

# **Gender and Space in Jordan: Boundaries and Power in a Middle Eastern Society**

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## **Abstract**

*A diversity of facets in the relationships between gender and space in Jordan come to light throughout this study, highlighting foremost the contentious nature running throughout the relationships between men and women as each gender attempts to shape, expand, and solidify the accepted gender roles and realms of influence within society. The study also exposes the power of issues like assumption, perception, reputation, and religious or cultural fervor in relation to discerning whether men and women can reside in or at least share the same space or whether the tensions between the genders are so great that men and women are foes who cannot peacefully cross the boundaries between spaces. For further insight into this topic of genderized space allocation, boundary maintenance, and power distribution in Jordan, the examination of the relationships between gender and space through the political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural lenses of Jordanian society offers documentation, in powerful terms and images, of the ways each element of society –political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural– supports the idea of fluidity in the boundaries between genderized public and private spaces but, paradoxically, provides even more efficient tools for increasing the rigidity and divisiveness of those same boundaries. Consequently, genders in Jordan remain divided between public and private spaces –a social reality shaped, supported, and enhanced by the interaction between both qualitative, emotion-based elements and tangible, fact-based elements.*

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## **Introduction**

In this study, I address gender and space in Jordan, examining the role gender plays in allocating space and defining the boundaries between spaces in Jordanian society while also highlighting the power struggles, between and among genders, resulting from the division of space and placement of boundaries. Through this study, I provide a glimpse into the ever convoluted and contentious world of gender relations in a Middle Eastern society like Jordan, outlining some of the ways various elements of society fit into and shape gender definitions and the division and allocation of space into public and private domains. In the process of outlining select political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural elements, I also shed light on the degrees to which men and women share or fight over space as well as the implications of their ability or inability to co-habit space on their relations with each other and with their society as a whole.

By concentrating on gender, space, boundaries, and power, this study explores very human conditions of survival and control; therefore, I delve into qualitative elements like relationships, empathy, and passion, suggesting that the division of space and the placement and maintenance of boundaries are indoctrinated responses both to common gender assumptions and to the statuses of the political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural environments of the individuals living within Jordanian society. Further, I highlight the notion that space and belonging to space are not merely matters of physical territory; rather, they are theoretical issues controlled by those who possess the most power and thus have the most to lose by any redistribution of space or realignment of boundaries. This notion, extended into the examination of space and power in Jordan,

helps clarify the behavior of and interactions between gender groups in Jordan, revealing the ways tension between modernization and tradition pull Jordanian society toward gender equality by encouraging greater space-sharing and boundary crossing while simultaneously pushing society back again to strict gender separation by enforcing spatial division and boundary maintenance.

As an introduction to the study of gender and space in Jordan, chapter one consists of an overview of the concepts of space, boundaries, and power. In this chapter, I examine the relationship between the three concepts, emphasizing the ways in which the interactions between the concepts shape power relationships and encourage social strife between those with and those without power, often at a scale extreme enough to create a foe-like hatred and distrust between the two segments of society. By connecting this discussion with the division of Jordanian space into public and private domains segregated along gender lines, I set the stage for the underlying premise that in Jordanian society, men and women face a level of indoctrination that leaves them unable to build relationships of mutual trust, rendering them enemies and consequently unable to share space or permit boundary-crossing.

In chapter two, I address the applicability of Jordan as the focus of this study. In a study of such personal and qualitative social behaviors, interactions, and influences, I recognize the danger of lumping even small portions of society into broad stereotypes. Therefore, I preface my decision to study Jordan with a discussion of different elements that make certain generalizations possible in a Middle Eastern society. By highlighting commonalities of experience in issues like race and religion, for example, both very unique to individuals or groups, I show how the empathy stemming from the shared

experiences of these kind of identity-forming issues can validate using those issues as foundations for careful generalizations. I complete chapter two by placing Jordan onto this background of acceptable generalizations, detailing the diversity inherent in Jordanian society but also outlining the ways the commonalities running throughout the diversities allow for measured generalizations of the relationships between gender and space, boundaries, and power and consequently make Jordanian society an especially pertinent focus of study.

Chapter three turns the focus back to the topics of space and boundaries, providing further detailing of the factors involved in space allocation and boundary maintenance. First, I offer a breakdown of some of the basic questions about the concept of belonging, from what it means to belong to a space to the intricacies of the rewards of inclusion in and the consequences of exclusion from spaces. In an attempt to answer these questions of belonging, chapter three continues with an outline of some of the prevailing citizenship theories, addressing, at the same time, the difficulties inherent in applying Western theories to a Middle Eastern society. Rather than negating the relevance of Western citizenship theories to the study of Jordan, I suggest incorporating the elements unique and vital to Jordan, specifically gender, religion, and the availability of political, economic, and civil resources, into the prevailing theories in order to develop the theories into successful tools for gaining a better understanding of space allocation and belonging in Jordanian society.

In chapter four, I add an additional layer to the formation of the study of space and boundaries in Jordan, giving an overview of some of the varying gender assumptions in Jordan and the ways in which those assumptions are created and indoctrinated into the

social fabric of Jordan's population. Through this chapter, I show how gender assumptions, generally emotion-based and fueled by fervor more often than fact, shape gender identity and behavior and consequently, direct the relationships among gender groups and between gender groups and society as a whole. In this way, through the examination of the differences and similarities between male assumptions of gender and female assumptions of gender, chapter four sheds light into the ways male and female gender assumptions promote the division of Jordanian space into genderized public and private areas.

As final preparation for studying the relationships between gender, space, boundaries, and power and specific political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural elements in Jordanian society, I use chapter five as an opportunity to express the territorial and theoretical characteristics of public and private spaces. This chapter shows the similarities between the characteristics of public space and the most widely accepted characteristics of the male gender and, conversely, the similarities between the characteristics of private space and the most widely accepted characteristics of the female gender. In this way, chapter five helps validate the premise that, in Jordan, public space equates to male space while private space equates to female space.

Chapter six provides the meat of the study of space and power in Jordanian society. In this chapter, I examine the political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural environments in Jordan to discover the relationships between each issue and the concepts of space, boundaries, and power. Throughout each issue, I discover evidence of movement toward gender equality and space sharing, but I also find corresponding and sometimes vicious movement away from gender equality and space sharing, exposing the

struggle between genders and the tensions resulting from the relationship between gender and space, boundaries, and power. Consequently, as I conclude in chapter seven, while portions of Jordanian society express some desire to shift and loosen the boundaries separating genders and public and private spaces, the portion of society that desires strict space separation and boundary maintenance holds enough control over the political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural realms of society to restrict lasting space sharing and boundary crossing and to enforce the impropriety of gender equality.

## Chapter 1

### Space, Boundaries, and Power: Trespass or Progress?

Space has a primarily social rather than physical quality. The notion of trespassing is related not so much to physical boundaries as to the identity of the person performing the act. A friend, for example, never trespasses, while a foe always does. A woman is always trespassing in a male space because she is, by definition, a foe. A woman has no right to use male spaces. If she enters them, she is upsetting the male's order and his peace of mind. She is actually committing an act of aggression against him merely by being present where she should not be (Mernissi, 1987, p. 143-144).

Let there be a community (or *umma*) among you, advocating what is good, demanding what is right, and eradicating what is wrong. These are indeed the successful (Qur'an, Sura 3:104).

The concepts of space, power, and boundaries are all interrelated: whoever defines and enforces the allocation of space generally holds the power, and the rigidity of the boundaries separating the spaces is vital to the maintenance of that power. Power is the sought after possession, as it is the power to claim the right of social control and ordering necessary to create a social reality. Once an individual or group controls space and boundaries, that individual or group has the power to create and maintain any desired social reality by relegating all other individuals or groups to inferior or confining spaces, thereby reducing or eliminating any tools, physical or mental, that might encourage the trespassing of boundaries (Lister, 1997; McCullagh, Wolkowitz, & Young, 1984; Tetreault, 2000; Turner, 2000). In other words, “[s]ociety does not form divisions purely for the pleasure of breaking the social universe into compartments. The institutionalized boundaries dividing the parts of society express the recognition of power in one part at the expense of the other. Any transgression of the boundaries is a danger to the social

order because it is an attack on the acknowledged allocation of power” (Mernissi, 1987, p. 137). Thus, potential changes in the status quo of space and boundaries threaten to dissolve the social reality; in other words, a status quo change is a direct threat to the power and, in the extreme, to the lives of those who control space and boundaries (Lister, 1997; Mernissi, 1987; Joseph, 2000).

The social reality created by those in power stems from and also influences the effects of the concepts of space, power, and boundaries on the relationships within a society. In a society defined by specific space allocation and rigid boundary maintenance, tension and distrust easily abound between the occupiers of the different spaces, or more specifically, between those with power and those without power. In fact, history often views individuals or groups crossing over boundaries into spaces that do not belong to them as trespassers, even hostile invaders, seen first as threats, possible enemies to the social norm, but almost never as friends (Mernissi, 1987). Equal relationships, expectations, and rights encourage and even allow boundary hopping and therefore rarely exist in these kinds of societies. Rather, the distrustful, "us verses them" characteristic inherent in space allocation and boundary maintenance fosters relationships that are not equal, do not suggest that those in power and those without power should have similar life expectations, and do not permit the actualization of equality in rights. These relationships cyclically encourage the formation of a social reality that perpetuates that distrust and inequality (Joseph, 2000; Kandiyoti, 1988; Lister, 1997; Mernissi, 1987; Tetreault, 2000).

The gender tensions in Jordan serve as prime examples of the relationships that stem from the concepts of space, power, and boundaries and the ways in which the social

reality reinforces the tensions. The concepts are defined in such a way that, in general, society in Jordan is divided into two genderized spaces that are, paradoxically, both very distinct and yet prone to augmentation depending on the specific situation and on desires of the allocaters of space and the maintainers of boundaries (Mernissi, 1987). Through the separation of space, both on territorial and theoretical levels, both genders have their own space in society as well as expectations and understandings of their own individual realities. The definitions, expectations, and perceptions of space, power, and boundaries shape the relationships and interactions between and within the genders and between each gender and the state, economy, educational system, religion, and culture of the specific community in which each individual or group resides.

As in many societies around the world, the division of society in Jordan divides space into two segments –the public space and the private space. The simple explanation defines public space as the territory outside the home and private space as the territory within the home. Accordingly, the line of demarcation between public and private spaces does separate the territory of the home from the territory outside of the home; however, the spaces also include other aspects of society that are not so easily contained within one territory or the other. For instance, while the public space embodies the territory outside the home, it is also the domain of political, economic, and religious issues –issues that affect life both outside and inside the home. The private space, on the other hand, consists of the territory within the home but only within the realm of domestic, family-related issues and does not cross over to any political, economic, or religious issues that may arise within the home (Lister, 1997; Kandiyoti, 1988; Mernissi, 1987; Joseph, 2000). Thus, the non-territorial nature of elements within space complicates the ease of space

allocation and boundary placement, potentially heightening tensions by confusing the location of the exact line of trespassing.

The separation of space and the boundaries between the spaces in Jordan becomes clearer and more socially divisive when power and gender come into consideration. In Jordan, the public space, because it consists of the larger territory and the decision-making institutions of politics, economics, and religion, is the domain of power and control. Historically, men occupy the public spaces in Jordan, relegating women to the only space remaining –the private space. Men, occupying the public space, with control over power, space allocation, and boundary maintenance, can consider any attempt by women to leave the private space for roles in the public space an act of aggression against the status quo and consequently, the social reality for men (Kandiyoti, 1988; Mernissi, 1987; Joseph, 2000; Yamani, 1996).

In this way, space allocation and boundary control are fundamental sources of tension between genders in Jordanian societies. The tension manifests itself in a variety of ways. For instance, because men traditionally occupy the public space, the space of power, some revile Jordanian men as the enemy of women's rights and the perpetrators of female oppression, while others, in the quest to protect men's role in the public space, view women as either inferior weaklings or monstrous seductresses -both of which assuredly capable of setting off total and inextinguishable social chaos and eager to do so unless properly contained and controlled (Mabro, 1991; Mernissi, 1987; Yamani, 1996). From a less extreme and stereotypical perspective, others view men and women simply as having such different capabilities that it is inappropriate, even hypocritical, to give men and women similar tasks, expectations, or measures of judgement (Mernissi, 1987;

Yamani, 1996). Still others view the separation of space along gender lines and its consequential delegation of power as an inexcusable defect in the system, a problem so extreme that, if not resolved and rectified, eliminates any positive growth –social, political, or economic– of the society because, as some political theorists suggest, a society’s treatment of women mirrors its progress in both the local and global arenas (Mernissi, 1987; Tucker, 1993; Yamani, 1996). These types of gender generalizations and the consequential interactions of each gender, the state, religion, and culture, set off and enhance the boundaries and tensions between space and gender. In other words, in Jordanian society, men and women are conditioned by spatial divisions and concurrent political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural issues to be enemies, unable to occupy the same space and, essentially, unable to create and maintain, let alone survive in, any kind of no-man’s-land in which men and women can call a truce and begin building the basis of a society based on equality of rights, expectations, and space.

## Chapter 2

### In Defense of Generalizations

Obviously, this type of discussion of public-private separation of space in Jordan involves a level of generalizations, risking the danger of lumping all the diverse communities and cultures of Jordanian society into one encompassing, yet ultimately stereotypical, social reality and relationship between gender and space, power, and boundaries. Any type of overarching generalization is dangerous when discussing any country in the Middle East because of the diversities inherent within each community, including variations and differences in matters such as tribal and religious associations and traditions, socioeconomic status, and gender assumptions and expectations. In addition, the cultures and traditions throughout the Middle East differ from the cultures and traditions of Western societies, rendering many Western sociological and political theories, in their original form, useless in applying to or aiding in the understanding of space allocation, boundaries, power, and gender relations in Middle Eastern societies. How, then, in topics like space, boundaries, power, and gender, applicable worldwide and especially throughout a Middle Eastern society like Jordan, are the dangers of overly broad generalizations and irrelevant theories of research and judgement avoided?

An overview of some of the elements important in the formation and character of Jordanian society and, to an extent, of most Middle Eastern societies, helps answer this question of generalizations. This overview highlights some of the broad connecting factors, like race and religion, of Middle Eastern societies that differentiate these societies, including Jordanian society, from Western societies but also clarifies the ability

of these broad topics to unite, through shared experiences, the different Middle Eastern societies. Highlighting these connecting factors and explaining their significance to the political, social, and civil framework of Middle Eastern societies outlines the ways the factors create a basis for extending careful generalizations into specific areas of study. Moreover, the overview and the emphasized factors also work together to stress the need to include each factor in any political or sociological theory applied to the study of any Middle Eastern society. Providing a more complete answer to the question of generalizations as it relates directly to the study of gender and space in Jordan, the overview of the characteristics important to Middle Eastern society also focuses specifically on Jordan and the ways each characteristic embeds itself into Jordanian society. In this way, addressing the idea of legitimate generalizations both exposes the suitability of Jordan as the focus of studying gender and space in a Middle Eastern society and explains the acceptability of generalizing Jordanian society within the parameters of the characteristics.

Jordanian society, although broad and diverse with myriad differences in tradition, experiences, formation, and even religion and levels of religious practices, is a society of significant uniqueness. For instance, Jordan, like the rest of the Middle East, was not formed through tribal loyalties or any other form of nationalism; rather, the physical boundaries separating Jordan from the other countries of the Middle East are effects of Western intervention in the Middle Eastern region, dependent not on any racial, religious, or other identity forming ideology but on the political and economic whims of the West (Goldschmidt Jr., 1996; Hourani, 1991; Joseph, 2000). In this way, nationalistic feelings towards specific countries in the Middle East are rather new emotions, creations

of the West instead of natural emotional development on the part of the people of the Middle Eastern region. Nationalism to country is now a real emotion felt throughout the Middle East, often demonstrated by the policies of the different Middle Eastern countries, sometimes reacting helpfully toward the needs of the other countries in the region but at other times responding antagonistically towards each other, protecting the status of the individual country over the well-being of the region as a whole (Goldschmidt Jr., 1996).

Regardless of this growth of nationalistic feelings and behavior towards country, the governments and populations throughout the Middle East continue to express feelings of connection that extend across and regardless of physical and national boundaries (Bowen & Early, 1993; Esposito, 1998; Goldschmidt Jr., 1996; Joseph, 2000). These feelings of connection have roots more deeply planted in history and tradition than in any political or economic goal, creating a hierarchical system of measuring commonalities and judging for the appropriate responses to those commonalities.

Religion is the widest measure of commonality, sitting at the top of the commonality “food chain” and casting the broadest, almost totally encompassing, shadow over Jordanian society. In the words of Albert Hourani (1991), “[a group can] be held together by the sense of common ancestry, whether real or fictitious, or by ties of dependence, and reinforced by common acceptance of religion” (p. 2). Accordingly, because Islam is, and has been for over fourteen hundred years, the religion of the majority throughout the Middle East and because the nature of Islam calls for the unity and “family-hood” of all believers, the commonality of Islam serves as the strongest and most demanding connection between individuals throughout the Middle Eastern region (Hourani, 1991; Esposito, 1998; Goodwin, 2003).

The following levels of commonality in the Middle East are neither as clear, as historically founded, nor as emotionally charged as the topic of religion. For instance, while the push for Arab nationalism and unity in the Middle East is strong, it is also a fairly new idea, stemming again from Western intervention rather than the development of Middle Eastern practices. Arab nationalism has only been a popular notion since early in the nineteenth century; in fact, in the past, the term “Arab” had negative connotations with which most of the inhabitants of the Middle East did not want to associate. However, in recent decades, especially in the 1950s and 1960s, “Arab” has become a term denoting a commonality of race and purpose, and most Middle Eastern countries have even joined, at least theoretically, the Council of the Arab League with the desire of expressing their commitment to the ideal of Arab unity. The weakness in this level of connection, however, comes from the historical loyalties to the immediate group with which individuals reside (Goldschmidt Jr., 1996; Hourani, 1991). As one Arab leader stated bluntly, “Whoever lives in our country, speaks our language, is reared in our culture, and takes pride in our glory is one of us” (Goldschmidt Jr., 1996, p. 180). Thus, the mere classification of “Arab” is not necessarily strong enough, on its own, to create binding and permanent connections across physical and national boundaries.

This perspective and level of commonality does, however, take the matter of loyalties back, full circle, to the nationalism created by the Western intervention into the Middle Eastern region and the West’s development of the physical boundaries separating the countries within the region. Moreover, the perspective of loyalties to the immediate group supports the strength of religion as a uniting factor between countries and different nationalities. Although all Muslims do not live in the same country or speak the same

language, the language of Islam and the culture of Islam, while naturally incorporating differences between countries due to the variances in the dialect and cultures of the individuals involved, both extend similarities that transcend physical boundaries in that there is a specific language and method of worship and a prescribed set of rules all Muslims, as believers, must follow (Abdalati, 1975; Esposito, 1998). In the nineteenth century, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, an important Muslim activist, described this unifying and comprehensive nature of Islam, saying:

[T]he principles of Islamic religion are not restricted to calling man to the truth or to considering the soul only in a spiritual context which is concerned with the relationship between this world and the world to come ... There is more besides: Islamic principles are concerned with relationships among the believers, they explain the law in general and in detail, they define the executive power which administers the law... Thus, in truth, the ruler of the Muslims will be their religious, holy, and divine law... Let me repeat... that unlike other religions, Islam is concerned not only with the life to come. Islam is more: it is concerned with the believers' interests in the world here below and with allowing them to realize success in this life as well as peace in the next life. It seeks "good fortune in two worlds" (Esposito, 1998, p. 128).

In addition, as a religion, Islam naturally requires its followers to mutually and communally support the faith, the tenets of the faith, and the fellow believers in the faith; consequently, challenging any part of the religion or religious practices and beliefs gives society permission to call into question the challenger's attachment to religion and subsequently, the challenger's connection to society itself (Abdalati, 1975; Esposito, 1998). In this way, regardless of the variances between sects and interpretations of Islam throughout the Middle East, because Muslims share an understanding of the depth of passion involved, both in faith and acts, in the Islamic religion, the *idea* of the commitment necessary to be a Muslim allows Islam to work as a unifying factor across

the Middle East. This shared understanding also makes certain levels of generalizations about the Middle East possible, insofar as the generalizations deal with religion and matters effecting or affected by religion and recognize the variations of each country in religion and religious practice, thus relieving some of the dangers inherent in broad generalizations and stereotypes (Esposito, 1998; Goodwin, 2003).

Few regions in the world can boast of a unifying factor as encompassing and fluid as Islam is in the Middle East. Therefore, using existing methods of study and political and sociological theories, appropriate for examining and understanding societies that lack a unifying factor like religion but not particularly geared toward societies that do possess such a unifying factor, poses some risk of, at best, misinterpretation of the realities of Middle Eastern society. “Westerners,” for instance, “can[not] imagine what it is like to walk around every day with one’s worldview not just informed by religious consciousness but largely determined by it...Muslim and Western nations may use the same words –negotiation, conflict resolution, democracy, consultation– but they are in such a different context in Islam. Consultation, for example, is not just experts sitting around the table with their own opinion trying to come to consensus. Instead, it always involves religious scholars and sources of Islam” (Goodwin, 2003, pp. 25-26). The logical Western response to this claim is that “...we have biblical verses, but we would never bring this to bear at the conference table. We would[not] impose religion on negotiations.’ But Muslims do;” this needs to be understood (Goodwin, 2003, p. 26). Even though, for example, not all the inhabitants of the Middle East are Islamic, Islamic tradition has taken on such a foothold, after over fourteen hundred years of influence, that Islamic traditions, whether from the original formation of the religion or from man-made

augmentations over the years, have permeated into all aspects of society, regardless of any religious differences that might also exist within the society. Thus, because of the relationship of the Islamic religion to both the small scale societies of individual groups and countries and larger scale societies of the multinational, multiracial Islamic “family,” any research into or theory applied to issues within the Middle East must take into account the role of religion in all aspects of relationships, from politics and economics to culture and tradition (Butenschon, 2000; Joseph, 2000; Kandiyoti, 1996; Mernissi, 1987; Turner, 2000).

Within this framework of Islamic influence, several additional elements also extend across national boundaries in the Middle East, adding layers to the commonalities between Middle Eastern countries and the consequential generalizations the commonalities permit and heightening the urgency of adjusting existing theories and methods of study to mesh with the realities of Middle Eastern societies. One of the additional elements is the idea of honor, an especially abstract and often difficult issue to study and define. In the most basic terms, honor is very much a matter of public perception, a concern for the way an individual, family, or group might be perceived, judged, and treated due to the way that individual, family, or group behaves or is caught behaving. In this way, the concept of honor is also a system of accountability, a method of social control and checks and balances. However, the concept of honor is much more complicated than this basic understanding suggests, as it is a concept inextricably tied to religion and tradition, provoking a need to maintain or regain honor in the sight of self, peers, or community so strong that it can drive individuals, families, or groups to behave within and maintain the exact parameters, set by society, of acceptability and often incite

those same individuals, families, or groups to perform acts of unspeakable violence as punishment for violation, or suspected violation, of those parameters (Amawi, 2000; Goodwin, 2003; Sonbol, 2003). Because of the passion inherent with the concept of honor and the ability of honor to shape and direct social behavior, honor easily deserves inclusion into any method or applied theory of research.

This concept of honor exists across the Middle Eastern region, differing only in the parameters of acceptability but not in the significance of the concept itself. The Price of Honor, by Jan Goodwin (2003), addresses, in part, honor from the perspective of Muslim women across the Middle Eastern region, providing examples of and supporting the notion that honor is an issue present in all parts of the Middle East and thus open to generalizations that extend across boundaries.

Furthermore, the text also highlights the connection between the concept of honor and gender, an additional element that provides commonality between the countries of the Middle East. While the text includes the stories of women and their experiences with honor, the text does not suggest that honor is solely a female issue; rather, it emphasizes the fact that while women bear the brunt, both in behavior and in consequences, of the social accountability enforced by honor, honor is an issue belonging to both genders. Across the Middle Eastern region, each society not only places the responsibility of maintaining honor on the shoulders of women but also entitles men to the right to judge whether or not women have maintained or compromised honor and to reward or punish women accordingly. Although maintaining purity of honor is of vital importance to both men and women, it appears to have a different type of importance to each gender: for men, the significance of maintaining honor lies in the perception of one's reputation, but

for women, the gravity of maintaining honor, while including the matter of reputation, lies more in the matter of personal survival (Amawi, 2000; Goodwin, 2003; Sonbol, 2003; Yamani, 1996).

Although the adjoining issues of honor and gender span the Middle Eastern region, the particularities of the relationship between gender and honor and of the relationships between genders that result from the existence of honor maintenance naturally differ according to the traditions of and religious practices in each Middle Eastern country. The differences, however, do not mitigate the significance of these issues throughout the region. Moreover, failing to recognize the magnitude of the social influences Middle Eastern men experience concerning the matter of honor, provoking them to need to protect their reputations, at all costs and to all levels of irrationality, against any real or imagined threat, results in a failure to accurately examine and understand Middle Eastern society (Amawi, 2000; Goodwin, 2003; Joseph, 2000). Accordingly, generalizations in research across national and physical boundaries in the Middle East succeed through augmenting existing study methods and theories to address and accept the role of potentially abstract elements like honor and gender assumptions and expectations, while also leaving room for the recognition of variances between and within the Middle Eastern countries.

All of these elements of connection –religion, honor, and gender– work together to create an environment, within Middle Eastern societies, of spatial division: one more additional layer of connection worth considering in the debate over the appropriateness of applying generalizations to the study of space, boundaries, power, and gender in the Middle East. As mentioned in chapter one, the relevance of this additional layer, the

division of space into two specific realms of activity –the private realm of domesticity and the public realm of business and politics, has extensive historical and contemporary evidence and spans the Middle Eastern region. Because Islam is a religion that encompasses a way of life and thus influences political and economic theories and decisions, religion in the Middle East resides in the realm of business and politics, but as a way of life, Islam has a hand in familial relations and accordingly has a role in the domestic realm as well. Disregarding the dual nature of religion, research into Middle Eastern society and lifestyles shows that, on a whole, the countries throughout the Middle East share an ideology that encourages the separation of genders through genderized space allocation, placing men in the public space and women in the private space (Goldschmidt Jr., 1996; Hourani, 1983; Hourani, 1991). Thus, despite the varying methods used to maintain the separation of the genders and the varying intensities of the separation, the countries in the Middle East share an understanding of the premise behind and the need for spatial division and allocation along gender lines.

Because the elements included in this study of genderized spatial allocation, boundary maintenance, and power distribution are all elements that provide connection between the different countries of the Middle East, the study itself opens up to a level of cross-territorial generalizations. These generalizations, however, cannot be not broad and over-bearing stereotypes that turn a blind eye to the effects of individuality. Rather, the generalizations must be sensitive, exposing the commonalities wrought by basic similarities of certain identity shaping ideologies while also acknowledging the fact that because the ideologies are so heavily invested in emotional, not rational, elements like human nature, ego, and faith, each difficult, if not impossible, to judge or quantify,

variations in the commonalities must exist, not only between different countries and societies but also between individuals living within the same country or society. In other words, as long as the applied generalizations allow both for the irrationality and spontaneity inherent in the highly personal aspects so intrinsically connected to the concepts of religion, honor, and gender and for the role these concepts play in all parts of social, political, and economic functioning in the Middle East, the generalizations are acceptable tools for research.

This study, however, does not address Middle Eastern society as a whole but instead addresses a small portion of Middle Eastern society –Jordan. Consequently, while addressing the concept of acceptable generalizations within a Middle Eastern society and in comparison to the acceptable generalizations and theories of Western society is important for creating an accurate method of analyzing qualitative elements in a Middle Eastern society, this study demands an even more narrow focus on Jordanian society itself. For the purposes of this study and to counter the potentially controversial notion of acceptable generalizations, breaking down the aforementioned factors inherent in the concept of generalizations as they relate directly to Jordanian society emphasizes, in greater detail, the applicability of certain generalizations in such a diverse society and the ways those generalizations make Jordan so representative of Middle Eastern society.

Jordan serves as an ideal case study subject for the topic at hand because of its “middle-of-the-road” characteristics in comparison with other countries in the Middle East. For instance, Jordan is, in a sense, an accurate cross-section of the various characteristics that span and define all the countries in the Middle East. Like the majority of the Middle East, Jordan is an Islamic nation, meaning that from the top down –from

the political arena to the individual— Islam is the official religion and cultural determinant; however, as with the majority of the Middle East, not all inhabitants of Jordan follow the exact same interpretation of Islam or are even Muslim. Moreover, Jordan's enforcement of Islamic tenets in everyday life demonstrates a tolerance that allows for individual interpretations of the religion and appropriate religious behavior and practices. In Jordan, for example, Muslims who follow Islam as strictly as it is followed in countries like Saudi Arabia in which women must practice complete veiling live alongside Muslims who do not practice or encourage the veiling of women at all. Accordingly, although the official religion is Islam, shaping and directing political, economic, and social decisions and behaviors, Jordanian laws permit individuals to practice Islam, within the letter of the law, as they see fit (Amawi, 2000; Esposito, 1998; Sonbol, 2003). In this way, the inhabitants of Jordan display the spectrum of religious adherence and influence as it exists across the Middle Eastern region.

The population of Jordan further supports the reliability of Jordan as an appropriate case study and example of a Middle Eastern society. The inhabitants of Jordan comprise a wide variety of nationalities and cultures, harboring large population of Palestinians, Iraqis, and citizens of other Middle Eastern countries looking for asylum or work or because of familial ties like marriage (Goldschmidt, 1996; Sonbol, 2003). Because of the diversity in nationalities and cultures, Jordan serves as a veritable melting pot, or tossed salad as the case may be, of Middle Eastern society as a whole, incorporating into its own identity the cultures and traditions that exist in different areas throughout the Middle East.

In addition to its cultural and national diversity, the population of Jordan also runs the gamut of the socioeconomic statuses found throughout the region of the Middle East. Because Jordan does not have an oil industry on which to base its economic structure, Jordan does not have the vast economic resources of the oil rich countries of the Middle East; neither, however, is Jordan burdened by overwhelming poverty and stagnation as experienced in war-ravaged countries like Afghanistan and Iraq. Rather, Jordan, again, sits in the middle of the road, heavily dependent upon its relationships with other countries for economic development due to its own lack of natural resources and economic difficulties but also experiencing enough economic activity to have an economy that can independently sustain at least a portion of its society (Goodwin, 2003; Sonbol, 2003).

Finally, the paradoxes threading through all of these aspects of Jordan, such as the apparent incompatibility of the pull towards the modern against the memory of the traditional and the growing relationship with the secular West against the tribal and religious bonds of the Islamic world, make Jordan an even more intriguing and appropriate subject for closer examination of the issue of genderized space, boundary maintenance, and power. As Norma Khouri (2003) describes in rather poetic words:

Jordan is a place where men in sand-colored business suits hold cell phones to one ear and, in the other, hear the whispers of harsh and ancient laws blowing in from the desert. It is a place where a worldly young queen argues eloquently on CNN for human rights, while a father in a middle-class suburb slits his daughter's throat for committing the most innocent breach of old Bedouin codes of honor.

It is a place of paradox and double standards for men and women, for liberated and conservative. Modern on the surface, it is an unforgiving desert whose oases have blossomed into cities. But the desert continues to blow in. Streets are parched and stripped of flowers, trees, or greenery—except for a rare grapevine in private patios, and new steel and glass corporate towers reflect the tawny colors of the dunes. In their shadow,

cafes are full of high-tech chatter, and young men in Jordan's requisite tan suit coat and Levi's rub elbows with elders in *dishdashay*, the ankle-length dress shirt that is a vestige of the desert. Young women in veils view with envy the "modern" girls sipping espresso, smoking, slim crossed legs exposed to the knee...Its fierce and primitive code is always nagging at men's instincts, reminding them that under the Westernizing veneer, they are all still Arabs. For most women, Jordan is a stifling prison tense with the risk of death at the hands of loved ones (pp. 1-2).

Thus, because Jordan incorporates elements of modernity, tradition, and religion into its civil, political, and social arenas, allowing the semantically dichotomous concepts of modernity and tradition to coexist within the same realm, Jordan serves as a fitting example of how gender relations and assumptions interact with the issues of space allocation, boundary maintenance, and power delegation in a Middle East society.

## Chapter 3

### A Question of Belonging

In the process of entering, in depth, the examination of space, boundaries, and power and the consequential effects on and of gender relations in Jordan, the idea of belonging serves not only as an important theoretical element of the discussion, but it also brings up a number of questions worth considering during the discussion of space allocation, boundary maintenance, and distribution of power. For example, what does it mean to belong? During the process of breaking down a population into gender groups, what, besides the obvious, denotes belonging to or membership in a specific gender group? In other words, what are the behavioral and emotional elements, real or imagined, welcomed or imposed, that align men and women into their gender groups and on opposite ends of the spectrum, and what is it about the elements that so unify, in a reliable manner, diverse groups of individuals into two very specific groups? How do these gender specifiers then direct the assumptions of the capabilities of each gender and the life expectations and social realities each gender accepts for itself and for the other gender?

Extending the idea of belonging to a gender brings up the issue of what it means to belong to a space. Does belonging to a specific space constitute a mere physical presence, or are there deeper levels involved, reaching into notions, similar to those of belonging to a gender, of commonalities in purpose and fate, in entitlement, and in rewards? As in gender membership, this notion of the unifying nature of belonging to a common space brings up issues of inclusion, exclusion, and possible consequential tensions between those who belong and those who do not belong. These issues of

inclusion/exclusion and belonging/not belonging naturally lead to questions of space sharing and the possibility of inhabiting multiple spaces. For instance, if an individual is a member of one space, is that individual then automatically excluded from any other space, or can the individual move, either with ease or difficulty, among and between spaces?

Combined together, the issues of inclusion/exclusion, belonging/not belonging, tension, and space sharing bring under scrutiny the possible signifiers of inclusion in or exclusion from a specific space. Similar to the questions about gender signifiers, what elements encourage or enforce partial or total inclusion in and exclusion from spaces? Considering the possible signifiers of inclusion and exclusion subsequently raises an interesting issue, especially pertinent to the examination of space allocation, boundary placement and maintenance, and power, of a community's attachment to those signifiers and the means to which the community, individually, by gender group, or as a whole, will justify going in order to protect, accept, or reject the signifiers.

Fleshing out these kinds of questions, inherent with the idea of belonging, leads to and corresponds well with the concept of citizenship. For instance, the underlying theme running through belonging to and membership in a gender or space fundamentally centers on matters of voice and visibility, two elements that expose an individual's level of belonging to a gender or space. Likewise, the functioning of citizenship, regardless of the particular theory or perception of citizenship, also depends heavily on these two elements. In this way, understanding the idea of belonging necessitates a solid understanding of citizenship. However, because this discussion of space, boundaries, and power centers specifically on the broad topic of gender, addressing the concepts of

belonging and citizenship takes on a slightly narrower frame of reference, requiring only an overview of the political, civil, and social aspects of citizenship theories as they relate specifically to each gender and to belonging to/occupying space but does not necessarily require, while not purposefully excluding, inclusion of the ways the aspects of citizenship theories affect non-gender elements of society.

### ***Defining Citizenship***

Citizenship is a key concept in the discussion of space allocation, boundaries, and power and the relationship between these three issues and gender. Citizenship implies the relationship of the individuals within a state to that state, but the concept of citizenship differs with the perceptions and experiences of the individuals or groups involved, from the policy makers and visible/vocal portions of society to the invisible or silent components of society. In simplest terms, Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (1979) describes a *citizen* as "an inhabitant of a city or town; one entitled to the rights and privileges of a freeman" and "a native or naturalized person who owes allegiance to a government and is entitled to protection from it" (p. 202). Webster's Dictionary (1979) continues with the definition of *citizenship* as "the quality of an individual's response to membership in a community" (p. 202). While these definitions are accurate on the most basic level, they leave plenty of room for embellishment.

Most students of citizenship theory begin with T.H. Marshall's concept of citizenship. In the 1950's, Marshall (1950) developed a formula for breaking down the articulation of citizenship into three developmental stages. The first stage, civil citizenship, deals with personal rights to basic elements of liberty, security, and justice.

The second stage, political citizenship, extends, as its name suggests, into the political realm and concerns the right of an individual to have a voice and play a role in political decisions and activities, and the third stage addresses the economic rights of individuals.

Marshall's (1950) own words provide more clarity on his formula, as he states

The civil element is composed of the rights necessary for individual freedom –liberty of the person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property and to conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice. The last is of a different order from the others, because it is the right to defend and assert all one's rights on terms of equality with others and by due process of law...By the political element I mean the right to participate in the exercise of political power, as a member of a body invested with political authority or as an elector of the members of such a body...By the social element I mean the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in society (pp.10-11).

Thus, according to Marshall, citizenship, or the formation of citizenship, works its way incrementally along a set pattern of rights, privileges, and actions, each level of citizenship dependent on the implementation and establishment of the previous level.

Marshall's three-tiered concept of citizenship fits the basic definition of citizenship but enhances the understanding of the relationship between individuals and the state. The relationship is very much a two-way road relationship in which citizens receive rights in the civil, political, and social arenas and are expected to take advantage of those rights and to earn those rights through obligatory duties. Society is, as Geriant Parry posits, a "mutual society" in which relationships between citizens and between citizens and the state are based on the principles of need and ability with each citizen giving what he or she can and receiving what he or she needs, or, in the words of Parry, "from each according to his or her ability; to each according to his or her need for the

conditions of agency” (Lister, 1997, p. 22). In other words, as citizens of a community and out of a desire to protect their citizenship rights and promote the positive growth of their community and fellow citizens, individuals should feel a strong sense, and act on that sense, of civic responsibility, responding with two different but equally important types of duties –vague duties, the activities that are more service oriented, and compulsory duties, the activities that are legally required like education and tax payment (Lister, 1997). Through this kind of contractual citizen-state relationship, Marshall’s definition of citizenship encourages the acceptance of an evolution in and expansion of membership within a citizenry and a corresponding evolution in and expansion of rights meted out to the citizenry.

Because of the theoretical nature of belonging and citizenship, citizenship theorists differ on their opinions of the Marshallian model of citizenship as an appropriate tool for research, especially as it relates to Middle Eastern societies and to gender. Ideas and thought processes have changed and progressed since Marshall developed his theory of citizenship; however, as Nils Butenshon argues, newer models of citizenship often presume the secure establishment of the basic rights in the civil, political, and social realms and disregard the fact that in many areas of the world, civil, political, and social rights are far from secure and even, in some regions, not yet established. This assumption and fast-forwarding of the maturing of citizenship and society, inherent in some of the more progressive models, makes, in Butenshon’s opinion, the Marshallian model of citizenship especially applicable to the Middle East. Butenshon’s opinion rests on the theory that because civil, political, and social rights remain insecure in Middle

Eastern societies, any advancement in citizenship theory beyond Marshall's formula is premature and possibly even misleading (Butenschon, 2000).

Raymond Hinnebusch supports Butenschon's assertion, suggesting that while some theorists may assume that through democratization efforts, the development of civil and social rights in a Middle Eastern society should automatically progress along the same pace and in the same direction as civil and social rights progressed in the West, Middle Eastern societies differ from the West in their economic development and distribution and cannot, because they are not following the progression outlined in the Marshallian model of citizenship, evolve into a society with complete citizenship rights (Butenschon, 2000; Hinnebusch, 2000). In other words,

Crude modernization theory may imagine the global replication of the Western (British) model [of citizenship development] in which liberal structures (parliament and elections) are democratized once development empowers the masses and makes their claim for inclusion irresistible. However, evolutionary democratic incorporation in the West was accompanied not just by mass politicization but also by an economic expansion large enough that demands for economic redistribution could be accommodated without civil war or massive capital disinvestment. . . In the Middle East, the "premature" granting of socioeconomic rights –before industrial takeoff– means current democratization there is likely to be accompanied by the opposite of the Western experience –not the *expansion*, but the *reversal* of such rights. (Hinnebusch, 2000, p. 145)

From this perspective, Butenschon and Hinnebusch make an especially important point, highlighting the fact that Middle Eastern societies are unique and different from the West and even from other developing countries in other parts of the world. Failing to recognize and incorporate the differences into the thought processes and analyses necessary for creating a definition and theory of citizenship threaten the risk of

misunderstanding and misdiagnosing the meaning of belonging to and citizenship in a Middle Eastern society like Jordan.

Unlike Butenshon and Hinnebusch, not all scholars accept Marshall's definition of citizenship. For example, Bryan Turner argues that the Marshallian concept of citizenship fails to address too many issues, making it too incomplete of an analysis to serve reliably. Not only does Marshall omit economic elements important to citizenship, like the autonomy and relationship of the worker/employee to his or her work/employer, Marshall also excludes sufficient scrutiny into broader elements of gender, age, the disenfranchised, religion, and so forth (Turner, 2000). The Marshallian theory is ineffective because, "citizenship is not simply about class and capitalism, but it also involves debates about the social rights of women, children, the elderly, and even animals" (Turner, 2000, p.11). Moreover, Turner, through his progression from the basic definition of and Marshall's own theoretical inroads into citizenship, highlights an additional element of pertinent interest in reference to citizenship and the idea of belonging, suggesting that issues of inclusion/exclusion, membership/non-membership, and care/protection are crucial to creating, understanding, and applying citizenship theory to a Middle Eastern society (Turner, 2000).

Turner, rejecting the Marshallian concept of citizenship, adopts a fairly Weberian perspective as he outlines his understanding of citizenship in the Middle East, defining citizenship in Weberian terms as "a function of modernization," suggesting "that failures of citizenship are failures of successful patterns of modernization." Turner refines his understanding of citizenship with a more direct usage of Weber's ideology, writing that citizenship "is the replacement of closed/personal social relationships by open/impersonal

social relationships, or the historical supremacy of markets over villages” (Turner, 2000, p. 31). In other words, the rise of citizenship coincides with the rise of urban, bourgeois society and open interactions and relationships with fewer constraints from real or imagined borders. Consequently, this perspective of citizenship suggests that citizenship does not mix well with tradition and tight familial/tribal bonds. Tradition and familial/tribal cultures often depend on exclusionary tactics to protect the purity and sanctity of their uniqueness, encouraging primary loyalties to tradition, family, or tribe rather than to the larger community or society. Extending this argument to Middle Eastern society, Turner further argues that the loyalties –traditional, familial/tribal, and religious– inherent in many Middle Eastern communities deter and even destroy the concept and growth of citizenship (Turner, 2000).

Moreover, the expansion of citizenship, because of its relationship with modernization, means an expansion of urban society, and the trickle-down effect of urban spread usually influences or creates an environment ripe for the elimination of tradition and familial/tribal units. In this way, primordial bonds of tradition, family, and tribe stand at odds against social expansion and growth, creating a battle that requires at least one casualty, tradition or citizenship. This division between tradition and social development sets the stage for a contentious relationship between the evolution of citizenship and the status quo in historically traditional societies like those in Jordan because citizenship, according to Turner, works better when differences fade to the background while similarities are highlighted and encouraged (Turner, 2000). Thus encouraging citizenship requires the weakening of tradition and the combined abstract, yet highly sensitive, principles of self and identity.

In this way, Turner's theory of citizenship creates two groups: one, the members who choose to accept citizenship, placing their loyalties in the larger community and consequently gaining access to all the social rights inherent in belonging to that community, and two, the nonmembers who refuse to join or who are excluded from the community with varying degrees of severity. Accordingly, "citizenship is necessarily a contradictory force. It creates an internal space of social rights and solidarity, and thus an external, exclusionary force of nonmembership" (Turner, p. 33).

The dichotomy between inclusion and exclusion forms a significant portion of the framework of Turner's understanding of citizenship. In his analysis of citizenship, Turner supports the idea of universalism, that all humans suffer from common natural shortcomings, or "frailty," and that those shortcomings, biological consequences of the human species, create a level of "social precariousness" from which all humans need protection. This analysis carries Turner's concept of citizenship to a point that is especially relevant to the study of citizenship and belonging in Jordan, as Turner argues that

[t]he test case of the depth of citizenship and the adequacy of human rights is the capacity of a state or political community to protect the physically weak –the elderly, the sick, children, and mothers– and to show compassion toward minorities, which might be expressed as a capacity to tolerate difference...a measure of political maturity will be the institutionalization of an ethic of care and compassion for those who are members [of a community] as well as those who are not. (Turner, 2000, p. 35).

Therefore, citizenship affects not only those who belong to a community but also refers to the status of the marginalized and excluded, the relationship between the included and the excluded, and the response of the political, cultural, and civic institutions of a

community to the status of and relationship between the included members and excluded non-members of that community.

Mary Ann Tétreault (2000) continues with this perspective of citizenship, further exposing the disregard citizenship theorists often display in relation to the highly genderized nature of citizenship –a nature easily visible in the ideology of inclusion/exclusion. Tétreault (2000) first addresses the inclusion/exclusion aspect of citizenship, suggesting that citizens are “free persons who are autonomous and equal partners in civil and political life” (p. 72). Tétreault also suggests that society creates not only citizens but also subjects, individuals who are not autonomous, equal, or politically active but who are instead dependent on the decisions of those in power to direct or control their actions. This idea of citizen/subject falls along the lines of inclusion/exclusion in that

...citizens of modern states are assumed to be autonomous , interchangeable, and, not incidentally, politically equal. However, some inhabitants of these political communities are none of these things... They are marked in some obvious and unerasable way that allows their fellows to reject and discriminate against them, and sometimes they suffer discrimination as an intended outcome of state policy (Tétreault, 2000, pp. 74-75).

In this way, Tétreault supports the notion that citizenship encourages exclusionary tactics against those who, for one reason or another, do not belong, entirely or only partially, to the citizenry of the community.

Expanding on this notion of citizen/subject and inclusion/exclusion, Tétreault (2000) further argues that one of the measures of citizenship and inclusion is the ability to grow and evolve, to become more like the existing citizens. Because tradition has a connotation of being ageless, even ancient, tradition holders bear the burden of the

assumption that, through their acceptance of and reliance on tradition, they are unable and unwilling to develop and are therefore unable to join and unwelcome in the community of citizens. The theories behind these premises on citizen/subject, tradition, and inclusion/exclusion have extensive historical evidence exposing the indoctrination of the dichotomies as they relate to gender. While historical accounts about the exclusion of a variety of marginalized groups from citizenship and belonging abound, Tetreault (2000) centers her argument on the historical bias against women and the role gender assumptions play in enforcing that bias. For example, women make up the group most commonly associated with traditional life; therefore, the assumption follows that women are unable to make the transitions necessary to achieve citizenship status. In addition, much of society, including some political scientists and sociologists, support the assumption that women are so incomplete in their physical and mental make-up and capacities that they should not be accorded the full rights of citizenship and are accurately categorized as subjects rather than citizens. Supporting this common assumption, Aristotle offers a telling delineation of the hierarchical levels of capabilities of individuals within a society, stating that

...the rule of free over slave, male over female, man over boy, are all different because while parts of the soul are present in each case, the distribution is different. Thus the deliberative faculty of the soul is not present at all in a slave; in a female it is present but ineffective; in a child present but undeveloped (Aristotle, 1981, 1259b32).

Tetreault (2000) sums up this perspective, writing that “[m]oral inferiority excludes such persons from an entitlement to participate as equals in political life. Natural subjects never can be citizens;” in other words, women, through their placement and treatment as subjects, cannot be not accepted or treated as citizens (p. 76).

The evidence of this gendered quality of citizenship makes the absence of gender from even some of the most accepted citizenship theories and models all the more glaring, especially in relation to citizenship in the Middle East. In light of the negative relationship between difference and citizenship, which often evolves into exclusionary tactics meant to eliminate primordial alliances and promote community unification, gender differences seem to qualify for a reserved role within the citizenship dialogue. Is it possible to resolve gender differences and assumptions in such a way that gender is an obsolete issue in the citizenship debate? More precisely, can citizenship provide an identity new and complete enough to sufficiently replace the citizen's attachment to all parts of his or her former identity, including any attachment to his or her gender identity?

Addressing the question raised by the dichotomy between difference and citizenship, Iris Young (1990) and other proponents of differentiated citizenship, a citizenship theory that accommodates sociocultural differences –much less amenable to change than socioeconomic differences– into the unity of the community, specifically confront issues like gender and identity. According to the theory of differentiated citizenship, the right to an individual sociocultural identity, whether religious, gender, or other primordial connection, is, in itself, one of the fundamental rights of citizenship. Failing to grant the right of identity, in fact, poses a significant threat to the community and only heightens the inclusion/exclusion division. In other words,

...in a society where some groups are privileged while others are oppressed, insisting that as citizens persons should leave behind their particular affiliations and experiences to adopt a general point of view serves only reinforce the privilege: for the perspective and interests of the privileged will tend to dominate this unified public, marginalizing or silencing those of other groups (Young, 1990, p. 257).

Therefore, to best reconcile differentiated groups under one umbrella of citizenship, institutions of citizenship and the accompanying guaranteed rights need to protect the voice of the minority groups, thus eliminating the inequalities that generally stem from group differences.

Present throughout the different definitions and concepts of citizenship, the elements of inclusion/exclusion, differences, and tension all lead to a very important segment of the citizenship discussion: the role resources play in determining and enforcing citizenship membership and rights. “Resources,” Turner (2000) describes,

...are primary economic resources such as social security, health care entitlements, subsidized housing, retirement packages, or taxation concessions, but they also include access to culturally desirable ‘goods’ such as, within a traditional liberal framework, rights to speak one’s own language in the public arena or rights relating to religious freedom. These resources therefore include not only the traditional economic resources of housing, health, income, and employment, but also cultural resources such as education, knowledge, religion, and language (38).

Adrian Oldfield (1990) takes this definition of resources, placing it in the context of citizenship, and highlights the significance of resources to the ability to actualize one’s citizenship.

For activity of any kind, including that involved in the practice of citizenship, people need certain resources. Some of these have to do with what liberal individualism identifies as civil, political, and legal rights. Others have to do with economic and social resources. Without health, education, and a reasonable living income, for instance, individuals do not have the capacity to be effective agents in the world, and the possibilities of a practice of citizenship are thus foreclosed in advance (Oldfield, 1990, p. 27).

In other words, according to Oldfield (1990), without resources, individuals can neither partake of the rights guaranteed by citizenship nor serve as active members of the community; in effect, individuals without resources do not belong.

The significance of the topic of resources extends beyond the idea that resources are vital to citizenship articulation. Because of the impact of resources on the practice of citizenship, resource distribution works as a strong determinant of elements like inclusion, exclusion, and consequential tensions. If a society has unlimited civic, political, legal, economic, and social resources and has the foresight and fortitude to equally distribute those unlimited resources to all individuals within the society, inclusion, exclusion, and tension become obsolete behaviors and emotions (Turner, 2000). This kind of ideal situation, however, is rare if not fantastical, and in communities where resources are limited, like those within developing countries in the Middle East, tensions thrive on the unequal distribution of the insufficient resources. The relationship between access to resources and citizenship rights creates an environment of, according to Max Weber, “social closure” (Turner, 2000 p. 38). In an environment of social closure, citizens, to protect their access to scarce resources and rights as citizens, form a relationship of “solidarity” with fellow citizens so strong that it consequently “produces inevitable alienation and stigmatization of ‘outsiders,’” thereby turning the concept of citizenship into a “matter of policing borders” (Turner, 2000, p. 38).

In this way, the concept of resource allocation corresponds directly to the study of space allocation, boundary maintenance, and power delegation. Because the citizens, those who control resource allocation, control the issue of belonging, from deciding who belongs where, inside or outside the realm of citizenship, to selecting where the borders

that separate the “inside” of citizenship from the “outside” of citizenship belong, the citizens also control the delegation of power, determining who to include in or exclude from the circle of power. In other words, the citizens who control the social reality determine to whom voice and visibility belong and who should remain silent and invisible.

Although this discussion of the varying concepts of citizenship is but a small morsel of the on-going full and diverse dialogue, it provides a sufficient overview of some of the existing definitions of citizenship. As discussed, some of the common themes running throughout the concepts, ideas like inclusion/exclusion, difference, identity, tolerance, and resources, for example, feed directly into the analysis of gender and space, boundaries, and power, creating a foundation on which to build an understanding of the ideology that supports the division of space along specific boundaries, the need to protect those boundaries against trespassers, and the power that stems from one’s placement within the divided space. In addition, the presence of these themes in the different concepts of citizenship emphasize the validity of the notion that citizenship is more than just “equal possibilities to participate in the governing of society” or “a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community,” making “all who possess the status...equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed” (Lister, 1997, p. 14; Marshall, 1950, pp. 28-29). Rather, citizenship is also a behavior and an emotion, incorporating all aspects of society, from civil and political to social and cultural, to create a social order, set guidelines, just and unjust, for treating all the inhabitants of that order, and assert justifications for both the parameters of and behaviors within the social order.

## Chapter 4

### Gender Assumptions in Jordan

Gender assumptions and generalizations in Jordan are two unavoidable elements involved in the study of space, boundaries, and power and the combined relationship of these three issues with gender and gender relations in Jordan. “Gender,” Joan Scott defines “is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power” (Kandiyoti, 1996, p. 6). Judith Lorber expands Scott’s definition, calling “gender...an all pervasive social institution that ‘establishes patterns of expectations for individuals, orders the processes of everyday life, is built into the major social organizations of society, such as the economy, ideology, the family and politics, and is also an entity in and of itself’” (Kandiyoti, 1996, p. 6). In Jordanian society, gender identity continues to function primarily through emotional and historical suspicions and imaginations rather than scientific or deductive reasoning. By depending on emotion rather than fact as a means of understanding the identity of the other gender and, in part, the identity of self, individuals and groups succumb to easy manipulation by abstract issues like fear, concern for public perceptions, the band-wagon effect, and even love. Unfortunately, these kinds of issues do not need fact to survive; moreover, fact and rationality have little power over such emotionally charged issues. The assumptions and generalizations each gender maintains about the other gender consequently result in easy miscommunication, misunderstanding, and even hostility and violence, often justifying the pigeon-holing of each gender into very specific roles, the presuming and assigning of responses and emotions of each gender, and the influencing of potentially discriminatory behavior of

one gender against the other (Goodwin, 2003; Mernissi, 1987; Sonbol, 2003). Without placing a judgement of just or unjust on any assumption or generalization, it is important to accept and understand that these generalizations do exist and are very real across much of Jordan. Failing to accept the gender generalizations significantly hinders any discussion and understanding of the roles of space allocation, boundary maintenance, and power delegation in Jordanian society.

However, before moving into discussions of specific assumptions of each gender towards itself and the other gender and the consequential gender relationships in Jordan, Ruth Lister (1997) offers a useful overview of the dichotomies separating the male and female genders in terms of the concept of belonging. Lister argues that the dichotomies are historical assumptions that saturate any dialogue or policy concerning inclusion and exclusion, creating a pattern of associations capable of rendering silent the implications of gender assumptions on the division and allocation of space and the placement and protection of boundaries. The pattern constructed by these dichotomies, categorized in Table 1.1 (Lister, 1997, p. 69) below, consists primarily of two main spatial implications:

...the abstract, disembodied individual on whose shoulders the cloak of citizenship sits and the public-private divide which has facilitated the relegation to the 'private' sphere of all the functions and qualities deemed incompatible with the exercise of citizenship in the 'public' (Lister, 1997, p. 69).

Table 4.1

**Categorization of Assumed Gender Qualities and Capacities**

<b>Public, male, citizen</b>	<b>Private, female, non-citizen</b>
Abstract, disembodied, mind	Particular, embodied, rooted in nature
Rational, able to apply dispassionate reason and standards of justice	Emotional, irrational, subject to desire and passion; unable to apply standards of justice
Impartial, concerned with public interest	Partial, preoccupied with private, domestic concerns
Independent, active, heroic and strong	Dependent, passive, weak
Upholding the realm of freedom, of the human	Maintaining the realm of necessity, or the natural and repetitious

In this way, Lister (1997) maintains, the dichotomy in gender assumptions of male and female qualities and capacities, not specific to Jordan but historically apparent in gender relations worldwide, directly controls the rules of inclusion and exclusion in space allocation, placing men solidly in the public space because the qualities of the public space, “impartiality, rationality, independence, and political agency,” are solely “male qualities,” while “banishing” women “to the private realm of the family, either physically or figuratively, because they do not display...[male] qualities...and...are deemed incapable of developing...[male qualities]” (p. 70). Even without delving into a discussion of public and private space, Lister’s nonspecific yet comprehensive categorization of gender assumptions works as a useful base for entering into the discussion of Jordanian gender assumptions.

## *Male Assumptions of Gender*

The general Jordanian male assumptions of both male and female genders naturally run the gamut from openly liberal to conservative in the extreme. On the one hand, some men subscribe to the notion that men and women are equal partners in all aspects of society; women, like men, should have the option to choose their social reality and the opportunity to act on that choice without interference from the state, religion, society, or family. Other men, on the other hand, ascribe to a very patriarchal notion of gender relations, assuming that women, because of their nature, are submissive, weak, incomplete beings yet, ironically, are also a threat to men, society, and even to women themselves. Because of popular interpretations of Islamic law and the Prophet Muhammad's guidance, however, assumptions similar to the latter assumption of the female gender are much more widely accepted and enforced, leaving the former, more open assumption, to fight against the obstacles, political, social, and religious, that all minority ideas face (Goodwin, 2003; Mernissi, 1987, Sonbol, 2003; Yamani, 1996).

Before exploring the religiously justified gender assumptions, the concept of patriarchy and its coincidental gender assumptions merits a quick overview. "Classic patriarchy," according to Deniz Kandiyoti (1988), begins with the ideal of an extended family in which the highest ranking or oldest man in the family wields authority over all others in the household. This form of patriarchy extends the reality of female subservience to males and also creates a hierarchy among women, secondary to the accepted hierarchy of men over women, in which the senior woman ranks over all the other women in the household. The remaining women, daughters-in-law at the lowest

rung, move up the hierarchy through the birth of sons and consequently exercise their new-found authority over the women on the rungs beneath them. In this way, women focus on their own individual and immediate self-preservation and fail to unify against their subservience to men, perpetuating the patriarchal system. To quote Deniz Kandiyoti (1988):

Women's life cycle in the patriarchally extended family is such that the deprivation and hardship she experiences as a young bride is eventually superseded by the control and authority she will have over her own subservient daughters-in-law. The cyclical nature of women's power in the household and their anticipation of inheriting the authority of senior women encourages a thorough internalization of this form of patriarchy by the women themselves. In classic patriarchy, subordination to men is offset by the control older women attain over younger women (p. 279).

Moreover, Kandiyoti continues, because women only gain status through their sons and only guarantee life-long security and senior-women status through their married sons, older women, mothers of sons in particular, have a personal interest in maintaining the total devotion of their sons. The most advantageous way to accomplish this level of and endurance in loyalty involves gender segregation; thus, "older women have a vested interest in the suppression of romantic love between youngsters...keep[ing] the conjugal bond secondary and...claim[ing] [the] sons' primary allegiance" (Kandiyoti, 1988, p. 279). Conversely, "young women have an interest in circumventing and possibly evading their mother-in-law's control" (Kandiyoti, 1988, p. 279). Thus, through classic patriarchal systems, female subordination by men discourages any unified female resistance against the system while encouraging manipulative interactions among and between genders.

Indoctrinated in this patriarchal system, women accept the assumption that female protection depends solely on the economic and emotional support of men; in fact, as noted, women are even willing to sacrifice their emancipation and transformation into complete individuals, as well as their relationships with other women, to guarantee that vital male support and protection. Kandiyoti (1988) labels this sacrifice and behavior as a “bargaining with patriarchy,” as women make a conscious trade of rights for protection. Declining economic statuses and systems, however, put strains on classic patriarchy and the simultaneous assumptions of gender capabilities and roles, forcing changes such as the necessity for economic contributions from all members of the family and consequently reducing the power and economic control of the male within the family, thereby disturbing the status quo of the familial hierarchy.

Although the deterioration of classic patriarchal systems implies the possibility of expanding women’s roles into the public space, the deterioration also gives sons and their wives greater opportunities to leave their paternal household. This two-fold consequence puts women in a bind, facing a new social role that carries with it opportunities for independence and self-determination but also facing the elimination of their control over their daughters-in-law and consequently their secure future through their sons. In this way, women who bargain away their rights to self-determination in order to guarantee their futures face a “genuine personal tragedy, since they have paid the heavy price of an earlier patriarchal bargain, but are not able to cash in on its promised benefits” (Kandiyoti, 1988, p. 282). The loss of control over their daughters-in-law takes away the deference and privilege women anticipate gaining through their roles as mothers-in-law, and the desire for such deference and privilege is so great that it supercedes any possible

benefits of the removal of the patriarchal system. In other words, women connect the gaining of rights through a non-patriarchal system not with the improvement of the future status of women but with the loss of their immediate well-being; “thus,” as Kandiyoti (1988) remarks, “when classic patriarchy enters a crisis, many women may continue to use all the pressure they can muster to make men live up to their obligations and will not, except under the most extreme pressure, compromise the basis for their claims by stepping out of line and losing their respectability” (pp. 282-283).

Because women tend to support classic patriarchal systems by bargaining away their rights to public space access, economic independence, and other aspects of self-determination, women bolster, for example, the gender assumptions outlined by Lister (1997). Women appear to focus more on themselves, lacking foresight or patience to improve the status of women as a whole (Joseph, 2000; Kandiyoti, 1988). This leads to the assumption that women are indeed emotionally charged creatures, impetuous, dependent, and preoccupied with domesticity, and thus unable and unwilling to act within the public space (Goodwin, 2003).

The concept of classic patriarchy and patriarchal bargaining leads to a similar concept of gender relations and assumptions deriving from the conclusion that women are driven by “consuming personal relationships” (Lazar, 2002, p. 112). Within the discourse of consuming relationships, society expects women to regard love and other personal relationships the all-consuming priorities in their lives, and in view of this generalized expectation, society appropriately seeks to mirror this assumed behavior in its targeting and treatment of women. Desensitized through methods like advertising, product availability, and other forms of publicly displayed overt and subliminal

messages, women internalize the idea that men and relationships with men, specifically marriage, are their optimal goals, and as such, male weaknesses are not offensive but are opportunities for women to display their loving, understanding, and non-confrontational nature. In this way, the male gender assumes, and consequently the female gender is conditioned to assume, based on the belief that it is part of a woman's nature to find the focus on and potential flaws in the behavior of men attractive rather than demeaning and oppressive, that the theory of consuming personal relationships is not only acceptable but also desirable (Lazar, 2002).

Additionally, according to the theory of consuming personal relationships, women, involved in these consuming relationships, achieve their self-identity as women through other-centeredness. Through marriage and motherhood women find an outlet for their other-centeredness, and the happiness of the husband and children correlates directly to the level of other-centeredness of the wife/mother; if the husband or children are unhappy, assumption mandates that the wife/mother has been too self-centered. In fact, this assumption of the self-fulfillment inherent in female other-centeredness is so strong that it robs women of their ownership of their emotions, claiming that a woman's emotions are not her own feelings but are merely reflections of the male's feelings about and responses to specific situations. In other words, women, solely focused and dependent on their personal relationships with the men and children in their lives, gain not only satisfaction but also self-worth and meaning vicariously through the satisfaction and contentment of the men and children with whom they are involved (Goodwin, 2003; Lazar, 2002; Joseph, 1999).

Social indoctrination of the female gender with this notion of the validity of consuming personal relationships for women and the other-centered nature of women reinforces their role as satellites orbiting the worlds of men and children. Moreover, the assumption and its subsequent indoctrination create a situation in which the very uniqueness of women, their ability to bear children, promotes the inferior status of the female gender as compared to the male gender. Women who accept this indoctrination consequently accept this role of subordination to the male gender, convinced that through their sacrifice of self, women, fulfilling their feminine duties and capacities, reap the maximum gains from society and for self. Accordingly, the male gender, witnessing and even assisting this indoctrination, also experiences the indoctrination of this assumption; thus, through the assumption of the feminine dependence on others for happiness, fulfillment, and purpose, men can assume that placing women in subservient roles not only benefits women but also provides women with feelings of self-worth (Kandiyoti, 1988, Lazar, 2002; Joseph, 1999).

While the previous examples of gender assumptions share the notion that both male and female genders internalize and support unequal gender labels and relations, religiously justified gender characterizations form the most dichotomous and fiercely fought over assumptions. By using religion as a base for formulating gender assumptions, individuals or groups strengthen societal acceptance of their assumptions because society often equates challenging religious justification with challenging religion itself (El-Saadawi, 1983, 1989, 1994). The paradox built into the use of religious justifications of gender assumptions stems from the fact that Islamic theological sources can support both conservative and liberal characterizations of gender. In other words,

Islam serves as a double-edged sword, capable of affirming the separation and unequal treatment of genders while at the same time endorsing the notion of equality in the purpose, creation, and rights of both genders. The following selections from the Qur'an illustrate this dichotomy:

Oh wives of the Prophet, you are not like other women. If you are mindful of God, do not be too obliging in your speech, lest some one sick of heart should covet your person; say only customary things. Stay at home, and do not deck yourselves with ostentation as in the days of paganism; fulfill your devotional obligations, pay the zakat, and obey God and His Apostle. God desires to remove impurities from you, O inmates of this house, and to cleanse and bring out the best in you (Sura 33: 32-33).

So that God punishes men and women hypocrites, the idolaters and idolatrous women, but He turns to faithful men and women in forgiveness, for God is forgiving and kind (Sura 33: 73).

Tell the believing men to lower their eyes and guard their private parts. There is for them goodness in this. God is aware of what they do. Tell the believing women to lower their eyes, guard their private parts, and not display their charms except what is outwardly, and cover their bosoms with their veils and not to show their finery except to their husbands of their fathers of fathers-in-law, their sons of step-sons, brothers, or their brothers' and sisters' sons...(Sura 24: 30-31).

Women are like fields for you; so seed them as you intend, but plan the future in advance. And fear God, and remember, you have to face Him in the end (Sura 2: 223).

The Lord heard their prayer and answered: "I suffer not the good deeds of any go to waste, be he a man or a woman: The one of you is of the other" (Sura 3: 195).

Women also have recognised rights as men have, though men have an edge over them (Sura 2: 228).

These Qur'anic verses show how certain verses support the segregation of women and the separation of society into two genderized spaces but also how other verses support the equality of the genders in the sight of God. Moreover, the fact that one verse can support

either argument, especially if the verse is taken in partiality rather than in its entirety, makes discernment between the different religiously justified gender assumptions even more difficult (Goodwin, 2003; Mernissi, 1987; Sonbol, 2003; Yamani, 1996). Because of the historic presence of patriarchy in Jordanian society, the most prevailing male assumptions, those with the loudest voices and the most ardent followers, are the assumptions of gender inequality, male superiority over females, and the inherent weakness and sinfulness of the female gender.

### ***Female Assumptions of Gender***

While women share many of the gender assumptions listed above, women also have their own assumptions of gender differences and relationships. For example, the following excerpt from Nawal El-Saadawi's book, Memoirs of a Woman Doctor (1989), eloquently describes differing images of a man and a woman, highlighting one of the most common female assumptions of the distinctions between the genders.

The man has the world supporting him and holds the scepter of life in his hand. He owns the past, the present and the future. Honour, respect and morality are all his –decorations earned in the battle against women. He owns the spiritual and the material world. He even owns the drop of sperm planted in the woman at the end of the struggle. He chooses whether or not to acknowledge it, to grant it his name and a honourable place in life, to let it live or have it destroyed.

The woman stands before the man, deprived by the world of her freedom, her honour, her name, her self-respect, her true nature and her will. All control over her spiritual and material life has been taken from her, even her control over the little fruit which she creates inside her with her own blood and cells and the atoms of her mind and heart (pp. 75-76).

While El-Saadawi is not a Jordanian woman, she is an important figure in the development of Middle Eastern feminist views about the male gender, the male gender's assumptions of the female gender, and the consequent female gender's assumptions about itself. According to El-Saadawi (1983, 1989, 1994), the male and female genders are locked in a fierce battle of indoctrination; the female gender, fighting for its very survival, struggles not only against the institutions of the state but also against the patriarchally indoctrinated hatred and disgust of women, born in the male gender space and permeating into the female gender space. Moreover, to be heard in this battle, a woman's voice must speak without the protection of armor, muffled by the oppression of a society which views all things feminine as tools wielded by Satan. From a woman's skin and voice to her menstrual cycle that leads to life itself, the characteristics that are innately feminine are symbols not merely of weakness but also of sordid and filthy temptation. In a society owned by men, women are taught to hate that which makes them feminine and different from men, to view their minds and bodies as enemies, worthless and malevolent (El-Saadawi, 1986, 1999; Mernissi, 1987). In this way, El-Saadawi assumes that part of the male gender's battle plan is to turn women self-destructively against themselves; consequently, the female gender must stand up against both the men who assume they own the world and the women who have come to accept that ownership.

Emotions of fear and subservience further buttress El-Saadawi's perspective that women are taught to assume their femininity is a weakness. Religious, political, and cultural mores condition women to form relationships of obedience to and dependence on their male relatives, consequently creating the assumption, both realistic and imagined,

that women are unable to function independently. Social realities like the fact that men are financially responsible for the women in their family and have the right to give or refuse permission to their female family members, even those who contribute to the financial well-being of the family, to participate in all realms of society, from education, employment, and marriage to travel, shopping, and entertainment, enforce this indoctrinated dependence. Moreover, the assumption and reality that women cannot act without the support and permission of their male relatives institutes an environment of fear in which women, assuming they are powerless on their own, learn to fear the male gender because men control the lives, livelihoods, and futures of women, and on a whim, based on any real or supposed female transgression, men can destroy the very lives of women (Amawi, 2000; Goodwin, 2003; Mernissi, 1987; Sonbol, 2003).

Of course all women do not share such dismal gender assumptions. Many women subscribe to the assumption that the male and female genders form a partnership, each carrying a portion of the burden necessary to maintain successful and fulfilling lives. According to this assumption, women, because their characteristics, emotionally and physically, take care of the domestic responsibilities while men, with characteristics more suited for economic and political activities, manage the responsibilities vital to financial well-being and familial security. In this way, genders are assumed equal in importance but different in abilities (Joseph, 1999; Goodwin, 2003).

An additional female gender assumption includes the idea that the very strength in and capabilities of women produce the divide and distrust between men and women. The weakness of the male gender, in comparison with the potential power of the female gender, forces men to institute a system of oppression against women (El-Saadawi, 1983;

Goodwin, 2003; Mernissi, 1987). Moreover, as Qasim Amin, a Muslim feminist, suggests, the system of oppression and its elements of gender separation and inequality are measures of maintaining order, not because uninhibited women cause chaos themselves but because men lack the self-control to avoid chaos in the presence of non-secluded women. Thus, due to the institutions of female seclusion, such as veiling, Amin posits that, “the implications of [female seclusion] lead us to think that women are believed to be better equipped in this respect [self-control] than men” (Mernissi, 1987, p. 31). The heroine of the novel, Woman at Point Zero, by El-Saadawi (1983), further voices this assumption in the context of her crime of murder, purporting that men fear her not because she killed a man but because her very presence threatens the male way of life:

I knew why they were so afraid of me. I was the only woman who had torn the mask away, and exposed the face of their ugly reality. They condemned me to death not because I killed a man –there are thousands of people being killed every day– but because they are afraid to let me live. They know that as long as I am alive they will not be safe, that I shall kill them. My life means their death. My death means their life. They want to live. And life for them means more crime, more plunder, unlimited booty. I have triumphed over both life and death because I...hope for nothing. I fear nothing. Therefore I am free. For during life it is our wants, our hopes, our fears that enslave us. The freedom I enjoy fills them with anger. They would like to discover that there is after all something which I desire, or fear, or hope for. Then they know they can enslave me once more (100-101).

A free and independent woman robs men of their ability to control, their access to power, and, in a sense, their purpose for existing; therefore, the premise that women are such strong figures in society mandates, as a matter of survival, the male oppression of the female gender.

Although women differ on their assumptions of gender characteristics and relations, two common themes, the connection between genders and the socially supported male dominance over females, run throughout the various assumptions, providing a link between women regardless of their accepted gender assumption. In words written almost sixty years ago but still relevant today, Salwa Sardah sums up this link between women, brought about by the ability of the common themes to give women similar life experiences, expectations, and acceptance of the narrow confinement of male gender assumptions, to their gender.

To those in high positions,  
To the masters of all time,  
To those who are the hope of their country during war,  
and the reason for happiness,  
To all of you, I want to ask a question and I need an answer.  
Who delivered you men and trained you to be so strong and brave as  
lions?  
Who taught you to be honest and who helped you reach high?  
This is woman,  
don't forget her goodness.  
If you forget, we are lost.  
Help her when she begs you for education and is willing to pay the  
price with her spirit and money.  
Eastern men, listen to her and give her what she asks,  
Because she brings you happiness and honour (Kandiyoti, 1996, p. 97).

This link of womanhood stems from the fact that all women, from girlhood on, see and experience that life is not equal (Amawi, 2000; Yamani, 1996). Women differ so markedly on their feelings over whether this inequality is a just or unjust situation that; as Suad Joseph (2000) asserts, women rarely cross lines of difference to join forces against inequality. In fact, women who do strive to change gender assumptions find that though “they are women working for women...[they are] not guaranteed that other women of their societies will accept them as their representatives” (p. 10). Regardless of their

reluctance to create a unified stand in favor of full and appreciative recognition of their social contributions, women seem to share the assumption that their survival is immutably tied to that of men and that women are responsible for the very existence of men, but men, because of their status, just or unjust, of superiority, control the destiny of women.

## Chapter 5

### **Spatial Division and Allocation in Jordan**

After summarizing some of the general theories of citizenship and assumptions of gender, the discussion systematically moves into the discussion of actual space allocation in Jordan. While citizenship theory and the concepts of inclusion, exclusion, and resources play more of an immediate role in boundary maintenance, both citizenship and gender assumptions significantly affect the ways in which a community divides and allocates space. Accordingly, based on the notions of inclusion and exclusion in citizenship, one way to divide space is to refer to the placement and supply of resources and allocate space within the vicinity of the resources to those who merit, through character traits and commonalities, the rights of citizenship while relegating those who do not merit the rights of citizenship to spaces away from the vicinity of resources. Because access to resources parallels access to power, dividing and allocating space in this manner makes the resource-rich space the public space and the resource-void space the private space and also ensures the restriction of limited resources from those deemed unworthy of citizenship in the realm of power (Joseph, 2000; Lister, 1997; Turner, 2000).

Valerie Mernissi (1987) provides a classification of the differences in the characteristics that define both membership to and relationships within public or private spaces. Her method of organization is very similar to Lister's categorization of the dichotomy inherent in gender assumptions in that the dichotomy between the public and the private clearly exposes the power gender assumptions have on the division and allocation of space, the importance of maintaining strict boundaries between the spaces,

and the consequential power given to the inhabitants of the public space to control the social reality. Furthermore, as seen in the tables below, Mernissi (1987) frames her categorization of public and private space along religious lines, thereby making the categorization even more relevant to the examination of Jordanian society.

Table 5.1

**Membership of the Two Universes**

<i>The Public Universe of the Umma</i>	<i>The Domestic Universe of Sexuality</i>
The believers. Women’s position in the <i>umma</i> universe is ambiguous; Allah does not talk to them directly. We can therefore assume that the <i>umma</i> is primarily male believers.	Individuals of both sexes as primarily sexual beings. But because men are not supposed to spend their time in the domestic unit, we may assume that the members are in fact women only.

Table 5.2

**Principles Regulating Relations Between Members**

<i>The Umma</i>	<i>The Family</i>
Equality Reciprocity Aggregation Unity, Communion Brotherhood, Love Trust	Inequality Lack of Reciprocity Segregation Separation, Division Subordination, Authority Mistrust

Table 1.2 supports the genderized division of space into two physically different and separated segments, making the division of space, foremost, a matter of territorial separation (Mernissi, 1987, p. 138). However, adding the elements delineated in table 1.3 extends the spatial division beyond territorial boundaries into more transcendent

elements like behavior, identity, and relationships (Mernissi, 1987, p. 138). The fundamental difference between the public space of the *umma* and the private space of the family lies within the relationships fostered in each space. The public space, for example, encourages unity of members and purpose, while the private space discourages unity, dividing its inhabitants into those who rule and those who must oblige. In this way, even within their own sphere of residence, women play the role of the subordinate to the men who are, regardless of space allocation, the heads, or rulers, of their families (Mernissi, 1987).

Continuing on the theme supported in the above tables, Suad Joseph (2000) also acknowledges the assumption that public space is the space of “rational discourse, abstract principles, the rule of contract law, and objective and impersonal judgments and relationships,” while the private space is the space “of emotionalities, subjectivities, specificities, and the rule of natural law” (p. 26). Joseph (2000) also points out the fluidity inherent in the boundaries between the spaces, stating that “the boundaries between and among spheres of social activity in the Middle East [are] porous, elastic, and shifting” (p. 27). It is the effects of issues like patriarchy, familial and other primordial bonds, and political, nonpolitical, and domestic activities and judgements that generate changes in the characteristics and composition of public and private spaces as well as in the boundaries separating the spaces. However, as Joseph (2000) notes, the idea of public and private separation of space, the need to monitor the boundaries between the spaces, and the power that is involved with space allocation and membership remain crucial to individuals and communities in Jordan, regardless of any potential shift in the makeup of the spaces and in the placement of the boundaries.

## Chapter 6

### **Spatial and Gender Signifiers of Belonging and Citizenship in Jordan**

While a complete study of all the political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural elements of Jordanian society opens the door to a daunting and potentially unending task, a more brief and select examination of only a handful of societal elements provides sufficient insight into the issues of genderized space, boundaries, and power in Jordan and thus provides an initial foundation from which to build a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between gender and space in Jordan and tendencies of men and women to fight over or share different spaces. In this way, this cursory examination answers the notion quoted at the beginning of chapter one, clarifying whether Jordanian men and women are foes, trespassing across spatial boundaries, or friends, willingly dismantling boundaries for the creation of an open society.

As addressed in chapter two, the society of Jordan, while unique and diverse, shares enough common unifying factors in relation to gender assumptions, religion, and space allocation to make it an acceptable example of the widespread relationships between gender and space, boundaries, and power. In Jordan, gender plays a variety of roles within society. With the exception of a few individual communities and family groups in which women are totally invisible from the public space, the fact that women do participate within the public space fails to elicit considerable astonishment; neither impassable walls nor fierce guard dogs line the boundaries between the spaces, protecting against infiltration into one space by the inhabitants of the other space. Rather, the boundaries are, in a sense, ideological lines drawn in the air by those who have power

enough to create the social reality, and the guard dogs are only the consciousness of those conditioned to need or accept the status quo. Thus, to a certain extent, both men and women, regardless of any political, economic, educational, religious, or cultural influences, decide the fate of both genders, including the nature of the relationship between the genders, the space to which each gender belongs, the ability of each gender to share or cross between spaces, and the accurate labels, such as space sharing or boundary trespassing, depending on the relationship between the genders, of movement between spaces.

The following brief examination of the political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural –the culture of honor, specifically– environments in Jordan addresses the relationships between each issue and the elements of gender, space allocation, boundary maintenance, and power delegation. The examination reveals the social tendency to accept indoctrinated gender and spatial assumptions, perpetuating and aggravating a relationship of hostility between the genders and making the on-going efforts of women to inhabit and succeed in the public space aberrations of trespass rather than evidence of social and citizenship maturation.

### ***Politics***

The political landscape in Jordan is a clear example of genderized separation of space, both territorial and theoretical. Initial and surface examinations of Jordan's political practices and progress may suggest otherwise, providing examples of ways policies and policy-makers attempt, at times successfully, to either erase the boundaries

that bar women from entering the public space or assist women in stepping out of the private space and over the boundary into the public space (Brand, 1998; Goodwin, 2003; Sonbol, 2003). The question remains, however, of whether the boundary-crossing attempted or permitted into the public, political realm in Jordan by women is really an infiltration of women into space that does not belong to them –an act of aggressive trespassing– or merely a sign of the maturation of a state and the progressive co-existence of two genders in one space.

One of the keys to answering this question of whether Jordanian women have roles within the political realm because they are crossing boundaries between spaces or because of a development in the consciousness of the state and its inhabitants involves the issue of citizenship and the ways the political sphere controls the access to citizenship. As discussed in chapter three, citizenship involves, among other things, the right to active participation in all social, political, and economic realms. While the political sphere, the state, delegates a significant portion of legislative and executive powers to the religious sphere, the state remains heavily involved in the lives of its inhabitants and their rights and access to social, political, and economic participation (Amawi, 2000; Sonbol, 2003). For example, through its constitution, Jordan declares its intent in the context of citizenship, stating that individuals, male and female, are equal; accordingly, the Jordanian political sphere intends to grant rights of citizenship to both its male and female natural-born inhabitants. Moreover, the legal system in Jordan appears to support this intent, as the laws, in general, do not discriminate against women. At this point, however, discrepancies between the intent and the reality of the political decisions

come into view, and the political relationship with gender and space, boundaries, and power becomes rather vague (Sonbol, 2003).

Regardless of state policies that support separation of genders, female subordination, and male superiority, because of the changing dynamics within Jordanian society, the state operates as the potentially greatest threat to male supremacy (Mernissi, 1987). The rise of modernization and the decline of the economic well-being in Jordan gives the state increased levels of interaction and, at times, interference into the lives of Jordanians, and in many cases, the increased presence of the state usurps the traditional roles of men. In other words,

[i]n spite of its continuous support for traditional male rights, the state constitutes a threat and a mighty rival to the male as both father and husband. The state is taking over the traditional functions of the male head of the family, such as education and the provision of economic security for members of the household...destroy[ing] two pillars of the father's authority. The increasing preeminent role of the state has stripped the traditionally powerful family head of his privileges and place him in a subordinate position with respect to the state not very different from the position of women in the traditional family. The head of the family is dependent of the state (the main employer) to provide for him just as women are dependent on their husbands in traditional marriage (Mernissi, 1987, pp. 172-173).

However, because the state continues to acquiesce in its attempts to incorporate women into the public space, deferring instead to the socially preferred and indoctrinated reality of genderized space allocation and boundary maintenance, the state exposes its role of inferiority to the male gender. Serving as merely one segment of the public space, the political sphere cannot control the space and must relinquish power to men, the owners of the space.

Taking the discussion of the political sphere and its relationship with genderized space allocation, boundary maintenance, and power delegation into an examination of women's actual political interaction moves deeper into the idea of citizenship. In the 1940s, Jordanian women first established women's organizations; however, far from women's rights movements, these organizations focused on traditionally domestic issues like childcare and helping those stricken by poverty but also addressed issues like improving women's health, education, and ability to tend to their children (Brand, 1998). Eventually, the women's organizations evolved into activist groups, petitioning the government to improve the social, economic, and educational lives of women; in other words, the women's groups wanted government assistance in providing women with the skills necessary for active political participation. In reality, however, "aside from the fact that the women were working in the framework of a political organization, the activities were largely traditional" and "[m]uch of their work ended up resembling that of a women's auxiliary group, although...the very fact of going out of the house to a resistance office was a major step of liberation for many young women" (Brand, 1998, pp. 123-124). While the governmental system of Jordan permitted the existence of these women's organizations, the government did not encourage women to take further steps into the political realm.

More recent years, however, find women in or attempting to gain more visible roles within the political sphere. While portions of the public appear supportive of movement of women in the political sphere, evidence shows that women walk a fine line between being accepted participants and demonized interlopers. One particularly telling example of the precariousness of the relationship between women and politics involves

Toujan Faisal, a prominent and popular Jordanian television journalist and newspaper columnist who, in 1989, ran, with extensive public support, for a seat in Jordan's parliament. Prior to the elections, Faisal wrote an article in which she outlined the ways Islamists' misinterpretations of Islam falsely oppress and discriminate against women, making the "political point...that those who believe in discrimination on any basis cannot be entrusted with a family, an extended household, or a nation" (Brand, 1998, p. 146). Islamic conservatives, previously noncombative about her bid for candidacy, immediately rose up against Faisal, charging her with apostasy because "people were beginning to listen to her misguided views on Islam because she was given a forum to air her views" (Brand, 1998, p. 146). The story continues with Faisal receiving overwhelming public support, a dismissal of apostasy charges, and a successful election into Jordan's parliament, suggesting that the expanded female presence in the political sphere results from an evolution in society towards accepting women as active members of the public space (Brand, 1998; Goodwin, 2003).

While the initial impression of Faisal's movement into the political portion of the public space appears positive, the larger picture shows that the conservative Islamists also won a significant battle against female presence in the public space during their fight with Faisal. The situation with Faisal raised the attention of the monarchy, resulting in a monarchal bid to change the Personal Status Laws, discussed later in this chapter, to better reflect the equality purported in Jordan's constitution; however, the conservative Islamist contingent placed enough pressure on and held enough power over the political sphere to prohibit any change in the Laws (Brand, 1998; Goodwin, 2003). Moreover, because the conservative Islamists continue to gain more power in Jordan, Faisal

continues to experience repeated persecution from the Islamists, “charged with ‘exceeding the boundaries of acceptable criticism’” (Goodwin, 2003, p. 257).

Conservative Islamist groups, by placing and maintaining such boundaries, thus reinforce their social reality and role as power-holders in Jordanian society.

The relationship between politics and gender shows that portions of the members of the public space appear willing to accept women actively participating in the public space, suggesting social maturation as the reason for the expanded presence of women in the public, political space. Conversely, the ease and suddenness with which other members of the public space can expel women from the public space imply that the public presence of women is merely a sideshow, an amusing idea until the women threaten, as Faisal did with her newspaper column, the power and status quo of men. “Political liberalization,” according to Brand (1998), “does not necessarily mean social liberalization. And the political liberalization in [Jordan] has been in clear retreat... Therefore, changes or reforms that imply a restructuring of the existing social order are likely for the foreseeable future to be vigorously resisted by most Jordanians – women and men alike” (p. 173). In other words, once women threaten the status quo of men, they consequently become trespassers, losing their right to interact in the public space, and, in conjunction with the concept of citizenship, losing their bid for membership into the public space and the rights, including the right to active service in the political arena, that membership guarantees.

## *Economics*

The economic developments, or lack thereof, in Jordan provide insight into the unique relationship between economic status and the allocation of space along gender lines, the strength of the boundaries between the spaces, and the effects of male authority and power. As mentioned in chapter two, Jordan lacks natural resources such as oil, arable land, and water on which to base its economy; however, through economic reforms that have enhanced economic growth in relation to trade and the Jordanian financial market, Jordan has rated as one of the fastest growing economies in the Middle East (Goodwin, 2003; Sonbol, 2003). At the present, however, the picture of Jordan's economic health darkens with the consideration of other elements. For example, the proportion of Jordan's population under the age of sixteen is significant –50 percent, and the population growth rate of Jordan, 3.4 percent, indicates that the proportion will remain the same for some time to come. Combining the numbers of individuals ready to move into the work force with internal issues such as quickly increasing debt and growing unemployment rates and politically charged international issues like fewer trade partners and increased need for foreign assistance paints a somewhat bleak picture for the Jordanian economy (Sonbol, 2003).

Territorially and theoretically, the economic sphere belongs within the public space. Within the economic sphere, interpersonal interactions transpire, both among workers and between workers and their clientele, individuals and businesses make rational decisions, and success often depends on big-picture planning. Accordingly,

because each of these economic sphere activities easily falls into specific categories in the gender and spatial assumptions, listed in chapters four and five, signifying that only men are capable of participating in the activities, the general male-enforced conclusion deems women unfit to enter into the economic realm (Goodwin, 2003; Mernissi, 1987; Sonbol, 2003). In light of the economic troubles facing Jordan's economy, however, the discouragement of women from joining the workforce produces a perplexing perspective into the relationship between the economy and genderized space allocation, boundaries, and power.

Based on the Jordanian Constitution of 1952, Jordan's economic sphere should have no gender barriers. Article Six of the Constitution states that:

Work is the right of all citizens.  
Jobs are based on capability.  
All Jordanians are equal before the law. There will be no  
discrimination between [Jordanians] regarding rights and duties based  
on race, language or religion (Sonbol, 2003, p. 87).

The labor laws offer further clarification by defining the term, "Jordanian," as gender-blind, making further guarantees that are "impressive in the overt and categorical equal rights they grant women," especially in light of the fact that the Constitution only mentions discrimination in terms of race, language, and religion, not gender (Sonbol, 2003, p. 87). However, because the reality of Jordan's genderized economy, the differences between the legislative and executive branches of Jordan's government come into view; in other words, "the intent [of the law] seems to contradict directly the actual laws and their execution" (Sonbol, 2003, pp. 87-88).

This contradiction between the letter of the law and the action of the law is evident in many of the obstacles separating women from active roles within the

workforce. For example, as occupiers of the private space, women cannot remove themselves from their domestic duties, including, especially, their duties as the primary caretakers of their children. Thus, if a woman enters the workforce, she must still provide care for her children, and as a response to this need, a legal directive requires worksites to offer childcare if they employ twenty or more women who need childcare. While in print this option looks attractive, it offers an easy loophole that actually diminishes a woman's opportunities in the professional world; in other words, although the legal requirement appears to assist female employees, it really only encourages the employer to hire fewer women, thereby eliminating the childcare requirement (Sonbol, 2003).

Women's domestic duties play an additional role in the tendency of the economic sphere to follow along the lines of the public and private spatial divisions. Marriage and child-rearing are the most common reasons women leave or do not enter the work force, and while domestic duties are time consuming and important, many times the decision to separate from the workforce stems from familial and social pressure rather than a woman's personal desire to reside only in the private space (Shukri, 1996; Sonbol, 2003). At times, however, and especially with the growing unemployment of men and the declining economic status in Jordan, women need to work to support their families, regardless of the possible social and familial objections (Joseph, 2000; Sonbol, 2003). However, because simply entering the public workforce does not eliminate a woman's presence and responsibilities in the private space, women are hindered by the dual responsibilities to work and family, lacking the resources of time, energy, and social support for their endeavors. Lister (1997) addresses this issue of women working in both

the public and private spaces, suggesting that without the proper resources and support in the private space, itself, women cannot successfully participate in the public, professional space:

Therefore the importance of an extensive and high quality social infrastructure of support notwithstanding, neither private nor public strategies to reduce the *impact* of the sexual domestic division of labour obviate the need to tackle *directly* the domestic division of labour and of responsibility itself. Until this happens, women's ability to enjoy full and equal access to the polity and to the labour market, together with the social rights that derive from the latter, will be compromised. Men meanwhile continue to abscond from their 'private' obligations as citizens, thereby freeing them to develop as public citizens (pp. 135-136).

According to Lister (1997), women need both political and social support in the private space as well as a redistribution of domestic responsibilities between both genders to give themselves the time and resources necessary for equal participation with men in the economic sphere. For some women, greater political, social, and familial help moves the obstacles keeping them out of the workforce; for other women, however, this idea fails to take into account the existing gender assumptions and internalized acceptance of the genderized spatial allocation (Amawi, 2000; Goodwin, 2003; Sonbol, 2003). As noted in chapter four, women have worked hard to gain a certain level of status within the patriarchal system, bargaining away rights to secure their futures. In so doing, some women remain unwilling to share domestic duties with their husbands because “for some women there is also the fear that they may lose what power they have in the private sphere (if men take on more responsibility in the 'private' duties) without gaining power in the public...” (Lister, 1997, p. 136). Thus, women, viewing the reality of the dichotomy between the wording of Jordan’s labor laws and the actualization of those same laws, face an uncertain future in the economic sphere, given no guarantees of

success, no promises of job stability, and no insights into whether their decision to enter the workforce at the risk of their guaranteed role within the domestic space merits the potential personal cost.

The idea that economic forces may demand the presence of women in the workforce, or at least reduce the number of men active within the workforce, adds a different dimension to the relationship between the economy and space, boundaries, and power. For instance, the rising level of unemployed men shakes up the dynamics in and between public and private spaces. Without financial security, men are marrying at older ages, extending the age difference between husbands and wives and also lengthening the time sons spend living in their paternal home, developing, as noted earlier in chapter 4, the mother-son relationship of dependency and control (Mernissi, 1987). Moreover, while honor crimes, addressed later in this chapter, exist at all socioeconomic levels of Jordanian society, a direct correlation exists between unemployed men and perpetration of such crimes (Goodwin, 2003; Sonbol, 2003). Most telling, however, are the effects of unemployment on the power relationship between men and women. According to the prominent existing gender assumptions in Jordan, men have the responsibility, the right, and the capability to provide for the financial well-being of their families; if a man cannot do these things, he aligns himself with feminine gender assumptions, as society does not expect women to be able to provide for the economic needs of the family. The weakness, shame, and loss of power inherent with being unable to provide familial economic support and thus meet the male standards of masculinity combined with the existing space allocation between genders and consequential boundary maintenance and power

delegation set the stage for a battle between men and women over economic resources (Goodwin, 2003; Mernissi, 1987; Sonbol, 2003).

As mentioned in the discussion of citizenship in chapter three, one of the key elements of inclusion into or exclusion from a group or community is the quantity of resources. This argument extends directly into the allocation of space in the economic sphere. In Jordan, economic resources, like jobs, are scarce; consequently, the presence of women in the public space, entering the workforce, and laying claim to some of the limited economic resources, creates tension with men who are already struggling amongst themselves to share those same limited economic resources (Sonbol, 2003; Turner, 2000). In this way, the limited economic resources become tools of inclusion and exclusion, justifying the judgement that women should not have access to the resources and consequently do not belong in the public sphere; as such, any movement of women into the workforce becomes an act of aggressive thievery of the male's economic resources.

Despite the barriers slowing women's entrance into and acceptance in the economic sphere, many women in Jordan do live successful professional lives. However, gender relations and gender assumptions affect both the careers in which women most commonly work and the relationships women foster with their employers. Although women enter the public space to work, often their roles are indicative of their roles in the private space in that women usually work as the employees rather than the employers, occupying lower ranked, less intellectually demanding jobs than men, and imitating the subservience they give to their male relatives in their relationships with their employers (Mernissi, 1987; Sonbol, 2003). Mernissi (1987) supports and expands on the similarities

between women's roles in the private, domestic space and the public, work space, suggesting that

...these conflicting images [of a woman at home and a woman at work] are likely to stimulate conflicting patterns of behaviour in men. The boss's typist, like his wife and sister, is in a subordinate position, and he has the right to command her. Like them, she is dependent on him (more or less directly) for economic survival. He administers her salary, which is given her because she provides him with specific services. Her advancement and promotion depend on him. It is therefore not surprising if he comes to confuse her with the woman he dominates because of his economic superiority and institutional authority (in other words, his wife), a step many men seem to take with ease (pp. 145-146).

Regardless of the aforementioned difficulties and tensions inherent with women and economic independence, as women become better educated and take advantage of the growing opportunities to enter into the workforce, women do manage to cross over the boundaries blocking them from entrance into the public, professional space. In Jordan, women have roles within the political process, serving in the government, within the educational and health systems, and even in the media (Sonbol, 2003). However, women in these positions must walk a very careful line of propriety because, in spite of their roles within the mainstream professional arena, the women have not eliminated the genderized allocation of space, the strict boundary maintenance between the spaces, or the male ownership of power. Because men, especially those who subscribe to the more conservative and fundamentalist interpretations of Islam, still maintain control of space allocation, boundary maintenance, and consequently the ability to create and maintain a specific social reality, men also, through threats or use of slander and violence, have the power to remove professional women from the public space (El-Saadawi, 1986, 1999; Goodwin, 2003). Coincidentally, this male tactic to keep women from threatening their

male dominated and protected status quo serves as fuel for tensions in the gender and space battle, inciting women who want and have had a taste of economic independence in the public space to take up the battle cry and resist, with disregard to any potential personal risk, the pressure to return to the private space.

### ***Education***

The Jordanian village of Samma provides a unique glimpse into the division of space within the educational sphere in Jordanian society and the effects of that division on the social realities of each gender. While Samma is only one village out of almost a thousand villages in Jordan, its make-up makes it very similar to all the other villages and thus a good example of an average Jordanian community. Within this village of three hundred inhabitants, the educational infrastructure offers its children six schools, three for each gender and spanning the educational levels from primary to high school (Sonbol, 2003). Because both boys and girls have equal access to education, expectations for equal educational successes of and futures for boys and girls persist; however, records from the village show that only male graduates of Samma schools have gone on to achieve university degrees and careers inside the village, in cities, and even abroad. The village records show no evidence of female graduates making similar personal advances, and while the records do not give a reason for the absence of female advancement, the most likely circumstance involves the probable marriage and subsequent childbearing of the female graduates, rendering them too preoccupied with domestic duties to continue their education or work towards a career. Even more telling, however, is the absence of any mention of the female workers in the village, from the employees of the pre- and

postnatal care facilities to the female teachers who staff the village's girls schools, leading to the perception that although boys and girls have equal access to education, only boys go on to use their education in the public space while girls, after receiving their education, either retire immediately to the private space or transfer their education into service oriented careers, as teachers, for example, and have their presence in the public space ignored and their work deemed unworthy of attention (Sonbol, 2003).

The Samma example exposes the core of the educational effects of the relationship between gender and space, boundaries, and power. Moreover, the relationship between the four concepts and the educational system provides an answer to the question of why, if girls and boys have equal access to education, men and women are not equally represented in the professional world. In Jordan, for instance, improving educational standards and opportunities, providing greater access to and desire for education for girls and women, and increasing the number of educated women within the work force are three of the main goals of the educational system. In fact, advances within the Jordanian educational system place Jordan in the highest ranks of literacy and well-equipped schools in the Middle East (Sonbol, 2003). At this point, however, the concepts of gender, space, and boundaries enter the picture. Because the genderized space divisions mandate that males and females, even as children in schools, do not co-mingle, the infrastructure of the school system must accommodate that mandate, making separate school systems for males and for females. More than just separating the physical space between males and females, the division of space in the educational system also extends into a more theoretical separation by providing different curriculums to male and female schools and by maintaining distinct graduate expectations for males and females (Sonbol,

2003). Because it encourages male students to evolve into active participants in the economy but places little merit on the educational or professional advancement of female students, the educational system, despite its aforementioned goals, succumbs to the prevailing gender assumptions and supports the allocation of space between the public, male space and the private, female space. Moreover, by providing different curriculum and expectations to male and female students, the educational system works to maintain the boundaries between the spaces, failing to give women the tools that might enable them to enter into and prosper socially and economically in the public space.

Genderized space allocation and boundary maintenance further affects the educational system in Jordan, providing a potentially insurmountable obstacle to the rights of and need for educational advancement of girls and women. Amira El-Azhary Sonbol (2003) argues that “without a change in social attitudes and reciprocal changes in Jordan’s gendered laws that these attitudes extend and continue to strengthen, the results from women’s education or other forms of investments in women’s development will have but little impact on generating greater gender equality, human rights, or participation of women in economic, political, and intellectual life” (p. 3). Thus, the allocation of space that places men and women in separate spaces and the attitudes that encourage such lasting and fierce protection of the boundaries between the spaces eliminate society’s acceptance of women’s development into active citizens. Even institutional efforts to improve the status and situation of women in Jordan prohibit women from crossing the boundaries, physical and intellectual, from the private space into the public space, thereby exposing the level of the social indoctrination of the validity of genderized space allocation and the unwillingness of the power holders,

through the perception that education is a potentially dangerous tool women might use to threaten the established boundaries, to give women the ability to develop into educated and participatory citizens.

## ***Religion***

Jordan is an Islamic nation; not only is Islam the prominent religion of the Jordanian population, Islam also serves as the official basis for legal and political decisions and shapes and controls social behavior and cultural and traditional mores. Consequently, adding religion to the mix of genderized spatial allocation, boundary maintenance, and power only enhances the understanding of gender and space relations in Jordan. The nature of the Islamic religion commands and justifies the strong influence Islam has on Jordanian society; more than just a matter of faith, Islam is a way of life and a religion of community that influences its followers to hold each other accountable to certain values, expectations, and behavior. As members of a community of religion that has, over centuries, created specific cultural and traditional mores and expectations, individuals more willingly consider the consciousness of the community as a whole instead of their opinion as individuals when making decisions and deciding whether an act or behavior is right or wrong (Abdalati, 1975). However, highlighting the role of religion in Jordanian society should not open the door for arguments over religious understandings and applications; rather, any real, potential, suspected, or non-existent deviations from religious "truths" have no role in the examination of gender, space, boundaries, and power. The fact that enough members of the community subscribe to such similar cultural and traditional mores that the entire community feels compelled to

comply by those same mores as their basis for separating right from wrong and defining acceptable and unacceptable behaviors holds much more importance to and relevance for the exploration of the relationships between gender and space, boundaries, and power than a debate over the theological accuracy of any particular religious practices.

The position, itself, of Islam as the legally assigned, or protected, religion of Jordan adds an additional dimension to the explanation and understanding of spatial divisions and insight into some of the different elements that factor into the process of finding the line of demarcation between the public and private spaces. In other words, the government legitimization and the public support of the "culture of Islam" as a legal and social basis for differentiating between the acceptable and unacceptable shed light not only on the factors that make an idea or territory part of either the public or the private space but also on the intangibility of the boundaries between public and private spaces. Furthermore, the ways in which religion divides the space it controls supports the notion of genderized space and bolsters the premise that men are the primary occupants of the public space, highlighting the convictions and efforts men and the majority of society take to contain women within the private space.

In its efforts to legitimate Islam as a cultural determinant, the government of Jordan delegates a portion of its legislative, executive, and judicial responsibilities to the religious sector of society, thereby giving religion a platform from which to control and divide space. Because the government actively gives and supports the role of religion in the legal system, the population of Jordan, regardless of the intensity of feelings toward obeying religious tenets, must, through legal obligation that leaves little room for

dissent, accept the values, rulings, and status quo demanded by the religious sector (Amawi, 2000; Joseph, 2000; Sonbol, 2003).

One of the most prominent legal roles given to Islam by the Jordanian government and consequently influencing space allocation, boundaries, power, and gender relations involves the personal status law, known in Jordan as the Jordanian Family Rights Law. According to the government of Jordan, the personal status law falls under the jurisdiction of the religious court system in which religious scholars, leaders, and theological study, including the *shari'a*, the *Sunna*, and the *qiyas*, determine the tenets of laws that relate to a variety of familial and personal issues and the possible consequences for defiling any part of the laws. For example, the personal status laws define a marriage as the ownership of the husband over his wife, stating that “she is legally his to establish a family and procreate,” and require a woman to have a guardian in order to marry; if she does marry without the permission of her guardian, her family or the court system can declare her marriage null and void (Amawi, 2000, p. 169). Hence, the personal status laws support the notion that women “lack the ability to make free choices and, thus, are not to be trusted” (Amawi, 2000, p. 170). The personal status laws additionally stipulate the nature of the relationship between husbands and wives, requiring husbands to treat their wives kindly and wives to act in complete obedience to their husbands. Accordingly, without their husbands’ permission, wives cannot work, apply for passports, or travel; should wives disobey their husbands in these regards, the personal status laws grant husbands permission to divorce their wives and prohibit wives from receiving alimony (Amawi, 2000). While the personal status laws give wives the right to divorce their husbands in situations of extended absences or insufficient financial

support, women rarely know their rights and face the risk of dishonoring their families if they choose to employ the personal status laws to their benefit (Amawi, 2000). Personal status laws such as the laws mentioned above extend into many more areas of social and relational life in Jordan, each shaping the gender and spatial dynamics in Jordan by sharing the common denominator of suppressing the rights of women in favor of those of men. Furthermore, because the personal status laws fall under the umbrella of the religious sphere, religious interpretations and legal decisions become vehicles for space allocation and strict boundary maintenance, further enhancing gender tensions and hindering possibilities of space-sharing between genders.

The role of Islam in space allocation and boundary maintenance extends beyond its control over personal status issues. As mentioned in chapter two, Islamic influences have tremendous power over assumptions of acceptable and unacceptable behavior and over characterizations of gender traits and capabilities. Because Jordan houses believers of various levels and types of religious interpretations, the nature and strictness of the Islamic influences have the potential to fluctuate according to the religious tendencies of those in power positions. At the present, conservative and fundamentalist interpretations of Islam exert the most control over the social order, led primarily by the Muslim Brotherhood, a religious and political organization intent on creating a wholly Islamic society, untainted by Western and secular influences (Goodwin, 2003). According to the breakdown of space, boundaries, and power, because the Muslim Brotherhood and their form of conservative/fundamentalist Islam employ the most authority over Jordanian society, the Muslim Brotherhood and fundamentalist Muslims are the power holders and consequently, the owners of the public space. Even King Abdullah of Jordan relents,

under pressure from the Muslim Brotherhood and other fundamentalist Muslims in the Parliament and in the public, on his some of desires for social reform and equality (Goodwin, 2003).

The prevailing assumption in Jordan is that the “fundamentalists have penetrated numerous Jordanian institutions, and are making a profound change in the structure of [Jordanian] society. Politically, they may appear compromising, but their power base is not; they are becoming more and more radical. The movement works against any Muslim who challenges its authority” (Goodwin, 2003, p. 261). According to this assumption, the fundamentalist Muslims, especially the Muslim Brotherhood, achieve power and control by calling into question the faith of anyone who disagrees with them (Goodwin, 2003). Zuleikha Abu Risha, a leading female activist against the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood, addresses this tactic, highlighting the threats she receives from the fundamentalist Muslims in response to her fight against the segregation and oppression inherent in the fundamentalist Islamic interpretations:

My former husband...says it is my own fault that I am threatened, I should not be writing against Islam...I am not against Islam. It is part of my identity, but it is also time that educated women read the Koran for themselves and make their own interpretations of it, not live with the misinterpretations of Islam that go against their rights, which is happening so much now (Goodwin, 2003, p. 265).

Risha’s opinion of the importance of self-interpretation of Islam sheds light onto the reasons behind the positions held and supported by the Muslim Brotherhood and other fundamentalist Muslim groups. As Risha asserts, “the Islamists want to change our modern society to what they refer to as ‘pure’ Islam...They want the country to be ruled completely by *Shariah* law. And they want to return the woman to the *harem*, where she will have a very restricted role in life –sitting at home and taking care of the children and

her husband. She is to have a limited education, and no role in political or economic life. She is simply to obey the man” (Goodwin, 2003, p. 265). In this way, the Muslim Brotherhood, to protect their control of and power over society, including the ability to shape the social reality, allocate space, and maintain boundaries, must enforce the genderized division of space that keeps genders separated, further internalizes the subordination of women and the superiority of men, and perpetuates the gender assumptions that justify the separation and unequal treatment, politically, economically, and socially, of genders.

The ability of the Muslim Brotherhood to promote and maintain genderized spatial allocation and boundaries leads directly to the indoctrination of society and the tendency of both male and female genders to cyclically support and impose the separation of space into public, male spaces and private, female spaces. By using instruments such as threats, fear, violence, and religious fervor, the Muslim Brotherhood solidifies its following, especially among, but not limited to, the undereducated and otherwise disenfranchised members of the community (Goodwin, 2003; Sonbol, 2003). Moreover, by highlighting the portions of the *Qur'an*, the *Sunna*, and the *Shari'a* that support gender inequality and separation in an effort to connect the presence of women in public spaces with sin and the superior role of men with divine will, the Muslim Brotherhood, in effect, institutes a band-wagon ideology in which the desire to not appear sinful or against God supercedes the validity of self-education and -interpretation of religious mores and “truths” (Goodwin, 2003). The growing popularity of the Muslim Brotherhood’s conservative interpretation of Islam throughout Jordanian society robs women of their right to visibility and of the voice necessary to combat their increasing

invisibility; in this way, the expanding role of Islamic conservatism in Jordan encourages and fortifies the notion that women who cross boundaries are active trespassers into male spaces, taking on the role of enemy aggressors in the battle between the male and female genders.

## ***Culture***

One of the most striking elements of Jordanian culture, honor, addresses the non-territorial nature of space allocation and boundaries. As discussed in chapter two, honor is primarily a matter of self- and public-perception; in fact, an indisputably unblemished self- and public-perception is especially important to the male psyche but entirely dependent upon the perception of the absolute purity of the female. In Jordanian society, the concept of honor is so important that, both legally and psychologically, honor works as one of the most influential driving forces involved in allocating space along gender lines and also in making the boundaries between the spaces veritable battle lines. Any actual or assumed breach of honor implies an attempted or actual trespassing of boundaries by women from their space into the male's space; women know they are enemies, trespassing into male space because men respond aggressively, with the violent repression acceptable against the encroachment of any threat to their space and social reality (Amawi, 2000; Joseph, 2000; Khouri, 2003; Goodwin, 2003; Sonbol, 2003).

Although the concept of honor is so tightly connected to the idea of space, boundaries, and power, the abstractness of honor adds to the difficulty in labeling boundaries. As Mernissi (1987) points out, space is more a matter of society and identity

than territory, and this is exactly the case when the issues of space and honor are combined. Because of the legal structure in Jordan, influenced by and co-existing with the social norms and gender assumptions, men, whenever they feel threatened by women, can throw down an accusation of dishonor; consequently, society and the legal system rewards the men for the acts of retribution necessary to regain the honor of themselves or their families (Amawi, 2000; Goodwin, 2003; Khouri, 2003; Sonbol, 2003). Through their ability to imprison women in the private space by using weapons of fear and violence, arbitrarily accusing and punishing women, men obscure the boundaries between the spaces, moving the boundaries to suit and protect the power of the male gender and the assumed sanctity of the public space. In this way, women live in constant fear of trespassing across boundaries they often cannot even see, further indoctrinated with the notion that as women, they are not entitled to the rights of citizenship, their lives depend upon maintaining the boundaries between public and private spaces, and men, inhabitants of the public space, control both the boundaries between the spaces and the behavior of women within their own space (Goodwin, 2003; Khouri, 2003; Sonbol, 2003).

Further examination of the role honor plays in Jordanian society sheds more light onto the relationship between honor and genderized space, boundaries, and power. As mentioned, violent retribution is the most acceptable way to curtail honor breaches and regain honor after a supposed breach. The violent acts span the spectrum from domestic verbal and physical abuse to incest and rape and, finally, to murder. As El-Saadawi (1994) laments in her book, The Innocence of the Devil,

Honour mean[s] chastity, and chastity [is] more valued than land. The men inherited in a line from father to son. No one...dare[s] as much as to touch someone else's honour, be he a spirit, or a genie with powers above those of ordinary men. The stigma of dishonour, of losing one's

honour, could only be washed off by blood...For honour meant the honour of the male, even if the proof of it was in the body of the female (pp. 43-44).

Thus, because of the male position of power and control, violent acts against women are easily glossed over as acceptable and necessary acts of maintaining the social order and gender hierarchy.

In Jordan, for instance, spatial divisions between the male and female genders are such that a woman is not permitted even to talk to a man unless he is a direct member of her family. This rule has its foundation in cultural ideology but is justified through the religious interpretations society uses to shape much of its gender assumptions and interactions. According to this unspoken but well understood rule, women who speak to or in any way interact with men outside their familial bonds threaten the honor of their family and thus risk punishment from the male members of their families, punishment intended to reclaim the honor tarnished by the acts of the women and also to deter other women from making the same mistakes (Khouri, 2003; Sonbol, 2003). Moreover, the legal system in Jordan defers to the rights of fathers and brothers over their wives, daughters, or sisters, perpetuating the notion that females “belong to [their] male relatives, beginning with the father,” thus permitting men to deal with women as they see fit without fear of legal ramifications (Amawi, 2000; Sonbol, 2003, p. 193). Women tend to accept this relationship not only because of the potential for physical suffering and death but also because

The relationship between a father and a daughter is build on strict respect and authority, deep pride and love, and fear of the father’s authority ...it is the mother who raises the children, and the father is there to protect and financially support and provide for the family, but he also holds the power and responsibility for discipline. ‘The love for and the fear of the father becomes mixed together in the child’s self. The youngster learns

early in life to obey the father's orders without questioning them and looks at [her] father as the mighty giant who rules unchallenged in the family's world' (Sonbol, 2003, p. 134).

The nature of the relationship between fathers and daughters, nurtured from childhood on, conditions women to accept, regardless of any sense of fairness or unfairness, the power men hold in maintaining the boundaries between male and female spaces.

As suggested above, the legal system in Jordan supports and encourages this element of spatial allocation and boundary maintenance and acknowledges and enforces the male ownership of power. Although the Jordanian monarchy has long condemned the concept of honor crimes and honor killing, the monarchy continues to unsuccessfully petition the Jordanian Parliament to change the laws that discriminate against women (Goodwin, 2003; Sonbol, 2003). Portions of the parliamentary body support changes in the legal system with regard to honor crimes, but a significant conservative force "[refuse] any suggestion that honor crime laws be abolished or changed...justifi[ng] their stance on the basis of protecting the morals of Jordanian society (Sonbol, 2003, p. 191). Sonbol (2003) suggests that the government no longer pursues the matter of honor crime laws because of economic and political pressures, positing that "in such situations [of economic or political difficulties], sacrificing women's rights has always been an element of negotiation to achieve greater leverage and hegemony" (191).

Regardless of the reason behind the government's choices and actions, the Jordanian Penal Code prescribed by the government provides both leniency to and loopholes for the perpetrators of honor crimes. Sonbol (2003) summarizes three of the specific laws within the Penal Code that spell out the loopholes and penchant for leniency (p. 193):

◆ Law 340a exempts from punishment a perpetrator who discovers his wife, or one of his female relatives, committing adultery with another person, and kills, injures, or harms one or both of them: “A person who surprises (*yufagi*) his wife or any of his *maharim* (those whose degree of relationship to him would not allow a marriage between them, for example sister or daughter or niece) while committing adultery (*zina*) with another person and he killed them or wounded them or harmed them both or one of the, benefits from this legitimising excuse (*‘uthr muhallil*).

◆ Law 340b actually exempts a perpetrator of an honor crime from punishment. Anyone –in every case a male– who commits a murder, physical injury, or another form of harm when he discovers his daughter, wife, sister, or other relative with another man in an illegitimate act can receive a reduced sentence. Law 340b “reduces the sentence of a person who murders, wounds, or harms...if he were to surprise his wife, or one of his *usul* [consanguine relatives] or *furu* ‘ or his siblings with a man in an illegal situation.”

◆ Law 98 allows for the reduction of the sentence received by an individual for a crime he committed in anger because of a wrongful act of great gravity committed by the victim.

The terminology of the three laws highlights some interesting details. Notice, for example, the references to only male perpetrators; apparently, a woman catching her husband in an act of adultery and reacting in like manner is not accorded the same legal excuse and must bear the full consequences of the crime of murder or attempted murder. In addition, in failing to develop the concept of “surprise,” the law grants wide leeway in the term’s definition, providing perpetrators with the opportunity to best benefit from the legal loopholes. Furthermore, by not specifying the type of proof necessary to support of evidence of surprise, men escape the Qu’ranic mandate that proof of wrong-doing, adultery, for example, lies in the actual witnessing of the act by four men or eight women (Sonbol, 2003). Moreover, the insufficient definition of terms like “illegal situation” leaves room for such broad interpretations and applications that “even a chance meeting between a man and a woman [can] be interpreted as [an illegal situation]” (Sonbol, 2003,

p. 194). Even the placement of the honor crime laws within the Jordan Penal Code is indicative of the general legal opinion of honor crimes, as the laws are placed in the same category as those laws concerning crimes of home- and self-defense. In fact, to merit leniency from the court, honor crimes require less proof than crimes of self-defense. This discrepancy between honor crimes and self-defense crimes leads to the most striking element in Law 98 which states that emotion is an acceptable defense for committing a crime of honor; in other words, the *feeling* of being slighted or of having one's honor defiled, the passion and anger that defilement or supposed defilement incurs, is enough of a provocation to excuse a murder (Sonbol, 2003). The underlying theme throughout this overview of the three main legal loopholes concerning the punishment for honor crimes is that the system protects the perpetrators while turning the victim of the honor crime into a criminal herself. It is her presence in the "illegal activity," not her participation, that damages the honor of the man and/or her family; therefore, through her mere existence as a woman, she essentially "asks for" the violent retribution of the men in her family.

Men use their power and the power given them by the legal system to extend the use of honor crimes into other parts of their lives beyond their specific honor. Throughout Jordanian society, many instances of violence against women, labeled as "honor crimes," are in fact motivated by the woman's potential claims to inheritance and property; in other words, a man may kill a woman or at least cast enough suspicion on her to make her death imminent for a variety of reasons, knowing that by labeling the crime against the woman as a crime of honor, the legal and social systems in Jordan will protect him from any significant legal punishment or social stigmatization (Amawi, 2000;

Goodwin, 2003; Sonbol, 2003). Consequently, a woman's behavior in the public space is not a necessary ingredient for becoming the victim of an honor crime, and merely refraining from even the most potentially suspect behavior does not remove the danger of familial violence. Ruth Lister (1997) points out that "even though [women] are as likely to encounter violence in the private as in the public sphere, women's fear of male violence constrains their freedom in the latter;" in fact, "an atmosphere of violence in the public sphere...can be reflected in particularly brutal violence in the private" (p. 128). In this way, the perpetuation and acceptance of honor crimes further relegates women to the private space and elicits even more fear in women of the risks involved in trespassing across their private space boundaries or in anyway upsetting familial relationships because the men who punish them for their supposed transgressions into the public space and even within the private space are the very men, their fathers and brothers, on whom they depend for economic survival (Sonbol, 2003).

Moreover, the ability of men to threaten women with honor crimes so arbitrarily further reduces the ability of women to even move about in, let alone visit or live in, the public space. Women must "move through" territorial public spaces when traveling, going to schools or doctors, and in individual cases, tending to the economic needs of their families; however, men who find this offensive or intrusive to their way of life have the right, protected by the aforementioned legal loopholes, to aggressively taunt or attack these women and even to remove, momentarily or permanently, the women from the situation (Khouri, 2003; Sonbol, 2003). Women so internalize this perspective that often, when they must interact within the public space, they do so with an apology for their

presence instead of asserting their right to co-mingle within the space. Mernissi (1987) provides a telling example of the strength of this internalization:

A female Palestinian militant was performing her task as a sentinel. She was posted in a deserted spot a few yards away from the camp, her machine-gun on her shoulder, when a Lebanese civilian who noticed her came by to make a proposition. When the woman rejected his advances with indignant words and gestures, the man got angry and said, 'How do you want me to believe that a woman standing alone in the street the whole night has any honour?' The woman is said to have turned her gun towards her suitor and told him, 'I am here in the street soiling my honour to defend yours because you are unable to do it yourself.' In spite of its revolutionary setting, the anecdote reveals that the female militant shares with the male civilian the belief that her being alone in the street is dishonourable. Her reflex was to justify her presence in the male space, not to claim her right to be there (145).

Although Jordan is the focus of this discussion, the above example nonetheless makes a point relevant to Jordanian society. Honor is a concept that ties genders into specific roles and places; it helps determine and depends on genderized space allocation and serves as one of the most widespread and unifying battle calls in the conflictual relationship between men and women. Even as political, economic, and social situations change to permit and in some cases, demand the presence of women in public spaces, the perception of honor and the ways it is breached are so great that even when a woman moves into the public space to perform a task for the good of her family, her religion, or her country, she is, regardless, dishonoring herself and her family.

Of course all Jordanians do not participate in or condone honor crimes. However, regardless of individual's personal opinion of honor crimes, the important fact is that honor and honor crimes are realities in Jordanian society, prevalent enough to shape space allocation and boundary placement. The continued prevalence of honor and honor crimes in Jordanian society also gives telling insight into the power holders of Jordanian

society and consequently the depth of the male gender's ownership of the public space, the space of control and power. Moreover, the mere presence of honor crimes in even a small portion of society, let alone a larger portion of society, incorporating educational and economic differences, creates and sustains a relationship of inequality and hostility between genders.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Conclusion**

A diversity of facets in the relationships between gender and space in Jordan come to light throughout this study, highlighting foremost the contentious nature running throughout the relationships between men and women as each gender attempts to shape, expand, and solidify the accepted gender roles and realms of influence within society. Moreover, the study also exposes the power of issues like assumption, perception, reputation, and religious or cultural fervor in relation to discerning whether men and women can reside in or at least share the same space or whether the tensions between the genders are so great that men and women are foes who cannot peacefully cross the boundaries between spaces. For further insight into this topic of genderized space allocation, boundary maintenance, and power distribution in Jordan, the examination of the relationships between gender and space through the political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural lenses of Jordanian society offers documentation, in powerful terms and images, of the ways each element of society –political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural– supports the idea of fluidity in the boundaries between genderized public and private spaces but, paradoxically, provides even more efficient tools for increasing the rigidity and divisiveness of those same boundaries. Consequently, genders in Jordan remain divided between public and private spaces –a social reality shaped, supported, and enhanced by the interaction between both qualitative, emotion-based elements and tangible, fact-based elements.

The first five chapters of this study provide evidence of the powerful role emotion-based elements play in understanding, shaping, and perpetuating gender tensions and genderized space allocation, boundary maintenance, and power distribution in Jordan. For instance, chapter four discusses common assumptions of gender characteristics, including assumptions that are supportive of the strengths and capabilities of each gender and also assumptions that are suspicious of and hostile to each gender. In turn, chapters one and three provide insight into the prevalence and acceptance of the most hostile and derogatory assumptions, explaining the ability of individuals or groups who own the space of power and of political, social, and civil resources to successfully demand the widespread acceptance of their own ideology and set of rules and thereby exclude and alienate any individual or group choosing to disagree or support a different ideology and set of rules. In the case of Jordan, the powerholders tend to enforce an ideology and set of rules that encourage fear and distrust, directing Jordan's social reality towards divisiveness and inequality. The notion offered in chapters one and three extends into the discussion of spatial characteristics provided in chapter five, laying a foundation for recognizing the relationship between gender assumptions and space separation, highlighting the direct correlation between the most prevalent gender assumptions and the division of space into genderized public and private domains. In this way, the study outlines a variety of emotion-based factors important in Jordanian society and also provides evidence supporting the validity and influence of those factors in the study and understanding of gender relations and space allocation in Jordan.

Chapter six addresses the more tangible, fact-based elements of the discussion of gender and space in Jordan but also details the ways these fact-based elements are

intrinsically connected to the qualitative factors listed throughout the first five chapters. By highlighting some of the significant political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural policies and environments in Jordan, the study provides clear, irrefutable evidence of the ways in which each element, while setting forth words and even actions supportive of gender equality and general social development, encourages genderized spatial divisions that perpetuate many of the prevailing distrustful and fearful assumptions of gender. In other words, while each aspect contains evidence of movement toward the space-sharing and boundary crossing that are inherent with a maturing social consciousness and perception of theories of belonging, citizenship, and gender, each aspect also contains more visible evidence of behaviors and ideologies that rage fiercely against any form of gender interaction in the public space. The aspects thus share a similarity in that each aspect incorporates words of inclusion and equality into its policies, laws, and interpretations; however, the aspects also share a striking difference between the letter of the law, so to speak, and the reality of implementation. The good will offered in words does not, consequently, walk hand in hand with good will in actions, and each aspect –political, economic, educational, religious, and cultural–steadily perpetuates genderized spatial division and gender tensions. Connecting this reality with the previous section of the study shows how the emotion-based elements can supercede or at least impair legal and personal attempts toward dismantling or weakening the boundaries dividing spaces and genders.

Chapter five also describes the levels to which the most vocal portions of Jordanian society go to enforce genderized space allocation, strict boundary maintenance, and their own hold on power and the rights to decision-making. The actions, from legal

loopholes and religious interpretations to emotional and physical violence and destruction, described in chapter five as well as the prominent gender assumptions outlined in chapter four are neither the actions nor attitudes normally taken towards friends, and are certainly not conducive for relationships of equality between genders. Rather, the elements, including laws, assumptions, and political, economic, religious, and cultural pressures, work to keep the two genders separate, unequal, and consequently foes. Moreover, even when an element of the political, economic, educational, religious, or cultural sphere supports the freedom of thought, movement, or even existence of women, an additional element or even that element, itself, often contains loopholes reinforcing the unequal distribution of rights. In a sense, these loopholes are methods of nonviolent warfare against trespassing, methods intended to maintain the status quo by ensuring, either through overt law or subvert encouragement, that women will not, indeed cannot, cross the boundaries out of private spaces. In this way, attempts by women to cross over boundaries into public spaces often involve the breaking of political, social, or religious laws; consequently, women are treated as the enemy, not only for breaking cultural laws by aggressively trespassing into space that does not belong to them but also for breaking and challenging Jordan's legal laws and establishment as well (Mernissi, 1987; Sonbol, 2003).

Moreover, in their struggle to protect, from the trespassing of women, the sanctity of their space, including their reputations and roles as the heads of their households, men often employ battle tactics that obscure the boundaries and even eliminate any leeway between the public and private spaces, denying women even the semblance of a no-man's-land from which to launch the necessary missions they need to make into public

spaces for their families' economic, educational, and medical well-being. In this way, men further relegate women to private spaces, even at the detriment to their families and to the women's abilities to care for their families.

This exclusion from public spaces, with no space designated for respite or for encouraging communication and subsequently cooperation between genders, thus denies women the rights and resources of citizenship, leaving women to face uncertain futures in relation to their own presence within and membership in their own community. "Women should not have to face such obstacles and make such sacrifices in their personal lives in order to be full...citizens," and neither should men feel such pressure to make the allocation of space and maintenance of boundaries such an either-or issue (Lister, 1997, p. 138). However, without a rearticulation of gender assumptions and spatial division that is powerful enough to move the discussion from its focus on difference and power to belonging and rights, this indoctrination that enforces the acceptance of spatial divisions and strict boundary maintenance will easily and aggressively continue shaping and directing attitudes and behaviors in Jordanian society. In conjunction with the concepts of citizenship and belonging, a rearticulation suited to combat the indoctrination augments the emotion-based factors of relationships, empathy, and passion, initially dividing genders and space, to instill attitudes of shared experience and community, thereby revising the perceptions of gender and public and private spaces into images of two autonomous groups and spaces, equal in relevance and importance. In this way, the public and private spaces can interact in a mutually interdependent manner that protects each space from being overpowered, overshadowed, or in any way rendered invisible by the inhabitants or supported policies and behaviors of the individuals in the other space.

Without this type of rearticulation of gender assumptions and spatial divisions and boundaries, however, the power for creating the social reality in Jordan remains in the hands of those who desire genderized space allocation and boundary maintenance rigid enough to serve as veritable war zones between the genders (Tucker, 1993).

Unfortunately, the solutions to rearticulating gender assumptions and spatial divisions and to loosening the constraints on the boundaries between public and private spaces, freeing the movement, whether physical or theoretical, of women out of their assigned private space and allowing easier and more accepted visitation or even residence in the public space, are only theoretically and semantically simple. The application of those solutions in Jordan is neither simple nor necessarily possible. For instance, the gender assumptions and acceptance of spatial allocations, boundary maintenance, and consequential delegation of power are all generationally ingrained into the social, political, and religious fabric of Jordanian society; thus, any social change or alliance between genders involves a total change in the thought-processes and self-perceptions of the individuals within Jordanian society. However, history abounds with examples of assumed truths and behaviors changing and progressing through political, social, or economic pressures, even if the truths and behaviors are so indoctrinated and normal, impressed upon generation after generation, that to change them entails incredible upheaval in the status quo, even to the point of total loss of identity. Coincidentally, as this study illustrates, the indoctrinated and accepted concepts of gender and genderized space allocation, boundary maintenance, and power delegation profoundly influence individual and gender identities in Jordan; thus, changing the concepts to allow for an actual gender-blind allocation of space, citizenship rights, and power, not to mention the

elimination of boundaries between spaces and genders does require the complete reevaluation and restructuring of individual and gender identities. The likelihood of power-holders relinquishing their power and control, either to share power or submit to the rule of another individual or group, in order to permit the reevaluation and restructuring of identities remains low; therefore, the propensity for battle between those with and those without power remains a constant reality and obstacle to creating a society based on gender-blind equality and citizenship.

Although chapters one and three emphasize the significant role adherence to identity plays in the struggle over space allocation and belonging, some of the examples in chapter five reveal the existence of a portion of society willing to relinquish the identity set upon them through generations of indoctrination. In this way, the study supports the notion that while the relationships between men and women in Jordan resemble relationships of enemies more than relationships of friends, some women and men in Jordan continue striving, in the face of myriad obstacles, to realign the boundary markers between the public and the private, seeking a fluidity in the boundaries that matches their own potential to live as active and engaged human beings without the constraints of any other social reality. Disregarding concern over “what...people [will] think,” these individuals, “scrutinized and judged by [their] communit[ies], are truly “the intruder[s] into history...the pioneer[s],” venturing across the lines of their own defenses, risking everything –family, identity, even life– to forge, in the midst of a warzone, the first step towards establishing a truce: a no-man’s land (Joseph, 1999, p. 48). Accordingly, the existence of these pioneers, each seeking to make their voices heard and their presence visible, leaves the door open for further investigation into the study of

gender and space in Jordan, offering a foundation from which to continue charting and revealing any development in gender relations and consequential realignment in spatial boundaries in Jordanian society for the purposes of acknowledging the importance and potential influence of this silenced and ignored portion of Jordan's population and also as a means to better understand the roles space and gender play in Middle Eastern society.

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