RECONCEPTUALIZING HUMAN SECURITY: A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

A Thesis
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ABSTRACT

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(May 2012)

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Critics of the human security literature claim that current definitions and conceptions of human security are too vague to be useful. There is some truth to the critiques; in an effort to fill the gaps in the security literature, this paper presents a feminist-based definition of human security and tests its relevance through a case study of the political, social and economic securities of women in Jordan. The study revealed that women in Jordan—a country known for its stability in a tumultuous region—still face a number of threats each day. Most notably, political and social insecurities stem from economic insecurity. Within Jordan, these findings suggest that nongovernmental agencies and women's organizations should channel funding and efforts into economic enhancement programs. Internationally, policymakers should be aware of hidden insecurities within seemingly secure states. Furthermore, human security efforts bolster national security efforts and should be incorporated into the broader spectrum of security studies.

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CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The debate about what constitutes security rages among political scientists, development scholars, sociologists, security scholars and public health administrators. Even with the plethora of literature related to human security, no widely accepted definition and measurement of the concept exists. Feminists have led the charge in heralding a human-centric conception of security; but there is a definite silence in the field regarding defining and measuring the term. This paper strives to fill that silence.

Why would a feminist based definition be any different, much less better, than the current definitions of human security? I argue that the feminist devotion to upending inequality across all societal dimensions is especially salient when measuring and observing imbalances in security. I present the literature on how security has evolved, especially in the last thirty years, and highlight the contributions feminists have made to security studies. Then, I examine four current definitions of and methodologies for measuring human security. When these current constructs are scrutinized under a feminist lens, inherent flaws emerge.

Literature Review

Conventional conceptions of security focus on increasing military force and capacity while buttressing territorial boundaries in the name of state sovereignty. Realist scholars, confident in their Hobbesian appraisal of the world, criticize the concept of individual human security as recklessly shifting the priority from hard security to soft security (Fukuyama 1998; MacFarlane & Khong 2006; Walt 1998). They argue that the definition of security is, and always will be, monopolized by a fixation on war; thus, security can be understood only

as a state-level phenomenon. As Lawrence Freedman notes: "Once anything that generates anxiety or threatens the quality of life in some respect becomes labeled a 'security problem,' the field risks losing all focus" (1998, p. 53). Roland Paris (2001), too, complains that the concept is simply too vague; he aligns human security with sustainable development, in that "everyone is for it, but few people have a clear idea of what it means" (p. 88).

There is some truth to the criticism. Often, when scholars attempt to identify specific indicators of individual human security, their justifications seem arbitrary. These indicators either reflect the inherent biases of the researcher or are selected based on available data. The nature of human security is such that the recommendations for improving the security of individuals go hand in hand with policy formations. Thus, critics argue that certain threats are prioritized over others to bolster end goals of institutions or policymakers (Grayson 2008; Paris 2001). Or, as Robert Cox (1981) concludes, "theory is always for someone and for some purpose" (p. 128).

Conventional conceptions of security promote preserving the status quo of the state. Threats that disrupt the status quo (i.e. invasions, nuclear attack) are seen as the most volatile type of threat. However, Tickner (1992) highlights a flaw in the logic of upholding the status quo, the "hegemonic masculinity" underlying the structure of the international system: "Strength, power, autonomy, independence and rationality, all typically associated with men and masculinity, are characteristics we most value in those to whom we entrust the conduct of our foreign policy and the defense of our national interest" (p. 3). Thus, state-centric conceptions of security promote significant inequality by promoting the status quo and disregarding its negative effects on a large swath of the population.

Thus, proponents of human security argue that state-centric definitions of security are too limited and fail to address individual level insecurities that people experience daily. While a state may be secure from interstate conflict, particular populations within the state may still be at high levels of risk. For instance, the conception of security at a purely state level ignores the female experience of security. Cynthia Enloe (1989; 2007) has repeatedly revealed how militarism is inversely correlated with the well-being of women and other marginalized groups. Her work demonstrates that as states and societies become more militarized (i.e. increasing defense budgets, opening more military bases, relinquishing personal liberties in the name of national security) the well-being of their female population decreases. Defining security in a way that discounts half of the population is clearly inadequate.

Not only does a strict state-centric definition of security disregard the well-being of half of the population, but many scholars also argue that the separation of human security from state security is impossible. These scholars claim that in a rapidly globalizing world, the two spheres are not only intrinsically linked, they are mutually reinforcing (Etzioni, 2007; Reveron & Mahoney-Norris 2010). For example, the 2001 report of the Hart-Rudman Commission on U.S. National Security identifies education as a core precept of national security and, more importantly, aligns the promotion of human rights and basic material well-being as a valuable tool for combating world-wide violence (Alkire, 2003, p. 32). Analysts recognize that a comprehensive national security plan is contingent on the well-being of *individuals* in other states, not merely on the capacity of a foreign government. Thus, the need for an individually based definition of security is clear.

Feminist scholars have been among the most vehement supporters for the shift from state to human-centered security. They contend that continued emphasis on security as the promotion of military (masculine) might results in imbalanced power definitions for men and women. Men are seen as "the protectors" while women are relegated to the position of "the protected" (Hudson, 2005; Tickner, 1992). On the surface this may not seem like a matter of security. However, if men are valued more than women, widespread detrimental ramifications could result. For example, if a family has limited food supplies and males are privileged above females, young girls may go hungry while their brothers are adequately nourished (Vlachova & Biason 2005).

It is important to note that feminist security literature considers more than the differences between genders; societal differences between races, ethnicities and class groups result in different levels and kinds of threats for these groups. According to this approach, attempting to identify universal threats is futile—the population must be disaggregated and analyzed to achieve a clear, definitive picture of individual level security (Truong, Wieringa, & Chhachhi, 2006; Waylen, 1996). It is worth pointing out that a feminist approach is not synonymous with an "anti-male" approach. Feminist scholars recognize that gender includes men as well as women, and that not all men share a common social or class status (hooks 2000; Romaniuk & Wasylciw, 2010). Hence, in order to achieve a complete understanding of the various threats to all individuals within a society, we must analyze levels of human security along gender, class, and ethnic lines.

Defining Human Security

Of the myriad definitions and measurements of human security, four of the most useful are: The 1994 "Human Development Report," Alkire's (2003) "A Conceptual Framework for Human Security," King and Murray's (2000) "Rethinking Human Security" and Owen's (2008) "Measuring Human Security." Closely reading each work reveals their contributions to the field. However, through a feminist conceptualization of security, I will show where these definitions and measures are lacking.

The 1994 "Human Development Report" defines human security as: "safety from the constant threats of hunger, disease, crime and repression…[and] protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the pattern of our daily lives—whether in our homes, in our jobs, in our communities or in our environment" (United Nations Development Program [UNDP], 1994, p.3). According to this report, human security is universal, its components are interdependent, it is best ensured through prevention and it is people centered. A cornerstone of the human security paradigm, this conception of security removes the fixation on threats to a state's borders and gives prominence to the insecurities that arise in people's daily lives. The report also divides threats to human security into seven major categories: economic, food, health, community, political, environmental and personal.

The report concedes that "it is important to develop some operational indicators of human security," (UNDP, 1994, p. 3). However, because the scope of the report encompasses so many variables, it essentially becomes the jack of all policy trades and master of none. In fact, the most common critique of the 1994 report is that is too broad to be practical. The

arbitrary nature of the seven threat dimensions and an incoherent mechanism for measuring threats across these dimensions renders the report functionally inadequate (Alkire, 2003; Grayson, 2008; King & Murray, 2001). For example, when describing the economic component of human security, the report begins with a simple indicator: "Economic security requires an assured basic income" (UNDP, 1994, p. 25). Yet, instead of presenting a straightforward strategy for measuring this indicator and subsequently ensuring the protection of a "basic income," the report points to employment, the job market, industry, credit and loan systems and the degradation of communities as sources for economic threats. By the end of the discussion of each of the seven dimensions of threat, we find ourselves no closer to operationalizing human security than we did in the report's overview.

A slightly more concise definition of human security is found in "A Conceptual Framework for Human Security." Alkire (2003) posits that: "The objective of human security is to safeguard the vital core of all human lives from critical pervasive threats, in a way that is consistent with long-term human fulfillment" (p. 2). Disassembling this definition and examining its component parts offers a clearer understanding of the depth and breadth of this construction. There are five key terms in this definition: "safeguard," "vital core," "all human lives," "critical and pervasive threats" and "human fulfillment."

The term "safeguard" requires institutions to actively engage in the protection of their populations. With this, possible threats must be identified and proper preparations put in place to mitigate the impacts of crises. Institutionalizing the responsibility for protection encourages respect for human security objectives—thus, resources that are meant to be used in the implementation and continuation of these policies will not be redirected (Alkire, 2003).

However, safeguarding against threats does not mean that the focus is shifted to a threat based analysis; the primary referent remains the individual.

Alkire (2003) uses the term "vital core" to describe the scope of human security. Rather than covering every possible aspect of human living, the vital core concept implies security of fundamental basic human rights, capabilities and needs. "All human lives" emphasizes individuals as the foci of institutional activities. It is worth noting that this focus on the fundamental well-being of human lives does not imply or require institutions to adopt humanitarian motivations; it simply adjusts the emphasis of the security agenda from territorial integrity to the protection of the population.

As mentioned earlier, effectively protecting human lives requires institutions to identify and actively prepare for threats. "Critical" threats degrade the vital core of humans. "Pervasive" threats refer to large scale and/or reoccurring threats. The important point is that critical and pervasive threats are capable of robbing a large number of people of basic rights and capacities. Part of the human security agenda is successfully acknowledging, preparing and responding to direct and indirect (e.g. structural violence) threats.

Finally, "human fulfillment" addresses the sustainability of human welfare. Again, institutions are implicated in preserving the long-term good of the population. Effectively protecting the vital core of humans requires an institutional framework that considers both the current population as well as future generations.

While I consider Alkire's definition to be one of the most thoughtful and articulate embodiments of human security, Alkire (2003), like the authors of the "Human Development Report*,*" does not provide a concrete methodological framework for implementing her definition. Alkire (2003) proposes a qualitative analysis of "people's reflections, on the basis

of their own experience and knowledge, of their values and needs" (p. 24). Rather than proffering a how-to manual for policy makers, Alkire (2003) contends that identifying the "vital core" of people should be specific to a state and, once these values and needs are identified, the state should respond with appropriate procedures.

The 1994 "Human Development Report" and "A Conceptual Framework for Human Security" share two fundamental flaws. First, there is no rigorous methodology for assessing the current state of human security and so there is no way to gauge the effectiveness of the authors' recommendations. Second, both of these definitions imply universality in the experiences of all humans. While these analyses identify gender, ethnicity, and social class as factors to consider for human security, they do not prioritize these distinctions. As feminist scholars have repeatedly shown, if gender is not prioritized, women will fade into the margins (Enloe, 1989; Tickner, 1992). The same holds true for other non-privileged groups.

A human security study that does employ a rigorous methodology is King and Murray's (2000) "Rethinking Human Security." The authors define an "individual's human security as his or her expectation of years of life without experiencing the state of generalized poverty. Population security, then, is an aggregation of individuals' human security" (King & Murray, 2000, p. 592). Crucial to this definition of security is the consideration of future risks and the demarcation of a specific threshold between security and insecurity. King and Murray (2000) argue that distinguishable differences in life experiences exist depending on which side of this threshold a person falls. Defined as such, security depends heavily on the presence or absence of poverty. In this particular case, poverty refers to the deprivation of any basic capability (King & Murray, 2000).

King and Murray (2000) include five metrics in the measurement of generalized poverty: income, health, education, political freedom and democracy. Notably, no one metric carries more weight than the others; if an individual falls below a certain threshold in any one of the domains, he or she is said to be in a state of generalized poverty. Each domain is assigned one particular indicator. Income poverty is indicated by Gross National Product (GNP) per capita converted into purchasing power parity. Any person or group subsisting on less than $365 per capita per year is said to be in a state of absolute economic poverty. Health security is measured on a 0 (death) to 1 (full health) scale; any person below .25 on this scale is said to be in a state of generalized poverty. Education is measured by average years of schooling; fewer than "five or six years" indicates a state of generalized poverty (King & Murray, 2000, p. 601). Political freedom draws on the Freedom House measures of societal freedoms, while the Democracy domain is indicated by the right of an individual to vote in at least one election.

King and Murray (2000) use a complex statistical equation to compute likelihood of years outside of generalized poverty, based on the previously indicated domains.[1] For example, if a 30 year-old woman has a life expectancy of 30 additional years but only a 50 percent chance of living above the generalized poverty threshold, her individual human security score is 15 years. To determine the human security of an entire population, King and Murray (2000) find the average of the number of years of individual human security for everyone in a given population.

King and Murray's (2000) definition, while easily measured and observed, is too parsimonious and fails to consider security beyond the strict domains and indicators they identify. For example, it fails to consider perceived threats. It also fails to account for

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[1] For complete details of the statistical analysis see King and Murray (2000) p. 609.

structural biases that misrepresent the well-being of marginalized groups. For King and

Murray (2000), human security and its measurements can only be conceived of within "those

domains of well-being that have been important enough for human beings to fight over or to

put their lives or property at great risk" (p. 593). I argue that, because males have been and

continue to be the majority of the warriors and property holders[2], King and Murray's (2000)

justification requires rewording thus: "those domains of well-being that *men have deemed*

important enough to fight over or to put their property at risk." Failing to consider how the

chosen domains and indicators are pregnant with male dominated measures (i.e. right to vote

versus ability to vote) produces a superficial picture of human security. Additionally, King

and Murray's (2000) definition gives no consideration to qualitative measures of security and

insecurity that cannot be captured by purely quantitative analyses.

Owen's (2008) article, "Measuring Human Security," brings in some of the

qualitative data that King and Murray (2000) disregard. Owen (2008) defines human security

as: "the protection of the vital core of all human lives from critical and pervasive economic,

environmental, health, food, political and personal threats" (p. 53). It is obvious that Owen

(2008) based his definition on those proposed by Alkire (2003) and the 1994 "Human

Development Report." However, his analysis of human security differs in a few key ways.

Owen (2008) is the first to develop a methodology that "facilitates the collection,

organization, and spatial analysis of human security information using a Geographic

Information System (GIS)" (p. 53). Rather than relying on national statistics from various

organizations, Owen (2008) takes a subnational approach to data collection that uses spatial

references as the common denominator. First, threats are assessed by interviewing regional

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[2] See the 1995 "Human Development Report" for an in-depth comparison of male versus female property
holders. For a discussion of women in militaries see Enloe (2007) *Globalization and Militarism.*

experts in each of the six categories (i.e. economic, environmental, health, food, political and personal threats). This serves to filter the extensive list of threats down to those that are relevant to a specific region. Next, quantitative and qualitative data related to the determined threats must be collected (ideally by contacting the regional experts referenced earlier). Two key factors come into play here: the data must have a spatial component and must be available. Once the datasets for each threat are collected, they are organized in a GIS by their spatial reference. Finally, maps that reflect the specific threat and the severity of that threat are produced. Those areas with numerous severe threats are dubbed "hotspots" and reveal the areas with the greatest threats to human security.

Both intriguing and methodologically elegant, Owen's (2008) measurement is a fine starting place for merging the methodological rigor of King and Murray (2000) with the rich qualitative assessments of the 1994 "Human Development Report" and Alkire (2003). Still, Owen's approach falls short. His approach relies on a network of "local researchers, the NGO community, government ministries, and international organizations" (Owen, 2008, p. 55) to establish the severity of threats in a community. Owen does not specifically require experts who are sensitive to threats faced by women, threats faced by ethnic classes or threats arising from class imbalances. This is the common downfall of all four of these approaches. By failing to address the inherent power imbalances between men and women and across ethnic and class divides, researchers risk assessing threats *of* a population rather than threats *in* a population.

The 1995 "Human Security Report" examined the state of women in the world and found that in no society do women enjoy a greater level of human development than men (UNDP, 1995). This suggests that the individual experiences of women should take a central

position in the evaluation of security if the end goal is the improvement of the daily lives of most people. Thus, I propose a feminist-based approach to defining and measuring human security that foregrounds gender, ethnicity and class. Feminists have long decried the inadequacy of analyzing aggregate populations and drawing "comprehensive" conclusions that claim to reflect the people of the state. Feminist scholarship is born out of lived injustices; thus, feminists are sensitive to security differences based not only on gender, but on race, sexual orientation, ethnicity and class as well (Basch, 2004; Hudson, 2005).

A feminist based definition will provide the world not only with a more equitable framework for *practically applying* human security but also for *studying* human security. Feminist researchers demand an awareness of every aspect of the research process that is not found in other approaches. The feminist research ethic requires researchers to be acutely aware of the power of epistemology, boundaries and relationships (Ackerly & True, 2008). This critical self-reflection requires a constant appraisal of techniques and findings (Enloe, 1989). I criticize the current measurements of human security because they fail to meet the standards of the feminist research ethic; not one of the aforementioned methodologies questions the way researchers inquire about human security.

I propose the following feminist-based definition of human security: Human security ensures basic sustenance, existential protection and confidence in the stability of these basic guarantors of well-being by examining critical and pervasive threats to individuals across gender, race/ethnicity and class lines.

There are essentially three parts to this definition: what human security protects (basic guarantors of well-being), what threatens human security (critical and pervasive threats) and

how to examine human security within a society (individuals delineated by gender, race/ethnicity and class).

   "Ensuring basic sustenance" means that individuals have access to means of sustaining life and livelihood. In other words, individuals are guaranteed to have adequate food and clean drinking water. "Existential protection" means that individuals do not fear for their survival—whether in the public or the private sphere. These two concepts are mutually reinforcing; having access to food and water while still fearing for one's life is not adequate security. "Confidence in the stability of these guarantors" means that individuals cannot foresee that either their basic sustenance or existential protection will be drastically compromised due to inadequacies, biases or changes within the state system.

   To identify the threats to human security, I build on Alkire's (2003) definitions of critical and pervasive threats. To reiterate, critical threats threaten a person's basic capabilities and functions. A critical threat does not have to occur suddenly; what makes a threat "critical" is its depth. Pervasive threats are those threats that are widespread and/or reoccurring. Widespread does not mean that the same threat impacts a vast number of people (e.g., a tsunami); a woman may be beaten in her home with no community organization or state mechanism for reprisal against perpetrator. While this may seem as if the threat is limited to the woman in question, count the occurrences of domestic violence within a state and it becomes clear that the domestic violence threat is pervasive. Critical and pervasive threats can be direct or indirect; ethnic cleansing and water contamination both directly threaten the lives of individuals. Alkire (2003) and Enloe (1989) point out how overinvestment in military sectors causes underinvestment in social sectors such as education or healthcare. This rerouting of funds indirectly threatens the well-being of individuals.

As indicated by the feminist literature, aggregate analyses of populations are inadequate. Parsing out differences by gender, race/ethnicity and class dimensions will successfully identify specific threats experienced by specific groups. Human security must be analyzed locally; national-level data misses the nuances of interactions at personal and community levels. While there will obviously be overlap between the dimensions, each will provide a different perspective. By then comparing the different perspectives a complete, nuanced account of individual level threats will emerge. Furthermore, having three perspectives will uncover patterns of insecurity within the dimensions. A simple example is this: If being poor, being black and being a woman are all correlated with having poor access to clean drinking water in a certain locality, then it would make sense to focus on improving basic resources to all poor, black women in that area.

Case Selection—The Kingdom of Jordan

In a tumultuous region, Jordan stands as a stalwart of stability. In a conventional sense, the Kingdom is secure. However, examining particular enclaves of the population reveals groups of people who experience insecurity on a daily basis. This has far reaching ramifications; choosing a case where insecurity is unexpected—and finding numerous examples—calls for an examination of other "secure" countries. Conceiving of security in this manner requires a fundamental change in our understanding of security around the world.

I use three categories to investigate the security status of women in Jordan: political security, social security and economic security. Given the interrelatedness of these sectors, some overlap will inevitably occur. However, to fully appreciate the security and insecurity of Jordanian women, a temporary disaggregation of these factors is necessary. In my final

chapter, I revisit the overlaps and disconnects among these categories and argue that human

security can be improved only when we address certain inadequacies in Jordan.

CHAPTER 2—POLITICAL SECURITY

Scholars cite the opening of Jordan's political system in the form of free and fair elections in 1989 as one of the defining factors responsible for the increase in women's political involvement in the Kingdom (Alatiyat & Barari 2010; Roald 2009). In the following decades, Jordanian women began to enter the political system—starting with the election of Toujan Faysal to the lower house of parliament in 1993. While Faysal won a seat allocated to ethnic Circassians, not an at- large seat, she still broke new ground for women in Jordan. Unfortunately, it would be a decade before the election of another woman into parliament; in 2003, the establishment of a quota system allocated six of the 110 seats in the lower house to women. In 2010, the total seat number increased to 120 and the number allocated to women was raised to twelve, thus ensuring female representation from each of Jordan's 12 governorates (Alatiyat & Barari 2010). Most recently, a proposed new electoral law would increase the total number of seats from 120 to 138 and give women another three seats in parliament (Ryan, 2012).

On the surface, it seems that Jordanian women are poised and ready to enter *en masse* the political scene within the Kingdom. Scrutinizing the literature and data on female political participation, however, reveals the tenuous role women still maintain in Jordanian politics. The following sections outline the ever-changing role of women in political parties, organizations and governmental positions.

Women, Political Engagement and Islamists

The ending of martial law in 1991 and subsequent legalization of political parties ushered in a new group of people to the Jordanian parliament. No other group beside the Muslim Brotherhood (MB)—not technically a political party—escaped the political party ban in place between 1957 and 1991. In 1992, the MB created a political party through which the Islamists could run for office, the Islamic Action Front (IAF). In subsequent parliamentary elections, the IAF dominated. The MB's political wing won 22 seats making them the largest single parliamentary coalition (Ababneh, 2009).

A number of scholars question whether or not Islamists promote or suppress women's involvement in politics. Clark and Schwedler (2003) note that the IAF includes women in the highest decision-making bodies. Given the seemingly privileged position of women in the party, the IAF—at first glance—appears sympathetic to and even proactive in the promotion of women in politics. However, the mere presence of women does not a female-friendly organization make; women in the IAF assumed greater roles within the organization for strategic purposes primarily. When the image of the IAF does not reflect public opinion on women's issues, women within the organization gain admittance into perceived positions of power to improve the appearance of gender relations and to appease critics (Clark & Schwedler, 2003).

The IAF, despite the façade, fails to integrate women into the power structure in any meaningful way. Party leaders contend that Islam requires justice for women, rather than equality (Alatiyat & Barari, 2010). Heralding this stance, the Islamists created a parallel women's sector to, theoretically, mirror the multi-sectored main political party.

Constitutionally, the women's sector has the same objectives as the primary party; yet in practice, the women's sector predominantly serves as a female-recruiting entity, especially during crucial voting sessions (Clark & Schwedler, 2003). In short, ebbs and flows in Jordan's political climate act as a catalyst for change. Because the IAF lacks both a clear policy for and ideological stance on the advancement of women, leaders oppress or empower women as a reaction to state policies addressing gender issues. As such, change is impermanent (Alatiyat & Barari, 2010; Clark & Schwedler, 2003).

IAF reactions to the changing role of women in Jordanian communities have improved the conditions for women *within* the IAF. Female IAF members report favorable changes in their lives resulting from their membership. Most importantly, in-depth Quranic knowledge elevates women's self-perceptions (Ababneh, 2009). As Quranic scholars, the women feel personal empowerment, challenge oppressive norms and traditions and garner greater respect from the community. Political activism allows women to attain more practices of freedom and choice within daily power relations. Ababneh (2009) further argues that by assuming the role of a "religious scholar," women's social positions improve and pave the way for greater involvement in other sectors.

Notably, Jordanian cultural norms still intimately tie women to the male members of their family; female empowerment is embedded in familial contexts. Membership in political organizations, specifically the IAF, is generally contingent upon approval from a male family member. Moreover, in Jordan, familial honor rests squarely on the shoulders of women. Understanding womanhood in this manner directly impacts the options women have for movement, involvement, education and so forth. Patriarchal power, then, constrains women before and after their entrance into political organizations (Ababneh, 2009).

Joining the IAF impacts a woman on two fronts: as a member of the organization and as a member of Jordanian society at large. Some female IAF members report a decrease in personal security because of their political involvement. Perhaps the most serious affront to personal well-being is the fear of increased governmental surveillance of their daily actions. This increase in governmental surveillance condemns women to even more marginal positions in society; potential employers associate IAF members with security issues and immediately reject the members from employment. Employers are not alone in their shunning of IAF participants; politically inactive women distance themselves from politically active females for fear of being associated with the IAF (Ababneh, 2009).

Women's Organizations and Politics

The IAF is not the only organization that must react and adapt to societal rifts; indeed, vibrant and vociferous women's groups can change the agenda of parliament as well as direct the conversation of Islamists (Alatiyat & Barari, 2010). When women have the option to mobilize, they have the opportunity to effectively foreground the concerns of women (Al-Ali, 2003). Jordanian women's organizations struggle to defend political spaces where civil society can flourish.

Given the implicit power of civil society, the state is intimately involved with women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The creation of Royal NGOs (RONGOs) and semi-governmental NGOs (note the oxymoron) moderate the activities of activists (Brand, 1998; Wiktorowicz, 2002). Indeed, some argue that "civil society institutions are more an instrument of state control than a mechanism of collective empowerment" (Wiktorowicz, 2000, p. 43). Independent NGOs must submit license applications and

detailed reports of all activities to the government. Resultantly, relatively few women's

NGOs are politically oriented (Brand, 1998). Channeling the focus of the population requires

a platform and funding; donors expect results and, usually, publicity. RONGOs, by

definition, have the support of the royal family, the most money and resources and attract

donor dollars with their impressive track record of involvement. Should women's NGOs

choose to "go underground" they effectively lose their platform. Thus, groups seeking to

impact parliament inevitably interact with the state (Clark & Young, 2008).

State involvement in NGOs has not completely squelched the goals of the women's

movement. In fact, involvement with NGOs encourages the political activity of women

outside of the walls of parliament. The Women for Women Network, created in 2006 by the

National Institute for International Affairs (NDI), unites women's organizations,

parliamentarians, members of municipal courts and political parties and activists for the

purpose of promoting female candidates for elected offices (NDI, n.d.). The Arab Women's

Organization, along with representatives from the Al Mosawa Network (a conglomerate of

more than 80 grassroots women's organizations) document breaches of women's rights,

cases of violence against women and violations of international conventions—namely the

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

The combined efforts of these activists culminated in a 2007 report to CEDAW on the

national policies, measures and figures on violence against women (Naffa, Al Dabbas, Jabiri

& Al Emam, 2007). The Jordanian Women's Union along with more than 20 other NGOs

prepared an updated CEDAW report in 2012; the report makes recommendations to the

Jordanian CEDAW compliance committee on issues such as trafficking in women and

prostitution, public and political involvement of women, equality before the law and the rights and protection of refugee women (Al-Jabiri, 2012).

Increasing awareness of women's issues, no matter the source, provokes societal discourses on these issues. Using the IAF as a proxy, correlations can be made between the demands of constituents (e.g., women's work, education and political participation) and concessions of Islamists. Alatiyat and Barari's (2010) analysis of Islamists and the women's movement concluded that, by politically engaging Islamist political parties, the women's movement successfully instigated a change in regard to women's roles in society. In fact, "the more aggressive the debate on women's rights…the more effect it had" on Islamist's political agendas (Alatiyat & Barari, 2010, p. 377).

Women in Government

Surveying the recent activity of women in government reveals the instability of women's political positions (see Table 1). From 2008 to 2010, the percentage of females appointed to ministerial positions dropped by more than four percentage points. Meanwhile, the number of females appointed the upper house of parliament decreased from 12.7% in 2008 to 10.9% in 2009 but then increased to 15% in 2010. As expected, doubling the number of seats allocated to women in the lower house of parliament significantly raised the number of women MPs in 2010. In short, women lack consistency in their involvement in the majority of government positions.

Table 1. Percentage of Females in Government Positions

	2008	2009	2010
The Cabinet	14.3	14.3	9.7
The Upper House of Parliament	12.7	10.9	15
The Lower House of Parliament	6.4	6.4	10.8
Local Councils	27.4	27.4	24.8

Source: Jordan Department of Statistics,2011

The appointment of Ina'am Al Mufti as the Minister of Social Development in 1979 marked the first time a woman ever held a cabinet position. Her appointment preceded the first election of a woman into the lower house by nearly a decade and a half (Attar, 2007). It seems counterintuitive then, that women in the lower house of parliament now regularly outnumber the female cabinet members. Reformers lament this trend and cite the fleeting and random presence of women in the Prime Minister's cabinet as evidence of women's transitory place in politics (Elbatran, 2010).

Interestingly, in 2010 women accounted for only 15% of the upper house of parliament but political parties had nearly 30% female participation that year (Jordan Department of Statistics). Even more telling, Abla Abu Olba was the first woman to be appointed secretary general of a political party, the Democratic People's Party (or Hash'd), and is currently serving as an MP for Amman's first district (NDI, 2010). Leftist parties are well-known for their promotion of women in politics. As such, many women who are registered as "independent" closely identify with leftist parties (Al-Attiyat, Shteiwi & Sweiss, 2003; Elbatran, 2010).

The low number of women in governmental positions does not reflect a lack of interest on the part of women (see Table 2). Although 65 fewer female candidates ran for election in 2010 compared to 2007, the number is still considerably higher than previous

election years. Structural and sociocultural barriers discourage many women from attempting

to run for parliament in the first place. A lack of financial resources, a distrust of women

performing in a "man's field" and the one-person, one-vote system are but a few of the

constraining factors for women seeking political office (Husseini, 2010). A quote from a

female parliamentary candidate in 2010 exemplifies the societal resistance: "Society is not

prepared yet for women in parliament. Both men and women told me, 'What do you want

with this headache? If male parliamentarians hardly did anything in their posts, how can

women do anything then?'" (as cited in Ma'Yeh, 2010).

Table 2 Female Participation in Lower House of Parliament

Year	1989	1993	1997	2003	2007	2010
Number of Female Candidates	12	3	17	54	199	134
Number of Females Elected Outright	0	0	0	0	1	1
Number of Females Elected through Quota	0	1*	0	6	6	12

Source: Attar, 2007; Azzi, 2007; Husseini, 2010
*Toujan Faysal elected through the quota for Circassians, not the gender quota.

According to the literature and data, women regularly serve in the margins of political

groups despite displaying great capability at enacting change through civil society.

Attempting to establish long-term security for women requires a change in the perception of

women's political skills and a system that encourages and provides for women in halls of

government.

CHAPTER 3—SOCIAL SECURITY

Social security is a complex and often misunderstood blend of legal, cultural and socioeconomic factors. Uncovering the root causes of women's insecurity in everything from domestic violence and honor killings to providing for their families requires an examination of the legalities that can curb or perpetuate these issues.

Legal Policies Addressing Women's Rights

Article 1.6 of the Jordanian Constitution states: "All Jordanians are equal before the law in rights and obligations, without distinction as to race, language or religion" (as cited in Roald 2009, p. 46). "All Jordanians" encompasses both men and women, allegedly guaranteeing equality before the law. Despite constitutional protection and prioritization of parity between genders, barriers to women's political and social participation still exist. Some scholars contend that because the constitution fails to explicitly denote equality on the basis of sex, "gender blindness" occurs among policy makers (Roald, 2009, p. 46). This blindness is made manifest in three particular cases: the ratification of CEDAW (and the reservations to certain Articles), the Provisional Election Law of 2010 and Personal Status Laws. These distinct yet interrelated cases highlight the complex relationship between the monarchy, parliament and women.

In a perpetually globalizing world, international organizations have the capability to influence state policies (Barnett & Finnemore 2004, Sikkink 2011). Dababneh (2012) argues

that Jordanian policies have, in fact, been affected by international conventions—especially

CEDAW—but these fail to transfer into substantial effects on the daily lives of women.

When Jordan ratified CEDAW, the committee did so with certain reservations: Ariticle 9,

paragraph 2 and Article 16, paragraph 1 (c), (d) and (g) (United Nations, n.d.) Article 9,

paragraph 2 grants women the same right as men with respect to the nationality of their

children. Article 16, paragraph 1(c) ensures the same rights and responsibilities for men and

women during and upon the termination of a marriage. Paragraphs (d) and (g) of that same

article confirm equal rights and responsibilities—irrespective of marital status—in matters

relating to their children and equal personal rights (e.g., choosing a family name, a profession

and an occupation), respectively (United Nations, n.d.). Given the enshrinement of equality

for "All Jordanians" in the constitution, why do these reservations about particular CEDAW

Articles arise?

The reservation to Article 9 is particularly contentious. Jordanian women's inability

to pass their nationality to their children spurs heated debates around the country. In February

2012, women's rights groups—spearheaded by Nimat Habashneh—threatened to protest

outside of the Prime Minister's office every week until the Citizenship Law changed

(McGinley, 2012). Parliamentarians argue that politics drive this policy, rather than a desire

to subjugate women. According to these members, granting Jordanian citizenship to children

with Palestinian fathers would decrease the number of Palestinian citizens and the push for a

Palestinian state would lose its fervor (Roald, 2009). Jordanian women, however, deal with

the burden of acquiring security clearances, permits for residency and medical reports for

their "non-Jordanian" children. Even more troublesome, Jordanian women must pay JD40

for children to attend a government school and, upon graduation, non-Jordanians must pay

JD270 to obtain a work permit (Husseini, 2012c; Husseini, 2012f). Despite protests and condemnation of the Citizenship Law, parliamentarians continue to declare that "now is not the right time to give citizenship to the children of Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians" (as cited in Husseini, 2012f).

Many of the activists campaigning for the repeal of the Citizenship Law also call for the addition of "gender" to Article 6 of the constitution, which declares there can be no discrimination on the basis of race or religion. In 2011, the constitutional committee debated including "gender" in Article 6 but alleged political and religious constraints dissuaded the committee from making the change (Muasher, 2011). More recently, the Royal Committee on Constitutional Review assured activists that "gender" would be included in Article 6, but the final draft did not reflect their statements; this time, only "political" reasons were cited for the exclusion. Activists argue that continually upholding the current version of Article 6 allows for gender discrimination, especially when the issue of citizenship arises in court (Husseini, 2012c). Moreover, CEDAW experts, in a February 2012 report, expressed concerns over the failure to recognize sex in the constitution; activists use this report to pressure the government to meet their demands ("Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination," 2012; Husseini, 2012c).

Understanding the complexity of the CEDAW debate requires a consideration of both monarchical and Islamist influences. Jordanian authorities signed the CEDAW agreement but did not discuss the Convention in parliament before the ratification was made public (Roald, 2009). This highlights a dichotomy at work in Jordan: King Abdullah's stance on women's participation compared to that of the Islamists and conservatives in parliament. King Abdullah consistently emphasizes the need to increase the presence of women in all fields,

especially politics (Dababneh, 2012). However, the Hashemite leadership calls for increased involvement that still conforms to the social traditions and customs of Jordan. Hence, despite ratifying CEDAW without Islamist input, the Jordanian authorities simultaneously promote the heightened involvement of women in preapproved sections of the public sphere, while keeping women wholly subjugated in the domestic sphere. This ingrained structural bias often goes unchallenged; failing to critically evaluate the system is part of the reason women cannot enjoy full constitutional rights (Roald, 2009).

With CEDAW originating in the UN, Islamists and traditionalists argue that the Convention imposes western conceptions of gender onto the Jordanian population. Islamists expound upon the notion that normalcy in Jordanian society hinges upon different social behaviors of men and women. CEDAW, Islamists argue, gives women full control over their bodies and, as such, women can engage in sexual relationships without religious or familial approval. Unchecked sexual behavior leads to moral decay and the inevitable demise of the family structure. Sexual freedom is linked to western secular ideals; a female IAF member of parliament (MP) argues that Jordanians "supersede the West by [their] strong familial bonds" (as cited in Alatiyat & Barari, 2010, p. 364). According to Islamists and other conservatives, removing all reservations to CEDAW would degrade every social more in Jordan; cultural identity would be sacrificed on the altar of western homogenization (Alatiyat & Barari, 2010).

Both the Constitution of Jordan (see Articles 22 and 23) and the King's commitment to CEDAW oblige the state to ensure women's participation in society and public duties, most notably participation in parliament (Dababneh, 2012). Though many authors argue that women's political participation in Jordan is still very low, current participation is

significantly greater than previous years (Roald, 2009). The adoption of the quota system for women in parliament in 2003 dramatically increased women's representation in the public domain. To reiterate an earlier point, only one woman succeeded in gaining a seat in parliament between the years 1989 and 2003. The 2010 Provisional Election Law improved upon the 2003 Provisional Election Law by increasing the number of parliamentary seats for women from six to twelve. Adding more seats for women serves a number of purposes: each of the twelve governorates in Jordan now have at least one female representative, female members of parliament more often address women's issues and women in parliament can demand greater gender equality in other sectors (Dababneh, 2012; Jamal, 2010).

Expectedly, the Provisional Election Law generated a number of critiques. As evidenced with CEDAW, delineating specific societal roles limits women's involvement options to predetermined (and preapproved) sectors. MPs complain that women in parliament primarily undertake "service" concerns (e.g., securing food for poor or underfed families) and cannot fairly and adequately address all of the needs of their constituents. Ironically, male MPs often funnel service projects to women because social norms dictate women as caregivers (Jamal, 2010). Furthermore, even though elected women participate in parliament, they still must work within the confines of patriarchy; behaving too radically results in marginalization from other MPs. Even more importantly, voters re-elect members who maintain ties with political elites and can deliver goods to the constituency; hence, women in parliament "must participate in this system of patrimony, which privileges existing patriarchal networks" (Jamal, 2010, p. 12). Women, unfortunately, often become agents of the status quo rather than agents of change (Lust-Okar, 2006; Jamal, 2010).

Even though the number of women guaranteed in parliament doubled in 2010, authorities made no provisions for population differences between the governorates. Similarly, the 2012 reforms added three more seats to the women's quota but, again, no considerations were made for governorate population differences (Clark & Young, 2008; Ryan, 2012). Clark and Young's 2008 study found that the quota system did not significantly aid women in advocating for women's rights. At that time, five of the six women who joined the 2003 parliament came from rural areas and the sixth was an IAF member. Rather than promoting experienced, politically active women from Amman, critics claim that the quota system rewards socially conservative women who could secure the greatest percentage of votes in their electoral district (Clark & Young 2008; Husseini, 2010). The critics have some ground for speculation; only two women have secured parliament seats outright in Jordan, Falak Al-Jamaani in 2007 and Reem Badran in 2010. And Reem Badran is the only woman ever to win outright in Amman; she received 3,792 votes to earn one of the five seats for Amman's District Three (Malkawi, 2010). Thus, the problem remains. The one-person, one-vote system tends to prevent qualified women from large constituencies from winning seats and favors the election of less qualified and less politically active women from smaller sub-districts (Beck & Collet, 2010). Under this system, "tribalism" dominates and proportional representation is forsaken (Ryan, 2010).

The overarching patriarchy in the public sphere permeates the private lives of women. Personal Status Laws (PSLs) maintain polygamy, allow Sharia judges to marry girls between the ages of 15 and 18 and restrict women from requesting a divorce on demand (Clark & Young, 2008; Husseini, 2010). PSLs blatantly contradict the Jordanian Constitution (Brand, 1998). In her 2003 work, *Women of Jordan: Islam, Labor and the Law*, Amira El-Azhary

Sonbol (2003) describes the magnitude of these laws: "The Personal Status Laws cannot be underestimated…As a totality, personal status laws confine women within predetermined patriarchal parameters, and give them only limited freedom of choice outside parental and husband approval" (p. 183). No other case better represents the interconnectedness of the King, parliament, international organizations and women.

Amendments to the PSLs reached parliament in 2003, with backing from domestic and international activists and the King and Queen. The parliament vehemently opposed the amendments. Pressure from civil society and international non-governmental organizations (INGO) consistently failed to convince the MPs, specifically the right-wing Islamist contingency, of the need and urgency for amending the PSLs (Brand, 1998; Clark & Young, 2008).

PSLs perpetuate women's reliance on men. Inadequate, masculinized state structures tether women to male relatives and make self-sufficiency inconceivable (Jamal, 2010). Conjointly, social norms override the few protections that PSLs offer women. On paper, PSLs guarantee women the right to inheritance; in reality, women receive half the share of a male heir and families often pressure women to give that portion to their brothers (Al-Jabiri, 2012; Brand 1998). The Seventh Annual Report of the National Center for Human Rights in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan notes the disparity between law and reality:

> Despite the many legal reforms that have been incorporated in a number of existing legislation such as the Labor Law, Social Security Law…Personal Status Law, Protection from Domestic Violence Law… many of the discriminatory practices against women are *still based on social norms and reveal systematic violence and discrimination against women*. Some of them are considered criminal acts punishable by law, while others are justified in

society without any religious or legal basis. p. 60. The National Center for Human Rights, 2010. (Emphasis added)

Without question, PSLs hinder the progression of women in Jordanian society. But, with PSLs and social norms dictating the appropriate level of engagement, how are women to overcome the barriers to entering the political and societal system?

Personal Safety

Any concept of social security must address the personal safety of women. The United Nations (UN) identifies three variations of violence experienced by women: gender based violence (GBV), violence against women (VAW) and domestic violence. UN reports define GBV as "violence that is directed at a person on the basis of gender or sex. It includes acts that inflect physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty" (United Nations 2008, p. 8). VAW is "any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual and psychological harm to women and girls, whether occurring in private or public" (United Nations, 2008, p. 8). Finally, domestic violence is defined as "various behavioral patterns from a member of the family against other members, which directly or indirectly inflict psychological, physical, verbal or sexual harm" (United Nations, 2008, p. 8). Given the complexity of all three concepts of violence, no single institution can adequately address this issue (Abu Ghazaleh, 2011). In Jordan, domestic violence is both pervasive and widespread and, as such, an analysis of personal safety should begin with an examination of this form of violence (Clark, 2011).

Domestic Violence

National reports of marital abuse range from approximately 30% to 50% (Al-Nsour, Khawaja & Al-Kayyali, 2009; Clark, 2011). In a 2009 study by Al-Nsour, Khawaja and Al-Kayyali, 87% of women reported at least one form of abuse during the past year. Notably, this study found emotional abuse to be the most commonly reported form of violence (47.5% of women reported this form of abuse). A 2008 study from the Jordanian National Council for Family Affairs bolsters the aforementioned statistics; 60% of the survey respondents reported verbally abusing a family member and 40% responded as having physically abused a family member (United Nations, 2008). Such high numbers of reported abuse coincide with the prevailing notion that abuse is justifiable. In fact, in a 2011 survey, 87% of Jordanian women felt that wife beating was acceptable under at least one circumstance—usually infidelity on the part of the wife. Moreover, 69% of women believe that a woman disrespecting her husband or his family warrants physical abuse (Clark, 2011).

Domestic violence has long term ramifications on a woman and her family structure. Victims of domestic abuse tend to have higher numbers of children and a greater risk for unwanted or unplanned pregnancies (Clark, 2011). Scholars link domestic violence to chronic diseases, depression and low levels of psychological well-being (Al-Modallal, Abuidhail, Sowan & Al-Rawashdeh, 2010; Hamdan-Mansour, Arabiat, Sato, Obaid & Imoto, 2011). While pregnant, women carrying female fetuses reported more subtle types of abuse. Al-Akour (2007) found that women pregnant with male fetuses visited the doctor about nine times over the course of their pregnancy and women with female fetuses only had five doctor visits. Overt physical violence during pregnancy has been linked to societal pressures and husbands' desires for male offspring (Okour & Badarneh, 2011).

Strategies for decreasing the prevalence of domestic abuse most often call for the empowerment of women. Empowering women involves providing educational opportunities and, most importantly, granting women financial independence. Women who have the option to take advantage of economic opportunities report fewer cases of domestic violence (Hamdan-Monsour, et al., 2011). Heightened participation in the local economy also tends to combat the social norms that encourage domestic abuse (Al-Nsour, Khawaja & Al-Kayyali, 2009). Working women, who still bear the majority of domestic responsibilities, often have higher instances of depression. However, it is important to recognize that the depressive symptoms are a product of social and familial pressures rather than the job itself (Al-Modallal, et al., 2010).

Addressing Violence Against Women—Jordanian Initiatives

The underlying causes of VAW can be traced to a number of factors (i.e., sociocultural pressures, inadequate economic opportunities, etc.) and, thus, no single institution can adequately address this issue (Abu Ghazaleh, 2011). Institutions across Jordan have coalesced in an effort to eradicate VAW. Jordanian laws created three national institutions tasked with protecting and safeguarding women: the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW), the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA) and the National Center for Human Rights (NCHR). Board members for each respective institution include governmental representatives, NGO staff members and subject experts. Domestic violence and abuse cases are investigated and addressed by a fourth national institution, the Family Protection Department—a sub-agency of the Public Security Directorate (United Nations, 2008). The combined efforts of these institutions result in a multi-faceted and

coherent task-force in charge of increasing social awareness of VAW, providing legal services for victims and, crucially, preventing VAW.

The Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs are the other major governmental organizations that address VAW. The Ministry of Health, with its network of health centers and hospitals, helps identify victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse. The Ministry of Education teaches school counselors how to recognize warning signs of abuse and helps students learn how to prevent violence. The Ministry of Social Development, while commonly regarded as a key organization in the struggle against VAW, actually has a limited arsenal for addressing the problem; most of the work done by this organization revolves around family counseling. The Ministry of Justice suggests laws and legislations that protect women. Finally, the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, comprised of a network of religious figures, clarifies women's rights in Islam and raises awareness on VAW in an Islamic context (United Nations, 2008).

A dense network of NGOs work with the national institutions and ministries to lobby for legislative amendments (Jordanian Women's Union), raise awareness of VAW (Sisterhood is Global Initiative, Arab Women's Organization), engage in psychological and social counseling (Queen Zein El-Sharaf Institute for Development) and offer victim services (Jordan River Foundation, Institute for Family Health) (United Nations, 2008). The Private Sector Project for Women's Health (PSP-Jordan) is a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded initiative that has been especially successful in addressing VAW. PSP-Jordan helped establish the health clinic at the first women's shelter in Jordan, Dar Alwifaq and also funded six NGOs in high risk communities all over the Kingdom to

help reach rural populations where VAW is especially high (USAID, 2010; Hamdan-Mansour, et al. 2011).

Honor Crimes

A particularly heinous form of domestic violence, honor crimes are defined as "the killing of a woman by her relatives for violation of a sexual code in the name of restoring family honor" (Abu-Lughod, 2011, p. 17). Ongoing debates over perpetrators' motivations for committing honor crimes most often point to tribal customs; the closer a culture is to its tribal roots, the more dominant the honor code (Abu-Lughod, 2011; Faqir, 2001; Kay, 2010). Overriding perceptions of the "honor code" in Jordan tie family honor to female behavior. In fact, a 2010 survey of over 2,000 households in Jordan found that 80.9% of parents believe that protecting a girl means protecting the family honor (Husseini, 2010). Behavior that deviates from socially constructed sexual norms, according to these people, shames the family; a family member (usually male) ends the life of the accused female in order to cleanse the family of the perceived shame (D'angelo, 2010; Hassan & Welchman, 2005). According to official records, approximately 20 honor crimes are committed annually in Jordan (Husseini, 2011c, Lichter, 2009). However, Rana Husseini, a journalist for the *Jordan Times* and the leading scholar on crimes of honor, believes that many crimes go unreported and the number could actually be doubled (Lichter, 2009).

Despite common misconceptions, honor crimes are in no way connected to or supported by Islam (Abu-Lughod, 2011; Connors, 2005; Hamdan-Mansour, et al., 2011). The Chairman of the Islamic Group submitted a letter to the UN Secretary General and reiterated that fact: "There is no linkage whatsoever between the killing of women and girls under any

societal or communal behavior including passion, honor on race, and the teachings, practices and values of Islam" (as cited in Connors, 2005, p. 34). No religious affiliation has a monopoly on honor crimes; both internationally and in Jordan, reported cases involve Muslims, Christians and even Hindus (D'angelo, 2010; Kay, 2010).

Activists and scholars contend that certain Jordanian laws promulgate honor crimes and create a culture of impunity for perpetrators (Hassan & Welchman, 2005; Human rights Watch, 2004). Articles 340, 98 and 99 of the Jordanian Penal Code receive the most scrutiny from activists. Article 340, which declares that surprising one's wife "in the crime of adultery or in an unlawful bed" (in Hassan & Welchman, 2005) is a mitigating excuse for murder, has only been used once, however (Husseini, personal communication, April 21, 2012). Closely related to Article 340 is Article 98 which holds that: "Whosoever commits a crime in a state of extreme rage resulting from an unrightful and dangerous act on the part of the victim shall benefit from the mitigating/extenuating excuse" (Hassan & Welchman, 2005). Article 99 can also lessen a perpetrator's sentence if the victim's family chooses to excuse him or her (Husseini, 2011a; Husseini, 2011c; Husseini, 2012e).

The government of Jordan, despite failing to rescind the aforementioned Articles, has made progress in stopping honor killings. For example, a 2009 special tribunal was established at the Criminal Court that bars perpetrators from using the "family honor" excuse (Husseini, 2011d). Since the establishment of this tribunal, Article 98 has not been applied to new cases (Husseini, personal communication, April 21, 2012). Both the King and Queen vocally support grassroots organizations and NGOs committed to eliminating honor crimes. Jordanian civil society actively engages in awareness-raising initiatives aimed at changing social norms regarding crimes of honor. The "No Honor in Crime" campaign, founded by

Deena Dajani, visits high schools and universities to talk to students about honor crimes. Also, the group is currently collecting signatures calling for the elimination of Article 99 (Husseini, 2011d).

Perhaps more than any other group or individual, Rana Husseini captured the attention of the Kingdom—and the international community—and mobilized support for combating honor crimes; these efforts culminated in the creation of the National Jordanian Campaign to Eliminate So-Called Crimes of Honor in 1998. Through the efforts of this campaign, shelters have been established for honor crime victims and thousands of signatures have been collected to call for eliminating leniency clauses for perpetrators of honor crimes. Also, Husseini's journalistic endeavors helped eliminate social taboos regarding these crimes and made it possible to discuss the topic in public forums (Lichter, 2009).

CHAPTER 4—ECONOMIC SECURITY

"People need to study, need to work, if I am not economically secure I will be subjugated and under the mercy of the person who supports me" (as cited in Nemeh, 2010, p. 324). The words of this Jordanian woman eloquently highlight the link between economic independence and security. Even though patriarchy permeates nearly every relationship in Jordan—social, political, economic, cultural—Jordanian women consistently cite economic security as the most important indicator for security. Indeed, financial independence boosted women's feelings of empowerment, community respect and decreased instances of personal violence (Kawar, 2000; Nemeh, 2010).

Beyond personal enrichment, numerous scholars and economists note how empowering women financially boosts the economy on both macro and micro scales (Kristof & WuDunn 2009; Sen, 2000; UNDP, 2011). In fact, the United Nations found a correlation between the advancement of women and economic growth. Conversely, countries that have little to no economic growth generally experience declining rates of development for women (UNDP, 2011). This fact has not gone unnoticed in Jordan. Jordan's *National Agenda* (2005) calls for an "Increase [in] women's contribution to the economy and [to] ensure that they become 'partners' with the men in the development process" (p. 13).

Despite the findings and political rhetoric, the employment rate of women in Jordan lags behind world and regional averages (World Bank, 2012). The following sections further

explore the current state of women and the Jordanian economy, reveal the barriers to entering the workforce and highlight the disconnects between policies, attitudes and reality.

Current State of Women and Economic Participation

In the UNDP's (2011) "Jordan Small Business and Human Development Report," the authors found that "when considering the gender aspect, women fare worse all-round, not just on the [small and medium enterprise] scale but also at the national level" (p. 22). According to the World Bank (2012), the total population of Jordan is 6,047,000. 1,817,540 Jordanians make up the labor force. Notably, females account for less than a quarter (22.9%) of the labor force. Working women are disproportionately employed in the public sector, even though the number of establishments in the private sector vastly outnumber those in the public sector (see Tables 3 and 4). This becomes especially problematic when considered in conjunction with the fact that the public sector was only able to absorb 41.4% of newly created jobs in 2008 and 82.5% of those jobs went to men (UNDP, 2011). Essentially, women vie for positions in an overly saturated public sector where they have minimal chance for advancement to the organization's upper echelons. Viewed differently, women accounted for 35% of the total number of employees in the public sector in 2009. In the private sector that year, women only accounted for 18% of the employees. What makes this even more troubling is the fact that private establishments outnumber the public establishments 554 to 1.

Poor advancement rates do not reflect the talent of the women in the labor force. Actually, the average Jordanian woman is more qualified than the average Jordanian man for similar jobs (Hendessi, 2007). In this regard, Jordan stands out in the region as one of only a few countries with a comprehensive educational system for both males and females. Average

women wage earners have 12.3 years of schooling while the average male wage earner only

has 9.3 years of schooling (World Bank, 2012). Even though women have more education

than their male counterparts, women make less money for the same jobs—in both the public

and private sectors. In other words, women have to attain higher levels of education than men

in order to obtain the same job for less money. By some estimates, the elimination of wage

discrimination would increase women's pay by 45% in the private sphere and by 13% in the

public sphere (Hendessi, 2007).

Table 3. Establishments and Employees*, Public Sector Years 2007-2009

	2007	2008	2009
Establishments	260	256	266
Employees-			
Total	269529	282378	295755
Male	176289	184711	191927
Female	93240	97667	103828

Source: Jordan Department of Statistics, 2011
*Jordanian Nationality only

Table 4. Establishments and Employees*, Private Sector Years 2007-2009

	2007	2008	2009
Establishments	146914	147327	147469
Employees	497489	519348	540148
Male	408539	424038	443500
Female	88950	95310	96648

Source: Jordan Department of Statistics, 2011
*Jordanian Nationality only

An often overlooked paradox exists within the education system. First, "'disciplined'

gender politics in education, [perpetuate] traditional discursive practices, roles and

stereotypes instead of acting as an emancipatory power" (Al-Mahadin, 2004, p. 22). Failing

to critique pedagogical practices and lesson plans has the potential to veil the biases that the system sustains (Al-Mahadin, 2004; Hendessi, 2007). Second, women need to learn practical skills for proactive job searches. Textbooks currently reinforce traditional gender roles and neglect training women on how to successfully venture into the working world (Hendessi, 2007; Miles, 2002).

With an average unemployment rate of 15%, lack of work is a serious issue for both men and women in Jordan. However, disaggregating the statistics reveals that women's rates of unemployment are much higher (24.1%) than men (10.3%). What's even more compelling is that approximately 55% of unemployed women have a Bachelor's degree; that's more than three times as high as unemployed men with degrees (UNDP, 2011). While Jordanian initiatives have successfully narrowed the education gap between males and females, changes to labor force participation have been slow (Al-Khaldi, 2006). As previously mentioned, Jordan's *National Agenda* acknowledges the need to incorporate women into the economy. Unfortunately, there is no clearly defined strategy for achieving this inclusion. Without a strident commitment to changing the status quo, gender parity seems unlikely.

Barriers to Labor Force Participation

The 1970s and 1980s saw a rapid increase in women's economic participation rates in Jordan. Changes in the market, coupled with supportive policies in the public sector produced an amenable environment for women to enter the workforce. While this evolution seemed promising for a few years, economic downturns shifted the winds of progress to disfavor women entering the economic realm. It became apparent that the temporary shift

reflected an economic need rather than a fundamental change in thinking (Brand, 1998; Hijab, 1988; Miles, 2002; Sonbol, 2003).

Sociocultural ideations of women's societal roles are generally regarded as the biggest barrier to women joining the labor force (Al-Mahadin, 2004; Kawar, 2000; Miles 2002; Sonbol, 2003). Misogynist thinker Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad sums up the female stereotype in three points: "1. Her nature, which includes her [physical] capabilities, and her [inherent] ability to serve her sex and her people. 2. Her rights and duties with the family and society. 3. Social relations that are required by custom and public morality most of which are matters of traditions and manners" (as cited in Sonbol, 2003, p. 219). Assessing these claims as a whole, we discover that the stereotypes stem from either individual biases (the nature of a woman) or structural biases (social duties and traditional expectations). These stereotypes are mutually reinforcing; preconceived notions about a woman's "nature" are bolstered by cultural norms.

Familial honor and community cohesion are linked to feminine modesty. Although women are responsible for shouldering the honor of a family, "the centrality of the family in perpetuating unequal power relations between men and women cannot be overestimated" (Kawar, 2000, p. 64). Females are cyclically dependent on male relatives. As young children and unmarried adolescents, females depend on their parents. Once married, women depend on their husbands (Kawar, 2000). The role of women is socially constructed in such a way that autonomy and empowerment are superseded by male superiority. Both men and women grow up with certain expectations of acceptable behaviors for both sexes. Some people link gender expectations with Islamic teachings, but, in reality, Jordanian traditions originated in

the tribal areas. Thus, the restraints on women's mobility are tribal based and confused with Islam; Islam is used to validate these imbalanced power relations (Sonbol, 2003).

What constitutes "approved female behavior" becomes apparent when examining the patterns of women's movement in relation to their work and the simultaneous expectations about women in the workplace. Women are expected to work near their home, return home before dark and only work in a single-sex environment (Hendessi, 2007; Kawar, 2000; UNDP, 2011). Expectations about how and when women can work limit the options women have for employment. 20% of male business owners cite women's inability to work late hours as the primary problem for hiring a female. 25% of the interviewed managers said the primary problem with hiring a female is her family's refusal to let her work (UNDP, 2011).

Structural discrimination creates even more adverse conditions for women's entry into the labor force. The system provides no incentives for women to work. If a woman dies, her social security or pension will not be passed on to her husband or children. Also, women have a lower mandatory retirement age than men. While this was originally designed to protect women, it inadvertently harmed women, forcing them to leave their job five years before men robs them of additional years for contributing to their security fund (Hendessi, 2007). Additionally, women are expected to resign upon marriage. If a woman resigns, she can withdraw all of the money she contributed to her retirement fund. Also, when a woman marries she receives a bonus comparable to an end of service bonus one receives upon retirement (Sonbol, 2003).

Expectations about women's roles after marriage lead to predictable outcomes. Because women typically leave the workforce upon marriage, managers do not extend

training opportunities to most women. Instead, men are awarded the opportunities to build

their skillsets. Men also receive greater training because women's wages are viewed as

merely supplementary to that of her husband (Hendessi, 2007; UNDP, 2011). Managers

engage in a cost-benefit analysis of male versus female employees; men can work longer—

both daily and over the course of a career—and have greater autonomy in society. The

prevailing tendency to choose men over women is especially noticeable in the male

dominated private sector. Regulations on private companies require provisions for female

employees that further dissuade managers from hiring women (Table 5).

Table 5. Public and Private Sector Employment

Labor requirements	Public sector	Private sector
Minimum wage	120 JD/month	85 JD/month
Working hours	7 hours	8 hours
Tenure	Security of tenure	Contractual
Paid maternity leave	90 days	70 days
Costs covered by	Government	Private sector employer
Lactation leave	None prescribed	1 hour per day
Nursery care	None prescribed	Fully funded on-site once 20 married women are employed

Source: Hendessi, 2007

While marriage can hinder women's roles as employees, it can aid women as business

owners. In fact, 87% of female business owners report that being married has a positive

effect on their business. Although this may seem counter-intuitive initially, it ultimately

makes sense because having a family and a husband gives a woman the financial support and

moral legitimacy to engage in a business pursuit. As a comparison, only 27% of female

business owners felt that being single positively affected their business (Al-Alak & Al-

Haddad, 2010).

Disconnects in the Literature

With the plethora of data available on women's labor force participation in Jordan, it is not surprising that some statistics and reports seem contradictory. Moving forward, however, requires finding and rectifying the disparities.

Nearly all of the aforementioned literature (see Barriers to Labor Force Participation section) cited cultural norms and social attitudes as one of the root causes hindering women from employment. Yet, the 2006 Arab Barometer found that 79.9% of Jordanians agreed that a married woman can work outside of the home if she wishes and 77.8% of Jordanians agreed that men and women should receive equal wages and salaries (Braizat, 2006). If the vast majority of surveyed individuals support women working outside of the home and women earning equal pay, why doesn't reality reflect these attitudes?

A more concrete manifestation of rhetoric versus reality can be found in the push towards privatization. The Center for Strategic Studies (CSS) and the Carnegie Middle East Center hosted a workshop in 2007 regarding economic reform in Jordan. Jamal al-Jibri from USAID, one of the primary sources of foreign financial assistance to the Kingdom, argued that privatization is a cornerstone of economic reform. Furthermore, al-Jibri contended that "Privatization has transformed formerly state-owned firms into dynamic private sector corporations. *The privatization process has had a net positive impact on the number of jobs in Jordan*" (CSS, 2007, no page number, emphasis added). The question remains, who received these jobs? Reviewing the number of males versus females employed in the private sector (see Table 2) shows that women are consistently underrepresented. Without question, the shrinking public sector disproportionately affects women (Miles, 2002).

Examining the findings and practical advice issued from the CSS (located in Amman) reveals a trend: women are rarely considered. CSS' (2007) Economic Reform Strategy never mentions increasing women's participation in the economy. Likewise, the "2002 Economic Integration in the Arab Mashreq Countries Phase II (The Private Sector) Analytical Report," also issued by the CSS, neither acknowledges nor offers any recommendations for mitigating women's low labor force participation.

Integrating women into the economy requires a united effort. Women recognize that security is inextricably linked to economic independence. Furthermore, the Kingdom recognizes the potential women have for positively transforming the economy. Strategies for economic reform cannot overlook women nor can the gender disparity between public and private sectors continue to be ignored.

CHAPTER 5—CONCLUSION

The Jordan case is important and useful for drawing conclusions about other Middle Eastern and Northern African countries. Policymakers should be aware of how legislations might not produce the intended results. Conceptualizing the security of Jordanian women from a feminist perspective prioritizes the experiences of these women and highlights disconnects between political rhetoric, public policies and economic realities. International norms push for gender mainstreaming but failing to consult women before initiating policies will only instigate superficial changes. Deconstructing the degree of political, social and economic involvement of Jordanian women revealed the areas where women suffer most and the areas where women prosper.

Politically, women in Jordan walk a fine line between serving their constituencies, their parties and themselves. Many of the women in parliament produce impressive results and have phenomenal resumes and qualifications; they are testament to the quality of education and critical thinking found in Jordan. However, two glaring security issues arise: first, women active in political parties—especially opposition parties—worry about increased governmental surveillance of their movement. Second, such a small number of women actually enter the political machine that vast swaths of the women in the country will, realistically, never have the opportunity to participate in sanctioned political activities. True, NGOs and women's organizations provide outlets for women to engage in politics but constant state observation moderates any radical thoughts. Thus, the paradox emerges:

Women engaged in political opposition parties fear the government and women attempting to change politics must succumb to the government.

Socially, women are subject to discriminatory laws and norms that tether them to male relatives. Denying a woman the right to pass her nationality on to her children further exacerbates the issue of choosing the "proper" man to marry; undue burdens await those who choose non-Jordanian husbands. VAW and honor crimes are critical and pervasive threats to a large number of women. The interrelatedness of politics and security emerges; laws that promulgate a culture of impunity for perpetrators of VAW and honor crimes are so ingrained in the patriarchal system that those seeking reform must deal with allegations ranging from representing Western agendas to threatening the moral fabric of the entire Kingdom. Meanwhile, women in insecure situations continue to suffer while policymakers debate legal and Quranic semantics.

Economically, women suffer the greatest but have the most to gain. Before a woman can enter politics she needs financial stability. Curbing VAW is linked to financial independence. Not surprisingly, economic reform proceeds at a glacial pace. Unleashing the potential of the educated mass of women in Jordan would, without doubt or reservation, fundamentally change the power structure in Jordan. Moving forward in any sector requires moving forward economically.

These findings are useful to the myriad NGOs and INGOs working in Jordan. Allocating funds to economic development would be the most effective use of stressed resources. Economic enhancement supports the goals of every NGO; if women are successfully incorporated into the economy, a ripple effect occurs in other areas. For

example, NGOs that focus on women's financial independence might not overtly deal with the promotion of women in politics, but the link between the two is easy to recognize. As women gain greater financial stability, they will feel more empowered to engage in political activity.

Human security, hence, most closely reflects economic security. Failing to link the importance and magnitude of economic independence represents the greatest downfall of the human security literature. Ensuring basic sustenance and existential protection first begins with the assurance that opportunities exists to participate openly and equally in the economy. Economists and development scholars have long decried the importance of using a country's entire human resource capacity. Adding the research from security scholars only strengthens the argument.

Pragmatically speaking, addressing human security forces policymakers to take a proactive rather than reactive stance on security. The utility of securing borders and stockpiling weapons depends upon the behavior of other actors. Improving the daily lives of individuals, however, has an immediate effect on the population. And, most importantly, human security and national security are mutually reinforcing concepts. Ignoring either paradigm weakens the state. Thus, a secure state calls for security of the population and security within the population.

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