Conclusions: The Women's movement, political transformation and civil society in Jordan

The purpose of this study was two-fold: First, we intended to draw a general prospective in the development of the women's movement in Jordan. This prospective is to introduce the dynamics of this development and to address the impacts of the internal and external factors in determining its direction. Second, to place the development of the women's movement within the mainstream of sociopolitical changes taking place in the country. Such placement includes viewing the women's movements as active agents of sociopolitical change, and hence to assist us in theorizing over the emergence of civil society in an inhospitable 'Patriarchal' environment. Therefore, the study focused on three main aspects with respect to the analysis of the women's movement, namely that of; activism forms and discourses, strategies implemented to meet women's interests, and finally the factors that play a significant role in the success and failure of the movement in general.

I. Development phases and forms of activism

Drawing a prospective of the developmental process in the contemporary women's movement in Jordan directed us to review the movement's development over time. In fact, the women's movement has been developed in terms of activism, objectives, and strategies through three main different stages. The first stage was evident in the period of the pre- political transformation process, namely, between the early 1940s and the early 1970s; the second, however, illustrates the period of 1974 to the present. Moreover, each stage has its own developmental mechanisms, and is accompanied with certain social, political and economic circumstances that have defined the course of the movement's work, organizational structure, and strategies implemented in mobilizing the various issues of interest.

In the first stage, namely the period between the early 1940s and 1974, the women's movement involved diverse loosely connected small societies and organizations. Activism at this stage consisted of middle, upper class and educated women. These women initiated several micro-scale organizations, with their main aim in providing charity services for the local community. Moreover, the target groups at that time

were poor people, refugees, orphans, and homeless children. Yet, we believe that the sociopolitical atmosphere of the period forced the women's action in this direction. On the one hand, there was the Arab- Israeli wars and their sociopolitical outcomes, namely the huge number of Palestinians who found refuge in Jordan. On the other hand, there was the widespread spirit of liberation and Arab nationalism, which was active in most Arab countries. The women's movement in this context was not able to provide a clear identity; neither did activists focus on women as a main target group. In fact, this phase was dominated by war and nationalism issues. Therefore, the war, and the nationalist (males) decided (at this stage) what was important and immediate, as well as what was not important and could wait. However, the only political action targeting women's rights during this period was carried out by the Arab Women's Union established in 1954. During a historic festival held in 1956 women activists demanded the reexamination of the Electoral Law, which allowed at that time only educated women to vote and denied such rights to uneducated women as it had also denied women's rights in running for office. This stage ended with the application of martial law and the suspension of all forms of political activity. Women's actions during this historical period were unfortunately among the casualties of this political crackdown.

Moving to the **second stage**, the study pointed out that the contemporary developments of women's organizations and programs mirror a new focus on various women's political and social rights. This stage starts with almost two decades of a renaissance process, namely the 1970s and the 1980s, wherein women's organizations were allowed to be reestablished in order to represent Jordan in the planned UN International Women's Decade. The women's movement in Jordan was able, by the end of 1980s, to develop a new and clear identity, in what can now be described as a new women's movement. Women activists, starting in the early 1990s and continuing up to the present, are calling for legal reform and are discussing various new policies that should enhance the active socioeconomic and political participation of women. In other words, during this stage there has been a fundamental move away from a need-based discourse (which has dominated the first stage) to a rights-based mobilization of interest. In this respect, the women's movement has witnessed significant 'new' developments in terms of objectives, activism, strategies, and most importantly,

significant outcomes that have influenced both the society and the state. These developments however, can be mainly explained (in this study) by two interrelated groups of influencing factors.

First, the women's movement owes its renaissance to the international efforts of mobilizing women's issues, namely at the level of the UN. It seems likely that had there not been a UN decade for women, the Jordanian Women's Union would not have been reestablished, certainly not in 1974. The argument that the kingdom, which likes to portray itself as enlightened, needed a representative of its women to attend the meetings and launch the decade appears sufficient to have led the state to allow the reemergence of a national women's union (previously the Arab Women's Union) after the passage of nearly twenty years. Yet, allowing the reemergence of women's action was right from the beginning controlled from above. Laws regulating women's action did not change (they go back to 1966), even though several new civil society and women's organizations were allowed to be (re)established. This control was much clearer when Princess Basma headed the Jordanian preparation process and the national delegation to the Beijing women's conference. The preparations included the establishment of a National Commission for Women (1993), which was basically her own initiative. Yet, the role that the princess plays in this context (as will be explained also later) should not be seen as absolutely negative. Rather, her role can also be seen as partly positive, if we consider facts related to the new reemergence of women's organizations; the lack of experience among female activists (who were mainly active in providing charity and social services); and the conflicts resulting from the formation of the General Federation of Jordanian Women established, in 1983 to substitute the Jordanian Women's Union (originally was called the Arab Women's Union (reestablished as mentioned in 1974))[1]. In this context, the princess assisted women's organizations (namely those being run by her) to create a clear agenda that targeted foremost women's issues. Moreover, due to her supervision, women's organizations were acting as a network; and consequently they are complementing one other in developmental, political and social women's issues. Her presence provides

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[1] The Jordanian Women's Union and the Arab Women's Union are the same organization. In fact, when it was allowed to be reestablished in 1974, the Arab Women's Union worked under the name of the Jordanian Women's Union (see for details chapter four).

them with the necessary buffer from direct confrontation with the state or society. In fact, her public appearance shows kindness and modesty that has endeared her to many Jordanians.

Moreover, the study pointed out that participating in international women's actions at the UN level has also had a significant effect on the consciousness of Jordanian women active in fields of social development and women's issues. The International Women's Decade has had a significant influence on the women's movement agenda, namely in terms of women's rights, discrimination, and gender mainstreaming. In fact, in recent years, and responding to (Women's) national and international pressure, the Jordanian government has achieved some gradual reforms despite Islamic and tribal opposition. Jordan ratified and acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1992, with reservations as to these issues that might conflict with Islamic law. Moreover, a national commission for women was established in 1993 with the mission of assisting the elimination of diverse forms of discrimination against women. In this respect, the commission was able to highlight several law articles (namely laws regulating Jordanian nationality, passports, and retirement pension). These laws, however, were the main target of legal reform (in women's favor) announced by Queen Rania later in 2002.

The international women's decade has also encouraged international sponsors and aid agencies to direct their aid initially to the enhancement of women's status and their integration within national development projects, over and above which that of decision-making processes. This is in order to enhance democracy through enhancing civil society groups and organizations, and because the state has failed to solely carry out the project of national development in general and that of integrating women in particular, the international aid agencies have invested in supporting the Gender and Development approach encouraged by the UN. This study found out that the international support and aid has had significant influence on types of activism active in the field of woman question in Jordan. In fact, it has encouraged not only the emergence of many independent women's organizations, but also some semi-governmental initiatives (the so called RONGOs or Royal NOGs) established to work

on women's issues; such as the Princess Basma center for Women, and the Women's Commissions Forum, etc….

The second group of factors shaping the form of developmental processes in the women's movement is the sociopolitical and economic challenges Jordan has witnessed since the mid 1980s. In fact, what has mainly characterized this period (1989- to the present) is the ascendancy of neo-liberal values in the economic and political spheres. These new values were formed through the state's political liberalization process launched in 1989 and from the economic crisis Jordan suffered through since the mid-1980s and has been enhanced by King Abdullah's wish to encourage foreign investments in order to breathe life into national economy.

The economic crisis was crystallized by the end of January 1989, when Jordan was no longer able to service its external debt, and was forced to negotiate with the IMF to reschedule its debt repayments. The government accepted a structural adjustment program that included the cutting of domestic spending, curbing domestic demands, encouraging exports and the like. This process forced women's action in the direction of working out socioeconomic agendas and focusing on social development. In fact, the rollback of the state in the fields of health, education, and social security has also been associated with some positive effects, most importantly of which is an increasing role for civil society organizations, which essentially have emerged to cover the gap behind the state's withdrawal. This process of economic reconstruction, through the application of the structural adjustment program, has assisted in the redefinition of state-society relations. This context has challenged women activists to confront new responsibilities and limitations of 'a capitalist democracy', and in so doing, to contribute to the amplification of a workable formula in the delivery of social justice. Consequently, women's organizations have directed a significant share (almost 70%) of their programs and projects to poverty elimination and economic empowerment, fighting the family's poverty through exposing women to credits and small enterprises, besides allowing them to earn extra income.

As Jordan entered into the IMF structural adjustment program, the regime chose political liberalization as a means of channeling and reducing the opposition that

would result. The initial openings were quite promising. Diverse civil society organizations and movements began to emerge, and wide ranges of civil liberties and rights have been freely practiced. In fact, unfolding the democratization process at this level revealed two significant changes, namely within accordance to forms and actions of collective actors in the Jordanian public space. We noted an active emergence of women's organizations, in addition to an active mobilization of women's interest. Simultaneously, conservative actors- mainly Islamists and tribal activists- remained representing a consequent challenge to changes of modernity and emancipation projects carried out by the women's movement.

The new environment of freedom of speech and practicing civil rights encouraged activists to launch a real project of emancipating women. It has namely encouraged the initiation of a national campaign to eliminate the so-called honor crimes, to establish a shelter for women threatened by domestic violence, to discuss the possibilities of reforming laws in women's favor and by enhancing women's political participation. In other words, it seems that women were the sole believers in the political transformation project of the kingdom and therefore they were able to make the best of it. The new context assisted not only the establishment of several (semi) independent women's organizations, with the focus of emancipating women and defending their rights, but also the emergence of a state, and Islam oriented feminisms. The fear that the women's movement would succeed in emancipating women their way (i.e. to release them from all forms of cultural informal and formal (legal) oppression (the way that the national campaign to eliminate honor crimes tried to do), forced the Islamic movement to provide other alternatives to the projects of enhancing women's status and the advancement of women. The emergence of state feminism, or better royal feminism, had different circumstances. First, the focus of international aid concerning women's issues and on financing civil society organizations forced the state to create its own civil society organizations and receive (in this way) international aid. Second, the fear that the women's movement would target the 'Arab' tradition and culture, and thereby threaten the state's alliance with the tribes, highlighted the necessity of the establishment of an umbrella organization such as the (JFJW), and the integration of the princess as a general director of women's public action.

Other actors in the women's scene were left to choose between having associational linkages to the state (such as the being members at the GFJW, or having a royal family member as head of their organization), and by this being protected from state intervention, or to continue in providing socially and politically 'harmless' social services. Examples of organizations which choose the first option are the Human Rights Forum (established in 1995), and the Arab Women Organization, ((re)established in1970). While the former focuses on conducting studies on women's rights, violence, and legal rights, the later changed its focus in 1995 to include family planning, reproductive health, and female empowerment, after being preoccupied with providing charity services in refugee camps in the city Amman.

At the level of individual activism, the study found that changes seem to not have touched activism on this level, namely with those women involved in the leadership. The study results show that it is still those "high class" women, who, in some cases, have even been chosen from above by the state or the princess that are directing women's action in the country. These women have tended to come from prominent families and very few of them have work experience on women's issues. Not surprisingly they have had limited political consciousness and even less understanding of the conditions of everyday life among Jordanian women in less privileged sectors. This form of leadership has had (as will also be later noted) negative impacts on the general performance of women's organizations.

Yet, the promising liberalization process, which also included a wide range of opposition, was relatively brief. It began to retreat gradually since 1994 when Jordan had signed a peace treaty with Israel. In 1999 the late King Hussein died and was followed by his elder son Abdullah. The ascent of the new king to the throne, was however, accompanied by diverse national, regional and international events, all of which have had also significant negative impact on the development of the genuine democratization process. The outbreak of the second Intifada in late September 2000, the September 11, 2001 restraints, and the continuous American threats of a war against Iraq, were the main determinant factors in defining the course of further political development in Jordan. In light of these events, diverse political measurements have been undertaken. In June 2001, the parliament was dissolved, the

elections (normally to taking place in November of every fourth year) were postponed, and a series of temporary laws related to regulating freedom of speech were put into power. The application of these laws was justified by the fact that these were urgent situations, and in order to protect the security of the state, it would be then be dangerous to wait for Parliament to reconvene.

While civil liberties and freedom of speech were, in this phase, limited, and many well-known opposition figures and journalists were imprisoned (one of them is Taujan Faisal the first female PM in Jordan), several developments were registered in women's favor. In fact, during the Arab Women Summit held in Amman during November 2002, the Jordanian Queen (Rania Al Abdullah) announced some significant reforms on the laws concerning passports, nationality and retirement. Moreover, on December 14, 2001, King Abdullah II approved an amendment to the law granting Jordanian women the right to divorce their husband (as long as they abandon any claims for financial compensation). In addition, he approved the proposal of the new election law (temporary law presently enjoying much discussion in Jordanian political circles), which promises a special quota for women in parliament. These empowerment reforms are considered the most significant in Jordanian women's history and are believed to prepare the ground for an active female involvement in the Jordanian political scene.

Despite the fact that these reforms targeted issues demanded by the women's movement, the independent women's actions and organizations were not able to bring relevant issues to the political agenda, but rather it was the National Commission for Women's Rights (established in 1993 as an initiative of the Princess), which was able to nominate several laws discriminating against women, and ensure the integration of women's issues in the national socio-economic plans. In fact, in order to carry out such reforms the Jordanian state has taken advantage of the rights provided for them by the constitution in the absence of the parliament. Women's issues in this context were used, on one hand, in the jockeying for power positions among the diverse political forces, namely the state, Islamists, and the other blocs especially the tribal and conservative forces. On the other hand, the reforms were also carried out to attract foreign aid and investments. The image that the royal family portrays, being

progressive and liberal, has required such reforms, especially in light of the increasing dominance of the Islamists. The advancement of women would also provide the RONGOs with the sufficient aid to run their projects, as well as it will encourage foreign investors who are seen as the main re-builders of the Jordanian 'weak' economy.

II. Two Approaches of emancipating women

With respect to the strategies and politics implemented by the women's movement in order to meet the diverse practical and strategic interests of women; the study pointed out that there are two main approaches to be distinguished. The first can be referred to as the traditional conservative approach and the second as a progressive radical approach. While the first traditional, more conservative approach sees the woman-question as a problem of an existing gap between men and women in regard to the various fields of development, politics and the economy. The second approach sees the woman problem more in light of the fact that they are oppressed and discriminated against by a male-based culture and politics.

The first approach suggests, therefore, that gradual changes should start with the advancement of women within the fields of education, work, and health. Defenders of this approach do not negotiate the role of women in the context of the family, society or culture. In other words, they do not target changing the culture and cultural aspects, which view women only within their traditional reproductive roles. They rather emphasize the fact that the advancement of women should be based on the grounds of the "Arab" heritage and traditions (state and royal feminism), or the main tenets of the religion (Islamic feminism). Moreover, advocates of this approach believe that enhancing the women's situation in Jordan requires the practice of policies, which seek the empowerment and advancement of women. Therefore, they are applying politics and projects that focus on covering the gap between men and women, assuming that women are backward and should be helped in gaining 'complementary' achievements compared to what men have. In other words to enhance their participation in the public space, whereby their reproductive roles in the family as child bearers and wives are not threatened.

One other form of female mobilization, which could be included within this approach, is that of the Islamic mobilization of women. A serious discourse on women's conduct and dress outside the private sphere first emerged in the late 1980s, when women's active participation in the labor market, as well as in educational institutions became a reality. Yet, until the mid 1990s male members of the Islamic movement dominated this discourse and associated women's emancipation projects with moral issues. The study noted the emergence of a new Islam-oriented female discourse concerning women's issues. This new discourse seems to be moving away from the male structured arguments which links women's liberation projects to western and Israeli projects, all of which are considered to be aimed at destroying the society through moral decay. Rather the female discourse deals with women's issues from a feminist standpoint, revealing the original Islamic views of women's rights. The new discourse demands that the Jordanian society must return to Islamic regulations and norms, whereby women's legal, political and social rights are preserved.

The second approach, or the radical one, is related to actions which demand a radical legal reform in women's favor, and/or a radical elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in Jordan. Advocates of such an approach blame the backward status of women on the male-based culture. They argue that from a human rights perspective, women in Jordan are subject to abuse, violence, and discrimination at all levels. The abuse and trauma of women in the society is not only going unprotected by the culture, but also by that of state institutions and policies. A few examples of actions being taken in women's favor are that of the National Campaign to Eliminate Honor Crimes, as well as the courageous action of the JWU in rejecting the Minister's decision of closing its headquarters and thereby moving the case to court. Yet, a societal reaction is the main problem which is facing women's activism in adopting this approach.

To compare the two approaches in terms of efficiency, this study found out that the social mechanisms in which the society implements in order to prevent any change, plays a significant role in the success and failure of any strategy implemented in emancipating women. In fact, the first approach is gradually being accepted without problems from the society for several reasons. First, it does not challenge the cultural

context wherein women's basic roles are viewed as mothers and wives. Second, because it is being protected by the princess who has succeeded through time and charity work to gain the love and respect from many people in the country. Third, because they believe in a gradual and by no means a radical immediate change in women's status. The second approach, however, is being charged (for its radical demands) as being part of an international western or Israeli project aimed destroying our society from within, and therefore is being rejected. Generally speaking, however, radical and conservative approaches are being taken, regardless of the success or failure of their actions, which by the way is not easy to be examine. The society's preoccupation with women's issues in these days is a good indicator that the women's movement has succeeded in politicizing women's issues in Jordan at all levels.

In summation, there is no specific approach or strategy that is more effective in the case of mobilizing women's issues in Jordan. Yet, the determinant factor in leading the mobilization to success– in addition to political power and financial resources- asks how does the society (women and men) feel about all these actions, and also, how does it react towards them. This leads us to the discussion of study conclusions in regard to variables that might assist in clarifying the society's reaction to women's organizational activities.

III. Determinant factors of the movement's sociopolitical outcomes

Although having achieved considerable structural improvements in their organizational form and performance, women's organizations still suffer from many problems and their actions are hindered by diverse limitations. Such limitations include financial problems, the state's constant intervention, and a lack of creative methods and strategies implemented to pursue their various objectives. In fact, diverse factors are determining the success and failure of women's actions. First, the experiences of women activists show that those who are most successful in conveying their message to average men and women are those who represent their argument within the framework, which clearly respects Islam and existing societal structures. In other words, any intended action concerning women is to see success only if it acknowledges the fact that Jordanian society is conservative, and more comfortable

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with the approaches that respect the general culture, norms and traditions, than with those efforts which target sexual liberties, and demand the rights to control ones body. Secondly, the form of organizational supervision and leadership plays the most significant role in determining the success of an action. Indeed, being highly respected by the people, princess Basma has led most of the initiatives carried out by organizations under her supervision to success. Success in this respect means that the government has adopted, for example, the legal reforms recommended by the JNCW, in terms of very controversial laws, namely that of divorce and citizenship. Moreover, success include that these reforms, did not raise any negative reactions from the conservatives in the society, partly because the conservative parliament was for the time resolved, but more importantly because her supervision provides actions with necessary legitimacy. She symbolizes in one way or another an authority, and thus she represents power. The rest of the women's organizations are being headed by one prominent woman who is considered the motor of the organization, thus the creator of ideas and project proposals. Most of them are also the initiators of the organization and deal with the organization as if it was their own.

This leads us to discuss another form of problems related to membership types and conditions. Many women's organizations that have been examined in this study suffer from the problem of limited participation in the membership-base they claim. Participation from the base is however limited by several factors. Apart from the participation structures, which have been proved to be very complicated, normal members have hardly had access to decision making processes within the organization. Participatory forms of normal members is being expressed only through participation in the application of a certain project (around 80% of the sample) and/or beneficiary from the facilities provided by a certain project (79% of the study sample).

The third factor that plays a key role in determining the success or the failure of women's organizations and actions is that of the ability of the organization to mobilize financial support, because the financial resources of the organization are the main means of implementing projects. In this respect, there is an indirect relationship between the size of the organization, its leadership, history and its ability to mobilize resources. In fact, large well-organized societies and NGOs are able to mobilize more

funds and to run more ambitious projects, while small organizations (in their fight for survival) are not able to develop creative ideas and projects, which might raise funds. The legal framework wherein women's organizations performs plays also a significant role in this respect. Women's as well as many other civil society organizations must apply for through strenuous procedures in order to raise needed funds from the outside or even inside the country. In fact, they have to register their fund raising activities and to provide an annual financial report, which is then reviewed by the state's related institutions. The royal NGOs have privileges in this respect as they do not have to register their fund raising activities, as well as an annual financial report is not required, which shows their financial resources.

However, the discussion of such limitations and problems facing women's action leads our analysis to consider the possibilities and limitations of implementing the theory of civil society to the case of the women's movement in Jordan. In fact, the study benefited widely from this approach, namely in terms of explaining the development of the movement overtime, its objectives and organizational expressions. In other words, the theory assisted us in placing the emergence and development of the women's movement within the mainstream of the sociopolitical development taking place in the country. In this way, the study was able to depart from producing an abstract analysis of the movement, and rather placing it within national and international contexts, which played as we have seen a significant role it its development.

Yet, the study results have pointed out that a civil society in the traditional western sense has only been able to carve out a very limited space in Jordan. At the same time, the societal restrictions (generically referred to as patriarchal structures) on women's conduct outside the home has placed further constrains on the women's movement and on their activities. This leads us to consider the fact that the civil society in Jordan is relatively conservative. It is even patriarchal. The political developments Jordan has achieved in the late 1980s has revealed and emphasized this fact. In fact, it was those conservative forces (the Islamists and the Tribalists) who were able to gain benefits from the political opening which existed for a couple of years. While the political opening project was considered as defensive strategy aimed at answering the survival

of the political system, the reversal democratization measurement, implemented since 1994, can also be regarded as defensive. The state, which is more liberal than the society (or at least likes to portray itself this way), has implemented the reversal measurements with regard to freedom of speech and gathering in order to limit the extending power of the Islamists and somehow to protect the image of the liberal state. This conclusion assists us to explain the significant reforms introduced in women's favor in 2002. In this respect, the state has introduced amendments to the laws- related to nationality, divorce, and honor crime-s in the absence of the conservative parliament. Such changes would have never come about if they had had to be discussed in the parliament. The rejection of any amendments related to law article (340)-which frames cases of honor crimes- made by the parliament in 1998, is a vivid example of the fact that any changes in women's favor would be rejected or maybe even hindered by the parliament.

Yet, we need to keep in mind that these amendments, despite being demanded by the women's movement for over a decade came as a response to different factors, namely the active involvement of the princess in the field of the woman's question, and through international pressure and finical aid (which is very essential to the economically dependent kingdom). Women's organizations and the mobilizations of women's issues still, in fact, suffer from state control and intervention. The status of the women's movement in this regard mirrors to a wider degree the general status of the civil society in Jordan. It shows that despite the wide benefits civil society has gained from the liberalization process, the state still controls all its actions. The state expresses such control through establishing its 'own' civil society organizations (those supervised and directed by the royal family), and/or through increasing the power given to state institutions through laws and regulations. The space of movement provided for the civil society is hence very limited.

Final Comments

On a macro level this study tried to examine how civil society organizations function in the society, what limits they face, and what factors facilitate their work. Through examining the case of the women's movement, one of the most dynamic elements of

Jordan's civil society, the study pointed out several significant results that can compared to emergent circumstances and work carried out by other civil society organizations, and .the difficulties facing them.

First, the analysis of the relationship connecting the women's movement to societal and state institutions indicates a special relationship between the three main spheres: The state, society and civil society. In fact, and as has been clearly demonstrated in this study the women's movement cannot be studied separately from state intervention, initiatives, control or even assistance. Its work programs and projects can also not be studies apart from societal reactionary control and intervention. This fact makes the ideal consideration of an autonomous civil society in Jordan far from describing reality. Hence, any study of civil society in Jordan should indeed take into consideration the dialectic relationship between these three main spheres and the interdependence relationship connecting them. In fact, seeking state support through the princess, the king or the queen, and by respecting the religion and cultural heritage has steered most efforts which chosen this strategy to success.

Second, and again in respectto the main argument which has framed our work right from the beginning, that is that social movements in general, and women's movements in particular, can de-traditionlize both society and state, thus this study has pointed out several significant results. Actually, this assumption was true and was valid to the case of the women's movement in Jordan. On the one hand we have seen that the state's institutions have responded positively to national and international calls which have demanded women's emancipation. Women's issues were successfully integrated within diverse plans of action prepared for by the government. Moreover, the legal reforms in respectto nationality, retirement, labor, and social stats laws are but a few examples for the developments achieved by the state's party. On the other hand, this study has pointed out that even the most traditional elements of civil society was also able to integrate women's issues within their agendas. The many activities conducted by research centers concerning issues related to women's political participation, as well as violence are good examples for the preoccupation of civil society organizations with women's issues. Moreover, the preoccupation of the MBs with women's issues and their provided alternative for emancipating women within the

context of Islam also provides a good example in this concern. The fact that they have succeeded in integrating six women within their Shoura Assembly, and that sisters among them were able to develop a discourse of rights regarding women, reflects that even the hard course conservatives can also adjust to the project of modern women and contribute to it. Ironically however, while the islamists were able to integrate women's issues within their agenda "their way", the tribalists- who comprise a fundamental element of Jordan's civil society- did not welcome the discourses concerning women's issues. They sharply rejected any reform of laws and associate every effort aiming at emancipating women with western or Jewish projects targeting the demoralization of society. The tribal associations and bonds were also not a main target of women's organizations. It seem likely that both sides (the tribalist and the women's activists) neglect the existence of each other, and each works as if the other did not count or eventually vanish.

Well, as a matter of fact these conservative institutions comprise an essential element in the civil society of Jordan, having succeeded over time in adjusting to changes of modernization, while remaining after all attempts to destruct their structures and power basis were active, leads us to argue that any project targeting the emancipation of women will not see success unless it tries to sensitize tribal structures and institutions to women's issues. As long as the tribal association are men's exclusive clubs, and women have no interest, or better do not dare to break through them, integrating women within the public space and eliminating forms of discrimination against them will be successfully limited.

Third, the study draw our attention to another factor which also plays a significant role in shaping the form of development of civil society and the discourses carried out by its constituents, that is the international atmosphere, and the role of UN conventions in terms of human rights, good governance and citizenship rights. The international discourse with respect to good governance, and the focus, at the international level, on the role of civil society assisting the state in carrying out tasks related to social development, is increasing the role of civil society. The international discourses on human rights, women's rights, and citizenship rights also legitimized discourses carried out by civil society actors and organizations.