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TROUBLING THE POLITICAL: WOMEN IN THE JORDANIAN DAY-WAGED LABOR MOVEMENT

Abstract
The Jordanian Day-Waged Labor Movement (DWLM) played a central role in the Jordanian Popular Movement (al-Hirak al-Shaʿbi al-Urduni), commonly referred to as Hirak, from 2011 to the end of 2012. The large number of women who were active and took on leading roles in the DWLM contrasts with the absence of women's rights organizations in the Hirak. I argue that the DWLM was able to attract so many women because it developed a discourse and flexible structure that understood women to be embedded within communities and prioritized their economic needs. By studying this discourse and structure, it is possible to learn important lessons about gender-inclusive political and institutional reform.

In late 2010, I attended a workshop at the Royal Cultural Center in Amman on women's civil and political rights in Jordan. The audience of about fifty people included the most prominent women's rights activists in Jordan, most of whom were from middle- and upper middle-class backgrounds and lived in West Amman. At the end of the question-and-answer session, a man with a heavy rural accent, who looked as if he did not fit in, stood up to make an intervention. At the time I could not identify him, but I later learned that he was Muhammad Snayd, the spokesperson and leader of the Day-Waged Labor Movement (DWLM, or Hirak ʿUmmal al-Muyawama). Snayd asked the esteemed women of the audience why they had not joined a recent sleep-in organized by the DWLM in front of the Royal Court, which attracted over twenty female day-waged workers. The women and men of the DWLM had been protesting their low salaries and the fact that labor laws did not apply to them (see below). "Where were you?" Snayd asked. He wondered out loud why the audience before him, supposedly made up of women's rights activists, had not come out to support these women, who had mustered the courage to leave their families overnight despite being from so-called tribal, and thus arguably conservative, backgrounds. "These are women from the governorates.[1] Where were you? Why didn't you support them?" he asked.

I could not get Snayd's intervention out of my mind. How was it possible for women from the governorates, or any Jordanian women for that matter, to spend a night away from home with male colleagues? Did their families consent? I wanted to find out more about these women, who had arguably participated in one of the most culturally radical

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acts in Jordan in fifty years, to see what they could teach us about women's rights activism. Thus began fifteen months of fieldwork involving semistructured interviews, focus groups, and participant observation. The interviews and focus groups were conducted in Karak, Madaba, Irbid, Jarash, Amman, Ajloun, Salt, and Wadi Shuʿaib. I also participated in a national demonstration co-organized by the DWLM and in several weekly DWLM demonstrations in front of the Ministry of Agriculture in Amman. My aim was to find out how this group was able to achieve what no other Jordanian women's empowerment project, or Jordanian women's group in general, had been able to achieve before, namely, to include large numbers of women in its base and leadership and to successfully organize and carry out protests that were widely deemed socially unacceptable. In this article, I argue that the involvement of so many women in the DWLM was attributable to the group's discourse and structure. In both domains, the DWLM focused on women as embedded within communities and prioritized their economic needs. The Jordanian DWLM, I maintain, represents an alternative to dominant patriarchal political organizing that situates men as the primary participants, leaders, and audiences. In the DWLM's model, women are present and active at all levels of the organization.

Given the paucity of literature on the DWLM, this article is based largely on primary research.[2] One of its main contributions is to document the history and development of this group. In the first part I introduce the history, main demands, and structure of the DWLM, particularly in relation to the Jordanian Popular Movement (al-Hirak al-Shaʿbi al-Urduni, or Hirak for short). In the second part I analyze the DMLW's success attracting women participants, which I connect to the group's discourse and structure. The DMLW's methods, which cut across all of its activities, included an emphasis on the problems facing day-waged workers; a focus on women not as individuals per se but as embedded within families and communities; and a flexible, nonprofessionalized approach. I conclude by asking whether the activism and politicization realized by women day-waged workers can extend beyond the life of the movement.

THE JORDANIAN POPULAR MOVEMENT

While Jordan did not experience a revolution in 2011–12, it has witnessed the rise of workers' strikes, governorate protests, civil and political initiatives, and weekly protests throughout the country, all of which is commonly referred to as the Hirak. The Hirak encompasses workers' groups, youth and governorate-based groups that emerged during the period of the Arab Spring, and political parties. It was most active between January 2011 and the end of 2012, a period in which it organized weekly Friday protests, workers' strikes, and civil initiatives. Starting in 2012 Hirak activism was conducted largely outside of Amman in the governorates. Hirak activists made varied demands, but they tended to emphasize social justice, critiques of neoliberal economics, nationalization of previously privatized industries and resources, the need to fight corruption, and constitutional and legal reform.

Very little has been written on the day-waged workers and their organized movement,[3] the DWLM, though they are widely credited for providing the spark that ignited "Jordan's Spring."[4] In fact, the DWLM has arguably been the most successful single-issue movement since the lifting of martial law in Jordan in 1989. For these reasons alone it deserves close study. But analysis of the movement is also important for helping us

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understand why and how this initiative, unlike many others, was able to secure and sustain such a large presence of women in both its base and its leadership. The literature that does exist on the Hirak, with a few exceptions,[5] has focused on political and youth groups that participated in Friday protests.[6] Although this literature emphasizes the Hirak's diverse nature, it has not dealt with the DWLM and labor movements in general even though most of the protests that made up Jordan's Hirak were labor protests. In 2011 the country saw an unprecedented rise in workers' demonstrations. By September of that year, 607 workers' protests had already been organized, compared to 140 protests in all of 2010.[7] The majority of these 607 protests were organized by day-waged laborers.[8]

One reason that Jordanian workers' groups have received so little attention is that much of the scholarly literature on oppositional politics in Jordan focuses on actors who make political demands.[9] These political demands are seen as separate from and are often juxtaposed to economic demands. Where mention is made of actors who make economic demands, these actors are usually depicted as unsophisticated, and their demands as insignificant. In his study on Hirak activists, Sean Yom, for example, highlights their demands for political reform. He writes that these demands shattered "stereotypes that tribal Jordanians cared first and foremost about economic welfare."[10] Hassan Barari has maintained that any real reform effort has to target the gerrymandered parliament "at the heart of Jordan's political struggle."[11] Scholarly literature on Jordan invariably stresses that the most pressing issue faced by Jordanians is the absence of real democracy and political representation.[12]

In privileging the fight for political rights over that for economic rights, scholars have followed Jordanian opposition parties on the ground, with groups such as the Islamic Action Front (IAF) directing their efforts toward lobbying for amendments to the Political Parties Law and the Electoral Law. Yet by focusing solely on parliament as the platform for democratization, scholars make the assumption that parliament is an institution with real political power. Further, this assumption, based on the belief that the political and the economic are separate realms, diverts our attention from the political nature of neoliberal economic policies. As a result, the effects of economic policies on various segments of Jordanian society are depoliticized. Hirak activists' struggle for socioeconomic justice is thus understood as a matter of distribution rather than as resistance to neoliberal economic policies and structures.[13] Finally, as I argue below, this narrow definition of politics is highly patriarchal in that it excludes the personal from the category of the political. It is no coincidence that for the majority of onlookers the DWLM's form of activism does not seem political. As feminist theorists have long argued, after centuries of patriarchy excluding the personal from the political—indeed juxtaposing it to the political—patriarchal hegemonic notions of the political as inherently nonpersonal have become normative.[14]

By extension, single-issue groups such as the DWLM—which, focused on only one issue, do not explicitly demand broad political reform—are deemed to be lacking. For instance, in a study by the Jordanian civil society organization Identity Center entitled "Map of Political Parties and Movements in Jordan, 2013–2014," no mention is made of workers' movements, strikes, and protests.[15] This absence indicates the authors' belief that workers' movements are not part of the map of *political* forces. As Yom's quote above indicates, scholars have assumed that demands for economic welfare are something from which Hirak activists would do best to distance themselves if

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they are to be taken seriously as *political* actors. In this article, I argue that economic demands are at the heart of the political struggle. Moreover, it is precisely by privileging economic demands and rights that the DWLM was able to be so inclusive of women.

The ability of the DWLM to attract so many women stems from its very constitution as a supposedly unsophisticated type of organization—a single-issue movement that calls for targeted economic reforms rather than political reforms, does not have a hierarchical structure, and does not produce paperwork or official documents. The DWLM is not an example of a nonpolitical group being able to do what political groups cannot, for the DWLM's work is highly political. It is political because, as Cynthia Enloe and other feminists have taught us, the personal is inescapably political.[16] Indeed, it is on the personal level that the political is lived most acutely. The work of the DWLM is therefore a practical example of what grounded, political work, which starts not with abstract ideology but with the lived reality of its members, looks like, and how such work is able to include women and men in egalitarian, nonpatriarchal structures.

To summarize, DWLM activism disrupts two main dichotomies: the political versus the economic and the political versus the personal. The DWLM's political work was both economic and personal. Before proceeding to the question of how the DWLM was able to be so inclusive of women, it is first necessary to define the day-waged worker and to provide some background information on the DWLM.

DEFINING THE DAY-WAGED WORKER AND THE DWLM

Day-waged workers can be defined as those who work for the government or private firms for daily wages. Among their ranks are engineers, technicians, secretaries, janitors, mechanics, messengers, drivers, and other types of professionals.[17] What makes them day-waged laborers is that, unlike all other employees, they are paid daily rather than monthly. Furthermore, day-waged workers who work for the public sector are not legally classified as part of the Civil Service Bureau, meaning that civil service regulations do not apply to them. They are also not classified as first-, second-, or third-degree employees—classifications associated with education level that determine salary, rights, and duties. According to civil service regulations, third-degree employment is for those who have completed either vocational training or a maximum of one year of community college education. It is the lowest possible form of permanent employment in a public institution.[18] Because day-waged workers are not included in this category, no less the second or first, they do not qualify for most rights given to public sector employees, such as vacation days or salary requirements.

Day-waged workers are divided into three categories: permanent (*dāʾim*), temporary (*muaʾqqat*), and seasonal (*mawsimī*).[19] Permanent day-waged workers are not actually permanently hired laborers. They have no additional job security compared to their nonpermanent counterparts. The category has the label "permanent" because the nature of the work it involves requires permanently having hired staff. Temporary day-waged workers are those hired only for a specific task, after which their employment ends. Seasonal workers are mostly fieldworkers hired to harvest a particular crop or to cut trees during a certain time of year. Uniting all of these laborers is that they are paid by the

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day. Lacking stability and job security, they can be fired or transferred to another location at the whim of their superior.[20] Moreover, they are discriminated against in terms of pay and eligibility for benefits to which civil service employees are entitled. While all day-waged laborers are technically included in the Social Security Cooperation (al-Daman al-Ijtimaʿi) health plan, they have to work for years to be eligible for coverage.[21] Lastly, day-waged workers, unable to have their salary transferred into their bank account, must receive compensation in cash.[22] As a result, they cannot take out bank loans—one of the most pressing problems faced by workers.

The DWLM comprised mostly day-waged laborers in the Ministry of Agriculture. Most of these laborers belonged to the permanent category. The participants interviewed for this study performed tasks ranging from farm to secretarial work. Workers in the DWLM mainly protested low pay, lack of the kind of benefits usually associated with employment in the public sector (such as a retirement fund), and lack of job security; they also demanded the right to establish new unions.[23] The DWLM held its first public demonstration on 1 May 2006. Its main demand was that all day-waged workers be hired permanently so that they would be subject to civil service regulations (*dīwān al-khidma al-madaniyya*), which govern all other employees in the Jordanian public sector. Indeed, it called for the category of "day-waged laborers" to cease to exist altogether.[24] The workers argued that although they did the same work as other employees in the ministry, they received lower salaries, were deprived of many benefits such as medical insurance, had fewer holidays (at the time of my research, they were given fourteen days off for holiday and fourteen sick days annually, with additional days off resulting in a salary deduction), and had no job security.[25] In addition, unlike other government employees, when day-waged laborers fell ill they could not go to a medical committee within the ministry to request extra sick days.[26] If the workers transitioned to third-degree government employment, the DWLM reasoned, such inequalities would cease to exist.[27]

DWLM activists also called for a living wage. Over the past twenty years, the minimum wage in Jordan has gone up from about JD75 ($105) to JD190 ($268)[28] per month before tax deductions. Meanwhile, the most conservative studies measure the poverty line at JD400 ($564) per month.[29] Nuha al-Shamayla, a single woman who is the sole provider for her sick brother and unmarried sister, and was one of the leaders of the DWLM[30] and a liaison person for the governorate of Karak, defined a living wage as one that "provides me with means of comfort; [what I mean] is that I can afford to pay rent, pay for the basic requirements of my family . . . that I am insured against hazardous and dangerous work."[31]

Day-waged workers have made some advances. Their activism and protests propelled successive governments to meet some of their demands.[32] At the end of 2007 the government formed a committee to study the conditions of workers not included in the payroll system. This committee recommended that by the end of 2009 all day-waged laborers be included in the civil service regulations.[33] This recommendation, which would mean an end to day wages, was not implemented fully until August 2015. The government has conceded on the minimum wage issue though. When protests first started in 2006 salaries were as low as JD150 ($211) per month.[34] Due to their efforts, day-waged workers now qualify for minimum wage, or JD190 ($268) per month before tax deductions.[35]

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As part of documenting the DWLM, I will now discuss the movement's stages of development and the central role of women within it. According to the DWLM's leader Snayd, the idea for the movement emerged in early 2006 when he found himself, not for the first time, in front of the Ministry of Agriculture. Waiting to see the minister, he encountered two men who, like him, sought to make an appeal. After they introduced themselves to one another, Snayd discovered that the men, also like him, were day-waged laborers. All three men had tried to take advantage of the connections available to them to gain permanent employment but had fallen short. For his part, Snayd had been trying to get hired permanently since 1995.[36] The three men were at their wits end, with one even proposing going in and shooting the minister. After they shared a laugh at this idea, the second colleague proposed holding an *iʿtiṣām*.

Before describing what occurred next, I diverge briefly to explain the meaning of the word *iʿtiṣām*. I choose to transliterate rather than translate *iʿtiṣām* because the word has no direct translation in English. Its meaning is somewhere between a sit-in, a demonstration, a protest, a rally, and a vigil. While the closest translation is likely "demonstration" or "protest," whenever I used the Arabic equivalent of these words—*muẓāhara*—in front of my interlocutors to describe their actions they would correct me by insisting they were conducting an *iʿtiṣām*. For them, the word *iʿtiṣām* did not carry the negative connotation that *muẓāhara* seemed to hold, particularly in its association with confrontation with the state, unruliness, and illegality. They argued that, far from opposing the state, they were asking the state to apply the law to them. Their refusal to use the word *muẓāhara* might have also been a reflection of their fear of the secret service.

Returning to the story of the three men, they agreed that day to stage an *iʿtiṣām* and to recruit some of their colleagues to the cause. On Labor Day—1 May 2006—thirteen day-waged laborers held their first *iʿtiṣām* in front of the Ministry of Agriculture. Seven of the demonstrators were women.[37] As news of the *iʿtiṣām* spread quickly through the media, others reached out to Snayd at the Directorate of Agriculture in Dhiban, where he worked, to ask when the next *iʿtiṣām* would occur. Two weeks later sixty-eight people, approximately twenty of whom were women, gathered for a second *iʿtiṣām*.[38] In response, Maʿruf al-Bakhit, the then prime minister of Jordan, decided to meet with the workers. During the meeting the workers demanded that they be hired permanently and that the government stop hiring people as *day-waged* laborers, a practice that in their view violated labor law. My interlocutors described al-Bakhit as having been very accommodating.[39] In a cabinet meeting, a three-stage plan was devised to permanently hire all day-waged laborers who had started working before 1 October 2006.[40] While this fell short of the DWLM's demand, the group considered it a step in the right direction. When the government stalled on implementing the three-stage plan as a result of a change of prime minister, the workers held further sit-ins.[41]

At the second *iʿtiṣām,* one of the organizers suggested creating a formal committee in order to be more effective. The committee would comprise representatives from each governorate who would serve as liaisons organizing the workers in their own districts. From its start this committee had both men and women, including Sukayna, a widow and mother of three who had been part of the struggle since it began.[42] The committee agreed that Snayd would be the official spokesperson.[43]

The next stage of DWLM activism started on 27 November 2007 when Prime Minister Nadir al-Dhahabi included Saʿid al-Masri in his cabinet as minister of agriculture. An

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engineer by education and a commercial farmer by profession, al-Masri was no stranger to agriculture. Early in his tenure at the ministry he had visited the different governorates and was disturbed by the poverty he witnessed.[44] Al-Masri was aware that in the past members of parliament were each given an "informal" quota of people they could hire as day-waged laborers. He approached al-Dhahabi to ask him if he could hire some people to work in his ministry because he believed that this would alleviate poverty in the region. Al-Dhahabi agreed. Neither al-Dhahabi nor al-Masri seemed to have been aware of the previous government's promise to stop the practice of day-waged labor. Upon hearing that positions at the Ministry of Agriculture were available, many of the women I interviewed traveled to Amman to apply. Some of them—including Lina, a single mother whose job as a day-waged worker was initially to make tea but later involved managing all transportation at her directorate—were hired. Other women were hired when al-Masri visited their village. Most of the DWLM women I met in Jarash, Ajloun, and Irbid were employed during this period.

On 14 December 2009 Samir al-Rifaʿi replaced al-Dhahabi as prime minister. Shortly after assuming the role, al-Rifaʿi called al-Masri, who was serving a second term as minister of agriculture, to inform him that the government lacked the funds to pay the salaries of the newly appointed day-waged laborers. Al-Masri was asked to let go of the workers he had just hired.[45] As a result, on 1 January 2010, 256 workers were fired. This was the trigger for a second wave of *iʿtiṣām*s. The majority of workers who were active in this second wave were newly hired and fired laborers, for by the beginning of 2010 most of the workers who had been active in the first wave of *iʿtiṣām*s—Sukayna among them—had been hired permanently. Many of these workers were women. In Karak alone fifty-six of the eighty new day-waged laborers employed by al-Masri were women. The make-up of the committee reflected the new composition of the movement. The liaison people and, by extension, committee members for Irbid, Ajloun, and Karak, were all women—Lina, al-Shamayla (both of whom we met earlier), and Amani, a Christian mother of four girls who has been a day-waged worker since 2009 doing mostly data entry.[46]

The committee decided to hold sit-ins every Tuesday in front of relevant government buildings in the capital.[47] However, the DWLM struggled with lack of funds. Many workers could not afford travel to Amman to participate. Lina and other workers had to lobby their MPs and community members to raise funds for the bus fare. Deploying a discourse of rights and citizenship, they argued that it was their MPs' responsibility to enable them to attend and participate in the protest. In an interesting twist on the common understanding of parliamentarians as service providers mainly of jobs, day-waged workers asked their MPs to provide them the service of funding that would allow them to engage in public protests for jobs.

Another way participants overcame a lack of financial resources for themselves and their colleagues was by selling some of their belongings. For example, in order to attend an *iʿtiṣām* Lina once sold one of the gas jars that she used to fuel her little gas oven at home, leaving her children without heating.[48] A more detailed discussion of the severe economic hardships that DWLM participants faced will be provided later in the article.

The sit-ins were organized in front of the Ministry of Agriculture and later the Prime Ministry. At each one, government representatives would emerge either to meet with select members (invariably Snayd, Lina, Sukayna, and al-Shamayla) or to make promises

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to the protestors.[49] During one meeting held after a sit-in the women were especially frustrated. They argued that more drastic measures of protest were required. Amani, the Ajloun liaison at the time, suggested an overnight sit-in in front of the Royal Court. Snayd initially opposed the idea, arguing that, given the conservative backgrounds of most of the female workers, it would be difficult to carry out. The women insisted, however, and decided by majority vote to proceed.

The overnight sit-in was held on 29 March 2010[50] and lasted well into the following day.[51] Participants' estimates of the number of women present varied. Al-Shamayla argued that twenty-four women came from Karak alone. She maintained that during the day more than two-thirds of the roughly 100 demonstrators were women, whereas at night the number sank to about half.[52] Snayd argued that the number of women was larger than that of men both during the day and at night.[53] Lina and two other women came from northern cities and Amani came from Ajloun.[54] During the protest the DWLM was aided by the Social Leftist Movement and the Democratic Youth Movement.[55] The two groups provided female protestors with two tents. Female protestors were able to use the toilet at the nearby mosque; when it closed they could go to the homes of members of the Social Leftist Movement and the Democratic Youth Movement.[56] In response to the sleep-in, the government agreed to allow 200 of the 256 workers (those without university degrees and thus ineligible for third-, second-, and first-degree civil service employment) to resume work on 1 May 2010. All of the women I interviewed agreed that it was the sleep-in that forced the government to rehire those it had let go. The remaining fifty-six workers with university degrees were told that they needed to go to the Registrar of Civil Service to be rehired. However, the Registrar of Civil Service did not rehire them. Protests continued for another eleven months until university degree holders were finally allowed to return to work on 1 February 2011.

State hiring practices adversely affected the movement's institutional memory. As older workers were hired permanently and new workers joined the struggle, the cycle of activist work—that is, of mobilization and solidarity building—often started anew with little involvement from previous activists. It is also crucial to note that those activists who chose to continue working on the issue of day-waged labor after being hired permanently faced disciplinary action. Al-Shamayla, for example, who worked in the Directorate of Agriculture in Karak, was issued a warning for participating in an *iʿtiṣām* after she was no longer a day-waged laborer.[57] Snayd, who refused to be hired permanently until the last day-waged worker had a permanent position, faced continuous harassment, culminating in his dismissal and a lawsuit.[58]

The third stage of activism coincided with the start of Jordan's Hirak on 7 January 2011. In terms of fighting for their rights as workers, DWLM activists were not as active during the Hirak as before the beginning of the Arab uprisings. They did, however, play an important role in the emergence of the Hirak by laying much of the groundwork for breaking the fear barrier that prevented many from engaging in political activism or participating in demonstrations.[59] Snayd, for example, had founded the Dhiban Youth Committee—Dhiban being a small city near Madaba in central Jordan where the Hirak protests started—which first called for the weekly Friday demonstrations that became the hallmark of the Hirak. DWLM activists later made up many of the Hirak's initial governorate organizers. And on 7 January 2011, Snayd and others in the DWLM organized the first official Hirak demonstration through the contact

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base of the DWLM, holding simultaneous Friday protests in numerous cities across Jordan.[60]

Since the beginning of 2011, there have been far fewer workers' protests on the day-waged labor front. This is partially due to the success of the movement, whose demands have largely been met. The day-waged laborers who were hired by the Ministry of Agriculture before 1 October 2006 were hired permanently. By the third stage, all of the remaining 256 workers were allowed to resume their work, albeit initially as day-waged workers rather than permanent employees. The Cabinet's three-stage plan to hire all day-waged laborers permanently was finally implemented on 1 August 2015. In addition to day-waged workers in the Ministry of Agriculture, all nonpermanent workers (*ʿumāl khārij jadwal al-tashkīlāt*) with the exception of seasonal workers are now employees of the Bureau of Civil Service.[61] Snayd maintains that since the start of DWLM activism over 50,000 workers have been hired permanently, including all 4,800 day-waged laborers in the Ministry of Agriculture.[62]

EXPLAINING THE LARGE PRESENCE OF WOMEN

In this section I turn to the question of why women had such a formidable presence in the DWLM. I argue that the primary reason for this presence was the movement's emphasis on a single issue, namely, the economic rights of workers, in both its discourse and its structure. When women's empowerment is mentioned in relation to Jordan, tribalism and traditional values are routinely invoked as the principal obstacles to women's full participation in society.[63] How is it, then, that women from rural and tribal backgrounds were so active in the DWLM? Admittedly, some women's families prevented them from being as active as they would have liked. Nevertheless, it was rural women from so-called tribal[64] backgrounds rather than their urban, supposedly nontribal sisters in the women's rights sector, who took to the streets to protest.

Furthermore, the DWLM's gender inclusivity must be contrasted with the low percentages of women participating in Jordan's political parties. The latter do not keep official records on the number of women members. However, based on the estimates of party spokespeople, the IAF has the highest percentage of women in leadership positions, with 50 percent of the party's representatives in the current Shura Council being women.[65] The Communist Party asserts that women make up between 18 and 20 percent of its membership,[66] while Abla Abu ʿUlba, the general secretary of the Democratic People's Party, estimates the percentage of women in her party to be about 29 or 30 percent.[67]

Most, if not all, of the participants in the DWLM worked because they had to. Their salaries were vital to the economic survival of their families. The movement's primary concern was to better the economic situation of its participants through permanent hiring, which would ensure eligibility for a pay raise, retirement funds, and health insurance. It was the movement's preoccupation with economic concerns that led the vast majority of my interlocutors to join it.

Moreover, the DWLM's discourse and structure were aligned and in conversation with the lived reality of the movement's participants. In terms of its women members, the DWLM was conscious of and sensitive to their social and economic restrictions. As a result, women were able to find ways around these restrictions and to participate

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in spite of them. For instance, when the DWLM organized any event, it included the families of female participants, thus engaging female workers as inseparable parts of their families. The DWLM viewed its female members both as coworkers and in their familial relational capacities, and it did so not out of a belief in a greater ideology or theory, but rather organically by working within and respecting established communal and familial structures. Similarly, appreciating that it would be too expensive for members to travel to Amman to attend a meeting, the movement organized much of its work through the virtual realm of phone trees. In other words, the DWLM created a loose, fluid structure that did not require members to commit to fixed meetings demanding personal time outside of work. As a result, women were able to be active in the movement without sacrificing substantive time with their families.

In terms of discourse, the DWLM argued that it sought economic justice. Participants largely emphasized their interest not in political reform but in the single issue of workers' rights as workers. They also argued for their inherent right as citizens to engage in this form of labor protest. However, the discourse that emerged from the DWLM was limited as the movement mostly focused on practice. DWLM discourse remained within the boundaries set by the practice in which the group was engaged. Both in discourse and practice, the DWLM drew on lived reality rather than ideology.[68] To appreciate its emphasis on economic reform and how this emphasis acted as a magnet for mobilization, it is necessary to further understand participants' harsh living conditions and the problems they faced. In the next section I outline the participants' economic grievances. These grievances were the basis upon which the discourse and structure of the DWLM developed.

ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

The primary reason why women and men joined the DWLM was that it fought to alleviate their difficult economic situation. Economic hardship touched every aspect of the lives of DWLM participants, many of whom were the primary providers for their families. The day-waged workers I interviewed were constantly in debt, and often had to stretch their meager salaries to support their nuclear and extended families. The sisters Ahlam and Maysun, who grew up in the Jordan Valley area, were forced to support their family financially from a very young age. Maysun attended school through the fifth grade; Ahlam was never officially registered. When their mother got sick the sisters took over her work at privately owned farms in the Jordan Valley. Since 2010 they have worked as temporary day-waged workers in the Ministry of Agriculture's farm at Wadi Shuʿaib. Their father, who is married to four wives, never worked, making Maysun and Ahlam the primary providers for this family of thirty. The other women working in the Wadi Shuʿaib farm also came from families in which they or their female relatives were the main providers because male relatives were unable to gain employment in the military. Most of the women I met there had been working on farms since they were in school. Initially they would work during their school breaks, though some dropped out to work fulltime.[69]

Meeting Mazyuna, a tall and cheerful woman in her twenties, one would never guess how difficult her life had been. After her father died, she became the breadwinner of the family.[70] Mazyuna held a university degree but there were no jobs for graduates where she

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lived. She applied to every job she could. In an effort to secure employment, she and her mother traveled to Amman and went from ministry to ministry applying for vacancies. Mazyuna and her family were beside themselves with joy when she finally started working as a day-waged worker in one of the directorates of agriculture in Jordan. She did not reveal that she had a university degree, for she knew from the experience of her relatives that she would have had to apply to the Bureau of Civil Service to be classified according to her academic degree, after which, due to the high number of applicants and limited opportunities, it would takes years for the Bureau to reply, if it did at all.[71] Shortly after starting in the role, Mazyuna got married to a man who worked in the army. However, her financial situation did not improve significantly[72] because their combined salaries did not cover their expenses, which included supporting Mazyuna's mother and siblings. The birth of their first daughter increased their expenses substantially. To save on their electricity and water bills the family lives apart, with Mazyuna staying with her mother and her husband with his family.[73]

Al-Shamayla also struggled to secure employment. Although she earned the second highest grades in the governorate of Karak on the national *tawjīhī* exams (the Jordanian equivalent of the British A levels) in the agricultural stream,[74] she was not able to attend university due to her family's limited financial resources. Initially al-Shamayla worked in the private sector at a chicken-breeding farm called al-Wataniyya li-l-Dawajin.[75] At JD90 ($126) monthly, her salary was far below the minimum wage, but al-Shamayla needed it to support her disabled younger brother and unmarried sister. Her financial situation became even worse when the firm demanded that its women employees work nightshifts.[76] When al-Shamayla, knowing that the labor law protected women from working at night, objected, she was let go with thirteen other women. Under the leadership of al-Shamayla, the women filed a complaint against the firm at the Karak governorate.[77] She described the incident as follows:

> What happened is that the governor was in cahoots (*mutʾamir*) with the chicken farm. I told them, in order for a woman to work night shifts you have to get her written permission and that of the minister of labor, but they did not have either . . . In the end the directorate brokered a deal with the chicken farm. We could return to work but under mitigated rights (*ḥuqūq manqūṣa*). We were registered as working the day shift, which is considered only part time. As a result we did not get our full salaries. They would randomly deduct JD40–50 [$56–$70] each month. Once I only got JD40.[78]

That al-Shamayla continued to work indicates how desperately she needed the income. Every dinar counts. Suha, who worked in the Wadi Shuʿaib farm, was also forced to accept minimal pay, receiving JD0.5 (70 cents) per hour working on a private farm before finding employment in the Ministry of Agriculture.[79] In sum, the DWLM's success in ensuring that day-waged laborers are paid at least minimum wage cannot be underestimated.

Due to their low wages, most women were perpetually in debt. Lamis, for example, who is married and has four children, explained that the moment she received her salary she had to pay back everyone from her community who had lent her money during the previous month. Within a week of paying back her debt, however, she was forced to borrow again.[80] Sukayna, despite earning more than most of my study's participants, was also continuously in debt. She began as a day-waged worker in 1995,[81] the year in which

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her husband died and left her with three young children, and remained one for seventeen years before being permanently hired. Now she lives in one of the houses donated by King ʿAbd Allah to families in need (*makrūma malakiyya*).[82] Sukayna argues that being in debt is a national problem: "Taking loans has become an addiction [in Jordan]. This is not because we want to indulge in luxuries, but because we don't have an alternative source of income. We have no land to sell, no business on the side, no other options—only taking loans."[83] Because day-waged workers cannot take out loans from banks, their only option is to take them out from others in their communities. But even this source of income dries up when community members do not have spare income.

The economic hardship faced by DWLM participants must be seen in the context of broad changes within Jordan's economy. In the last twenty years Jordan has undergone economic liberalization through an austerity program imposed by the IMF as part of a structural adjustment process.[84] Starting in 2000, privatization was aggressively pursued. Most Jordanian public property (factories, raw materials, etc.) has been privatized, including enterprises in telecommunications, water, transport, and manufacturing.[85] While privatization was initially successful in generating wealth, this wealth did not contribute to greater income equality. On the contrary, it has led to a widening gap between rich and poor.[86] In 2008, "the richest segment of the population spent almost two folds the amount spent by the middle class and almost fourteen times more than the poorest segment of the population."[87] Moreover, there have been fierce debates over how these firms were privatized and the possible corruption involved.[88] Using a popular farmer's saying, al-Shamayla compared privatization to "selling a cow that gives us seven liters of milk per day for the price of one liter, and then having to buy the milk from those to whom we sold the cow."[89] Al-Shamayla's analogy parallels a common critique of privatization in Jordan, namely, that firms were sold far below their real value in corrupt deals that have led to economic dependency on imports[90]; and in a country with almost no natural resources, the privatization of the main factories and state industry has heavily affected the state's ability to generate income.

Poverty rates are highest among Jordanians in rural governorates. According to the Jordanian Department of Statistics, the highest poverty rates in 2010 were in Maʿan, followed by Ajloun, al-Balqa, and Jarash.[91] With most private sector jobs located in Amman, inhabitants of the governorates are often limited to public sector opportunities. However, as privatization and neoliberal economic policies have stripped the public sector of its importance, such opportunities have become increasingly less available.[92] This decline is especially detrimental to women workers—and educated women workers in particular—since they invariably belong to the public sector.[93] Saʿid al-Masri, the former minister of agriculture, argues that the reason he had to let go of so many day-waged laborers during what I called the second phase of activism was that the state was no longer financially capable of providing day-waged jobs, the purpose of which was poverty alleviation.[94]

Snayd's story captures the momentous socioeconomic changes experienced by rural families, whose youngest members now work as day-waged laborers. Snayd's grandfather was a landowner and sheep farmer. He owned 433 dunam (one dunam equals 1000 square meters) and over one thousand sheep.[95] Snayd's father (Abu Muhammd) continued to farm the land and tend sheep. However, when in 1992 the government started pumping local water to supply Amman, he and other farmers were left with insufficient

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water for their crops. At the same time, the price of barley rose. No longer able to afford barley for his sheep,[96] Abu Muhammad reverted to cheaper processed food, causing the sheep to get sick and many to die. As a result of all of this, Abu Muhammad was forced to abandon farming and to slowly sell off his surviving sheep. After losing his source of livelihood, he started working as a day-waged laborer for the Ministry of Labor in Jarash, earning JD75 ($105) per month. Of this amount, he used JD20 ($28) to pay off his debts at the grocer.[97]

While this story might be an extreme example, it is indicative of how the lives of many "East Bank" Jordanian families from rural backgrounds changed over the past fifty years.[98] The majority of my interlocutors were from rural backgrounds. It is likely that their grandfathers or great grandfathers owned substantial land or at least enough of it to sustain themselves and their families. While high birthrates caused the land to be divided among inheritors so that making a sufficient living became difficult, this was neither the only reason nor always the main factor for this segment's impoverishment, as the previous example shows. Other forces at play included lifting of state subsidies, price increases, decreased state spending, and, as in the case of Snayd's family, state centralization, which deprived rural areas of their water supply. As a result, Snayd's father, an independent farmer and sheep grower, found himself in employed poverty.[99]

The preoccupation of day-waged workers and others in the Hirak with economic rights is not, therefore, a matter of "the East Bankers no longer trust[ing] the existing system to work to their advantage,"[100] as Julien Barnes-Dacey claims. Rather it is the result of neoliberal economics: "Jordan is not seeing a withdrawal of rights overall, but the adoption of legal reforms and particular practices that accord certain kinds of rights to certain segments of the population while effectively denying them to others."[101] The issues raised by the DWLM are thus highly political in nature. They include questions of economic self-determination, that is, how economic resources are distributed and in whose favor, as well as demands to expand democratic decision making to encompass economic matters and policy.

DISCOURSE

It is this economic context that pushed women to participate in the DWLM. The movement's focus on economic rights in general and the right of government employees to a decent standard of living in particular rang true for the activists and their families and communities. The DWLM's demands were driven not by ideological commitments but by the real economic hardship faced by families. Being active in the DWLM was less a choice than a necessity. The discourse of participants interviewed for this study reflects this point.

Since members in the movement were only loosely affiliated with each other and it had no official paperwork, one is unable to speak of a clear or united ideology or discourse. Different actors had very different understandings of their work. Some, such as al-Shamayla and Snayd, saw themselves as part of the Hirak and their work as highly political. Others were hesitant to affiliate themselves with the Hirak despite the DWLM's importance to it. They juxtaposed their activism to that of Hirak participants, whom they saw as political actors, and justified it by drawing on their experiences of economic hardship. They were careful to underline the legality of their work. For many,

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participation in a single-issue movement meant not interfering in matters that did not concern them. They argued that they were simply demanding their own rights as citizens.

Many day-waged workers I interviewed had divergent ideas about the meaning of politics. Because hegemonic liberal discourse defines the political as the work of the executive and legislative branches of government, workers saw their actions, focused as they were on economic goals, as outside the realm of politics. Thus, although they argued that their work was not political, in discussing their own actions they described an alternative form of politics. I will elaborate on this alternative understanding in the following sections.

RECONCEPTUALIZING CITIZENSHIP

My interlocutors' discourse reflects their concern for economic security. In my interviews with them, many spoke of how their low salaries prevented them from leading a dignified life.[102] As citizens of Jordan, they maintained, they had a right to live in dignity. Jana, for example, a mother of three daughters and two sons, believed that her children had a right to a university education if their grades allowed it.[103]

In the view of my study's participants, both men and women were equally important as breadwinners. And in their effort to secure greater economic justice, participants had the support of their families and communities, who saw women's struggle to secure better economic conditions to be of utmost significance. As was the case with al-Shamayla, the sisters Ahlam and Maysun, and the widows Lina and Sukayna, women were often the principal providers in the family.

During my research, my interlocutors constantly invoked the language of rights. However, the types of rights that Snayd and women such as al-Shamayla and Sukayna demanded were different from the political rights usually discussed in the post–Cold War world.[104] These were *economic* rights: the right to a job, a living wage, a decent standard of living, health insurance, housing. Al-Shamayla argued that there should be laws guaranteeing workers a decent living. As for Sukayna, she critiqued the liberal notion of political rights upheld by many political parties. She states, for example, that:

> We do not get the simplest citizenship rights . . . they gave me the right to vote, but I do not want this right because it is an incomplete right . . . [the state] is able to do what it wants whether I use this right or not; I do not want it. In its place, I want a different right, I want to live, I want to drive a car, I want to be allowed to live.[105]

Sukayna went on to argue that political rights such as the right to vote mean little when a person does not have money to buy food for her children. Moreover, she suggested that voting, even when elections are free and fair, might not guarantee that her economic rights can be secured. This speaks to the discussion earlier in the article about the elevation, indeed supremacy, of political rights—understood in the conventional sense of the term—over economic rights, and the assumption that the former are more sophisticated.

THE PRIMACY OF THE PERSONAL: ANOTHER KIND OF POLITICS?

My interlocutors did not express interest in abstract political concepts and slogans. Instead, they argued for political engagement based on immediate material realities.

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Most maintained that their work was not political. The DWLM, they affirmed, was concerned with only one issue: workers' rights. If some of its members believed in organized political work, they did so as individuals. Acute economic necessity (seen as separate from political involvement) caused otherwise seemingly conservative women to participate in very radical action, such as participating in a sleep-in with male colleagues.

This fear of being seen as engaging in political work was likely an outcome of Jordan's martial rule (1957–89) and the continued interference of the General Intelligence Department (GID) in political life. Despite the lifting of martial law in 1989 and the supposed reintroduction of democracy, many political activists and journalists still report systematic harassment by the authorities and the GID.[106] The Press and Publication Law still enables heavy censorship of the media. The dangers associated with politics often lead the families of Jordanian women to forbid them from political activity.[107] Many women join the IAF without the knowledge of their families, and others are afraid to join because of potential secret service harassment. As a result, the IAF does not require women to officially register to become active members.[108] This fear transcends the identity divide: thus, it is not only Jordanians of Palestinian origin who do not want to appear as too politically engaged, as Ezra Karmel has suggested, but also so-called Jordanian-Jordanians.[109]

The refusal of my interlocutors to be seen as politically active may also be a rejection of the topics often considered political and of how traditional political actors engage in politics. In other words, it may be read as a critique of a certain kind of politics, and an affirmation of a different kind of politics. Sukayna, for example, once suggested to me that the DWLM does not engage in politics in the way political parties do. I asked her in reply if the movement had not called for the resignation of various prime ministers. They had, Sukayna admitted, but that was exactly the difference.

> As an employee in the Ministry of Agriculture, I am allowed to chant: "go, go Oh Samir Habashna [then minister of agriculture]." It is my right to chant against a minister who has not given me my rights and to ask for his resignation, but a leftist or a partisan does not have the right to make this demand [110]

Sukayna thus argues that groups and individuals should only speak in terms of what they know. She does not oppose political involvement, but rather prefers a politics that is based on personal experience. It is experience that should inform political action and discourse. Her statements are in direct contradiction to one of the most common critiques of groups that emerged in the context of the so-called Arab Spring, namely, that they are politically immature, naïve, or underdeveloped because they lack a political ideology, a fixed structure, and a charismatic leader.[111] For Sukayna, political credibility stems from practice. In fact, she argues that groups whose actions are based on ideology rather than practice should be regarded with suspicion. Rather than being apolitical, Sukayna (similar to many feminist scholars) advocates a politics that is personal, grounded, and connected to the economic realities that she and other activists seek to change.[112] However, it was not only the movement's grounded discourse that made it so attractive to female participants; it was also how the movement organized its activities.

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STRUCTURE AND LOGISTICS

During the period of my fieldwork (November 2011 to February 2013) women were highly represented in the movement, occupying key positions and participating in decision making. It was Amani, for example, who suggested holding a sleep-in in front of the Royal Court. I argue that one reason the day-waged workers were successful in attracting so many women was the flexible structure of their movement: organizing around a phone network and limiting meetings to protests. As will be discussed below, the DWLM took both the economic and social circumstances of women into consideration when dividing tasks and arranging meetings. It organized its activism with awareness of women's daily constraints and attempted to work around them.

Part of what facilitated the involvement of female activists was the DWLM's flexible structure. In fact, it is hard to speak of a *structure* at all. The movement did not document its activities or decisions. No minutes were taken at its meetings. It had no headquarters or bank account and did not rent meeting rooms. Furthermore, as workers were permanently hired they left the movement. New members often knew very little about events that took place before they had joined, or even events organized in the directorate where they worked.[113] Most active members had contacted Snayd after seeing him on television. Saving their numbers on his cell phone, he would call them when there was an activity planned or else have a government liaison reach out.[114] In terms of structural organization, the DWLM developed a number of acutely informal, flexible practices. These practices include developing a phone network; meeting, rather spontaneously, during protests; organizing with and through members' families; and working from home. Each practice will be examined in turn to illustrate how it facilitated women's participation.

The movement organized itself through a telephone network, with Snayd at the center and different liaison people as the branches in each governorate. The liaison person would discuss matters with the activists in her or his governorate and then report back to Snayd. When an *iʿtiṣām* was being planned, the liaison people contacted the workers. Through such a decentralized structure the DWLM was able to adapt to difficult circumstances that were always in flux.

Moreover, the phone trees enabled some female participants to transcend their geographic location by participating virtually in protests while remaining at home with their families. Women's rights advocates often emphasize the importance of seeing women as individuals and not just extensions of their families. They argue that seeing women as mothers or sisters rather than as individuals with their own rights can be disempowering. Feminist scholars have discussed the simultaneously restrictive and enabling role the family can play in many Middle Eastern societies.[115] To think of women solely as individuals can restrict women's choices.[116] As Suad Joseph points out, "connective or relational notions of selfhood can underpin relational . . . rights. . . . Relational rights imply that a person's sense of rights flows out of relationships that he or she has. It is by being invested in relationships that one comes to have rights."[117] Female day-waged activists, in addition to being workers, were daughters, mothers, wives, or sisters. They were often unable to travel where they wanted when they wanted. Apart from lacking the money to travel, they played roles in their communities that made travel difficult. Thus,

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it was precisely by working within—rather than challenging—their relational familial capacities that women could remain active.[118]

Even those who did not assume key responsibilities and major roles in the DWLM felt very much part of the movement. Through their coworkers and telephone calls from Snayd, they and their families were kept informed of the latest news. Sahar, for example, whose friend had seen Snayd on television and called him to put him in touch with her, remained in continuous communication with Snayd, who even called her and her husband on social occasions to send them best wishes, just as he would with family members or friends. Sahar was one of the 256 workers to be fired on 1 January 2010 after Samir al-Rifaʿi became prime minister. When the government gave into protests, only those without university degrees were rehired on 1 May 2010. University degree holders such as Sahar, disallowed from resuming their work as day-waged laborers, had to apply to the Bureau of Civil Service. It took Sahar over a year to return to work. On the day she finally returned Snayd called her and her husband to congratulate them,[119] a gesture that indicates his high familiarity with Sahar. Typically only friends and family, rather than someone whom the couple had never met in person, would perform such an act.

Being a liaison person was more a matter of necessity than of prestige. For this reason, there was little to no competition between workers from various directorates to fill the role. Snayd maintained that the position was filled through a process of self-selection whereby those most active and willing to take on the extra responsibility would volunteer to do so. Liaison persons argued that it was a job that had to be done. This might explain why so many women occupied the role. They were also rarely pushed out of it, perhaps because it offered so little reward. My interlocutors also emphasized that because men were the main targets of police and secret service harassment, women felt it preferable to be at the forefront of activities. Serving as a liaison person can be read as another way in which women took on the task of protecting their male colleagues.

The informal manner in which meetings were arranged also contributed to women's high participation. Meetings were only held around protests. In this way, day-waged laborers, unlike other activists who meet after work (or exclusively in Amman), did not have to sacrifice too much time with their families. The movement did not have money to rent meeting space. Some of its gatherings were held on the pavement adjacent to the Mujamaʿ al-Naqabat (Syndicate Complex) in Amman because everyone knew its location. These meetings would only happen if participants were already in Amman for a national protest. Otherwise workers in each governorate would meet on the street at the location of a local *iʿtiṣām* they had organized. It is crucial to appreciate the significance of this practice of holding meetings during *iʿtiṣām*s. Women's not having to spend money to attend meetings in person was a key contributing factor in their ability to participate.

I would now like to return to another reason women were able to participate in high numbers, namely, the DWLM's collaboration with families rather than only with individuals *as* individuals. In many of the small directorates, the workers (male and female) were often related to each other.[120] That is, in many cases women did not work with strangers but with family members. This in turn allowed families to feel comfortable with and even supportive of their female members' attending national demonstrations in the capital.

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As the example of the phone trees shows, the DWLM actively sought to include the families of their female members in its structure. Snayd made it a point to call the husbands of his female colleagues. In doing so, he demonstrated to them that speaking to his female colleagues was an "honorable" endeavor, that he respected the husbands, and that he would involve them in the organization of events. Read out of the social and cultural context of Jordan or the Arab world, this practice of asking a familial patriarch to permit a female family member to participate in a protest or meeting may be seen as playing into patriarchy. But putting theory aside, practice shows that what can be empowering varies according to context and is often far more complex than assumed.[121] That Snayd knew the women's husbands was what helped women such as Lamis, whose husband was initially opposed to her participation, to become involved in the movement.[122] In addition, it was not just fathers and husbands who were drawn in by the DWLM, but also sisters and mothers.

Some participants whose families were opposed to their attending *iʿtiṣām*s reached compromises: namely, that they could attend so long as one or more of their family members accompanied them. For this reason, many participants traveled to Amman with their mothers, husbands, and children, involving the whole family in the movement. During protests, the husbands of female day-waged workers met with their wives' male colleagues, whom they often had not met before, thereby strengthening mutual trust. In general, the families of female workers were deeply involved not just in the movement, but also in the work lives of their family member. When Lina went to Amman to meet the minister of agriculture, her sister joined her. Likewise, Mazyuna's mother accompanied her when she went from ministry to ministry in search of employment. The DWLM, by involving the families of its members, did not invent a new practice. Rather, it used a practice already in place.

Yet some DWLM women activists were still unable to attend protests and meetings due to the difficulties of traveling alone. This was especially true on weekends, when they were expected to be at home with family. In speaking to these women, I was surprised to hear them describe the various DWLM events as if they themselves had been there. Sahar and Amal from Jarash, for instance, spoke about the movement with a high level of ownership, enthusiasm, and passion, though they had not participated in a single protest due to their parents' opposition. It was the telephone network that allowed female participants to be a part of the process even when not physically present. Through it, activists provided a running commentary of the event to the (mostly female) colleagues who were not able to attend. In this way, female workers who stayed home could still participate virtually.

Those who could not attend public meetings also found ways to participate from home. Ruwayda, who after her divorce had moved back to her parents' house, was very passionate about the cause of the day-waged workers. Because her father did not believe she should leave the house to join the others at the protest, Ruwayda decided to call Snayd and propose serving as the movement's media liaison person, a function that did not previously exist. Ruwayda thus invented the function on her own initiative. Before each protest, she would call the different media correspondents to inform them when and where it could occur, and on the day of the event she would issue press releases. She also liaised with Lina and Snayd, shared their telephone numbers with journalists for interviews, and managed the workers' Facebook page.[123]

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CONCLUSION: PRESERVING THE LESSONS OF PRACTICE

In this article, I have undertaken two tasks. First, I have documented the history of the DWLM. Second, I have considered how it was possible for so many women to be active in the movement. The DWLM's high percentage of women participants, I maintain, is due to the way the movement *did* its activism and *spoke* about it. Numerous women joined and occupied leading positions in the DWLM precisely because it focused primarily on economic empowerment and worked with and around social constraints. The markedly grounded approach of the DWLM allowed participants to effectively negotiate difficult social and economic situations. The movement, intimately familiar with existing constraints, enabled participants to devise strategies to work *through* them.

In describing their involvement in the DWLM, participants argued that they were not engaged in political work. At face value, it may appear that they were afraid of appearing to be political, for many still pay a high price for being politically active in Jordan. However, given the courage participants showed in breaking social taboos and demanding their rights, their rejection of the political can also be understood as a critique of the very notion of traditional politics. Likewise, given that the DWLM's demands and modes of mobilization did not align with what is commonly referred to as "politics"—assumed to be carried out by urban-based political parties, human rights organizations, and nongovernmental organizations—its members saw their actions as falling outside the political domain. My interlocutors did not describe their work as political because the conventional meaning of the word did not speak to them. Yet their work was clearly political. Theirs was a politics of the everyday. It was experience rather than ideology that dictated the DWLM's agenda. In their work and discourse participants favored a grounded political approach through which they could address their concerns: mainly economic deprivation. It was this form of "low" politics with which many women found themselves more comfortable—being able to speak with authority despite lacking the *proper* political education.

The flexible structure and discourse of the DWLM accommodated the needs of many women and enabled them to participate in the movement. Minimizing the number of meetings and working through a phone tree, the DWLM opened the way for women to stay active without having to sacrifice too much family time. The personal relationships Snayd developed with the women and their male family members played a key role in allowing women to participate from home. In addition, women could contribute in ways other than attending demonstrations, and often took the lead in conceptualizing new roles for themselves, as did Ruwayda when she invented the media liaison position. This flexibility in organization, based on loose, personal ties in which the families of participants were included—indeed embraced—meant that women could become active members in a nonconventional sense. Thus, the point is not only that the personal is political, but also that the DWLM's practicing politics personally enabled women to participate more fully.

I conclude by asking whether this remarkably gender inclusive approach can be maintained beyond the life of this single movement. In other words, can this fluid, gender-egalitarian structure remain intact once all of the movement's demands are met and the workers make strides toward establishing an independent union? The example of the committee to reestablish a teachers union in Jordan is illuminating here. The

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Jordanian teachers union had been shut down in 1957 with the declaration of martial law, and although martial law was lifted in 1989, the teachers were not allowed to reestablish it. In 2010 teachers from all over Jordan came together to form a committee to reverse this situation. Although many of these teachers were women,[124] once the union was established not a single woman was elected into a leadership role. The reasons for this dynamic are beyond the scope of this paper, but suffice it to say that the supposed neutral structure of the union (I am not speaking only about this specific union, but rather about unions in general in Jordan) is in fact classist and androcentric. The teachers' union, like all other unions in Jordan, is based in Amman. Its meetings are mostly held after work hours. This structure makes it extremely difficult for working mothers who are expected to care for their children, and at times their entire families, in addition to women and men who do not have the financial means to travel to Amman, to attend meetings. Does this mean that any kind of institutionalization inevitably sidelines women or establishes hierarchies disadvantaging vulnerable members? Are there intrinsic problems with institutionalization? Or can we envision institutions that are race, class, and gender inclusive? How can we maintain the spirit of the flexible structures of grassroots reform, labor, and opposition movements in order to guarantee that women are not sidelined once the struggle is won?

This article is not in a position to answer these questions. I will suggest, however, that by studying and envisioning alternative institutional structures and forms of organizing that are gender egalitarian we can start to think about what these institutions might look like in a "reformed" gender and socioeconomically just society. Meeting the demands of opposition groups is not enough. If the gender and class egalitarian organization of groups such as the DWLM is to be preserved, we need to reexamine and reform androcentric, classist, and patriarchal institutions. Likewise, we must challenge the understanding of sophisticated politics as consisting of highly organized political players who have a hierarchical mode of organization with an institutionalized leadership. It is by learning from the alternative, grounded mechanisms in which grassroots protest groups mobilize that we can begin to envision the emergence of gender and socially just political realities.

NOTES

Author's note: I thank Amal Sabbagh for her mentorship and guidance, and for taking me, step-by-step, through the various dimensions of ethical qualitative research; Hala Ghosheh for her practical feedback, for keeping me grounded, and for organizing the PSU Gender and Qualitative Research Course, which initially enabled me to work on this project; Rula Qawwas for her unflinching support and mentorship; Sumi Colligan for her meticulous and perceptive proofreading; the CSS interns and research assistants for all of their help with logistics and the less fun parts of writing articles, such as interview transcription; and Shadaab Rahemtulla for his thoughtful feedback throughout the research and writing process. I also express my gratitude to the anonymous *IJMES* reviewers, whose feedback and reflections greatly strengthened the article. Last but certainly not least, I am deeply indebted to the participants in this study, who never tired of my endless visits and follow-up phone calls, and whose work continues to inspire me.

[1]In relation to women's rights, the term *governorate* usually refers to the eleven governorates other than Amman and is used to signify that these places are somehow less developed.

[2]The main research methods used for this study include semistructured interviews; focus groups; participant observation; and research notes and a self-reflective journal. The in-depth semistructured interviews were all conducted in Arabic and were audiorecorded and transcribed. On average, each of the interviews lasted about two hours. With the exception of one interview, I met with the women at their workplace. This way I

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was able to hear their accounts of their activism while observing their work environment and relationships with coworkers. Some of the main activists were interviewed more than once. Over the course of fifteen months (November 2011 to February 2013), I conducted fourteen in-depth interviews with nine core female activists, one male organizer from the central part of Jordan, the leader of the movement Muhammad Snayd, the former minister of agriculture Saʿid al-Masri (25 November 2007 to 22 November 2010), two directors of the agricultural directorates, and ʿAbd al-Halim Dugan from the Ministry of Agriculture. I also facilitated four focus groups with the help of Ruba al-Twaysi, Suzan ʿAfifi, and Ahmad al-Sholi, who took notes during the focus groups and transcribed them. The interviews and focus groups were conducted in Karak, Madaba, Irbid, Jarash, Amman, Ajloun, Salt, and Wadi Shuʿaib. The focus groups had five, eight, six, and five participants, respectively. Three of four were held inside the various Directorates of Agriculture and one took place at the farm in which this particular group of activists worked. I also participated in a national demonstration co-organized by the DWLM and two of the weekly demonstrations in front of the Ministry of Agriculture in Amman. This "participant observation" enabled me to see firsthand how demonstrations were organized and how women participated in them. I witnessed how women led negotiations with officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and how ad hoc meetings were organized and future plans hatched.

[3]Exceptions include the works of Ahmad Abu Khalil, Fida Adely, and Ahmad Awad at the Phenix Centre for Economic and Informatics Studies. Ahmad Abu Khalil, "ʿUmal al-Muyawama bayn Khat al-Qahir wa-Khat al-Faqir," *al-Mastur Journal* 15 (2007): 10; Fida Adely, "The Emergence of a New Labor Movement in Jordan," *MERIP* 264 (2012), accessed 26 May 2014, http://www.merip.org/mer/mer264/emergence-new-labor-movement-jordan; Phenix Centre for Economic and Informatics Studies, "Labor Protests in 2011" (report, "Labor Watch Reports," Jordan Labor Watch and Phenix Center for Economic and Informatics Studies in Cooperation with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Amman, Jordan, February 2012), accessed 12 October 2015, http://www.phenixcenter.net/en/paper/152.

[4]Adely, "The Emergence of a New Labor Movement in Jordan"; Aʿla al-Fazaʾa, "al-Snayd Abraz Qadat al-Hirak al-Shaʿbi fi al-Urdun li-l-Sharq: al-Islamiyyun Yataʿun Idaratihum li-l-Hirak . . . wa-Yuʿamilunana bi-Uslub al-Ajihaz al-Amniyya," *Sahifat al-Sharq,* 6 March 2012, accessed 10 February 2014, http://www.alsharq.net.sa/lite-post?id=152814; Ahmad al-Huwari, "al-Kalaldih: Hirak al-Mutalib bi-l-Islah fi al-Urdun Wulidat Qabl al-Rabiʿ al-ʿArabi," *al-Dustur*, 4 November 2013, accessed 10 February 2014, http://addustour.com/sn/890771/; Hussein Khazaʾi, "Violence on University Campuses and Higher Education" (lecture organized by Jordan Days and al-Ghad newspaper, Mujamaʿ al-Naqabat al-Mihaniyya, Amman, Jordan, 12 May 2012); Hussein Khazaʾi, "al-ʿUnf al-Jamiʿi . . . Ruʾya min al-Dakhil," *Ammon News*, 4 August 2013, accessed 6 February 2014, http://www.ammonnews.net/article.aspx?articleno=149417.

[5]Adely, "The Emergence of a New Labor Movement in Jordan"; Tamer Khorma, "The Myth of the Jordanian Monarchy's Resilience to the Arab Spring: Lack of Genuine Political Reform Undermines Social Base of Monarchy," *SWP Comments* 33 (2014), accessed 1 February 2015, http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/comments/2014C33_kor.pdf.

[6]Hassan A. Barari and Christina A. Satkowski, "The Arab Spring: The Case of Jordan,"*Ortadoğu Etütleri* 3 (2012): 41–57; Hassan A. Barari, "The Limits of Political Reform in Jordan: The Role of External Actors" (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung International Policy Analysis, Bonn and Berlin, Germany, December 2013), accessed 19 June 2014, http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/10455–20140108.pdf; Malika Bouziane and Katharina Lenner, "Protests in Jordan: Rumblings in the Kingdom of Dialogue," in *Protests, Revolutions and Transformations —The Arab World in a Period of Upheaval* (Berlin: Center for Middle Eastern and North African Politics, Freie Universität Berlin, 2011), accessed 17 June 2014, http://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/polwiss/forschung/international/vorderer-orient/publikation/WP_serie/WP1_All_FINAL_web.pdf; Hisham Bustani, "The Alternative Opposition in Jordan and the Failure to Understand Lessons of Tunisian and Egyptian Revolutions," *Jadaliyya*, 22 March 2011, accessed 1 February 2015, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/959/the-alternative-opposition-in-jordan-and-the-failure; Bustani, "Jordan's New Opposition and the Traps of Identity and Ambiguity," *Jadaliyya,* 20 April 2011, accessed 1 February 2015, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/1303/jordans-new-opposition-and-the-traps-of-identity-a; Mohammad Hussainy, "Map of Political Parties and Movements in Jordan, 2013–2014" (report for the Identity Center, Amman, Jordan, January 2014), accessed 30 January 2015, http://www.identity-center.org/en/node/263; E. J. Karmel, "How Revolutionary Was Jordan's Hirak? What the Incognito Participation of Palestinian Jordanians in Hirak Tells Us about the Movements" (report for the Identity Center, Amman, Jordan, June 2014): 2, accessed 12 October 2015, http://www.identity-center.org/sites/default/files/How%20Revolutionary%20Was%20Jordan%27s%20Hirak__0.pdf; Sarah A. Tobin, "Jordan's Arab Spring: The Middle Class and Anti-Revolution," *Middle East Policy* 19 (2012):

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96–109, accessed 19 June 2014, http://mepc.org/journal/middle-east-policy-archives/jordans-arab-spring-middle-class-and-anti-revolution; Sean L. Yom, "Jordan: The Ruse of Reform," *Journal of Democracy* 24 (2013): 127–39; Yom, "Tribal Politics in Contemporary Jordan: The Case of the Hirak Movement," *Middle East Journal* 68 (2014): 229–47.

[7]Phenix Centre for Economic and Informatics Studies, "Labor Protests."

[8]Ibid.

[9]The work of Adely, Bouzaine and Lerner, Khorma, and Seeley are exceptions. Adely, "The Emergence of a New Labor Movement in Jordan"; Bouziane and Lenner, "Protests in Jordan"; Khorma, "The Myth of the Jordanian Monarchy's Resilience"; Nicholas Seeley, "Jordan's Arab Spring Continues to Disappoint," *Waging Nonviolence: People-Powered News & Analysis,* 30 November 2012, accessed 15 January 2015, http://wagingnonviolence.org/feature/jordans-arab-spring-continues-to-disappoint/.

[10]Yom, "Tribal Politics in Contemporary Jordan," 231.

[11]Barari, "The Limits of Political Reform in Jordan."

[12]Laurie A. Brand, *Women, the State, and Political Liberalization: Middle Eastern and North African Experiences* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Allan George, *Jordan: Living Under Crossfire* (London: Zed Books, 2005); Ryan Curtis, "'We Are All Jordan' . . . But Who Is We?," *MERIP*, 13 July 2010, accessed 1 February 2015, http://www.merip.org/mero/mero071310.

[13]For a similar argument concerning the depiction of women's rights as essentially the problem of a small minority of the population, see Lila Abu Lughod and Rabab El-Mahdi, "Beyond the 'Woman Question' in the Egyptian Revolution," *Feminist Studies* 37 (2011): 684, accessed 31 January 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/23069928.

[14]Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber, "Feminist Research," in *Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis*, 2nd ed. (New York: Sage, 2012), 11.

[15]Hussainy, "Map of Political Parties and Movements in Jordan, 2013–2014."

[16]Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2000).

[17]Phenix Centre for Economic and Informatics Studies, "Labor Protests," 24.

[18]Nuha Al-Shamayla (day-waged worker in the Directorate of Agriculture in Karak), "The Day-Wage Labour Movement" (lecture at the conference "Women's Rights in Jordan: Contesting Voices, Class, NGOization, and Negotiating Foreign Interests," Council on International Educational Exchange, International Faculty Development Seminar, Amman, Jordan, 11 August 2014).

[19]Abu Khalil, "'Umal al-Muyawama," 10.

[20]Phenix Centre for Economic and Informatics Studies, "Labor Protests," 25.

[21]Sukayna (pseudonym), employee in the Directorate of Agriculture, interview with the author, 12 April 2012, Jordan; Muhammad Snayd, day-waged worker in the Directorate of Agriculture in Dhiban, interview with the author, 24 April 2012, Amman, Jordan.

[22]Abu Khalil, "'Umal al-Muyawama," 11.

[23]Phenix Centre for Economic and Informatics Studies, "Labor Protests," 7–9.

[24]Nuha al-Shamayla, day-waged worker in the Directorate of Agriculture in Karak, interview with the author, 8 February 2012, Amman, Jordan; Muhammad Snayd, interview with the author, 24 April 2012, Amman, Jordan.

[25]Focus group with the author, 21 June 2012, Wadi Shuʿaib, Jordan.

[26]Focus group with the author, 1 July 2012, Karak, Jordan; focus group with the author, 19 March 2012, Jarash, Jordan.

[27]Jordanian Civil Service Regulation, no. 30 (13 March 2007), 19, accessed 10 February 2014, http://www.csb.gov.jo/csb/Legislations/Systems/CivilService/TABE3.aspx.

[28]These are approximate values at the time of writing.

[29]Phenix Centre for Economic and Informatics Studies, "Asʿar al-Kahrabaʾ fi al-Urdun: Istiʿdad I'tmani bi-Kalaf Bahiza" (Phoenix Centre paper, Phenix Centre for Economic and Informatics Studies, Amman, Jordan, 2013), accessed 2 February 2014, http://www.phenixcenter.net/ar/paper/127.

[30]Most names have been changed to maintain the anonymity of participants. Only Muhammad Snayd and Nuha al-Shamayla agreed to have their names used. Some participants have asked me not to mention their governorate. In such cases I have omitted any information that might lead them to be identified. Al-Shamayla has since been hired permanently but she has stayed active, helping to organize rallies and attending them.

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[31]Al-Shamayla, interview with the author, 8 Feburary 2012, Jordan.

[32]Phenix Centre for Economic and Informatics Studies, "Labor Protests," 28.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Ibid., 26.

[35]Abu Khalil, "'Umal al-Muyawama," 13.

[36]Muhammad Snayd, "The Day Wages Labor Movement and Protest Politics" (lecture at the conference "Women and Gender in Light of the Arab Spring," Council on International Educational Exchange, International Faculty Development Seminar, 30 May 2013, Amman, Jordan).

[37]Snayd, interview with the author, 24 April 2012.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Snayd, "The Day Wages Labor Movement and Protest Politics."

[40]Petra Jordan News Agency, "Tathbit Jamiʿ ʿUmal al-Muyawama al-ʿAmilin fi Wazarat al-Ashghal," 9 October 2013, accessed 12 October 2015, http://petra.gov.jo/Public_News/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=1&site_id=2&NewsID=126743&Type=P; al-Shamayla, interview with the author, 8 Feburary 2012; Lina (pseudonym), day-waged worker in a Directorate of Agriculture in Jordan, interview with the author, 6 February 2012, Jordan; Snayd "The Day Wages Labor Movement and Protest Politics."

[41]Snayd, interview with the author, 24 April 2012; Snayd, phone interview with the author, 11 October 2015.

[42]Sukayna (pseudonym), employee in a Directorate of Agriculture in Jordan, interview with the author, Jordan, 12 April 2012.

[43]Al-Shamayla, interview with the author, 8 Feburary 2012; Lina, interview with the author, 6 February 2012.

[44]Saʿid al-Masri, former minister of agriculture, Amman, Jordan, interview with the author, Amman, Jordan, 23 April 2012.

[45]Ibid.

[46]Snayd, interview with the author, 24 April 2012.

[47]Ghassan (pseudonym), employee in the Directorate of Agriculture in Salt, Jordan, interview with the author, Salt, Jordan, 21 June 2012; focus group with the author, Wadi Shuʿaib, Jordan, 21 June 2012.

[48]Lina, interview with the author, 6 February 2012.

[49]Amani (pseudonym), day-waged worker in the Directorate of Agriculture in Ajloun, Jordan, interview with the author, Ajloun, Jordan, 11 March 2012; al-Shamayla, interview with the author, 8 February 2012; Snayd, interview with the author, 24 April 2012.

[50]ʿIssam Imbeidin, "Tawajuhat Hukumiyya li-Tathbit ʿUmal al-Muyawama al-Mafsulin min al-Ziraʿa . . . wa-l-ʿUmal Yuʿaliqun ʿItisamahum Amam al-Diwan al-Malaki," *Saraya*, 31 March 2010, accessed 17 September 2014, http://www.sarayanews.com/index.php?page=article&id=20674.

[51]The exact date and length of the sleepover was hard to establish. Participants had different stories about the event. All remembered that it was cold. Snayd recalled that he had had an interview at a radio station the following day, which was a Tuesday. He also remembers smelling like smoke during the interview because they had built a fire the previous night. In general, exact dates and other details were difficult to confirm through interviews because the participants, not having any kind of documentation of their activities, relied solely on memory. In the end, during phone conversations, the participants and I simultaneously conducted Google searches of news coverage of the sleepover to reconstruct the exact chronology of events.

[52]Snayd, interview with the author, 24 April 2012; Amani, interview with the author, 11 March 2012; al-Shamayla interview with the author, 8 Feburary 2012; Lina, interview with the author, 6 February 2012.

[53]Snayd, phone interview with the author, 17 September 2014.

[54]Amani, interview with the author, 11 March 2012; Lina, interview with the author, 6 February 2012.

[55]According to Snayd, some activists from the DWLM had met with representatives from the Muslim Brotherhood, al-Haraka al-Qawmiyya li-l-Dimuqratiyya al-Mubashira (National Movement for Direct Democracy), and Harakat al-Yasar al-Ijtimaʿi (Social Leftist Movement) a few weeks before the sleep-in. During the meeting, the Social Leftist Movement promised to help with the event. The Muslim Brotherhood participants said that they had so few representatives in parliament that they could not do anything. If, however, the day-waged laborers would agree to vote for them during the next parliamentary elections, they continued, they would support them in the future. Finally, the National Movement for Direct Democracy said that they would only aid the DWLM if the latter could convince 100 workers to join the movement.

[56]Snayd, phone interview with the author, 17 September 2014.

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[57]Al-Shamayla, interview with the author, 6 February 2012.

[58]Snayd, interview with the author, 17 September 2014.

[59]Adely, "The Emergence of a New Labor Movement"; Khorma, "The Myth of the Jordanian Monarchy's Resilience."

[60]Snayd, "The Day Wages Labour Movement and Protest Politics."

[61]Manar Hafez, "Tay Malaf ʿUmal al-Muyawama," *Khabirni*, 10 August 2015, accessed 12 October 2015, http://www.khaberni.com/more-153470-1-%D8%B7%D9%8A%20%D9%85%D9%84%D9%81%20%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%85%D8%A9.

[62]Muhammad Snayd, phone interview with the author, 11 October 2015.

[63]Abla Amawi, "Gender and Citizenship in Jordan," in *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East*, ed. Suad Joseph (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2000); Cheryl Rubenberg, *Palestinian Women, Patriarchy and Resistance in the West Bank* (London: Lynne Rienner, 2001); Amira Azhary Sonbol, *Women of Jordan: Islam, Labor and the Law* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2002).

[64]See Joseph Massad, *Colonial Effects: The Making of National Identity in Jordan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001) for a more critical reading of the notion of tribalism and its orientalist undertones.

[65]IAF representative, phone interview with Suzan ʿAfifi, 4 September 2014.

[66]Faraj al-Tamizi, Jordanian Communist Party, phone interview with Suzan ʿAfifi, 7 September 2014.

[67]Abla Abu ʿUlba, general secretary of the Popular Democratic People's Party, phone interview with Suzan ʿAfifi, 4 September 2014.

[68]For a similar argument about the variation in discourse among rural and urban Egyptian youth, see Lila Abu-Lughod, "Living the 'Revolution' in an Egyptian Village: Moral Action in a National Space," *American Ethnologist* 39 (2012): 21–25, accessed 28 January 2015, doi:10.1111/j.1548-1425.2011.01341.x.

[69]Focus group with the author, Wadi Shuʿaib, Jordan, 21 June 2012.

[70]Mazyuna was extremely concerned that her real identity might be discovered despite my using a pseudonym for her. I therefore omit any mention of where she works, the focus group of which she was a part, and when this focus group took place. I identify the place of work only for participants in my study who were not worried about revealing where they worked.

[71]Focus group with the author, Jordan.

[72]Ibid.

[73]Ibid.

[74]The Jordanian *tawjīhī* (Secondary School Certification Exam) has different streams to which students are admitted according to their tenth-grade marks. The students with the highest marks are allowed to enter the scientific stream, which focuses on natural sciences and math. Other streams include the humanities stream, the Islamic religion stream, the business stream, and the agriculture stream. The Ministry of Education often revises these streams, adding and dropping them according to need. Currently there is also an information technology stream that is very popular. However, at the time in which al-Shamayla did her *tawīihī* exam the information technology stream was not an option.

[75]Al-Shamayla, interview with the author, 6 February 2012.

[76]Ibid.

[77]Ibid.

[78]Ibid.

[79]Focus group with the author, Jarash, Jordan, 19 March 2012.

[80]Ibid.

[81]Sukayna, interview with the author, 12 April 2012.

[82]Ibid.

[83]Ibid.

[84]Julia Droeber, *Dreaming of Change: Young Middle-Class Women and Social Transformation in Jordan* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

[85]Amman Stock Exchange Information Center, "Privatization in Jordan," 2014, accessed 4 February 2014, http://www.ase.com.jo/en/privatization-jordan.

[86]George, *Jordan.*

[87]Yasmeen Tabbaa, "Assessing the Middle Class in Jordan (2008)—Policy Paper" (Economic and Social Council, Amman, Jordan, 2008), 3, accessed 5 October 2015, http://www.mopic-jaims.gov.jo/uploads/Assessing_the_Middle_Class_in_Jordan_(2008).pdf.

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[88]Higher Council for Retired Military Veterans, "The Economic Paper of the Higher Council of Retired Military Veterans" (Higher Council for Retired Military Veterans, April 2010).

[89]Al-Shamayla, "The Day-Wage Labour Movement."

[90]See the Higher Council for Retired Military Veterans study as an example of such a critique. Higher Council for Retired Military Veterans, "The Economic Paper."

[91]Jordanian Department of Statistics, *Taqrir Halat al-Faqr fi al-Urdun* (Amman, Jordan, 2010), accessed 15 September 2014, http://www.dos.gov.jo/dos_home_a/main/Analasis_Reports/poverty_rep/poverty_report_2010.pdf.

[92]Ragui Assad, *The Jordanian Labor Market in the New Millennium*, ed. Ragui Assad (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), viii.

[93]Ibid., x.

[94]Al-Masri, interview with the author, 23 April 2012.

[95]Snayd, interview with the author, 24 April 2012.

[96]Ibid.

[97]Ibid.

[98]The terms "East Bank Jordanians" and "Jordanian Jordanians" (as opposed to "Palestinian-Jordanians") are commonly used to speak about those whose families lived in what is now Jordan prior to 1948.

[99]Snayd, interview with the author, 24 April 2012.

[100]Julien Barnes-Dacey, "Europe and Jordan: Reform Before It's Too Late," *European Council on Foreign Relations* 54 (2012): 3.

[101]Schwedler, "The Political Geography," 267.

[102]Focus group with the author, 21 June 2012, Wadi Shuʿaib, Jordan; focus group with the author, 1 July 2012, Karak, Jordan; Jana, general discussion after interview with the author, Salt, Jordan, 21 June 2012.

[103]Jana, general discussion after interview with the author, Salt, Jordan, 21 June 2012.

[104]I use the term "post-Cold War" here because during the Cold War era the Eastern Bloc insisted on including economic rights as part of human rights. Now most "rights" initiatives focus on political rights, which are narrowly defined and often exclude critiques of neoliberal capitalism.

[105]General discussion after interview with author, Salt, Jordan, 21 June 2012.

[106]Christoph Wilcke, "Shutting Out the Critics, Restrictive Laws Used to Repress Civil Society in Jordan" (report, Human Rights Watch, vol. 19, no. 10 [e], December 2007): 5, 18, 20, accessed 17 September 2014, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/jordan1207web.pdf.

[107]For a more detailed discussion of the gendered nature of political activism and its effects on female political participation in Jordan, see Sara Ababneh, "Islamic Political Parties as a Means of Women's Empowerment?: The Case of Hamas and the Islamic Action Front" (DPhil thesis, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford, 2010).

[108]Sara Ababneh, "Islamic Political Activism as a Means of Women's Empowerment? The Case of the Female IAF Activists," Special Issue, "Gender: Gender, Ethnicity and the Nation: Cross-Cultural Perspectives," *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 9 (2009): 1–24.

[109]Karmel, "How Revolutionary Was Jordan's Hirak," 5.

[110]Ibid.

[111]Al-Muʿala, "Jordanian Women in the Hirak."

[112]Linda Alcoff and Sandra Harding, "Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What Is 'Strong Objectivity'?," in *Feminist Epistemologies*, ed. Linda Alcoff and Elisabeth Potter (New York: Routledge, 1993), 49–82; Cynthia H. Enloe, *The Curious Feminist Searching for Women in a New Age of Empire* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2004); Hesse-Biber, "Feminist Research," 11; Dorothey E. Smith, *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1987).

[113]Al-Muʿala, "Jordanian Women in the Hirak."

[114]Snayd, interview with the author, 24 April 2012; focus group with the author, Wadi Shuʿaib, Jordan, 21 June 2012; focus group with author, Jarash, Jordan, 19 March 2012.

[115]Wilhelmina Jansen, "Contested Identities: Women and Religion in Algeria and Jordan," in *Women and Islamization: Contemporary Dimensions of Discourse on Gender Relations*, ed. Karin Ask and Marit Tjomsland (Oxford: Berg, 1998); Droeber, *Dreaming of Change*; Homa Hoodfar, "Iranian Women at the Intersection of Citizenship and the Family Code," in *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East*; Suad Joseph, "Brother/Sister Relationships: Connectivity, Love, and Power in the Reproduction of Patriarchy in Lebanon," *American Ethnologist* 21 (1994) 50–73; Joseph, "Gendering Citizenship in the Middle East."

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[116]For a wider discussion on relational vs. individual understandings of self, see Sara Ababneh, "The Palestinian Women's Movement vs. Hamas: Attempting to Understand Women's Empowerment Outside a Feminist Framework," *Journal of International Women's Studies* 15 (2014): 35–53.

[117]Joseph, "Gendering Citizenship in the Middle East," 24–25.

[118]See Saba Mahmood's critique of the notion of autonomy in *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005).

[119]Focus group with the author, Jarash, Jordan, 19 March 2012.

[120]Lina, interview with the author, 6 February 2012; focus group with the author, Wadi Shuaʿib, Jordan, 21 June 2012.

[121]On the importance of moving away from predefined notions of empowerment, see Ababneh, "The Palestinian Women's Movement vs. Hamas."

[122]Focus group with the author, Jarash, Jordan, 19 March 2012.

[123]Ruwayda (pseudonym), day-waged worker in the Directorate of Agriculture in Irbid, Jordan, interview with the author, 12 April 2012.

[124]Ahmad Al-Sholi, "Min al-Wilada Ihtijajiyan ila al-Intihar Biruqratiyan: Nisf Aʿwda li-Naqabat al-Muʿalimin al-Urdunin," *Majalat al-Thawra al-Da'ima* 5 (2015), accessed 20 August 2015, http://permanentrevolution-journal.org/ar/node/127.

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