

Tribes, Land, and Administration in Jordan: Past and Present (622 to 2009 A.D.)

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Abstract: This research concentrates on interactions between tribal lands with the administration in Jordan since the dawn of Islam up until the present day. All through the years, the tribes have been a safety valve for change and stability in Jordan. The study follows up interactions between three elements: the tribes, land and administration. The tribes were sometimes an enabler and sometimes a constraint on the decisions of administrations. The power of administration has been affected by the tribes, and vice versa. This study assumes that this element has been the most important element and it has placed constraints and abilities on the power of the state. The Ottomans took into consideration this factor and interactions between the two elements were clear. Other governments showed the same interest in this element. This study reaches the conclusion that this element, the tribes, has been the most important factor and a safety valve for the administration all through the years, even in the era of globalisation.

Key words: Tribes, land government, Quraish, Ottomans, Jordan, Huwaytat, Glubb.

Introduction

Maybe few people recall that the initial spread of Islam was carried out by Bedouin armies. Any new empire or state, according to Ibn Khaldoun, needs powerful groups to enforce the law. When the new state

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emerged in Madina - Yathrib, the Prophet Muhammad (God bless his soul) depended on Islam to unite the different, scattered tribes. He succeeded in uniting them in one group, which became *asabiehs*. *Asabiehs*, according to Ibn Khaldoun, is the power which every new state needs and it means the power of groups, tribes or big families (Ibn Khaldoun, 1978). The Prophet was able to protect the new state by uniting the *asabiehs* (plural of *asabiehs*).

Because Jordan was on the route between Damascus and the holy places of Mecca and Madina, Jordanian tribes enjoyed a special position as hosts, receiving guests and protecting their caravans as mentioned in the Holy Quran. The Quraish Surah states:

﴿لَا يَلْفِ قُرَيْشٍ﴾ إِيْلْفِهِمْ رِحْلَةَ الشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيْفِ ﴿٢﴾ فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ
هَذَا الْبَيْتِ ﴿٣﴾ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ جُوعٍ وَعَأَمَنَهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ ﴿٤﴾

*Since the Quraish have been united,
United to fit out winter and summer caravans
Let them worship the Lord of this House,
Who provided them against destitution and gave them security against
fear. [106:4] (Ahmed Ali,
1984,*

The Quraish, who lived in Mecca, was the dominant tribe of Arabia that represented the Arabs. Its economy depended on trade. The caravans of the Quraish that are mentioned in the Qur'an were moving between the north and south. In summer, the caravans used to move towards Damascus in the north, and, in winter, the caravans would move towards Yemen in the south. The Prophet Muhammad (God bless his soul) is reputed to have passed through Jordan twice as a merchant on his journey. This road, which is still used today, was the great pilgrim road to Madina and Mecca.

Jordan's prosperity related to its location on the route between Damascus and the holy places of Mecca and Madina. When the newly founded Muslim-Arab Empire moved to Damascus, the prosperity of Jordan continued. The Jordanian desert became a favourite place for the Caliphs. The pilgrim road became unused when the Abbasids succeeded

the Umayyads because their capital was Baghdad and they used a new road to Mecca and Madina.

Jordan's importance was renewed when the Ottoman-Turks gained power. The main pilgrim route from Constantinople to the holy cities of Mecca and Madina passed through Jordan, where tribal chiefs ruled as semi-independent *sheikhs*. The tribes were always out of control. Town dwellers were not completely protected by the Ottoman administration, since the Ottoman system of government was in general to protect principal cities, such as Damascus and Aleppo, and the areas between eight and thirty kilometres from the centre of those cities (Sinai and Pollack, 1977).

Many sources say that the settled population was mistreated by nomadic tribes, to whom it was forced to pay *khawa* (tribute) (Abujaber, 1989). This is not necessarily true, because we can sometimes find evidence of a form of confederation between the tribes and the settled population. For example, in the south of Jordan there was a confederation between a strong tribe called the Huwaytat and city dwellers in Maan and other small towns, and another confederation between a strong tribe called Bani Atyieh, the sons of Atyieh, and city dwellers, like El-Karak and other small cities. Small tribes or city dwellers used to pay *khawa* when they were weaker than their neighbours. They obtained protection in return, so there were some mutual benefits to be had from this arrangement.

The nineteenth century witnessed a purely nomadic tribal involvement in agriculture. *Sheikh* Sattam Ibn Fayiz from the Bani Sakhr tribe was the first pioneer (El Favez, 2007). *Shaikh* Sattam, who was born in 1830, became Sheikh El-Masheikh (Paramount Sheikh of Bani Sakhr) in September 1881 and governor of Zizia-Jiza under the Ottomans until his death in 1889. Because *Sheikh* Sattam had eleven brothers and eight children, financial pressure forced him to look for other income opportunities apart from *khawa* or *ghazu* (raiding) against other tribes. *Sheikh* Sattam was successful in finding a new source of income from the Ottoman administration, which appointed him governor of Zizia. In time, he became a farmer, and gradually disengaged himself from the old traditions of the Bedouins, who depended on their income on *khawa* or *gha*. (Abujaber, 1989).

The Ottomans used to grant *sheikhs* of Bedouins *surra* (purse) to protect the caravans which used to move from north to south and vice versa. *Surra* was money paid by the Ottomans to the Bedouin tribes to protect the pilgrimage caravans. After the Ottoman Sultan Saleem had the ceremonial honour of receiving the keys of the holy shrines in Mecca and Madina in 1517, he started sending *surra* to Bedouin tribes by means of a cashier, *ameen es-surra*. At the beginning, it was sent via Cairo to poor people in Mecca and Madina. (Abidl Rahman). Later, the Ottoman sultan sent it to the *sheikhs* of Bedouins and others, who then helped to facilitate the journey of caravans which used the route from Damascus to Mecca and Madina, protecting them on their way.

The Development of Events in the 17th Century

In the seventeenth century, there was an imbalance among the tribes. This was partly because there was an absence of tribal power which came about after the Mawali tribe near Aleppo and others disappeared from the region. The Anaza tribe was encouraged to move to the north. There were attacks on pilgrim caravans and *jardih* (fortified caravans). In 1757, the Ottomans invented a way to protect the caravans by establishing a new position of *Ame* (prince), *El-hajj* or *Ameer Dimashq* (Damascus) to protect the pilgrim route from Hama (in Syria) up to El-Ola (now in Saudi Arabia) (Barbir, 1980). This increased the activity of the *jardih*, which was an armed caravan that was used to carry food and meet the pilgrimage caravans when they returned from the holy cities of Mecca and Madina. It used to meet them in Ma'an. (El -Moradi)

From 1531 to 1671, there were no attacks by tribes on the caravans, for a period of one hundred and forty years (Barbir. 1980). Maybe the tribes ceased to be a threat because there was government interest in their activities. The following incident may explain the reasons for the renewal of attacks by tribes:

In 1757, a *jardih* was exposed to attack by Qadan Al-Fayez and another *jardih* was also defeated. The Bedouins robbed a pilgrimage caravan which was loaded on 20,000 camels (El-Moqtatuf 1909). The reason for the attacks related to weak administration. Damascus suffered a period of instability because the rulers of Damascus were changed eighty times during the seventeenth century. The same may be said about Aleppo (Holt, 1966).

There were changes during this century in that *surra* was usually sent via Damascus on the 12th of the holy month of *Rajab* every Hejri year, and it was paid to Bedouins as a reward for using their camels, and as presents. If the government stopped paying *surra*, the Bedouins would create trouble. However, *Ameer El-Hajj* Hussein Maki made several errors; he suspended giving *surra* that year to tribes and this factor was the direct reason for the attack on the *jardih* in 1757 (Rafeq, 1970).

The Importance of the Jordanian Tribes

The importance of the tribes was apparent at the very beginning of Islamic history. For example, three prominent tribes backed Muslim soldiers in the first battle in Islamic history, in Muthah in the south of Jordan (Ibn Hesham). The battle was between Islamic troops and the Romans. The Prophet Muhammad (God bless his soul) placed importance on blood relationships. He sent his famous follower (*es-sahabi*), Ummr Bin El-Aass, to the Beli tribe in the north. The reason the Prophet selected him was not only because of his qualifications, but also because his mother was from that tribe (Ed-Dabgh, 1979). The mission succeeded.

The Ottoman administration wanted reforms (*tanzima*) in the early eighteenth century and started its effort to settle the tribes in Rakka in south-eastern Anatolia and in the *vilayet* of Zor-Deyrizor.

After the era of reforms, in 1840, new units of administration were established. In the new administration, there were military and civilian responsibilities in the sub-districts. In the administrative structure, there were *vali* (governor), *mutasarrif* (sub-governor), *kaymakam* (district chief), and *nahiye müdürü* (administrator of *nahiye*).

The administration wanted to force nomads to settle by establishing new *vilayets* and *sanjaks* (lower administrative divisions under *vilaye*), and by founding new military units.

There were developments in the area when the Suez Canal was opened in 1867. The control of the Red Sea had been fully monopolised by the Ottomans up until then. They expected that the British would compete with them to control the Red Sea and would create difficulties in the transportation of Muslim pilgrims (*haj*) and merchants via the Red Sea. A few years later, the Ottomans established a *vilayet* with Amman as its centre to strengthen security in the area. They sent Circassians to settle

in the Amman area (Turkish Arab Relations, 1990). The migration started in 1878.

The plan also aimed at encouraging the Bedouins to settle and to create towns for the settlement of Circassian immigrants. Moreover, it aimed at changing the economic system by encouraging the raising of cows, instead of camels, and cultivating rice and cotton in the environs of the River Jordan.

Regardless whether the *vilayet* was established or not, Ottoman expectations came true as the British occupied Egypt in 1882 and the *Vilayet* of Amman received immigrants from Egypt. This *vilayet* covered a huge area and contained most of the Jordanian tribes, i.e. Huwaytat, El-Adwan, Bani Sakhr, Bani Atyieh, Bani Hamida, Ed-Dajih, and others.

The Difference between the Approaches of El-Adwan and the Bani Sakhr in Dealing with the Administration

There was a difference in dealing with the administration of El-Adwan tribe and the Bani Sakhr tribe because the former was semi-nomadic and lived in the Ghor area, but the Bani Sakhr people were nomads who used to move from place to place. The transportation facilitated the control of El-Adwan and it was also easier because they were close to the centre of administration in Es-Salt city and other such places, while it was difficult to chase the Bani Sakhr, who used camels and entered deep into the desert (As-Shuwayhat).

These two tribes protected the pilgrim roads and travellers in their areas. Fandi Ibn Fayez of the Bani Sakhr tribe, for example, went to the British Consulate in Jerusalem and made a deal with a British traveler, Henry B. Tristram, who was going to travel to the Dead Sea and El-Karak. Tristram could not move without the protection of the tribes. The deal was for eight thousand piasters, two guns, eleven sheep, coffee and tobacco. A similar agreement was made between El-Adwan tribe and a British engineer, Claude R. Conder, who also came to the area and was protected by El-Adwan (Tristram, 1873).

El-Adwan tribe had protected the traveller Tristram on his previous trip when he came to the north of Hisban. El-Adwan was his protector there because tribes had divided the area geographically amongst themselves. Bani Sakhr could not protect him in the areas of El-Adwan, and vice versa. *Sheikh* Sattam of Bani Sakhr went to Jerusalem to

accompany Tristram to Moab, which was not under the control of El-Adwan, but El-Adwan would not allow Sattam to accompany the traveller and protect him in their area, so when El-Adwan thought that Bani Sakhr had cheated them by breaking the unwritten rules of dividing the areas, they got upset and planned to prevent Sattam from passing through their land. However, Sattam went to the south of their area without passing through any roads where El-Adwan was the protector (Tristram, 1873).

Readiness among the Nomads to Become Settled

There was readiness among some nomads to settle, because some of them discovered that agriculture could be a new source of wealth. Besides that, the Bedouin *sheikhs* became aware during the 1870s that the Ottoman administration was serious in its efforts to control the countryside. They noticed the increase in government power and the new armaments of the Ottoman Army.

In the 1870s, a new weapon was available and the Ottoman Army was equipped with it. The British consul-general in Damascus had by then written to the British ambassador in Constantinople and told him that Rashid Pasha, Governor of the *Vilayet* of Syria, had sent an advance force and a battalion of infantry on dromedaries carrying Snider rifles against Bani Sakhr and El-Adwan in May 1869. However, the Ottoman unit had adopted the Snider mechanisms since 1868. The Snider had been adopted by the British Army one year earlier after the conversion of the Enfield rifle, following a design by Jacob Snider of New York. This allowed muzzle-loading rifles to become breech-loaders. This new weapon enabled the users, the Ottoman soldiers, to employ completely self-contained metallic cartridges which each user could carry with him in any quantity he chose. Because the Bedouins had only muzzle-loaders, the Ottoman administration was able to achieve a new level of firepower and to attain new prestige for its armed forces, specifically, and the government, in general (Abujaber, 1989).

Relationship between the Administration and the Power of Bedouins

The relationship between the Ottoman administration and the Bedouins varied from time to time according to the power of the former. The power of

the *sheikhs* depended on this relationship. When the central administration was strong, the Paramount *sheikhs* who had belonged to that administration became local leaders, but when the administration became weaker and weaker, the *sheikhs* behaved like kings (Abujaber, 1989).

Ibrahim Pasha, son of Mohammad Ali, the strong ruler of Egypt, imposed his orders on the Bedouins and the power of the *sheikhs* shrunk. He forced them to settle in houses. C. R. Conder saw these houses many years later in 1881 (Abu Shaar, 1995). The administrations of Mohammad Ali and his son were very effective in achieving that order. He protected the people in Houran, Irbid and Ajloun, and used horsemen. He was very tough in dealing with agitators in Balqa, Houran and Ajloun in 1839. When the Egyptian Army of Ibrahim Pasha left the area, the Bedouins controlled the agricultural areas and asked the people to pay *khawa*. The farmers in the north also paid *khawa*. *Wasim* (tribal marks) may be seen, which every tribe uses to brand its animals (sheep, horses, camels, goats and donkeys), to declare ownership. These *wasim* sometimes indicate where the scope of tribal influence ends (Abu Shaar, 1995). Although the Ottoman administration increased military forces after the departure of the Egyptian Army of Ibrahim Pasha, the Bedouins continued to take *khawa* from the farmers, especially strong tribes, such as El-Adwan or Bani Sakhr, which might contain the migration of other tribes who tried to move from Nejd to the north, but were contained by confederations of some of the Jordanian tribes (Abu Shaar, 1995). There was a confederation between the Bani Sakhr and the Sardiyeh tribe in the north to contain the Anaza tribe, which explored the possibility of moving north. Some may remember the size of the power of some tribes when we talk about the number of fighters. For example, there were three hundred and fifty fighters from Sardiyeh and four hundred and fifty from the Sarhan tribe of Bani Khalid. This confederation continued up to the first quarter of the twentieth century. It was strengthened when *Sheikh* Sattam married Sabha Bint Imraybia' El-Moalaq from Sardiyeh and she delivered three sons: Arif, Shibli and Juryid (Al-Swarieh, 1996).

However, the future of the Bani Sakhr tribe itself was in danger after the death of Fandi Ibn Fayiz, the father of *Sheikh* Sattam, and subsequent conflicts among his brothers, sons and nephews. They were divided into two sides - that of *Sheikh* Sattam and the other of his brothers, Fayeze and Fawaz. Without the help of the Ruwala tribe,

Sattam could have been defeated. However, because Sattam was the *Nahiye Mudürü* (*nahiye* - administrator), the Ottoman administration ordered him not to retaliate against the aggression of his brothers (Al-Swarieh, 1996). Since his relations with the *Amir El-hajj* were intimate, Sattam used them for the benefit of his people to use camels to convey goods to the Ottoman administration. He protected the road from Imzayreeb (south of Syria) to El-Qutranih to the east of El-Karak. The Bani Sakhr settled there, started to cultivate the land and encouraged others to do the same. In spite of that, they continued to obtain *khawa* from many of the weak tribes or farmers who were scattered in the area of the pilgrim road.

In the 1860s, there were peaceful relations amongst the confederations of the tribes. The Balqa confederation was under the local rule of *Sheikh Mashayikh al-Balqa Ali*, the son of the Paramount *Sheikh* Dhiyab. He was born in 1835 and assumed this post during the lifetime of his father. A sister of Ali, Alya, married *Sheikh* Sattam in the early 1870s. Peaceful relations fortunately improved among the confederations of tribes after that marriage, especially when Ali granted his brother in law, Sattam, a very large area to cultivate. Ali was generous enough to tell Sattam to cultivate whatever land he could (Abujaber, 1989). Sattam did not miss the chance of having as much as he could of the land. He, accompanied by two others, went to Umm al-Amad and fired a shot into the air confirming that it had become his possession and that he had become the owner and protector of the land which his brother in law had granted him. He immediately moved on to Az-Zabayir, Zizia-Jiza-, Zuwayzia, Umm Rummana, Manja, Julul, Huwara, Umm Qasseer and finally Dulayla, declaring his ownership. Eventually he owned ten villages. In turn he allocated the villages to his tribal clans as follows: Az-Zubayir to Sahan, Um Rummana to Muhammad Hayil and Juruh, Manga to the Kunayan clan, Julul to the Zabn clan, Huwara to Falah Shulash of the Zabn clan, Umm Qasseer to the Nufal clan and Dulayla to Ayd Er-Rudayni in 1881, in compensation for Madaba, which the Ottoman administration had given to three Christian tribes who migrated from El-Karak to Madaba in the late 1870s (As-Shuwayhat). They spread throughout Madaba (Al-Swarieh, 1996).

New Migration and Interest in Land

The 1860s and 1870s witnessed the migration of three tribes from El-Karak to the north, ultimately to Madaba. These three Christian tribes were El-Uzayzat, El-Karadisha and El-Ma'aya'a. Their agricultural activities spread and they bought more land. They became wealthy and in twenty five years obtained *iltizam* (tax farm) from the whole of Balqa (Abujaber, 1989).

It seems that either the Ottoman administration encouraged the Christian tribes to live in areas like Madaba, or they were encouraged by others who knew the importance of the area, like Madaba. Some of the sources talk about Esa Ehjazeen, a Christian from El-Karak, who was working with Eid Er-Rudayni from Imtair (Bani Sakhr). Esa encouraged the Christian tribes to demand Madaba from the administration, which offered them the choice of Madaba, Er-Rajeeb, Sara or Jelaad. In 1879 they cultivated corn in Madaba. When Eid asked for his share, they refused to give him any. Then *Sheikh* Sattam gave him Dulayla (As-Shuwayhat). The Christian tribes refused to give Sattam any crops, such as wheat, oatmeal or corn. They argued that they were not obliged to pay him since they had paid the government. Sattam attacked a guest house of the priest, who sued him under the Ottoman administration in Nablus. It was not easy for the *Mutasarrif* (sub-governor) of Nablus to chase Sattam, who could easily (like any of the Bani Sakhr) run away into the desert. The administration enlisted the help of *Sheikh* Ali, his brother-in-law. Ali had a personal reason to chase Sattam because Sattam was no longer his brother in law, having divorced his sister. He attacked Umm El-Amad for three days without success.

Sheikh Sattam was later caught by the *kaymakam* (district-chief) of Es-Salt when Sattam went to get his share of presents. He was caught and sent to Nablus, where he was jailed for three months. He asked the priest to intervene, so he mediated and Sattam was released. He was hosted by the priest who gave him three hundred pieces of gold (*lir*) in return for Madaba. After that he never entered Madaba again (As-Shuwayhat).

We can see that land was less important in the eyes of the Bedouins; for example Hag-Hoog Bin Zabn exchanged Huwara land from Falah for his daughter's hand in marriage (As-Shuwayhat). He sacrificed land for personal interest. If he had cultivated it, he would perhaps not have let it go so easily. In any event, the Bedouins, especially the nomadic

ones, did not believe in the possession of goods. Although they badly needed land to feed their sheep and camels with grass and water, the majority of them never possessed land or material goods like money.

A British officer, J. B. Glubb, who served among the Bedouins in Iraq and Jordan during the years between 1920 and 1956 and became head of the Jordanian Army, stated in 1939 that the Bedouins whom he mixed with did not care about possessing money: "They behave like socialists." They do not believe in the possession of money which they considered to be like dirt on hands that comes and goes. They also consider that money in their hands is yours if you need it. By the same token, the Bedouins consider that they have their rights to use your money if they need it. Glubb denied the opinions or views that the Bedouins were greedy. He said they were not. He added that they were a hundred times better than the dwellers of cities who did not behave like this. On a personal note, one of the two writers of this research has noticed that one of the famous *sheikhs* in Jordan behaved this way when he did not repay money he had borrowed from a bank.

The most appealing side of this culture is that a Bedouin will spend his life indebted to you once you do him a favour or good deed. There is a very famous proverb among the Bedouins: Ra'ei El-Awalih Ma Yel-tahuq' (راعي الاوله ما يلتحق), which may be translated as: 'You will not catch up with one who first does you a favour or good deed'.

Relations between Attacks and Non-Payment of *Surra*

The Ottoman administration continued to send its forces to the area to keep it secure. The *vali* of Syria, Madhat Pasha, was very strict in 1880. Four years earlier, Bani Sakhr attacked a caravan and there was a battle between the two sides. There was another source of threat by the *Sheikh* of Adwan, Qublan, who led the confederation of Balqa tribes. The *Mutasarrif* of Nablus was worried about the influence of Qublan.

In spite of all this, the Ottoman administration attacked local leaders. The Paramount *sheikhs* became local leaders, when the administration started establishing the Hejaz Railway and the administration established a camel corps to protect it from the Bedouins (Al-Swarieh, 1996).

Stability to the North of Qatrani

It seems that all the activities were to the north of Qatrani, where the Ottoman administration concentrated on trouble spots (Abujaber, 1989) and paid money. The income of the tribes to the north of Qatrani increased because they had animal husbandry among the Bani Sakhr tribe and their farmer partners. When *Sheikh* Sattam died in 1891, his encampments had five thousand sheep and goats and nearly five hundred cows. He and his nearest kin had a couple of thousand of the camels owned by the tribe (Abujaber, 1989).

Regarding farming, the Bani Sakhr tribe and others depended on *murabiiya*, when the farmers used to receive one quarter of the crops for their work during the agricultural year (Abujaber, 1989). The idea of *murabiiya* started when some farmers came from Palestine to assist in planting the land. The farmers used to bring their tools, families, and sometimes oxen. The Bedouin *sheikhs* used to give them shelter, food and protection, and let them cultivate the land and sometimes take one fifth of the crops. Later it was organized so that the farmers took one eleventh of the crops. Because of this, the farmer was called *murabii*, in the singular, which relates to the word 'quarter' (Nahhas, 1979). *Sheikh* Sattam was the first nomad to own land and cultivate it with the help of partners, *murabiiya*, who came from Hauran, Samü village in Hebron or Es-Salt area. The area which was cultivated during the life of Sattam was to the west of Umm El-Amad because it received the highest rainfall. The area was twelve thousand dunams; each dunam is approximately one thousand square meters (Abujaber, 1989).

The Bani Abbad tribes were semi-nomadic and most were scattered from Naur to the north of Es-Salt. Their number was estimated by counting six hundred tents in 1877. Since they were farmers, they reacted against the policies of the government that had deprived them of their land and saved it for Circassian immigrants (Al-Swarieh, 1996).

The Bani Abbad knew the area and competed with El-Adwan to control Es-Salt. They had controlled Es-Salt before El-Adwan, who were stronger and came later. The Ottoman administration controlled the two tribes later still in 1866. The administration caught the *Sheikh* of El-Adwan, Diab, and jailed him (Dawud, 1996).

A military garrison was located in Es-Salt and a local committee was established to administer the area from the Zarqa River in the north to El-Karak in the south (Dawud, 1996).

The Importance of the Area

Abdel-Hameed, the Ottoman sultan, concentrated his administration on Syria, and mainly its southern part. He felt that it was the cornerstone in his reforms and the security of this part was a very important element in the security of the whole Empire. He appointed the new vali, Othman Nuri, to Syria in order to make "*mutasarrifiyya*" in the southern part of Syria (Akasil, 1986).

By then the *vilaya*, governorate or province, of Syria was divided into seven sub-provincial administrative divisions (*liwa* or *sanjak*): Beirut, Tripoli, El-Lathedikeih, Hama, Akko, Houran and Maan. The *liwa* of Ma'an was divided into *qadas* (district): El-Karak, Tafleeh, Ma'an and Balqa. The borders of this *liwa* extended from the Zarqa River near Jerash down to Aqaba in the south, and the Jordan River in the west.

New Trends in the Administration

Othman Nuri visited the area on the 18th May 1892 (22nd Shawwal 1309) and wrote a report suggesting the establishment of *mutasarrifiyya* in the area (Akasil, 1986). The reason for this was that Sultan Abdel-Hameed wanted to strengthen relations between the centre and these parts of the Empire. On the 18th August 1892, Othman submitted his report to the Ministry of the Interior, and the *mutasarrifiyya* appeared. With this, Othman's mission was completed. The Ottoman administration, chosen from the best employees for this *mutasarrifiyya*, took great care to achieve success in this part of the Empire.

The *vali* Hussein Helmi was appointed to the new *mutasarrifiyya*. He started to market new diplomacy to attract people, and paid a monthly salary to the *sheikhs* of El-Karak (El-Moqtatabass, 21st and 27th Dec. 1910 and Al-Qusus, 1920). He appointed six teachers in El-Karak in the same period. The number of teachers was the highest compared with other sub-provinces (*li*) (Turkey, Salname Suriya Vilayt I, 1311-1312). The population in El-Karak by then was eight thousand (El-Moqtatabass,

21st Dec. 1910). Hussein Helmi left El-Karak after three years and was replaced by Sadeq-Pash, who suspended the monthly salary which was paid by Hussein Helmi. (Al-Qusus).

However, the situation improved when Rashid, the new governor of El-Karak, replaced Sadeq. Rashid concentrated on strengthening relations between the tribes and the Ottoman administration, by good service and efficient administration. He recruited many locals to the police to keep order (El-Moqtabass, 21st and 27th Dec. 1910).

The Confederation of the Tribes of Bedouins and Others

There were two confederations of tribes in the area. When the Egyptians left it, the power of the tribes increased in El-Karak and the surrounding areas. The tribes of El-Karak were a threat and danger to the Egyptian Army which was in the area. The people of El-Karak thought that some other tribes were assisting the Egyptians against them. When the Egyptians departed, the tribes started to form confederations to be self-sufficient. By the middle of the nineteenth century, they were strong enough to depend on themselves. The Bani Atyieh tribe who lived to the east of El-Karak joined that confederation. Two other cities joined one of them, i.e. Shobak and Maan (*Es-Shamie*) or the western part of Ma'an. The second confederation was the Huwaytat tribe and the cities of Tafileh, Wadi Musa and Ma'an (*El-Hajazieh*), or the eastern part of Ma'an (Al-Qusus Al-Sanousi, 1981, and Abudayeh, 1989).

The Role of Confederations

These confederations increased the power of the tribes. They were not thinking about revolting against the Empire, but they wanted to protect themselves. The central administration wanted at the same time to have efficient central power. As a result, many laws appeared. The government was accused of weakening the positions of tribes and families (Asali, 1986).

When the administration established the Hejaz Railway from Damascus to Madina, rumours spread that the central administration was increasing its power to achieve its political and military goals. The administration was accused of ignoring the people of the area after the reforms (Ali, 1904).

The administration used to pay money to tribes (*surra*). After establishing the *mutasarrifiyya* of El-Karak and after the construction of the Hejaz Railway in 1908, it reduced the money gradually every year, from 30,000 lira to 24,000 in the second year, to 19,000 in the third year. Then it cancelled paying money altogether (Al-Moqtabass, 5th Feb. 1911).

When A. Musil visited Maan on the 10th July 1910, he felt that there would be a revolt among the Huwaytat tribe or in Ma'an. He was told when he asked about the Huwaytat that they had moved to the west and that they wanted to revolt because the government had suspended granting them their financial allowances (*surra*). The *vali* (governor) in Damascus heard about that, but he thought that the revolt would be in Houran (Musil, 1926).

The Revolt of the Druze in Houran

Two months before the revolt of El-Karak, there was a revolt in Houran by the Druze. Sami Pasha El-Farouqi, a famous military leader, crushed it and was assisted by the Ruwla tribe, which surrounded the Druze from the south. The reason for that revolt was that the people were resisting the government's policy of recruiting their sons for the army. The leaders of the tribes in El-Karak resisted the same policies. The governments method of recruitment was to start a census of the population and to collect weapons from the hands of the people (Al-Moqtabass, 5th Feb 1911).

Suspending payment of the monthly salary was not the direct reason for the revolt. Although it was one of the important reasons, the administration implemented several policies at one time, without taking into consideration the reactions of the tribes. The administration thought that crushing the revolt in Houran would deter others and scare them. Sami Pasha, the leader of the army units which crushed the revolt in Houran, became a powerful personality who did not cooperate with the central administration. Instead, he coordinated with the *mutasarrif* in El-Karak directly and consulted with him to collect arms, complete the census and register the land (El-Moqtabass, 1st Feb.1911).

The *mutasarrif* behaved with irresponsibility and missed an opportunity for cooperating with the people. He ignored the real feelings of the tribes and the gap widened day after day between the

administration and the people. The administration had no real information about the situation and we can see that from the prediction by A. Musil about the revolt in July among the Huwaytat tribe or in Ma'an. The administration in Damascus did not predict that accurately, since it predicted that the revolt would take place in Houran and did not know that the strong tribes in the south were not satisfied with the situation. Later they revolted. Moreover, the administration predicted that crushing the revolt in Houran would deter the rest. The information of the tribes was better than the information of the administration in Damascus. The *vali* in Damascus was not happy that the *mutasarrif* of El-Karak had received orders from Sami Pasha and not from him (El-Moqtabass, 15th Feb. 1911). The *murasarrif* was subordinate to the *vali*, not to Sami Pasha.

Eighteen years before the revolt, the *vali* of Syria was Othman Nuri, who had written the report mentioned before, and he stated that the people respected the Sultan and had no intention of resisting him. The *vali* by then had made a lot of efforts to motivate and give incentives to the people to bring them closer to the administration. However, that policy changed. In eighteen years, the situation became different. The tribes were dissatisfied and the administration did not predict the size of their power. Moreover, the administration ignored their feelings and demands. After the revolt, the *mutasarrif* of El-Karak accused the leaders of the tribes of being selfish and wicked (El-Moqtabass, 5th Feb 1911). The *vali* in Damascus blamed El-Majali, the Bani Hameeda and Es-Salaytieh tribes. The administration never thought of the reactions of the *sheikhs* of the tribes (El-Moqtabass, 17th Dec 1911). For example, Qadar el-Majali, the Paramount *Sheikh* of El-Karak, who lost one thousand piasters, his monthly salary from the government, when he lost his position in the local council in the city, was working against the administration (El-Moqtabass, 2nd Feb 1911). The *vali* never thought of the powerful size of the confederation among the tribes. The situation in El-Karak was different from Houran, where the Ruwala tribe was beside the administration and surrounded the Druze from the south (El-Moqtabass, 2nd Feb. 1911). However, the situation was not like that in El-Karak and the surrounding area. On the 10th December 1910, the

tribes attacked government posts in El-Karak and Qutrana. Many stations of the Hejaz Railway were attacked as follows:

Name of Attacked Station	Distance from Damascus (km)
El-Qasr	234
El-Lubn	249
El-Giza	260
Ed-Dhaba	279
Khan Ez-Zabeeb	295
Es-Siwaqa	309
Qutrana	326
Manzla	348
Frayfra	367
Hessa	378
Jurf Ed-Daraweesh	398
Anza	423
Wadi Jordoan	440

The *sheikhs* of Balqa, El-Adwan, Ajarmih, El-Fayez, Abu El-Ghanam and others wired telegrams to the Sultan, condemning the attacks (El-Moqtabass, 17th Dec. 1910). In any event, there was dissatisfaction among the tribes in the south, which may have been encouraged by external support from the British or French powers.

Development of Events during World War I

There were great developments during World War I. The British needed allies in the area to face the German and Turks, so they thought of the Hashemites who had a very strong legitimacy because they had been the rulers of Mecca since the 16th century. The Hashemites in Mecca in turn were dissatisfied with the administration of the Ottomans in the area. There were secret liaisons between the Hashemites and the British, when Great Britain promised to help the former gain independence. On the 10th June, the Hashemites revolted against the Ottoman administra-

tion and issued their first communiqué declaring a new era in the area. When the Hashemites needed assistance to move to the north, their most suitable tool was the Huwaytat tribe which was scattered in the north (Obaydat, 1999, and El-Najadat, 1989). Without them, the operations would have faced a lot of difficulties. From the 9th May 1917 to the 1st October 1918, the Huwaytats were great participants in battles (El-Najadat, 1989).

The Hejaz Railway and Concentration of the Administration

When military operations started, the Ottoman administration concentrated on the Hejaz Railway and worked to keep it in their hands. The stretch from Damascus to Derra in the south of Syria was an important part of the line because after that it was split into two lines; one went to the west and the other to the south to Amman, which was about two hundred kilometres from Maan, then to Madina in Hejaz. The railway was the source of power of the Ottoman Army (Mousa, 1976). The administration fortified the station in Ma'an with three to eleven thousand soldiers guarding the railway from Amman to Maan. There were three thousand soldiers in Maan station alone (Mousa, 1976).

The line was safe to the north of Ma'an, but operations of the Huwaytat to the south of Ma'an were successful. The famous *Sheikh*, Odah Abu Tayeh of Huwaytat, attacked and captured Aqaba. The Huwaytat seized all the stations to the south of Maan from the 23rd to the 25th April 1918 (Mousa, 1976).

At that time, there was no role for the Bani Sakhr. When the British army reached Beersheba (south of Palestine) in October 1917, it planned to move forward to the east of Jordan. The British were interested in persuading the Bani Sakhr to attack or distract the attention of the Ottoman Army from behind. Money was paid to the tribe, but they let the British down on the 30th April 1918 when they started operations (Mousa, 1976).

In general, the main role of the tribes in World War I and in the Arab Revolt was played by the Huwaytat, and in particular Odah Abu Tayeh, who entered Damascus with Faisal, the second son of Sherif Hussein of Mecca. Odah offered a lot to the revolution.

All the tribes to the north of Ma'an had roles to play later. The role of Odah started with the occupation of Aqaba and continued in the other

battles. He participated in the mobilisation of people in the north to attract them to the revolution (Obeydat, 1999).

The Role of the Tribes in the Transitional Period

On the 5th October, Prince Faisal established a military government in Damascus, with Jordan being part of it. The British reneged on their promise to grant independence to the Arabs. Britain and France planned secretly to rule the area after the withdrawal of the Ottoman administration. Although Prince Faisal protested, the British assured him that these procedures were temporary (Klieman, 1970). In Jordan, the *sheikhs* played basic roles to keep order, for example in Karak, *Sheikh* Refifan El-Majali played a role in maintaining order on behalf of the army (El-Madi, 1959).

Mysaloon and after the Tension Started

On the 24th July 1920, Faisal, who later became the king of Syria, faced the French army. Faisal was remote from the strong Jordanian tribes, was weak, and the Syrian *sheikhs* let him down. The famous *Sheikh* of the Ruwla, Nuri Es-Shalaan, used to receive golden pounds from Faisal until August 1918. Faisal gave *Sheikh* Nuri thirty sacks, and each one contained one thousand golden pounds. However, when Faisal faced the French two years later in battle, Nuri received the French army in Damascus, thus letting Faisal down (Mousa, 1976).

After the Battle of Mysaloon in July 1920, Jordan was left without any military force to protect the people. Syria was directly under French power and Jordan was left with no administration and no military forces.

Without the assistance and great role of the tribal *sheikhs*, no security would have been achieved in Jordan during that period. The British Commissioner in Palestine tried to fill the military vacuum in Jordan or to establish a police force from the tribes, but the British government refused (Mousa, 1971).

The Meeting between the Commissioner and the Tribal Leaders

The British Commissioner came to Jordan and met with the tribal leaders in Es-Salt on the 21st August 1920, when he concentrated on security issues (El Zorkli, 1926). After that, Britain sent five officers to assist Jordanians in running the country. On the 2nd September 1920, one held a meeting at Um Kais because the *sheikhs* of Irbid and Ajloun did

not attend the first meeting the previous month. Several local governments were established, mainly in the north. The Bedouin *sheikhs* never thought of such local governments. This situation continued up to the date of the arrival of Prince Abdullah, the second son of the sharif of Mecca, in Maan on the 21st November 1920.

Prince Abdullah came to liberate Syria from French control, but the British Minister of Colonies met him in Jerusalem on the 28th March 1921 and agreed to establish a new state in Jordan. On the 11th April 1921, the first central government in Jordan was established.

Interest in the Tribes

The first government focused on the tribes by appointing two special ministers who were interested in tribal affairs. These cabinets which were formed on the 11th April, 5th July, and the 15th August 1921 and the 10th March 1922, had two ministers, among six or seven in total, involved in tribal affairs (El Wathaaq El Urdunieh, 1984). On the 28th January, the 5th September 1923 and the 3rd May 1924, there was one minister who dealt with the tribes and he was always headed by Prince Shaker Bin Zaid, a close relative of the king. However, the British planned to cancel this ministry to weaken the position of Prince Abdullah, who was later king (Dann, 1976). In 1926 the British succeeded in removing the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (*Neyabit el-Ashair*).

The British Force

In 1926 the Frontier Force appeared to control borders and security amongst Bedouins in the eastern and southern deserts, but Prince Abdullah (later King) did not support it. British officers in Jordan, such as Kirkbride and J. B. Glubb did not support it either because it belonged to the British mandate administration and most of its soldiers came from Palestine (Vatikiotis, 1967).

The Annexation of Ma'an and Aqaba

On the 25th June 1925, Ma'an and Aqaba were annexed to Jordan. They had belonged to Hejaz before. After annexation, Jordan bore responsibility for a long border of seven hundred miles. The Frontier Force was not able to keep up the security in the desert. F. G. Peake, the head of the Arab Legion, thought of occupying Wadi Es-Sarhan to the

east. The Bedouins were exposed to the danger of *ghazu* (raids) from outside and they needed pastures for feeding their goats, sheep and camels.

New Procedures in the North

The Jordanian government came up with the idea of resolving the problems of the Bedouin tribes in the north with treaties, and it signed a treaty on the 4th March 1930 to resolve their problems. A court was formed with the judges being a British and a French officer who met every two months (East Jordanian Gazette, 1930).

The situation was not the same in the south and east, where there was *ghazu*. This was the way tribes did business, effectively exchanging livestock and other property. A British officer, Major Jarvis, pointed out that fifty percent of *ghazu* was business (Jarvis, 1936). The Bedouins were accustomed to attacking each other with raids to capture animals like goats, sheep, horses and camels. The borders between Jordan and Saudi Arabia witnessed a great number of *ghazu* among the tribes. Since they crossed borders, that meant the raids were classed as being international, and although the two governments wanted to reduce the number of these operations, it was not easy because the Bedouins were very good at secretly conducting trade. The researcher of this study met a very famous sheikh who told him that they used to bribe police officers. Because of this, it took Glubb, the leader of the camel corps, two years to gain control of the borders and *ghazu* became a thing of the past. Iraqi tribes suffered more than any others in the area because they were very rich and were constantly targeted by poor tribes. *Ghazu* has its own traditions and not every tribe was exposed to it. When Winston Churchill, the British Minister of Colonies in the early 1920s, blamed one of the Bedouin *sheikhs* for committing the crime of *ghazu*, he told Churchill that England was doing the same thing with the weaker states of the world and finding a lot of excuses for its actions.

The Bedouin population of Jordan was 170,000, and 120,000 of them were half Bedouins or semi-nomads, while 50,000 were pure nomads. The total population of Jordan was then between 300,000 and 320,000 (Glubb, 1938, and Epstein, 1938). The priority of the government was to secure a climate of confidence with the Bedouins (Kirkbride, 1956). Under these circumstances, J. B. Glubb entered Jordan and started the huge task of assisting the Bedouins to settle, as

previously mentioned, and he began this great mission in the Jordanian desert (Glubb, 1948).

Some of the pioneers of the camel corps were met in a personal interview by one of the writers of this research and they referred to their endeavors to build and achieve security in the desert (Sayer, 1986). Many years later Glubb wrote:

“Most of the credit for this proud record must go to the members of that First Little Desert Patrol of ninety men who by their wisdom, their devotion, to the cause in which they were engaged(sic.)” (Glubb, 1948:112.)

Before the mid 1930s, there was a government class that consisted of teachers and employees, and there was no Bedouin or army officer, but gradually the desert became part of life in Jordan and a new class appeared.

Peake Pasha, the leader of the army, had a very strange policy that insisted on keeping power in the hands of city dwellers, but not Bedouins (Jarvis 1936 and Kirkbride 1956). He had been keen to keep power in the hand of the frontier force. However, Glubb concentrated on Bedouins. It appeared that he had been intending to keep power in their hands. In 1939 Glubb replaced Peake Pasha in the army, became leader of the Arab Legion (the Jordanian National Army), and was subsequently accused of concentrating on Bedouins. In 1956, after his departure, new officers dismissed Bedouin officers who were loyal to him. Because of the great influence of Egypt and its radio propaganda in the Arab world, the king maintained good relations with the tribes and the prominent figures of their families. There were always senators from among them in the Upper House in Jordan.

In 1970, without the efficiency of the army and the loyalty of the tribes, Jordan would have faced difficulty after Palestinian commandos created trouble for the Jordanian government, as it could not achieve security without power.

In 1971, after a year of incidents in Jordan, the army achieved security throughout the whole county. King Hussein appointed his brother, Prince Mohammad, to be head of the tribal council. The king felt that he needed this support. Two years later, Zaid Er-Rifai became prime minister, and three Bedouin ministers were assigned to his cabinet

for the first time in the history of Jordan. However, there was continuous pressure from several sides who were trying relentlessly to minimize the strength of the tribes. Many politicians readily criticized the tribes to such an extent that it became a habit.

1970 and After

The year 1970 was a decisive year in the history of relations between tribes and the administration. The departure of the Egyptian President Gamal Abid En-Nassir was a basic factor in the weakening of the Palestinian position in Jordan and elsewhere. During the time of Gamal, the Palestinians were fanatical about him and their loyalty to Jordan was very weak. The Jordanian administration concentrated on the native population of Jordan to gain support. Gamal's influence was dangerous to the extent that the administration made continuous efforts to contain the Egyptian influence. These were golden days for the relationship between the administration and Jordanians.

In 1970, civil war erupted and the Jordanian Army crushed the Palestinian guerrillas and kicked them out of Jordan because they had violated the rules and formed a state within a state. Therefore the king formed a military government in September 1970 and got rid of the Palestinian guerrillas.

The Tribal Council

After 1970, King Hussein Bin Talal concentrated on the safety valve of Jordanian security, the tribes. He formed the Tribal Council (*Majlis El-Asha'e*) and appointed his second brother, Prince Muhammad, as its head. It was constituted from its members and operated for two years. Its role was:

- 1 - To promote tribal standards;
- 2 - To submit the needs of tribes to the administration;
- 3 - To delegate the lands of the government to needy tribal people, according to laws and regulations;
- 4 - To suggest the most suitable methods of administration to be implemented among Bedouins. (Official Gazette, 1976).

This council was cancelled in 1976. That year the Jordanian administration cancelled the National Union (*El-Etihad El-Watani*) that acted as a party to unite Jordanians and Palestinians and it also

witnessed the cancellation of other laws relating to the tribes, such as the Law of the Tribal Courts and the Law of Tribal Supervision of 1936, and the founding of a new tribal court.

1976 and After

The year 1976 witnessed some developments that annulled the activities of 1971, for example those of the Tribal Council and the National Union which tried to bridge gaps and build confidence among original Jordanians and Jordanians of Palestinian origin. Some prime ministers who gained power after 1976 were not interested in tribes in the same way that their predecessors were, who maintained contact with them, like Zaid Er-Rifai in 1973.

Some Tribal Reactions

A tribal reaction took place in the early 1980s and land was a common factor in the incidents of 1983. The Bani Hassan tribes in Zarqa reacted strongly against the administration which failed to resolve fairly land ownership issues in Zarqa. A similar problem occurred in the south in Ma'an in August 1983, which opened the way for demands for political participation.

From 1983 onwards the Bani Hassan tribe participated in the government. This was part of the resolution to close the file of Bani Hassan affairs. In Ma'an, however, the problem of land was not the only problem, but there was another: that of trucks which were affected by new government policies. It was then that the problems started. In 1989 the situation worsened and, for the first time in Jordanian history, people reacted against the government's decisions to raise the cost of some basic goods. The initiative came from King Hussein himself when he opened the door for parliamentary elections and permitted political parties to operate again. They had been banned since a law was issued in 1957.

Another Trend of Abhorrence to the Tribes

As mentioned before, some politicians were against tribalism - for example, the head of the National Council put tribalism in the same category as racism (*El-Wathaiq El-Urdunieh*, 1980).

Former Deputy of Parliament, Layth Ishbaylat, a prominent representative and leader of the opposition against the administration, defended tribalism and said that it did not weaken the administration:

“Ousting tribalism does not mean adopting Western laws,” according to Layth (Darwish, 1990).

There was clear evidence to describe the situation in that period as abhorrence against tribes. An old Jordanian senator mentioned that two strong personalities in the West Bank asked the administration not to appoint any senators from the *sheikhs* of Bedouins. Their request was granted. Going back to the documents, they reveal, that on the 24th December 1966, the Upper House did not have any of the *sheikhs* of tribes wearing cloaks. However, two personalities were included in that Upper House (October 1984). King Hussein later said that he himself belonged to a tribe and that it was a source of pride for him (*El-Wathaiq El-Urdniyah*, Oct 1984).

The Peace Treaty with Israel and After

The first incident after the peace treaty in 1994 between tribal people and the administration took place on the 17th August 1996 when the price of bread was raised. Four hundred people in El-Karak, demonstrated in the streets and attacked government offices and buildings after Friday prayers (*Salaht El-Juma*) (*El-Wathaiq El-Urdunieh*, Sept.1996). This reaction came from people with tribal backgrounds. That was the third incident following the 1983 and 1989 cases and they came from the same area for the same reasons. The king then accused external powers of interfering (*El-Wathaiq El-Urdunieh*, August 1996).

In the following year, the king energetically visited several cities in Jordan, in an extraordinary manner, as follows:

- Mafrag on the 31st July;
- Maan on the 12th August;
- Aqaba on the 14th August;
- Tafileh on the 18th August;
- Ajloun on the 27th August;
- Madaba on the 18th September;
- Jerash on the 23rd September;
- Zarqa on the 30th September.

The king talked about democracy, national unity, the peace process, and sometimes referred to the old days when the people were around him during his youth (September 1997). The reader may notice that the king did not visit El-Karak. That was because he paid three visits to El-Karak

on the 5th June 1997 and that visit was preceded by Crown Prince Hassan's visit on the 29th December 1996. The Crown Prince stated that Jordan would be divided into three developmental areas (*El-Wathaiq El-Urdunieh*, September 1997).

The Fourth Incident

There was a fourth incident in 1998 when demonstrators went out and expressed their point of view against the government in Ma'an, an area of tribal background. This time the reason was not economic but related to Iraqi issues and supported the Iraqi government against U.S. policy in Iraq. The king again accused external powers of interfering on this occasion (*El-Wathaiq El-Urdunieh*, February 1998).

King Abdullah the Second

On the 7th February 1999, King Hussein passed away, but all the old files were still open. The new king, Abdullah II, visited some cities now and then, but they were not necessarily Bedouin towns, as he did on the 11th and 18th January 2000. He presented young students with computers.

On the 21st February 2002, the king visited two small villages in the south: Qatar and Rahmeh. In Qatar he saw a family that had been living under a tree for forty years. The three daily meals for the family consisted of tea and bread only. He immediately ordered the concerned authorities to build a big palm farm of about two hundred dunams (or two hundred square kilometers) for them (*El-Wathaiq El-Urdunieh*, 2002).

Are the Tribes a Target or Not?

Some people accused the government of being anti-tribes and of aiming to weaken the tribes when the security forces entered Ma'an in November 2002 to capture a few people who were accused of agitation. The government was accused of sending a message to warn the other tribes not to do the same. The prime minister addressed journalists on the 2nd December 2002 and said that all these accusations against the government were false (*El-Wathaiq El-Urdunieh*, 2002). It was the first incident between the government and the people of a tribal background during the period of King Abdullah II. There were clear differences between administrative procedures during this period and the previous

period of King Hussein. In June 2005, the king started the old policy of visiting Jordanian governorates and areas, such as:

- Madaba on the 12th June;
- Aqaba on the 18th June (*El-Wathaiq El-Urdunieh*, 2005);
- The Southern Badia region on the 20th July; and
- Maan on the 7th of August 2005.

The king referred to closing the file of the events of Ma'an in 2002. The people of Shobak complained to the king that because of unemployment, they were losing eleven people every month who emigrated and left the city. The people of Wadi Musa also asked the king to resolve the chronic problem of the size limitation of many cities or villages, surrounded by land owned by the government. The government now sells them land which it owns, so they can expand outside the villages. The people complained that the ratio of unemployment in Ma'an Governorate was 53% and 25% for women and men respectively (*El-Wathaiq El-Urdunieh*, 2005). A further request to resolve the problem of land ownership was put to the king when he visited other governorates, like Balqa on the 23rd of February 2006 (*El-Wathaiq El-Urdunieh*, 2006).

Some Notes

The difference between the thirties and recent years is that there is no follow-up now. In 1930 Prince Abdullah (later the king) wanted to teach the Bedouins. Glubb, the founder of the Camel Corps, followed up and finished the task in two years. The desert became part of Jordanian political life. These days, ideas are not followed up and translated into action. During Crown Prince Hassan's visits which were mentioned before, he proposed the idea of old Jordanian culture whereby people volunteer to work. The word is *nakhwa* (chivalry, generosity and sense of honour). The Prince wanted to institutionalise *nakhwa*, but no one followed the idea up and no one volunteered to work on the implementation of a plan to initialise the ideas, so the proposal collapsed and the same problems remain.

This reminds us of an important technique which should be employed by advisors who deal with tribes: they must follow up and open the way for the two sides, the government and the tribes, to have good communication systems. The tribal element has been very

important throughout the centuries and Jordanian tribes were major players during the Ottoman Empire. The most dangerous revolt against the Ottomans came from Jordanian tribes in the south in 1910. Six years later, Jordanian tribes were major players in the Arab Revolt by Sherif Hussein Bin Ali. Aqaba was captured by the Jordanian *Sheikh*, Odah Abu Tayeh.

What attracts our attention is that the tribes are still the ones who react, for example when the Jordanian government raised the prices of basic commodities in 1989 and 1996. The tribes always were and still are the ones who react.

These days, the tribes are suffering from very acute problems which have not been fully studied. They have demanded, during the king's visits, that he find jobs for their sons. Sometimes they demand a solution to the land ownership issue. This is a chronic problem and all the riots that happened in 1983 in Jordan related to it.

The scope of the land problem had reached a level which had never been seen before in Jordan. The problem is that Jordanians never revealed this degree of concern during the king's visits. Although the king asked the people to submit some requests in writing (*El-Wathaiq El-Urdunieh*, Feb. 2006), this has not been done. Jordanian culture is unfortunately unaccustomed to such methods.

The initiative has been lost on both sides: the government and people. However, the people are suffering and their suffering increases day after day. Land ownership problems have accumulated over the years. In the last three years, there has been a severe problem because the price of land has risen to extraordinary levels and some Jordanian opinions have appeared in weekly newspapers. Selling land has been subject to corruption at extraordinary levels in some places. On the 15th March 2007, a small article appeared in a Jordanian weekly addressing the administration and asking them to take action to protect their land (Shehan, 15 March 2007). In another interview in another weekly, a concerned person declared that seven hundred thousand dunams were designated by the late King Hussein to a specific family in the north, but later they lost it to influential people who owned the land through unknown means. This kind of phenomenon in Jordanian tribal life is very dangerous. Because it relates to the life, dignity and future of Jordanians,

it should be studied carefully. There have been mumbblings of discontent against this phenomenon, especially among the tribes who are not accustomed to writing down their problems, some of which may be significant.

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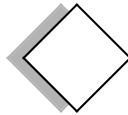
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العشائر والأرض والإدارة في الأردن بين الماضي والحاضر (622 إلى 2009م)

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ملخص: يركز هذا البحث على تفاعلات عنصر (العشائر) في المجتمع الأردني مع الإدارة والأرض عبر العهود المختلفة؛ ابتداء من العهد الإسلامي وحتى الآن، وقد كان هناك تفاعلات دائماً بين الإدارة والعشائر بحيث إن العشائر كانت دائماً هي صمام الأمان للاستقرار أو التغيير. وتتابع الدراسة تأثير العلاقة التبادلية بين العشائر والإدارة، ومتى تكون العشائر عامل قوة للإدارة ومتى تكون ضابطاً على تصرفها. وتأثرت قوة الدولة بهذا العنصر كما تأثر هذا العنصر نفسه بقوة الدولة. وتفترض الدراسة أن هذا العنصر كان عاملاً حاسماً عبر التاريخ، ومن أكبر الضوابط والمقومات لقوة الدولة.

وفي العهد العثماني ركز العثمانيون على هذا العنصر، وكانت التفاعلات بين الإدارة وبينه واضحة. وعندما ظهرت حكومات أخرى استمر الاهتمام مستمراً وهكذا ظل هذا العنصر حجر الرchy وصمام الأمان للإدارة، وحتى في عصر العولمة فإن مكانته لم تتأثر، وهذا ما افترضته الدراسة.

المصطلحات الأساسية: العشائر، الأرض، الحكومة، قریش، العثمانيون، الأردن، الحويطات، كلوب.

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