, people in a village do differ in terms of their prestige and influence in the community. Traditionally in Jordan the farmer has ranked above the craftsman and merchant. One reason is because the merchant is often seen as an outsider, standing apart from village society.

2.1 LEADERSHIP IN VILLAGE SOCIETY

Leadership in Jordanian rural society requires relative wealth in land, advantageous family connections, age seniority, and reputation. As with the nomads, a basic kinship organization exists in the villages: male descent, paternal residence and authority, the extended family, and the clan are all present.

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Hence, an individual villager is bound to the other members of his lineage by a network of mutual obligations, which is strongest within the circle of the extended family but which can also draw the whole lineage together in the face of any external threat.[18]

Traditional characteristics of village life in Jordan are: worship of the land, involvement of individuals in the kinship group, obedience to religious sect, and community connections. However, these characteristics are being influenced by migration to the towns and the effect of Western ideas and methods. The old forms of paternalistic authority have become less forceful and command less respect. The wage-earning husband finds himself more dependent on his own efforts than on the cooperative economic activity of a circle of relatives. The force of religion remains strong, but the secular influences of the town are calling into question the traditional meaning which religion has had for the countryman, and with the spread of education there is much less to bind him to his former place in the village. Also, the movement of the rural population to urban centers in itself affects the overall solidarity of the community.

2.2 THE PROBLEMS FACING VILLAGE SOCIETY

A study by Shabib Abu-Jabir on immigration from the agricultural areas indicates that most rural inhabitants preferred to work in government or military service, or in urban manual labor positions. Abu-Jabir found that 57% of his sample worked in such fields, while 28% worked in

agriculture, and 13% in other occupations (2% refused to answer). This study also showed that 56% of the respondents preferred their children to work in clerical jobs.[19] Of the 28% working in agriculture, only 8% wished their children to follow their occupation.[20] These findings show the serious problems of village life. Most people are illiterate or semi-literate. Economic, health, and social conditions are also unsatisfactory for most residents.[21]

2.3 WOMEN IN VILLAGE SOCIETY

Rural society is heavily influenced by the bedouin heritage. Both are conservative in their social trends. Tribal connections and collective responsibility are very close. Even though the last decade has seen a spread of education, communications, and the media, the conservative attitude still prevails. The effect on the economy is that education has had no real impact on social life in this rural agricultural setting.

Rural society is fundamentally a man's society. Men are the providers and the decision makers. A woman's position is marginal, even though women in rural village society work alongside men in agriculture (for example, tilling the land, planting and harvesting) and they also usually fill the role of raising livestock. A woman's work is not considered to be productive labor but rather her duty; all productivity belongs to the man and his family.

2.4 THE PROBLEMS OF STUDYING WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS

It is worth mentioning that there are not many studies on
rural women in Jordan. The first census, in 1961, reported
that 389,958 people worked in agriculture, of which 6% were
women. Of course this number does not include women who
worked without pay but rather as part of their family duty.
The only study done regarding the situation of rural women
concerned women in the labor force in the Jordan valley, in
1975. This study showed that 46.2% of women in the labor
force were in the agricultural sector. Of this number, 73.3%
worked with their family without pay and only 26.7% were
working for wages.[22]

Another relevant study was published on November 19, 1980
by the Development Journal with support from the Queen Alia
Fund. This study was conducted in a specific area in southern
Jordan. A key finding of the study was that only a small
percentage of women worked outside the house (besides
agriculture): 5.5% as seamstresses, 3.3% in teaching, 2.6% in
tapestry weaving, 1.6% working as vendors, and 0.3% as maids.
The percentage of women who worked for their families without
pay was 44.5%. This study sample included 308 married women
from six villages with a total population of 10,732, which was
approximately 1,624 families.[23] It is apparent from the data
that rural society is patriarchal: the man is the head of the
family and makes the daily decisions. Authority rests with
the father who has the right to dictate everything in his
children's lives. For example, children do not have rights to
their own property; everything is in the father's name and the

decision-making process rests with him in all public and private matters down to the marriage of his children. The father's authority is the same as in the bedouin tribal system. In this reality, women hold marginal positions in society. A woman's place is determined by the ability to produce male children and to be obedient to her husband and his family. An unmarried woman's life will be in danger if her virginity is in question -- even if it is only a rumor, her father, brother, or husband has the right to kill her if she has done anything against her customs. A woman can be divorced or the husband can take on a second, third, or fourth wife if she does not produce male offspring.

In the case of older women and mothers of important men, however, they may exercise influence through advising sons and often through helping to arrange marriages. In the case of widows, influence and status is very much determined by the status of their family.

2.5 CONCLUSION

It is clear from this analysis that women are under considerable economic and social pressure. A woman does not have the right to refuse or accept a marriage proposal; even a man has only partial rights in this matter. Usually the marriage is arranged by the father in accord with social and economic interests. The marriage arrangement is often made when the children are first born. The right of the cousin takes first precedence, a traditional practice which continues to this day.

3. **THE CITIES IN JORDAN**

The contrasts between life in the Jordanian villages and nomadic tribes and life in the city are great. In the city, Islamic culture is obvious but secular patterns also exist which are essentially urban. The city looks to the rural areas for tax revenues, food, and some raw materials. The gap between city and countryside has formed largely due to Western influences. Cities are diverse in composition and have more readily adapted to such influences, while the homogeneous village has been relatively remote from these new forces.

For a long some time the rural population had been economically self-sufficient and able to satisfy its basic dietary needs from its own food production. Today, the peasant (and increasing the nomad) relies on commercial agriculture and consumer goods available in the city.

The cities are important as centers of administrative, political, judicial, religious, and educational activities. Religious minorities are concentrated in the cities, working mainly in these activities and other professional fields, as well as a still smaller minority of well-to-do landed proprietors and modern businessmen.

The city has wealth, power, and cultural pursuits. Coupled with current economic and social forces, this has helped speed rural migration to the urban centers. For example, Amman is the largest city in the country; its population expanded from just a few thousand in the 1920s to 1.573 million people in 1991. Other general features of a

city are hospitals (or at least a government clinic), one or more public and/or private schools, a number of mosques and churches, and a newspaper.

A major source of wealth in Jordanian cities has been real estate. The urban owners of landed estates put their capital into building houses, apartment blocks, and so on. The new middle class has exerted appreciable influence on the political, economic, and cultural life of the country.[24]

3.1 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN JORDANIAN CITIES

In Jordan, a distinction must be made between old and new cities, between those with long-established populations and those like Amman which are based on an influx of refugees and other settlers. The settlers brought with them the social patterns of their home localities, but it remains to be seen how these settlers will adapt to the confused and generally poverty-stricken conditions of contemporary Jordanian urban life.

The social organization of the older cities shows a general resemblance to that of the nomadic tribe and the village. Extended families are grouped into lineages. Paternal descent and authority, family loyalty, and intra-lineage cooperation are more important in these cities. However, the actual integrity of the extended kin-group varies from the strong cohesiveness of the conservative lineage to the more relaxed approach of families influenced by Western education or residence abroad.

3.2 WOMEN IN THE CITY

Women in the city have more chance for a college education, because most universities are located in cities. At the same time, the availability of work outside of the home is greater. The rise of new values to replace old ones, along with modernization, and increases in wealth, have given urban women more opportunities and freedom of choice than their rural counterparts.

The immigration of Palestinian women into Jordan after the 1948 and 1967 wars has been an important factor influencing women in the city. Some Palestinian women imparted their knowledge to Jordanian society. Other Palestinian women came from villages to refugee camps, bringing with them their traditional values. These latter women -- who had little education or job skills -- could not compete economically with city women. As a result, they were forced to adopt new values to cope with the economic realities of city life. Politically, the Palestinian women brought to Jordan a commitment to continue with the struggle to regain their homeland.

To sum up, women in Jordan's cities have been exposed to different outside influences, customs, and values than village or tribe women.

3.3 CONCLUSION

Jordanian cities have faced a break from the old order as a result of several factors, including the occupation of Palestine and the ensuing refugee flood, Western influences,

and nationalist turmoil in the Arab world. All these factors
have had a particularly intense impact on the cities. New
styles of work and social forms compete with traditional ways
of life.

Jordanian cites are dominating the rest of society as
they have never done in the past. The continued development
of new economic forms and the efforts of the government to
substitute a pattern of unified political administration for
the local and family controls of the past seem certain to move
the cities, and with it eventually the other main sectors of
Jordanian life, closer to patterns familiar in the Western
world.

CONCLUSION

Jordan is made up of three societies these of the bedouin, the
villages, and the cities. Even though bedouin society has
changed, traditional customs are still the foundation around
which bedouin life revolves. Rural society is fundamentally a
man's society: men are the providers and the decision makers.
A women's position is marginal, even though women in rural
village society work alongside men in agriculture. While life
in the cities is still influenced by bedouin and village
customs, cities are also subject to other influences - such as
these stemming from the large influx of Palestinian refugees
and from westernization. There more opportunities for women
to obtain education and employment.

II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN JORDAN

1. POLITICAL HISTORY

The Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan was the new name given in 1949 to the enlarged state of Transjordan, originally created in 1921. Prior to 1921, the area comprising the state of Transjordan was called Urdun or Sharq al-Urdun. The reason that Transjordan had no permanent name in the past was that it was never before a separate and independent entity. Since ancient times this area's geographical location exposed it to numerous conquerors who occupied it for varying reasons, such as security and protection of trade routes.

In the first two decades of this century Transjordan experienced a series of quick political and administrative changes. After the outbreak of World War I, Transjordan was occupied for a short period by the forces of the Arab Revolt, but it eventually came under British influence.

2. JORDANIAN POLITICS DURING KING 'ABD ALLAH'S RULE

INTRODUCTION

The Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan achieved independence from Britain in 1946. After the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, the East and West Banks of the Jordan River were united in order to save the parts of Palestine which remained under Arab control

from Israeli occupation. Unity was confirmed and announced in 1950. Seventeen years later, the West Bank was occupied by Israel during the 1967 war.

Today, Jordan is bounded on the north by Syria, on the north-east by Iraq, on the east and south by Saudi Arabia, and on the west by Israel. The total area of Jordan is 97,740 sq km (37,738 sq miles). The territory west of the Jordan River (the West Bank) -- some 5,600 sq km (2,160 sq miles) -- has been occupied by Israel since June 1967.[25] According to a recent study conducted by the Department of Statistics, Jordan's population stood at 3,888,000 at the end of 1991, (not including the West Bank) much of which was in Amman Governorate where 1.573 million people lived.[26] The Department of Statistics reported that:

> Children under 15 years of age constituted 43 per cent of the total population, down from 45.5 per cent found in a 1987 study and 50.7 per cent in a 1979 study. The 1991 study also indicated that a decline in the fertility rate in the past decade meant a decline in the number of under-15s and a rise in other age groups. The number of people above 60 years old rose by 4.1 per cent in 1987 and by 4.4 per cent in 1991. According to the study, the under-59 group rose from 45 per cent in 1979 to 53 per cent in 1991, indicating that the average life expectancy is on the rise, coupled by a decline in births.[27]

Jordan has been ruled by three monarchs: King 'Abd Allah ibn Al-Husayn (1921-1951), King Tallal ibn 'Abd Allah (1951-1952), and King Husayn ibn Tallal (1952-present).

2.1 POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN JORDAN BEFORE

INDEPENDENCE

A treaty was signed in February 1928 with Britain which granted limited independence; the British retained the right to advise on such matters as financial policy and foreign relations. This same treaty created a constitution, which was proclaimed in April 1928. The first Legislative Council met a year later.[28] A supplementary agreement was added permitting Transjordan to appoint consular representatives in Arab countries in January 1934. Jordan did not have a regular Cabinet with ministers in charge of specified departments until Britain permitted this in May 1939. In addition, the British subsidy and the British-officered to Arab Legion (whose second commander was the famous Sir John Bagot Glubb "Pasha"), helped the amir (prince) before he became King to extend his authority over the country's internal affairs.

The outbreak of the Second World War prompted moves towards independence. This was finally achieved, if only in name, by the Treaty of London on March 22, 1946.[29]

2.2 POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN JORDAN AFTER 1946

On May 25, 1946, 'Abd Allah was proclaimed King and a new constitution replaced the old one of 1928. On behalf of an independent nation, in 1947 King 'Abd Allah signed treaties with Turkey and Iraq and applied for membership to the United Nations; this move was vetoed by the Soviet Union and the United States of America on the grounds that Transjordan was

not an independent state. Britain arranged a new treaty in March 1948, which gave Jordan independence, but retained for Britain military privileges, including the maintenance of airfields and communications, transit facilities, and arrangements for military training. In addition, Britain agreed to provide economic and social aid.[30]

After Israel was created in May 1948, Jordan refused to agree to the internationalization of Jerusalem, and introduced a plan for the resettlement of Arab refugees. Jordan indicated it would accept as permanent the cease-fire boundary. Despite this action in April 1950, Jordan agreed to a resolution by the Arab League Council held in Cairo which ruled out negotiations with Israel or occupation of Palestinian territory. In the same month elections were held in Jordan and the West Bank. The West Bank inhabitants voted to be part of Jordan, which led 'Abd Allah to annex the latter territory formally on April 24, 1950. This step was immediately recognized by Britain.[31]

The East Bank's population was essentially rural and nomadic with a low level of education. The tribal and local character of loyalties limited the East Bank population's involvement at the grassroots level in politics. In contrast, the West Bank population had a quite different political history. There was more Western influence and the educational facilities were much better. A relatively large professional group formed the core of a growing middle class; many of its members had been educated in Britain or continental Europe. Also, because of Jewish migration into Palestine, the

political awareness of the Palestinians had increased. These new elements brought experienced Palestinian leadership into Jordanian politics.

3. JORDANIAN POLITICS DURING KING HUSAYN'S RULE

Since 1948, Jordanian political activity has been conducted under conditions of continued crises involving war, civil interference, constitutional change, and constant alarms in the unstable ceasefire with Israel. Developed organizations, and large popular Western-style parties, with platforms and defined positions on particular issues, were not formed until 1953. Before that the average Jordanian tribesman or villager came into contact with the government only through the mukhtar (village chief), local police, and sometimes with the ra'is al-baladiyah (mayor). On the most important issues, the mutasarrif (provincial governor) was involved. The government seemed distant to the people and was not held in high regard.

As already discussed, family, tribe, and village constitute the significant units of rural Jordanian social life. Within these circles, politics is a loyalty given or withdrawn on the basis of attitudes toward the personality of the individual leader. People turn to the figure most able to help them and their families personally -- to lend money, provide food when needed, give employment, and act as advocate before authority.

This "patron-client" relationship remains a basic force in Jordanian life, even in urban areas. In the villages, the patron is typically a man from a well-established family.

Even such local leaders assemble around other more powerful individuals. It is from these personal loyalties that the larger pattern of Jordanian politics is formed. The highly personal element in leadership and organizational life makes political parties loose organizations around a key individual.

In February 1955, Jordan announced that it intended to join the Baghdad Pact (a Middle Eastern defense arrangement) along with Britain, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Pakistan. There were three days of demonstrations and rioting in Amman.[32] King Husayn called for the Arab Legion (the Jordanian Army) to restore order, and the Hazza' al-Majali government resigned after only several weeks in power.[33] Because of the strong public reaction against the Baghdad Pact, King Husayn dismissed Glubb Pasha as commander of the Arab Legion in March 1956, and British officers were dismissed from the Army.[34]

3.1 THE 1956 ELECTION

Political parties developed more fully in Jordan before the national election of October 1956, which witnessed the victory of leftist, anti-West, pro-Naṣirist candidates. Seven parties were contesting seats in the legislature, although only three of them were legally recognized. These three parties were the Nationalist Socialist Party, the Arab Renaissance Party and the Arab Constitutional Party. The other four which, although the government had declined to register, were nonetheless permitted to participate in the elections, were: the Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamic Liberation Movement, the Arab Nationalist Party, and the National Front (a front

organization for the Communist Party).

In the 1956 elections the <u>Al-Hizb al-Watani al-Ishtiraki</u> (Nationalist Socialist Party) emerged as the strongest political force in Jordan. It gained eleven seats in the new parliament, and Sulayman al-Nabulsi, its leader, formed the new Cabinet. Al-Nabulsi was in favor of close cooperation with Egypt and Syria, cancellation of the treaty with Britain, and neutrality in the East-West struggle. He also advocated establishing relations with the Soviet Union and rejecting American aid.

In April 1957, King Husayn decided to strike against the opponents of his regime. With the help of loyal bedouin regiments, he defeated a military coup. He imposed martial law, dissolved parliament, and disbanded political parties. As a result, Jordan did not establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. The United States replaced Britain as the main source of outside aid, although there was no bilateral treaty or other formal alliance.[35]

3.2 <u>JORDAN AFTER THE 1967 WAR</u>

After the 1967 war, Israel occupied the West Bank, many Palestinian refugees went to the East Bank, and Jordan started to receive financial subsidies from wealthy Arab oil countries. There were questions as to whether the Kingdom of Jordan could still survive the radical nationalist pressures from revolutionary Arab regimes, such as those in Iraq, Egypt, and Syria.

According to Michael Hudson "there was a strong

interrelationship between legitimacy and strength of leadership in the traditional Arab systems".[36] This is clear in Jordanian politics. King Husayn himself was able to quickly adjust his policies to accommodate progressive nationalist forces. For example, despite opposition from Arab countries in February 1960, Jordanian citizenship was offered to all Palestinian refugees who applied for it.[37]

3.3   THE NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

Israeli occupation of the West Bank in June 1967 followed the general elections of April 1967 and impeded the democratic process in Jordan by making it impossible to hold elections in the occupied territories. Because of this there were two forms of parliamentary institutions: an extension of the mandate of the last elected parliament, and the National Consultative Council (NCC). The NCC was created in 1978 as a temporary body empowered to give advice and consultation. The NCC discussed public policy, considered legislation and laws submitted and passed by the government, and debated general state policy in cooperation with the government. The council had no powers to approve, amend, or reject legislation. Its 60 members were appointed for two-year terms, upon the recommendation of the prime minister.[38]

The NCC was dissolved in 1984, when bye-elections were held in the East Bank to fill seven seats vacated by the death of some members of the last elected parliament. Vacant West Bank seats were filled by a vote within the parliament itself. The 60 seats in parliament were divided equally into 30

deputies from each of the East and West Banks.[39]

3.4 JORDAN AFTER 1988

The Palestine intifadah (uprising) against Israeli occupation
of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which began in December 1987,
increased international support for Palestinian national
rights. The Palestinians also demanded statehood and
supported the Palestinian Liberation Organization PLO as the
official representative for the Palestinians. Because of
these circumstances, King Husayn stated that he would
immediately recognize a Palestinian government-in-exile, if
the Palestinian National Council (the governing body of the
PLO) decided to establish such a body. Another issue to be
considered by the PNC was whether to proclaim an independent
Palestinian state in the West Bank. King Husayn stated that
he would immediately recognize a Palestinian Affairs
Department. New electoral laws were approved in 1986 which
increased the number of seats in the lower house from 60 to
140, divided equally between the East and West Banks.[40]

In October 1988 it was decided to revise the electoral
laws as these were inapplicable - dividing seats between the
East and West banks - and the government announced that the
election would be in November 1989.

On November 15, 1988, the PNC proclaimed the
establishment of an independent State of Palestine and, for
the first time, endorsed U.N Security Council Resolution 242
as a basis for a Middle East peace settlement, thus implicitly
recognizing Israel. Jordan and 60 other countries recognized

the new state.

3.5 THE ELECTION OF 1989

After 22 years without an election, Jordan held one in 1989 and for the first time Jordanian women went to the polls to participate in the political process. The election was the result of the breaking of formal ties with the West Bank in July 1988, which removed any reasons for continuing to postpone an election. Another factor contributing to the need for an election was the riots in April 1988, which signalled clearly that the Jordanian people were looking for change -- especially economic reform. Martial law, which had been in force since 1967, and the ban on political parties in effect since 1957, were also unnecessary artifacts of the past.

The general election in Jordan was held on November 8, 1989, for an 80-seat House of Representatives. It was contested by 647 candidates most of whom were independent as a result of the ban on political parties in effect since 1957. However, it was possible for the Muslim Brotherhood MB to present candidates for election, owing to its legal status as a charity rather than a political party. At the election, in which 46% of the total electorate (including, for the first time, women) of 877,475 voted, the MB won 20 seats, while independent Islamic candidates, who were supported by the Muslim Brotherhood, won a further 14 seats.[41] It was estimated that Palestinians or Arab nationalist candidates won seven seats and that candidates who were supported by leftist political groups won four seats. The remaining seats were won

by candidates who were broadly considered to be supporters of the Government.[42]

The King and the government were in favor of democratization and there was no sign of the King or the government intervening in the electoral campaign. The King personally ordered that Article 18 of the Constitution would not be used to ban candidates on grounds of their past political activities; because of this many who had engaged in political activities in the past participated.[43]

Jordanian political institution take the form of a Bi-Cameral system. The king appoints members of the Senate and the parliament is elected. In 1989, there were multiple constituencies, and voters could make seven votes.

Women were allowed to participate in national elections for the first time. There were 12 women among the 647 candidates were competing for 80 seats. Despite the fact that 50% of the potential voters were women, women only constituted about 2% of the candidates.[44] All of the women ran as independents, and their campaigns were not supported by any party, society, or women's organization. In the end, none of the women received much support. The 12 women who ran as candidates in seven voting districts, were:

Hayfa' al-Bashyr received 365 votes, or 1.32% of the
    vote in the district,
Janayt al-Mufti received 2604 votes, or 9.44% of the
    vote in the district,
Tujan al-Faisal received 1328 votes, or 4.74% of the

vote in the district,

Hudā Fakhurī received 2978 votes, or 5.6% of the
vote in the district,

Asbiyr Zriyqat received 828 votes, or 2.32% of the
vote in the district,

Wadad al-Shanawī received 155 votes or, 0.8% of the
vote in the district,

Naydah Bishnaq received 2602 votes, or 4.47% of the
vote in the district,

Nada al-Shar'ā received 491 votes, or 4.01% of the
vote in the district,

'Ayshah al-Khawaja received 1176 votes, or 4.26% of
the vote in the district,

'Ayda al-Mutlaq received 3495 votes, or 5.46% of the
vote in the district,

Mufyda Swydan received 3817 votes, or 5.96% of the
vote in the district,

Na'ilah al-Rashdan received 1046 votes, (percentage
unknown)[45]

In Amman there was 1 woman in the first voting district, 3
were in the third, and 3 in the fifth. Two women stood in
Irbid, 1 In Balqa, 1 in Zarqa, and 1 in Ma'an.[46]

During the election there was one incident worth
mentioning. This was when the deputy <u>mufti</u> (chief religious
official) <u>al-shayhk</u> 'Abd al-Rahman Faris brought a case before
an Islamic court against Tujan al-Faisal, a well-known
television personality and one of the few women candidates
standing for election. She was charged with "apostasy"

because she had "slandered Islam" in an article in the newspaper Al-Ra'i on September 21, 1989, which discussed the role of women in Islam. She raised topics such as wife-beating, polygamy, and child abuse. The mufti asked the court to rule her legally incompetent, dissolve her marriage, separate her from her children, and give protection to anyone who would kill her. The court dismissed the case.[47] It was a rumored that the King personally intervened on al-Faisal's behalf.

The al-Faisal case was a message from the fundamentalists to women indicating that women's issues could not be discussed in the open and that it was imprudent to raise topics such as polygamy and subordination of women, which touch women's lives every day. Because of what happened to al-Faisal, more women felt that women's voices had to be heard, and this brought on a heated discussion in the daily press as to whether people agreed or disagreed with al-Faisal. The debate raised questions about the democratic process and what kind of democracy there was if women were not free to bring their issues to the public without fear of a backlash.

3.6 THE MULTIPARTY SYSTEM IN JORDAN

Following the 1989 election, King Husayn, under increasing pressure to initiate Constitutional reform, promised to allow political parties more freedom, and to tighten controls on corruption. In April 1990, he appointed a 60-member Royal Commission to draft Al-Mithaq al-Watani (The National Charter) to provide a framework for reform. A former Prime Minister,

Ahmad 'Ubaydat, was appointed Chairman of the Commission,
whose members included figures from the country's various
political and religious groupings, including leftists and
religious fundamentalists. The Charter, which achieved
widespread political consensus in its drafting, was adopted as
a constitutional document on July 5, 1991. Soon after,
parliament passed a law legalizing political parties, thus
forming Jordan's first multi-party system since 1954.[48]

A law passed by parliament in August 1992, specified
that parties must have at least 50 founding members; respect
the Constitution; and have no financial or administrative
links with foreign groups or governments. Party names and
symbols should not be similar to those of foreign parties.
The Minister of the Interior had the right to reject or grant
a party's application, but in the case of rejection the party
could appeal to the Supreme Court for a final decision.

With the enactment of the law, several women became
founding members of new political parties. These were as
follows:[49]

1. The centrist Jordanian National Alliance had no
    women among its 167 founding members.

2. The centrist Popular Unity Party had 10 women among
    its 85 founding members.

3. The centrist Jordanian Pledge Party had 3 women
    among its 205 founding members.

4. The Islamic Action Front had 13 women among its 353
    founding members.

5. The centrist Future Party had 5 women among its 160
    founding members.

6. The leftist Jordanian Progressive Democratic Party
    had 17 women among its 96 founding members.

7. The leftist Communist Party had 9 women among its 70 founding members, and 2 women in its executive primary leadership.

8. The leftist Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party had no women among its 72 founding members.

9. The leftist Jordan People's Democratic Party had 14 women among its 100 founding members, and 3 women in its executive primary leadership.

10. The centrist Progress and Justice Party had 7 women among its 175 founding members, and 1 woman in its executive primary leadership.

11. The leftist Jordanian Socialist Democratic Party had 1 woman among its 61 founding members.

12. The centrist Reawakening Party had 1 woman among its 178 founding member, and 1 woman in its executive primary leadership.

13. The leftist Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity had 6 women among its 98 founding members.

14. The centerist Freedom Party had 6 women among its 61 founding members.

15. The centrist Unionist Arab Democratic Party had 10 women among its 182 founding members, and 1 woman in its executive primary leadership.

16. The Islamist/liberal Arab Islamic Democratic Movement had 10 women among its 72 founding members.

17. The leftist Arab Ba'ath Party for Progress had no women among its 76 founding members.

18. The leftist Homeland Party had 13 women among its 152 founding members.

19. The Pan-Arab-leftist Arab Democratic Party of the Masses had 9 women among its 56 founding members.

20. The Pan-Arab-leftist the Jordanian Arab Democratic Party had 10 women among its (uuknown) founding members.

It is clear that there are few women among founding members, and even fewer in the executive primary leadership of these parties.

3.7 JORDAN AFTER 1989

With the peace process that started in June 1991, the country faced growing divisions between the regime and the opposition. Moreover, the opposition was also slit between secularists and Islamist activists. Both secularists and Islamists opposed many aspects of the current system, and both were represented in the professional ranks which led the movement for democratization. However, while both groupings sought for a more open system, they parted company over the Islamists' desire to pursue a socioreligious agenda. They agreed on democracy for all, but the secularists wanted a democracy that would guarantee individual rights.

The Muslim Brotherhood wanted democratic structures to allow them to gain power and alter the political and socioeconomic structure. The influence of the Brotherhood could be seen in the media and in the mosques, and the group became more powerful after it had won the presidencies of the medical association, the engineering association, and the pharmacists' association. It was, besides, the largest bloc in parliament. The regime found itself in opposition to the Brotherhood, whom it had previously used against the left. The Brotherhood called for the liberation of all Palestine and refused to join the Tahir al-Misri government, which had called for peace talks with Israel.

A factor in the increased support for Islamists was that the leftists and nationalists were largely limited to drawing support from urban intellectual elites. The left's failure in the elections showed that their concern with political

doctrines was not shared by average voters, who struggled with practical economic issues and voted instead for the Brotherhood.

III.   THE BACKGROUND TO WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN JORDAN

INTRODUCTION

The structure of Jordanian society in general does not encourage women's public activity. Jordanian women started receiving education in 1922 when six schools for female students were founded[50]. The main employment for educated women until 1962 was as teachers for the Ministry of Education. There were no universities in Jordan until 1963, and women wishing to study in university had to go to neighboring Arab countries, and also had to have family financial support and approval. At the time of writing there are three state universities and all admit women. Also, five private universities have opened recently. These create opportunities for students who would otherwise not meet strict the entrance requirements of the state universities.

The feminist movement in Jordan has been weaker than that in other Arab countries. Before the 1950s, there is no record in Jordan of women's political participation. Whereas urban elite women in other Arab countries took the lead in starting feminist movements, this did not occur in Jordan.

There are several possible explanation for this. First,

up to 1948, there were no large cities in Jordan comparable to Cairo or Damascus. The only major cities in Jordan were Salt and Irbid. Even Amman had only a small population before 1948. Second, in comparison to neighboring Arab countries, Jordanian women did not encounter a tangible enemy British rule in Jordan was more removed than in other countries, and there was no physical occupation even though Jordan was under British mandate. Third, Jordanian women had no experience of working in national liberation movement, which might have made them feel they were an important part of public life. These factors account for the weakness of Jordan's feminist movement.

However, there was an indirect influence from Arab feminist struggles on Jordanian women, even though political participation for women did not start until the early 1950s.[51] Women like Huda Sha'rawi were role models for Jordanian women and the struggles of Palestinian and Algerian women were often used as an example for Arab women.[52] The feminist movement in Jordan was started by women working in the political opposition from 1950-1957 when Jordan had political parties.

1.1 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN FROM 1950 TO 1973

A number of Jordanian women worked in the opposition Al-Harakah al-Wataniyah, but they did not influence the parties concerned towards creating an agenda that would integrate or improve the status of women in society. It is worth mentioning that in the early 1950s most of the women who had

an active role in politics had at least one male family member who was politically active.[53] Most of these women participated under the protection and approval of the male family member.

In the early 1950s, when the opposition was in its prime in Jordan, large numbers of women participated in the party campaigns by word of mouth, distributing flyers, or organizing demonstrations.

While feminists also supported the Palestinian cause and put their energy into demonstrations against the occupation of Palestine, they did not express concern for their own rights or even for obtaining the right to vote. As a result, the feminist movement did not become serious until much later.

The Arab Women's Union was created on June 17 1954, and sought the vote for women. This goal was achieved on March 10, 1955. But the right to vote was limited to women who had at least an elementary education. The new arrangement did not prohibit women from being candidates for office. Unfortunately, women did not practice the right of vote because of the abolition of political parties under martial law.

After the abolition of political parties in 1957, Jordanian political life and mass participation by women levelled off. In the mid-sixties, the educated women started to press for equal rights and free political participation. This trend continued into the seventies.

1.2 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN FROM 1974 to 1989

Women's political participation in Jordan is not as widespread as in neighboring Arab countries. In part, this is because the main issues of the feminist agenda were sidetracked by the Palestinian movement.

The state began to push forward women's political participation in 1974, partly because the U.N. had decided that 1975 would be International Women's Year. King Husayn signed election law No. 8 in 1974, which gave women the right to vote and to run for office. However, no general election was held until November 1989.

In spite of the limited participation of most women, several women did hold public office. From April 20 1978, for example, women were able to participate in politics through membership in the National Consultative Council. Three women were appointed: Widad Bulus, Na'ilah Rashdan, and In'am al-Mufti. The three women came from different backgrounds. Bulus was christian palestinian and a school principle. Rashdan was a native Jordanian , a muslim, and a political active lawyer (see an interview with Rashdan, p. 197), and she was the daughter of a member of the Jordanian Supreme Court. Mufti was a Circassian, the daughter of former prime minister of Jordan Sa'iad al-Mufti, and had received a college education. All three of those women, then were educated and in the case of Rashdan and Mufti kinship ties were important . The women also had some economically independence, as Bulus and Rashdan had their own incomes from their jobs.

The number of female members increased to five in the
second meeting of the council which began on Feb 31, 1979.[54]

The state was intent on increasing and upgrading the
level of women's participation, and in December 1979 a
Ministry of Social Development was established. In'am al-Mufti
was appointed Minister and became the first woman minister to
serve in a Jordanian Cabinet.[55] The Ministry had a budget of
$6.4 million in 1980, and a staff of 99 working in its offices
in Amman. The Department of Women's Affairs was established
within the Ministry of Social Development in 1981.[56]

The state used an integrated approach to women's issues
and programs in an effort to activate and coordinate the
process of overall development. Support was given to the
General Union of Jordanian Women, which had been established
in 1981. The Union was composed of social groups and
individual women. Its primary goal was to promote women's
skills in different fields, with a view to enhancing their
role in social and political development. Also, a Law of
Municipalities was passed in 1982, giving women the right to
vote and be elected to municipal councils.

In 1984, Layla Sharaf became the first female Information
Minister in the Middle East. However, she resigned after some
months because she did not have a free hand in deciding
information policy.

2. THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT IN JORDAN AFTER THE 1989 ELECTION

INTRODUCTION

With the new political atmosphere in Jordan, Jordanian feminists found it easier to raise women's issues for public debate. This was done at several conferences between March 1992 and July 1993, held in Amman. The value of examining these conferences is that they shed light on the position of contemporary Jordanian women.

2.1 SYMPOSIUM ON "THE ROLE OF WOMEN WITH REGARDS TO THE DRAFT LAW ON CIVIL STATUS" HELD ON MARCH 24, 1992

The symposium was organized by the General Federation of Jordanian Women. The first presenter criticized the lack of women involved in the law review, and the second pointed out that the law treated women as minors. Khadijah Abū 'Alī (a political activist), stated that, " women should not abide by laws and regulations to the letter", referring to the need for continual change in the laws. Abū 'Alī indicated that women activists should participate in the law review committee created in 1990 by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, which she said was composed solely of shaykhs.[57]

The second paper, presented by In'am 'Abd al-Hadī (a lawyer), discussed certain aspects of the draft civil status law. For example, she said the definition of marriage under

the draft civil status law was that

> "marriage is a legitimate agreement between man and
> woman aimed at a certain stable family life under
> the husband's care to be founded on a sound basis
> that can ensure for both of them the ability to
> shoulder burdens cordially and compassionately."[58]

'Abd al-Hadī argued that the phrase "under the husband's care"

portrays women as incapable of running their lives and their

families without supervision from men.[59]

2.2 THE CONFERENCE ON THE "STATUS OF JORDANIAN WOMEN" ON MARCH 6, 1993

This conference, attended by Princess Basmah, was organized by

a government committee with the objective of examining women's

status. A paper submitted by the Minister of Planning to the

meeting said that "the low number of women in the nation's

labor force is primarily attributable to the lack of serious

family support for female members working in the labor market

and therefore outside the home."[60] He added that the

unemployment among able-bodied and willing-to-work females was

estimated at 24% of the total unemployed workforce in Jordan.

The Secretary General of the Ministry of Education in his

paper said that "illiteracy stood at 25 per cent of women

above 16 years of age and 12 per cent for men."[61] Also, he

indicated that the total number of females in vocational

training programs was estimated at 86,000 compared to 164,000

males at the end of 1992. He noted that more than 57% of

students at community colleges were women and said that

"despite the high number of school and university students,

numerous constraints continue to obstruct the path of women in

assuming senior positions in Jordan's social and economic

sectors".[62] Attorney Tahir Hikmat suggested that a

comprehensive study of laws related to women be conducted with

a view to introducing amendments that would end the privileges

of men over women.[63]

This conference ended with a recommendation for another

meeting entitled "Towards a National Women's Strategy in

Jordan." Princess Basmah emphasized that there was a need to

activate the role of Jordanian women in comprehensive

development. This required a commitment to find ways of

putting the final strategy into practice so that the public

can see and feel its effects.

2.3 LECTURE ON "CRITICIZING EXISTING SOCIAL VALUES AND LAWS AS DISCRIMINATING AGAINST WOMEN" ON MARCH 6, 1993

An important lecture was organized by the 'Abd al-Hamid Shuman

Foundation. Suhayr al-Tall, a prominent Jordanian writer,

said that the Jordanian women's movement was suffering, partly

because women themselves did not exercise enough effort to

bring on change. Al-Tall indicated that the Jordanian women's

struggle had failed to introduce change or raise awareness

among women. She characterized this failure as resulting from

the dominant perceptions of a woman's role in society that are

usually based upon a traditional tribal or patriarchal style

of thinking. For example, school textbooks continue to

portray women as housewives or as weak creatures who rely on

men to rescue them from dangers or critical situations. Al-
Tall added that there was a lack of representation in the
recently established political parties, which provided further
evidence of the absence of women in the political arena.
Women were only used at the last minute to complete the
numbers required for licensing these parties.[64]

2.4 SYMPOSIUM ON "THE CREATION OF A NATIONAL SOCIETY" ON MARCH 12, 1993

This symposium was at the Royal Cultural Center. It
recommended the "creation of a national society", to defend
women's rights in conjunction with Amnesty International.[65]
Although this conference was not specifically feminist, it
raised many issues on the feminist agenda. Participants said
that there was a large gap between the theory and practice to
women's rights. Participants also devoted time to discussing
the rights of women obtaining passports independently from men
and having access to family planning. Other subjects included
the need to form pressure groups to ensure the enactment of
laws giving equal rights and treatment to men and women, and
focusing on women as victims of rape, sexual exploitation,
severe punishment, and other forms of maltreatment.

2.5 SYMPOSIUM ON "THE AGREEMENT FOR THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN" ON APRIL 20, 1993

The symposium was arranged by the Business and Professional

Women's Club. The purpose of the symposium was to shed light

on the U.N. agreement on discrimination against women and to

discuss its suitability for approval in Jordan. The symposium

was held in Amman at the Chamber of Commerce. The symposium

tried to bring to the public important issues related to

women's status by inviting well-known guests from both sides

for balanced discussions. Even though these meetings did not

recommend any strategy to change the status quo, at least

women knew what they were facing and would be prepared for the

next step.

At the meeting, Aḥmad 'Ubiydāt, the former prime minister

of Jordan, said that the United Nations agreement for the

elimination of discrimination against women did not contradict

the Jordanian Constitution.[66] He said that each country

should have the right to interpret the United Nations

agreement in a way that conformed with its constitution and

its traditions and values. He indicated that more analysis

was required before Jordan could give an answer as to whether

the U.N. agreement would be adopted. The former Social

Affairs Minister, In'am al-Mufti, and director general of the

Noor Al-Husayn Foundation, said that in 1988, 94 countries

validated the U.N. agreement, but only four of these countries

were Arab. "Iraq, Tunisia, Yemen and Egypt are the Arab

countries that approved the U.N agreement; Jordan signed the

agreement in principle but has not yet validated it".[67] She

indicated that the agreement was flexible and took into

consideration the traditions of each country, and that Jordan

needed to examine how to implement it with respect to its

traditions.

'Abd al-Azīz al-Khayyat, former Minister of <u>Awqaf</u>
(Islamic Affairs), said that Islamic law and gave women
equality with men -- as children, as girls, as young women, as
wives, and as mothers. Nevertheless, he said that certain
aspects mentioned in the U.N. agreement were in contradiction
with Islamic Law. For example, "Women can not inherit equally
with men as it is men who have financial burdens that women
are exempt from." [68] He also said that "Women have equality
in working, as long as that does not negatively affect the
children's upbringing". He added that women have equality in
politics in their right to vote and the opportunity to learn
in mixed schools, as long as the seating arrangement separated
men from women. Al-Khayyat said it was not possible to change
Islamic Law with respect to women's dress, eating, drinking,
marriage and inheritance, because there were norms and
traditions by which men and women in society abide.[69] This
represented the traditional religious view.

2.6 <u>THE SEMINAR ON "WOMEN AND POLITICAL ACTION" ON</u>

<u>JULY 5, 1993</u>

A seminar was held at the Royal Cultural Center on July 5,
1993, chaired by Laylā Sharaf, a member of the Senate of
Parliament. The seminar was organized by the new women's
research center in Jordan. Sharaf told the seminar that "we
should not keep on blaming society - though it plays a major
role for women in the present crisis; nor should we blame the
man, though he has also stood in the way of women's

development.... We should not distance ourselves from our responsibility if we really want to get out of this deadlock". She said that feminist actions should concentrate on raising awareness among women in the countryside of their rights, especially their political rights.[70]

2.6 CONCLUSION

Whereas the early feminist movement tended to concentrate on the Palestinian issue, recent feminists have taken advantage of greater political openness to present women's issues for public debate.

3. THE DEBATE OVER GRANTING WOMEN A QUOTA OF SEATS IN PARLIAMENT

INTRODUCTION

Just before the 1993 parliamentary elections, advocates of women's issues were pondering ways and means which would advance women's chances of getting into Jordan's 12th Parliament. One idea which was floated was granting women a quota of seats in the Parliament. While advocates of such a quota system describe it as a positive action, rivals said that it would be undemocratic, depriving qualified men of seats in the legislature. This issue was to divide the feminist movement. However, a quota system was already incorporated in Jordan's Election Law, which ensured that racial groups, such as Circassians and Christians, were

represented in Parliament. Nine seats were reserved for

Christians, two for Circassians, and one for Chechens.

Although women, theoretically, could take all seats in

parliament through the electoral process, Parliament did not

at that time include a single woman.

3.1 ARGUMENTS FOR THE QUOTA SYSTEM

Advocates of the quota system said that it would ensure that

minorities participated in the decision-making process.

Although women were not a minority, they were politically

disadvantaged. Twelve women ran in the 1989 elections but

none of them won. They all ran as independents, and their

campaigns were not supported by any party, society, or women's

organization.

In March 1993, quota advocate Arwah al-'Amiri, president

of the Center for Women's Studies was quoted as saying "many

Jordanians still perceive that a woman's place is in the

home." She added that "even though women are increasingly

becoming more visible in the public arena, they still only

occupy lower level positions with few exceptions."[71]

Suhayr al-Tall said the quota system was needed because

many parties which supported women's rights instead decided to

increase their chances of winning by nominating men, rather

than implementing their own programs and nominating women.[72]

She added that the role of women in the 1989 elections was

extremely limited. First, only a small number of women stood

for election. Second, women were not aware of their rights

and their voting patterns showed that the majority of them

followed the voting of their fathers, brothers, or husbands.

Some feminists accepted the quota system as being
temporary action until society changed and women became
incorporated in all aspects of life. At that point, women
would be able to win office on their own merits.[73]

Some feminists felt that the presence of women in the
public arena would increase women's political, social, and
economic skills. They argued that women could not develop if
they were isolated from public life, and that the current
Parliament had neglected women's issues and had weakened the
civil status laws associated with women.

3.2 ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE QUOTA SYSTEM

It is worth mentioning that some feminists opposed the quota
system on the grounds that it would place mainly conservative
women in Parliament, and would sign away the remaining rights
of women in Jordan. Other feminists saw the quota system as
undemocratic, and here they had political allies.

The Chairman of the Islamic Action Front, Ishaq al-Farhan
said "I oppose the quota system because I perceive men and
women as equals...enactment of the quota will portray women as
inferior to men."[74] 'Abd al-Ra'uf al-Rawabdah, a deputy in
the Parliament, said that the quota system would only benefit
a minority of women - those who work in the public arena. He
added that this representation of women would be "fake" since
women would be ensured a place in Parliament by law, not by
the choice of the people.[75]

3.3 CONCLUSION

The debate over the quota system raised other related women's issues with the public. These issues had never before been debated in Jordan. The outcome was that the idea died out before the 1993 elecation.

4. THE JORDANIAN ELECTION OF 1993

INTRODUCTION

The first multiparty poll since 1956, the year before King Husayn outlawed parties after a failed left-wing coup to overthrow his Hashemite dynasty, was held in Jordan on November 8, 1993. There were 20 political parties registered, and the elections saw leftists, centrists, conservatives, traditionalists, and pragmatists competing. It was also the first test of Palestinian support for the Washington peace accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. The peace talks with Israel were opposed by the fundamentalist Islamic Action Front (IAF), which constituted the biggest bloc in the previous parliament. There were 550 candidates, including three women.

It is important to mention that there were three incidents which seemed likely to interrupt the process. The first was the change in the voting law from bloc voting to a one-person, one-vote system, which the Islamists in particular interpreted as a government move to cut their support and strengthen tribal voting patterns. The second event, the PLO-

Israel agreement in September, caused more upset, as it
suggested that Jordanians of Palestinian origin who chose to
vote in the elections planned for the West Bank in 1994 would
not also be able to vote in the Jordanian elections. Also
there were strong indications that the Jordanian elections
would be postponed due to the agreement. The third incident
was when the government rejected the IAF's application to hold
election rallies. The ban was overturned by the courts only
10 days before voting day, and this contributed to a fairly
quiet campaign.[76]

4.1 THE RESULT OF THE 1993 ELECTION

The result of the 1993 election was that centrist and
traditional candidates, who endorsed the King's peace dealings
with Israel and further democratization moves, won over 50 of
the 80 parliament seats. Islamic fundamentalists, who
hostilely opposed peace with Israel, lost nearly a third of
the 22 seats won in 1989.

The campaign raised no major national issues. Voter
turnout was higher than in the 1989 elections, with 68% of
registered voters casting their ballot in the 1993 election,
compared to 46% in 1989.[77] Voters in Amman gave the highest
number of votes to the IAF candidates. Jordan's first woman
member of parliament, Tujan al-Faisal, was elected in Amman.
Al-Faisal was an outspoken feminist and liberal whom the
Islamists had tried to have declared an "apostate" during the
1989 campaign. She won one of the three seats reserved for
the Circassian minority, although she only received 1885

votes, or 4% of the total in the third district. Two other women stood, but received even lower support. Janayt al-Mufti came fourth for this seat, with 853 votes, or 1.8% of the total. Naydah Bishnaq, in the city of Zarqa drew 1195 of the votes, or 1.3% of the total.[78]

It important to mention that Kerak, which in 1989 turned its back on traditionalist leaders, returned a leading tribal figure and leader of the centre-right nationalist Al-Ahd party. Tafilah, in contrast, voted heavily for newcomer and pan-Arab leftist Muhammad Daoudiah, while the Balqa constituency, which includes the quintessentially Jordanian city of Salt, now has among its eight deputies two representatives of Palestinian origin elected largely by the residents of the Baq'ah refugee camp and representing their interests. Only 26 former deputies returned to the new house.

The election showed a strong desire by Jordanians to see change. This was reflected in the election of a liberal woman member of parliament for the first time.

4.2 CONCLUSION

The 1993 election saw a high voter turnout and a strong swing away from Islamists. It was disappointing that only three women stood as candidates, but the consolation was that for the first time in Jordan a woman was elected as a member of parliament, and it was a particular victory for the feminist movement that it was Al-Faisal.

5. JORDANIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS: OFFICIAL

AND UNOFFICIAL

Although after 1989 women were able to vote, they still found
it difficult to use the political system to advance their
cause. Thus, many of the issues were raised by women's
charitable associations. The associations were first started
by female royalty as social welfare agencies for the poor and
for children. Later on, educated women and working women
became involved with associations, and as a result the goal of
these organizations changed to calling for more political
rights for women.

5.1 JORDANIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS FROM 1944 TO 1954

The first women's association in Jordan was created in 1944
under the name of Al-Tadamun al-Nisa'i al-Ijtima'i (Women's
Social Support). The mother of Prince Tallal was honorary
President of this association. The goal of the association
was to care for children and women and enhance the social
welfare of the poor and needy. On May 31, 1945, another
association was established under the name Al-Itthad al-Nisa'i
al-Urduni (General Jordanian Women's Association), again with
Prince Tallal's mother as honorary President. The acting
President was Princess' Zayn Al-Sharaf, now known as the queen
mother.[79] This association differed from Women's Social
Support in that its goal was to increase the level of
education for women, raise basic health standards for
children, and give assistance to poor mothers. In 1949, the

two associations become one under the name of the <u>Al-Jam'yah</u>
<u>al-Nisa'iyah al-Urduniyah al-Hashimiyah</u> (Hashemite Jordanian
Women's Association). However, the association dissolved in
that same year.[80] No official explanation was given for this.

Between 1951 and 1979 there were more than 340
associations in the General Union of Social Associations,
which was formed by the Social Welfare Ministry.[81] Women's
associations, defined as those with only women as members,
totalled 32 out of the 340 associations. Basically, they
provided financial assistance to kindergartens, day care
centers, centers for homeless children and the elderly,
schools for the handicapped, and charities for the poor.[82]

Several women's clubs also worked in social activities
with an emphasis on education. The membership of these clubs
was made up of different classes and political affiliations.
Three major clubs were the Professional Women's Club, and the
Arab Women's College Club. Members of the Arab Women's
College Club had to have a college degree and most of their
activities were of an intellectual nature. All of these clubs
sponsored lectures and educational activities for their
members. In addition, most did charity work, but none
seriously addressed women's issues.

There was also an association to combat women's
illiteracy through work in poor areas and refugee camps. With
the help of the Ministry of Education, this association opened
an evening school for women, staffed by Ministry of Education
teachers.

5.2 THE ARAB WOMEN'S UNION FROM 1954 TO 1974

Some Jordanian women saw the need for a unified organization which would improve women's status. On June 17, 1954, Al-Ittihad al-Nisa'i al-'Arabi (the Arab Women's Union) was founded by more than 100 women from Amman. The president was Emily Bisharat[83]. For the first time in Jordan the question of women's right to vote and to participate in parliament was publicly raised.[84] After much work and discussion, in 1955 women achieved a declaration from the parliament giving them the right to vote in the national elections if they had an elementary education. However, women could still not be candidates for election. The union was not satisfied with this and continued to work for equal status with men. Their principal argument was that whereas women with an elementary education could vote, men who were illiterate could both vote and run for office. The union kept pressing this point and wrote a petition in February 1956 endorsed by thousands of women who used their fingerprints rather than their signatures - as this was the means of identification used when illiterate men voted. This was perhaps the most unusual petition ever submitted in Jordan up to that time.[85]

In March 1956, the Arab Women's Union called for modifying the personal status law and for the abolition of polygamy.[86] The union also wanted to modify the labor laws to ensure better conditions for Jordanian working women. In June of that year, the union also asked for the right to vote and be candidates in municipal council and village council elections.[87]

The Arab Women's Union asked the government in June 1956
to train women to carry arms and administer first aid and
render civil defense. They sought this at a time when Egypt
was under attack from Britain, France, and Israel after the
Egyption government had nationalized the Suez canal. Also,
the Arab Women's Union organized demonstrations in support of
Algerian women against French occupation.[88] In interview in
1994 Emily Nafa' said that in 1956 Jordanian women asked to
have equal rights under law and sought to abolish the
Jordanian-British treaty.[89]

In 1957, the Arab Women's Union was dissolved following
King Husayn's move to restrict political parties and other
organizations in Jordan.[90]

5.3 JORDANIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS FROM 1974 TO 1991

A.   ASSOCIATION THE UNION OF JORDANIAN WOMEN'S UNION

In 1974, a new independent women's organization was formed:
the Jam'iyat al-Ittihad al-Nisa'i al-Urduni (the Association
of the Jordanian Women's Union). One factor which led to the
establishment of this organization was the United Nations'
announcement that 1975 would be International Women's Year. A
large number of women who had experience working in voluntary
associations joined this new association. The association was
officially formed on November 17, 1974. The organization was
permitted by the Ministry of the Interior. Emily Bisharat was
the president of this Association.

In its constitution, the organization set its goals as to

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improve the educational, social, and economic status of women, to ensure that women would be able to enjoy all their rights as citizens, workers, and housewives, to have good relationships with other local and international unions and associations, and to represent Jordanian women in local and international conferences.[91]

When the Association started, it had just 100 members, but after six years there were 3,000. The Association put its emphasis on vocational work for women and on combating illiteracy, and opened a center in Amman to train women to sew, embroider, and knit, as well as to learn to type in Arabic and English. Completion certificates were given at the end of the two-month training period. There were also branches in northern and southern Jordan. Clubs aimed at educational activities for children were also created.[92]

Emily Bisharat told the researcher the Association first published a journal in 1975 under the name of Al-Ra'idah (Pioneer). These journals were stopped when the association was dissolved.[93]

The Association was also politically active. It played a supportive role for Palestinians by holding a demonstration in March 1975 in front of the International Red Cross office to protest against the torture of Palestinians in prison.[94] On July 1, 1975 the Association sent a telegram to the Secretary General of the United Nations, signed by thousands of women asking him to intervene on behalf of the imprisoned president of the Jam'iyat In'ash al-Usrah (Family Assistance Association) of the West Bank. Finally, the Association was

dissolved by the Ministry of the Interior on October 26, 1981.
The justification given for this move was that the Association
was involved in activities that were outside its own
constitution. In reality, the Association had become very
active and was well organized and the government felt it could
be a potential threat.[95] In 1989, the case of the Association
of the Jordanian Women's Union came before the courts and it
was decided that the 1981 dissolution was unconstitutional.
Thus, the organization was reestablished.

B.   THE BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S CLUB

The Club was established in 1976, and in 1984 started to
increase its activities by offering advisory services to
Jordanian women, for example, free legal assistance. By 1986,
the Club had started to play an important role in working to
modify laws such as the civil laws and to inform women about
their rights and duties.[96] Panels were created with
government decision-makers to discuss women's issues. Another
project begun in 1989 was to help women start small businesses
to reduce the unemployment in Jordan. Also, before the 1993
election the Club started panels to encourage women to vote.[97]

    The Club tried to politicize Jordanian women in any way
it could to make them aware of their rights. The Club
proposed three changes in the personal status law to the
Ministry of Justice in 1993, first, a man should pay alimony
to a woman until she remarries when there was no reason for
divorce (but that she must have a court decision to be
eligible). Second, the deferment dowry should be adjusted for

inflation. Third, there should be a fund available for child

support until the court gave a decision.[98]

C. THE GENERAL JORDANIAN WOMEN'S UNION

In 1981, a new official women's organization under the name of

Al-Ittihad al-Nisa'i al-Urduni al-'Amm (the General Jordanian

Women's Union) was established to represent women and was

funded by the Ministry of Social Affairs. Because of this

official influence, many women were hesitant to join.

5.4 WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AFTER 1991

There were two large of women's organization after 1991 in

Jordan: the General Jordanian Women's Union and the

reestablished Association of Jordanian Women's Unions.

Several parties also had their own women's organizations.

IV. WOMEN AND EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

A key hypothesis of this thesis is that as women become more

educated, their political participation will increase. It is

worth in this context examining the development of women's

education in Jordan in detail.

   As noted earlier, in 1922 there were six schools for

female students and ten schools for male students. In 1922

there were 318 girls in elementary schools and 2182 boys at

the same stage. The number had increased by 1945-1946 to 1956

girls and 7918 boys.[99]

1. **EDUCATION IN JORDAN AFTER 1952**

It is now generally accepted in Jordan that women have the right to and need for an education. Education in Jordan became compulsory in 1952 for elementary school, which is six years, and preparatory school, which is three years. Higher education is also available for women. The University of Jordan was established in 1962, the University of al-Yarmuk in 1976, and Mu'tah University in 1982.

Total enrolment of women, a useful measure of educational development, is illustrated in the following table:[100]

Stage	School year	Males	Females	%Female
Elementary	1975-6	206,618	179,394	46
	1984-5	256,841	245,412	49
Preparatory	1975-6	67,388	48,229	42
	1984-5	108,339	69,463	47
Secondary	1975-6	25,394	16,743	40
	1984-5	49,917	46,685	49
Secondary voca-tional	1975-6	4,548	1,893	29
	1984-5	18,679	10,347	36
Higher education-institutes	1975-6	7,904	3,969	33
	1984-5	30,070	23,825	44
Universities	1984-5	15,875	10,054	39

This table shows how much of an improvement there has been from 1975 to 1985. (More details are given in Appendix 2). There is also evidence of a change in attitudes regarding the purpose of women's education. A study by Najat al-Sanabary in 1985 found that a majority of the women in her sample said they were looking for work in educational and occupational fields previously dominated by men.[101]

The Secreatry General of the Ministry of Education referred to the fact it that 57% of student in community

colleges in 1992 (see p. 150) were women. This compared to
50.9% in 1986-87 (see table p. 279). This increase was
typical of women's participation at all levels of education
and is likely to have been a major factor increasing women's
political participation (see p. 254).

1.2 CONCLUSION

Women have had increased access to engineering studies and to
the natural, physical, and medical sciences. This reflects a
marked change towards education since the 1970s, when women
concentrated on studies that would make them better wives and
mothers. There is no doubt that education improves the lives
of women, despite the restrictions that still exist for them
in political activities.

V. WOMEN IN THE LABOR FORCE

INTRODUCTION

The patterns of women's participation in the labor force are
changing. An investigation of these patterns shows definite
shifts over time, especially during the past decade profound
the changes in the national economy have occurred. Changes in
the regional oil economy, as well as the increase in planned
development on the national level, have had a significant
impact upon the structure and nature of women's work.

As noted earlier, better education has increased the
opportunities open to women in the workforce. Jordanian women

entered the labor force in the 1950s despite societal

opposition. This opposition is illustrated by the state ban on

the employment of women in government agencies until 1947;

married women, moreover, were not allowed to teach.[102] Most

women who had taken a non-agricultural occupation by the 1970s

were either teachers or were working for the government as

public servants. Later, it became acceptable for women, even

married women, to work for wages outside the home (See

Appendix 3).

1. THE PROBLEMS OF STUDYING WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE

Jordanian statistics about women in the workforce are limited

to government employees, and do not include women in the

private sector, or in the army. Most statistics on the

private sector take into account institutions with more than

five people, which excludes small businesses. For example, a

woman who works at home or a woman who works as a maid or a

baby sitter would not be counted.

According to government figures, in 1980 about 48% of

Jordan's population was female. 50.7% of women were under 15

years old, 34.4% were 15-39; 10% were 40-54; and 4.6% were

more than 55.[103] A recent statement by the secretary general

of the Ministry of Labor in Jordan indicates that "at present

women form 14 per cent of the total workforce in the Kingdom,

up from 7.4 per cent in 1979".[104] However, the assessment of

women's participation in the agricultural sector remains

problematic because of the differing definitions of employment

and the contradictions between various studies.[105] This makes

it difficult to generalize about increasing or decreasing participation in this sector. A 1979 estimate was that 70% of the female labor force was in agriculture and this constitute 33% of all labor. Of these, only 2.2% were paid and permanent workers, 17.6% are paid and non-permanent, and 79.8% were unpaid.[106]

1.2 THE OBSTACLES FACING WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE

A study of obstacles facing women workers in Jordan was published in 1989. Its author, Amal al-Farhan, used interviews with women and men working in administration offices of the Ministry of Education in Amman. Her sample identified 2460 people working as administrators, of which 81.7% were male and 18.3% were female. She found that only 2.8% of women believed they would be promoted. The rest mentioned the lack of motivation in their current position due to the limited chances for promotion, or the lack of training provided. According to al-Farhan, the Ministry of Education did not send women employees to training courses to improve their work skills. In addition, when promotions are given a man always had priority.[107]

2. JORDANIAN LABOR UNIONS

The labor movement in Jordan started in 1948 under the name Jam'iyat al-'Ummal al-'Arab al-Filastiniyah (Arab Palestinian Workers' Association) in Hayfa. After the occupation of Palestine, the Association moved to Amman. The activities of the Union continued until 1951, but after 1952 the name was

changed to the Jordanian Labor Association; however, in the same year, it was dissolved by the state.[108]

Owing to popular pressure, the state issued law No. 35 in 1953, which gave the Ministry of Social Affairs the right to issue licenses to labor unions in Jordan. By 1956, there were 27 associations within the General Union of Jordanian Labor, which including the Vocational Association, the Industrial Association, Government Employee Association, and Agriculture Labor Association.[109] But the state contest government employees being classified as "labor," and forbade them to have an association. Labor union activities increased in the early 1970s with the Ministry of Labor responsible for all labor associations.

2.1 WOMEN IN JORDANIAN LABOR UNIONS

Most working women were working for the government and were thus excluded from labor unions. According to Ministry of Labor statistics,[110] 80% of women in private education participated in unions; 28% of women in banking; 20% of those who worked in stores; and 25% of those who worked in travel agencies and airlines. In other areas, participation in unions was less than 1%. (See Appendix 4 for more details.)

In explaining the low level of women's participation in unions, Suhayr al-Tall has contended that women feel the laws do not protect them from employers and fear losing their jobs. Also, because of the absence of democracy in Jordan, women are afraid to confront the state. The consequences for a woman sent to prison would be devastating, given cultural norms and

the inevitable involvement of the whole family in the
process.[111]

This seems reasonable. It is also likely that women are
not aware of their rights, which is the fault of the Unions
because they do not stand for women's rights or demand more
protection for women under the law. Based on the above
analysis, it is clear that women's participation in the
Jordanian labor force has been increasing in recent decades.
It has increased not because women achieved a better position
in society, but because economic necessity forced many women
to work outside the home. Islamic culture did not stand in
the way of women joining the labor force in greater numbers.
Indeed, many women today have adopted the _hijāb_ as a symbol of
identity that does not interfere with their roles in the
modern urban workforce.

3. __THE STATE ROLE IN PROVIDING EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN__

The attempt by the state to further development raised the
need for more workers and created new opportunities for women
by providing the appropriate environment for women's
employment through planning and legislation. The state as is
clear from plan in The 1976-1980 Five-Year Plan, emphasized
the need for a new concept of social organization, assuming
that all sectors of the population would participate
effectively in development and women's participation in the
wage labor force would be significantly increased.[112]

In February 1977, the Ministry of Labor created the
position "Secretary for Women's Affairs," the job description

being to follow up and implement the resolutions of the
Manpower Symposium, which was held in April 1976 and focused
specifically on the role of Jordanian women. According to
Nadyah Hijab,

> The Symposium adopted some 55 resolutions to
> modernize labor legislation, enforce universal and
> compulsory education, expand work opportunities for
> women, provide training and placement services,
> conduct research on obstacles and attitudes
> preventing women's participation, enforce the
> principle of equal pay for equal work, and involve
> women at the policy making-level.[113]

The 1976-1985 plan included measures to promote women's
education, organize special training programs for women, and
establish child care centers. This plan was discussed during
several conferences and seminars on women organized by
different governmental and non-governmental institutions.[114]

4. THE EFFECT OF LABOR MIGRATION ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN

The effect of labor migration to the Gulf was twofold. First,
the migration of men encouraged women to join the workforce to
replace male migrants. At the same time, the rise in the cost
of living pushed more women to work outside the home. Second,
the labor migration that increased women's involvement in
economic activity also led to women having a greater share in
decision-making, because the women left behind had more family
responsibilities. The extent to which this occurred, however,
was uneven and depended greatly on the woman's position prior
to the man leaving. A newly married young woman would not
find her position strengthened until she has children,

particularly sons, and establishes control over her own household by wresting control from her mother-in-law.

Women with an education benefitted most from the labor migration of men to the oil countries. A woman with poor skills and low education level had little employment potential. Such a woman did not have a promising job future outside the home, and in many cases dropped out of the workforce altogether and lived on the money sent by the male working outside the country.

Jordan also employed large numbers of Egyptian and Asian workers, estimated in 1980 at 80,000.[115] (See Appendix 6 for up-to-date numbers), taking up the vacancies created by absent Jordanian males. This not only delayed the entry of women into vacancies in the labor force, but may in fact have removed some from those spheres where they had high levels of participation in the past. This phenomenon showed itself clearly in the agricultural sector, but also occurred in urban areas where domestic services were increasingly performed by non-Jordanians. However, the number of outside laborers decreased after the second Gulf War according to government statistics, due mainly to an economic slow down and high unemployment in Jordan.[116] (Unemployment figures are given in Appendix 7.)

In the last few years Jordan has been in a recession and has been faced with backlash migration from the Gulf after the war and a cut in Arab aid. Since then, the unofficial policy has been for the withdrawal of women from the labor force as a solution for the rapidly intensifying unemployment problem in

the country. The policy was implicit rather than explicit; for example, if a man and a woman applied who had equal job qualifications applied for a job, the man would be given priority on the assumption that the man would be the provider, ignoring the fact that some women provide for themselves and their family.

If this policy is pursued, then even the limited inroads that women have recently achieved in the formal sectors of the economy will be threatened and they will be likely to disappear once again into the "invisible" and unmeasured spheres of labor.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the state needs women in order to successfully pursue development in Jordan. To do so, the state must create opportunities for women and integrate them in the national development plan. Many women have taken advantage of education and training, and have contributed to their country's development. As in many other Arab nations, the state gave the space to women, but recently the state has been trying to push women back home.

VI. WOMEN AND THE LAW

INTRODUCTION

To encourage more women to participate politically, it is not only necessary to increase their opportunities in education

and in the labor force, but also to change the laws affecting women. This legal perspective argues that Jordan's existing laws, and especially the personal status laws and labor laws, slow down the process of integration, and demands that they be changed to accommodate the evolving role of women.[117] I will give a brief description of the legal position affecting Jordanian women.

1. JORDANIAN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

In the 1952 constitution, Article 6 stated that "all Jordanians will be treated the same in laws in terms of rights and duties even though they are different in color, language, or religion." Article 23 ensured the right of work for all citizens and the duty of the state to make that available to everyone. Although the election law gave a man a right to vote and to be a candidate, women did not have rights to either. However, this was changed in 1954, as a result of hard work by women's organizations (as mentioned earlier) to change Article 8 of the election law so as to give women with elementary schooling the right to vote. However, women did not have a chance to practice their right because parliament was abolished. It was not until 1974 that King Husayn changed Article 8, and finally all women gained the right to vote and to be a candidate. Women could not practice these rights until the election in 1989.

From the above, it is clear that the constitution does not discriminate against women.

2. WOMEN AND LABOR LAW

In general, the legislation regarding working women in the
Arab world is reasonable by international standards. The 1960
Labor Law, Article 21, was the first attempt to regulate labor
laws for men and women in Jordan. There were specific
articles concerning women's rights. Article 46 prohibited
women from working in dangerous areas or in situations that
involved a hazard to health. Article 47 prohibited women from
working at night except in a situation recognized by the
Ministry of Social Welfare. Also, according to Article 50 (a)
women had the right to three weeks paid leave before her baby
was due, and three weeks with half pay after the baby was
born. However, Article 51 stipulated that women employees
must have worked at least for the last 180 days before they
are allowed to take maternity leave and gain protection from
dismissal because of the pregnancy. Article 45 (4) stated
that women working regularly must have two weeks paid leave
after maternity, but must have spent six months on the job and
have a report from a doctor, and that the first sick day would
be without pay.

The Labor Law did not give a woman any kind of special
right concerning her children, such as free time to breast-
feed them. However, Article 35 (3) specified that
institutions with more then 30 women employees must provide a
day care center for children under six years old. In general,
the Labor Law did not discriminate against women in terms of
wages. Article 19 (1) indicated that if a woman left her job
because she got married, she would retain rights to social

security, if she had spent at least six months in her job.

A new Labor Law was adopted in 1980. It tackled some of the problems of working women. For example, Article 191 prohibited women from working in certain industries, such as those using chemicals or in any work considered dangerous to the workers' health. Also, Article 188 said that women may work at night if the nature of her job required it, and that the Ministry of Labor had the authority to change Article 188 if there was a need for more women workers, for example, if there was a war or other crisis. The new law recognized the right of an employee mother after maternity. For example, she had the right to feed her child for an hour with pay under Article 195. The law again stressed, in Article 196, that every employer who has 30 women employees must provide a nurse at the day care center. Article 116 said that it was illegal to fire a woman employee because of marriage.

The table below compares maternity leave in various Arab countries as of 1984:[118]

	Maternity Leave	% of wages paid during leave
Algeria	84 days	50
Bahrain	45 days	100
Egypt	50 days	100
Iraq	70 days	100
Jordan	42 days	50
Kuwait	70 days	100
Lebanon	40 days	100
Libya	100 days	100
Morocco	80 days	50 for 10 weeks
Oman	45 days	100
Saudi Arabia	56 days	50 or 100 according to the length of service
Sudan	56 days	100
Syria	50-60 days	50-70
Tunisia	30 days	66
U.A.E	45 days	50 or 100

Yemen   60 days   100

The table shows that there are differences in how generous
maternity leave is.

3. TREATMENT OF WOMEN IN THE CIVIL RETIREMENT LAW

Like the Labor Law the Civil Retirement Law No. 3, 1941 had
specific rules for women. Article 17 said that a male
employee may retire if he has spent 20 years working; on the
other hand, female employees may retire after 15 years.
Article 24 said that if a retired woman has inherited two
pensions she has the right to only one of them. Article 34
specified that when a retired woman employee dies, her
retirement salary is only paid when there were people
dependent on her when she was alive. However, when a retired
man dies, the retirement salary is always paid, whether or not
the next of kin were dependent on him.

4. TREATMENT OF WOMEN IN THE SOCIAL SECURITY LAW

The Social Security Law No. 30, 1978, also had specific rules
for women employees. Article 41 said that a male employee has
the right to social security when he becomes 60 years old, but
a female employee gets it when she is 55. The same article
(e) said that employees have the right to all social security
benefits when they retire, but they must have participated in
social security for at least 180 months, so that they can have
a benefits until they die.

5. TREATMENT OF WOMEN IN THE PERSONAL STATUS LAW

The personal status laws of 1976 were derived from the shari'ah and cover marriage, guardianships, dowries, the rights of the wife, the rights of the husband, polygamy, al-muhkala'ah (paid divorce), divorce, custody, and inheritances. These issues will be examined separately. (See Appendix 5, legislative indices of the position of women within Arab Societies 1993).

Marriage

Article 61 (2) of the personal status laws defined marriage as a contract between a woman and a man, like any other type of contract. In order to be valid, there must be two men as witnesses or a man and two women as stated in Article 17; the law considers two women equivalent to one man. Also, Article 33 said that if a Muslim woman marries a non-Muslim her marriage is invalid, but if a Muslim man marries a Christian or Jewish woman it is considered valid.

Marriage Guardians

The law defined a guardian as the person who signs a marriage contract on behalf of a woman. Article 2 said the minimum age of marriage for a boy is 16 and for a girl 15. If the woman is under 18, a guardian must be present. The guardian in the marriage must be a man from the family of the bride. A woman over 18 who has married before has the right to conduct her marriage contract without a guardian. However, Article 22

stated that if a woman over 18 has never married, the
guardian has the right to ask a judge to cancel the marriage
if the prospective husband is not considered to be suitable
for the woman. This same criterion did not apply to a man if
he chooses someone not considered good enough for him. It is
worth mentioning that a woman can be a marriage guardian if
there is no male in the family.

Dowries

Article 44 said that the dowry must be stated in the marriage
contract. If no amount is specified an amount depending on
the status of the woman or her relatives and friends must be
offered. This is based on the Qur'an's principle: "Marry them
with their family's permission and pay their wages".[119]

The rights of the wife

The woman has the right to receive money from the man for
three months after a divorce. She also has the right to be
treated well as stated in Article 39.[120] Also, when the man
marries more than one woman, all wives must be treated the
same and each wife must live in her own house - according to
Article 40.[121]

The rights of the husband

Under Article 39, the husband can order his wife to stay at
home or to go where he goes. According to Article 81, if a
woman leaves her house without reason, or does not let her

husband stay in the house, she loses her right to three months
money after the divorce because she is considered to be <u>nashiz</u>
(literally, dissonant). Also during this three months of
<u>'adah</u> the husband has the additional right to annul the
divorce.

Polygamy

The man has the right to marry up to four women at the same
time, according to Article 40, but moral guidelines often
prevail based on the <u>Surah</u> from the Qur'an: "If you fear being
unfair it is better to have only one".[122]

Divorce

A man in Jordanian law has an automatic right to divorce a
woman, as is stated in Article 85. A woman must petition the
judge for divorce, and must have a reason as stated in
Articles 116, 120, 123, 126, 127, 128, 130, and 131. Article
19 said that if the woman puts such a clause in her marriage
contract, she is entitled to a divorce <u>'ismatuha biyadiha</u>, and
she can also put in other conditions; for example, that she
can stay in her own town, or that if he marries again she will
seek a divorce. These conditions are binding on the husband
by law. Unfortunately, many women are not aware of these
rights.

Al-Muhkala'ah

Al-Muhkala'ah means an agreement between a man and woman in

which the woman pays money to the man in exchange for a divorce. This requires the consent of the man. The amount paid is at least as much as the dowry, or the equivalent in goods, and is covered in Articles 102-112.

Custody

In the case of divorce, the mother has the right to custody of her children, (and the father has to pay child support), as outlined in Article 154, until 9 years old if the child is a boy, and until 11 if the child is a girl. The mother can have custody of her children after that age if the father agrees, but the father does not then have to pay further support. It is important to mention that when a woman has custody of her children she is not the guardian -- usually the father is in cases of divorce. In cases of the father's death, the guardian is any male from the father's side. In some instances, a woman can be the guardian if no one from the man's family protests. Also, a woman loses her right of custody according to Article 156 if she marries again. This right will go immediately to her mother; if her mother dies or is too old, the mother of the father becomes the next in line for custody.

Inheritance

The law of inheritance was based on the Qur'an, when a parent dies, a woman will inherit half of what her brother would inherit. If a women's husband dies, she inherits 1/4 of his inheritance if she has no children, and 1/8 if she does. The

rest goes to the children and their grandparents. If a man's
wife dies, he always inherits 1/2.[123]

CONCLUSION

This chapter has described the specific societal, and
political conditions in Jordan affecting women. It is clear
from this analysis that many tensions exist between
traditional and modern conceptions of the role of women.

Feminist activities in Jordan are growing in strength,
partly as a reaction to the multi-party system adopted in
1992. This system has given women the hope of participating
more fully in the political process. The effects can be seen
by the increasing number of meetings and conferences demanding
legal changes concerning women's rights. Women's
organizations are bringing to the public many new issues.
However, because of strongly differing views, it is unclear
how this debate will be resolved in the coming years.

The laws affecting Jordanian women that there is a strong
similarity with laws in neighboring Arab countries.
Constitutional laws grant women the same rights and duties as
men, but there are contradictions with other laws such as the
labor, retirement, and personal status laws.

Chapter five will present in detail Jordanian women's
opinions, based on the questionnaire which was used in field
research to test the hypotheses of this study.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. See Abū Jābir, Shabīb for more details (1979), and Harris, (1958). p. 56-57.

2. Ibid.

3. Harris, (1958). p. 56.

4. Ibid, p. 57. See also Abu Jabir. P. 48.

5. Ibid, p. 56.

6. Al-Qusūs, (1936). p. 17. Also Al-'Abaddī, (1986). p. 72.

7. See Al-'Abbadī (1986), and Faruq Al-Kilani (N.D.).

8. Al-Tall, (1985). pp. 28-29.

9. Ibid.

10. Al-Qusūs, (1936). p. 21-23. See Al-'Abaddi, (1986). p. 11.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid, p. 39.

13. Ibid, p. 20.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid, p. 37.

16. Abū Jābir, (1979). p. 41.

17. Ibid, p. 42.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid, p. 67.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Al-Tall, (1985). p. 40.

23. Ibid

24. See Harris, (1958).

25. Fisher, (1992). p. 569.

26. Al-Hawamdah, (1992). p. 3.

27. Ibid.

28. Fisher, (1992). p. 571.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Metz, (1991). p. 32.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid, p. 34.

36. Hudson, (1977). p. 218.

37. Fisher, (1992). p. 572.

38. Ibid, p. 575.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid, p. 579.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. Democracy bounces back in Jordan, (1989). p. 11.

44. Abū Jaber and Schirin, (1991). p. 80.

45. Al-Dustur Newspaper, November 11, 1998.

46. Hajjar, (1993). p. 12.

47. Democracy bounces back in Jordan, (1989). p. 11.

48. Hajjar, (1993). p. 12.

49. Abboushī, (1993). p. 1-21.

50. See for details, p. 167.

51. Al-Tall, (1985). p. 112.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid, p. 117.

55. Hijāb, (1988). p. 99.

56. Ibid.

57. Halsa, (1992). p. 4.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid.

60. Nabil, (1993). p. 3

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid.

64. Kilanī, March 1993, p. 3.

65. Women's Panel Urges creation of National women's rights society, March, 1993, p. 5.

66. Addasi, (1992). p. 5.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid.

70. Kilanī, July 1993, p. 12,

71. Ghosheh, (1993). p. 5.

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid.

75. Ibid.

76. Dougherty, (1993). p. 8.

77. Yorke, (1993). p. 14.

78. Al-R'ai, No. 8599, Feb 3, 1994. p. 17.

79. Da'irat al-Matbu'at, (N.D.). p. 20.

80. Ibid.

81. Ibid, p. 21.

82. Ibid.

83. See an interview with Bisharat, p. 194.

84. Interview with Emily Bisharat at her home in Amman, April 27, 1994.

85. interview with Emily Bisharat at her home in Amman, April 27, 1994. Also the _Falestyin_ Newspaper, February 19, 1956.

86. Interview with Emily Bisharat at her home in Amman, April 27, 1994. Also the _Falestyin_ Newspaper, March 31, 1956.

87. Ibid, June 22, 1956

88. Al-Tall, (1985). p. 129. Also see Da'irat al-Matbu'at, (N.D.).

89. Interview with Emily Nafa', Amman , April 24, 1994.

90. Ibid. p. 130.

91. _Al-Dustur_ newspaper, October 20, 1974.

92. Al-Tall, (1985). P. 136.

93. Interview with Emily Bisharat at her home in Amman, April 27, 1994.

94. Ibid.

95. Ibid.

96. Interview with Buthyanah Jardanah the Director of the Business and Professional Women's Club, Amman Jordan, May 1994.

97. Ibid. Jardanah said that there are now 150 women members in the Club.

98. Ibid.

99. Da'irat al-Matbu'at, (N.D.). p. 17. Also see Al-Tall, (1985). p. 53.

100. Ayish, based on Jordanian government figures. Also see the seventh education project (1987).

101. Al-Sanabary, (1985). p. 108.

102. Woodsmall, (1956). p.59.

103. Statistics Department in Jordan, (1980).

104. Jordan's Female Workforce Increases, (1993). p. 4.

105. Mujahid, (1985). pp. 108-109.

106. Ibid.

107. Farhan, (1989). pp. 123-143.

108. Al-Tall, (1985). pp. 86-88.

109. Ibid.

110. Ibid, p. 92, cited the Ministry of Labor (1978).

111. Ibid, p. 93.

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE RESULTS OF FIELD RESEARCH TO EVALUATE JORDANIAN WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

INTRODUCTION

Jordanian society in the last four decades has experienced many economic, social, and political changes. One of these changes has been an increase in women's participation in both the economic and social spheres. However, the political participation of Jordanian women is still limited, even though women have the right to vote, to be candidates in parliament, and to be members of political parties after the multiparty system was re-introduced in Jordan.

Field research was conducted in Jordan by the researcher in an effort to obtain new data on the role of women in social and political life. The information obtained from this research helps fill a gap in existing knowledge about how Jordanian women participate in politics and the obstacles they face in increasing their participation.

This chapter will first review the results of seven interviews, which were conducted by the researcher with leading Jordanian women's activists of varied backgrounds and experiences. During the research, it was determined that it would be beneficial to have both the views of women activists and women at grass-roots level. For women activists, the researcher conducted unstructured, informal interviews concerning their personal experiences as activists, the quota

system which guarantees some seat in Jordanian parliament for women, the problems with women's political participation, and strategies for improving political participation. The researcher tried to give different perspectives from women who have worked in a variety of political roles. Interviews were also conducted with two lawyers (a man and a woman; both family lawyers) in order to gain different perspectives about the how the personal status laws are administered in the courts.

The field research methodology will then be discussed, and how the data was collected, how the researcher presented herself, and the general observations of the researcher. The questionnaire used in the interview process is then described. It was designed in five sections: the first section reviews demographic and personal data; the second covers women's attitudes on political participation; the third discusses women's views on private life and the Jordanian personal status laws; the fourth section analyzes women's views on education and work; and the fifth section analyzes the relationship between Jordanian women and other Arab women with respect to political participation.

All data gathered in the interviews is analyzed using percentage analysis and ANOVA and LSD computer analysis. The findings of the research are presented.

This chapter concludes by relating the hypotheses to the research findings.

1. INTERVIEWS WITH ACTIVIST WOMEN IN JORDAN

1.1 AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FIRST JORDANIAN WOMAN LAWYER, EMILY BISHARAT

BIOGRAPHY

Emily Bisharat was the first Jordanian woman to become a lawyer. The researcher was fortunate to be able to meet her, as she is now retired from public life and no longer grants interviews. Bisharat has an L.L.B (Bachelor of Law) degree from the University of London. In 1954, she was elected president of the Arab Women's Union.[1] In 1961, she joined the Jordanian Bar Association and was active in the Union of Lawyers' Associations from 1970 to 1980.

VIEWS ON PERSONAL STATUS LAWS AND QUOTA SYSTEM

Bisharat stressed that one of the most important steps that could be taken to improve women's political participation was to change the personal status laws. However, in her opinion, this would be difficult because Jordanian women today seem to care more about material things instead of values. Bisharat was against a political quota system guaranteeing seats for women in the Parliament because it would not be democratic: "democracy can not be limited".

VIEWS ON THE CONTEMPORARY STATE OF WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Bisharat thought that Jordanian women in general must be more politically active. In her view, the status of women could

only be improved through integration of Arab countries under the theme of "equal rights, equal responsibilities".[2]

1.2 AN INTERVIEW WITH A MEMBER OF A POLITICAL PARTY, EMILY NAFA'

BIOGRAPHY

Emily Nafa' has been a member of the Jordanian Communist Party since 1954, and is the president of the re-formed Arab Women's Union. She became politically active for the first time in 1954. Because of her political views she lost her job in 1963 as personnel manager at the Ahli Bank. Because there was no political prison for women in Jordan she was placed under house arrest for six months.[3] After that she could not find a job. Nafa' worked in a labor union and cooperated with Emily Bisharat in the Arab Women's Union, until 1957 when it was dissolved.

VIEWS ON THE PERSONAL STATUS LAWS, LAWS, AND QUOTA SYSTEM

Nafa' indicated that there was a need to modify the personal status laws, passport regulations, and labor law.[4] She also mentioned, that in the House of Representatives from 1989-1993, a law relating to women's inheritance was changed which dated from the Ottoman rule (the old law allowed a woman to have the same rights as a man in inheriting undeveloped land), and now the new law was that a woman inherited half of what the man inherits. This law was puplished in the Official Journal April 1991, No. 3747. She said that the time for feminists to take the opportunity to gain more rights was

during the 1993 to 1997 term of the House of Representatives. Nafa' agreed with the quota system for women to be in parliament and municipal councils.

VIEWS ON THE CONTEMPORARY STATE OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

According to Nafa', a woman's involvement in her daily duties did not leave her time to do anything else. She believed that democracy was a temporary thing in Jordan; democracy must be built by society.

Nafa' felt that women's political participation could only grow if women became more politicized through political parties.

1.3 AN INTERVIEW WITH LAYLA SHARAF, MEMBER OF THE
      JORDANIAN SENATE

BIOGRAPHY

Layla Sharaf was a member of the National Consultative Council appointed in April 1978, Minister of Information briefly in 1984, and a member of the Jordanian Senate since 1989.

VIEWS ON THE PERSONAL STATUS LAWS, OTHER LAWS AND THE QUOTA
SYSTEM

Sharaf recognized that there was a conservative movement which might slow the growth of the women's movement; for example, the conservative movement had passed the land inheritance law (which Emily Nafa' also mentioned) and was attempting to stop all moves to modify, 1976 the personal status laws.[5]

Sharaf had been in favor of the quota system for women to

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be in the House of Representatives and municipal councils, but now she had changed her position because she thought the conservative movement would benefit most from the quota system.

CONTEMPORARY STATE OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Sharaf said that the recent achievements of Jordanian women were remarkable and were the result of much hard work. For her, the women's movement was dynamic and growing. She felt that women's organizations must use different tactics to achieve their goals. She said that the women's situation today was different from the past; the Jordanian Women's Union and the Business and Professional Women's Club had the responsibility to act as pressure groups and use their power to improve the status of women. To realize this goal, Jordanian women had to become more politically active.[6] She also indicated that any change in Jordanian women's status could only be achieved by women working hard for that goal -- it could not be done for them.

OTHER ISSUES

An important event occurred in March 1994 when 59 out of 62 members of Parliament refused to lift the immunity of an MP who Tujan al-Faisal had accused of hurling insults - and an ashtray - in a clash during a debate on security. Al-Faisal, vowed to pursue him in the courts when Parliament recessed and his immunity automatically lapses. Sharaf was asked whether this dispute would hurt the image of women as MPs; she said it

would not change perceptions of Jordanian women politicians. She noted that Jordan was preparing to attend the September 1995 U.N. women's conference in Beijing with a delegation headed by Princess Basmah. While attendance by itself would be important, implementation of the conference's recommendations was what really required.

1.4 AN INTERVIEW WITH NA'ĪLĀH AL-RASHDĀN, MEMBER OF THE JORDANIAN SENATE

BIOGRAPHY

Na'īlāh al-Rashdān is a member of the Jordanian Senate. She started her life as a lawyer, the third woman practising law in Jordan. In 1976, she joined the Business and Professional Women's Club. She has given free legal advice to any woman who has asked for it. In April 1978, she became a member of the National Consultative Council with Laylā Sharaf. Since 1980, Al-Rashdān has been a member of the Lawyers' Association, the Consumer Protection Association, and the Family Planning Association, and is an executive member of the Jordanian Women's Association.[7]

VIEWS ON THE PERSONAL STATUS LAWS AND QUOTA SYSTEM

Al-Rashdān believed that improvements in the status of women must be gradual, and that pressure must be put on the House of Representatives to change the personal status laws. She believed that the parliamentary quota system for women was important to improve women's status.[8]

Al-Rashdan thought that the main problem facing Jordanian women was that they were not economically independent, and that they must go beyond the idea that man was the only provider. She said that women's organizations highlighted women's problems when there was an international conference, for example the upcoming September 1995 Beijing Conference, but that the issues must be constantly addressed. She concluded that there was a need for leadership in the women's movement.

1.5 AN INTERVIEW WITH BUTHAYNAH JARDANAH, A

DIRECTOR OF THE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

BIOGRAPHY

Buthaynah Jardanah has been the director of the Business and Professional Women's Club since 1989.

VIEWS ON THE PERSONAL STATUS LAWS AND THE QUOTA SYSTEM

Jardanah supported the parliamentary quota system - at least until such time as Jordanian women had more experience in politics. She said that the integration of women in politics could only be accomplished by working hand in hand with Jordanian men.[9]

VIEWS ON THE CONTEMPORARY STATE OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Jardanah indicated that Jordan, like other Arab countries, faced many problems which affected women's political participation, for example, the occupation of Palestine, the

lack of resources, the rapid increase of population, some
social customs, and ignorance of the Islamic religion. She
added that religion was not responsible for the low status of
Jordanian women, because Islam prohibited exploitation of
people. Jordan's participation in the September 1995 Beijing
Conference was important but so was implementing the
recommendations of the conference.[10]

1.6 AN INTERVIEW WITH AN EX-CANDIDATE FOR THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (1989 AND 1993), JANAYT AL-MUFTI

BIOGRAPHY

Janayt al-Mufti was a candidate in the 1989 and 1993
elections. In 1989 she ran for the third district (Amman is
divided into eight districts), and in 1993 she lost to Tujan
al-Faisal in the fifth district, in a Circassian seat.

EXPERIENCE IN POLITICS

Al-Mufti said that she learned from her first political
experience how to present important issues and discuss them.
She mentioned that funding for the campaign was an important
factor for her because she ran as an independent candidate;
women involved in political parties were more likely to get
help with funding.[11] Also, the tribal factor played a
conservative role in the Jordanian election. In her
experience, a woman did not vote for a woman and a man did not
vote for a woman.

VIEWS ON QUOTA SYSTEM

Al-Mufti also stated that the parliamentary quota system should be adopted for now, until Jordanian society became accustomed to having more women in political life.[12]

VIEWS ON THE CONTEMPORARY STATE OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Al-Mufti indicated that the political and economic situation in Jordan affected women badly. In Jordanian politics women were always considered marginal; to solve the problem of unemployment women could be sent home to make jobs available for men. Even though the political and economic situation affected the whole society, women were affected most because any solution always came at their expense. Unfortunately, there was no effective leadership in the country that would stand up for women's issues. It was important to stress, she said, that women's organizations must be more prepared than before.

1.7 AN INTERVIEW WITH MP TUJAN AL-FAISAL

BIOGRAPHY

MP Tujan al-Faisal became known as an anchorwoman on Jordanian television, before entering politics, in 1989.

EXPERIENCE IN POLITICS

Al-Faisal said that she lost the 1989 election not because she was a woman, but because of the way she thought about different issues rationally. The fundamentalists were against her. Even though the progressive forces supported her, she

could not find a job for four years after her defeat. She
indicated that she was not sure that she was going to win in
the 1993 election and yet did. She said that women's rights
were not her main interest, but stressed that she had a
political interest in human rights that included both women
and men. She noted "I am not an MP for women, but I am for
both men and women".[13]

With regard to the recent dispute discussed in section
1.3, Al-Faisal said that she was the only MP who had stood up
against MP al-Khraishah. For the first time in Jordan's
history, nine parties had cooperated to support her in this
case.

VIEWS ON THE PERSONAL STATUS LAWS, AND OTHER LAWS

Al-Faisal said that she had had a long-standing commitment to
women's issues. When she was the anchor on Jordanian
Television she did a series in 1985 which highlighted the
personal status laws to make women aware of their
constitutional rights. She had also proposed to modify the
Law of Nationality so that a Jordanian woman married to a
foreign husband could gain Jordanian citizenship for the
husband and any children they might have.

She said that she believed in the enlightenment of
religious thought, and that any change of the personal status
laws must be gradual. To achieve this change required popular
support.

Al-Faisāl believed that committees and conferences were not going to benefit women's political participation. She criticized the attitudes of women's organizations for their dependency on the state and for their traditional thinking.[14]

She characterized her differences with the women's leadership by saying that "women's issues are one concern and I am concerned about Jordan as whole and changing the Jordanian political system".[15] Al-Faisāl concluded that democracy was the only answer for Jordan, because with democracy the authorities would work to please the people; "with democracy we will have dignity and human rights."

1.8 AN INTERVIEW WITH NĀWĀL AL-JAWHARĪ, A FAMILY LAWYER

BIOGRAPHY

Nāwāl al-Jawharī has been a family lawyer in Amman for five years.

VIEWS ON BAYT AL-TA'AH (HOUSE OF OBEDIENCE)

Nawal al-Jawhari said that the bayt al-ta'ah could not be implemented until certain conditions were met by the husband: 1. that he provided for his wife; 2. that before he asked her for bayt al-ta'ah he must pay all the conditions in the marriage contract, such as for her jewellery, furniture, or other valuables mentioned in the contract; and 3. that he provided a house to the wife. She said that in a court of law it was hard to implement the bayt al-ta'ah. The underlying

idea was to make a women obedient. If the wife refused to

agree to <u>bayt al-ta'ah</u>, she would lose her rights for three

months on the alimony which was required by law. Al-Jawhari

indicated that the personal status laws were fair for women;

for example, if a woman left her husband because he beat her

and there was no scar or witness, then the court would

consider as evidence any statements made to a neighbor or her

family about what the woman had said that the husband may have

done. If the judge was not convinced by such statements or

other evidence, then he would ask for the woman's testimony

under oath.[16] But the main point was that if a woman was

treated badly by her husband she was allowed under law to seek

a divorce.

CONTEMPORARY VIEWS

Al-Jawhari concluded that, in her opinion, the problem was not

the law, but the practice of the people. For example, parents

would often marry off a daughter who was under age even though

this violated the law.

1.9 <u>AN INTERVIEW WITH 'ALĪ MASLAH, A FAMILY LAWYER</u>

BIOGRAPHY

'Alī Maslah has been a family lawyer for twenty five years.

<u>VIEWS ON AL-'ASAMAH AND BAYT AL-TA'AH</u>

Maslah said that a woman had the right to have as many

conditions in her marriage contract as she wanted. For

example, <u>al-'asamah</u> allowed a woman to have a divorce but the

wording must be specific or she will lose this right even if
it said in her marriage contract that "I have the right to
divorce any time I want until the divorce is final". Maslah
said if the wording was not exact the man by law could ask the
woman to come back.[17]

Maslah also stated that for cases of <u>bayt al-ta'ah</u> a
woman would lose her rights to three months of alimony, which
was required by law, but would not lose her deferred dowry.
She had the right to protest within one week about this
decision. Maslah noted that <u>bayt al-ta'ah</u> was not from
<u>shari'ah</u>, rather it was originally derived from Ottoman law.
The Family Law of 1951 included <u>bayt al-ta'ah</u> and required
police to return a woman to her marriage and home. By
contrast, the personal status laws of 1978 asked but did not
force her to return to her husband.

CONTEMPORARY VIEWS

Maslah also felt that the laws were fair. For example,
article 97 of the personal status laws stated that the wife
could ask for emergency alimony while the case was in court;
also in cases where the man sought a divorce for no reason, a
women had the right to alimony from three months to one year.
Based on his 25 years of experience as a family lawyer, Maslah
said that there was a need to: 1. raise the age of marriage
for both men and women; 2. clarify several articles in the
laws and allow the courts to show more flexibility in
interpreting the laws; 3. use arbiters when there are long
divorce cases, instead of the court asking for more evidence

which resulted in delays; and 4. take into consideration the needs of the children in custody cases.[18]

1.10   CONCLUSION

The activists, have different perspectives of political life and varied levels of experience. However, they all shared a belief that there was a need to modify the personal status laws, and also to politicize Jordanian women. Most agreed that women's organizations should play more active roles as pressure groups (with the recommendations from international conferences being followed up). All felt that democracy in Jordan would give women a better chance to play an active role.

Of the two lawyers, both said the laws were fair, but one recommended changes.

2.   **FIELD RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The objective of this study is to gain insights into Jordanian women's opinions about political participation and to test the hypotheses stated at the beginning of this study. To do this, the researcher designed a questionnaire, which sought to fill in gaps in the existing research. The researcher used participant-observer interviews with a sample of 70 women. This size sample was considered the maximum that could be examined in the time available and within the capacity of a single researcher. The interviews were conducted between April 1 and June 1, 1994 in Amman, the capital of Jordan, which is home to a diverse mix of Jordanians.

The interview technique allowed the researcher to ask questions the same way to each interviewee, and, importantly, to explain the questions the same way. This technique is important in the context of this study because it is the most culturally acceptable form of eliciting responses from Jordanian women.

The researcher used formal, structured interviews; formal means that the researcher explained to each interviewee the purpose of the study and asked permission for each interview; structured means the researcher asked questions and wrote the answers in a questionnaire. The questionnaire included closed-ended question (suitable for easy codification), and the open-ended questions (which allowed women to express their opinions without limiting their answers or directing them to respond in any particular way). This technique was designed to gather as much information as possible.

2.1 THE SAMPLE

The researcher used a "Quota Sample". This method made it possible to include women's opinions from different classes in Jordanian society. The research took into account the following variables: age, religion, cultural/ ethnic group, area of residence, profession, women's clothing, marital status, education, occupation, and income.

The research examined the above variables and how they related to women's opinions on political participation. These variables should highlight differences between different groups of women. The popular view that younger people have

less conservative views than older people. It is feasible to suggest that single women are more employable, and also have more free time for other activities. Naydah Ḥijāb argues that education is a main factor in the workforce,[19] and one could expect that better-educated and professional women would be more likely to be interested in politics. Women who wear the hijāb could be predicted to have more conservative views. The Muslim section of the population would probably have stronger views on the personal status laws, some of which do not apply to non-Muslims. This factor is also worth examining because the legislature reserved three seats for Circassians and Chechens, who form 1% of the population, and nine for Christian minorities who form 4-6% of the population.[20]

The sample consisted of more working women than housewives because of the availability of the former women to interview. The sample covered more married women than single women, but there is no data on the actual proportions of married and single women in Jordan.

2.2 **DESCRIPTION OF THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES**

AGE

The sample women were all of voting age and were categorised as 19-25, 25-34, 35-44, or 45+

RELIGION

Women were classified as Muslim or Christian

CULTURAL/ETHIC GROUP

Women were classified as Arabs or Circassians

AREA

The research classified the respondents according to the area divisions used by the Department of Census in Jordan. The department splits Amman into 41 subdivisions.[21] Social classifications of the Jordanian Department of Census were used to relate area to social and economic ranking. For example, as shown in the map in Appendix 9, subdivisions 83, 85, 86, and 93 are considered wealthy districts and will be referred to in the analysis as areas 1, 2, 3, 4. Subdivisions 81, 91, 92, and 94 are middle class and are referred to below as areas 5, 6, 7, and 8. All other areas are lower class.

PROFESSION

This category denotes a women's profession if she is working, her husband's if she is not. This is because housewives define their class by their husband's profession.

CLOTHING

Women were classified as wearing the hijāb (Islamic dress), a scarf (i.e. she covers her hair, but wears makeup and a colorful dress or skirt), traditional dress (the Palestinian traditional dress), a modern dress (Western clothes).

MARITAL STATUS

Women were classified as married or single.

EDUCATION

Women's levels of education were categorised as illiterate,
Tawjihi (from first grade until high school), Diploma (Tawjihi
+ two years, community college), B.S., B.A., (University
degree), M.A.(Master's degree), M.D.(Medical Doctor), and
Ph.D. (doctorate).

OCCUPATION

The researcher used definitions used by the Jordanian
Department of Census to form four classifications:

High Status Occupation

women who have a Ph.D or M.D. in medicine,
dentistry, law, journalism, engineering, or are
director of research centers or companies (private
business) or banks.

Middle Status Occupation

top civil servants in the Ministry of Education or
Health or the Justice Department.

Middle Lower Status Occupation

lower civil servants working as clerks or
secretaries, and women in small private businesses.

Lower Status Occupation

Women who are working as janitors or maids, as
laborers in the construction industry, or living on

welfare.

INCOME

This refers to the income from work for a working woman, but the husband's income for housewives. For single women who do not work, the income of the family was used.

2.3 I DESCRIPTION OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC AND
PERSONAL DATA

1.AGE

Table 1

Age	Number	Percentage
19-25	11	15.7
25-34	26	37.1
35-44	18	25.7
45+	15	21.4
Total	70	100

All of those in the sample were aged over 19. The categories into which interviewees were classified in age terms are given in Table 1. The largest group was those from 25-34, constituting 37.1% of the sample. Those under 34 constituted 52.8% of the total, and the remainder 47.1%.

2.RELIGION

Table 2

Religion	Number	Percentage
Muslim	62	88.6
Christian	8	11.4
Total	70	100

The sample was 88.6% Muslim. Christians accounted for 11.4%. The latter percentage is higher than their relative proportion of Christians in the population as a whole, but this may reflect the fact that the Christian population of Jordan mostly lives in Amman.

3.CULTURAL/ETHNIC GROUP

Table 3

Cultural/Ethnic	Number	Percentage
Arabs	64	91.4
Circassian	6	8.6
Total	70	100

The Circassian minority in the sample was 8.6%. This shows that the proportion presented in the data was roughly equal to the proportion of the population as a whole.

4.AREA

Table 4

Area*	Number	Percentage
Wealthy	22	31.4
Middle-class	33	47.1
Lower-class	15	21.4
Total	70	100

*Jordanian Department of Census classifications.

The sample consisted of 31.4% from wealthy areas, 47.1% from middle-class areas, and 21.4% from lower-class areas. The middle-class, therefore constituted the largest percentage of the sample.

5.PROFESSION

Table 5

Profession	Number	Percentage
Housewives	25	35.7
Working women	45	64.3
Total	70	100

The sample consisted of 64.3% working women, and 35.7% housewives.

6.CLOTHING

Table 6

Clothing	Number	Percentage
Hijab	9	12.9
Scarf	8	11.4
Traditional	3	4.3
Modern	50	71.4
Total	70	100

The sample consisted of 12.9% of women who wear the hijāb, 11.4% of women who wear a scarf, 4.3% who wear traditional clothing, and 71.4% who wear modern clothing.

7.MARITAL STATUS

Table 7

Marital status	Number	Percentage
Married	48	68.6
Single	22	31.4
Total	70	100

The sample consisted of 68.6% married women and 31.4% single women. The majority is married women.

8.EDUCATION

Table 8

Education	Number	Percentage
Illiterate	5	7.1
Tawjihi	16	22.9
Diploma	15	21.4
B.S, B.A +	34	48.6
Total	70	100

In the sample, 48.6% had University degrees, which women without a University degree constituted 51.4% of the sample. Although the sample covered a wide range of educational backgrounds, the sample shows a skew towards women with more education.

9.OCCUPATION

Table 9

Occupation*	Number	Percentage
High Status	25	35.7
Middle Status	11	15.7
Middle Lower Status	21	30.0
Lower Status.	13	18.6
Total	70	100

* For the definitions of these four categories, see above.

The sample consisted of 51.4% of women in high status
occupation and middle status occupations, while women in the
lower occupational ranks are slightly underrepresented,
accounting for 48.6% of the total.

10. INCOME

Table 10

Income*	Number	Percentage
0-199	31	44.3
200-500	21	30.0
500+	18	25.7
Total	70	100

*In Jordanian JD per month.

As is clear from Table 10, all income levels were represented
in the sample. There are, however, relatively few people with
lower incomes.

2.4 <u>HOW THE DATA WAS COLLECTED</u>

Before the researcher started to collect the data, an outline
of the procedures to be used was developed, but there was
still a concern that some Jordanian women would not allow
themselves to be interviewed. The main issue was whether or
not Jordanian women would answer questions of a personal and

private nature asked by a stranger, thus putting in jeopardy the objectives of this study. The researcher believed that being a Jordanian herself would be beneficial, but having been educated in the West and living in the United States for several years might raise some suspicions. Upon arrival in Jordan, the researcher conducted a pilot study with friends to determine if the study questions were understandable. This same approach was used by the researcher in Durham, which helped refine the questionnaire; however, the Durham group was small because there were only five Jordanian women there.

An interview strategy was developed. One method was to use a friend to invite several women to have coffee in her house, without mentioning anything about the research. The researcher attended several parties like this and was able to gain access to various types of women and interview them later with their permission. Another method was to go to government public clinics for lower-income people and sit in the waiting room. Usually there would be between 10-20 women in such rooms; this allowed the researcher to meet a different segment of women and later interview them discreetly. Another method was to find people in specific occupations, for example a lawyer, a medical doctor, or a pharmacist. The researcher took all opportunities to speak with as many different women as possible. Many of these sessions were spontaneous, which allowed for more candid discussions.

The researcher did several interviews by going to government ministries. For example, the researcher went to the Department of Census to ask several questions concerning

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the research, and also took the opportunity to interview two women. The researcher met a woman waiting in the bus station, asked her if she would agree to be interviewed, and later went to her office in a private institution. The researcher interviewed her and asked her if there was anyone else who might agree to be interviewed. The woman called an older colleague from a different department.

A male friend working in the Housing and Planning Development Department introduced the researcher to two women colleagues, who were engineers, and they agreed to be interviewed. The researcher also went to a private school and interviewed teachers there and, separately, while conducting private business in a bank, the researcher took the opportunity to interview the teller and the manager of the bank.

2.5 HOW THE RESEARCHER PRESENTED HERSELF TO THE INTERVIEWEE

As a Jordanian woman the researcher knows the culture, but because she has lived outside Jordan for several years she was careful about the way she dressed in order to present the proper image. From the first three interviews she learned that it is better to start by explaining the aim of the research and by stating that the researcher does not work for any particular institution or the government. Also, it had to be stressed that the interviews were anonymous and there was no need for the interviewee to provide her name. The researcher said she had come from the U.K. to write about

Jordanian women. The researcher explained to each interviewee what her definition of politics was, and that she was not limited to speaking about the government or political parties. The researcher sought to learn if the interviewee was interested or not in politics. After this introduction, permission was asked for an interview.

2.6 GENERAL COMMENTS

Generally, the women surveyed were enthusiastic, helpful, and friendly. From the 71 women the researcher asked to interview only one refused. The researcher interviewed every woman by herself with no one else around. The researcher had a hard time explaining the need for this to every person and finding a private place for the interview, but in the end was able to.

I would like to mention one special event, which typified the friendly response received. On one occasion, I went to interview a woman at her office, was introduced to her supervisor, and asked for his permission to interview her. He agreed and we returned to her office, but the office was shared with other employees. I asked if there was a private place, but this could not be found, so I started to interview the woman in the corner of the stairway. At that point, the other employees started to ask questions and invited us back inside; later, they emptied an office with four employees to give us a place to work. I was touched by this event and believe it shows the friendly environment that existed.

3. THE FIVE SECTIONS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was designed in five sections, as given in Appendix 1. The sections were as follows:

I. Demographic and personal data. Questions 1-10 ask about: age, religion, cultural/ethnic background, area of residence, profession, clothing, marital status, education, occupation, and income.

II. Women's attitudes on political participation. Questions 11-25; these questions relate to a woman's interest in politics, whether or not she is a member of any political group, if she voted and if so for whom, if she discusses politics, when she became interested in politics, what event she remembers that raised her interest in politics, what she thinks about a woman running for public office, her opinion of women's political activities compared to men, and if she follows elections on television and in newspapers.

III. Women's views of private life and the personal status laws. Married women were asked questions 26-40. Single women were asked questions 28-43, with the exception of questions 31 and 36. The goal of these questions is to assess women's opinions about the laws and related social issues, which affect their personal life. The questions address issues such as the dowry, _al-asmah_ (the right to initiate

divorce), <u>bayt al-ta'ah</u> (the house of obedience),
/
inheritance, how parents determine the number of
children they will have, pressures on single women
to get married, and what women think about the
personal status laws in particular and Jordanian
laws in general.

IV. Women's views on education and work. Questions
44-48 seek to determine women's opinions about
education, asking whether they agree that married
woman can work outside the home, whether women have
the same job opportunities as men, and whether all
kinds of work are available to Jordanian women.

V.   Question 49 sought to discover if Jordanian
women are aware of Arab women's political
participation in neighboring countries.

Finally, question 50 addressed how Jordanian women define
women's liberation. This question was not included in the
statistical analysis because it was an open question. The
researcher decided that this question was for the benefit of
the overall research but not the statistical analysis.

4. <u>ANALYSIS OF THE DATA</u>

The computer analysis was conducted in Jordan with the advice
of the Department of Census and the guidance of the Computer
Center at the University of Jordan.

4.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE STATISTICS

The data was analyzed using the SAS computer statistical
package. The following techniques were used:

    1. Frequency Distribution, to display the
percentages of each response to the 49 questions.
Question 50 was not entered into the analysis.

    2. ANOVA was used to find out whether there was a
correlation between answers to every section of the
questionnaire and every independent variable (the
Demographic and Personal Data). For analytical
purposes, the section on Jordanian women's awareness
of Arab women's political participation was combined
with the section on women's education and work,
resulting in three main sections.

    3. LSD (Least Significant Difference) was used to
show whether correlations between independent
variables and answers were significant at the level
of 0.05.

II. <u>WOMEN'S ATTITUDES ON POLITICAL</u>

   <u>PARTICIPATION</u>

<u>PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS</u>

11. Do you consider yourself interested in politics?

Table 11

	Number	percentage
Interested	41	58.6
Partly	19	27.1
Not interested	10	14.3
Total	70	100

Over half the respondents, 58.6%, said that they were
interested in politics, 27.1% said they were partly
interested, and 14.3% said they were not interested. This
gives an indication that, on balance, Ammani women are
interested in politics.

12. Are you a member of a group?

Table 12

	Number	Percentage
Yes	24	34.3
No	46	65.7

Total	70	100

The sample showed that 65.7% were not members of an
organization or group (this question was explained to the
interviewees to mean any kind of party or other organization,
such as a religious or charity group). This response showed
that most Ammani women were not involved in an organization.

13. Have you provided any assistance to political candidates?

Table 13

	Number	Percentage
Yes	35	50.0
No	35	50.0
Total	70	100

This response was equally divided, which shows that more
Ammani women were active in this kind of activity than were
members of an organization. Most of the activities described
in response to this question were informal in nature, such as
telling a friend or a relative about a certain candidate.

14. Do you think that politics affects women and men in the same ways?

Table 14

	Number	Percentage
The Same	56	82.4
Man	12	17.6
Total	68*	100

*Two did not answer, so they were dropped from the analysis.

82.4% of the sample said that politics affects men and women equally. Of the 12 respondents who did not agree that politics affected men and women the same, eleven said that politics affects only men, justifying their answer by saying that "man is the provider." The other respondent said politics affects only women, on the basis that women are always disadvantaged and therefore feel the impact of political decisions.

15. Did you vote in the 1989 election?

Table 15

	Number	Percentage
Yes	37	52.9
No	33	47.1

	Number	Percentage
Total	70	100

Over half of the sample, 52.9%, voted in the 1989 election, which may be considered promising for a country that only recently allowed women to vote. The researcher asked those who did not vote why they had not done so; 15 said that their voting registration papers were not ready, 10 were out of the country, and 7 said they did not care.

16. Did you vote in the 1993 election?

Table 16

	Number	Percentage
Yes	46	65.7
No	24	34.3
Total	70	100

There was an increase in women's political participation from the 1989 to the 1993 election. The researcher again asked the interviewees who did not vote why? 10 said it was because they lived too far from the polling place, 8 said it was because they did not impressed with any candidate, and the rest did not care.

17. For whom did you vote?

Table 17

	Number	Percentage
Woman	13	18.6
Man	41	58.6
No one	16	22.9
Total	70	100

Over half the sample, 58.6%, voted for a man. 22.9% did not exercise their right to vote. The researcher asked those who voted for a man why they had done so; 24 said it was because there was no woman candidate in their districts and if there was one they would have voted for her. The popular view is that Jordanian women do not vote for women simply because they are women. However, the data appears to show that this is not the case. 14 said the male candidate was a relative or friend, while 3 said that the woman candidate's programs were not convincing.

18. Did you think that the programs of women candidates were different from those of men candidates?

Table 18

	Number	Percentage
Yes	43	61.4
No	18	25.7

Do not know	9	12.9
Total	70	100

In this response, 61.4% of the sample said there was a difference between the programs of women and men candidates, 25.7% said the programs were the same, and 12.9% did not have an opinion. The researcher asked those who saw a difference what the key differences were. The respondents said that the women candidates had special programs for women and children, and the men candidates mentioned did not have any specific programs directed toward women.

19. Should women be running for public office?

Table 19

	Number	Percentage
Yes	64	91.4
No	6	8.6
Total	70	100

An overwhelming majority, 91.4%, said that women must be represented in the parliament and on the municipal council.

20. Did you talk with others about the election campaign?

Table 20

	Number	Percentage
Yes	61	87.1
No	9	12.9
Total	70	100

87.1% of the sample said that they talked about the election campaign. The researcher explained to the interviewee what was meant by "talk", which was discussing the election with friends or family or with colleagues at work.

21. Do you think your conversations with women about the election differed from your conversations with men?

Table 21

	Number	Percentage
Differed	56	80.0
Same	7	10.0
Do not know	7	10.0
Total	70	100

80.0% of the sample said that their conversations with women were different. The researcher asked those people in what way they were different? 38 answered that women are more enthusiastic about elections and women's issues. Men on the

other hand were seen to be interested in politics in general, and 18 were against women candidates, criticizing even the fact that women have the right to vote.

22. At what age were you first interested in politics?

Table 22

	Number	Percentage
13-20	53	75.7
20-30	17	24.3
Total	70	100

In this response, 75.7% of the sample became interested in politics when they were between 13 and 18 years old, is not surprising. The Middle East has faced several wars and there have influenced the political thinking of young women.

23. What was the first political event that made you interested in politics?

Table 23

	Number	Percentage
1956 war	9	12.9
1967 war	12	17.1
1970 war	10	14.3
1982 war	6	8.6

1990 war	8	10.0
Land day	10	14.3
Others events	15	21.4
Total	70	100

The researcher received a variety of answers, which were later classified into the above categories for statistical purposes. A relationship was evident between the age of the interviewee and an event that happened in her teens. This agrees with question 22 indicating that events shape the interest of the sample in politics at an early age.

24. How does women's political activity differ from men's?

Table 24

	Number	Percentage
Men have more freedom	35	53.0
Women are busy at home	14	21.2
Women are novices in politics	7	10.6
Other	10	15.2
Total	66*	100

*4 from the sample did not answer the question.

The researcher asked this question as an open question and for the statistical analysis coded the answer into the above categories. 74.2% of the sample said either that men had more freedom or that women were busy at home. The researcher was told that men had more opportunities to attend meetings and had more freedom to go out. Women, on the other hand, have to take care of the children. Some interviewees also said that Jordanian women are not experienced in politics, and some said that men know more about politics than women.

25. In which way did you follow the election campaign, by newspapers and/or television?

Table 25

	Number	Percentage
T.V.& Newspapers	60	85.7
T.V. only	10	14.3
Newspapers	0	0
Total	70	100

A strong majority of the sample, 85.7%, followed the election in newspapers and a television. It seems clear from this response that the media plays an important role. A small portion of the sample, 14.3%, received their information only by watching T.V., which suggested to the researcher that women with a lower education level usually follow the news on T.V.

4.3 III. WOMEN'S VIEWS ON PRIVATE LIFE

AND THE PERSONAL STATUS LAWS

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

26. How did you meet your husband?

Table 26

	Number	Percentage
Chose husband	26	54.2
Traditional way*	16	33.3
Married a relative	6	12.5
Total	48**	100

*"Traditional way" means that the marriage, was arranged
through the family.

**Omits 22 single women.

In this response, 54.2% of the sample chose their husband,
which illustrates the decline in the traditional practice of
arranged marriages. The researcher learned that even when the
traditional way of meeting a partner is used, the woman's
opinion often determines the acceptability of the future
husband.

27. How old were you when you got married ?

Table 27

	Number	Percentage
-20	15	31.3
20-30	30	62.5
30+	3	6.3
Total	48*	100

*Omits 22 single women.

62.5% of Jordanian women in this sample married between the ages of 20 and 30. In earlier times most women would marry before 20. This suggests that women are marrying later and provides further support for the view that women are increasingly selecting their marriage partners. The rising marriage age illustrates how much Jordanian society is changing.

28. Do you agree with the "prompt dowry" (the money paid in the marriage contract)?

Table 28

	Number	Percentage
Yes	25	40.3
No	37	59.7

Total	62*	100

* These figures omit 8 Christian women, because Islamic laws do not apply to them. (same for questions 29, 30, 32, 33, 37-39).

59.7% of the sample said that the prompt dowry is not necessary, which shows that women are moving away from the traditional large dowries. In Islamic law the prompt dowry is usually a small amount of money, but in current practice larger amounts of money are involved. The researcher learned that 40.3% of the sample thought that if the man pays money to the wife, he will not be able to get out of the marriage easily because of this "investment". Some believed that because the dowry is an integral part of Islam, it should not be questioned.

29. Do you agree with the "deferred dowry" (the money paid after the divorce is final) ?

Table 29

	Number	Percentage
Yes	30	48.4
No	32	51.6
Total	62*	100

*Omits 8 Christian women.

51.6% of the sample said that they disagree with the need for a deferred dowry, while 48.4% supported it. This result suggested to the researcher there were mixed opinions about this issue. The justification for women who said yes was that they see it as security in case of divorce. Some said that a deferred dowry may make a man think twice before he opts for divorce. Deferred dowry is important for a woman because, in case of a divorce, it is the only money she will have, except for three months' alimony. The women who said that deferred dowry was not necessary argued that if a man wants a divorce he will do everything in his power to make a woman unhappy, so that she will leave and ask for a divorce, which automatically leads to a loss of any right to the deferred dowry. All too often in real life, women choose freedom over the deferred dowry.

30. Should a woman have the right to initiate a divorce called (al-'asmah)?

Table 30

	Number	Percentage
Yes	18	29.0
No	44	71.0
Total	62*	100

*Omits 8 Christian women.

71.0% of the sample said women should not have the right to

initiate divorce proceedings. Most of the women who said no cited a view that women are emotional and men are rational; the emotion makes their judgment less clear. Surprisingly, even women with higher education levels expressed this opinion.

31. Who determined how many children you would have?

Table 31

	Number	Percentage
Both*	30	62.5
Husband alone	5	10.4
No planning	13	27.1
Wife alone	0	0
Total	48**	100

*Both means husband and wife decided.

**Omits 22 single women.

62.5% of the sample said that both they and their husbands decided on the number of children, which is a very important indicator with respect to the changing relationship between Jordanian women and men.

32. What do you think of polygamy?

Table 32

	Number	Percentage
Agree	1	1.6
Disagree	61	98.4
Total	62*	100

*Omits 8 Christian women.

Overwhelmingly, 98.4% of the sample said they disagree with polygamy (the right of a man to have more than one wife). There were no differences between women who wear the hijab and women who wear modern clothing in their answers, which can be summarized as "I do not want to share my husband with another woman".

33. What do you think of bayt al-ta'ah (the house of obedience)?

Table 33

	Number	Percentage
Agree	4	6.5
Disagree	58	93.5
Total	62*	100

*Omits 8 Christian women.

A solid majority, 93.5%, said they do not agree with the concept of <u>bayt al-ta'ah</u>; most Jordanian women said it is unjust for a woman to be treated in this way.[22]

34. Do you agree that a woman should inherit half of a man's inheritance?

Table 34

	Number	Percentage
Agree	39	56.5
Disagree	30	43.5
Total	69*	100

*One refused to answer the question.

56.5% of the sample agreed that a woman should inherit half of the man's share. Some women said that this concept is embodied in Islam and there is no question that it is God's will. They also justified their answers by saying that a man has more responsibility than a woman and he is the provider; to fulfil this obligation he must have more than the woman. Some of those who disagreed said that a woman is also the provider for her family; the old role of men's responsibility is different now. It is obvious that Jordanian women have conflicting ideas about the matter of inheritance.

35. Would you obey a law that equalized inheritance between men and women?

Table 35

	Number	Percentage
Agree	46	66.7
Disagree	23	33.3
Total	69*	100

*One refused to answer the question.

All of the 33.3% that answered no said that God's Qura'anic laws could not be changed. This issue is very complicated and the researcher found that, taken together with Question 34, some respondents would comply with a new inheritance law. Even if it was contrary to their religious views.

36. Who makes the decisions concerning your daughter's marriage?

Table 36

	Number	Percentage
Daughter	33	71.7
Parents	8	17.4
Parents and daughter	5	10.9
Total	46*	100

*Omits 22 single women and 2 others who refused to answer the question.

71.7% of the sample said that the daughter decides, while 17.4% said that the parents decide. 10.9% said they think that the parents must be consulted, which indicates that these women have more freedom in their private lives than before.

37. Did you know that a woman has the right under the Jordanian personal status law to put conditions on her marriage certificate?

Table 37

	Number	Percentage
Yes	52	83.9
No	10	16.1
Total	62*	100

*Omits 8 Christian women.

83.9% of the sample were aware of their rights, but in practice most women do not in fact use such conditions.

38. Do you believe that the Jordanian personal status laws are fair for women?

Table 38

	Number	Percentage

Yes	22	35.5
No	34	54.8
Do not know	6	9.7
Total	62*	100

*Omits 8 Christian women.

54.8% of the sample said that the personal status laws are
unfair to women, 35.5% believed they are fair, and 9.7% had no
opinion about the laws. This result suggests that the women
in the sample women are looking for change.

39. Do you think women can participate fully in politics
under the current personal status laws?

Table 39

	Number	Percentage
Yes	19	30.6
No	40	64.5
Do not know	3	4.8
Total	62*	100

*Omits 8 Christian women, who were not familiar with the
personal status laws.

64.5% of the sample saw the current personal status laws as

restricting women's participation.

40. Who do you blame for women's lesser status compared to men: Our laws or our society?

Table 40

	Number	Percentage
Laws	1	1.4
Society	26	37.1
Laws and society	43	61.4
Total	70	100

A majority of the sample, 61.4%, believe that both laws and society are responsible for the low status of women in Jordan.

41. Do you face various forms of pressure to get married?

Table 41

	Number	Percentage
Yes	11	50
No	11	50
Total	22*	100

*Omits 48 married women.

Half of the single women in the sample are under some pressure from family and society with regard to marriage.

42. Why do you choose to remain single?

Table 42

	Number	Percentage
To be free	3	13.6
Have not met the right person	17	77.3
Other	2	9.1
Total	22*	100

*Omits 48 married women.

Of the single women in the sample, 77.3%, were thinking about marriage.

43. Would you like to be consulted about who you marry ?

Table 43

	Number	Percentage
Yes	22	100
No	0	0
Total	22*	100

*Omits 48 married women.

All the single women in the sample said they wanted to have a say in who they marry.

4.4 IV. <u>WOMEN'S VIEWS ON EDUCATION AND WORK</u>

<u>PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS</u>

44. Do you think all women are entitled to an education?

Table 44

	Number	Percentage
Yes	70	100
No	0	0
Total	70	100

All the women in the sample supported a woman's right to an education. The researcher noticed that when she asked this question, the interviewees were surprised that the education of women would be an issue.

45. Do you think all kinds of work are open to women?

Table 45

	Number	Percentage
Yes	29	41.4
No	41	58.6
Total	70	100

A slight majority, 58%, said that Jordanian women did not have access to all types of obs. The researcher noticed that working women seemed m ˉe realistic in terms of what jobs are

available to women, whereas those women who did not work did not feel there were any limits on women in the job market.

46. Should married woman be able to work?

Table 46

	Number	Percentage
Yes	64	91.4
No	6	8.6
Total	70	100

Most women in the sample, 91.4%, supported the idea that married women should be able to work, suggesting that the economic situation in Jordan does not give a woman the option not to. But some of them said that work should not come at the expense of the marriage, particularly if there is no-one to take care of the children. Even though Jordanian women want married women to work, they are still concerned about basic family values.

47. Would an employer give preference to a man or a women ?

Table 47

	Number	Percentage
Men	51	72.9
Women	13	18.6
Other	6	8.6

Total	70	100

The researcher explained this question as follows: if a woman and a man have the same qualifications in terms of education and experience, and the job they are applying for does not specify either a woman or a man, who do you think will be offered the job?. 72.9% of the sample said that the man would be given preference indicating that Jordan is a male-dominated society. Some noted that many employers are afraid that a woman will be absent more from work because of her family responsibilities. 18.6% of the sample said that a woman would be chosen because she is more patient and has a better attitude toward people than a man. The remaining 8.6% said it depends where the job is; for example, the government selects more men, but private businesses will tend to employ woman. The sample result shows that, as regards equal employment, Jordanian society remains a man's society.

48. Are you aware of women's organizations?

Table 48

	Number	Percentage
Yes	70	100
No	0	0
Total	70	100

Jordanian women seem to be knowl=dgeable about women's

organizations.

4.5 V. <u>RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JORDANIAN WOMEN AND</u>

<u>OTHER ARAB WOMEN WITH RESPECT TO POLITICAL</u>

<u>PARTICIPATION</u>

49. What do you think is the difference between the
experiences of Jordanian women and those of other Arab women
with respect to political participation?

Table 49

	Number	Percentage
More experienced	21	30
Less experienced	27	38
The same	17	24.3
Do not know	5	7.1
Total	70	100

This question was an open question, and later categorized by
the researcher. It was explained to the interviewees that
Arab countries meant Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and Palestine -
areas where the movement is much stronger. 38.6% of the
sample said that the Jordanian woman are less experienced than
their foreign counterparts in terms of political
participation. The rest of the sample seemed to be unaware of
the higher level of women's political participation in the
neighboring Arab countries.

4.6 VI. <u>HOW DO JORDANIAN WOMEN DEFINE WOMEN'S</u>
<u>LIBERATION?</u>

50. How do you define women's liberation with respect to yourself?

This was another open question. Most of the women's answers related to decision making at home, freedom of choice, the right to work, the right to education, and some combination of all of the above. Most Jordanian women provided similar answers, which reflected the norms of the society.

5. __THE FINDINGS OF THE FIELD RESEARCH RELATIVE TO__ __ANOVA AND LSD STATISTICAL ANALYSIS USING THE__ __CORRELATION SIGNIFICANT AT 0.05 (WITH THE__ __INDEPENDENT VARIABLES)__

ANOVA and LSD are tools for examining statistical data. The questions were combined into three groups, and Anova was used to show where there is a correlation with the independent variables.

5.1 <u>THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EVERY INDEPENDENT</u>
<u>VARIABLE AND WOMEN'S ATTITUDES ON POLITICAL</u>
<u>PARTICIPATION</u>

For the independent variable Age, there are differences in answers about women's attitudes on political participation between women aged 19-25 and those aged 35-44, and also between those aged 19-2 and those aged 45+, but there are no

differences in answers between the 19-25 group and the 25-35 group or between the 35-44 group and the 45+ group. Women under 35 participate more in politics.

The independent variable Religion shows that there are no differences in women's attitudes on political participation between different religions. There is also no correlation for the independent variable of cultural/ethnic group.

For Area, there is a significant difference between answers of women in wealthy areas and others. Women from wealthy areas more politically active.

For the independent variable Profession, there are no differences in women's answers between housewives and working women.

For the independent variable Clothing, there is a significant difference between women who wear the hijab and women who wear modern clothes. The latter are more politically active.

For the independent variable Marital Status, there is no difference between married women and single women.

For the independent variable Education, there are differences between women who have Tawjihi or less and women who have higher education. Women with less education participate less. There are no differences in women's answers between women who have more than high school education and a university degree.

For the independent variable Occupation, there are differences between the answers of women in lower status occupations and those in higher status occupations, and the

middle status occupations and high status occupations, but not between the middle status occupations and the lower status occupations. Women with high status occupations are more politically active.

For the independent variable Income, there are differences between answers from women from lower incomes and higher incomes, and between lower incomes and middle incomes. Women in the lower income group are less likely to participate in politics.

In summary, the ANOVA and LSD research found that, with regard to views about "women's attitudes on political participation in politics", the answers did not depend on cultural/ethnic group, profession, or marital status. However, the views were correlated with age, religion, area, clothing, education, occupation, and income.

5.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EVERY INDEPENDENT VARIABLE AND VIEWS ON THE PERSONAL STATUS LAWS AND SOCIAL LIFE

The views on the personal status laws and social life were not correlated with age. Thus, older women are not necessarily more conservative than younger women, which is another commonly held view.

The independent variable Area shows a difference between women who live in wealthy or middle-class areas and those in poorer areas. Women in the wealthy areas were more in favor of changing the personal status laws.

The independent variable Profession shows no difference in women's answers between working women and housewives. The independent variable Clothing also shows no differences. This runs against the popular view that women who wear the _hijab_ have conservative views.

The independent variable Marital Status shows that there is a difference between answers of married and single women. Married women were more in favor of changing the personal status laws. But the independent variables Education, Occupation and Income show no differences. The independent variable Cultural/Ethnic Group showed no differences.

Women's views on private life and the Jordanian personal status laws do not appear too vary with age, cultural/ethnic group, profession, clothing, education, or income.

5.3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EVERY INDEPENDENT VARIABLE AND VIEWS ON EDUCATION AND WORK

With respect to women's views on education and work, the independent variable Age shows that there is a difference between the respondents aged 19-25 and 45+; also between 35-44 and 45+, but there are no differences between 19-25 and 25-34. Younger women saw fewer obstacles in the workplace.

The independent variable Religion shows no differences between women's answers. Similarly, the independent variables Cultural/ Ethnic Group, Area, Profession, and Clothing show no differences between women's answers. However, the independent variable Marital Status shows differences in women's answers. Married women saw more discrimination at work.

The independent variable Education also shows differences between women in group 1 (Tawjihi) or group 2 (Tawjihi+ two years), and those in group 3 (University degree) or group 4 (Ph.D). Women with more education think there are more obstacles in the workplace.

The independent variable Occupation shows that there are differences in answers between women who have lower or middle status occupations and women in higher status occupations, who felt more discrimination at work.

In summary, the ANOVA and LSD analysis show that, with respect to women's views on education and work, there are differences according to age, education, and occupation.

Religion, cultural/ethnic group, area, profession, and clothing do not have a significant effect on women's views about education and work.

6. CONCLUSION OF THE FINDINGS ACCORDING TO ANOVA AND LSD ANALYSIS

The ANOVA data analysis shows the correlation between every section of the questionnaire and every independent variable. Below is a summary of how each of the variable affects the answers:

> Younger women are more politically active, and saw fewer obstacles at work.
>
> Women from wealthier areas participate more in politics and were more in favor of changing the personal status laws. Also saw more obstacles at work.

Women wearing h̲i̲j̲a̲b̲ were less politically active.

Married women were more against the personal status

laws, and saw more discrimination in work.

More educated women were more politically active and

saw more obstacles at work.

Women with higher occupations were more active and

felt there was more discrimination at work.

Religion, cultural/ethnic group and profession were

not correlated with women's answers.

7. THE FINDING OF THE RESEARCH WITH RELATIONSHIPS TO THE HYPOTHESES

The field research has provided information on Jordanian
women's opinions about political participation, which enables
us to determine if the hypotheses put forward in Chapter 1 are
valid. There will now be examined.

7.1 TIME AVAILABLE FOR WOMEN TO PARTICIPATE IN POLITICS

HYPOTHESIS 1: As women are able to have others take care of
their children, they have more time to spend doing other
things - including participating in politics.

This hypothesis argues that most women have the burden of
domestic duties,[23] that a woman belongs in the house, and that
politics is a man's domain. This topic was discussed in
Chapter 4.

Evaluation of the data gathered for this research

supports the view that responsibilities at home stop women
from participating in politics. The data shows that most
Jordanian women said that men participate more because they
have the freedom to go out of the home at any time, but women
have to stay home and take care of the children and the house
(Table 24).

This agrees with the points made by Jordanian women
activists, to the effect that the absence of women from
political life is partly the result of their busy daily
lives.[24]

The conclusion is that the hypothesis is valid.

7.2 THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

HYPOTHESIS 2: As the education rate of Jordanian women
increases their political participation will increase.

This hypothesis assumes that if a woman has more
education she will be better equipped to participate in
politics. The data shows convincingly that, with respect to
the Education variable, women's attitudes to political
participation vary with their levels of education; those with
more education are far more active than those with less
education.

This view is supported by Jordanian women activists, who
also noted that education is important if women are to improve
their levels of political participation and enhance their
overall economic status.

The finding are that whereas women have accepted
education (Table 44) have been reluctant to became active in

politics. Thus, hypothesis 2 can not be supported.

7.3 THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE LABOR FORCE

HYPOTHESIS 3: As Jordanian women enter the labor force, they will be more interested in politics and will increase their political participation.

This hypothesis suggests that if women are economically free, they will protect their interests as working women, and that an economically independent woman is more likely to take independent political decisions.[25]

The data shows that most Jordanian women see obstacles to joining the labor force. They believe that not every kind of work is available to women (Table 45). Also they believe that discrimination against women in the workforce exists (Table 47). Nevertheless, women feel they must work for economic reasons (Table 46). The data also shows that there are differences between the views of working women and housewives on some work-related matters.

The Jordanian women activists emphasized the need for women to be economically independent. Clearly, women see obstacles to getting into the labor force, and it is thus difficult to prove or disprove the hypothesis.

7.4 WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

HYPOTHESIS 4: As women's organizations bring issues about women to the government, and into public attention, this will help increase women's political participation.

This hypothesis assumes that these political

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organizations are effective and will help women to present important issues to government officials and decision-makers and that they will lobby to gain more rights for women.[26]

Evaluation of the data gathered for this research suggests that the majority of Jordanian women know about women's organizations (Table 48). But (Table 12) shows that only a quarter of the sample participate in any organization, which indicates that organized activities have not yet attracted meaningful levels of popular support.

The reluctance of women to join mass organizations leads to the organizations being seen an unrepresentative and powerless.

The women activists had mixed views about the roles and effectiveness of women's organizations; some praised these groups for bringing key issues into the public domain, while others stated that there is a need to change the leadership and outlook of these groups.

In conclusion, hypothesis 4 cannot be supported.

7.5 THE STATE AS AGENT OF CHANGE

HYPOTHESIS 5: The state plays a role in promoting women's political participation.

The data shows that Jordanian women are interested in politics (Table 11), and have participated in some fashion, for example by helping campaigns for political candidates (Table 13). An increase in women's voting rates occurred from 1989 to 1993 and is shown in the data (Tables 15 and 16). Women follow campaigns and candidate programs closely and

support the notion that women have the right to run for public office (Table 19).

All these activities derive from decisions taken by the state since 1974, when women were first given the right to vote, and they have created new opportunities for women to participate in politics. Thus, this hypothesis seems valid.

7.6 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

HYPOTHESIS 6: Some laws discriminate against women, and women feel they are not a part of the political process.

This hypothesis assumes that if a woman faces discriminatory laws that restrict her rights and treat her as a second class citizen, that such an environment will limit women's political participation.[27]

The data shows that many women believe that there is a need to modify Jordanian laws to enable them to participate more in politics (Tables 39 and 40). Women activists agreed with this. This hypothesis seems to be justified.

7.7 THE PERSONAL STATUS LAWS AND SOCIAL LIFE

HYPOTHESIS 7: The personal status laws restrict a women's private life and as a result discourage public activities such as political participation.

This hypothesis is not new in that there are many activists in the Arab world (for example Nawal al-Sa'adawi, Fatamah al-Mernisi, and the Jordanian women activists[28]), who have asked the state to modify the personal status laws and to improve the status of women.

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The data shows that over half of the sample believes the personal status laws are not fair to women (Table 38). The women disagree with the concept of prompt dowry (Table 28), and have mixed opinions about the deferred dowry (Table 29). The data shows beyond a doubt that women disagree with the bayt al-ta'ah (Table 33) and polygamy (Table 32), and that they would support a law to equalize inheritance between women and men (Table 35). Jordanian women are aware of their rights in marriage contracts (Table 37) and they blame both the law and society for the lower status of women (Table 40).

The data also shows several results that suggest some societal changes which relate to the personal status laws. For example, Jordanian women appear to have freedom in terms of choosing their husband (Tables 26 and 36). Also, the marriage age is rising (Table 27) and the discussion of the number of children a couple will have seems to be a decision for both the husband and wife (Table 31). Similarly, single women say their opinion counts in who they will marry (Table 43).

The Jordanian women have conflicting opinions about al-'asmah (Table 30). Many see themselves as emotional and not entitled to the right to divorce.

Table 39 shows that many women see the personal status laws as restricting their political activity, which supports Hypothesis 7.

Chapter Six constitutes the conclusion of this study. It will describe the scope of women's participation in politics

in Jordan. It will also discuss the key societal attitudes
and factors that affect women's political participation. The
chapter will offer concluding observations on strategies for
empowering women to achieve greater levels of participation in
the future.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. Interview with Emily Bisharat in her house, Amman, Jordan, on April 27, 1994.

2. This was the theme of the Arab Women's Union in 1954.

3. Interview with Emily Nafa' at the Arab Women's Union, in Amman April 24, 1994.

4. Ibid.

5. Interview with Layla Sharaf at her house in Amman, Jordan, on May 17, 1994.

6. Ibid.

7. Interview with Na'ilah al-Rashdan at her house, in Amman, Jordan, on April 27, 1994.

8. Ibid.

9. Interview with Buthaynah Jardanah at the Business and Professional Women's Club, in Amman, Jordan, on April 30, 1994.

10. Ibid.

11. Interview with Janayt al-Mufti, in Amman, Jordan, on May 10,1994.

12. Ibid.

13. Interview with MP Tujan al-Faisal at her house, in Amman, Jordan, on May 14, 1994.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Interview with the lawyer Nawal al-Jawhari at her office, in Amman, Jordan, on May 6, 1994.

17. Interview with 'Ali Maslah, family lawyer, at his office, in Amman, Jordan, on May 3, 1994.

18. Ibid.

19. Hijab, (1988), argues that the education give women the opportunity to participate in labor force.

20. Le Monde, August 11, 1993. P. 4.

21. See Appendix 9. Areas where interviews were conducted are marked on the map.

22. For further discussion on the topic of <u>bayt al-ta'ah</u>, see the interviews with the two family lawyers in this chapter.

23. See Afshar for more details, P. 4. 1993.

24. Al-Nafa' interview in this Chapter.

25. See Chapter Four for more details about Jordanian women in the labor force. Also see the interviews in this chapter with Al-Nafa'.

26. See Chapter Four for more details about Jordanian women's associations and the role they play; also see the interview with the Jordanian MP Tujan al-Faisal earlier in this chapter.

27. See Chapter Four for more on women and the laws.

28. See for more detail the interview with Na'ilāh al-Rashdān, and Layla Sharaf earlier in this chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

It is beyond doubt now that Jordanian women are capable of
performing important political, economic, and technical tasks.
While the evidence shows that women can do these jobs, there
are still some who believe that the role of women should be
limited and, as a result, the public role of women has become
more controversial rather than less.

In order to assess the future prospects for Jordanian
women's political participation, it will be helpful to
consider the issues in the context of the research questions
identified in the Introduction. The purpose of this chapter
is threefold. First, it summarizes the main themes and
conclusions of the study. Second, it offers future strategies
for empowering women in order to further their political
participation. Third, it suggests some directions for future
research.

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN THEMES AND CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of this study was to examine the changing
political status and political participation of Jordanian
women over this century. The study defined political
participation broadly as "political activity, including
informal and indirect action, and any activity to
intentionally influence public policy". This definition

covers a wide range of activities, such as ad hoc political
campaigns, food riots, protests in support of liberation
movements, and anti-war demonstrations. It is clear that any
serious effort to analyze women's political participation in
Jordan needs to take into account many non-traditional
activities which involve a broader range of actual
participation.

A theoretical framework was developed to examine the
interplay of three major factors influencing women's political
participation in Jordan: Islam, the state, and feminism. As
in other Arab countries, women's political participation in
Jordan in the early 20th century has been strongly affected by
these three factors.

The early feminists were affiliated with Arab
nationalists who placed priority on liberation from colonial
domination. The nationalists used tradition as the embodiment
of cultural authenticity and manipulated traditional ideology,
a prominent mobilizing force. The involvement of Arab women in
politics during the struggles for independence was illustrated
in the case of Egypt, Algeria, and Palestine. Arab women
crossed traditional boundaries and engaged in militancy; but
once the wars ended, women returned to predominantly domestic
roles.

After independence, most Arab countries did not have a
clear ideological position about the role of women. The new
Arab states were seeking to industrialize in order to
modernize, and there was a need for female labor. For this
reason, most Arab states planned to integrate women into

economic development. This was a very pragmatic response based on economic needs; it was not reflective of any specific policy to improve the status of women.

With regard to legal issues, each government in the Arab world has interpreted the <u>shari'ah</u> laws regarding women in its own way. For example, the implementation is conservative in Algeria and Egypt and more progressive in the Democratic Republic of Yemen and Tunisia. In Kuwait, the Gulf states, and Saudi Arabia women and men are still fighting for the right to vote, and women's suffrage movement has been attacked by conservatives and the state by rasing questions about the morality of the women who engage in politics. Clearly, leaders can use their claim to be protecting the family and public morality to restrict women's political activities. In the end, the way the state defines women's roles depends heavily upon the way it defines its mission.

Official Islam has been controlled by Arab states. Fundamentalist Islam, however, has confronted the state with its conservative codes of gender relations. State leaders have thus had to defend their social and political changes as being compatible with Islamic values.

Women's organizations have been supervised by the state in most Arab countries. Nevertheless, the feminist movement in the Arab world can be credited with bringing women's issues to public attention.

The analysis undertaken in this study would seem to show that the state is the most influential of the three major factors which influence women's political participation; it is

apparent that both Islam and feminism have yielded in many
important respects to the overall power of the state.

1.1 THE FACTORS THAT SHAPE WOMEN'S POLITICAL

PARTICIPATION

There are three essential elements of Jordanian society: the
bedouin tribe, the village, and the city. Jordanian society
has maintained many bedouin ideas. Jordanian rural society is
fundamentally a man's society. Men are the providers and the
decision makers. A woman's position is marginal, even though
women work alongside men. There is high illiteracy among
women, and an acute shortage of women's organizations capable
of rendering advice and assistance.

The position of Jordanian urban women is better; they
have a better chance of a college education, as most
universities are in cities. There is also more work outside
of the home. Palestinian women immigrating into cities in
Jordan after the 1948 and 1967 wars imparted their knowledge
to Jordanian society.

The field research shows, however, that Jordanian women
of all backgrounds are held back from greater political
participation by not having sufficient free time.

There remain wide differences between the bedouin tribe,
the village, and the city, which can be seen in terms of
women's educational levels and economic status. However, the
field research sample shows that Jordanian women across
society believe that they have many choices and options in
their private lives. One of the findings of this study is

that an analysis based solely on societal structure does not present a complete picture of the reality of how Jordanian women view their roles.

1.2 JORDANIAN WOMEN IN POLITICS

Jordanian women have been indirectly influenced by Arab feminist struggles. Women like Huda Sha'arawi were role models for Jordanian women, and the struggles of Palestinian and Algerian women were often cited as an example for Arab women generally. The feminist movement in Jordan was started by women working in the political opposition and dates from 1950-1957 when Jordan had political parties. It gained momentum when King Husayn signed election law No. 8 in 1974, which encouraged women to engage in the political process by giving them the right to vote and run for public office. However, there were no elections until November 1989 and no women were elected to parliament at that time. After 1989, feminists were able to raise women's issues at several conferences in Amman.

In the 1990s, feminists have been more demanding and specific about their concerns than the early feminists, who tended to concentrate on the Palestinian issue. An important milestone for the women's movement was the election of Tujan Al-Faisāl, the first woman ever elected to the Jordanian parliament.

Jordanian women's associations have helped to advance the status of women by helping needy families and bringing women's issues to the public. The associations were first started by

elite women as social welfare agencies for the poor and for
children. These organizations started calling for more
political rights for women. However, the field research shows
that women's organizations have still not attracted much
popular support.

Economically, the state needs women in order to
successfully pursue development. To do so, the state created
opportunities for women and integrated them into the national
development plan. Many women have taken advantage of
education and training. However, to solve recent unemployment
the state has been trying to push women back into home to make
more opportunities for men. The field research also shows
that Jordanian women believe that discrimination exists
against women in the workforce.

It is clear that the laws affecting Jordanian women
bear a strong similarity to laws in neighboring Arab
countries. For example, constitutional laws grant women the
same rights and duties as men, but the Labor and Retirement
Laws are not equal. Moreover, the personal status laws treat
women as minors and discriminate against them. The field
research confirmed that, in the opinion of Jordanian women,
the personal status laws are not fair to women. It also
revealed that there is a need to modify Jordanian laws to
enable women to participate more in politics. These views
were shared by women across the social spectrum of views.

Although the state first encouraged women to work, it had
no long-term policy towards women, and thus could later adopt
an unofficial policy to solve unemployment by not employing

women in government service.

The state has played a crucial role in promoting women's political participation. The field research shows that there has been an increase in women's political participation from 1989 to 1993. It also confirms that women are interested in politics and have participated in some fashion by helping political candidates. Women follow campaigns and candidate programs closely and support the notion that women have the right to run for public office. Women's attitudes on political participation vary with their levels of education; those with more education are far more active than those with less education.

Women in the Arab World have not been strangers to political activity, including street demonstrations and active participation in struggles of national liberation. Throughout the region, there are many common experiences, yet each country has had its own unique circumstances, which have affected the development of women's political participation. This development, however, does not necessarily match the Western framework, primarily because of the interplay between Islam, the state, and feminism found in the Arab world.

2. A STRATEGY FOR EMPOWERING WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN JORDAN

In Jordan, the state has promoted new roles for women for practical and ideological reasons, but it can be argued that it has often attempted to solve the country's economic problems at the expense of women. Today's reality is that

women have more activities outside the home and family, although there is little reason to doubt that family relations still remain central to their lives. The challenge for the state is to recognize these evolving patterns of behavior and develop policies that address the needs of modern Jordanian women. Issues of cultural identity and related questions of who can speak for and represent women also remain unsolved and require further development that will only come with increased political participation.

A strategy for improving the political participation of Jordanian women is presented. This proposal is general in nature and covers five broad areas: legislation, politics, economics, social issues, and education.

2.1 LEGISLATION

The research has shown that there is a need to modify the laws concerning Jordanian women to abolish discrimination against women. For example, the personal status laws could be modified in a way which does not conflict with Islam but uses _ijtihad_ (interpretation) to suit the needs of the 21st century. Changes also need to be made to the Labor Laws, the Civil Retirement Law, the Social Security Law, and the Law of Nationality.

2.2 POLITICS

The research has helped to answer many questions about women in politics. There is a critical need for more women to participate in the decision-making of the country. This could

be accomplished, for example, by using the media to change the image of Jordanian women. Women need to be portrayed more frequently as capable of taking important decisions. Also there is a need for more discussion about women's issues and the problems facing women, and to move away from ivory tower assertions that Arab women are "powerful" and already have full rights.

Women must use the multiparty system and the democratic process to advance their participation. Women need to be encouraged to become active in political parties and women's organizations, such as the municipal council and the Professional Union. Also, these organizations should work more efficiently with the grass-roots level and move from Amman to the villages. It is important also for women's organizations to use their position to pressure for change.

There is a lack of independent women's research centers. In addition to conducting research on women's conditions and offering policy recommendations, such centers could give women training in political and other skills. They also could serve as independent sources of information not under the influence of the state.

2.3 ECONOMICS

To improve women's political participation, there is a need to increase the number of women in the workforce and to abolish any kind of discrimination against working women. One way to do this is to encourage women's participation in professional organizations and unions. Reliable day-care centers and

kindergartens for young children are also required. There is also a need to make women more aware of sexual harassment in the work-place. Currently, sexual harassment is not acknowledged as a problem situation. There is also a need to improve the work situation of women in rural areas by making training available and enabling them to learn new skills. In general, women should have more opportunities beyond traditional work such as typing, handicrafts, and sewing, which have had the long-term effect of marginalizing women.

There is an urgent need to counter the argument that to solve the country's severe unemployment problem women should return to the home. The government must be realize that the economic potential of women not only affects the women, but their families, and ultimately national development.

2.4 SOCIAL ISSUES

To improve the social life of Jordanian women, a number of steps can be taken. For example, there is a need to recognize that the role of the family is changing. Women should seek more opportunities outside the home. In addition, the reality today is that some women are the sole providers for their families but society has generally not recognized this fact.

Women also need more information concerning domestic violence, including legal remedies and centers for women who need such services. The media should work to change the image of Jordanian women so as not to portray them only as victims or manipulators, but equal to men, because perceptions are important and stereotypes should not be reinforced.

2.5 <u>EDUCATION</u>

To empower women, there is a need to improve education, mainly through curriculum changes, and also by removing images of women in educational materials that depict them as emotional or incapable of making important decisions. There is also a need to encourage women to take advantage of vocational education training; currently, such training is limited and men tend to receive more and better vocational schooling.

3. **<u>CLOSING THOUGHTS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH</u>**

Overall, there is a need for indigenous women to do more research about the issues concerning and problems facing contemporary Arab women. There is a lack of information on the role of women, and much more basic research could be done to fill the void in the literature. Building on the themes developed in this study, it is clear that further micro- and macro-level research on the political participation of women in Jordan is needed.

Several specific topics merit attention for future investigation. For example, it would be helpful if the research methodology and scope used in this study were expanded beyond Amman to cover the rest of Jordan. This would show whether the consensus for change seen in Amman is reflected in the rest of the country. Another important question concerns attitudes of men with regard to the role of women, and research aimed at both sexes could be useful show

whether male society is willing to question its attitudes and share power more equally. Finally, comparative studies of women in other Arab countries in circumstances similar to the women examined in this study would be especially helpful in showing how different governments have influenced women's status in society.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

WOMEN'S CHANGING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION
IN JORDAN
BY
BARI'AH NAQSHABANDI

I   Demographic and Personal data

1.   Age: a. 19-25
         b. 25-34
         c. 35-44
         d. 45+

2.   Religion: a. Muslim
              b. Christian

3.   Cultural/Ethnic Group: a. Arabs
                           b. Circassian

4.   Area: a. Wealthy area
           b. Middle class area
           c. Lower class area

5.   Profession: a. Housewives
                b. Working women

6.   Clothing: a. Ḥijāb
              b. Scarf
              c. Traditional
              d. Modern

7.   Marital Status: a. Married
                    b. Single

8.   Education: a. Illiterate
               b. Tawjihi
               c. Diploma
               d. B.S, B.A
               e. M.A
               f. M.D
               g. ph.D

9.   Occupation: a. High Status Occupation
                b. Middle Status Occupation
                c. Middle Lower Status Occupation
                d. Lower Status Occupation

10. Income: a.   0-99
               b. 100-199
               c. 200-299
               d. 300-499
               e. 500-700
               f. 700+

II Women's attitudes on political participation

11. Do you consider yourself interested in politics?
    a. Interested
    b. Partly interested
    c. Not interested

12. Are you a member of a group?
    a. Yes   b. No

13. Have you provided any assistance to political candidates?
    a. Yes   b. No

14. Do you think that politics affects woman and man in the same way?
    a. Same
    b. Men

15. Did you vote in the 1989 election?
    a. Yes   b. No

16. Did you vote in the 1993 election?
    a. Yes   b. No

17. For whom did you vote?
    a. Woman
    b. Man
    c. No one

18. Did you think that the programs of women candidates were different from these of the men candidates?
    a. Yes   b. No

19. Should women be running for public office?
    a. Yes   b. No

20. Did you talk with others about the election campaign?
    a. Yes   b. No

21. Do you think your these conversations with women about the election differed from your conversations with men?
    a. Differ
    b. Same
    c. Do not know

22. At what age were you first interested in politics?
    a. 13-20
    b. 20-30

23. What was the first political event that made you
    interested in politics?
    a. 1956 war
    b. 1967 war
    c. 1970 war
    d. 1982 war
    e. 1990 war
    f. Land day
    g. Other events

24. How does women's political activity differ from men's?
    a. Men have more freedom
    b. Women are busy at home
    c. Women are novices in politics
    e. Other

25. In which way did you follow the election campaign by
    newspaper and/ or television?
    a. Both
    b. T.V. only
    c. Newspapers

III Women's views on private life and the "Personal Status Laws"

26. Haw did you meet you husband?
    a. Chose husband
    b. Traditional way
    c. Married a relative

27. How old were you when you got married?
    a. -20
    b. 20-30
    c. 30+

28. Do you agree with the in "prompt dowry" (the money paid
    in the marriage contract)?
    a. Yes   b. No

29. Do you agree with in "deferred dowry" (the money paid
    after the divorce is final)?
    a. Yes   b. No

30. should a woman have the right to initiate divorce called
    (al-'asmah)?
    a. Yes   b. No

31. Who determined how many children you would have?
    a. Both
    b. Husband alone

c. Wife alone
d. No planning

32. What do you think of polygamy?
     a. Agree
     b. Disagree

33. What do you think of <u>bayt al-ta'ah</u> (the house of
     obedience)?
     a. Agree
     b. Disagree

34. Do you agree that a women should inherit half of a
     men's inheritance?
     a. Agree
     b. Disagree

35. Would you obey a law that equalize inheritance between
     men and women?
     a Agree
     b. Disagree

36. Who makes the decisions concerning your daughter's
     marriage?
     a. Daughter
     b. Parents
     c. Parents and daughter

37. Do you know that a woman has the right under the
     Jordanian personal status laws to put conditions on her
     her marriage certificate?
     a. Yes   b. No

38. Do you believe that the Jordanian personal status laws
     are fair for women?
     a. Yes   b. No   c. Do not know

39. Do you think women can participate fully in politics
     under the current personal status laws ?
     a. Yes   b. No

40. Who do you blame for women's lesser status compared to
     men: our laws or our society?
     a. Laws
     b. Society
     c. Laws and society

41. Do you face various forms of pressure to get married ?
     a. Yes   b. No

42. Why did you choose to remain single?
     a. To be free
     b. Have not met the right person
     c. Other

43. Would you like to be consulted about who you marry ?
    a. Yes   b. No

IV Women's views on education and work

44. Do you think all women are entitled to an education?
    a. Yes   b. No

45. Do you think all kinds of work that are open to women?
    a. Yes   b. No

46. Should married woman be able to work?
    a. Yes   b. No

47. Would an employer give preference to a man or a women ?
    a. Men
    b. Women
    c. Other

48. Are you aware of women's organizations?
    a. Yes   b. No

V Relationship between Jordanian women and other Arab women with respect to political participation

49. What do you think is the difference between the experiences of Jordanian women and those of other Arab women with respect to political participation?
    a. More experienced
    b. Less experienced
    c. The same
    d. Do not know

VI How do Jordanian women define women's liberation?

HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

SEVENTH EDUCATION PROJECT

Enrollments by Level and Type of Education,
Sex and Administering Authority
(1986/87)

Level and of Education	MOE	Other Government a/	UNRWA	Private	Total	%
Kindergarten	—	582	--	31,245	31,827	
Male	—	310	--	17,343	17,653	55·5
Female	--	272	--	13,902	14,174	44·5
Primary	403,641	3,544	91,434	43,900	542,519	
Male	207,110	2,802	46,522	25,027	281,461	51·9
Female	196,531	742	44,912	18,873	261,058	48·1
Preparatory	161,710	1,542	44,162	7,329	214,743	
Male	85,420	1,340	22,568	3,948	113,276	52·8
Female	76,290	202	21,594	3,381	101,467	47·2
Secondary General	91,807	841	--	6,138	98,786	
Male	43,440	680	--	3,844	47,964	48·6
Female	48,367	161	--	2,294	50,822	51·4
Secondary Vocational	26,164	4,760	527	319	31,770	
Male	14,058	4,599	458	213	19,328	60·8
Female	12,106	161	69	106	12,442	39·2
Community Colleges b/		27,042 c/				
Male		13,283	49·1			
Female		13,759	50·9			
Universities		26,711 c/				
Male		16,308	61·1			
Female		10,403	39·9			

a/ Ministry of Defense, VTC and MOHE.

b/ Including nursing colleges.

c/ 1985/86 data.

Appendix 3.A
Government Employees by Sex and Qualification During 1989

Ministries Dept. & Corporation	Grand Total	Total Female	Total Male	Ph.D.		M.A./MSC		Higher Diploma		B.A./B.SC		Diploma		G.S.E.C.		Less than G.S.E.C	
				F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
1-House of Parliament	41	11	30	-	-	-	1	-	-	4	14	2	1	5	12	-	2
2-Ministers Cabinet & Prime Ministry Office	56	15	41	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	13	4	1	5	10	4	15
-Audit Bureau	396	50	346	-	1	-	8	4	4	20	197	10	59	16	59	-	18
-Supreme Judicial Dept.	345	-	345	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	93	-	19	-	82	-	143
-Central Bank of Jordan	709	248	461	-	9	-	6	11	-	49	134	89	92	99	59	-	161
-Civil Service Commission	107	33	74	-	-	-	6	-	1	13	29	10	10	10	15	-	13
-Public Administration Institute	50	16	34	2	4	2	2	-	3	6	6	3	6	4	3	-	10
-Aqaba Region Authority	114	17	97	-	1	1	4	-	-	5	20	2	4	8	13	-	55
3-Ministry of Health	12871	5942	6929	2	59	14	121	8	125	518	1570	1646	1768	357	312	3397	2974
4-Ministry of Justice	1206	177	1029	-	6	-	10	-	24	11	362	20	39	81	248	65	340
5-Ministry of Tourism	151	40	111	-	2	-	1	-	-	20	29	4	4	19	16	-	59
6-Ministry of Education & Culture	42470	23442	19028	3	22	57	347	277	1400	4645	4971	16054	8850	372	149	2034	3289
7-Ministry of Youth	198	57	141	-	1	3	3	-	1	14	31	9	16	10	18	21	71
8-Ministry of Municipalities & Rural Affairs & Environment	605	118	487	-	4	-	7	-	-	25	177	49	87	41	95	3	117
-Cities & Villages Development Bank	126	46	80	-	1	-	-	-	-	14	24	16	18	11	7	5	30
9-Ministry of Industry & Trade	347	95	252	-	5	-	6	-	1	37	99	22	29	16	45	20	67
10-Ministry of Energy & Mineral Resources	71	11	60	-	-	-	4	-	-	3	33	2	4	6	8	-	10
-Natural Resources Authority	1015	74	941	1	8	2	35	-	9	33	158	24	168	3	78	11	485
-Jordan Electricity Authority	1854	100	1754	-	6	-	18	-	7	26	335	60	430	4	105	10	853
11-Ministry of Public works & Housing	2296	153	2143	-	3	1	29	-	4	99	209	18	96	24	145	11	1659
-Housing Corporation	199	30	169	-	1	-	2	-	-	19	71	7	17	3	13	1	65
12-Ministry of Agriculture	5598	354	5244	-	31	3	62	2	17	43	348	106	351	53	132	147	4303
-Agricultural Credit Corp.	236	66	170	-	1	-	4	-	-	6	44	20	22	40	45	-	54

continued: Employment Survey
Source: Jordan, Amman 1989, Table no. 4/1/13, p.77

Government Employees by Sex and Qualification During 1989

Ministries Dept. & Corporation	Grand Total	Total Female	Total Male	Ph.D		M.A./ MSC.		Higher Diploma		B.A./B.SC		Dipoloma		G.S.E.C.		Less than G.S.E.C.
				F	M	F	M	F	M	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
13-Ministry of Social Development	1053	592	461	-	4	4	14	15	14	49	193	73	110	47	223	235
14-Ministry of Water & Irrigation	4941	63	4878	-	10	-	18	-	5	74	24	192	193	236	3	4129
-Jordan Valley Authority	1764	51	1713	-	4	-	13	-	13	125	10	55	18	150	10	1366
15-Ministry of Labor	211	56	155	-	3	-	3	2	12	81	8	8	26	15	8	43
-Vocational Training Corporation	733	13	709	-	2	1	2	-	3	99	4	355	4	38	1	212
-Social Security Corporation	395	103	292	-	3	-	8	1	2	82	32	76	42	59	9	62
16-Ministry of Information	104	32	72	-	1	-	4	-	-	37	-	1	12	10	4	19
-Broadcasting & Television corporation	1689	184	1505	1	2	3	14	1	21	238	41	205	56	149	32	876
-Jordan News Agency	108	12	96	-	-	-	2	-	-	39	2	9	3	12	4	34
17-Ministry of Foreign Affairs	291	43	248	-	13	-	43	-	1	117	1	9	22	18	9	47
-Palestinian Affairs Department	147	57	90	-	3	-	2	-	-	16	5	16	22	18	18	35
18-Ministry of Supply	1165	115	1050	-	2	-	2	-	7	152	22	125	50	268	19	494
-Civil Services Consumers corporation	725	153	572	-	1	-	1	-	-	30	22	23	74	184	56	333
19-Ministry of Interior	668	79	589	-	1	1	12	-	3	194	12	46	41	123	26	210
-General Department of Passports	369	72	297	-	-	-	2	-	1	58	8	21	45	91	15	124
-Department of Civil Status	484	97	387	-	-	-	-	-	-	113	20	38	52	161	14	75
20-Ministry of Culture & National Heritage	101	25	76	-	2	-	4	-	-	21	5	1	5	23	5	25
-Depment of Antiquities	187	33	154	1	6	3	3	-	13	28	2	1	10	12	4	104
Direcotrate of Libraries & Documentations	36	21	15	-	1	-	3	-	18	-	9	3	2	-	2	8
-Royal Cultural Center	53	14	39	-	-	6	-	1	1	10	1	3	13	4	3	21
21-Ministry of Planning	164	62	102	-	8	-	23	-	4	28	12	3	13	5	5	31
-Department of Statistics	142	160	252	-	2	1	10	4	6	23	39	34	82	48	21	62

continued. Employment Survey

Source: Jordan, Amman 1989, Table No.4/1/15, p.78

Appendix 3.C
Government Employees by Sex and Qualification During 1989

Ministries, Departments & Corporations	Grand Total	Total Female	Total Male	Ph.D.		M.A./MSC		Higher Diploma		B.A./B.SC		Diploma		G.S.E.C.		Less than G.S.E.C.	
				F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
22-Ministry of Finance	685	155	530	-	4	-	13	-	6	36	137	49	71	55	113	15	186
-Customs Department	1496	53	1443	-	2	-	12	-	2	6	185	18	302	27	606	2	334
-Income Tax Dept.	554	139	415	-	-	-	9	-	8	53	225	22	28	57	66	7	79
-General Budget Dept.	46	6	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	1	2	2	-	3	9
-Dept. of Lands & Surveys	730	97	633	-	1	-	-	-	2	2	40	17	194	76	187	2	211
-Post Offices & Saving Fund	65	26	39	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	11	11	11	-	-	8	16
23 Ministry of Transport & Communication	43	11	32	-	1	-	1	-	3	2	9	-	2	7	3	2	14
-Jordan Establishment for Investment	29	8	21	-	1	-	1	-	1	3	8	5	-	-	2	-	8
-Amman Financial Market	66	18	48	-	-	-	1	-	-	6	20	6	10	6	2	-	15
-Dept. of General Supply	45	12	33	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	20	7	3	3	8	-	-
-Civil Aviation Authority	1298	185	1115	-	2	-	5	-	-	8	125	20	138	113	362	42	483
-Meteorological Dept.	278	22	256	-	2	-	3	-	-	3	48	4	11	12	128	3	64
-Ports Corporation	5283	17	5266	-	1	-	4	-	2	2	121	6	465	-	480	9	4193
-Aqaba Railway Corp.	1050	13	1037	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	54	2	65	7	47	3	870
-Hijazi Jordan Railway	143	3	140	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	1	8	-	4	-	124
-Royal Jordanian	4107	741	3366	-	2	6	14	4	4	221	550	172	698	252	569	89	1529
-Public Transport Corp.	1008	9	999	-	-	-	2	-	4	1	11	-	38	6	50	2	895
-Telecommunication Corp.	3436	578	2858	-	4	-	7	1	6	44	303	117	429	177	625	239	1484
24-Ministry of Awqaf & Islamic Affairs	2682	122	2560	-	9	-	18	3	4	104	259	1	120	2	103	12	2047
25-Ministry of Higher Education	1967	452	1515	1	56	14	188	41	142	116	380	125	312	38	28	117	409
26-Royal Society for Conservation of Nature	37	2	35	-	1	-	2	2	6	-	-	-	1	-	5	-	20
27-Royal Scientific Society	524	114	410	1	35	8	53	2	18	41	97	31	52	17	28	12	127
28-Post and Bostal Saving Public Corp.	2632	611	2021	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	332	58	112	323	1003	200	574
29-Hotel College Amra Hotel	51	-	51	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	16	-	10	-	18
Grand Total	115105	36524	78581	10	358	133	1235	367	1886	6625	13852	19319	16476	3058	7727	7012	37047

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Participation of Women within Different Unions

	Union Name	Headquarters	Date Established	Number of Members	Percentage of Women	Comments
1	General Union of Workers working in Mining	Rusaifah	1970	3,500	1%	
2	General Union of Workers working in Construction	Amman	1953	4,307	1%	
3	General Union of Workers working in Petrolum & Cemicals	Amman	1960			numbers not available
4	General Union of Workers working in Clothing & Textiles	Amman	1954	1,600	25%	
5	General Union of Workers working in Services	Amman	1954	1,123	5%	
6	General Union of Workers working in Transportation by land & Mechanics	Amman	1954	25,000	0%	
7	General Union of Workers working in Electricity	Amman	1960	1,359	5%	Irbid & Amman's numbers
8	General Union of Workers working in Private Education	Amman	1969	377	80%	
9	General Union of Workers working in Municiple Area	Amman	1969	880	4%	
10	General Union of Workers working in Banks, Insurance & Accounting	Amman	1961	1,000	28%	
11	General Union of Workers working with the Rail Road	Amman	1955	682	1%	
12	General Union of Workers working in Commercial and Private Stores	Amman	1955	1,200	20%	
13	General Union of Workers working in Medical Services	Amman	1962	598	35%	
14	General Union of Workers working in Air Transportation and Tourism	Amman	1970	1,000	25%	
15	General Union of Workers working at Docks	Aqaba	1956	247	20%	numbers reflect Amman's branch only
16	General Union of Workers working in Food Services	Amman	1955	3,300	4%	
17	General Union of Workers working in Printing and Publishing	Amman	1954	930	6%	

Source: Ministry of Labor Table No. 6

The Average Unemployment Based on Age & Gender

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
15-20	18.1	53.7	20.6
20-29	18.3	45.3	23.6
30-39	9.1	10.3	9.2
40-49	11.4	7.7	11.2
50-59	13.2	6.0	12.9
60+	11.4	2.3	11.3
Total	14.5	34.2	17.1

The Distribution of Unemployment Based on Age & Gender

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
15-20	12.2	7.7	11.0
20-29	50.0	83.7	59.0
30-39	12.6	6.3	10.9
40-49	12.1	1.7	9.3
50-59	9.3	.4	6.9
60+	3.8	.1	2.8
Total	100. / 73.3	100. / 26.7	100. / 100%

Appendix 6

Number of Work Permits issued to Workers in the Kingdom
by Sex and Occupational Classification during 1991

| Occupational Classification	Total	Sex	
		Female	Male
Agriculture	10810	24	10786
Construction	232	-	232
Industry	-	-	-
Garbage Collectores	2565	37	2528
Loading and Un-loading	1394	-	1394
Servants	5919	5572	347
Total	20920	5633	15287

Source: Ministry of Labor, 1991, Table No. 4/2/9 ص. ٨٨

Legislative Indices of the Position of Women within Arab Societies 1993

	Minimum age of Marriage	Political Rights	Registration of Marriage	Regulation of Divorce	Regulation of Polygamy	Abolition of Repudiation	Abolition of Polygamy	Comprehensive Civil Code
Tunisia	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-
Yemen	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-
Jordan	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
Algeria	+	+	+	+	-	-	¦	-
Egypt	-	-	-	-	-	-	¦	-
Saudi Arabia/ Arabian Gulf	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

SOURCE: BARI'AH NAQSHABANDI

Area	Units	Social and Economic Ranking	
'Abdun	83	1	
Al-Suiyfyyah	85	2	wealty class
Amm 'Aziynah	86	3	
Al-Shimasani	93	4	
Al-Madiynah al-Riydiyan	94	5	
Jabal Amman	81	6	middle class
Al-Wabiydah	91	7	
Jabal al-Husyan	92	8	
MarkahI	33	9	
Wasat al-Balad	14	10	
Al-Nizha	21	11	lower class
Jabal al-Naziyha	61	12	
Mukhum al-Wahdat	52	13	

THE SHADED AREAS INDICATE
THE DISTRICTS WHERE THE
INTERVIEWEES RESIDE.
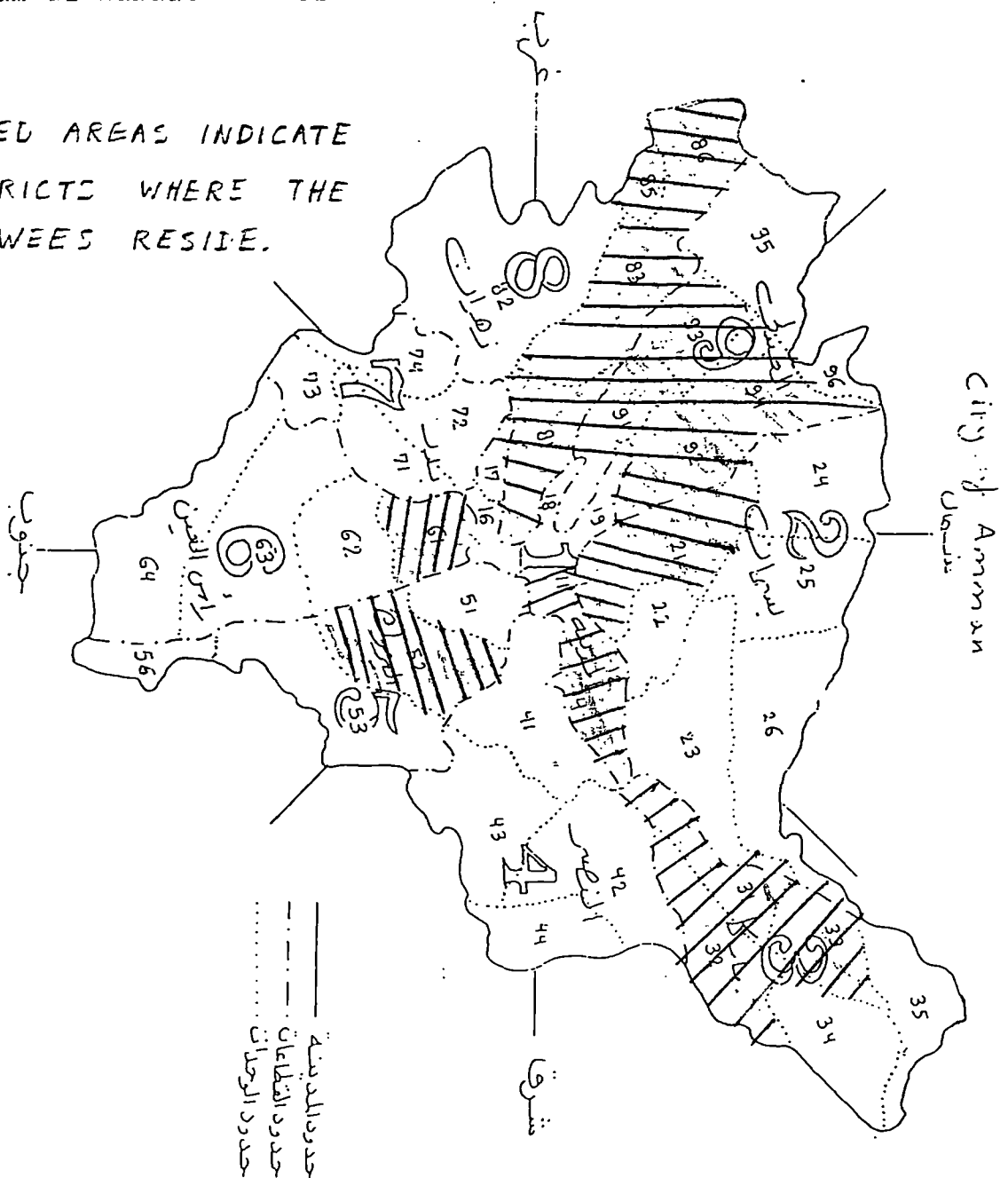
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