Berichte und Kommentare

The Socioanthropological Dynamics of the Urban Evolution of the Contemporary Amman City

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Introduction

The social and spatial components of cities have been viewed by anthropologists and sociologists either as styles of social interaction (Lynch 1996) and urbanization as the total of macro-processes fabricated by the human experience (Low 1996a), or as the sum of the adjacent ecological niches occupied by human groups in a series of concentric rings surrounding a central core (Park, Burgess, and McKenzie 1974). Other scholars conceived the city as a series of urban "communities" based on extended family kinship relations (Zenner 1994; Marris 1962, 1995) or social networks (Lomnitz 1977; Kadushin and Jones 1992). Accordingly, the economy in terms of goods flow, cash, labor, and service between city and countryside was considered as a driving force that shaped its existence (Guldin 1989, 1992). From a political economy point of view, scholars stressed on the structural forces that according to them may shape the urban experience. For example, inequality and alienation as a consequence of industrial capitalism produced a new urban paradigm all over the world (Mullings 1987; Ong 1987).

The city has been presented through different metaphoric lenses in literature including the "ethnic city" as a sum of social, economic, and linguistic enclaves (Portes and Stepick 1993; Zhou 1992), or the peoples' location in the occupational and social structure as well as the historical background.[1] The other lens is the "divided city" based on the evoked race and class (Borneman 1991; McDonogh 1993), thus, introducing social capital (Fernandez-Kelly 1993) defined by the urban space and collective constructions of social class and race (Wacquant 1993). The city has also been perceived as a male place where women have little if any access to the physical and social outdoor matters (Wilson 1991; Harrison 1991). Post-structural analyses depict the city as a site of ongoing urban conflicts about the material basis for social reproduction reflected in a concern for the quality of life (Jones and Turner 1989), access to land (Díaz Barriga 1995; Holston 1991), and neighborhood control of affordable housing (Beck 1992). The global view of city by Sassen (1991, 1995) is actually applicable to most of the cities worldwide in which translocal economic forces have more weight than local policies in shaping urban economies, which consequently may do changes in the economic base, spatial organization, and social structure (Sassen 1991). The meaning of the physical and conceptual boundaries of the city is created through the social production of space and the social construction of space (Low 1996a,b; Rodman and Cooper 1995) leading the anthropologists to include in their ethnographies the key elements of historical emergence, sociopolitical and economic structuring, patterns of social use, and experiential meanings (Low 1996a,b).

For many centuries, the whole corpus of knowledge on the Middle East was produced and monopolized by the orientalists and orientalist approaches. Orientalism constituted a set of theoretical tools, concepts, and images on the Middle Eastern societies. In this orientalist system of knowledge, the Middle Eastern societies were defined as scattered ethnic, tribal, and communal groups that lack the societal civil coherence. The orientalists define the Middle Eastern city as a place that produce and reproduce the ethnic, sectarian, and tribal affiliations and sentiments. According to them, this city failed to play the role of a melting pot for the diverse identities of its population. As an illustration of the orientalist approaches, Lapidus (1969) focuses on the particular urban plan of the Middle Eastern city. The plan of the Middle Eastern city that he is presenting shows the different ethnic and religious groups

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1 Margolis (1994); Markowitz (1993); Kwong (1987).

living in separate and independent neighborhoods without any socioeconomic interactions. Each ethnic and religious group tends to be closed and independent of other social groups and communities. In other words, the orientalist approach considers the Middle Eastern city – contrary to the European city which is based on horizontal social grouping – as based on vertical social grouping.

The recent history of Middle Eastern cities and how they came into their current existence has been minimally cited in the anthropological lexicon (cf. Yacobi and Shechter 2005). The urbanization of the city of Amman was researched by Al Rawashdeh and Saleh (2006) who tracked the physical expansion and growth of the city using satellite images. Potter et al. (2009) documented the phenomenal expansion of the "ever growing" Amman concluding that the highly polarized social structuring of the city was created by physical geography and the early growth of the city. The other study on the urbanization of Amman entailed the historical development of architecture and a suggestion for future urban design (Abu-Ghazalah 2006). Unfortunately such a design may not succeed unless the socio-anthropological dynamics that contributed to the creation of the city were taken into consideration.

During the Ottoman rule, the urban development was most notable in cities that were state capitals while the others remained, ignored probably till the rise of nation-states (Owen and Pamuk 1999), as is the case of Jordan in 1921. Cities then grew rapidly as a result of the rural-to-urban migration of citizens drawn by new job opportunities, proximity to

state services, and significant demographic increase. During the oil boom (1974–1984), Jordan, a state that did not export oil, sent thousands of workers to the Gulf region, where large sums in workers' remittances were sent home and were often used to purchase land and build private and commercial venues. This has greatly influenced urban development in cities and in the countryside but unfortunately ended in the 1980s that reiterated the need for economic reforms (Shafik 1997). Amman, the capital city of Jordan, must have passed through the ups and downs of the recent history in the Middle East. Moreover, the factors that intertwined to create the modern day Amman are far beyond the linear expectations and did not parallel those of nearby urban centers. Consequently, a more in-depth study on the evolution of the capital city of Amman is needed. This study aims at analyzing the particular model of urbanization that the Jordanian capital has witnessed. It aims also at analyzing the socio-anthropological factors or dynamisms, either internal or external, that led to this particular type of urbanization.

Materials and Methods

Due to the complexity of the research topic and the many interrelated variables that contributed to the emergence and evolution of the city of Amman, it was necessary that a multidisciplinary approach is used in data gathering and analysis. The researchers relied heavily on conducting ethnographic research in the area of Amman that included interviews with elderly people, retired stakeholders at the municipality of Amman who lived and witnessed parts of the city's evolution. The researchers benefited from the historical records available at the greater municipality of Amman and at the Jordan University Library. The other method includes the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) to track the expansion of the city through time (1925–2007), which necessitated the digitization of the urbanization features and/or land use from the collected satellite images and aerial photographs, depending on their availability at the Royal Geographic Center and other literary sources. The process inside GIS was accomplished according to the following flowchart (Fig. 1).

Contemporary History of Amman

In spite of its very long history thousands of years ago, the contemporary history of Amman seems to be too short; it started in the 19th century. In the

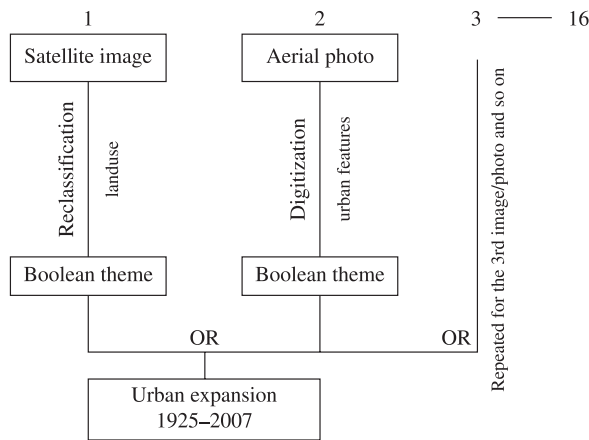**Map:** Jordan, showing the location of the capital city of Amman.

Fig. 1: A flowchart of the GIS model.

beginning of the 19th century Amman was visited and documented by many Western travelers, but unfortunately they were not concerned with urbanization; they were basically concerned with describing the site archaeologically, paying less attention to the tribal groups living in the surrounding areas of Amman. Furthermore, the works of the Western travelers in addition to the oral histories narrated by the Jordanians show that the small groups who lived in Amman from the 1600s to the early 1900s used to live in caves.

In the beginning of the 20th century Amman was an ordinary small village belonging to the peripheral components of the Ottoman Empire, with a population of about four thousand inhabitants; it was then a small rural agglomeration like all other villages in what is known at present as Jordan. In the 1900s, the Jordanian tribes and small groups of Caucasians (Chechens and Circassians) were the main demographic groups. Meanwhile, the main socioeconomic activities were reduced to peasantry, animal husbandry with limited artisanal activities exercized mainly by the Chechens and Circassians and later by the immigrant Armenians. According to the latest national statistics (DOS 2012, the population of Amman is exceeding two million inhabitants (2.4 mill.). Furthermore, in a relatively short time Amman has transformed into the main political, financial, economic, and administrative center of the new emerging Jordanian State. In other words, Amman has witnessed a very exceptional and unique growth on many levels that turned it from a small peripheral and rural village with homogenous population in terms of the economic basis into a relatively huge urban center with a heterogeneous population with clear and flagrant hierarchies both socially and economically.

Results and Discussion

The characteristics of the contemporary urban evolution of Amman city include unprecedented rapid demographic growth. In one century the population of Amman doubled more than 25 times (Fig. 2). In this sense, Amman represents the fabricated city where one can watch in just a few generations a tremendous growth in demography. In 1910, the population of the city of Amman did not exceed 10,000 inhabitants, while the population according to the last statistics reached 2.4 million. This spectacular demographic growth was the fruit of different sociopolitical factors on the national and regional levels.

Amman witnessed a very rapid evolution in terms of the modes of subsistence; the modes of subsistence and the economic organization of the city have drastically changed. In the beginning of the 20th century, the basic modes of subsistence were a mixture of peasantry and transhumance with limited commercial activities. Nowadays Amman has a very sophisticated economy based on services, trade, and industry. Then, a very rapid transition from a sociocultural homogeneity to a tremendous ethnic and cultural diversity could be observed; in the beginning of the 20th century a very limited group of Jordanian tribes and Caucasians were the main components of Amman.

A continuous process of growth created a very wide diversity in terms of the sociocultural identities in the city. The population identity of Amman inhabitants is highly problematic; it could be argued that the inhabitants, scholars, and researchers agree that the city of Amman has not succeeded, as of yet, to be the source of identity for the inhabitants. The question about identity is answered by an inhabitant mostly as such that he is originally from this village
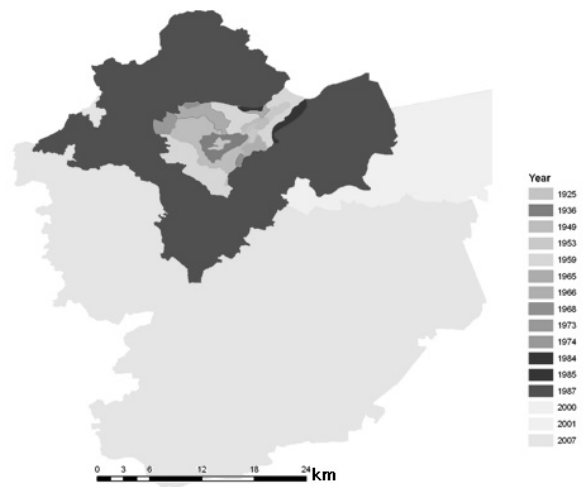

Fig. 2: The expansion of the city of Amman from 1925–2007.

or that city but not from Amman. Such an answer substantially indicates that the issue of identity in Amman is in the form of development, as Amman was originally a mixture of rural and urban citizens, and of different origins such as Palestine, Syrian, Iraq, or Balkans besides the people of Jordan.

There is a continuous process of spatial differentiation in the city of Amman; the profound division between East Amman and West Amman. Amman has moved rapidly from a unified and homogenous space to a very differentiated and hierarchical one. In just a few generations the Jordanians have witnessed the evolution of Amman from a homogenous small village, where the face-to-face relationships were dominant, to the creation of two Ammans, a very rich part with modern and Western façades called West Amman and a very crowded, traditionally, and religious part called East Amman.

The continuous mobility of the rich population of Amman from the eastern parts of the city to the western parts created some sort of discontinuity in the process of class formation in the city. Consequently, an uncontrollable urban evolution of the city came into existence, where the population is imposing the growth of the city and not the specialized technocratic apparatus. The policy of Amman municipality was historically to orient the growth of the city to East, but the de facto policy imposed by the dominant power networks imposes an urban evolution towards the West at the expense of the limited fertile green zones.

The process of differentiation both in terms of urban and cultural life between the East and the West of the city has been growing. Culturally speaking, there is no one unified Amman but at least two Ammans. Ruralization of the city of Amman is a continuous process; the massive immigration of the rural populations seeking for better life conditions is shaping the urban identity of Amman by giving it a mostly rural face than an urban one. People attempt to reaffirm their cultural identity, often in territorial terms, by "mobilizing to achieve their demands, organizing their communities, and staking out their places to preserve meaning, to restore whatever limited control they can over work and residence" (Castells 1989: 350 cit. by Low 1996a: 394). A continuous crisis of identity is present since the city did not succeed to turn into a melting pot for its mosaic population. The city of Amman does not constitute a source of identity for its people and maybe we have to wait for a long time to see Amman as a melting pot for those who are coming to live in it. Finally, it exists a continuous reproduction of the primordial ties (the ties of kinship, region, religion, and ethnicity) that lead to particular forms of socialization of

space (tribalization of space). Morgan (1877) differentiated between two stages in the human history, where the first had the kinship relations drove the rights and duties inside the group, while the second stage represents the huge transformation toward the ties of identity based on the concept of contracting and mutual belonging to land to be the source of rights and duties. Historically, the city has played a major role in the destruction of the kinship systems that were extended as the base of the economic and social relations by fostering those relations belonging to land. Despite the extensive urbanization and the huge demographic growth, Amman represents a model for the city where social ties and belonging to a sect or group play a significant role in the determination of the individual's position within the group and in the determination of the sum of the rights and duties enjoyed by an individual (Al Husban and Na'amneh 2010).

The Socioanthropological Dynamisms behind the Particular Urban Evolution of Amman City

There are two types of socioanthropological dynamisms in the history of Amman during the last few centuries (before the year 1900 and after). Before the year 1900, the internal dynamisms (the relatively ecological determinism), like most of the southern and eastern Mediterranean lands, Jordan is characterized by a particular geography that has led to the evolution of two subsistence economies. In a very limited region surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, where the precipitations are high and the soil is relatively fertile, a sophisticated subsistence economy based on farming and peasantry was evolved. This encouraged historically some major parts of the population to settle in villages and urban centers. In the inner regions, which represent the vast majority of the superficies of the Arab world where desert climate conditions and poor soil, a completely different subsistence economy was evolved; herding animals (goats, sheep, and camels) and pastoralism either nomadism or transhumance, which represented the cultural adaptations and responses that the population has developed through history.

The existence of these two different but close ecological systems created continuous nobilities and displacements from the inner desert land with the cattle towards the relatively fertile hills and plains close to the Mediterranean, so they were transformed from Bedouins or nomadic groups to village settlers. Consequently a differentiated urban organization in the Arab world in general was created. Strong urban states have evolved in the regions

very close to the Mediterranean. But the inner desert zones have escaped this process of state centralization. As such they constituted mostly a continuous threat to the prosperous coastal zones where farming, trade, and artisanal activities are flourishing. Amman's geographic location is very particular, unique, and fragile, as it is situated on the edge of two contrasting zones. So it underwent a pendulum movement for many decades receiving nomadic and transhumant groups, who were seeking for settlement, and later on an opposite movement a leaving population which transformed into a nomadic and transhumant one.

After the year 1900, a new era in the history of the city has started with the successive developments in the region and in Jordan, politically, socially, and economically. These developments decreased the influence of the ecological determinism in the process of making Amman. After 1900, new dynamisms have evolved; they were no longer determined by the ecology but mostly by the human factors. The main factors that led to this particular form of rapid and uncontrollable urbanization include the creation of the Hijazi railways in the beginning of 20th century, where it shaped the whole history of the region demographically, socially, economically, and politically. The other factor is the creation of a new highly centralized state supported by the West for which Amman has been chosen to be the capital city. Furthermore, the creation of Israel to be a state of the Jews of the world and the very distinctive geography of Jordan as the biggest neighbor of this Jewish state gave Jordan and its capital Amman a very particular attention and interest both economically and politically, followed by the successive Palestinian immigrant waves during the 1940s and 1950s. Consequently, the 1940s and 1950s are considered as the turning point in the history of Amman. The expansion during the 1940s and the 1950s was in the northern part of the city as well as the southeastern one, close to the existing urbanization and the arable land.

The successive wars in the region changed the city of Amman dramatically (wars of 1967, the Lebanese civil war from 1975–1990, the gulf wars in 1979, 1991, and 2003). The petrol boom after the year 1973 led to the flux of capital to the city of Amman and to the flagrant differentiation between its population and its parts. The western sector of Amman attracted the investors as it has been the most expensive land, although the area of expansion then was limited (Fig. 2). The continuous domination of the socioeconomic power networks based mostly on the primordial ties (attachments to tribe, to ethnicity, to the locality, to the religious community). And fi-

nally, after being sensitive for the ecological factors for long centuries, the city of Amman has become more sensitive to the external regional and international developments. The urbanization during the 1980s and 1990s was exceptional compared to the preceding years, and engulfed the perimeter of the city of Amman. The less arable land in the southern suburban areas of Amman started after the year 2000 for commercial and housing purposes, but not agriculture, as it is considered as a semiarid region.

Conclusions

The urban evolution of the city of Amman represents a unique model that was created by the sum of many intertwined variables. The rapid population growth triggered by the massive waves of immigrants initiated the first features of urbanization in the city of Amman in the early 20th century. Consequently, Amman appeared then to be less homogenized than it was before, where ethnic and cultural diversities have created stratification that maintained the modern day Amman. The most prominent factors in the evolution of urbanization in Amman were probably the political issues and events the region passed through in the years of 1948, 1976, 1973, 1991, 2003, etc. All of these variables were melted into the surrounding ecological determinism especially during the years of the early 20th century. The continuous primordial ties in the city of Amman have weakened as urbanization continues, which is currently mirrored in the dispersed spatial organization of housing and land properties.

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Le chamane, un explorateur de l'inconscient

Lambert Lipoubou

Introduction

La psychanalyse met en face de soi-même : connais-toi toi-même disait Socrate. Le chamanisme montre que la position de chacun dans le groupe de la parenté relève d'une organisation dynamique du champ désir et d'un inconscient collectif transmis de génération en génération.

Le symbole du groupe de la parenté est alors le modèle du désir, tout membre du groupe naît débiteur envers lui, parce que nul ne peut vivre sans lui. Il fonde un ordre social invisible, c'est cette relation quasi contractuelle qui unit les membres du groupe. Pour déplacer la position d'un membre, le chamane fait un recadrage et une thérapie systémique du désir. Par une opération manipulatrice et une technique originale de persuasion, le chamane modifie la réalité du premier ordre du groupe de la parenté, change le cadre. Il déconstruit le premier ordre, reconstruit par marchandage et négociation avec les membres du groupe, c'est donc ce retour qui exprime le consensus et la réconciliation.

Il reconfigure le système des interactions, la structuration d'attente (place, rôle), l'équilibre des règles (dette, obligation). Le chamane définit un destin alternatif du groupe de la parenté (possibilité de chan-

ger la dette et la culpabilité). L'objectif de cette recherche sera donc de faire le rapprochement entre la cure chamanique et la cure psychanalytique.

Dans un premier temps, elle présente la perspective méthodologique. Dans un deuxième temps, elle rend compte de la principale pathologie qui somatise le groupe de parenté. Dans un troisième temps, elle montre l'intérêt d'une autre méthode d'exploration de l'inconscient groupal. Et dans un quatrième temps, elle relie la quête intérieure la thérapie curative et ses implications spirituelles.

1 Perspectives théoriques

Nous partons de la piste ouverte par Claude Lévi-Strauss selon laquelle la cure chamanistique est précurseur de "la psychanalyse [et qu'elle] n'a fait que retrouver, et traduire en termes nouveaux, une conception des maladies mentales qui remonte probablement aux origines de l'humanité et que les peuples que nous appelons primitifs n'ont pas cessé d'utiliser, souvent avec un art qui étonne nos meilleurs praticiens" (1956: 8). Nous allons donc essayer d'approfondir cette thèse par des analyses anthropologico-psychanalytiques et de rétablir la passerelle entre la résolution archaïque du désordre psychosocial, et celle, moderne, des maladies mentales ; l'une et l'autre nous apparaissant finalement inséparables.

Mais auparavant nous définissons d'abord la société chamanique, totémique et clanique. En prenant au sérieux le conflit et la gestion de la duplicité psychique propre à l'humain, le chamane nous met en présence d'une double rencontre, celle de la renaissance de l'autre homme, et celle de la reconnaissance des dieux doubles et des divinités bisexuées. Il brouille les certitudes en transgressant les frontières entre l'humain et l'inhumain, l'homme et l'animal. Il tente de conceptualiser l'homme au-delà du normal, renouant avec sa dimension d'inquiétante étrangeté. Il saisit la structure anthropologique basique, avant et hors de toute histoire et de toute culture, celle qui manifeste l'ambivalence fondamentale de l'homme "sapiens et demens". Il restaure l'unité perdue et donne une place à la part maudite chère à Georges Bataille (1970).

En acceptant la transgression et la subversion en son sein, la société chamanique ne se réfugie pas dans des utopies d'un monde ordonné et meilleur, elle est donc comptable des risques et des potentialités indéfinies de son propre devenir. Elle se veut pragmatique et s'ouvre à des comportements inattendus sur la nature de l'homme, puisque le chamane autorise celui-ci et la communauté à assumer leur part maudite, à osciller entre l'homme et l'ani-