

## Home and Homeland: The Dialogics of Tribal and National Identities in Jordan

By Linda Layne. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 188 pp.

The formation of Jordanian tribal and national identities is the central theme of Layne's *Home and Homeland*. This study focuses on the Abbadi tribes of the East Jordan Valley and is based on extensive fieldwork conducted by Layne between 1979 and 1988. Layne's central argument is that for the Abbadi and for Jordanian society in general, tribal and national identities are in dialogic relationships, deriving meaning from and conditioning one another. She challenges approaches to Jordanian social and political identity which compartmentalize individuals according to rigid Palestinian/East Bank/tribal lines, arguing that identities are constantly shifting and being reconstructed through discourse between tribespeople, urbanites, the monarchy, bureaucracy, the intelligentsia, Hashemite rulers, and Western social scientists.

In the introductory chapter of this work, the author reviews and assesses notions of social identity. Layne criticizes mosaic and segmentary models of collective identity on two grounds: they are essentialist in tending to posit collective identity in terms of social masses and they provide "pigeonhole" models of identity which require the presence of an observer. Here she introduces a "posture-oriented" approach to identity which "sees identity as meaning constructed on an ongoing basis through the everyday practices of making a place in the world, that is, adopting a posture in the context of changing circumstances and uncertain contingencies."

Layne devotes the next three chapters to the Abbadi tribes. She outlines significant changes that occurred in the Jordan Valley in the twentieth century in terms of the tribes' relationship with land and state. Her case study focuses on domestic space as an expression of how the tribespeople have constructed their social entities in the context of inclusion in the Jordanian nation-state and integration into world capitalism. The author emphasizes the strong threads of con-

tinuity woven through the process of changing identity. A chapter assessing the changing architectonics of the home and family describes how the Abbadis still maintain "a modified pattern of seasonal transhumance," moving for the summer season into goat hair tents.

Layne's work then moves from a tribal to a national level with a discussion of the Jordanian debate in the 1980s over the compatibility of tribalism with modern citizenship. The author analyzes tribal voting patterns during the 1984 parliamentary by-elections to argue that tribespeople can function fully as citizens while retaining their tribal identity.

The theme of "posture" is carried through to the monarchy in the last section of this work where Layne discusses the role of King Hussein in shaping social and political identities, particularly through the expropriation of tribal heritage as a symbol of Jordanian national identity.

*Home and Homeland* makes a valuable contribution toward discussions of social identity in the Middle East region. Layne effectively demonstrates the fluidity and complexity of social identity formation and is well justified in pointing to the flaws in "pigeonhole" models of collective identity. The greatest strength of this work lies in Layne's presentation of her extensive and obviously diligent fieldwork, which offers us a detailed portrayal of aspects of Abbadi domestic life.

Unfortunately however, Layne's analysis of broader socioeconomic and political trends effecting identity formation in Jordan is not comprehensive. No reference is made to political liberalization in Jordan since 1989. The context of the 1984 elections is not properly explained. The Palestinian component of Jordanian society is very undertreated, and Palestinian conceptions of identity are not analyzed. Finally, appearing as it did after the 1989 parliamentary elections, it seems extraordinary that this work has completely neglected to discuss the Islamic component of Jordanian social identity.

Nonetheless, it must be said that Layne's case study has made an informative and thought-provoking contribution to the still somewhat limited scholarship on Jordan and will certainly generate further discussion of social identity in the Middle East region.

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