

Inverting the Lens: Insider photography by the Manaja'a family, Humayma, Jordan

by

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BFA, University of Victoria, 2001

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of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in Interdisciplinary Studies (History in Art, Anthropology)

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Abstract

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In this thesis, I assert that photographs of Jordanian Bedouin produced by cultural insiders disrupt and challenge pan-Bedouin and romantic photographic constructions of Bedouin made by cultural outsiders. These outsiders, Western ethno-photographers and members of the Jordanian Hashemite monarchy, use photographs featuring visual symbols of Bedouin identity in order to legitimise claims to land, resources, and cultural capital. Data produced from collaborative action research (the creation of photography with a self-identifying Bedouin family from Humayma, Jordan) demonstrates an increasingly complex version of Jordanian Bedouin identity absent from outsider representations. This nuanced picture of Bedouin identity, while limited by its focus on a single family, may help contribute to further collaborative investigations of Bedouin identity in Jordan. This research has the potential to assist in the better understanding of the diverse social practices and concerns of Bedouin living in Jordan today.

Keywords: Bedouin, photography, ethnography, identity, Jordan, Howeitat, Hashemite, self-representation, collaborative research.

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*For Greg, Eileen and Mary – my family,
and for
Abu Sabah al Manaja'a, for inviting me into his.*

Preface

Notes

Arabic transliteration

The Manaja'a family, on whom this research focuses, speaks in a colloquial dialect of Arabic different from the Modern Standard Arabic used in most North American scholarly publications of Middle Eastern Studies. As I am not a linguist, nor do I assume many of my readers will be, I have chosen to represent the Arabic words in this thesis (mostly personal and place names) in the most simplified manner possible. As a result, I have presented Arabic names and terms without the use of diacritical marks. Marks connoting the Arabic letters *Alif* and *Ayn* have been included. Where a Europeanised version of an Arabic name exists, I have chosen to use that version. The name *Manaja'a* was written for me, in English, by the family. As such, I have used the name in this document as it was represented to me.

Dates

All dates are Common Era unless stated otherwise. Unless indicated, all references to conversations between members of the Manaja'a family and myself took place during our collaboration in June 2007.

Visual chapter

Chapter four of this document consists solely of photographs taken by the Manaja'a family and myself during our collaborative research in 2007. The images are presented with limited textual accompaniment—only page numbers are visible. To ensure that each

project participant is properly credited for their work, and that no one goes nameless, information regarding the author and the individual(s) featured in each photograph is available in Appendix I.

Presenting the photographs without accompanying text encourages viewers to regard the photographs as discrete documents (from caption—not necessarily from the other photographs included in the chapter). The photographs communicate as much, if not more, information than the text-based chapters which comprise the majority of this document. Though I alone selected these images for final presentation in this thesis, their content was among the most discussed by the Manaja'a family. It is with the expressed interests of the Manaja'a family in mind that I compiled this assortment, and it is with great regret that I cannot present all 2,048 photographs we produced together. For an explanation of how photographs were selected for inclusion in chapter four, see chapter three, section 3.10.

Ethical considerations

Names of the members of the Manaja'a family

The heads of the Manaja'a family often use a *kunya* (honorific) in place of their birth names. *Abu* (father of) and *Umm* (mother of) are used in conjunction with the name of each parent's first child. Because there are both male and female children in the Manaja'a family, each parent uses the eldest child's name which corresponds to their own gender. This means Eid Swelem Manaja'a, who's first born son is named Sabah, is referred to as Abu Sabah. Wafa's eldest daughter is named Dimah, thus Wafa is often called Umm Dimah. Throughout this thesis I refer to Eid Swelem as Abu Sabah, however I refer to Wafa using her first name. I have made this distinction because it reflects how I

addressed each family member when speaking to them. As I was more familiar with Eid Swelem, he asked me to call him Abu Sabah. Wafa, with whom I had less interaction, made no such request. At the request of Abu Sabah, each female member of the Manaja'a family has been assigned a pseudonym for this thesis.

Visual representations of female members of the Manaja'a family

At the request of Abu Sabah Manaja'a, the faces of the women and girls collaborating in this research have been altered to protect their identities. Permission has been granted for the women's faces to appear unaltered in the photographs presented in this document during the process leading up to, and including, its defence.

Key terms

East/Orient

This thesis narrows the definition of the Orient by discussing it in terms of the Arab Near East, and more specifically, the Levant and *bilad al-sham* (Arabic term for Greater Syria). In order to further focus the scope of this thesis, I have limited its timeline to the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century. The political events from this point onward bear most heavily on the shaping of the modern nation of Jordan.

Levant and Greater Syria

For ease of understanding, the areas of the Levant and Greater Syria are referred to synonymously and are comprised of the regions located within the modern nations of Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Israel and the Palestinian Territories (Rogan 1999:xiii; Khalidi 1997:163).

Transjordan/Jordan

Transjordan, originally part of the Ottoman provinces of Syria and Hijaz, came under British Mandate at the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire on May 15, 1923, under the rule of Amir Abdullah bin Hussein (Abujaber 1989:5). The name Transjordan came into “popular usage and was adopted as the recognised name of the new state” at this time (Abujaber 1989:5). Transjordan existed as a mandate nation until the British government relinquished much of its control in 1946 with the Anglo-Transjordanian treaty. However, the US and UN did not recognise the nation’s sovereignty until the treaty was revised, removing remaining rights for British troops to occupy the territory in 1948 (Dann 1984:99; Gubser 1983:82). Transjordan from then on became the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, also referred to as Jordan. At its inception, Transjordan’s boundaries ran to the Yarmuk River in the north; the Wadi Araba rift in the west (which extends toward the Gulf of Aqaba in the south); eastward across the Hijaz and onward to Najd; moving into the north Arabian and Syrian deserts (Abujaber 1989:3).

West/Occident

The meaning of the West is defined as continental Europe (namely Britain, France, Russia) and North America (Said 1994: 14-15, 17). These nations have most actively sought to occupy the territories of the Levant from the nineteenth century to present day (Smith 2007:13–16). Canada is deliberately included in this definition of the West not because it has actively sought a role in the politics of Greater Syria, but because it is the author’s country of origin and historically has been influenced by the UK and US through popular culture and general political frameworks.

Introduction

In the West the mention of the word *Bedouin*—even for those who have never visited the Near East—evokes a multitude of images. One might imagine a lone traveller steadily traversing on camelback in a remote desert landscape; envision a group of men sitting around a radiant fire, indulging in aromatic coffee under the shelter of a welcoming tent; or witness a lawless warrior, his silver dagger flashing while engaging in battle for the benefit of his tribe or nation. Bedouin are thought to be generous hosts, honourable, and proud, yet ungovernable, independent, and fearless. They are the spiritual conservators of ancient heritage, and the endangered guardians of a desolate land. But to what extent are these images of Bedouin, prevalent in European and North American societies, truthful? Who cultivates this imagery and why?

Photographic images produced in magazines, travel books, found on postcards, posters and the internet, significantly influence Western ideas about Bedouin¹ people (Layne 1994:xiii; Al-Mahadin 2007:93, 96-99; Cole 2003:254). Historical and contemporary photographic representations of Bedouin—the majority of which are created by non-Bedouin cultural outsiders—are laden with political and social meaning (Al-Mahadin 2007:93, 96-99). In this thesis, I assert that photographs of Jordanian Bedouin produced by cultural insiders—specifically, the Manaja'as, a self-identifying Bedouin family from Humayma, Jordan—disrupt and challenge homogenous and romantic photographic constructions produced by cultural outsiders. These outsiders,

¹ While this thesis is primarily concerned with the photographic representations of Jordanian Bedouin, images of Bedouin from outside of Jordan's present national borders (including the Levant and Arabian Peninsula) will also be addressed.

Western ethno-photographers and members of the Jordanian Hashemite monarchy,² use photographs featuring visual symbols of Bedouin identity to legitimise claims to land, resources, and to acquire potent cultural capital. Rarely do photographs produced *by* Bedouin *for* Bedouin come into popular circulation.³

In this introduction, I will produce a working definition for the term Bedouin to be used throughout this thesis. Next, I will determine the key motivations behind the cultivation and adoption of Bedouin identity by cultural outsiders; principal visual signifiers of Bedouin identity will also be identified. Following this, I will introduce my collaborative research with the Manaja'a family as an intervention on traditional Western scholarship which privileges outsider over insider voices. Lastly, I will present a synopsis of each chapter in this thesis.

1.1 Defining a population: Who is Bedouin?

Historically, outsiders—particularly Western ethno-photographers and members of Jordan's Hashemite monarchy—have used elements of Bedouin social practice and visual culture to present themselves as honourable, trustworthy, brave and generous. By adopting Bedouin customs and costuming, or by forging relationships with Bedouin through adventure travel scenarios, these non-Bedouin attempt to endow themselves with a specific set of positively connoted ideological characteristics. Because these outsiders draw heavily upon Bedouin culture to augment their own identities, it is necessary to

² The Hashemites are originally from the Hijaz, an area located in Saudi Arabia, south of Jordan's modern boundaries. The Hijaz extends along approximately two-thirds of the Red Sea's eastern bank (Western Saudi Arabia) and incorporates the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina.

³ There is a growing body of popular literature written by and for Bedouin. These printed books speak to Jordanian tribal history and are adaptations of oral tradition (Shryock 1995:325).

understand what is meant by the term Bedouin. Who is Bedouin; what makes someone Bedouin; who decides who else is Bedouin?

Throughout this thesis, I will assert that the term Bedouin is most useful when thought of as an ideological, rather than an analytical, classification. Increasingly, analytical definitions of Bedouin are viewed by anthropologists⁴ as meaningless. Empirical definitions are imprecise due to the range of dissimilar qualities possessed by various groups of Bedouin people living throughout the Levant, Arabia, and beyond (Young 1999:276; Layne 1994:17). The imprecision of the term is compounded when linked with ideological qualifiers which make assumptions about the character of Bedouin people (Young 1999: 275, 279; Al-Mahadin 2007:90; Layne 1989:24-25).

Presently, there are countless competing definitions of what constitutes Bedouin identity. However, the definition of the “ideal” or “true” Bedouin, created by outsider Arab scholars and Western anthropologists alike,⁵ designates Bedouin as Arabic speaking tribally organised desert dwellers who are economically dependant on nomadic pastoralism, and can trace their lineage from a single Arabic-speaking ancestor (Young 1999:275-9; Ingham 1986:33; Gubser 1983:22; Lancaster 1981:24; Layne 1994:15–18; cf. Massad 2001:126).⁶ In this definition, Bedouin raise livestock, including goats, sheep and camels. The animals’ hair is used to make wool for clothing and housing (*bayt al-shar*, or house of hair), while their milk and flesh provides sustenance (Cole 2003:237; Young 1999:276; Marx in Marx 1984:11-12; Lancaster 1981:103; Layne 1994:15). This definition sees Bedouin society as egalitarian and possessing an ethos that “stresses

⁴ Donald Cole (2003:237), Emmanuel Marx (1984:4), and William C. Young (1999:275-276) among others.

⁵ The idea of a “true” Bedouin is an outsider construct (Layne 1994:15).

⁶ It is implied that this ancestor is noble or of some form of status (Layne 1989:25).

generosity, independence, bravery, and toughness” (Young 1999:276; Lancaster 1981:67, 73; Graulund 2009:79-80, 87-88; cf. Ochsenschlager 2004:29, 35). Finally, true Bedouin are said to be uninterested in education or writing, and favour their own legal traditions over those imposed by any state (Shylock 1995:326; Young 1999: 276).

One obvious difficulty with these empirical descriptions is that the term Bedouin “connotes much more than mere economic specialization, geographical location, or ecological adaptation” (Young 1999:275). No group of people, in the past or in the present, lives up to this definition completely (Young 1999:276).⁷ Yet, analytical definitions of Bedouin fall short of accurately describing many groups of people who self-identify as Bedouin (Layne 1994:15; Young 1999:287-293; Shryock 2004:46–48). The definition’s inadequacy in part rests in its richness; countless individuals who self-identify as Bedouin meet only a limited number of the ideal requirements. For example, many Arabic speaking people can trace their lineage to a single Arab-speaking ancestor, yet they live sedentary lives in urban environments; or, they live in cities a portion of the year, and then participate in nomadic activities for the remainder. While it is conceded by many anthropologists that Bedouin may live a range of nomadic, semi-nomadic, semi-sedentary, or sedentary lifestyles,⁸ others maintain that only those who live as nomads are true Bedouin (Gubser 1983:24; Lancaster 1981:149; Casto and Dotson 1938:124).⁹ Debate also occurs over other requisites of Bedouin identity. One case in point is the

⁷ The term “Bedouin” in English is used in place of four distinct Arabic words: *baduw*, ‘*arab*, *a’rab*, and ‘*urbaan*. The meanings of these words relate directly with each other yet hold different connotations from one another. As a consequence, it is difficult to assess which, if not all, of these words accurately translates into the English term (Young 1999:281). For a detailed discussion of scholarly Arab uses and linguistic (Arabic and English) origins of the term “Bedouin”, see Young 1999.

⁸ See Layne 1989:25-26; Marx in Marx 1984:23; cf. Shryock 1995:327; Gubser 1983:25; Cole 2003:242.

⁹ Such categorization is outdated and denies the significant impact of changes in the global economy since World War II (Marx in Marx 1984:3).

practice of animal husbandry. For example, if a group of Bedouin raises only sheep, or indeed does not raise any livestock at all; rather than goats *and* sheep *and* camels, they may be perceived by anthropologists, outsiders, and even other Bedouin groups as being somehow *less* Bedouin (Young 1999:294; Gubser 1983:24; Lancaster 1981:149).

The definition of the ideal Bedouin is rigid and static with “no room for overlap, gradations, or change” (Layne 1994:4). Cultural insiders who self-identify as Bedouin tend not to view themselves in this dualistic and rudimentary manner. While insider categorisations which differentiate habitation and animal husbandry practices exist, they are explained using a thoroughly developed and complex vocabulary (Layne 1994:15). Present global economic transformations contribute to lifestyle changes for many Bedouin communities. These changes include increased urbanisation and shifts in agricultural practices. As anthropologists struggle to define who is Bedouin, tribes throughout Jordan, and specifically in the Jordan Valley (who have been particularly impacted by these transformations) “evidenced no discomfiture with the changes, in their way of life or confusion about their identity” (Layne 1994:15).

An additional problem with this traditional definition is that ideological descriptions are intrinsically linked with the analytical criterion. For example, because Bedouin are desert dwelling, they must engage in nomadic migration to have year-round access to food and water resources. Bedouin engage in pastoralism possessing flocks which act as economic safety-nets, providing income, food, and materials for clothing and shelter during times when agricultural resources are limited (e.g., drought, winter, poor economy) (Marx in Marx 1984:12). Animal husbandry signifies wealth essential to the long term success of Bedouin tribal community. Animals are “generously”

slaughtered and shared to ensure the survival of all tribal members (Marx in Marx 1984:12; Lancaster 1981:103). Bedouin demonstrate their generosity, hospitality, and honour by sacrificing animals for a communal feast, or sharing resources with families within their tribal group who may be struggling (Young 1999:276; Lancaster 1981:83). This demonstration of generosity—essential to the concept of a common Bedouin ethos, and the accumulation of honour in Bedouin communities—is a performance fundamental for survival (Young 1999:276; Shryock 2004:38; Lancaster 1981:83, 94).¹⁰ Bedouin who do not share, who do not engage in communal feasting and distribution, are less likely to survive the sparse resources of the desert environment. But not all Bedouin (nor anybody in any given set of people) are generous. The same can be said for qualities such as hospitality, bravery, disinterest in education and law; the list goes on. The correlation between ideological and analytical qualities has made the definition of Bedouin a catchphrase for “imputing moral or genealogical characteristics to diverse populations, rather than a technical term useful for classifying societies according to empirical or objective criteria” (Young 1999:281).

Examples of the “ideological contamination” of Bedouin are littered throughout anthropological writing (Young 1999:281; cf. Burchardt 1967:183-194; Thesiger 1959:32, 51, 61). These theoretical stereotypes are not just limited to a Bedouin ethos, but to a philosophy that encompasses all Arabs. In 1993, anthropologist L. Jakubowska, included the following passage in her description of a trial that took place in southern Israel: “the Bedouin... remain the unquestionable ideal of the Arab ethos—honourable, pure, brave, independent, hospitable, and honest” (Young 1999:283). The idea of a single

¹⁰ The hospitality of welcoming a stranger into one’s home and providing food, water and safety is similarly essential for long-term survival. Ochsenschlager provides a succinct explanation of the collective responsibility of honour (Ochsenschlager 2004:17).

Bedouin ethos or, more unbelievably, a united Arab ethos, is “an ideological exercise, not an effort to discover general patterns by examining numerous ethnographic accounts” (Young 1999: 283). Other anthropologists avoid conflating ideological and analytical characteristics by clearly defining their own meaning and usage of the term.¹¹ By being mindful to not generalise their definitions beyond the individual groups of people with whom they have worked with, anthropologists wishing to use the term Bedouin as an ethnological category are able to do so with reasonable success.

I.2 Bedouin identity – fictive kin, banishment, and the recognition of others

As mentioned above, the concept of lineage is included in the list of analytical signifiers of Bedouin identity (Lancaster 1981:34). Lineage is important in claiming Bedouin identity as each tribe claims noble ancestry from a singular patrilineal forbearer (Ingham 1986:33; Gubser 1983:22; Lancaster 1981:24). A significant aspect of establishing tribal identity through lineage claims relates to an individual’s right to access certain areas of land (Ingham 1986:21; Cole 2003:239).¹² This land usage differs from Western conceptions of land ownership by which the title-holder has exclusive rights to an area, disallowing others access without the landowner’s consent. Bedouin land rights encompass entire tribal groups, and permit many individuals to inhabit, travel over, or use the resources from a specific area of terrain if they belong to, or are under the protection

¹¹ For example, Young uses Bedouin as “a synonym for ‘Arabic speaking nomadic pastoralists’” (Young 1999:283).

¹² Land rights are acquired through patrilineal inheritance (Ingham 1986:21).

of, the governing tribe. As a consequence, it is imperative for individuals to establish a legitimate lineage in order to access resources essential for survival (water, food, shelter).

Making these claims is not straightforward. People declaring Bedouin status, need to not only trace their genealogical history over numerous generations, but belong as an accepted member of a particular tribal affiliation (Ingham 1986:47; Young 1999:294; Shryock 1995:333-334). If others do not accept one's ancestral history, his or her claim of Bedouin identity will not be believed (Young 1999:286, 293).¹³ To further complicate this lineage requirement, genealogies can be manipulated by tribal groups. Bedouin families can adopt biologically unrelated (and even previously non-Bedouin) individuals through fictive kinship (Layne 1994:17; Lancaster 1981:34).¹⁴ Fictive kinship creates and maintains social and political alliances.¹⁵ Individuals adopted as fictive kin are generally well trusted, and play a significant role in the adoptive tribe or family's life. Consequently, people traditionally thought of as non-Bedouins, can be made Bedouin. Conversely, individuals who choose to leave tribal life, or who are banished from familial affiliations due to unacceptable behaviour can lose their tribal status (Ochsenschlager 2004:17; Lancaster 1981:149-150; Ginat in Marx 1984:62-63).¹⁶ Without relatives to corroborate one's claim to a certain lineage, it may be difficult, if not impossible, to have one's claim to Bedouin identity accepted.

¹³ Young also discusses how individuals asserting Bedouin identity may choose to lay claim to select characteristics of Bedouin identity. This strategically associates themselves with attributes that best suit their values and social rank (Young 1999:294).

¹⁴ In 2004 I witnessed the Manaja'a family make archaeologist Dr. Andrew Smith II a member of the Manaja'a family. In 2007, I had the same honour bestowed upon myself, though I wonder how many people in the community, other than the Manaja'a family, would accept me as an al Manaja'a.

¹⁵ Marx discusses the political implications of kinship through marriage, divorce, and the splitting and fusion of tribes (Marx in Marx 1984:23-24).

¹⁶ People will leave tribal life for economic stability that may be found in urban centres. Others view tribal life as a secure economic base, working in urban environments while family members reside in tribal areas maintaining flocks (Marx in Marx 1984:2-4,9).

Bedouin identity claimants must have their identity affirmed by those around them for their claim to be substantiated. Those who enjoy confirmed Bedouin status, both individuals and communities, can help decide or validate the identity status of others. Non-Bedouins, such as the Jordanian government, also play a role in this affirmation. For example, in 1921, when creating laws for the newly mandated Jordanian nation, the government cited a list of proper names designating certain tribes in Jordan as legitimately Bedouin (Layne 1994:17; Shryock 1995:328).¹⁷ The government's influence on the lives of its Bedouin citizens provided the Jordanian administration with the authority to make these rulings. Significantly, tribes who played a role in legitimising the Hashemite government's claim to rule Jordan (i.e., those who participated in the Arab revolt, many of whom are camel-herding tribes from the eastern and southern deserts)¹⁸ are more frequently presented to international outsiders as embodying the idea of Jordanian Bedouin than other tribes (cf. Gubser 1983:26). As Jordanian law was amended over the years, a clause was introduced to recognise the status of Bedouin not listed in the initial regulation. Official Bedouin status was granted for additional tribes and sub-tribes of Bedouin living in Jordan under the protection of those formally recognised in the nation's legislation. This clause helped acknowledge the complex and fluid nature of Bedouin tribal identity, however many tribes, such as the Balqa, were nonetheless excluded (Layne 1994:17; Shryock 1995:328).¹⁹ The special legal category

¹⁷ At this time in Jordanian history, the British drafted laws as representatives of the Jordanian government (Shryock 1995:328).

¹⁸ See chapter one for more details.

¹⁹ Layne provides the example that nine tribes of camel herders from the eastern desert were listed as Bedouin in the 1924 Jordanian *Bedouin Control Law*. This is significant as more than nine tribes existed in the area at the time. As the law was updated in 1929, and 1936, some tribal names were dropped from the list while others were added (Layne 1994:17). This law also helps acknowledge the fluidity of Jordan's borders which have varied considerably since the nation's inception. See chapter one for more details.

for Bedouin was suspended in 1976 as Bedouin citizens were incorporated into Jordanian civil law (Shryock 1995:328).²⁰

I.3 Defining Bedouin for my research

For the purpose of my research, Bedouin are defined as individuals who self-identify as Bedouin, and who are accepted by others as Bedouin.²¹ This definition situates its meaning in recent anthropological scholarship which privileges ideological (over analytical) classifications of the term as discussed above. I identify my project collaborators, the Manaja'a family, as Bedouin for these two key reasons. First, and most importantly, the Manaja'a self-identify as Bedouin. In particular, the head of the Manaja'a family, Abu Sabah (Eid Swelem), his wife Wafa, and two of their sons, Swelem and Abdullah, refer to themselves using the terms *Bedouin*²² and 'Arab, as well as identify themselves as members of the Howeitat tribe. Abu Sabah traces his lineage patrilineally for seven generations. Second, community members living around the

²⁰ The incorporation of all Bedouin tribes under one citizenship law has contributed to the deliberate homogenization of Bedouin culture by the Hashemite regime (cf. Al-Mahadin 2007:95). Cole states: "the category of Bedouin (or nomad) existed and was counted in the censuses of colonial governments; but Bedouin are not enumerated as such in today's national censuses" (Cole 2003:236).

²¹ It is possible to be accepted as Bedouin in one/some communities and not in another/others (Young 1999:293).

²² Pronounced *bedwyn*.

Manaja'as, as well as other Jordanians,²³ the Jordanian government,²⁴ and cultural outsiders,²⁵ have accepted the family's claim to Bedouin identity.

While the Manaja'a family possesses many analytical traits of ideal Bedouin identity—they are Arabic speaking; hold membership in a tribe; participate in animal husbandry by raising camels, goats, sheep; and live in a goat hair house—I have chosen to deliberately exclude these analytical qualifiers from my working definition of Bedouin. I believe that self-identification, and the acceptance of one's identity from external communities are stronger criteria in establishing identity than empirical factors which may be easily altered by, and do not take into account the changing social, economic, and environmental realities of Bedouin people. The Manaja'as do not conform to the definition of ideal Bedouin in many ways. The family values education; demonstrates interest in the laws, religions and social practices of other peoples; and shows loyalty to the Jordanian king. Finally, the Manaja'a family are (what I, and other anthropologists would classify as) semi-sedentary rather than nomadic. Yet, like many other Bedouin families, the Manaja'as do not see themselves in the anthropological terms of semi-sedentary, sedentary, or nomadic. The Manaja'as can pick up and move their tent at any time they choose, and therefore possess the potential to exist in each of these categories (Layne 1994:15). The Manaja'as have not lost their identity because they are supportive

²³ I.e., Jordanian citizens who come into contact with the family, such as tourists visiting Humayma, and employees of the Aqaba Archaeological Museum.

²⁴ The Manaja'as receive government subsidy on water and food for their herds because of their Bedouin status. See chapter four for further discussion.

²⁵ Including members of the Humayma archaeological excavation and international eco-tourists. In addition, members of the Manaja'a family are featured in photographs on display at the Aqaba Archaeological Museum and Humayma Visitor Centre. In these exhibits the Manaja'as are represented as a Bedouin family both visually in photographs, and through didactic text. As such, any visitor to these exhibits would not likely contest the family's Bedouin identity. This of course is a complex matter which also is at least partially implicated in the museum's role as a constructed space of educational authority.

of certain politics, or have interest in ideas outside of what is thought to be traditional Bedouin law and folklore. Finally, it is the example of Sabah, the eldest son of the Manaja's household's recent lifestyle change that emphasised, for me, the precariousness of defining Bedouin identity in analytical terms. In 2006 Sabah moved away from his familial home in Humayma to the town of Quweira where he rented an apartment. Sabah purchased a car and now makes a living as a taxi driver shuttling people between Humayma and Quweira. Sabah does not practice animal husbandry and no longer lives in a goat hair tent in the desert. Yet, Sabah's identity as a Bedouin of the Howeitat tribe remains intact. The analytical changes that Sabah has made to his lifestyle do not disqualify his Bedouin identity; rather they demonstrate that Bedouin identity is more than just an accumulation of empirical traits. Bedouin identity is complex, fluid, and changing.

I.4 Key motivations behind outsider appropriation of Bedouin identity

What are the benefits of claiming Bedouin identity? The positive ideological characteristics of Bedouin identity—honour, generosity, bravery and so on—together create a potent cultural capital which makes Bedouin a desirable social label.²⁶ These sought-after characteristics, many acquired through social practice made necessary from historically harsh living environments (as discussed above), and through the historical actions taken by groups of Bedouin (such as participation in the Arab Revolt, to

²⁶ Bedouin identity has both benefits and drawbacks. Many urban Jordanians, Jordanian non-Bedouins and other cultural outsiders see Bedouin as backward, primitive, ignorant, greedy, and treacherous. For an insightful discussions of both positive and negative ways Bedouin are stereotyped, see Young 1999:287–293; Shryock 1995:326; Al-Mahadin 2007:87–89; Kersel et al. 2008:311; Graulund 2009:80,84.

be discussed in chapter one) have proven beneficial to cultural insiders. Western travellers and cultural outsiders such as the Hejazi Hashemite family see these benefits and choose to appropriate aspects of Bedouin identity in order to profit from their associated stereotypes.²⁷ Those granted Bedouin status are designated as a supra- or über-Arab; “socioculturally... [Arabs] often idealize many aspects of bedouin life, saying that the bedouin are the model from which other Jordanian patterns are derived” (Gubser 1983:25, 27; Layne 1989:24). Bedouin culture thus serves as a stereotype for all positive Jordanian and Arab qualities (Gubser 1983:25, 27). For insiders, those who are already considered Bedouin, reasserting their Bedouin identity through visible symbols, such as dress, or social practices, such as hospitality, can be a strategic way to invigorate one’s standing within outsider communities (Young 1999:290; cf. Layne 1989:30).

The making of identity is “something that happens over time, that is never absolutely stable, that is subject to the play of history and the play of difference” (Hall 1989:15). The creation of difference through identity is a key political strategy of the Hashemite monarchy. Throughout history, the Hashemites have appropriated Bedouin identity to create both camaraderie and discord among Bedouin and non-Bedouin. For example, during the decline of the late Ottoman Empire, Hashemite leader Hussein ibn ‘Ali and his son Abdullah (later, the first King of Jordan) portrayed themselves as Bedouin in order to earn the allegiance of tribes throughout the Levant and Hijaz (Al-Mahadin 2007:90; Wilson 1987:34). This allegiance was necessary to protect Hashemite ambitions for leadership against other politically strong families in the area (Wilson 1987:9, 33-34, 37; Abujaber 1989:24; Smith 2007:63). At a time when Jordan was

²⁷ Also of benefit is the historical legacy of Bedouin living in the area that now is Jordan. Bedouin identity establishes inhabitation rights to Jordan’s land. This legitimization is of significance to the Hashemites (Shryock 1995:352).

seeking independence from colonial custodianship, the Hashemites emphasised their difference from both the Ottoman and British Empires by establishing themselves as cultural insiders through an adopted Bedouin identity (Young 1999:286; Al-Mahadin 2007:90). As politics in Jordan and the Near East continually change, the Hashemites continue to shape Bedouin imagery and social practice to ensure the survival of their regime. By using pan-tribal culture as the root of Jordanian national heritage and culture, the Hashemites have strengthened Jordan's emerging national identity through symbols linked with non-specific Bedouin social practice and material culture (Layne 1989:25; Layne 1994:102; Young 1999:286; Shryock 1995:329).²⁸ This strategic use of identity successfully underscores cultural differences between Jordanians and Palestinians rebuking ongoing Israeli claims to territory (Layne 1989:25, 28; Al-Mahadin 2007:90).

While the Hashemites wish to exemplify and create new Bedouin traditions in order to secure the survival of their regime, Western photographers and anthropologists document Bedouin in a romanticised manner, attempting to valorise and preserve a culture they feel is changing beyond recognition (Graulund 2009:84, 86; Layne 1989:25; Cole 2003:255; cf. Mauger 1988:10; Bell in Naiden 2007:179; Khouri 1980:3).²⁹ Many Western outsiders spend months and years travelling with Bedouin in search of adventure or spiritual enlightenment (Graulund 2009:80; cf. Al-Mahadin 2007:92-94; Sullivan 1969:2-5). Westerners questioning the belief systems of their own societies seek solace in

²⁸ I.e., characteristics possessed by any singular tribe are abandoned in favour of traits all or most tribes possess. For example, in 1981 Queen Noor wore a "traditional" embroidered Bedouin dress to the first annual Jerash Festival of the Arts. However, the embroidery on the dress was the antithesis of traditional as it contained an amalgamation of styles use by several Bedouin tribes. This conflation of embroidery styles has no precedence in historical Bedouin embroidery practice as the designs served as markers to indicate the tribal origins of their wearer. Interestingly, as the dress possessed visual elements from numerous tribes, in wearing the garment, Queen Noor was embodied as the leader of *all* of the tribes represented (Layne 1989:29).

²⁹ Yet, at the same time "cannot change" and is fixed in the past (Layne 1989:25; cf. Massad 2001:136).

what they feel is an unadulterated society, untouched by the troubles of modern life (Graulund 2009:82, 85; cf. Sullivan 1969:4). These travellers attempt to immerse themselves in Bedouin culture and adopt what they feel to be authentic Bedouin characteristics and dress.³⁰ This emulation of Bedouin identity serves to set outsiders apart, distinguishing them from those in their countries of origin who have not travelled or been exposed to Bedouin culture. Those who promote Bedouin culture as superior or ideal often have vested interests in the ways Bedouin are perceived.

I.5 Visual signifiers of Bedouin identity

The discourse of Bedouin identity is produced by diverse groups of people in order to promote social and political agendas. These groups of people use signs to construct and articulate social difference (Rose 2005:70-72). By creating an indexical relationship between an object or a concept (for example, an object such as a dagger, or the concept of honour) and an image (for example, a Bedouin man), an image can become endowed with information beyond its original meaning (Rose 2005:70-72). In Jordan, signs of Bedouin identity are emphasised during periods of social and political unrest which threaten the Hashemite monarchy (Al-Mahadin 2007:86). Western outsiders visiting Jordan have their own political agendas when representing Bedouin. The same image of a Bedouin man (as in the example above), when shown in Canada, may signify an ecological ethos or an endangered culture. In this way, photographs serve to educate, or

³⁰ T.E. Lawrence, Gertrude Bell, Freya Stark, Wilfred Thesiger, Charles Doughtry, J.L Burckhardt are all such examples.

confirm what Westerners already think they know about the character of Bedouin (Micklewright 2003:4, 9).

Visual cues, when associated with certain elements of Bedouin social practice, elevate the social and political status of those who successfully claim Bedouin identity. Visual signifiers of Bedouin identity manifest in traditional costuming³¹ including the prominent red *kaffiyeh* (head scarf), black *agal* (black rope which affixes the *keffiyeh*), *thawb* (long tunic type garment) worn by men, or elaborately embroidered dresses worn by women (Layne 1989:29; Cole 2003: 237; Graulund 2009:87; Al-Mahadin 2007:99; Ingham 1986:47; cf. Khouri 1980:3,7; Ochsenschlager 2004:16). Sheep, goats and camels, represent the ideal Bedouin's nomadic pastoralist lifestyle (Cole 2003:238, Young 1999:293). Objects related to hospitality, including coffee urns; tea pots; the national meal of Jordan, *mensef*; even Bedouin tents and landscapes are cultivated to represent Bedouin and Jordanian culture (Shryock 2004:35, 37-38; Al-Mahadin 2007:86, 91; Layne 1989:27, 30; Gubser 1983:27; cf. Ochsenschlager 2004:147). Other objects of material culture—historically used or forged by Bedouin—such as metalwork (including jewellery and knives), act in a similar manner.³² These items act as visual representations of national pride and political autonomy, and substantiate the existence of a homogenised Jordanian national identity, despite the varied characteristics of the many Bedouin groups living in Jordan (Layne 1989:32–35; Young 1999:293; Shryock 2004:35-40).

Photographic images featuring visual symbols of Bedouin identity circulate throughout the popular media in books, magazines, exhibits, and on the internet. The Hashemite

³¹ By “traditional costuming” I mean clothing that has been stereotypically viewed in the West as evoking a sense of history. *Thawbs*, *kaffiyehs*, and other garments that are worn in contemporary situations are indeed products of the present day and are reflective of modern practices.

³² Even if the item(s) are no longer made by Bedouin (cf. Clemons 1973: 14-15).

monarchy and Western photographers produce photographs that shape popular ideas about Jordanian Bedouin throughout Europe and North America. However, despite the innumerable representations of Bedouin produced by outsider photographers, there is little imagery of Bedouin people made by or for Bedouin people available in popular circulation. I believe that insider photographs of Bedouin use visual symbols of Bedouin culture differently than outsider representations and consequently convey increasingly multifaceted visions of Bedouin identity.

I.6 Research as an intervention

Encouraged by my belief that insider representations of Bedouin (photographs taken by and for a Bedouin audience) differ from outsider representations, I created a project to act as an intervention on traditional Western scholarship in the Near East which privileges the outsider voice. Through a collaborative research process, I conducted an investigation of how members of a Bedouin family from Humayma, Jordan—the Manaja’a family—see photography as a way of documenting their lives and experiences for themselves, their families, and for cultural outsiders. Through open-ended discussion and the creation of new photography, the Manaja’a family and I set out to investigate three key questions: (1) What roles do photographs and photography as a process play in the everyday lives of members of the Manaja’a family; (2) What visual strategies do members of the Manaja’a family employ to communicate their identities in photographs (i.e., choice of clothing worn, facial expressions made, body postures adopted); (3) How do familial roles determine the use and significance of photography to members of the Manaja’a family?

The photographs created during this collaboration function for the Manaja'a family in a multitude of ways. The family uses photographs to document and remember; to capture images of important people, places, events and experiences; to depict the places they are familiar with, or foreign to; and to convey interests about, or knowledge of, certain subjects and objects. The photographs produced by the Manaja'as demonstrate diversity in what each participant chose to include in their photographic frames. Their interests range from expressions of family relations, friendships, social identity, masculinity and femininity; of desire for employment; and of knowledge of history, natural resources, and archaeology. The creation of this knowledge was facilitated through the direct involvement of the Manaja'a family "as partners, not merely as subjects, as sources of insight, and as progenitors of new lines of evidence" (Wylie 1995:267 in Moser 2002:225). This research was produced with the explicit aim of providing benefits for each project collaborator. The benefits of this research include; the creation of shared knowledge, and the production of photographic archives for the Manaja'a family. This project combines visual ethnographic and visual art processes with methodology derived from the disciplines of history in art and anthropology.

Combining the methodologies of semiology and content analysis, I argue that while insider photography of Bedouin people features many of the same visual signifiers that outsider photographs do, photographs produced by the Manaja'a family are distinct from outsider photographs. The Manaja'a photographs are dissimilar to outsider photos as they highlight the diversity and vitality of each photographer and the subjects/objects being captured on film. This self-representation of Bedouin as unique and vigorous individuals discredits the generalised, pan-Bedouin identity constructed by Jordan's

Hashemite monarchy, as well as the romanticised and endangered identity constructed for Bedouin by Western ethno-photographers.

I.8 Project significance

The creation of images of Bedouin *by* Bedouin is increasingly important due to the political agendas surrounding the construction of stereotyped identities of Jordanian Bedouin (as generous, honourable, trustworthy)(Layne 1989:32). Many Bedouin in Jordan are aware of this construction and politicised identification with “Bedouiness” (Layne 1989:25). As a consequence, many individuals are “reconceiving and reevaluating their culture” by integrating their personal and local ways of knowing into the larger frameworks being developed by the Jordanian state (Layne 1989:25). The stereotypes present in outsider photography serve to fit specific political agendas. They ignore the heterogeneity of Jordan’s Bedouin population, and do not necessarily represent how certain groups of Bedouin see themselves. The disjunctures evident between insider and outsider representations of Bedouin—between the photographs produced by the Manaja’as compared to those created by the Jordanian Monarchy and Western ethno-photographers—are valuable as they demonstrate an increasingly complex version of Bedouin identity. This nuanced picture of identity, while limited by its focus on a single family, may help contribute to further collaborative investigations of Bedouin identity in Jordan. This research has the potential to assist Western and international scholarly communities, as well as the Hashemite regime, to better understand the diverse social practices and concerns of Bedouin living in Jordan today.

I.9 Chapter synopsis

Chapter one establishes a historical context for the founding of the modern nation of Jordan. Some of the ways in which Bedouin social practice and imagery has been co-opted by the Jordanian monarchy to construct a universal pan-Bedouin identity will be highlighted. This pan-Bedouin identity has been used by the Hashemites as a method of regime survival against cultural outsiders including the Ottomans, British, and Palestinians. Attention will be given to the work of scholars Linda Layne, Rashid Khalidi, Joseph Massad, Andrew Shryock, Mary Wilson, and William C. Young for their unique insights into the ideological uses of visual signs of Bedouin identity by the Hashemite regime.

Chapter two focuses on the production of ethno-photographic representations of Bedouin by Western authors. The role of travel writers and ethno-photographers in constructing a romanticised and endangered version of Bedouin identity will be discussed through a comparison of photographs produced throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Chapter three provides an introduction to my project's background and methodology. Information about each project participant will be presented. The project's goal to invert Western and Hashemite photographic representations of Bedouin people through the creation of insider photography will be accentuated.

Chapter four presents sixty of the 2,048 photographs taken by the Manaja'a family and me during our collaborative research in 2007. These photographs act as a visual essay, communicating experiences of the Manaja'a family and myself in relation to community, place, family, relationship and identity.

Chapter five provides a textual overview of the photographs produced during the research project, along with observations and comments made by the Manaja's family which help communicate the interpretations of their photographs. Visual symbols and recurring themes which depict aspects of Bedouin identity present in the photographs will be compared with outsider photographs of Bedouin.

Lastly, the conclusion will connect and evaluate the main arguments of each preceding chapter, and emphasise the significance of insider photography in representing Jordanian Bedouin.

Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

Through the cultivation of an identity which links the Jordanian monarchy with both modernity and tradition, the Hashemite rulers have worked to establish a distinct Jordanian self. In this chapter I discuss how the Jordanian monarchy draws upon, and cultivates, visual symbols and social practices of Bedouin culture. By providing a historical context for the founding of the modern nation of Jordan, and by citing key political moments in Jordanian history, I will highlight some of the ways in which Bedouin social practice and imagery has been co-opted by the Jordanian monarchy during periods of political unrest. The Hashemite's construction of a universal pan-Bedouin identity, which negates social and political differences existing between the various tribes of Jordan, has been used as a means to establish, legitimise, and secure the political survival of the monarchy against cultural outsiders including the Ottomans, British, and most recently, Palestinians.

1.2 Signs, identity and ideology

In the introduction to this thesis I presented the idea that signs can be used to construct and articulate social difference through an indexical relationship between an object/concept and an image (Rose 2005:70-72). Homi Bhabha's idea that "identity is a domain of representation rather than a reflection of some pre-given, irreducible, ahistorical cultural traits" (Al-Mahadin 2007:86-87), testifies to the role of signs in the construction of identity (Al-Mahadin 2007:86-87). But what is identity? Stuart Hall

asserts that “identity is a process of identification”; it is “something that happens over time, that is never absolutely stable, that is subject to the play of history and the play of difference” (Hall 1989:15). For the purpose of this thesis, I have defined identity as a collective set of characteristics (including social, behavioural, historical, political, religious, economic and gender traits), which may alter and change over time, though which a person (or group of people) is recognisable (Massad 2001:20-21; Hall 1989:12). National or cultural identities are defined when a specific set of characteristics is presented as prerequisite to, or criterion for, membership in a certain group.³³ The criterion for these groups is often classified and produced by the state. These markers are defined by nationalist or political ideologies (Massad 2001:20-21), and are presented as “natural” and “truthful” rather than selective, socially constructed ideas (Davis in Ramplly 1998:164). Intellectuals play a key role in the dissemination of these “truths” – they act as “vehicles of power” circulating institutional ideologies of the state (Foucault 1980:98; cf. Said 1994:223; Massad 2001:1). The educational institutions of schools and the media (television, newspapers, books, and the internet) are “favorite channels for enforcing disciplinary normalization of the population” (Massad 2001:4). Michel Foucault writes:

Truth is centred on the form of scientific discourse and the institutions which produce it; it is subject to constant economic and political incitement (the demand for truth, as much for economic production as for political power); it is the object, under diverse forms of immense diffusion and consumption (circulating through apparatuses of education and information whose extent is relatively broad in the social body, not withstanding certain strict limitations); it is produced and transmitted under the control, dominant if not exclusive, of a few great political and economic apparatuses (university, army, writing, media); lastly, it is the issue of a whole political debate and social confrontation (‘ideological’ struggles). [1980:131-132]

³³ Common history (including shared memories) and language are key in the development of nationalist discourses (Bernhardsson 2005:120).

Thus, government administrators (including colonial officers), educators, journalists, and scholars, all have roles in the circulation of institutional power/information for the benefit of the home-nation. (Foucault 1980:131). The following chapter sections outline the history of Jordan in relation to the Hashemite monarchy's ascent to power. Particular attention is paid to the ways in which the Hashemites cultivated their political identity through the use of Bedouin social practice as compared with other, non-Bedouin, political entities that posed potential threats to the regime.

1.3 The development of Eastern and Western imperial interests in the Middle East

In the mid 15th century the Ottoman Empire had taken hold of Constantinople and was preparing for an outward expansion that would last until the mid 16th century.³⁴ From the late 17th century and into the 18th, the great empire experienced stagnation, and eventually, decline. The vastly expansive Ottoman Empire – which at its zenith had reached across Eastern Europe, North Africa and into Western Asia – found the great territory difficult to govern due to lack of infrastructure, geographically hard to navigate terrain, and remote frontiers (Rogan 1999:4; Robins 2004:5; Gubser 1983:76). At this time, Greater Syria, a large segment of the empire, was comprised of *vilayets*—small, relatively independent self-governed provinces. To greater and lesser extents, each province reported to a central Ottoman administration (Johns in Rogan and Tell 1994:10). For the most part, the Ottoman Empire lacked cohesive control over rural provinces in the

³⁴ For more information on the Ottoman conquest of the Levant see Abujaber 1989:24.

Levant, and independent trade among urbanised and nomadic peoples flourished (Robins 2004; Smith 2007). As a consequence, from the late 18th century into the 19th century, vast areas of the empire remained virtually ungoverned and open to the exploitation of various tribal communities (Rogan 1999:4; Khalidi 1997:40).³⁵ Powerful tribal chiefs such as Hussein ibn ‘Ali of the Hijaz (1854–1931, patriarch of the Hashemite family, descendant of the Prophet Muhammad and later Sharif of Mecca) and Abdul Aziz Al Saud (Ibn Saud) of Central Arabia (1876–1953, later, King of Saudi Arabia), vied for increased control over territories and Bedouin tribal support throughout Arabia and the Levant. Regions including Jidda, Mecca, areas along the *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca) route and the King’s Highway were of key interest to these vying leaders (Wilson 1987: 9, 33, 37; Abujaber 1989: 24; Smith 2007:63). Dissatisfied with external Ottoman rule which left them to pay taxes with limited recompense, Hussein and Ibn Saud competed to unite the Levant and Arabia as one nation, under the authority of a single internal Arab leader (Wilson 1987: 20). Hussein and Ibn Saud each saw themselves as the best person to lead this Arab supra–nation, and their discontent towards foreign Ottoman rule found strength in the emerging ideology of Arab Nationalism.³⁶ Key to official Hashemite discourse was

³⁵ The Ottoman Empire initiated a series of reforms to counter this administrative void. The Tanzimat Reforms demonstrated success in establishing a new order of land registration, taxation, education and governmental authority in the region (Rogan 1999:4, 48, 253; Smith 2007:24–25; Abujaber 1989:27, 35; Khalidi 1997:39, 47). While these gains came too late to save the Ottoman Empire, they introduced the area to an administrative structure that was based on Western models and was similar to those which followed during the British Mandate Period (Abujaber 1989:77; Rogan 1999:253; Rogan in Rogan and Tell 1994:32; Dann 1984:21; Massad 2001:23). Before the 1990’s scholars writing about Ottoman rule were inclined to neglect, omit, or distort the Ottoman administrative history of Transjordan. However the administrative reforms put in place by the empire were essential to the national economy, “without such a fiscal base, British subsidies alone would not have sufficed for the Transjordan government to survive” (Rogan 1999:253). Al-Mahadin provides an extensive list of scholars who state that the Levant during the Ottoman period was not in a continual state of decline as Hashemite discourse asserts. Instead, the area experienced “continual patterns of settlement, cultivation and trade” (Al-Mahadin 2007:89).

³⁶ Simply stated, Arab Nationalism promotes the idea that through the acknowledgment that “Arabs are a single people with a single language, history, and culture” and Arabs can overcome any societal divisions created by foreign imperialism (Khalidi 1997:180). This unanimity of powerful shared Arab

the idea that the Ottoman administration had left the Levant in a state of disorganisation and neglect. Consequently they presented Ottoman rule as a period of stagnation and decline (Al-Mahadin 2007:88). The Hashemites are heroicised for taking action to advance the territory through their political ambition (Al-Mahadin 2007:88).

By the late 19th century Hussein, troubled by Ibn Saud's increasing political autonomy, worked to further cultivate his relationships with the tribes of Arabia (Wilson 1987: 8, 36, 37; Bocco and Tell in Rogan and Tell 1994:109). Simultaneously, Britain, France and Russia, grew increasingly aware that the Ottoman Empire struggled to manage its most remote territories, and expressed their own competing designs for the region (Smith 2007:12–16; Rogan 1999:4–5; Massad 2001:27; Khalidi 1997:36; Wilson 1987:8; Dann 1984: 2). Conscious of these foreign interests, as well as the need to reign in the emerging strength and authority of the Hashemite and the Al Saud tribal families, the Ottoman authorities increased their administrative presence in the Levant through the implementation of a series of reforms based on French and Italian administrative practice (Wilson 1987: 8-9; Rogan in Rogan and Tell 1994:32; Massad 2001:23).³⁷ In addition to administrative reforms, Ottoman Sultan, Abdul Hamid II (1876–1909), recognised the

commonalities, in theory, supersedes the multitudinous local and personally specific identities—such as alliances felt to particular tribes, familial lineages, places of origin, and social or economic groups—which individuals throughout the Ottoman Empire experienced (Khalidi 1997:146, 153). Each leader had a distinct vision of what a united Arab nation should look like, and thus each continued to compete for political popularity.

³⁷ In 1856 a proclamation issued as part of the Tanzimat reforms was issued by Ottoman Sultan Abdul Majid. This document was one of many attempts to communicate the *citizenship* rather than subject-hood of those living in Ottoman Territory. With this effort the Ottoman's hoped to inspire loyalty through the granting of equal access to education and “equal treatment before the law” (Smith 2007:49-52).

power of Bedouin support, attempted to tie Bedouin sheikhs to the empire by gifting them agricultural land (Lancaster 1981:84).³⁸

Hussein was annoyed by the growing intrusiveness of the non-Arab central Ottoman government and fearful of Ibn Saud's territorial expansion. As a consequence he sought an ally in Britain while he continued to solicit local allegiances (Wilson 1987: 7-9; Bocco and Tell in Rogan and Tell 1994:110). Distancing himself from Ottoman rule, Hussein sought justification for his imperial ambitions through his status as a direct descendant of the Prophet. By claiming descent from the Prophet, Hussein emphasised the discontinuity, or otherness, of Ottoman authority. This otherness, underscored by the idea the empire left the Levant administratively and culturally unattended and stagnant, was further exacerbated by the Ottoman's siding with the Central Powers in World War I (Al-Mahadin 2007:89). A Hashemite leader would mean a return to progress, allying with the "right" politics, and a reestablishment of the continuity "of social order from which the Ottomans had diverged" (Al-Mahadin 2007:89). As is practice among those of Sharifian lineage, Hussein's sons were sent to learn about tribal history and nomadic ways in their youth (Wilson 1987:6).³⁹ This respect for the tribes (or at least the acknowledgment of tribal authority) was part of Hashemite education from an early age. The religious identity of Hussein and his sons helped legitimate his move to establish dynastic authority throughout the Muslim Arab world (Wilson 1987: 26; cf. Bernhardsson 2005:5, 107).⁴⁰

³⁸ With this gift came the title of Amir, as well as the right to tax the land they were given title to (Lancaster 1981:84).

³⁹ This value is represented as Islamic. One Jordanian journalist wrote that Prophet himself was sent to "one of the Bedouin tribes to absorb the best and noblest in national tradition, manners, customs and way of life" (Quoted from the Jordan Times in Layne 1989:27).

⁴⁰ Not all Arabs are Muslims, however the majority of the population in the Levant at this time were. In their 1938 article, Casto and Dotson claim that of Transjordan's population, approximately 250,000 people were identified as Muslim Arabs (81.6%); 20,000 were Christian Arabs (6.2%); and 7,000 were from various

To bolster his chances to gain power over the Ottoman administration, and to provide himself with an advantage against Ibn Saud, Hussein recognised that he needed to amass political allies. While Hussein was not an advocate of British colonialism, he deemed joining forces with the British a necessity to move forward against the Ottomans in achieving his Arabist/Islamist goal of leading a single cohesive Arab nation (Khalidi 1997:163-164).

The British, following their own imperialist path, believed it would be necessary to acquire local support if they attempted to counter the Ottoman authority. The Hashemites were a means for Britain to acquire backing from local tribes through the influence of a notable family. As Britain's role in the Levant intensified, an influx of colonial administrators, took up residence throughout the region. These individuals developed relationships with local notable families and increased their strategic hold of Ottoman lands (Robins 2004:12; Rogan 1999:29). The British and the Hashemites united their efforts against Ottoman rule, each promising to support the other in various ways. Though each party came together for different reasons, both recognised the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire as an opportunity to acquire political authority and economic resources.

other groups, including Shi'a Muslims, Druze, Baha'i (2.2%)(Casto and Dobson 1938:124). As of July, 2009, the Official website of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan sites that of Jordan's 4.4 million population, 92% of citizens are Sunni Muslim descended from various Arab tribes (<http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/people.html>).

1.4 Securing allies: Axis treaties, Arab nationalism and tribal alliance

By 1915, unbeknownst to the Hashemites, Britain and France had begun secret negotiations over the resource rich territories they wished to control (Robins 2004:12). Greater Syria was of particular interest to the British who saw value in the area for its proximity to India, the Suez Canal and oil resources (Wilson 1987: 39; Smith 2007:64). In May of 1916, Britain and France privately ratified the Sykes-Picot Agreement, a clandestine accord dividing the not yet defunct Ottoman Empire into strategic territories which reflected the superpowers' interests (Smith 2007:70).⁴¹ This agreement was a betrayal of the British promises for a national Arab homeland concurrently being made to Hussein (Wilson 1987:24, 37; Khalidi 1997:160).⁴² By June of 1916 the Hashemites, believing to have satisfactorily negotiated terms of mutual benefit of an alliance against the Ottomans with the British, united in the Arab Revolt (Smith 2007:79; Rogan 1999:232). Hussein's sons, Abdullah (1882–1951), and Faisal (1883–1933), garnered support from local tribes, while Britain contributed financial support and military guidance to the cause. Abdullah, recognised the strength of the various tribes as the “traditional leaders... who were in control of Transjordan south of Amman” (Wilson

⁴¹ This agreement effectively divided the Middle East into territorial spheres of influence for Britain, France and Russia. Britain gained the most through the agreement, using France as a buffer between Britain and Russia. The territory that Britain acquired (to be labelled *Transjordan*) would be used as a staging area for Britain's attempted take over of Syria from the French. At this time, Palestine was made into an international zone, the details of governorship to be discussed with Russian and Sharif Hussein at a later date (Smith 2007: 69-71, 73-75).

⁴² The Sykes-Picot agreement also contradicted terms negotiated in the Hussein-McMahon Correspondences. The correspondence consisted of a series of eight letters written in 1915 between the Hussein and the British High Commissioner of Egypt, Henry McMahon, outlining the terms of Hashemite participation in the British orchestrated revolt against the Ottomans. While the language of McMahon's correspondence was left intentionally vague, he expressed Britain's “desire for the independence of the Arab countries and their inhabitants and [Britain's] readiness to approve an Arab Caliphate upon its proclamation.” In exchange for this, the Hashemites would provide the British “preference in all economic enterprises in the Arab countries” (Smith 2007:65; Wilson 1987:25; Khalidi 1997:159-60).

1987:48), and wanted to establish an affinity with them that would lead to support, claimed himself to be Bedouin (Wilson 1987:34).⁴³ Throughout his travels during the revolt, Abdullah would cloth himself in Bedouin dress, including a *kaffiya* (head scarf) and white *thawb* (tunic), and host guests in a large tent, entertaining them with poetry and song (Figure 1.1) (Wilson 1987:29).⁴⁴ T.E. Lawrence, meeting Abdullah for the first time described him as, “Aged 35, but looks younger... In manner affectedly open and very charming, not standing at all on ceremony, but jesting with the tribesmen like one of their own sheikhs” (Wilson 1987:29).⁴⁵

⁴³ In addition to the traditional tribal leaders of the south, Abdullah identified another key group of supporters. This group was made up of Arab nationalists who could provide the Hashemites with resources including knowledge of British colonial practice and organisational skills. Most significantly, the nationalist ideology that the group followed would prove to be more inclusive than that of Bedouin tribal affinity as it “could attract followers across regional, confessional, and class lines” (Wilson 1987:48).

Regarding Abdullah’s claim to be Bedouin: perhaps Abdullah was made an honorary member of the Bani Shihri (or another tribe) during his life. The custom of inviting others into Bedouin families is not uncommon; in fact during the time I spent researching in Humayma, the Manaja’a family inducted me as a member of their family.

⁴⁴ Reciting poetry, telling stories, singing and dancing are common and significant forms of expression in Bedouin communities (Lancaster 1981:67).

⁴⁵ Abdullah was taught “tribal history and nomadic ways”, including poetry, song and lore by the Bani Shihri tribe as a child (Wilson 1987:6). It is not unreasonable to assume this experience gave him confidence when relating with tribesmen.



Figure 1.1
Amir Abdullah Ibn Hussein (left) entertaining visiting Sheikhs in his Bedouin tent
Photograph by George Rodger, 1941.

Throughout the revolt Bedouin tribes comprised significant portions of the army, and often participated in skirmishes as they approached and moved through specific tribal territories (Gubser 1983:77; Rogan 1999:232). For example, members of the Howeitat tribe, whose territory lies in the Ma'an/Hisma area, played a particularly significant role in the battle to capture the port of Aqaba from the Ottomans (Gubser 1983:26, 77). At other times, Abdullah had as many as 5,000 “rifle-bearing beduin [sic]” supporting his far more meagre number of trained men supplied by the British (Wilson 1987:32).⁴⁶

⁴⁶ For example, at Abdullah’s headquarters in Wadi ‘Ays he had command over four officers, one hundred trained men and 5,000 Bedouin fighters (Wilson 1987:32).

Hashemite discourse portrays the Arab Revolt as a triumph over the backwardness of Ottoman rule (Figure 1.2) (Al-Mahadin 2007:88).⁴⁷



Figure 1.2
 Jordanian dinar, scan by Abdullah Beydoun
 Courtesy of Owen W. Linzmayer, Banknotenews.com, 2008.⁴⁸

In return for Hashemite assistance in the revolt, Britain made two key promises. The first promise was to honour and protect Hussein’s position as Sharif of Mecca, thus bolstering his authority against his local competitor Ibn Saud. The second promise was to “support the Arabs in general in their struggle for independence” thus facilitating Hussein’s aspirations for greater rule (Wilson 1987: 24; Smith 2007:65, 67; Rogan 1999:252). Behind the scenes however, Britain continued with its covert agenda to expand its influence. In addition to the development of the Sykes-Picot accord, the 1917

⁴⁷ See the official Hashemite website: http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/his_arabrevolt.html (Al-Mahadin 2007:88).

⁴⁸ Images of the revolt are prevalent throughout modern Jordan. Two widely distributed representations of the revolt are the Jordanian flag (closely derived from the flag used by the Hashemites during the revolt), and the Jordanian dinar. The dinar (figure 1.2) features three men on camelback moving through the desert, presumably on their way to or from battle. The camels are saddled with bags made with Bedouin weaving patterns. Each man wears a head scarf, while one of the men holds a disproportionately large Hashemite flag.

Balfour Declaration was soon in development. The result of international petitioning by prominent Zionists groups, the declaration affirmed British support for the creation of a “national home for the Jews” in Palestine (Smith 2007:73; Khalidi 1997:159).⁴⁹ At the time, the implementation of the declaration was beneficial to Britain as it masked their interests for the control of Palestine⁵⁰ under the guise of Jewish self-determination (Smith 2007:74-75). The Ottomans, seeking to recover their authority, gained access to and published the previously undisclosed Sykes-Picot Agreement, leaked by Bolshevik Commissar, Leon Trotsky after the Russian Revolution thus warning the Arabs of British treachery (Smith 2007:80-81; Khalidi 1997:160).⁵¹ As a result, by 1918, the British were attempting to reassure Hussein that their promises for Arab liberation were not empty (Smith 2007:79). To counter the Ottoman caveats, Britain released a statement declaring their intent to facilitate Arab run national governments in both Iraq and Syria. This proclamation, “designed to calm the inhabitants and facilitate occupation of the region” was contrary to true British intentions (Smith 2007:81).

The end of the Arab revolt roughly coincided with the end of World War I and left the Ottoman Empire diminished and ripe for partition by 1918 (Abujaber 1989:161). Britain, among the victors of the war, was now poised in a position to expand their empire while the Hashemites (especially Hussein’s son Abdullah) who celebrated several victories during the revolt. Ultimately, the Hashemites fared worse as they suffered huge losses in the form of casualties among their tribesmen, and a severely “diminished family

⁴⁹ This accord would ultimately prove a key catalyst in the gruesomely bloody decades long Palestinian/Israeli struggle causing division among Arabs and Westerners alike, both groups internally at odds about the situation.

⁵⁰ Palestine was a “vital strategic asset in guarding the Suez Canal, Britain’s imperial lifeline” (Smith 2007:74-75).

⁵¹ The Ottomans also used intimidation and rewards in attempt to regain loyalty from their citizens (Rogan 1999:219).

prestige” resultant from their overall lack of tactical success (Wilson 1987:37). The consequence of these losses was that Abdullah was seen by many British officers, including the influential T.E. Lawrence, as an individual with huge ambition (Wilson 1987:25) but prone to slothfulness and limited success (Wilson 1987:29, 41). This reputation, negative as it was, would ironically serve Abdullah’s political ambitions in the end. This was not the end of the Hashemite’s relationship with the British.

Ultimately, neither the Hashemites nor the British had intended for the other to gain complete control over the land they each fought to govern. The Hashemites sought to establish a regime over a united Arab homeland and used the British in attempt to oust the foreign rule and taxation of the Ottomans, and gain authority over their rival, Ibn Saud. Hussein and his sons continued to hedge their bets by adopting attributes that would appeal to both the politically influential, regionally based traditional tribal communities, and the newer, more characteristically diverse group of individuals concerned with nationalist politics. The British desired to expand their empire further into a resource rich land. By securing the Levantine territories to ensure the survival of other colonial interests, they employed the politics of the notables and selected the Hashemites as the key to secure local support in a foreign land. Each group had identified the Ottoman Empire as the key Other to triumph over; they united against and defeated a current common enemy (cf. Al-Mahadin 2007:90).

1.5 A strategic convergence: the British and the Hashemites

At the end of World War I, borders that had been drafted in the Sykes-Picot Agreement were drawn across the former Ottoman territory, the land divided into artificial states of strategic importance for the Allied powers. The creation of these new territories was implemented by Europeans who achieved their own ambitions; they did little to recognise the geographical attributes of the land, or the habitation patterns of the people who lived there. Britain intended to use Transjordan as a buffer from Ibn Saud's expansion in the south, and a bridge to unite the ports of Palestine and the oil of Iraq (Robins 2004:13; Bocco and Tell in Rogan and Tell 1994:110; Wilson 1987:39). Many resident groups suffered from this. Nomads and farmers who relied on specific geographic territories for sustenance had their pastures made inaccessible by the creation of the new borders. Previous to this post WWI era, there was, "no territory, people or nationalist movement that was designated, or that designated itself, as Transjordanian" (Massad 2001:11; Rogan 1999:1; Robins 2004:5). It was Britain's imperial interests alone that generated the physical geography of Transjordan (Wilson 1987:3). Indeed, there was no cohesive nation-state of Palestine, Syria or Iraq: residents of the Levant had previously found their identities in multiple alliances, whether they were tribal, familial, political, religious or related to their city of origin (Khalidi 1997:6, 10, 19-21).⁵² With the creation of Transjordan, residents of the Levant were no longer able to move across the land in traditional ways, resulting in the separation of families and tribal territories (Massad 2001:11; Rogan 1999:1; Robins 2004:5; Shmueli in Marx 1984:35). In addition, many of

⁵² Political areas such as *vilayets* (provinces) existed in the Ottoman period and before. While these territories experienced their own unique local economies, social practices, and indeed, patriotism, there were no borders restricting travel between the areas. Individuals, families, trade merchants and tribal groups enjoyed a great deal of freedom of movement.

the people who lived in territories that were soon to be occupied by the new Jewish state of Israel would eventually find themselves displaced or homeless (Khalidi 1997:11).

Britain's next challenge was to choose appropriate individuals to act as figureheads in their newly drafted nations: people who would comply with British requests, and also placate the resident population (Wilson 1987:41; Robins 2004:17). Looking to previously cultivated relations—and previously made promises—Britain thought they found their much needed viceroys in the Hashemites. Having promised Sharif Hussein's son Faysal a leadership position, in a bid to claim territories recently allotted to the French, Britain fulfilled their pledge of Arab Nationalism under Hashemite rule and installed Faysal as a figurehead in Syria (Massad 2001:27). Faysal's right over Syria was contrary to the terms set out in the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and with the authority granted to the French at the 1920 San Remo Conference, the French shortly evicted him from office (Massad 2001:27; Wilson 1987: 40). The San Remo Conference was a meeting between the Allied powers at the end of WWI. With the consent of the League of Nations, Britain and France were granted dominion over territories in the newly divided Middle East with the provision that each nation was a mandate—that is that each nation would receive economic, social and political guidance from an assigned superpower with the eventual objective of self-governance (Wilson 1987:40; Smith 2007:85). The goal of sovereignty for the mandate nations rendered “British and French imperialism palatable... mak[ing] it possible for at least some sections of Arab society sometimes to acquiesce in and co-operate with European rule” (Wilson 1987:40).

Faysal's brief time on the Syrian throne evoked a vision of Arab leadership and gave nationalists hope for the potential of greater political unity (Smith 2007:87). Arab

nationalist sentiments grew increasingly stronger and an uprising broke out in Iraq during the summer of 1920 (Smith 2007:89). The British consequently were feeling the pressure to either placate their mandated citizens, or face increased amounts of armed resistance (Smith 2007:89). Acting decisively, and at the recommendation of his advisor T.E. Lawrence, Winston Churchill, the newly appointed colonial secretary,⁵³ made two strategic moves. Motivated by his administrative desire to cut expenditures in this increasingly expensive colonial venture while stabilising the growing nationalist malcontent, Churchill instated Faysal as king of Iraq, and his brother Abdullah as *Amir*⁵⁴ of Transjordan (Smith 2007:87-89).⁵⁵

Abdullah's accession to the position of Amir was well debated among British advisors because of the reputation he had earned himself by the end of the Arab Revolt. Ultimately it was decided that Abdullah was more of an asset the more incompetent he was perceived to be (Wilson 1987: 41). Edward Montagu, secretary of state for India asserted: "If Abdullah is the lascivious, idle creature he is represented to be, he is the ideal man [to be Amir], because he would leave the British Administrator to govern the country wholly" (Wilson 1987: 41). Thus the establishment of Abdullah as a figurehead over the British mandated territory served not only Britain's goal to maintain authority

⁵³ Churchill was previous the British secretary of state for war.

⁵⁴ *Amir* can mean prince, ruler, commander, but also can be used as a title to describe a descendant of the Prophet.

⁵⁵ During the time Faysal was negotiating his place in Syria, Abdullah, accompanied by 500 to 1000 supportive tribesmen, had traveled to Ma'an to "bring himself forcefully to Britain's attention" (Wilson 1987: 44; Dann 1984: 2). Once again, the support of the Bedouin tribes was essential to Hashemite success. Abdullah's used his time in Ma'an to mount a "wave of Hashemite propaganda," rallying for support for the recently lost Hashemite rule over Syria. Abdullah's words were received considerably well (Dann 1984: 3). Abdullah's public self-promotion and Britain's need for an Arab intermediary (either popular or just well known) was well timed; a position was available, and Abdullah presented himself in good time to fill it. Britain enjoyed the added bonus of mending fences with the Hasemites after Faysal's loss of Syria.

over the strategic region,⁵⁶ but also Abdullah's dual ambition to "assert his status within the Hashemite clan"⁵⁷ and to bolster the declining Hashemite dynasty (Massad 2001:27; Robins 2004:17; Wilson 1987:59).⁵⁸ The relationship between Britain and the Hashemites was one of mutual need. In order to maintain its presence in the Levant, the British Empire was dependant on Abdullah's role as intermediary between the Empire and its Levantine residents (Dann 1984:3). At the same time, Abdullah required the political and financial resources that only Britain could provide (Dann 1984:5). Without the backing of the Empire, Abdullah would be highly vulnerable to challenges from those suspicious of Hashemite rule. The Hashemites seized the opportunity of Britain's reliance on the politics of the notables and allied themselves strategically with the mandate government. Britain had just provided Abdullah the time and resources he needed to establish his legitimacy as sovereign.

1.6 The emergence of Abdullah, Sheikh of Transjordan

Keen to make the state his own and end the control of British mandate, Abdullah sought to establish his rule through the accomplishment of three goals (Gubser 1983:78).

Abdullah's objectives were to first, increase national security; second, create a working

⁵⁶ The area of Transjordan provided Britain a strategic link between Iraq's oil resources and the motherland (Massad 2001:143). A pipeline of the British owned Iraq Petroleum Company later ran directly into Transjordan providing Britain access to this highly valuable commodity (Massad 2001: 144–145).

⁵⁷ Wilson in particular discusses Abdullah's feelings of rivalry towards his brother Faisal for being granted the throne in Syria, and then Iraq, the two territories he wished most for himself.

⁵⁸ Specifically to recoup some of the influence and territory taken by the increasingly powerful Ibn Saud (Massad 2001:107; Robins 2004:17).

parliament; and third, continue advocating for Arab unity under the Hashemite monarchy (Gubser 1983:78).

Abdullah soon set forth to secure his nation against internal and external threats. Of major concern were possible tribal raids, tax revolts, and incursions from Ibn Saud's regime in the south (Gubser 1983:79). As a consequence, Abdullah continued to carefully cultivate his relationships with Arab Nationalists and tribal leaders. By opening his palace to the public every Friday, Abdullah made himself available to hear the issues and concerns of his new citizens (Gubser 1983:80). This practice of facilitating open dialogue or, *hiwar*, was adapted from Bedouin tribal custom where *sheikhs* (tribal patriarchs) act as mediators for the tribe (Lancaster 1981:81-84; Lynch 1999:23). By implementing *hiwar*, Abdullah further linked his identity with Bedouin culture, and represented himself as a "first among equals", a member of the tribe rather than a distant cultural outsider with ties to the Hijaz. As gatherings act to reaffirm tribal solidarity in Bedouin culture, Abdullah operated as sheikh for the nation. He communicated his status and authority by listening to, and mediating, the concerns of others (Lancaster 1981:81; Gubser 1983: 88, 118; Marx 1984:13). This diplomatic hosting of guests is also related to a culture of hospitality prevalent among Bedouin. Hosting others is essential to maintaining a superior reputation, personal and communal honour, and has been a "distinctive feature of public life in Transjordan" since the 1850s (Rogan 1999:36, 38). Abdullah's ability to initiate *hiwar* not only reflected positively on his own reputation, but added to the auspice of the entire nation (Rogan 1999:40).⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Abdullah's son, King Hussein, has earned Jordan an international reputation for his ability to call *hiwar*, often calling for talks between countries in political crisis (Lynch 1999:23, 155). *Hiwar* is now "deeply institutionalized" in Jordanian political practice and theory, and is practiced by the nation's current monarch, King Abdullah II (Lynch 1999:155).

Another way that Abdullah chose to secure his nation was through the development of the Arab Legion. The existing Legion, led by British officer F. G. Peakes, was used to protect Transjordan's external borders, and curtail internal Bedouin raiding and regional tax revolts. It was Peakes' policy to exclude Bedouin as enlisted men; however, this policy was less than effective as raids were on the rise throughout Transjordan (Gubser 1983:80; Massad 2001:107; cf. Al-Mahadin 2007:91-2).⁶⁰ Abdullah recognised that change was needed and replaced Peakes with J.B. Glubb in 1930 (Al-Mahadin 2007:92). Peakes' policy was immediately reversed and Bedouin were actively recruited to be members (Gubser 1983:80; Massad 2001:110-111). This change in policy had several benefits. First, Bedouin raiding was drastically reduced.⁶¹ Raiding was an integral part of the Bedouin financial system. Through the creation of these additional employment positions in the Legion, raiding became a less necessary part of the Bedouin economy. Tribe members were now being paid respectable wages; in fact, a soldier's pay in the Jordanian Desert Patrol could sustain several Bedouin families (Bocco and Tell in Rogan and Tell 1994:122; Dann 1984:16). This was a significant and lifesaving change for many tribesmen as countless Bedouin families had experienced extreme suffering through the drought related famines of the 1930s (Bocco and Tell in Rogan and Tell 1994:122; Dann 1984:10; cf. Al-Mahadin 2007:92). The Howeitat lived in the most famine affected region, and consequently were the most represented tribe in the desert patrol (Bocco and Tell in Rogan and Tell 1994:122). It is no wonder that "by the end of

⁶⁰ Peakes non-Bedouin policy was motivated by his desire to "...prevent power from getting into the hands of the tribal chiefs as the country would not prosper if this occurred" (Peakes quoted in Massad 2001:107).

Many Bedouin tribes feared the loss of their autonomy under British mandate. As a consequence, Abdullah spent much of his mandated allowance on appeasing tribal leaders (Al-Mahadin 2007:92).

⁶¹ Gubser goes as far as to state that raiding was totally eliminated by 1932 (Gubser 1983:80).

the Mandate, the Bedouin dominated the Arab Legion and seemed to embody loyalty to the Hashemite throne” (Bocco and Tell in Rogan and Tell 1994:108). Bedouin loyalty increased significantly towards the Hashemites as they provided employment opportunities and financial resources (Rogan 1999:254). Members of the Arab Legion (therefore many Bedouin), experienced an elevation in their social status as their armies were nationally celebrated for their successes (Khalidi 1997:171; Abujaber 1989:28). As Bedouin reputation increased, so did Abdullah’s: the “authority of Amir Abdullah’s state was projected into the desert” (Gubser 1983:27). Bedouin support was crucial to Abdullah’s political success. By staffing the Arab Legion disproportionately with tribesmen, Abdullah and Glubb had taken steps to secure loyalty to the Hashemite regime (Gubser 1983:25, 27; Dann 1984:11).

Glubb used his position to increase “loyalty” to the new regime in unexpected ways. He played an active role in the “invention of a specifically Jordanian national cultural product, ranging from mannerisms and comportment to national dishes (produced by British mandatory trade relations), national dress and music” through the production of a new Jordanian (Bedouin) military man (Massad 2001:102, 118). Glubb designed new military clothing for the Bedouin Desert Patrol which consisted of long robes with long white sleeves, a khaki outer garment, red and white chequered headcloth (*kaffiyeh*), “with a red sash, a red revolver lanyard, a belt and a bandolier full of ammunition, and a silver dagger in the belt, the effect was impressive” (Massad 2001:119, 121).⁶² Massad argues that the creation of this “uniform” fetishised Bedouin as objects of both female desire and

⁶² Glubb writes regarding the *kaffiyeh*, “Previously, only white headcloths had been worn in Transjordan or Palestine” (Massad 2001:121). Massad contends that the red and white *kaffiyehs* were later adopted to “act as a marker, marking out “real” Transjordanians from Palestinian Jordanians” (Massad 2001:121).

tourist intrigue (2001:120).⁶³ Glubb's own writing corroborates this idea: 'They are certainly the most picturesque body of men in the Middle East, and when the tourists are on the Petra run during the winter the Beduin [*sic*] patrol are photographed from daybreak to dusk' (Massad 2001:120). Glubb's efforts went so far as to alter the eating habits of Bedouin (and the rest of the nation). Items such as tea and rice, which were formerly too expensive to purchase regularly, replaced the staples of coffee and cracked wheat. Rice, introduced in 1925, profoundly affected Jordan's "national dish", *mensef*, which used to be cooked with meat, broth, and bread only. The dish now heavily features rice, and a sauce made from goat or sheep's milk that had previously never been associated with the meal (Massad 2001:158-159). These changes, among others, were introduced as "tradition" and "real" Bedouin culture (Massad 2001:158). This new state sanctioned production of identity repressed former ways of life (Massad 2001:158).⁶⁴

Abdullah's second goal was to implement a government infrastructure. Working with, but eventually replacing, the tax system already put in place by the Ottomans, Abdullah gradually increased access to education and healthcare (Gubser 1983:81; Rogan 1999:253-254).⁶⁵ Also on the agenda was the implementation of a parliamentary system. Abdullah ruled through an "executive council drawn from notables... [and] expatriates from Hijaz and Palestine" (Gubser 1983:80). In addition to this executive parliament, the nation was divided into electoral districts, each with a specifically allotted number of

⁶³ Al-Mahadin argues that the Bedouin were not commoditised as a cultural or tourist image until 1970 (2007:92).

⁶⁴ Massad refers to Glubb's changes in Bedouin lifestyle as well considered, and denies members of the Bedouin League (and Jordanians as a whole) agency for making their own food choices. The practicality that some food staples were becoming increasingly affordable (especially after years of drought and economic depression), or sought after as part of a fashionable trend, does not necessarily equal out to the deliberate construction of a national food. The main elements on *mensef* – meat and rice – prepared and served in a specific manner, were already established.

⁶⁵ The Tanzimat reforms provided Abdullah with "the foundations of a national economy" (Rogan 1999:254).

representatives who could vote to approve or veto certain legislation. These members comprised the Legislative Council. Once again Bedouin, along with other Hashemite loyal cultural minorities,⁶⁶ were provided with the advantage of numerical over-representation (Dann 1984:9). This over-representation in the provisional parliament of the mandate period demonstrates the states' reliance on "a series of alliances between the Hashemite family, tribal leaders and expatriate elites" (Kingston in Rogan and Tell 1994:185).

Abdullah's third goal was the promotion of Arab Nationalist ideals. Abdullah had not given up his hope for acquiring territory in addition to Transjordan (Gubser 1983:83). The Amir wished to succeed where his father Sharif Hussein had failed. Abdullah advocated that Transjordan was a key piece of the larger Greater Syria, and each area should be united under his rule (Gubser 1983:83; Dann 1984:13). Opinion about Abdullah's proposal was split between those who wanted to see a united Arab kingdom, and those who did not. To Abdullah's great annoyance, many of those who conformed to Arab Nationalist agendas saw Transjordan as the portion of land that should be absorbed into Syria, with Abdullah's monarchy fading away instead of claiming further authority (Gubser 1983:83-84). Many nationalists felt that Abdullah was too closely related and controlled by Britain to be considered a viable nationalist leader (Al-Mahadin 2007:92). Regardless of his opponents' opinions, Abdullah continually advocated for Arab unity. In 1947 the UN passed a resolution to partition Palestine and create a Jewish state. While this angered the Arab population of the Middle East, Abdullah saw this as an opportunity to change his tactics. Wanting to channel the united anger of the Arab world, Abdullah

⁶⁶ ...including Christians and Circassians (Dann 1984:9).

claimed the creation of a combined government in Greater Syria was the “sole solution to the Palestine problem” (Gubser 1983:84).⁶⁷

By the time Abdullah had achieved these first major objectives he was politically prepared to separate from the British Mandate. On March 22, 1946 Abdullah was granted his sovereign state (Dann 1984:13-14, 71). A treaty of alliance was signed by Transjordan and Britain declaring Abdullah “His Majesty the King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan” (Dann 1984:14). While the US and the UN did not immediately recognise the nation’s independence—they believed that Jordan’s freedom was in question due to Britain’s remaining rights for military occupation in Jordanian territory— it would only take another two years before Jordan was recognised as an autonomous nation by the international community (Dann 1984:99; Gubser 1983:82). The Bedouin-led Arab Legion aggressively patrolled his territories, securing it from internal and external threats. Tribal leaders and other notables populated his parliament, strengthening Abdullah’s ability to promote his Arab nationalist agenda. Abdullah’s strategic alliance with the Bedouin communities of Transjordan, the development of Bedouin “tradition”—through the simultaneous repression of old customs and creation of new ones—combined with his ability to portray himself with Bedouin attributes, enabled him to secure his role in the development of a new nation. Abdullah compensated for the lack of “national cohesiveness” caused by the foreign creation of borders, through the deliberate cultivation of a distinct national identity. This identity, though in its infancy, was key in

⁶⁷ Many advocates of Arab Nationalism take issue with Abdullah’s politics. Pursuing Arab Nationalism while simultaneously attempting to promote the creation of a distinct national identity through the Othering of Palestinians is a severe ideological contradiction (Wilson 1987:4).

distinguishing Jordan from its surrounding nations and asserting its political and territorial authority (Layne 1989:25, 28).

Throughout this chapter I have made reference to Bedouin customs and traditions. I have thus far argued that Sharif Hussein and his son, Abdullah, deliberately embraced elements of Bedouin culture in order to develop, and then ensure, the survival of the Hashemite regime. Transjordan's initial formation rose out of third party administrative decisions rather than a nationalist movement on the ground. Because foreigners created the state in this way, the nation had no sense of national identity (Massad 2001:27). To compensate for this lack, Abdullah intentionally implemented the use of Bedouin social practice within regional politics through his performance of *hiwar*. Abdullah's practice of using and traditionalising Bedouin customs have been continued by his heirs. After the assassination of King Abdullah in 1951, and the brief reign of King Talal, Abdullah's grandson Hussein bin Talal (1935–1999) was crowned King of Jordan (Gubser 1983:86). King Hussein both inherited and modified his grandfather's approach to identity formation during his 46 year reign (Gubser 1983:88-89, 110).

1.7 Territorial disputes and their effects on Jordanian self-representation

In 1951, when Jordan annexed the West Bank, the nation began to develop tourism in relation to holy sites (the Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem) (Al-Mahadin 2007:93). Tourism was marketed, in general, to an international audience interested in Biblical history (Al-Mahadin 2007:93). The Jordanian government marketed itself as the protector of Christian and Islamic holy places (Al-Mahadin 2007:93). Stamps were issued to

commemorate a papal visit, bringing Jordan's place in the international community to the forefront. Images of Jordan's national pride, the Dome of the Rock and Petra, were presented together, symbolising the unification of the East and West Banks (Al-Mahadin 2007:93). Further enforcing this image of Jordan as the guardians of religious heritage was the nation's pavilion in the 1964 World Fair. Through their exhibition, the nation was represented through the theme "holy places and the dead [*sic*] Sea Scrolls" (Al-Mahadin 2007:94). This portrayal of Jordan as a holy land "legitimate[d] Hashemite rule in the midst of the pro-Nassrite, Pan-Arabist sentiments of the 1950s and 1960s" which threatened the regime's security (Al-Mahadin 2007:94). Further solidifying the Hashemite claim to the holy sites at this time was their role as descendants of the Prophet. It appeared to be the Hashemite's pre-destined "duty to defend the holy city of Jerusalem" (Gubser 1983:110).

When the West Bank was reoccupied by Israel in 1967, many Palestinians emmigrated to the East Bank, and Jordan lost possession of numerous biblical sites (Al-Mahadin 2007:94-95).⁶⁸ Despite these changes, it wasn't until the 1970s, with an increased "Palestinian presence on its lands and the threat of Israel to turn Jordan into a homeland for Palestinians" did Jordan begin a concerted effort to "invent an image for itself marked with distinct symbols and signifiers" (Al-Mahadin 2007:93; cf. Layne 1989:24). Jordan, loosing its role as protector of the holy land to Israel, needed to re-envision its national identity to replace the national signifiers it had just lost, and to secure the safety of the Hashemite regime from Israeli and Palestinian threats (Al-Mahadin 2007:95). Drawing on its already constituted relationship with tribal culture,

⁶⁸ Interestingly, when I visited Jordan in 2006, several areas of biblical interest, including the Baptismal site of Jesus, were advertised (separately) as existing both in Jordan and in Israel.

Jordan reconstructed Bedouin identity to suit its latest political needs (Al-Mahadin 2007:95). The events of Black September in 1970 shook the Jordanian nation from the inside (Fruchter-Ronen 2008:251). From the late 1960s, Palestinians organised resistance against Israeli incursions into the West Bank, and increasingly opposed the Hashemite government who they felt was willing to betray the Palestinian cause for their own benefit (Smith 2007:312- 321). After several events organised by the Palestinian group, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PLFP), called for King Hussein's dethronement, and civil war broke out between the Hashemite government and Jordanian Palestinians (Smith 2007:321). During the nine day conflict, Jordan faced internal threats from rioting Palestinians, as well as external threats from Arab leaders who did not agree with King Hussein's retaliative actions against Palestinian refugee camps (Smith 2007:321).⁶⁹ As a result of these internal and external threats, the Hashemite regime campaigned to "selectively emphasise and build up" elements of Bedouin identity through institutional practice, and the creation and dissemination of "symbolic representations of Jordanian identity" (Al-Mahadin 2007:95; Layne 1989:25). A new image of Jordanian national identity was being created "based on East Jordanian tribal and Islamic Islamic values, loyalty to the royal family and to the King's army, cleansed of Palestinian, pan-Arab, and progressive ideologies" (Fruchter-Ronen 2008:252). By using tribal culture as the root of Jordanian national heritage, the Jordanian government strengthened its claims to its land, and asserted difference between the Jordanian identity as Bedouin and the Palestinian culture as non-Bedouin (Layne 1989:24-25). This

⁶⁹ Over three thousand people were killed in the civil war, with another eleven thousand wounded (Smith 2007:321). Also angering Arab leaders was the fact that many of them felt the Hashemites were making a land grab and trying to acquire the West Bank for themselves rather than for Palestinians (Gubser 1983:86, 90).

distinction bolstered claims against Israeli assertions that “Jordan is Palestine” (Layne 1989:25, 28). By distancing themselves from non-nomadic Palestinian culture, the governing Jordanian authority deployed concepts of Bedouin identity to legitimise their present territorial authority, and prevent further (forced or voluntary) Palestinian exodus into Jordan. The construction of this new Jordanian identity as a “normalized subject” required the “production of its *other*, the “abnormal”, whose abnormality has to be *repressed* and buried to reveal the normal as essence” (Massad 2001:4). Thus, Palestine history was erased from Jordanian school curriculum, and government jobs were taken from Palestinians and given to Hashemite supporters (Fruchter-Ronen 2008:253-4; Khalidi 1997: 15). The livelihoods of Palestinians were threatened (Fruchter-Ronen 2008:254). The assertion of this “Bedouin patriotism” frightened Palestinians and other non-tribal Jordanians, as it “intensifie[d] nativist, anti-Palestinian sentiment by creating a privileged form of national identity which only Jordanians of tribal descent can claim” (Shryock 1995:325). The cultivation of this identity was not for tourists, but to legitimise the Hashemite regime for internal Jordanian, and external international political audiences (Al-Mahadin 2007:96). The King was represented as head of a “patriarchal society based on the idea of the Bayet or house whereby Jordanians follow the Bedouin traditions of construction one big hierarchal household with the King at its helm” (Al-Mahadin 2007:96; cf. Layne 1998:33).⁷⁰

Using the metaphor of being head of the *bayt*, King Hussein, and his son Abdullah II (the present King of Jordan), have continued using Abdullah I’s strategy of *hiwar* (dialogue). King Hussein cultivated his image as a tribal sheikh by facilitating

⁷⁰ Al-Mahadin notes that in 1990, following the first Gulf war, King Hussein “asked Jordanians to refer to him as Sharif Hussein, which is an invocation of the King’s tribal roots as a descendant of the Prophet Mohamed” (2007: 96; also see Layne 1989:28).

international political meetings and peace talks (Figure 1.3)⁷¹. By taking the role of mediator in important talks such as the Arab Summit meeting of 1980, and the Camp David Peace talks he brought honour onto himself in the international community through the re-enforcement of this Bedouin practice on an international scale (Gubser 1983:118).⁷² The manner in which King Hussein was received as an equal to other heads of state, reinforces the King's legitimacy to Jordanians as well.



Figure 1.3

“King Hussein (centre), with Crown Prince El Hassan, Israeli Prime Minister Rabin, Jordanian Prime Minister Majali, and Israeli Foreign Minister Peres exchange copies of the initialled drafts of the Jordan-Israeli Peace Treaty, October 17, 1994.”

AFP http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/his_peace2.html, accessed June 2009.

1.8 Bedouin culture as a tourist commodity

The correlation between Jordanian and Bedouin identities is also presented to tourists.

Hotels, retail establishments, and restaurants decorate their lobbies, and indeed, their entire establishments, with images of Bedouin culture (Shryock 2004:35-38; Layne

⁷¹ See the official Hashemite website on King Hussein's biography at <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/biography.html>. The King's role in international dispute resolution and peacekeeping is well presented.

⁷² See (Hussein 1984:141) for an example.

1989:27).⁷³ “Bedouin kitsch” in the form of coffee urns, *nargillas* (water pipes), *kaffiyehs*, *bayts*, daggers, plush camels, handwoven rugs, and embroidered textiles are produced for the tourist trade (Shryock 1995:329; Shryock 2004:38; Layne 1989:27; Cole 2003:255). Tourists can project themselves into a romanticised version of Bedouin life by purchasing their own *kaffiyehs* and daggers (cf. Cole 2003:254). Through the development of tourism by the government and private tourism companies, visitors to Jordan can now *buy* Bedouin hospitality (Cole 2003:255; Shryock 2004:38).

Tourism in Jordan contributes significantly to the nation’s economy, but it also plays a role in disseminating symbols of Jordanian state identity (Layne 1989:27). The image of a nation possessing a rich visual and social culture asserts the idea that Jordan has been established for a long time; it is not a country created within the past 100 years (Layne 1989:28). By drawing connections between Jordanian Bedouin identity and heritage sites such as Petra, the Hashemites have established themselves as rulers in a long line of legitimate heirs. For example, the Hashemites have worked to establish the Nabataeans (builders of Petra in the sixth century BCE) as the “forefathers of the modern Jordanians,” and as proto-Bedouins (Shryock 2004:98-99).⁷⁴ The mediating quality of the Nabataeans as merchants who had trade relationships with both the East and West has been emphasised in relation to King Hussein’s role as intermediary in international political arenas (Shryock 2004:99).

⁷³ For instance, the Golden Tulip hotel, where I stayed in Aqaba in 2004 and 2006, had decorated its lobby to include an entire *bayt* where guests could lounge, smoke a *narghilla*, and order drinks from the nearby bar.

⁷⁴ This assertion is not strongly founded in historical evidence (Shryock 2004:98). For a detailed account of the ways in which the Hashemites have aligned themselves with Nabataean culture, see Shryock 2004. This phenomena is not unique to Jordan. In Iraq, Saddam Hussein was depicted as Nebuchadnezzar’s direct heir by his “loyal cadre of poets, historians, and archaeologists” in order to establish Hussein’s legitimacy as leader (Bernhardsson 2005:216).



Figure 1.4
King Hussein (left) and King Abdullah II posters at Petra
Photograph by Greg Lanning, 2007.

Throughout this chapter, I have discussed how Jordan was created through a series of complex political events. By drawing upon, and cultivating, visual symbols and social practices of Bedouin culture, the Hashemites have ensured the survival of their regime during periods of political unrest. The Hashemites encourage “both national and genealogical images of community,” emphasising and integrating their royal and religious lineage with tribal identities (Shryock 1995:329, 353-355; Layne 1989:27).⁷⁵ The symbol of Bedouin in the Arab Revolt have “had an important place in Jordanian nationalist discourse” (Young 1999:286). Today, Bedouin values are presented as representative of an entire nation (Young 1999:286; Layne 1994:102). But homogenised

⁷⁵ A copy of the Hashemite family tree is presented on King Abdullah II’s official website: http://www.kingabdullah.jo/main.php?main_page=0&lang_hmka1=1. The tree demonstrates the way in which the King Abdullah II is a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad through 43 generations.

versions of Bedouin identity which promote “Bedouinism in a general way rather than encouraging each tribe to maintain and develop its own individual identity”, are erasing tribal differences and encouraging “political invisibility” (Layne 1989:35; Shryock 1995:329). Bedouin today view the Hashemites as a “breed of super shaykhs” who have the power to impose their own history on others” (Shryock 1995:353).

Chapter Two

2.1 Introduction

Images of Bedouin have captured the imagination of Western explorers, anthropologists, government officials, and armchair travellers since the advent of photography. While chapter one highlighted some of the ways in which Bedouin social practice and imagery have been used by Jordan's Hashemite monarchy to ensure the survival of their regime, chapter two focuses on the production of ethno-photographic representations of Bedouin by Western authors. Western ethno-photographers play a significant role in defining how Bedouin culture is perceived. These photographs however, often tell us more about the interests and concerns of the outsiders producing the images, than the people they are supposed to represent. This chapter begins with a brief summary of Western ethno-photographic practice in the Near East, including the activities of Western travel writers using the emerging technology of photography. Next, the travel writing of mid-20th century traveller, Wilfred Thesiger will be discussed. This chapter concludes with an analysis of contemporary representations of Bedouin by photographers Annie Griffiths Belt and Vivian Ronay.⁷⁶

2.2 Early anthropological travel writing in the Levant

During the Middle Ages, the majority of contact between the West and the East consisted of European pilgrims visiting holy sites in the Levant (Fedden 1958:7). By the 16th

⁷⁶ This chapter is not a survey of all historic photographs of Bedouin made by Western outsiders. I have chosen to discuss the work of Wilfred Thesiger, Annie Griffiths Belt and Vivian Ronay because of the long term relationships they each made with the Bedouin they photographed. Photographers such as Gertrude Bell, William Lancaster, T.E. Lawrence, Thierry Mauger, Félix Bonfils, and others, each created photographic images of Bedouin extremely worthy of study.

century, commercial trade between Europe and the Levant increased with the 1581 establishment of the British commerce corporation, the *Levant Company* (Fedden 1958:7). The founding of the Levant Company was a catalytic moment for British travellers writing about the Near and Middle East. The company's rapid growth resulted in increased European diplomatic missions to the Levant, and as a consequence, the number of Westerners writing about the area boomed (Fedden 1958:7). By the early 17th century, scholar and poet George Sandys had published a comprehensive account of his journey throughout Egypt and the Holy Land. Sandys' document, *Relation of a Voyage* (1610), while part of an earlier tradition of travel writing, was unique because of its emphasis on the anthropological concerns of archaeology and ethnology. Sandys relayed information regarding the ancient architecture and contemporary peoples he encountered in his travels (Fedden 1958:10). The popularity of *Relation of a Voyage* ensured that it was re-printed multiple times and spurred the creation of numerous additional travel accounts. Subsequent 17th and 18th century authors were eager to emulate Sandys' success with an audience hungry for tales of distant peoples and places (Fedden 1958:10-12).⁷⁷

Those able to travel to the Middle East in the 19th century drew upon these written experiences of previous visitors; setting out on their journeys with pre-conceived ideas about what they would find when they arrived (Micklewright 2003:6, 15; Graham-Brown 1988:5). These “pre-texts”—expectations of what they would see and encounter, were shaped by earlier authors and artists whose work had created a vision of the Middle East, and constructed an understanding of the land and people, through outsider eyes

⁷⁷ Travel to the Levant also became part of the “Grand Tour”, the travel-based European educational rite-of-passage for affluent young men (and some women) in Europe, with the completion of the Earl of Sandwich's visit in 1738-39 (Fedden 1958:12).

(Micklewright 2003:6, 15; Alon 2009:57). In the West, books, paintings, and other studies of Oriental life were extremely popular (Graham-Brown 1988:5). Authors such as Sandys, and artists, such as the Orientalist painter, David Roberts (1796-1864), produced commercially successful visual and textual accounts of the Middle East. These highly consumed works presented the East in a particular way, reflecting European imperial concerns whilst communicating a “heavy burden of historical, moral and cultural preconceptions” (Graham-Brown 1988:5). Sarah Graham-Brown explains:

The nineteenth century saw the height of European fascination with the Orient which... manifested itself in a variety of forms from linguistic scholarship to popular novels. On a visual plane it affected everything from the Orientalist school of painting in the French Academy to the picture postcards tourists sent home to their families. [1988:5]

The discourses of archaeology, botany, ethnography, biology, geology, and painting represented in scholarly and travel literature, displays in museums, and exhibits in world expositions were “very much part of the British imperialist project” (Micklewright 2003:62).

During the 18th century, many Western writers travelling in the Levant placed an increased emphasis on archaeology and antiquities (Fedden 1958:12; cf. Micklewright 2003:6). At the same time, anecdotal travel literature—writing which emphasised the author’s personal interests and opinions in addition to historical, geographical, and scientific lines of inquiry⁷⁸—had become increasingly popular⁷⁹ (Fedden 1958:20; Micklewright 2003:3). Travel writing incorporated the personal opinions of the author; including detailed accounts of supplies purchased, meals eaten, plants and flowers

⁷⁸ The “science” behind these earlier studies/writings are debatable, however, the precise measurements and documentary type descriptions of architecture and artefacts that were commonplace in previous writings noticeably decreased in, or were absent from, more anecdotal texts.

⁷⁹ A. W. Kingslake’s 1844 travel book, *Eothen*, was the first text to express this shift (Fedden 1958:16).

viewed, and accounts of conversations (Micklewright 2003:35). This plethora of information provided fascinating reading.⁸⁰ When accompanied by illustrations which augmented the author's narrative, readers felt as though they too were travelling to the locations they read about. Being more than just entertainment, travel literature was used as an educational tool for those who could not afford to make the voyage themselves. Authors like Lady Annie Brassey wrote books and constructed photographic albums, for use as didactic tools, explaining and instructing about the places to which they travelled (Micklewright 2003:1-3). With the invention of photography in 1839, and its increasing inclusion in travel writing over the next two decades, the ability for travel literature to instruct and influence its readers significantly increased.

2.3 Photography as a document of truth

Travel writing became a major genre of literature in the West during the 19th century. Illustrated with maps, diagrams based on photographs, as well as photographic reproductions, the visual and textual information presented in European travel books worked together to disseminate information about far off and seemingly exotic people.⁸¹ Photography was invented during a period of colonial expansion, in a time of "uneven cultural relationship between European cultures and those of the Middle East" (Graham-Brown 1988:4). When presented in travel writing, photographs performed an act of confirmation; "photographers created images for consumption by outsiders which

⁸⁰ This convergence of personal interest and scientific inquiry straddled the boundaries of fiction and non-fiction and as such has created problematic resources for those wishing to glean accurate historical information from their texts (Micklewright 2003:3).

⁸¹ By the turn of the twentieth century 1000's of different travel books, each containing twenty to two hundred photographic images, were circulating in the West (Micklewright 2003:189).

informed their views of those places” (Micklewright 2003:9). The photographs “became part of a shared set of ideas about what distant places looked like and who inhabited them” (Micklewright 2003:9). Photography was well suited to instructive purposes, as the medium’s exact and in-depth appearance reinforced its didactic qualities (Micklewright 2003:4). The hyper-detailed and naturalised look of photographic prints endorsed them as unquestionable sights of accuracy and curiosity in the eyes of the European and North American public (Graham-Brown 1988:1–3). Viewers often believed photographs to be truthful due to their “indexical properties – that is, that a photograph retains a “trace” of an actual existence” (Wallis 1995:48). The amount of detailed information a photograph supplies “confuses and problematizes its message; it creates... a “reality effect,” a semblance of realism bound to detail” (Wallis 1995:48).

Not all 19th-century travel photography of the Middle East communicates the same message. While 20th-century scholarship has emphasised the 19th-century production of photographs depicting staged representations and ethnographic types of non-European people, the actual occurrence of these themes in 19th-century photographs has likely been disproportionately represented in comparison with all photographs produced in the genre. Micklewright explains that this depiction of Western travel photography in the East

is shaped by the late twentieth-century understanding of the Middle East. In this period, many outside the region still characterized the Middle East as conflict-ridden, poverty stricken, and backward. Modern cinema and the press often depict the Middle East as dominated by religious extremism, its inhabitants prey to terrorism, with confusing business practices and governments whose adherence to democratic principles is weak. [2003:14-15]

This scholarly outlook breeds stereotypes and misunderstandings that “do nothing to further contemporary understanding of this critically important region of the world” (Micklewright 2003:15). While it may be that of photographs during this period have been researched with disproportionate emphasis on certain subject matter, it is perhaps not too difficult to understand why 20th-century scholars are focused on discussions of ethnographic typings and colonial misrepresentations. Photographs of racial and ethnic categorisations have inflicted violence on the subjects of the photographs, their communities, and their ancestors. Many scholars research these particular images as a strategy to recuperate their histories from colonial culture.⁸² Though photographs of ethnographic types may be inaccurate representations, these photographs hold value through their communication of how Westerners constructed non-European cultures, and how Westerners wanted to be viewed themselves (Graham-Brown 1988:3).

2.4 Western attitudes towards Bedouin

Interpretations of Bedouin as fierce warriors play into the Western cultural construct of “the noble savage.” This concept, while it does not necessarily offer much information about the lives of Bedouin, provides significant insight into the values of twentieth and twenty-first century Western travellers (Grauland 2009:80). The myth of the noble savage is “constructed by observers who view themselves as civilized”, they inhabit urban, industrialised, capitalist environments, and their thinking is the product of Enlightenment rationalism (Grauland 2009:81-82). In contrast, they find themselves fascinated with

⁸² See articles, *Black Bodies, White Science: Louise Agassiz's Slave Daguerreotypes* by Brian Wallis, (Wallis 1995:59); *Tricky positions: A conversation between Dave Lewis and Chris Wright* (Lewis and Wright 1996:12).

desert because of its perceived differences from the West; the desert possesses an environment foreign to European landscapes, and is less industrialised than the West (Graulund 2009:82). The desert is believed to be pristine, and empty with the exception of “a few hardened desert tribes”; it is the opposite of European conceptions of the ordinary (Graulund 2009:82). During the nineteenth century, as England and the rest of Europe became increasingly industrialised, many people began to question the benefits and disadvantages of modernisation in their communities. Travellers to the East—and those reading their accounts—became increasingly interested in “the spare life of the Beduin [sic] and the open horizon of the desert” (Fedden 1958:23). Bedouin and desert life became a romantic ideal for those struggling with increased urbanisation in Europe and the social issues that accompanied it (Graham-Brown 1988:8; Fedden 1958:23; Graulund 2009:80; Alon 2009: 58; cf. Naiden 2007:179). British explorers felt they had a “cultural affinity” with Bedouin which stemmed from their “admirable qualities and good manners” (Alon 2009:57). These qualities provided the explorers with the “‘natural’ ability to rule over natives” (Alon 2009:55-56). English travellers in particular felt a kinship between the tribal societies of Bedouin and their own experiences in the British public school system (Alon 2009:58, 62).⁸³

Westerners sought spirituality and wisdom from those they felt were “uncivilised” as the Bedouin seemingly led their lives unencumbered from the material pitfalls of Western society (Graulund 2009:80; Simpson 1989:16-17; cf. Sullivan 1969:3-4).

Travellers pushed further and further into regions of limited inhabitation seeking to

⁸³ In reality, many British officers “grossly misunderstood the local conditions,” even misinterpreting the Bedouin social practice of hospitality for compliance in political matters (Alon 2009:550). Britain however did attempt to employ anthropologists who spoke Arabic and knew the people, customs, and terrain after spending years in the area, as administrative officers (Rogan 1999:218)

escape the obligations and social restrictions of life back home, by traveling to wild empty places, and by locating a sense of otherness (Graham-Brown 1988:8). This wilderness was associated with a *maleness*, an absence of women, which was epitomised by the “wild, untrammeled Bedouin” (Graham-Brown 1988:8).⁸⁴ Travelling through the previously uncharted⁸⁵ desert provided Westerners with a chance to prove their strength, endurance, and heroism to their colleagues and those left behind in the motherland

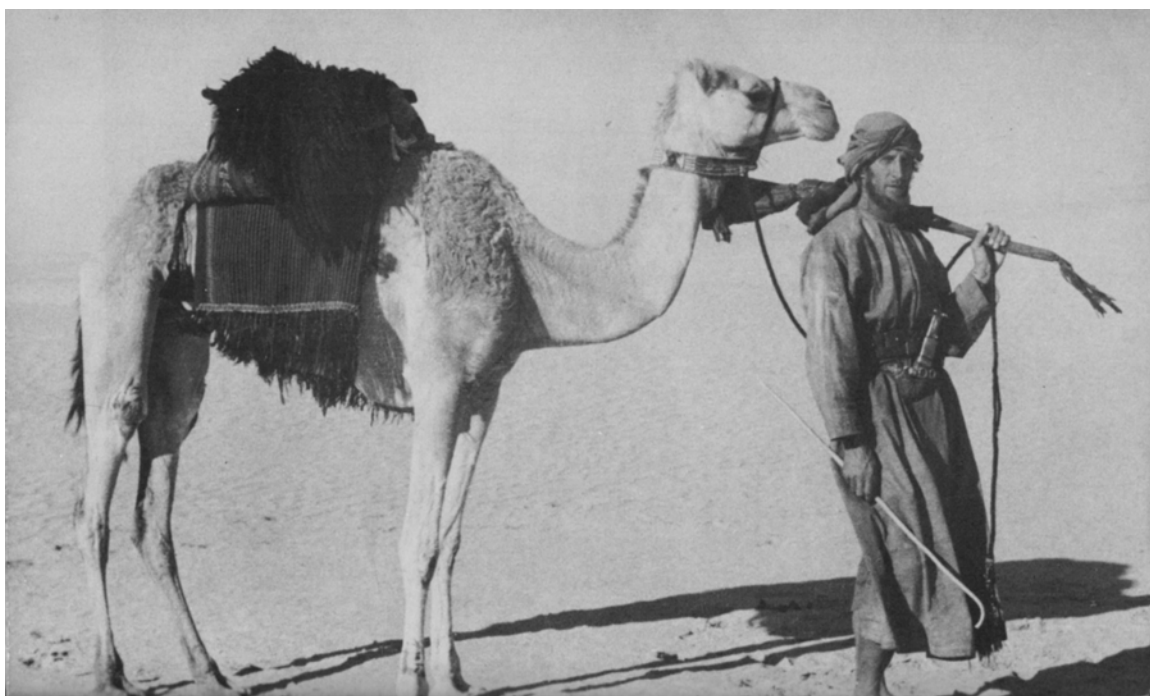


Figure 2.1
Wilfred Thesiger during his second crossing of the “empty quarter” (Thesiger 1959:16).

(Sullivan 1969:3-4). The ultimate way a traveller could prove his or her strength of character, was to “pass” as a resident of the East or Bedouin: to dress in what Westerners perceived to be traditional clothing (most notably the *kaffiyeh* [headscarf] *thawb* [tunic],

⁸⁴ In the writing of European travellers, Bedouin women were acknowledged as “little more than black shadows in the corner of the bedouin tent – relegated to a corner of their consciousness. These travellers lived in a world of men and admired the male values of nomadic societies” (Graham-Brown 1988:9).

⁸⁵ Uncharted by Westerners.

and accompanying belt with dagger); reside, converse, break bread with; and partake in dangerous adventures with *real*⁸⁶ natives (Sullivan 1969:2-4; cf. Graulund 2009:86-87)(Figure 2.1, 2.2). This mimicry of Bedouin identity was an “attempt to become, as it



Figure 2.2
 “Don, Lily and Charlie”
 Photograph by Annie Griffiths Belt, 2008.⁸⁷

were, alien from themselves, to make themselves anew in some preferred image” (Brent in Graulund 2009:87). To further associate themselves with Bedouin culture, English travellers took on Bedouin names, for example, “John Lewis Burckhardt was known as Shayk Ibrahim” (Abujaber 1989:30). Richard Burton (1821-1890), explorer and ethnologist, wrote a *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to El-Medinah and Mecca*

⁸⁶ See introduction.

⁸⁷ The adornment of Bedouin dress by outsiders continues to this day. Also see chapter four, page IV, image ii.

(1855) based on his travels to the Holy Cities. Burton spent his journey disguised as an Indian Muslim, this duplicitous act earned him a reputation with Westerners for exemplary courage, cunning and fortitude (Fedden 1958:25). Charles Doughty (1843-1926) writer and traveller, journeyed throughout Arabia first in the guise of a Syrian doctor named *Khalil* (Arabic for friend), and later “dressed as an Arab prince” while researching his book, *Travels in Arabia Deserta* (1888) (Fedden 1958:28; Tabachnick 1987:2-5; Sullivan 1969:2-3). Doughty’s notes were written in a clandestine manner, hidden from those he traveled with. He attributed his secretive behaviour, in part, to the “suspicions of the Beduin [sic]” with whom he travelled, and for whom he gave “words that echo in the empty landscape” (Fedden 1958:28, 31; Sullivan 1969:2-3). Doughty’s work was celebrated in England when Near Eastern studies experienced a revival due to the popularity of T.E. Lawrence’s (1888-1935) exploits (cf. Sullivan 1969:4-5).

Lawrence, a consummate enthusiast of *Arabia Deserta* wrote a new introduction to the book leading to its renewed publication in 1921 (Tabachnick 1987:6). Lawrence’s interests in archaeology (fuelled in part by Doughty’s work) brought him to the Levant igniting his interest in the desert and the people of Arabia.⁸⁸ Lawrence’s awareness of Near Eastern geography, language and social practices led to his political endeavours—his knowledge proving a tremendous asset to British colonial administrators who had lesser awareness of Arab language and social practice (Fedden 1958:35; cf. Alon 2009:55). Lawrence left his own literary mark with his book, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (1919). In his book he described the people of the Levant in great detail, in

⁸⁸ Doughty’s work was just one influence. For example, Lawrence and archaeologist Leonard Wooley collaborated extensively.

particular, his Bedouin friends with whom he fought along side during the Arab Revolt (1916-1918) (cf. Young: 1999: 286–287).

Wilfred Thesiger's (1910–2003) travel book, *Arabian Sands* (1959) represents Bedouin in a tradition of the noble savage, similar to that of Burton, Doughty and Lawrence (Graulund 2009:86). Their writing valorised Bedouin as “an especially gifted people” Graulund 2009:86). Bedouin were praised by these travellers for the physical strength and endurance they demonstrated by surviving desert environments, as well as for a “moral purity they enjoyed as a result of their distance from the corrupting influences of civilization” (Graulund 2009:87). Thesiger writes of Bedouin character by stating:

arrogant, individualistic and intensely proud, they never willingly accepted any man as their master, and would rather die than be shamed. The most democratic of people, they yet valued lineage highly, and for centuries had guarded the purity of their blood with the dagger... Their hospitality was legendary—a man would think of nothing of killing one of his precious camels to feed a stranger who had chanced on his tent. [1959:94-95]

The accounts of these explorers and their Bedouin travel guides, companions, and comrades greatly influenced the ways Westerners envisioned Bedouin society (Graulund 2009:86).⁸⁹ Thesiger was the last in this line of Arabist travellers who really wanted to embody Bedouin culture. The following passage, from his book, *The Marsh Arabs* (1964), provides a clear example of Western valorisation of Bedouin society. Also present is Thesiger's aversion to his companions' desires for modern amenities and the cultural affinity he felt with them:

Like many Englishmen of my generation and upbringing I had an instinctive sympathy with the traditional life of others. My childhood was spent in Abyssinia,

⁸⁹ Hollywood movies such as *Lawrence of Arabia* also helped to cement the image of the Bedouin warrior wearing pristine white robes (*thawb*) while engaging in battle (Graulund 2009:87, 89).

which at that time was without cars or roads, and then after leaving Oxford, I lived for the next eighteen years in remote parts of Africa and the Middle East. All this made it easy for me to consort with tribal people, to adapt myself to their ways and to find an interest in their lives, but difficult for me to feel at home with those who had discarded their own customs and were trying to adapt themselves to Western civilisation.

In Iraq, as elsewhere, this change was inevitable and I knew that others, broader-minded than myself, found the process interesting and believed in the value of its results. All the same, I preferred to see as little of the products as possible. For example, I generally felt bored and frustrated when I had to spend a night with Iraqi officials—for which I blamed myself, since my hosts were friendly and extremely hospitable. But their preoccupation was with Iraqi politics about which I knew little and cared less, while my interest in the tribes appeared to them incomprehensible or even sinister. We would talk for hours about the United Nations, the attractions of a holiday in Paris, different makes of motor cars of the development of their country, and for the sake of good manners I would be forced to utter insincerities. Their house, comfortable compared to many places I had slept in, were often jerry-built bungalows in execrable taste. Their education had taught them to judge civilization entirely by material progress and they were, in consequence, ashamed of their background and anxious to forget it. A suburbia covering the length and breadth of Iraq was the Utopia of which they dreamed. My own tastes went, perhaps, too far to the other extreme. I loathed cars, aeroplanes, wireless and television, in fact most of our civilization's manifestations in the past fifty years, and was always happy, in Iraq or elsewhere, to share a smoke-filled hovel with a shepherd, his family and beasts. In such a household, everything was strange and different, their self-reliance put me at ease, and I was fascinated by the feeling of continuity with the past. I envied them contentment rare in the world today and a mastery of skills, however simple, that I myself could never hope to attain.

I had spent many years in exploration, but now there were no untouched places left to explore, at least in the countries that attracted me. I therefore felt inclined to settle down among a people of my choosing. In Arabia I had been very close to my companions, but constant journeying had prevented me from getting to know any particular community as well as I could have wished. What little I had seen so far of the Marshmen appealed to me. They were cheerful and friendly and I liked the look of them. Their way of life, as yet little affected by the outside world, was unique and the Marshes themselves were beautiful. Here, thank God, was no sign of that drab modernity which, in its uniform of second-hand European cloths, was spreading like a blight across the rest of Iraq. [1967:50-51]

Thesiger's early experiences at school influenced his desire to find camaraderie with the Bedouin (Graulund 2009:88) In his book *Arabian Sands*, Thesiger states, "I have been

lonely at school and in European towns where I knew nobody, but I have never been lonely among Arabs” (Thesiger in Graulund 2009:88). In Thesiger’s world, Bedouin are constructed as superior through their purity (caused from their distance from civilisation, and modernisation), physical ability, tribal attributes of generosity, and their martial abilities (Graulund 2009:88-89). Bedouin are valorised as “impossible to corrupt, physically superior, proud, determined, and will in all instances fight to the death for their own kind” (Graulund 2009:89; Alon 2009:57).

Many Western travellers and writers pursued interests as anthropologists and archaeologists, using journals and photography to document their experiences (Rogan 1999:218). Thesiger was no exception to this practice. Thesiger’s photographs contribute an insight to the relationships he forged with his Bedouin companions in a way his writing does not convey. In viewing Thesiger’s portraits viewers glean a sense of the relationships existing between Thesiger and his subjects. A greater sense of what Thesiger’s Bedouin travel companions and friends were thinking is conveyed through their use of body language and facial expressions. Though Thesiger’s photographs are mediated by his choice of composition and framing, his subjects often play a more active role representing themselves than would be possible to do through Thesiger’s written work. For example, the photograph in Figure 2.3 portrays Amara bin Thuqub, a young man who travelled with Thesiger for seven years. In the portrait, Amara is relaxed, and smiling. His ease is not representative of colonial photography that portrayed non-Europeans as “types”. While Amara wears a *kaffiyeh*, the focus of the photograph is not on his clothing, but rather the expression of his face, and the relaxed posture of his body.

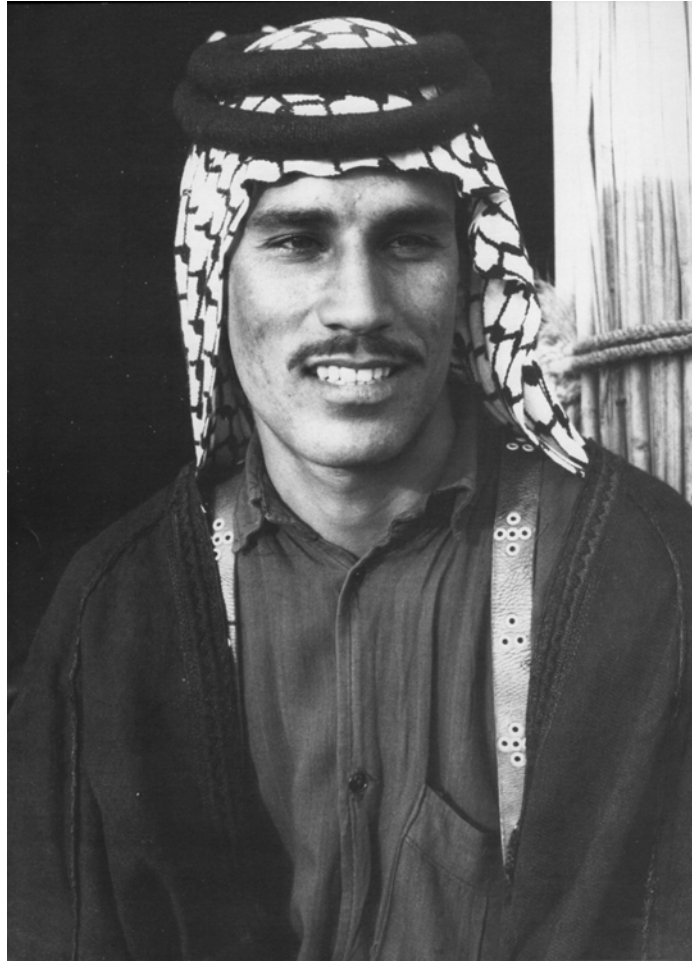


Figure 2.3
“Amara bin Thuqub, my constant companion in the Marshes from 1952-59”
(Thesiger 1979:213).

2.5 Contemporary photographic representations of Bedouin by Western outsiders

Contemporary photographic representations of Bedouin by Western outsiders draw heavily from the legacy of nineteenth and early twentieth century travel writers which preceded them. In fact, the some images of contemporary photographers perpetuate more stereotypes of Bedouin culture than Thesiger’s representations. American photographers Annie Griffiths Belt and Vivian Ronay have contributed to photographs intended for

circulation in the popular media, including publicly accessible books, magazines (such as National Geographic), and travelling exhibits throughout North America. The ethnographic images of Ronay and Griffiths Belt have shaped popular ideas about Jordanian Bedouin throughout Europe and North America over the last thirty years. The concern regarding the modernisation of Bedouin life described by Thesiger in *The Marsh Arabs*, is dealt with by these contemporary photographers in different ways. As computer-based and mechanised technology and globalisation increase, the Western paradigm of the noble savage, forcefully asserts itself as a “counter-reaction to the increase in industrialization and urbanization experienced all over Europe” and the Western world (Graulund 2009:90). Photographers, many who are travel writers and journalists, lament modernisation as the demise of an imagined Bedouin way of life (cf. Mauger 1988:10). However, this phenomenon is not new to the modern era, nor the industrialisation and globalisation of societies. Cultural outsiders have been lamenting the loss of what they perceive to be “the Bedouin way of life” for centuries. As early as the seventh century, people have been concerned about the decline of Bedouin nomadic practices due to the arrival of Islam (Khan 2008:140). For example, the theme of the late seventh and early eighth-century Arabic romance, *Majnun and Layla*, explored the “breakdown of their [the Bedouin’s] ancient, nomadic, pagan culture”(Khan 2008:139) which was, at that time, thought to be in the “final stages of decay” (Khan 2008:140) when compared with the emerging Islamic urban society of the Hijaz (Khan 2008:148). This struggle with Bedouin tribal life being portrayed as part of an “idealized past” essentialises the diverse social and historical experiences of Bedouin: “the symbol of the romantic Bedouin clashes conceptually with the reality of tribes made up of living

members who are participating in every aspect of national life” (Layne 1989:25). Griffiths Belt’s photograph “Petra Backcountry” (Figure 2.4) is an example of the disconnection of daily life in outsider portrayals of Bedouin. Griffiths Belt photographed a lone Bedouin man as part of the Petra landscape. He surveys the territory below him while reclining on the top of a well-known architectural structure (*Al Deir*, the Monastery) in Petra. Rather than an active member of his community, he is isolated from other people, timeless and idealised. The lone Bedouin surveys the land with apparent environmental, ecological or spiritual awareness, while at the same time appears passive, as part of the landscape, and even lazy or primitive.



Figure 2.4
 “Petra backcountry”⁹⁰
 Photograph by Annie Griffiths Belt, 1998.

Griffiths Belt erases aspects of modernisation present in contemporary Bedouin life, photographing them in remote or historical environments. These photographs set out to

⁹⁰ The photograph “Petra backcountry” was accompanied by the following caption: “Reclining on a rooftop carved two millennia ago, a bedouin surveys the realm of the Nabataeans, whose ancient capital beckons from the sands of southern Jordan. Forgotten for centuries, Petra still echoes with mysteries of the past; this immense building, Al Deir (the Monastery), was probably a Nabataean shrine” (Griffiths Belt 1998).

visually preserve a society, or way of life, perceived to be vanishing. Emphasis is placed on clothing that is perceived by Westerners to be traditional and from the past – the *thawb* and *kaffiyeh*, are present at the expense of pants and shirts. The Bedouin Griffiths Belt photographs, by in large, remain nameless in her publications—their individuality removed as representatives of a larger (mostly male) cultural community.⁹¹ Outsider photographs of Bedouin in general, tend to emphasize the male-ness of Bedouin culture. Very few photographs show female community members, and when women are present in photographs of Bedouin, they were often segregated from men. Additionally, activities presented in such photographs are male-dominated, war-like and evoke a strong sense of fraternity. Bedouin are presented in desolate and barren rural spaces, undertaking what are thought to be “traditional” and “non-technological” activities.⁹² Emphasis is placed on the barrenness of desert environments and its apparent lack of plant, animal and other resources thus reinforcing the idea that all Bedouin live a nomadic lifestyle. These images, many of them conflicting, visually present the idea of a single “true” type of Bedouin.

Vivian Ronay sees her photography as a means of communicating to the Western outsider the changing lives of the Bedouin of Petra. Ronay emphasises the changes she has witnessed in Bedouin life over the past thirty years. By documenting the transition of the Bedouin community’s move from their previous homes located inside Petra, to their

⁹¹ Griffiths Belt does refer to her Bedouin guide (pictured in Figure 2.4) by his first name, Hamoody, in spoken interviews (<http://events.nationalgeographic.com/events/speakers-bureau/speaker/annie-griffiths-belt/>).

⁹² The term “technology” is relative. Indeed, a wheel, a spoon, and a computer are all different forms of technology. Western photographs of Bedouin tend to erase mechanised technologies such as cameras, cell phones, televisions, radios, that are perceived to be products of industrialisation and globalisation.

re-location by the Jordanian government to the village of Umm Sayhun, Ronay hopes to portray a less romanticised version of Bedouin life (Figure 2.5).



Figure 2.5
“Neighbors together in Umm Sayhun”
Photograph by Vivian Ronay, 2001.

Ronay’s photographs portray Bedouin partaking in daily activities, interacting with one another, in their own homes and communal settings. The interaction between men and women, familial relations, visitors and friends, even subject and photographer are visually apparent through body language and facial expression. While Ronay controls and selects the aspects of Bedouin society she wants to represent in her photography, her vision of Bedouin life sees individuals and groups existing in their own communities, not solely as guides, cultural guardians, or people subordinate to the activities of cultural outsiders. Though Ronay is careful to receive permission to take or display photographs

of the Bedouin she meets, her photographic process is not collaborative beyond the interaction that exists between sitter and photographer at the time of shooting.⁹³ I believe that by incorporating the photographic interests of the people that they document, through a collaborative process of image creation and discussion, photographers could provide an increasingly insightful and meaningful look into the lives and concerns of Jordanian Bedouin.

Photographs produced by Western ethno-photographers play a significant role in defining how Bedouin identity is envisaged in the West. However, these outsider photographs frequently communicate more about the lives of those producing the images, than the community they are intended to represent. In spite of the countless representations of Bedouin produced by Western photographers there is little imagery of Bedouin people made by or for Bedouin people circulating in Western scholarly or popular sources. Finding photographs taken *by* and *for* Bedouin in the public realm is difficult. While it stands to reason that family photographs exist in many Bedouin homes, few, if any, circulate publicly. Notably, countless photographs of Bedouin men and women, created by and for non-Bedouins exist on the internet. These images are easily accessed—just *google* “Bedouin photograph”—and a range of commercial stock photographs appear in electronic albums displayed on photo-sharing sites such as *flickr* and *shutterfly*. These photographs have been created by outsider tourists and posted to the net for consumption by their friends, as well as the general public. Chapter three of this thesis addresses this perceived lack of photographic self-representation by Bedouin, and

⁹³ Personal telephone communication with Vivian Ronay, August 15, 2009.

the ways in which insider Bedouin photography has the potential to disrupt the stereotypes of traditional outsider images.

Chapter 3

3.1 Introduction

As discussed in chapter two, Western ethno-photographers play a significant role in defining how Bedouin culture is conceived. These photographs however, often tell us more about the interests and concerns of the outsiders producing the images, than the people they are supposed to represent. As a Canadian photographer, I questioned how I could contribute a more nuanced perspective to this archive of Bedouin photography while acknowledging my own interests and bias as an outsider?

In this chapter, I will provide a brief history of the development of my project. Included in this account is my first meeting with the Manaja'a family in 2004 through the *Humayma Excavation Project*. Background information about each participating family member will be provided. Next, I will discuss my research methodology and the logistical process the family and I undertook to create our photographs in 2007. This information provides context for the images presented in chapter four, and discussed in chapter five.

3.2 Humayma, Jordan and the *Humayma Excavation Project*

Humayma, Jordan is located 12 kilometres west of the Desert Highway, approximately halfway between Petra and Aqaba (Figure 3.1). Situated on an ancient trade route in the Hisma desert, this little known but strikingly beautiful area has been inhabited by numerous cultures for over two thousand years.

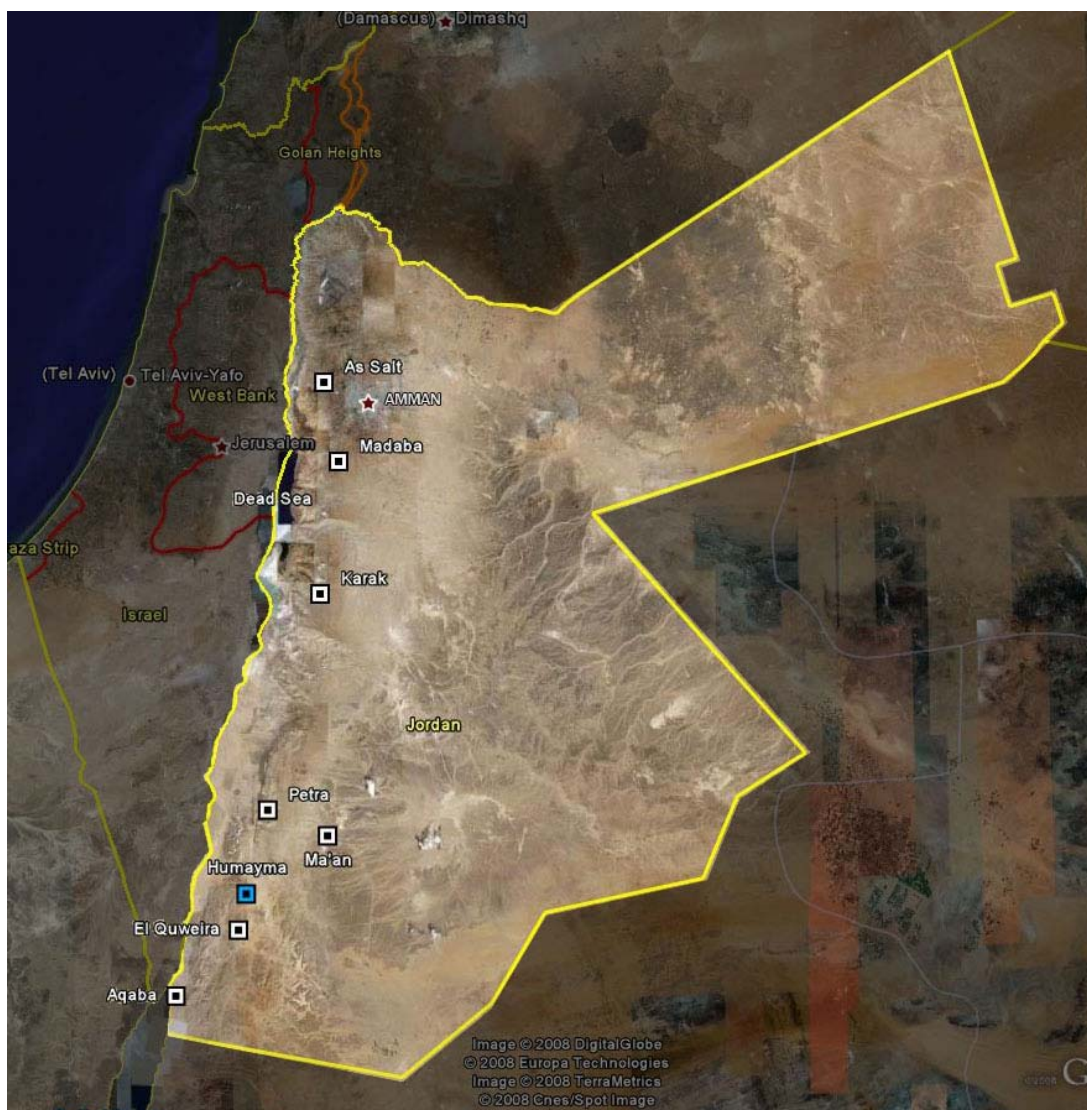


Figure 3.1
Map of Jordan, Humayma indicated, 2008.

The Hisma is an exceptionally arid environment. Due to this environmental feature, the people of Humayma have created and use previously established and effective means of water collection and crop cultivation. Water sources are situated at various locations across the landscape. Local residents use ancient cisterns, reservoirs and run-off fields to collect water for drinking, animal husbandry and agricultural purposes.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Many families also have water delivered to private tanks near their homes for convenience and in times that cistern and well water are low.

The water sources in the area make it conducive to year-round livestock farming. Allowing locals to raise sheep, goats, chickens, and camels for food, raw weaving materials and transport.

Historically, four cultural groups predominated during the eight hundred years of Humayma's most intense occupation. These groups consist of Nabataean traders, pastoralists and farmers (first century B.C.E.–first century C.E.); Roman military administrators (second–fourth century); Byzantine clergy and congregations (fifth–seventh century); and Abbasid revolutionaries, farmers and traders (690–750). Presently, Humayma is a region of significant cultural interchange: the area is home to several Bedouin families – including the Manaja'as– and the site of an ongoing archaeological excavation. Over the past 20 years this seasonal project, led under the direction of Dr. John Peter Oleson, has uncovered artefacts which demonstrate the importance of Humayma's environmental resources, diverse material culture, and social interactions and transformations. During this time, professional and academic relationships, as well as personal friendships, have been forged through the excavation at Humayma. Jordanians and Canadians have used the project as an opportunity to share language and culture. Many of those who have developed relationships at Humayma have used photography as a means to illustrate and communicate ideas, as well as to produce visually meaningful records of their encounters.

Many Bedouin living in and around Humayma have demonstrated pride in its landscape, and their culture, by sharing their experiences and knowledge through research organised by archaeologists. Projects, including the archaeological excavation at Humayma, have increased the vitality of the local economy. In 2004, I was invited by Dr.

Oleson to participate in the latest development designed to further increase economic subsistence in the area, by acting as curator and producing photography for the Humayma Visitor Centre. The Visitor Centre contains an exhibition of Arabic and English text, artefacts and photographs providing information about the Humayma site and local residents. I also produced photographs, and acted as co-curator for parallel exhibition of artefacts and photographs simultaneously produced for the Archaeological Museum in the nearby tourism based city of Aqaba.⁹⁵

3.3 Photography and the Manaja'a family: Participation in the Humayma Room exhibition at the Aqaba Archaeological Museum and Humayma Visitor Centre

The photographs on display in the exhibits depict the lives of contemporary Bedouin families inhabiting the area.⁹⁶ As photographer and co-curator of the exhibitions, I spent two months in 2004 photographing the archaeological site and working with local community members.⁹⁷ I was invited to individual's homes to meet and socialise with people who potentially wanted to be featured in the exhibits' photography.

Upon being introduced to the Manaja'a family, the family patriarch, Abu Sabah, and his son Swelem, both quickly expressed keen interest in the process of taking

⁹⁵ Photographs produced for the Humayma Visitor Centre were generously funded by the University of Victoria, Faculty of Humanities. The photographs were displayed accompanied by artefacts and textiles in an exhibit at the UVic McPherson Gallery. The exhibit entitled, *Wadi to jebel: Humayma – landscape of culture*, ran from November through December, 2005 and was curated by Caroline Riedel and myself, with gracious support from Dr. John Oleson. The photographs featured in the show were taken to Humayma and installed in the Visitor Centre the following summer.

⁹⁶ Photographs on display at the Humayma Visitor Centre can be viewed on the Christian-Albrechts Universität zu Keil (Germany) online database of Near Eastern archaeology at <http://www.uni-kiel.de/kibidano/content/below/index.xml> using the search-word "Humayma".

⁹⁷ During my 2004 stay at Humayma I was made aware that several members of the Humayma community (members of the Howeit tribe) were interested in the photographs of T.E. Lawrence. The ancestors of these individuals had fought along side Lawrence during the Arab Revolt and were featured in some of his published photographs. The Manaja'a family does not have these same ties with Lawrence.

photographs, and being subjects in a photographic display representing their community. While visiting the Manaja'a family home, I met and formed friendships with the other members of the family who did not work at the excavation site. The women of the Manaja'a family expressed interest in my job as photographer, and asked to inspect and use my camera. Several members of the Manaja'a family had previous experiences with cameras. These experiences, by in large, were limited to watching cultural outsiders—tourists and excavation coworkers—take photographs. Hands-on experience with cameras, previous to our work taking photographs for the Aqaba Museum display in 2004, had been uncommon, if not non-existent, for the Manaja'a family. As they did not own their own camera, the family rarely experienced opportunities to use cameras themselves. In general, the family posed for photographs, and watched photographs being taken, rather than authoring their own images.⁹⁸ As the cameras were owned by visitors and outsiders, the film (or digital images) taken featuring the Manaja'a family, was often processed and printed outside of Jordan. This made it difficult for outsiders to provide photographic prints to members of the Manaja'a family unless the visitors planned to go back to Humayma, bringing the photographs with them upon their return.⁹⁹ As a result, members of the Manaja'a family infrequently saw printed copies of the photographs

⁹⁸ The activity of witnessing the use of cameras, and posing for cameras, was limited to the older male members of the family who worked on the excavation site and had contact with outsider visitors. Female members of the family heard about the cameras and photographs through the stories of the male members of the family. It is my belief that I, along with Caroline Riedel, was one of the first (if not the first) outsider visitors to meet the Manaja'a family women in their home.

⁹⁹ There is no postal address for the Manaja'a family at Humayma. In order to send letters or other items to the family, one must arrange for another traveller to deliver the goods in person.

I believe that many tourists or coworkers who had taken photographs of the Manaja'as would not think to provide the family with copies of the pictures taken.

taken of them.¹⁰⁰ Despite these obstacles, the Manaja'a family (specifically Abu Sabah) had collected approximately one dozen photographs taken by visiting coworkers, friends, and tourists before my arrival in Humayma in 2004 (Figure 3.4).¹⁰¹

In addition to photography taken by outsiders, some insider photography at Humayma has also taken place by our collaboration in 2007. Cell-phone use has increased throughout the Humayma area in recent years, and several community members have purchased cell-phones with small built-in digital cameras. These cell-phone cameras have been used to take photographs; however, by in large, the digital images are displayed on screen and have not been printed.¹⁰² Due to the limited memory space of the cell-phone cameras, each camera is restricted in the number of photographs/digital information it can store. As a result, the photographs shot on cell-phone cameras are often erased, and replaced with new pictures on a regular basis. This makes insider images taken on cell-phones at Humayma temporary additions to ever-changing collections of photographs.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Between 2004 and 2007, the family was able to receive and print several photographs taken of them through a yahoo email account created by Swelem. Swelem travels to Aqaba to access the internet using internet cafes every few months.

¹⁰¹ Also in this collection was an official government-issue photograph of Abu Sabah. This photograph was similar in size and format to a black and white Canadian passport photograph. Abu Sabah explained that the photograph was taken as part of Jordanian identification documents. When I returned to Humayma in 2007, Abu Sabah did not present this photograph as part of his collection.

¹⁰² Printing photographs taken on cell phones would be a costly and time consuming undertaking for people living in Humayma. The cell phone owner would have to ensure his or her phone was equipped with the appropriate technology to transfer the digital files to a computer, travel to a large city to access a computer, and pay for both computer time and printing of the images. This is beyond the financial means of most people living in the community.

¹⁰³ In 2006 and 2007 I witnessed community members actively sharing the cameras on their phones with their friends and family. While the Manaja'a family had not owned a cell phone with a camera by the time of our research together in 2007, they were familiar with the technology. I can not conclusively say that the Manaja'a family had seen/used cell phone cameras upon our first meeting as I did not see any cell phone cameras during my time at Humayma in 2004.

During my work photographing for the archaeological excavation exhibition projects in 2004, I was able to meet with the Manaja's family on several occasions. During our interactions, I took turns taking photographs with several family members, acting as both subject and photographer. Through this process I observed that as the family members participation increased, so did their comfort level with taking and being featured in photographs.¹⁰⁴ The men, women, and children posed in a variety of ways as we took photographs. The poses assumed by the family members provided me with insight into the ways each person chose to represent themselves for the camera and for the visitors of the exhibits who might potentially view their images. For example, Nassr, the fourth eldest son of Abu Sabah, then 13, grew increasingly comfortable using the camera. Nassr was initially modest about posing in photographs, but he soon actively sought the camera lens, and presented himself in various costuming changes. Nassr posed with and without a *kaffiyeh* in some photographs, while in others, he wore my sunglasses. Quickly Nassr began to direct his family members (mainly his older brother Abdullah, and his younger siblings Ghada and Hamad) to pose for the camera. Nassr first suggested the sitters present themselves sitting individually, head on, wearing stoic faces; then standing, in smiling groups; and finally, adorning various costuming (sunglasses, *kaffiyehs*, different head scarves, earrings). Nassr soon took over operating the camera¹⁰⁵ and continued to experiment directing his family members and me into new positions. The operation of the camera did not pose any difficulty for Nassr.

¹⁰⁴ At this time I had only one camera. We passed the camera to one another so each person who wanted to use the camera could do so numerous times.

¹⁰⁵ I was glad to hand over the task of photographer. Nassr's composition of his subjects, which were rapidly becoming photographic tableaux, were growing increasingly complicated, and I did not know if I was capturing his "photographic vision".

Abu Sabah and Swelem took it upon themselves to take me to places they felt best represented Humayma, or their family's experience, so that I could photograph our time spent there for the museum displays. The family's involvement in dictating how their photographs were taken alleviated many of my fears about representing a community that was new to me, and to which I am a cultural outsider. The Manaja'a family's active participation in the production of many of the photographs I took (including composition, posing of subjects, and selection of subject matter and location) made the family joint authors of the images. Members of the Manaja'a family and I established a relationship that allowed us to engage in a collaborative experience. It is from this initial experience collaborating with the Manaja'a family, our shared interests in photography, and their invitation for me to collaborate with them in the future, that has been the catalyst for the research presented in this thesis.

3.4 The Manaja'a family – a background

In the introduction of this thesis I established the Bedouin identity of the Manaja'a family through two criteria. First, the family self-identifies as Bedouin, and second, the communities with whom the Manaja'as come in contact with accept this identity. Like the cultural outsiders discussed in chapters one and two, the Manaja'as assertion of Bedouin identity can be seen as a strategic statement providing the family with elevated social status and access to resources. The Manaja'a family is registered with the Jordanian government as Bedouin, and thus qualifies for financial assistance including discounts on food, animal feed, water and rights to land. The Bedouin identity of the Manaja'a family provides them with the ability to earn an income in the tourist industry

as providers of “authentic” Bedouin experiences for international travellers wishing to participate in heritage and eco-tourism (Figure 3.2).¹⁰⁶ As residents local to the archaeological site of Humayma, members of the Manaja’a family are also eligible to be hired for archaeological related work through the Jordanian Department of Antiquities and the Humayma excavation project.

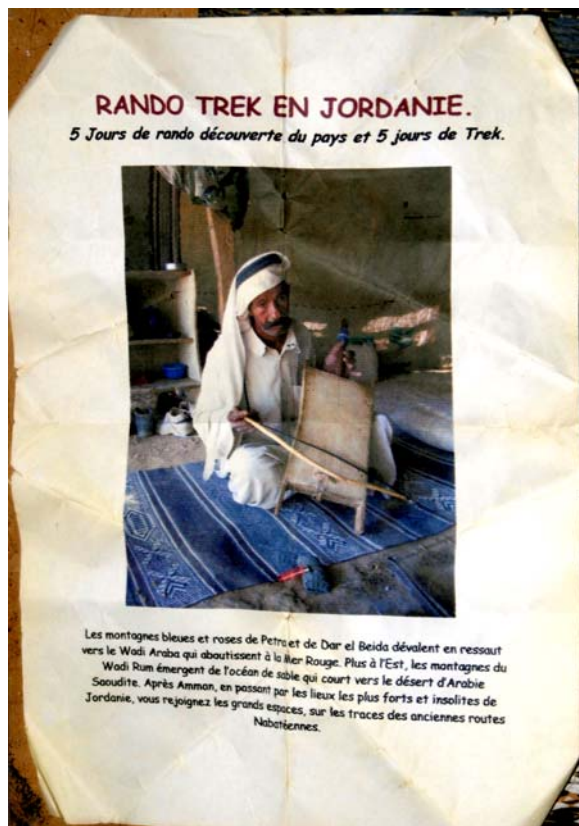


Figure 3.2
 “Rando Trek” eco-tourism poster featuring Abu Sabah al Manaja’a
 Original photographer unknown. Photograph by Robbyn Gordon Lanning, 2007.

¹⁰⁶ See section 3.5 for information regarding the family’s participation in the tourist industry.

3.5 The structure of the Manaja'a family of Humayma

The Manaja'a family patriarch, Eid Swelem Ruwayd Swelem Awad Salam Hamad al Manaja'a¹⁰⁷ (Abu Sabah) comes from a family of 13 children. Abu Sabah has five surviving brothers, Salan Swelem Ruwayd (Abu Awad), Nasr Swelem Ruwayd (Abu Hamad), Salam Swelem Ruwayd (Abu Saleh) and Awad Swelem Ruwayd (Abu Swelem); as well as four surviving sisters.¹⁰⁸ In addition to the relationships existing between Abu Sabah and his immediate family, he is familiar with members of the "greater" Manaja'a family who live beyond the Humayma region. Abu Sabah has indicated to me that he knows of many people with the Manaja'a family name who inhabit the areas of Quweira, Ma'an, Husayniyah and Karak.¹⁰⁹ Abu Sabah has been married to his wife Wafa (Umm Dimah) for approximately thirty years. Wafa is the eldest of 12 children, five of whom are sisters,¹¹⁰ and six who are brothers. Wafa's brothers names are Abdullah (Abu Habib), Hatallah (Abu Ahmed), Sulayman (Abu Abul-Rahman), Hussein (Abu Muhammad), Salam, Muhammad, and Ra'id.

The particular branch of the Manaja'a family that I have collaborated with for this project consists of Abu Sabah, his wife, Wafa, and their 16 children (Table 3.1). This unit of the Manaja'a family lives approximately five kilometres north-west of the Humayma archaeological excavation site in Jordan's Hisma desert.

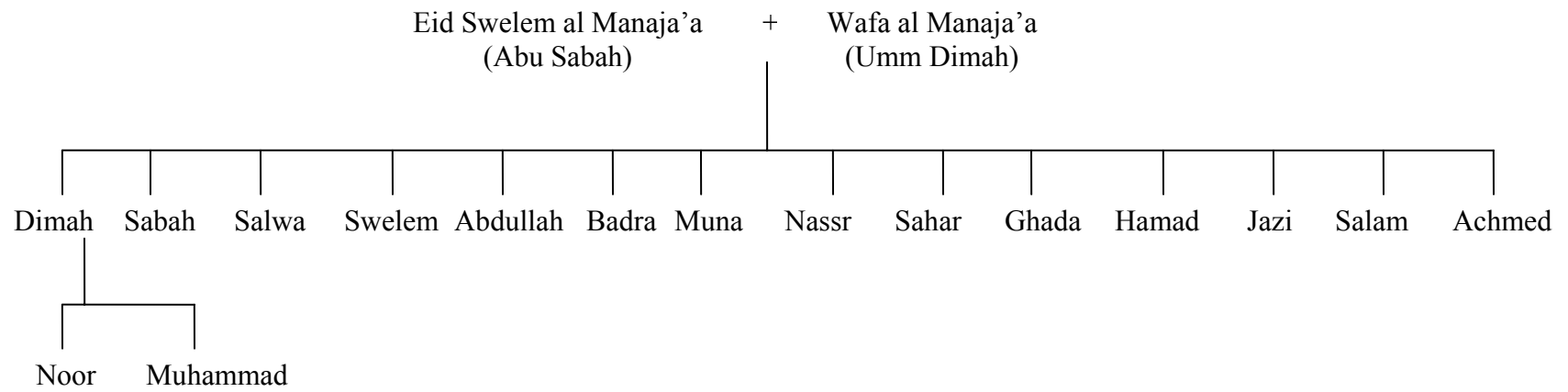
¹⁰⁷ Eid is Abu Sabah's first name. His second name "Swelem" is that of his father. His third name is his grandfather's, the fourth is his great-grandfather's, and so on. Abu Sabah told me he could trace his lineage seven generations, however only provided me with six of his forefathers' names.

¹⁰⁸ I have not listed Abu Sabah's sister's names because, as pseudonyms, they would provide limited useful information.

¹⁰⁹ Abu Sabah's mother and father also live in Quweira.

¹¹⁰ I have not listed Wafa's sister's names because, as pseudonyms, they would provide limited useful information.

Table 3.1
The Manaja'a family



Abu Sabah and Wafa's eldest daughter, Dimah, is 29 years old¹¹¹ and no longer lives at the family home. She is the only member of the immediate family not to participate in this project. Dimah is married to Salih and they have two young children, Noor and Muhammad whom they care for in their residence which neighbours Abu Sabah's home. Abu Sabah and Wafa's eldest son is Sabah. Sabah is 28 years old and no longer lives at home. Sabah however, has not moved because of marriage, but rather lives in an apartment in the local town of Quweira (approximately ten kilometres from Humayma) where he has established a taxi business. Salwa, the family's second eldest daughter, is 25 and lives at the Manaja's family home. Swelem, 22, and Abdullah, 20, also live at home. Sabah, Swelem and Abdullah have been looking for employment as they are no longer school aged. Over the period of several years, Sabah, Swelem and Abdullah have been seasonally employed with the archaeological excavation at Humayma. Daughters, Badra, 19, Muna, 16, Sahar, 13, and Ghada, 12, live at home and attend school together in the nearby town of New Humayma.¹¹² Nasr, 15, and his brothers Hamad, 9, and Jazi, 7, also live at home and attend school in New Humayma during the week; 2007 was Jazi's first year at school. Abu Sabah and Wafa's youngest sons, Salam, 4, and Achmed, 1, are too young for school and spend their days with various family members.

The family practices pastoral farming by raising goats, sheep and camels. They keep chicken (free-run) and doves (in cages) for meat and eggs. Several dogs guard the

¹¹¹ All ages listed were accurate as of July 2007.

¹¹² Established in 1979 through Canadian/UNESCO funding, New Humayma was specifically developed to provide living space, water, health, economic and educational resources for people originally living on or near the site of Humayma's present day excavation. However, many of the stone houses and structures built serve as supplementary housing and storage for the town's residents as the Bedouin *bayt al-shar* remain the most pragmatic accommodation in the Hisma's often searing heat.

family home and livestock.¹¹³ Their *bayt al-shar* (goat hair tent) is located at a site they feel is of superior status to other potential housing sites in the Humayma area (Figure 3.3). So, unlike other families in the region, the Manaja'as do not relocate their house seasonally as weather, food, or animal grazing supplies dictate.

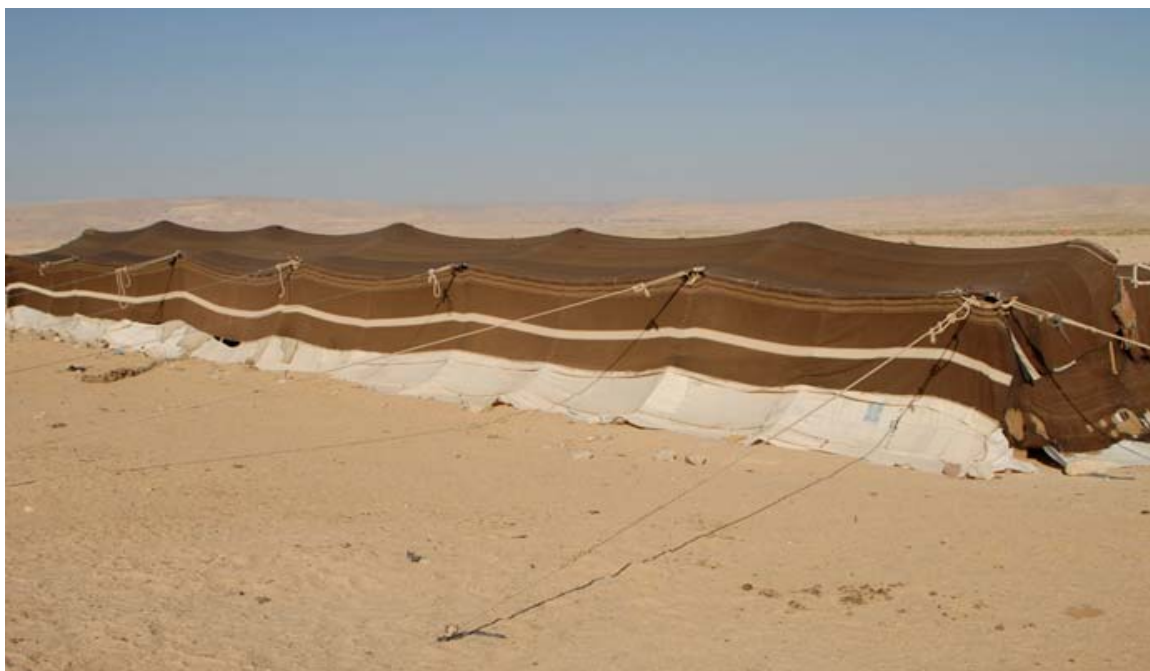


Figure 3.3
View at *Abbaseeya* facing northeast
Photograph by Robbyn Gordon Lanning, 2007.

The home is divided into three sections. The first section is where guests are received.¹¹⁴ In this section of the tent men actively socialise with visitors; women and young children generally do not visit this area if guests are present. The second smaller

¹¹³ The family also has a pet ginger cat.

¹¹⁴ The first section of the tent as shown in figure 4.3 starts at the right hand side of the photograph. This section is large and extends from the end of the tent on the right hand side to the third peak in the roof. The second section is smaller, spanning only one peak. The third section on the tent spans the remainder of the home. In addition to the main home, the Manaja'as have a storage area located approximately ten meters south-west of the home. The family also has a separate out-house, which is a new addition since 2004. The out house was installed, at least in part, for the comfort of visiting friends and tourists.

section of the tent divides this public space with the more private third area of the tent.¹¹⁵ This second section is used for storage. The third area of the tent is as large, if not slightly larger than the first. This section is generally used for the activities of the women and small children in the family.¹¹⁶ The different social uses for the various spaces in the house are flexible and change with the needs of the family in various situations.

The location of the home is known to the family as *Abbaseeya*. *Abbaseeya* is linked to the Desert Highway by two serviceable roads, and is situated strategically between Petra and Wadi Rum.¹¹⁷ *Abbaseeya* does not flood during the rainy season, and is close to familial agricultural and grazing lands. In addition to the site at which the Manaja'a family currently resides, Abu Sabah is developing a new location to inhabit, located within close proximity to their current home. This new space is also referred to as *Abbaseeya* and is currently the beginning of a family compound being built out of permanent cinder brick structures. Abu Sabah calls both of these homestead locations *Abbaseeya* after the Abbasid family who purchased the town at what is now the archaeological site of Humayma around 687-688 (Oleson and Foote 1996:1). The Abbasid family were descendants of the Prophet Muhammad through the Prophet's uncle Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib who lived from 566–662. While living at Humayma the Abbasid family plotted the overthrow of the Umayyad Caliphate (Schick 1998:83).

¹¹⁵ The second section of the tent is often used by women and children (or anyone) wishing to glimpse through seams in the walls, into the more public portion of the tent. I have also used this area to investigate who was present in the public area of the home.

¹¹⁶ Activities that the women often undertake without men include, spinning wool, weaving, sewing, cooking, and visiting with female guests.

¹¹⁷ This is advantageous as Abu Sabah and his older sons are involved in the tourist industry. Abu Sabah meets tourists at Petra and takes them on guided tours (on camelback) from Petra through Humayma to Wadi Rum. Tourists are offered an "authentic Bedouin experience" and are invited to camp out under the stars, or in the Manaja'a family home, after enjoying a meal of oven roasted chicken and flat bread. Coffee and tea are prepared, and singing and dancing also occurs. The next morning Abu Sabah takes the tourists to the Humayma Visitor Centre and excavation site. The journey is completed when they arrive at Wadi Rum.

Through the naming of his home, Abu Sabah has connected the Manaja'a family with the Abbasid family. This raises some interesting issues regarding the Manaja'a family's status and history in Humayma. Such an analogy between the two families seems to imply that the Manaja'a family feels a strong connection to the historiography of the area. Perhaps this link also connects the Manaja'a family (in a distant way) with the Hashemite monarchy's relation to the Prophet.¹¹⁸ This interest in the social and cultural history of Humayma, undoubtedly reflects Abu Sabah's knowledge of Islamic history and genealogy.

Despite my efforts to learn about Abu Sabah's family history, I was unable to confirm his exact birthplace. Abu Sabah told me that he was born in Humayma, moved to another area in the Hisma later in his life, only to return to Humayma in 1980. However, the accounts of two of Abu Sabah's sons, Abdullah and Swelem, dispute this history. Abdullah and Swelem told me that Abu Sabah was not born in Humayma, but rather in Sarah, a village located northwest of Ma'an. Abdullah and Swelem believe that their grandfather, Abu Sabah's father, came to Humayma with his family in 1980.

After considering the different stories presented to me by Abu Sabah and his sons, it is my belief that Abu Sabah has been keen to establish a version of his family history which indicates he was born in Humayma. I believe Abu Sabah wants to establish his origin in Humayma for two reasons. First, because Abu Sabah was aware that I was writing about his family and Humayma in general, he assumed I may include his place of birth in my writing. I, therefore, could make the potentially unquestioned claim in my

¹¹⁸ I asked Abu Sabah whether or not King Abdullah II was Bedouin, and if so, were Abu Sabah's and the king's tribe related. Abu Sabah was clear indicating to me that the king is Bedouin, but that his tribe is from the south, and not related to Abu Sabah's tribe (the Howeitats). At this time Abu Sabah emphasised the nobility of the Hashemite lineage by explaining to me how they are descendant from the Prophet.

written work that Abu Sabah was originally born in Humayma. Abu Sabah told me that the Jordanian government granted him land northwest of Ma'an, however, he prefers to live in Humayma. Secondly, my affiliation with the Humayma excavation, and my explicit interest in the Manaja'a family's interests in photography (and by extension, the family's interests in general), may have led Abu Sabah to believe that my work may hold the further potential to link the family with the historical and cultural aspects of the Humayma site. Both of these possible motivations would correlate with Abu Sabah's personal connection to (and investment in) the land on which he lives,¹¹⁹ as well as his interest in Humayma's cultural heritage. Regardless of the incongruence in Abu Sabah's birthplace, Abu Sabah has been living in Humayma since the first survey for the Humayma archaeological excavation took place in 1986, leading me to believe that Abu Sabah's connection with his home and the excavation itself are intertwined in a complex relationship.

Members of the Manaja'a family have been employed at the Humayma excavation during various seasons of fieldwork over the past twenty years. Because of this employment, the family has had regular encounters with North American archaeologists and students.¹²⁰ These encounters generally last for approximately two months of each year, with many of the visiting North Americans returning to Humayma numerous times. This prolonged contact has helped establish long-term relationships between local community members and North American visitors, and has contributed to a strong English-Arabic language exchange. As a result of this language exchange, many

¹¹⁹ Abu Sabah does not have a deed to the land he lives on at Humayma. In questioning Abu Sabah I was unable to determine who, if anyone, holds title to the land there.

¹²⁰ Other areas in Jordan which have experienced long-term excavations include Petra, Madaba, Karak, Aqaba, and Wadi Araba.

Bedouin living and working at Humayma have become proficient in English. This bilingual adeptness is prevalent in the male members of the Manaja'a family who have worked multiple seasons at the Humayma excavation.¹²¹

3.6 Research methodology

This project uses methodology which contrasts anthropological studies in which researchers attempt to “maintain emotional and physical distance” from the people they are learning about (Ochsenschlager 2004:44). Using a combination of Sol Worth’s concept of *biodocumentary*,¹²² and Mary Louise Pratt’s definition of *autoethnography*, I set out to facilitate, and participate in, the production of photographs designed to communicate information about the Manaja'a family’s lives, interests, and relationships, as told in their own voices (Gross in Worth 1981:3-5; Worth and Adair 1972:7). My research objectives were twofold: (1) investigate how insider photography of Bedouin differs from homogenous and romantic photographic constructions produced by cultural outsiders, and (2) facilitate the self-defined learning objectives of project participants as they relate to the use of photography.

Biodocumentary is the creation of photographs¹²³ by individuals in order to communicate the world from their own points of view (Gross in Worth 1981:3, 18). Autoethnography is “ethnography of one’s own culture”, produced through the active participation of the study’s subjects, it inverts the traditional role of outsider ethno-

¹²¹ Knowledge of English has transferred, to a lesser extent, to the female and younger male members of the family who do not visit the site.

¹²² As implemented in his Navajo film-making project (Worth and Adair 1972)

¹²³ Worth, however, worked mostly in film.

photographer (Gross in Worth 1981:5; Pinney in Pinney and Peterson 2003:3-5). In both biodocumentary and autoethnography, the productive roles of the researcher and subject are made transparent in written discussions which outline the relationships existing between collaborators, joint interpretations of the photographic experience, and in the visual presence of all project collaborators (researcher included) in the photographs created (Gross in Worth 1981:5; Reed-Danahay 1997:2, 9). This reflexivity serves to acknowledge the power relations present in ethnographic practices by asking “who speaks... on behalf of whom”, and “who represents whose life, and how?” (Reed-Danahay 1997:2-3). By providing multiple perspectives on the same experience (i.e., the collaborative project), both concepts deny the idea of an “objective or value-free” photographic document which is prevalent in colonial and early anthropological photography (Gross in Worth 1981:7, 16; Reed-Danahay 1997:9; Ramply 1988:11; cf. Ochsenschlager 2004:36). A purely insider or outsider document is not created; rather a hybrid document representing mutual exchange emerges (Gross in Worth 1981:5; Reed-Danahay 1997:7-8).

Key to implementing autoethnographic and biodocumentary based research is the acknowledgement of the researcher’s positionality. In 2004, when I first met the Manaja’a family, I was an outsider. I had never been to Humayma, or anywhere in the Near or Middle East. I had no contact, either online, by telephone, or through written correspondence with people living in, or coming from, Humayma. I had researched Humayma and Jordan by reading scholarly articles and travel books.¹²⁴ When I arrived at Humayma, I was part of a large group of approximately twenty-five university educated

¹²⁴ In my own experience, travel books continue to have as significant an impact on travellers to the Near East as they did in the nineteenth century and twentieth centuries.

North Americans, who were financially able to forgo earning a wage while they travelled internationally. Particular to my own identity, I was an unmarried female in my twenties, and a Canadian citizen of Irish, Scottish and Polish descent.¹²⁵ I owned several pieces of expensive photographic equipment, and had brought two cameras, and multiple lenses, with me for the job.¹²⁶ Undoubtedly I appeared to be privileged in both my financial situation and education. During my first week in Humayma, I travelled with my colleague Caroline Riedel, and learnt about the excavation site from Dr. Oleson. Dr. Oleson spent an extended, and atypical, amount of time with Caroline and me in order to explain to us the aspects of the excavation he wished to be featured in the exhibits. For the duration of the week we arrived at the excavation site in Dr. Oleson's vehicle, and left the site with him. Because of this, a rumour quickly spread around the community that I was Dr. Oleson's daughter.¹²⁷ As a consequence, I was treated with a special reverence not immediately afforded to other excavation members. While I believe that the Humayma community has been gracious hosts to all those working on the excavation, retrospectively I see that I was (at least initially) treated as a person of honour before I had been given the opportunity to earn such a position through my own actions. Dr. Oleson's status as director, and as a highly respected individual in the community, was

¹²⁵ My maternal grandmother was the last member of my family to immigrate in Canada. Margaret (Peg) Mary MacGregor (nee Harrington), originally from Bere Island, County Cork, Ireland, travelled to Canada in 1946 as a war-bride. Both of my parents were born in Victoria, British Columbia in 1947.

¹²⁶ At this time I did not own a digital camera. I used a fully automated Nikon SLR camera I had recently purchased in Korea and kept my tried and trusted fully manual Nikon FM-10 camera as back-up. Earlier in 2004 I had the incredible opportunity to travel to Korea, and then later to Ireland. This wealth of recent travel experience (and photographic equipment) undoubtedly shaped my perspectives of Humayma as well as the way members of the Humayma community viewed me.

¹²⁷ Dr. Oleson had previously brought his family to Humayma. At this time, his daughter was a teenager. Coincidentally, Dr. Oleson's daughter and I are the same age. As a consequence, of the time I spent with Dr. Oleson during my introduction to the site, and the relatively privileged working conditions I had at Humayma as a curator and photographer (a job much less physically strenuous than that of an excavator), members of the Humayma community, who had seen Dr. Oleson's daughter years before, initially believed that I was his child.

transferred to me as his apparent kin. For nearly two weeks, I did not know that I was perceived to be Dr. Oleson's relative. When I was made aware of the situation, I immediately tried to rectify the misunderstanding by telling people that I was not the director's daughter.¹²⁸ By this time I had made several acquaintances in the community and at the excavation site. I did not perceive that these individuals treated me any differently after they found out my "true" identity.¹²⁹

My role as a photographer and curator also influenced the way members of the Manaja'a family, and Humayma community at large, viewed me. Unlike many of my excavation colleagues, I was not in a position responsible directing the work of local community members. Much of my work focused on documenting celebratory activities such as the preparation of *mensef* for a feast, camping out under the open sky, and general social times away from the routine, and physically demanding, labour of excavation. As a consequence, those who were able to spend time helping me with my work were able to partake in more pleasant and extraordinary activities. Adding to the appeal of collaborating with me was the potential for locals to represent their community through photographic exhibits. By representing Humayma in a permanent public display, community members had the opportunity to become part of history. Those pictured in the exhibits at the Aqaba Museum and Humayma Visitor Centre, have been viewed by

¹²⁸ I am not sure whether my perceived status as Dr. Oleson's daughter affected the Manaja'a family's decision to work with me taking photographs for the exhibitions. I had been introduced to the family through Dr. Andrew Smith II who worked on the excavation as an administrator, and had known the Manaja'a family as a friend for approximately ten years. I had initially believed that it was Dr. Smith's introduction that helped my conversations about photography with the family begin. When I told Abu Sabah that I was not Dr. Oleson's daughter, he did not seem disappointed, but rather thought it was humorous that the rumour had taken such hold in the community. The family continued to work with me, and treated me in the same manner they had since our first meeting.

¹²⁹ While the Humayma landscape was new to me, and it was exhilarating for me to experience language, social practices, foods, and events that were different from what I was accustomed to in Canada, my relationship with the Manaja'a family was one of mutual respect grounded in a shared interest in collaboration and photography.

international visitors, Humayma community members, and Jordanian school children alike. Their images are a means for educating both insiders and outsiders about Humayma. By being documented performing aspects of Bedouin social practice, participants featured in the exhibit photographs garnered honour for themselves and their families through their place in history (made significant by their selection for, and display in, the museum space), and for demonstrating respect for practices and items of social value (Layne 1989:32-33). This honour is bestowed by other Humayma community members, or other Bedouin, who have seen or heard about the exhibits, and are aware that outsiders, including tourists and Jordanian schoolchildren, are viewing the displays as well. In this way, by producing photographs to be viewed by a diverse public, I acted as an intermediary between the Humayma community and the museum-going population. The individuals who visit the museum displays, with the exception of those from the Humayma community itself, in general, have limited to no contact with the Bedouin of Humayma. Like me, they are outsiders who have been allowed to look at certain aspects of life in Humayma.¹³⁰

When I returned to Humayma in 2007 to conduct my graduate research, my positionality had shifted. While I was still an outsider, I was an *invited* outsider. In 2006, the Manaja'a family had extended an offer for me to return to Humayma to work with them in the future. We had come to recognise our mutual interests in photography, though other factors also contributed to our collaboration. By collaborating with the

¹³⁰ During the production of the Humayma exhibits I used a 35mm film camera (as opposed to a digital camera where one can view and re-view the photographs taken before printing). This meant that the photographs taken in 2004 were edited in-camera (at the time of shutter release) by me. Those who posed for the exhibit photographs were careful to show me the views of Humayma that they wanted me to see. As the Humayma community had no way to erase the photographs I took (unless they verbally asked me not to display certain images), they regulated the photographs by controlling the places, events and people they introduced me to.

Manaja's family I would have the opportunity to learn more about photography and Bedouin identity in Jordan, as well as acquire the information necessary to write a thesis and earn a degree. The Manaja's family would have the opportunity to increase their own photographic collection, taking pictures of the subjects, people and places that interested them. As a consequence, the audience viewing the photographs generated by the Manaja's family and me in 2007 had shifted. These new images were to be created for the Manaja's family themselves, as well as for my research objectives,¹³¹ rather than for the unknown, and potentially unlimited audience of the museum displays. Because of this, the photographs produced were negotiated in different ways than the 2004 exhibit photographs. During this project, the Manaja's family members were producing photographs largely for themselves; *they* were the audience. As a consequence, the photographs created were taken of people, events and places that held specific importance to the project participants. Compositions were more personal, and required less information to explain them, as the majority of the intended viewers (at least the ones on-site in Humayma) were privy to insider family knowledge.¹³² My role of mediator between insider and outsider audiences was less necessary for the photographs taken in 2007 compared to those produced for the exhibits in 2004. While I was still an outsider, the photographs were created for insiders, and for the most part, by insiders.¹³³ Instead of

¹³¹ I.e., the photographs would be viewed by me (and my family), my thesis committee members, and the scholarly community. The photographs available to the larger scholarly community have been edited by the Manaja's family by what they photographed as in 2004, but also through their request to obscure the faces of the Manaja's family women.

¹³² I am the exception to this. Though the participants attempted to explain why certain photographs were of interest, undoubtedly, I was unable to understand the photographs in the same way that a member of the Manaja's family would. For this reason, those reading this thesis, experience this disjuncture in an amplified manner as the images are interpreted second hand through my writing.

¹³³ The photographs created by me (an outsider) during the project were less elusive to the Manaja's family (than perhaps photographs taken by the participants when I was not present) as they were generally taken during my times of interaction with the participants (insiders). Because the participants were "there" when I

portraying events such as the preparation of *mensef*, which would potentially be of great interest to cultural outsiders, the photographs portrayed familial events, relationships and other themes of interest to the family. In addition, the photographs were edited in-camera by the participating members of the Manaja'a family, rather than having to rely on me to photograph (or not photograph) certain compositions. Some participants edited the photographs in-camera through the digital display, discarding the images they did not want to keep. Finally, participants verbally expressed which photographs they liked most, and which they felt were unsuitable for display (for further discussion, see section 3.7).

By hosting me as a guest the Manaja'as would, like in 2004, gain esteem in the Humayma community for their generosity. My affiliation with the excavation and Dr. Oleson might have also been seen as a potential benefit for the family as they may have hoped that members of the family would increase their potential to gain employment with the excavation in the future.¹³⁴ When I returned to Humayma in 2007 I was no longer single. My husband Greg travelled with me to Humayma and helped me during my research. Greg spent time with the male members of the Manaja'a family, though he did not meet the women. Abu Sabah declared me a member of the family, as a Manaja'a, as his fictive kin. While I felt that Abu Sabah treated me much the same way as he had during my previous visits, with respect and generosity, one incident in particular stood out as different to me. Abu Sabah protected my honour and modesty by guiding me to the private section of his home with his wife and daughters when two unknown male visitors arrived at his tent. While I had been removed from the men's sight, Greg remained in the

took the majority of my photographs, they had a greater understanding of the images through their roles as active participants or witnesses.

¹³⁴ I was explicit at the start of the project, that this was not the case.

hosting area of the home. This event may or may not have been related to my new status as a married woman. Perhaps Abu Sabah was demonstrating to me the kind of etiquette a married woman should perform. Possibly the incident was interrelated to my new status as a member of the Manaja'a family. As a female Manaja'a, this sort of modesty was now expected of me, when it hadn't been in the past.

In order to execute research based on the self-reflective and collaborative principals of autoethnography and biodocumentary, I selected the techniques of *expressive photography* and *participatory photo elicitation* to apply during my fieldwork. Expressive photography is photography that is produced collaboratively with the aim of “combine[ing] the intensions of both ethnographer/photographer and informant” (Pink 2005:58). The resulting photographic product reflects the learning objectives of both the researcher and the “researched” (Pink 2005:58).¹³⁵ Expressive photography, like autoethnography/biodocumentation, breaks with traditional ethnographic photographic practices that “represent generalized cultural characteristics and specific categories of activity, or artifacts” (Pink 2005:126). Its creative visual compositions contrast documentary-style photography in a manner similar to the way poems and autobiographies are different from business reports and how-to manuals (Pink 2005:128). Expressive photographs function as interpretations “invoke[ing] diverse aspects of experience” (Pink 2005:128-129). By presenting project collaborators with the option to use cameras as a means to express aspects of their lives—without setting guidelines for, or restrictions on, the content and composition of the photography—project participants are

¹³⁵ The “researched” effectively becomes the researcher.

both able to communicate the aspects of their lives they wanted to share, as well as use photography to define and achieve their own project-related goals.¹³⁶

In conjunction with the creation of expressive photography, project participants and I engaged in participatory photo elicitation¹³⁷. By asking open-ended questions about the photographs contained in two family albums owned by al Manaja's family, as well as by discussing the photography we were producing, these photographs acted as departure points to discuss aspects of the project participants' lives. This approach contrasts traditional photo elicitation where the researcher attempts to find meaning in the photograph itself, rather than in the experiences the photograph indexes (Pink 2005:68). The content of our discussions relating to the photographs produced during our collaboration, will be discussed in chapter five.

3.7 Research logistics

In June of 2007, members of the Manaja's family and I collaborated in the production and discussion of digital photographs. This month-long research schedule was designed to be flexible, taking into account times when the Manaja's family would be too busy, otherwise engaged, or not interested in participating in the project. In general, I arrived at the family home at 8:00 a.m., four or five days of each week for the duration of my stay

¹³⁶ These goals included the use of photography to demonstrate knowledge of antiquities (to help in the acquisition of employment) and to create a family album which includes every family member. See chapter five for a detailed discussion.

¹³⁷ By included the word "participatory" with photo elicitation, I mean to emphasise the collaborative aspect of this method. Project participants were encouraged to think of and share their own questions for both me and other project participants, not just respond on questions or comments made by me.

in Jordan.¹³⁸ We collaborated until approximately 2:00 p.m. most days.¹³⁹ The project was designed to be simple to implement. To facilitate discussions about photography, we used an easily accessible set of photographs belonging to the family. In order to produce photographs, the project participants and I shared six cameras between us, with one person using a specific camera for the entire day (each camera was numbered for tracking its usage).¹⁴⁰ We discussed the photographs we created the following day when I had printed them out, and returned to the family home. The project was also flexible in terms of its research goals. While my goal was to find out how insider photographs potentially differed from outsider photographs of Bedouin, the participants' ultimate goal was the creation of a photographic archive that they could keep. Additional, more individualised participant goals cropped up throughout the project. I did my utmost to facilitate each participant's requests.¹⁴¹

At the onset of my fieldwork, I verbally outlined, discussed and clarified my proposed project with members of the Manaja'a family.¹⁴² As my original research concept was to produce and discuss photographs with only the female members of the family, the male members of the family immediately took issue with the project. The male members of the family did not want to be excluded, and as a consequence, the project was re-evaluated on the spot. This instantaneous re-assessment and negotiation of

¹³⁸ My husband, and generous assistant, Greg, accompanied me to Humayma each day. While I worked travelling throughout the family's house, Greg remained in the side of the tent where guests are received.

¹³⁹ Notable exceptions include an unplanned daytrip to Petra taken with Swelem, and the extended research hours of an overnight campout at the family home.

¹⁴⁰ While some camera swapping occurred, the participants were aware that I was interested in recording the author of each photograph, so they kept me updated as to who took what pictures.

¹⁴¹ See chapter five for examples.

¹⁴² As per UVic Human Research and Ethics Board guidelines.

the project's terms reinforced its need for flexibility and collaborative nature (cf. Pink 2005:58).

Once each family member had confirmed his or her participation under the new project terms, and had expressed his or her own goals for the project, the Manaja'as and I discussed an existing collection, contained within two albums, of photographs owned by the family.¹⁴³ These family albums are made up of photographs taken by cultural outsiders. Many of the images feature a male member of the Manaja'a family (most frequently Abu Sabah) accompanied by a visiting friend, co-worker or tourist. Abu Sabah explained that each of the album's photographs had been provided to him by the visiting friend, co-worker or tourist who took the photo, as he did not have access to a camera or photo finishing services. Abu Sabah said that the images are a source of great pride for him. They are a reminder of personal and professional relationships that he has forged over the years. He explained that viewing the albums is an activity to be shared with honoured visiting guests.¹⁴⁴ Each family album consists of 24, four by six inch transparent plastic slots to hold photographs; each slot contains one photograph. The contents of the two family albums includes: 12 photographs of international tourists (mostly German and French) on various eco-tours at the Manaja'a family home, 1 photograph of the 1996 Wadi Rum excavation crew (Figure 3.4), 15 photographs taken during various excavation seasons at local excavation sites,

¹⁴³ I recorded our conversations in my note-pad, and was also able to use a tape player to record conversations on a few occasions.

¹⁴⁴ Abu Sabah controls when the photo albums are viewed and by whom. Photographs in the albums which display the features of female members of the family are only shown to close and trusted friends and family. This is a matter of protecting the women's modesty from unknown individuals.



Figure 3.4
Wadi Rum excavation crew, original photograph by Dr. Dennine Dudley, 1996
Re-photographed by Robbyn Gordon Lanning, 2007.

2 photographs of family friends pictured in their home countries, 1 photograph of a drawing in the sand made by Abu Sabah, 1 close up portrait of Abu Sabah, and 16 copies of photographs taken (by me) in 2004, for the Humayma Visitor Centre and Aqaba Museum exhibits. At seeing the photographs featured in the exhibit, Abu Sabah, Abdullah, Swelem and Nassr expressed satisfaction in having their photographs chosen to represent the Humayma community. Abu Sabah explained that the exhibit photographs, as well as some artefacts the family donated to the museum for display,¹⁴⁵ had increased his prominence in the community.¹⁴⁶ This increase in reputation had also reached his extended

¹⁴⁵ Abu Sabah donated a home-made *rebab* (string instrument made of goat hide, played with a bow), as well as a tea pot and glasses for the display.

¹⁴⁶ Through their representation in the Humayma Visitor Centre and the Aqaba Museum, the Manaja'as have become part of local history. Layne explains, "there is a tribal precedent for the connection between history and honor... *asiil* tribes (tribes that can trace their lineage, that are part of history) have honor... that non-*asiil* tribes do not" (Layne 1989:32). Additionally, "treating things worthy of respect (the holy places,

family in the region; however, some complaints had been expressed by neighbouring family groups about the Manaja'a prominence in the display. Abu Sabah explained this as the jealousy of families in the community who were less generous than the Manaja'a family. Abu Sabah did not regret welcoming me, and by proxy, all those associated with the Humayma excavation, into his home.¹⁴⁷

After reviewing the images from the album, the Manaja'a family and I worked to produce a new archive of photographs. I showed the family members how to use the digital cameras I had brought for their use. Deliberately excluded from the lesson was any guidance regarding the content or context for the photographs. As part of defining the participants' goals for the project, they individually identified what and how they wanted to photograph.¹⁴⁸ This inclusion allowed the project participants to develop and convey their own photographic perspectives rather than receive direction from an outsider (me). Many members of the Manaja'a family had limited feedback about what subjects they wanted to photograph during our initial conversation about the project. However, as participants grew more confident in taking pictures, they became more vocal about what results they wanted to create (cf. Pink 2005:58).¹⁴⁹

traditional tribal artifacts, and so on) with the respect they are due bestows esteem upon the actor..." (Layne 1989:33). The Manaja'a's role in the construction of the exhibits (indeed, *my* role producing the exhibits), constructed the family as honourable through their demonstrated value of Bedouin tradition (Layne 1989:33).

¹⁴⁷ Honour is bestowed not only on the individual, but on his or her family, and the larger tribal unit (Layne 1989:30).

¹⁴⁸ If any of the collaborators had requested lessons in photo composition, I would have obliged as to facilitate their interests to the best of my ability. No interest however, was expressed.

¹⁴⁹ Swelem was the only project participant to articulate a targeted goal for his subject matter on the first day. Swelem asked me to accompany him around the Humayma excavation site, so he could take photographs of archaeological structures and artefacts.

Sharing time between five cameras,¹ Swelem, Abdullah, Sabah, Nassr, Muna, Badra, Sahar, Salwa and I took photographs both as a group and privately (Figure 3.5). During these times we took photographs both together and apart; we partook in everyday activities such as cooking, cleaning, herding, and eating; and we spent time discussing



Figure 3.5
Collaboration between Ghada, Swelem, Robbyn and Salam (left to right)
Photograph by Nassr al Manaja'a, 2007.

photographs. The participating members of the Manaja'a family had the freedom to create the photographs they wanted to create, participated as the subjects of photographs as they chose, and discussed the elements of whichever photographs they felt like

¹ For the most part, I kept the sixth camera (my Nikon D200) for myself to use. Various times throughout the project, Nassr, Swelem, and my husband Greg, used the Nikon as well.

conveying. Each participant dictated when and where he or she photographed, and frequently continued to photograph long after I had left the family home for the day.¹⁵¹

Younger siblings, Hamad, Jazi, Ghada and Achmed participated by actively posing for photographs. Wafa took a different approach. While she did not want to operate the camera herself, Wafa composed photographs by directing family members where to stand, and by telling me how and when to take photographs. Abu Sabah took an active role discussing the images in the family albums and made great effort to pose for photographs in various constructed situations, however, did not take any himself.¹⁵² Often during our photography sessions, family members would help compose the pictures about to be taken. Debates between the photographer and bystanders would ensue about how the picture should be taken, what elements included, how people should pose, and so forth. Participants would then view the photograph on the digital viewfinder and decide whether or not the image was satisfactory. Frequently photographs would be re-created, with slightly different compositions to generate the desired effect. Each participant present would suggest changes for the photographs as they were taken. The discussion regarding what constituted an acceptable photographic composition was commonly heated. The older siblings in the family (Swelem, Abdullah, Sabah, and Badra) would often dominate the composition process. Abu Sabah and Wafa generally left their children to debate among themselves, but sometimes intervened when they were particularly interested in a certain image, or when their children were having difficulty settling the dispute in a non-aggressive

¹⁵¹ Images taken while I was absent from the photographic process, provide a more intimate look at domestic activities that would not normally occur with visitors such as myself present (cf. Loescher in Grimshaw and Ravetz 2005:59).

¹⁵² Abu Sabah took much pleasure in presenting his albums for me to view, in discussing the photographs as they were produced, and posing for new photographs.

manner.¹⁵³ As a consequence, participants would take cameras outside of the family home in smaller groups, or alone, to take pictures. This provided the photographers increased control over the authorship of their images. Of all the project participants, Swelem dominated the composition of the most photographs. Swelem did this by ensuring that he had a camera for his own use during the majority of the project, and by directing his siblings to take photographs of him that he composed himself.¹⁵⁴ Some arguments erupted between Swelem and his younger brothers over his monopolisation of camera time, however not much change came of these disputes. The older male members of the family were able to dictate over the younger boys. The female participants, in general, seemed more willing to share the cameras between themselves and the younger boys, however made certain that they were able to use the cameras uninterrupted for large blocks of time by taking them out during their herding duties. By taking the cameras out on work related duties, or to school, the female participants were able to circumvent arguments over who got to use the cameras simply by removing the cameras. This action also helped to negate the intensity of the periods when the young women were photographing. By bringing the cameras with them throughout their daily activities, they made it possible to distribute the taking of photographs over longer periods of time, as well as making it possible to photograph at the times most convenient to their schedules. As a result, the content of the photographs taken throughout this research was shaped by social negotiations between family members. For example, as the women took cameras with them during their herding

¹⁵³ This sort of parental intervention occurred most often with the eldest siblings in the family who seemed less willing to back down than the younger children.

¹⁵⁴ Whether this had more to do with Swelem's independent personality, his position as an older male member of the family, or with his relationship with me (Swelem and I spent the most time together of all the project participants, most likely due to his outgoing and friendly personality, our ability to cooperate, and our familiarity from working together in 2004) is unclear to me. Most likely Swelem's dominance in the project was due to a combination of the above mentioned factors.

activities, the content of their photographs often reflected the places they traveled to, and the animals they worked with.

The photographers most comfortable using the cameras, such as Swelem, Abdullah, and myself would edit our images in camera—deleting unwanted images to free up space on the camera's memory disks for more successful photographs. Other participants ignored this feature in favour of verbally communicating to me which photographs they wanted printed, and which could be ignored. Several participants made use of the video function on the cameras to record short clips of events such as singing or dancing.

At the end of each day I gathered the cameras (leaving replacements so family members could continue photographing if they so chose) from the project participants. I then uploaded and saved the photographic images to my laptop computer at my hotel. Afterwards I spent the evening using a portable colour printer to produce four by six inch photographs of the images taken during the day. Every photograph was printed in duplicate so that I could give one copy to the family, and make notes on the back of the other for myself. These photographs would be viewed and discussed by the family the following morning when I returned to their home. Many photographs, when printed, were deemed less than satisfactory by their authors. For example, Swelem carefully composed an image of two camels sitting side by side in the dark of night (chapter 4, page 122). However, when the photograph was printed, he was dissatisfied with the glowing quality of the cameras eyes and suggested the photograph would be better if he marked out the animals' eyes with a black pen. In another example, Sahar took an impromptu close-up photograph of Muna's face. In the image Muna's face was cropped, showing only her eyes and forehead; her eyes were opened large in surprise reacting to the quick and unexpected

manner the camera was thrust into her face. In another photograph, Badra was posing for a portrait while Ghada snuck her hand in front of her sister's face just as the camera's shutter was released.¹⁵⁵ Ghada's hand blocked out Badra's face and Badra looked visibly taken aback by the startling appearance of her sister's hand. Both of these photographs were judged by the young women to be amusing, however they were also deemed as images that should remain in their possession and not be shown to others (including their other family members).

Rather than selecting and discussing certain photographs as "favourites", members of the Manaja'a family tended to view the images they produced as memory triggers for real life situations, instead of describing the photographs as solely self-contained objects or compositions. For example, Muna's photograph of a sunset (Figure 3.6) was taken one of the evenings that my husband and I stayed at the Manaja'a family home overnight. In our discussion of the photograph, Muna briefly talked about the colour difference in the sky caused by the setting sun, as well as the curving lines of the mountains, and the presence of ropes in the photographs foreground.¹⁵⁶ However, Muna focused on the events surrounding the taking of the photograph with more interest and detail. Muna spent time discussing the preparation of dinner, and the subsequent singing and story-telling that continued throughout the evening the photograph was taken. The photograph indexed experiences for Muna that had occurred long after the sun had finished setting—the sunset, landscape and ropes visually present in the photograph were secondary to her discussion. Similarly, the photograph taken by Sabah of Nassr and Salam in his car (chapter 4, page 115, image i) ignited more discussion about Sabah's business as a taxi operator and his new apartment in

¹⁵⁵ The photograph was taken by Muna.

¹⁵⁶ Muna did not use the term "foreground" but pointed at the ropes to indicate them to me.

Quweira than what Nassr and Salam were doing in the parked vehicle together. Swelem’s photograph of a sign featuring Arabic and English text from Petra (chapter four, page 124, image v) was deemed a “favourite” by Swelem, not because of its composition, but because of its subject



Figure 3.6
Sunset from *Abbaseeya*
Photograph by Muna al Manaja’a, 2007.

matter.¹⁵⁷ This manner of using photographs as entry points into lived experience is similar to the ways in which Abu Sabah discussed the photographs in his family album at the outset of our collaboration, and did not appear to change significantly throughout the project’s duration. “Favourites” were linked to themes, events, and individuals greater than

¹⁵⁷ Swelem is keenly interested in language, specifically English translations of Arabic writing. Swelem hopes that in the future, a book about him will be published containing both Arabic and English text side by side.

what was visually present in the photograph, rather than the photograph itself as an object. The photographs acted as memory triggers, more so than as appreciable compositions.

Due to time and material constraints, photographs that were indiscernible, or close duplicates of other photographs, were not printed at this time. At the end of the project we had produced a total of 2,048 photographs. Upon completion of the project, I returned to Canada and printed the entire collection of photographs. The photographs were taken to the Manaja'a family the following spring.

3.8 Project benefits

This project benefits its participants as they receive a complete archive of the photographs they produced for their own use. The participants also received the technical training required to use, or further develop their existing skills using digital cameras. Through our discussions, the Manaja'a family learnt more about their own individual and group concepts of representation and identity. An exhibit based on the photographs, learning goals and research methodology produced during this project was displayed at the University of Victoria, McPherson Gallery from June 6 through July 30, 2009. The exhibit entitled, *Inverting the Lens: Photographs by the Manaja'a family, Humayma, Jordan*, was presented in both English and Arabic and reached a wide variety of students, scholars, and external community members (including the growing local Arabic speaking community of Victoria). The publicity materials generated for the *Inverting the Lens* exhibit are presented in Appendix II of this document. Information about the research and exhibit was disseminated through two curator's lectures. I provided the first presentation to students in UVic History in Art 262 (History of Women in Photography), and the

second through the Maltwood Gallery's public lecture series "Conversation Café." Additionally, in November 2009, I presented a lecture about my research collaboration with the Manaja'a family, including the *Inverting the Lens* exhibit, to the UVic History in Art 250 (Middle Eastern Civilisation: the Ancient World) class. In February 2010, a second exhibit of this research will be displayed in the Victoria community through a local business. This exhibit will help to disseminate the research to a larger audience.

3.9 Project limitations

One limitation of this research is that its initial structure and final thesis presentation is constructed by a cultural outsider.¹⁵⁸ To account for this limitation I allowed for flexibility in defining the research goals and logistical format of the project. A second limitation of this research is that it does not include the creation or discussion of photographs beyond the initial time of research. It is limited to the production of images in one particular time and space and does not account for changes in participants' opinions that might have occurred after I left Jordan.

3.10 Chapter four selection process

The following chapter consists entirely of photographs produced by the Manaja'a family and I during our collaboration in 2007. This section explains how images were selected for inclusion in chapter four. The sixty images presented were chosen from 2,048 photographs produced during this research project. These photographs were selected in

¹⁵⁸ Conversely, the Manaja'a family has constructed their own album with the project photographs. The Manaja'a family controls the ways in which they arrange and present this archive.

the following manner: First, photographs featuring individuals who did not, or were unable to, provide informed consent to participate in the collaboration as outlined by my application to the UVic Human Research and Ethics Committee, were immediately excluded from presentation in this document. Second, I eliminated all photographs that were indiscernible or blurred. Third, I removed any double, triple, or multiple photos of the same subject. Many photographs were taken in rapid succession resulting in the production of near duplicate images. I removed consecutive “duplicates” if they were of lesser technical quality (i.e., blurred, over, or underexposed); or if one image seemed to present more information than the other (for example, in portraits, I would keep a photograph where the subject had both eyes open, rather than select an image where the person had accidentally blinked). Figures 3.7a, and 3.7b, below, help illustrate the example of “duplicate images”. Of the two figures, 3.7b would be kept as it imparts more contextual information than 3.7a (3.7b illustrates that Greg is being led by a person (Nassr), not just riding alone).



Figure 3.7a (left), featuring Greg Lanning
Photograph by Swelem al Manaja’a, 2007.



Figure 3.7b (right), featuring Greg Lanning and Nassr al Manaja’a (left to right)
Photograph by Swelem al Manaja’a, 2007.

Forth, photographs having limited connection to the project were eliminated (I removed over two hundred fifty photographs I had taken at Petra. These images were essentially architectural tourist photographs. While these images are indicative of my own interests as a photographer, they are atypical from the majority of the photographs produced during this research as they were not taken with my research objectives in mind and have limited relation to the Manaja'a family. However, because this group of photographs were produced during an active research period, on an outing with a research participant (Swelem), they are included in the core data of the content analysis charts presented in chapter five. Fifth, photographs that were "similar" to each other were reduced in number. For example, the images in figures 3.8a, and 3.8b, were not taken consecutively (as in the previous group of photographs) however, the composition and subject matter of the photographs are considerably analogous. By reducing the archive in this way, viewers are presented with a substantially more varied set of photographs. This set of images imparts more diverse information than a set containing multiple examples of "similar" photographs.



Figure 3.8a (left), featuring Abdullah al Manaja'a
Photograph by Salwa al Manaja'a, 2007.



Figures 3.8b (right), featuring Abdullah al Manaja'a
Photograph by Salwa al Manaja'a, 2007.

Sixth, the photographs were separated into groups by author. Of these groups I kept whichever photographs each author had discussed the most, made mention of, or reacted to, during our collaboration. The same process was undertaken in relation to comments made by the subjects of the remaining set of photographs. By acknowledging the photographers' and subjects' interests in the images that they took and where featured in, the remaining photographs best reflected the concerns of their authors and subjects.

The seventh and final means of selection was the favouring of photographs portraying familial relationships. I chose to emphasise these photographs as they provide the most insight into the daily lives of each family member, and serve to communicate information about not only the author of the photograph, but the people featured in it as well.¹⁵⁹

I chose to present chapter four's photographs in 11 by 17 inch landscape format. I chose this format to disrupt the familiar Western text based reading format of 8.5 by 11 inch portrait.

As discussed in the preface of this document, the faces of the female participants in the final (and publicly accessible) version of this document¹⁶⁰ have been made indecipherable at the request of Abu Sabah. I have obfuscated the women's faces using raster-based digital image editing software to provide them with anonymity. I have done this as an alternative to blocking out the women's faces with solid bars of colour, or by removing the photographs in their entirety. I chose to obscure the women's identities in this manner as I believe placing a bar across their faces appears visually similar to the

¹⁵⁹ Three photographs were excluded from presentation because the author of the image requested they not be shown. Two of these photographs are discussed in section 3.7.

¹⁶⁰ Excluding me.

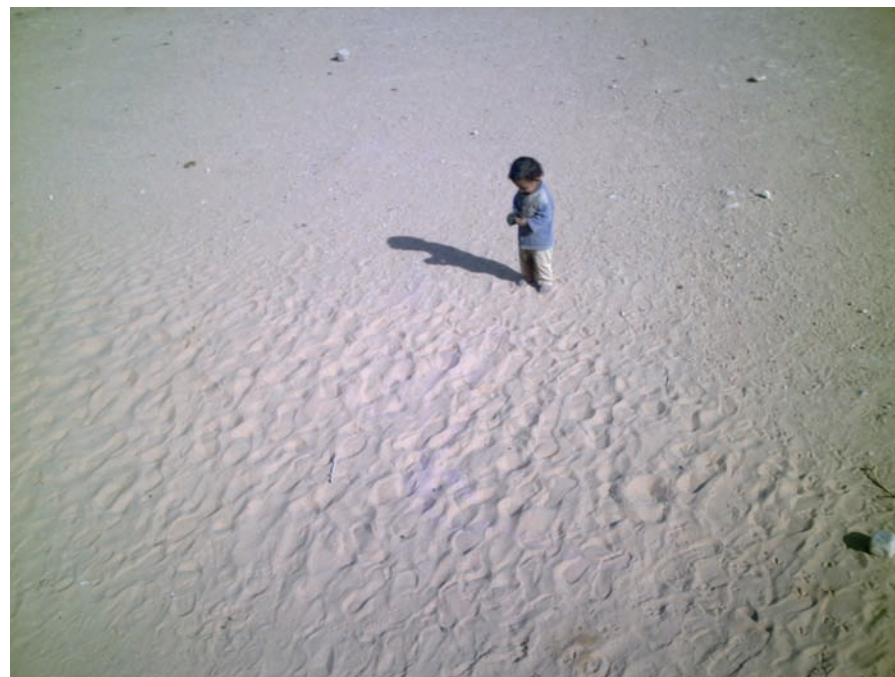
practice of veiling. It is essential to me that I not “electronically veil” the females who collaborated in this project. The Manaja’a family women did not wear veils during the duration of this project, and I feel it would be misrepresentative of the family to veil them after the fact. This point is key due to the significant amount of misunderstandings circulating in contemporary North American societies about women and veiling practices.¹⁶¹ Finally, I chose not to remove photographs featuring female project participants as I felt too much information about the family would be lost, and the voices of the female participants partially silenced, if they were omitted.¹⁶²

¹⁶¹ For an interesting article on North American conceptions of veiling see Layne 2002.

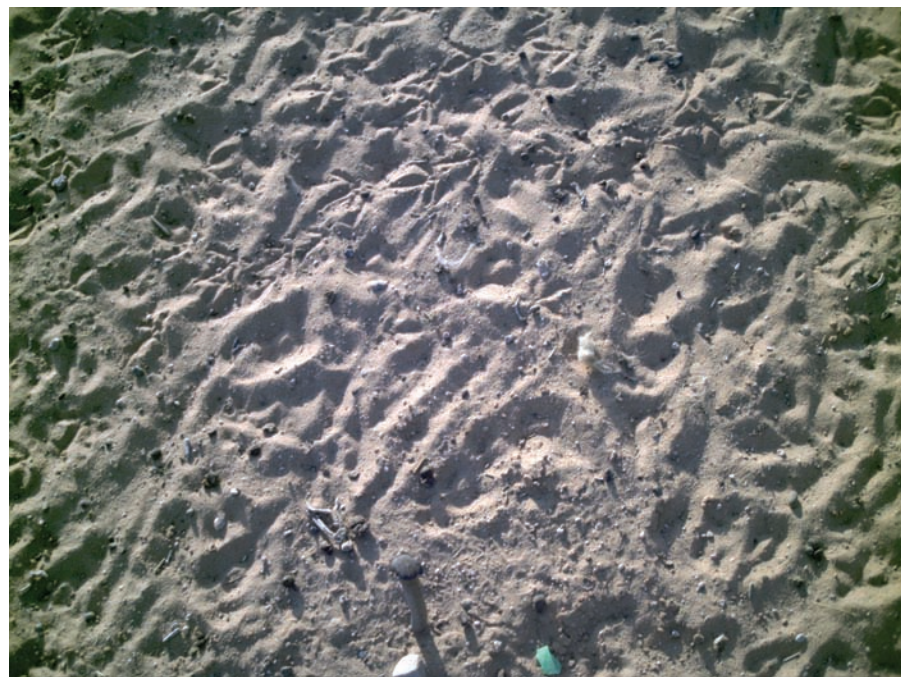
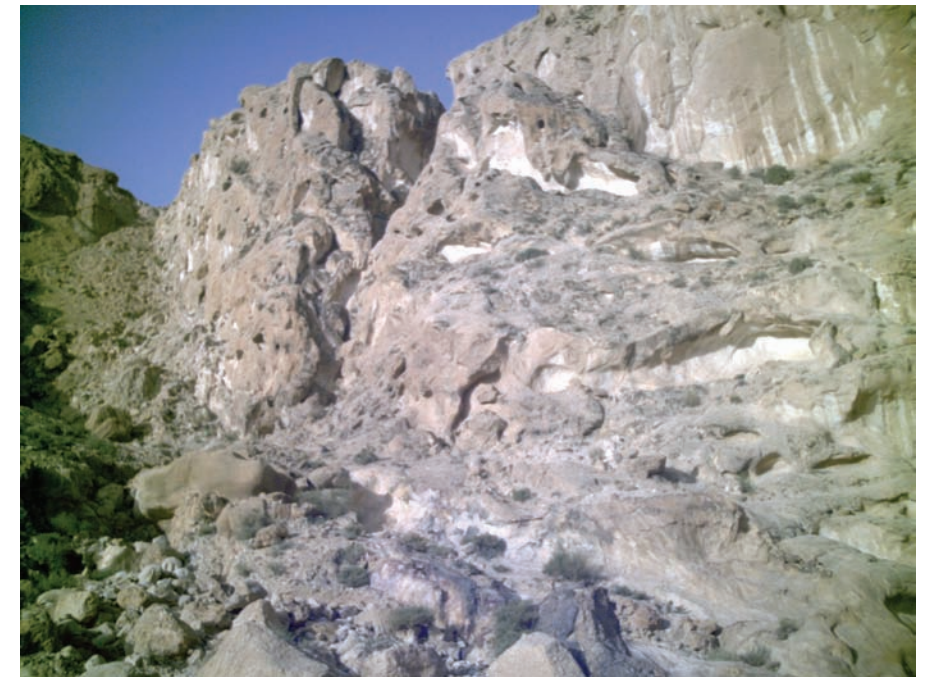
¹⁶² I consulted with the Manaja’a family at the time of our initial collaboration regarding this matter. The family, as represented by Abu Sabah, was satisfied with me disguising the women’s faces. Abu Sabah however, did not seem to have the same concerns regarding the idea of “electronic veiling” that I did.

Chapter 4





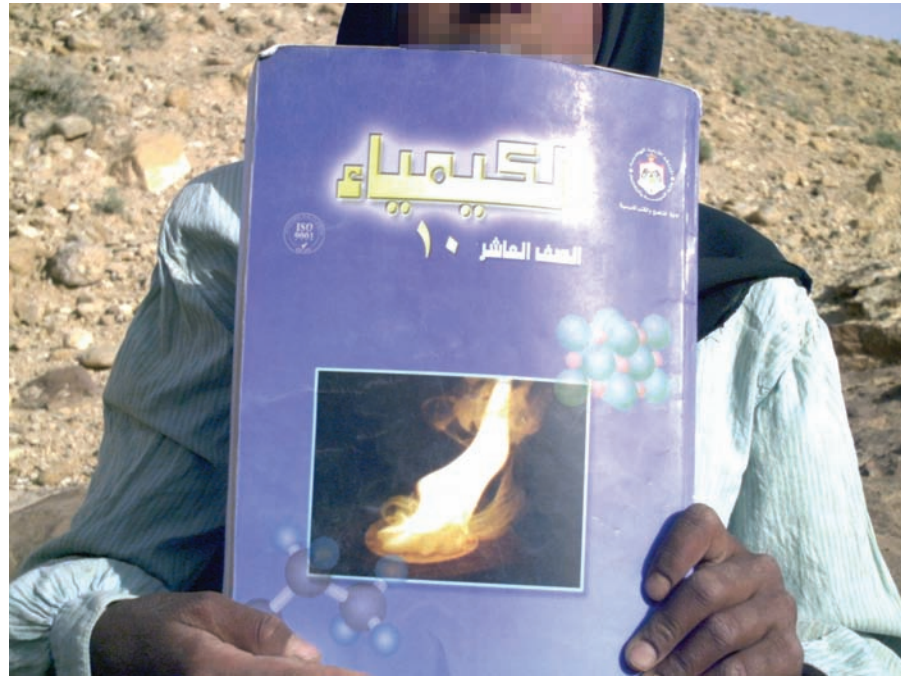




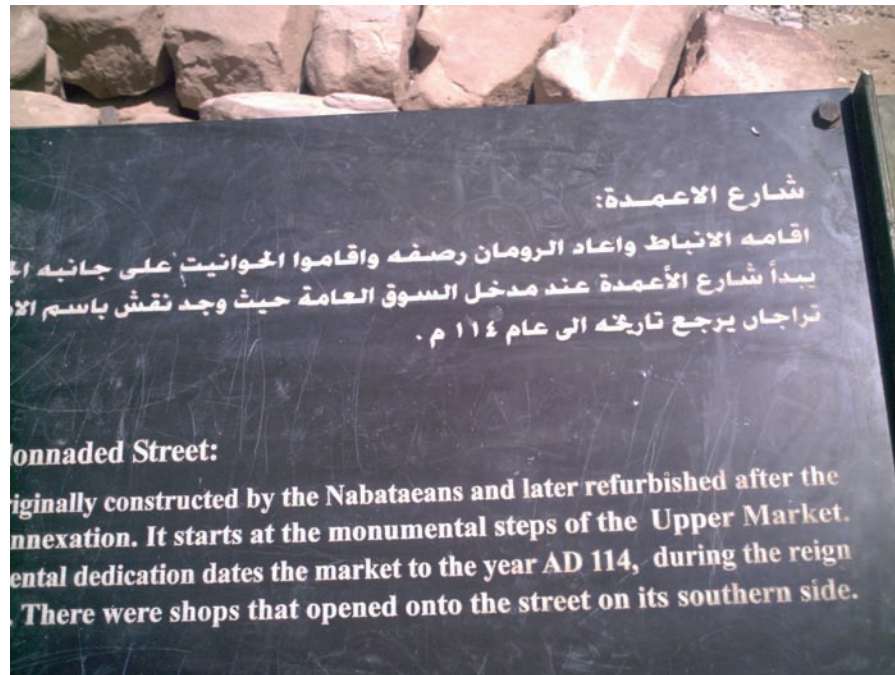












Chapter 5

5.1 Introduction

Photography is one of the languages in which people speak about their own past and their own experience and construct their own identity.
Stuart Hall 1989:19

As discussed in chapter three, the Manaja's family and I worked together to produce an archive of 2,048 photographs. The photographs and dialogue produced during our collaboration forms a body of work capable of inverting outsider representations of Bedouin. By focusing on aspects of the family's lives that *they* deemed important—rather than the romanticised and homogenous depictions of Bedouin culture prevalent in outsider photography—our photographic archive offers an alternative portrayal of Bedouin life in Jordan. The photographs presented in chapter four, and those featured throughout this chapter, communicate experiences of community, place, and family from an insider perspective.

In this chapter, I provide a textual overview of the photographs produced during the research project. The photographs are discussed through content analysis identifying select visual symbols that occur throughout the archive. I will conclude this chapter by examining three photographs from our collection, citing the Manaja's family's commentary associated to each photograph.¹⁶³ Each photograph will be accompanied by a brief discussion of my own interpretations of the images. These narratives will

¹⁶³ I documented my conversations with the Manaja's family in my note book for the majority of my fieldwork (sometimes I was able to use a tape recorder). My notes detailing our conversations were not written in third person narratives, and as such, I do not present my discussions with the Manaja's family in that manner.

incorporate comparisons with concepts of outsider representations of Bedouin discussed in chapters one and two.

5.2 Overview of archive created – visual symbols and recurring themes

Through a process of content analysis, I set out to identify the frequency of specific signifiers of Bedouin identity in our photographic archive. I began this task by creating a list of symbols commonly found in outsider photographs of Bedouin. This list includes the following eight categories: camels, livestock (goats and sheep), *kaffiyehs* (head scarf), *thawbs* (long tunic), *mensef* (meal of goat meat, rice, bread and yogurt-based sauce), coffee, embroidered dresses, and daggers. Each of these symbols has been discussed in the context of outsider photography in previous chapters of this thesis.

At the same time, I identified signs in the photographic archive that were not commonly associated with outsider representations of Bedouin. This second list includes eight categories: familial themes, plant life, cars, cameras, ibex, *rebab* (goat hide string instrument),¹⁶⁴ wells, and harvest/food related activities. Once I identified these categories, I set about counting the number of times each of these items was present in the photographic archive (Table 5.3). During this count, I noted the names of each photographer, and tallied of the number of times each category was photographed by each author. In addition to this tally, I counted the number of photographs each photographer took, and how many times each project participant was featured in a photograph (Tables 5.1 and 5.2). By making these specific counts I hoped to learn the

¹⁶⁴ While the *rebab* can be seen in some outsider photography, I have not seen it represented vary often. Because of the Manaja'a family's interest in the music of the *rebab*, I have included it in the category of insider symbols.

following three things; (1) how prevalent are outsider symbols of Bedouin identity in insider photographs; (2) is there a correlation between occurrences of outsider symbols and the photographer's gender; (3) what, if any, patterns emerge?

Table 5.1

Overview of number of photographs taken by each project participant; includes number of times each project participant is featured in a photograph.

NAME	GENDER	AGE (as of July 2007)	PHOTOS PRODUCED	% of total photos produced ¹⁶⁵	PHOTOS FEATURED IN	% of photos featured in ¹⁶⁶
Abu Sabah	M	57 ¹⁶⁷	0	0	32	1.56
Wafa	F	47	83 ¹⁶⁸	4.05	61	2.98
Dimah	F	29	0	0.00	0	0.00
Sabah	M	28	1	0.05	10	0.49
Salwa	F	25	157	7.67	13	0.63
Swelem	M	22	471	22.99	17	0.83
Abdullah	M	20	181	8.84	100	4.88
Badra	F	19	0	0.00	56	2.73
Muna	F	16	160	7.81	32	1.56
Nassr	M	15	177	8.64	107	5.22
Sahar	F	13	54	2.64	9	0.44
Ghada	F	12	0	0.00	61	2.98
Hamad	M	9	0	0.00	43	2.10
Jazi	M	7	0	0.00	46	2.25
Salam	M	4	0	0.00	57	2.78
Achmed	M	1	0	0.00	24	1.17
indiscernible individual	--	--	--	--	42	2.05
other relatives	--	--	--	--	20	0.98

¹⁶⁵ Numbers rounded to the 1/100th.

¹⁶⁶ Numbers rounded to the 1/100th.

¹⁶⁷ Abu Sabah's true biological age is uncertain. The number shown is an estimate provided to me by Abu Sabah.

¹⁶⁸ These photographs (subject matter and general composition) were directed by Wafa though she did not operate the camera manually. I shot 72 photographs under Wafa's direction. Swelem shot the remaining 11 photographs so that I could be featured in them.

family friends	--	--	--	--	14	0.68
unknown photographer	--	--	7	0.34	--	--
Robbyn	F	28	728 ¹⁶⁹	35.55	105	5.13
Greg	M	25	29	1.42	207	10.11
		TOTAL	2,048	100.00%	--	51.55%

¹⁶⁹ Includes photographs taken at Petra as discussed in section 3.10

Table 5.2
Breakdown of photographs featuring human subjects by author.

		NUMBER OF TIMES PROJECT COLLABORATORS APPEAR IN PHOTOGRAPHS																						
		Abu Sabah	Wafa	Dimah	Sabah	Salwa	Swelem	Abdullah	Badra	Muna	Nassr	Sahar	Ghada	Hamad	Jazi	Salam	Achmed	Other relatives	Family friends	Indiscernible individuals	Robbyn	Greg	TOTAL	
NUMBER OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY PARTICIPANTS	Abu Sabah	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Wafa	0	21	0	0	0	0	14	27	0	19	0	27	9	18	20	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	166
	Dimah	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Sabah	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Salwa	0	5	0	0	0	0	28	4	5	0	3	6	3	4	11	1	0	1	6	2	0	79	
	Swelem	18	4	0	5	0	9	28	2	5	46	0	0	8	2	7	5	6	8	9	41	71	203	
	Abdullah	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	3	0	1	4	6	0	3	0	0	24	
	Badra	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Muna	0	0	0	0	10	0	25	20	0	33	1	18	4	4	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	118	
	Nassr	12	29	0	3	2	9	3	2	18	1	5	8	13	15	14	10	8	0	11	39	21	223	
	Sahar	1	1	0	2	1	2	1	0	4	4	0	2	3	3	2	3	0	5	12	0	0	46	
	Ghada	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Hamad	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Jazi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Salam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Achmed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Robbyn	52	8	0	0	0	91	2	6	0	35	2	4	13	5	10	13	13	0	6	1	134	395	
	Greg	5	0	0	0	0	6	3	0	0	5	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	6	0	11	0	39	
TOTAL	84	69	0	10	13	118	105	61	32	147	11	65	59	51	67	37	33	20	48	105	207			

As evident in Table 5.1, I took the most photographs during the collaboration with 35.5 percent of the project total. I attribute this high rate of photography to my eagerness to take pictures of the research project, and to the fact that, of all of the participants, I alone had a camera with me for the entire duration of the project. Swelem produced the second largest amount of photographs having taken 23.0 percent of the archive. Of the project participants, Swelem was the most keen to take photographs and ensured that he had access to a camera as much as possible. Swelem stated that this enthusiasm was due to three reasons; (1) the experience he had during our photographic collaboration in 2004, (2) his interest in camera technology, and (3) his desire to earn a wage taking archaeological photographs for excavators in the region (Figures 5.1 and 5.2).

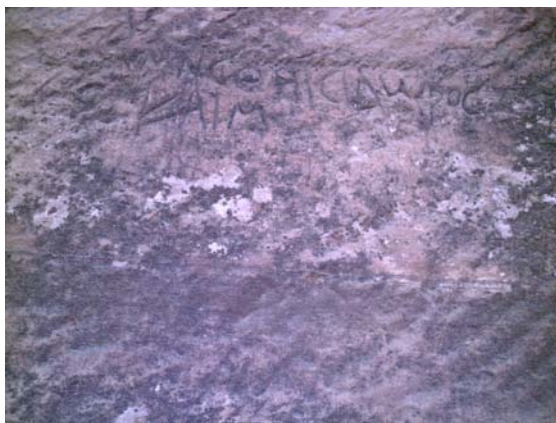


Figure 5.1 (left) Mountaintop inscription
 Photograph by Swelem al Manaja'a, 2007.

Figure 5.2 (right) Black stone cistern
 Photograph by Swelem al Manaja'a, 2007.

Salwa, Abdullah, Muna, and Nassr each took approximately 8 percent of the project photographs, sharing camera use between each other equally. Sahar took 2.6 percent of the total, while Sabah took a single photograph resulting in his 0.05 percent project total. While Abu Sabah actively participated in project discussions and was featured in

numerous pictures, he chose to take no photos. Wafa, took 4.1 percent of the projects photographs through a process of directing other people in taking photographs for her. Wafa composed her photographs by verbally guiding her children where and how to pose while directing me and Swelem to operate the camera (Figures 5.7 and 5.8). The youngest members of the family, Ghada, Hamad, Jazi, Salam, and Achmed were also featured in photographs, but did not use cameras. Ghada, Hamad, and Jazi deferred camera use to their older siblings, while Salam and Achmed were too young to use the cameras. The only member of the Manaja'a family who did not participate in the project was Dimah, who was absent from the family home during the period of our research.

The 4 male participants of this project shot 830 photographs compared to 454 taken by the 4 female participants. These numbers seem to indicate that the men were much more active in taking photographs than the women. These numbers may be misleading however. Swelem's total of 471 photographs produced during the project disguises the fact that both genders actively participated in taking and posing for photographs. I believe Swelem's high production rate is indicative to his keen interest in photography, rather than an indicator of his gender. While Swelem may have used his position as an elder male member of the Manaja'a family to secure himself the constant use of a camera during the project, his older brother Sabah—who holds the most status among his siblings as the eldest son of the family—had limited interest in photography, and only took one photograph despite the fact he could have easily demanded to use the cameras more often. In this research, photographic production appears more related to personal interest than gender.¹⁷⁰ It should be noted, however, that the division of labour

¹⁷⁰ In the brief period between opening the project for the male Manaja'a family members to participate, and commencing taking photographs, I believed that the men would take significantly more photographs than

within the family—which is divided by gender and sees the women participating in activities such as the daily herding of goats and sheep, the cooking of most meals, and the men participating in caring for the camels, the slaughtering of animals, and so forth—had limited to no impact on the number of photographs taken by each gender. Rather, the division of labour influenced the subject matter and locations that many photographs were taken in.¹⁷¹ The participants were able to find time to photograph by negotiating around their work schedules by using the cameras during work times. The photographic content produced by the members of the Manaja’a family reflected their work-related activities or locations where they travelled for their work (Figures 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5). In this way, the content of the photographs produced during this research was influenced by



Figure 5.3 (left) Photograph by Sahar al Manaja’a, 2007.

Figure 5.4 (right) Photograph by Abdullah al Manaja’a, 2007.

the women. I was surprised to find (with the exception of Swelem) that the numbers were fairly equally distributed. I had believed that the men would take more photographs as I perceived them to have more leisure time than the women. I now believe I was incorrect in this assumption. The men and women appear to distribute work relatively equally between the sexes, however, the men tend to perform work such as hunting at specific times in the year, for extended periods of time, whereas the women practice herding on a daily basis.

¹⁷¹ This division of labour does not seem rigid. During the duration of this project, Nassr often participated in herding activities, performing the duties of his sister Salwa who was feeling under the weather for several weeks. Women were also free to accompany their brothers while they cared for the camels. While the women were in charge of the majority of cooking, the men slaughtered the animals and used the cinder block oven to cook chickens for tourists (Figure 5.5).



Figure 5.5 Cinder block oven
 Photograph by Swelem al Manaja'a, 2007.

the every day work duties of each member of the family. The photographs taken during periods of work however, did not feature exclusively work activities. A significant amount of time was taken to pose and stage photographs during the occasions when photographers were out doing their jobs (chapter four, page 117, image iv; chapter four, page 121, images i and v; and chapter four, page 122, images ii, v and vi).

Table 5.2 presents the number of times each project participant appears in a photograph. For example, Abu Sabah was featured in 84 photographs. This number is comprised of 18 of Swelem's photographs, 1 photograph by Abdullah, 12 by Nassr, 1 by Sahar, 52 taken by me, and 5 by Greg. While I had anticipated that project participants who spent large amounts of time photographing together would have taken a large number of images of each other, I was incorrect. For example, Swelem and Abdullah spent hours walking through the mountains together with their cameras, but while Swelem had taken 28 photographs of Abdullah, his brother had taken only 1 shot of him.

Though Abdullah shot 8 percent of the archive, he featured only 24 people in his photographs.¹⁷² Abdullah was less interested in taking photographs of project participants than Swelem. It was difficult for me to elicit a reason from Abdullah about why he did not include a high quantity of people in his photographs. From observing his interaction with myself and his family members however, I have deduced that Abdullah's subject choices were related, at least in part, to his shy personality. While Abdullah found it acceptable to let Swelem and other project participants photograph him, he was less likely to approach others in order to take their photographs, and less likely to interact boisterously in group situations. Another likely influence on Abdullah's subject matter choice was his interest in hiking and animal tracking.

Greg was the individual featured in the most photographs. This is largely due to the fact I took 134 photographs of him. Our relationship as husband and wife influenced the choices I made when selecting my photographic subjects. Nassr was the next most heavily photographed participant. He is featured in photographs 147 times, by a wide variety of project participants. Nassr's age may have influenced this statistic. At 15 years old, Nassr spends a lot of time with his younger siblings and mother, but is physically and emotionally mature enough to participate in male dominated activities that younger children are not able to partake in (for example, hunting, playing the *rebabah*), acting as host in the receiving area of the *bayt*). Nassr is at an age where he can easily navigate and be accepted in both male and female areas of the tent.¹⁷³ As such, I believe Nassr has the

¹⁷² Because a varying number of people are featured in each photograph, and the way in which I counted individuals in photographs, I cannot assign a percentage to this number. For example, Abdullah may have taken 24 photographs, each with one person featured, or he may have taken only 6 photographs, each featuring 4 project participants.

¹⁷³ In no way do I mean to infer that the male realm of Bedouin social practice and activity is "adult" where the female is that of a "child". The division of labour in the Manaja's family means that women and

most contact with the most number of family members. This social role manifested in the diverse number of photographers authoring a picture of him. Salwa appears in only 10 photographs. Her health was unwell during our period of research, and as a consequence, did not want to participate very often.¹⁷⁴

Table 5.3 provides information regarding visual symbols of Bedouin identity featured in the photographic archive. The symbols I selected were reflective of outsider photography's tendency to focus on the themes of environmental desolation, lack of resources, the lone Bedouin, masculine warrior culture, the segregation of genders, spiritual and environmental awareness, and Bedouin costuming thought by outsiders to be historic. The idea of a single type of true Bedouin is manifested through the presence of certain clothing, objects and activities including: camels, livestock, *kaffiyehs*, *thawbs*, *mensef*, coffee, daggers, and embroidered dresses. Symbols present in the photography created by the Manaja'a family that contrasted these themes, and emphasised the family's focus on familial relationships, interconnectivity of genders, daily work activities, interests in archaeology and heritage, animal and plant resources, the fluidity of urban and rural life, industrial mechanised "technology", and education included photographs of family members, harvest/food imagery, plant life, photos of ibex, wells, and cameras. The most prominent of this outsider imagery were the clothing items worn by men (*thawb*, *kaffiyehs*). Members of the Manaja'a family wear both cloths thought to be stereotypically Western and Bedouin. In general the young boys (under twelve) wear jeans and t-shirts. The young men in the family trade between wearing *thawbs* and jeans

younger men often provide child care. The distinction between male and female areas of the tent are fluid and change with daily events.

¹⁷⁴ Salwa let it be known that she was feeling unwell. When Salwa did not want to be featured in photographs, she would verbally tell her siblings her wishes and then would remove herself from areas where participants were using cameras.

depending on the social situation. If the family is receiving honoured guests, the young men generally wear more formal attire. Abu Sabah is the exception to the group and does not wear Western clothing. In numerous photographs in the archive, young men deliberately dressed up and posed in *thawbs* and *kaffiyehs*. This deliberate choice of clothing will be discussed in section 5.3 of this chapter.

Camels were the next most photographed symbol of Bedouin culture with 246 pictures being taken by a wide variety of collaborators. The Manaja'a family owns several camels. These camels are used for wool, milk, and transporting tourists across the desert. One camel (named "Lowjess" by the family) was gifted to Swelem by Abu Sabah. Swelem explained to me that Lowjess is his camel, and he takes care of him; Lowjess will be used as bride wealth when he gets married. The role of camels in the Manaja'a family is important; camels provide income, food, shelter (from wool), and social status. *Mensef* was the least photographed symbol of Bedouin culture in our archive. Only two photographs were taken (one by Swelem, one by me). Greg and I were served *mensef* twice at the Manaja home during 2007. The first time we were served *mensef* it was made of goat, rice, bread and sauce. The second time we were served the dish, it had was with chicken. Abu Sabah explained that the family often serves *mensef* made with chicken to the tourists who stay at his home. It is quick to prepare (much less time consuming than slaughtering and cooking a whole goat), and much less expensive. The minimal documentation *mensef* received in our archive might suggest that the Manaja'a family views the serving of *mensef* as a common activity, one not worth much notice. This idea contrasts greatly with my experiences in 2004, when Abu Sabah and his family prepared *mensef* for myself and other members of the Humayma excavation. At this time, I was

documenting local activities for display in the Visitor Centre and museum exhibits. The slaughtering and preparation of the goat for *mensef* at this time was treated as a highly auspicious occasion.¹⁷⁵

While looking through the photographic archive, I was interested in the large number of times plant life and vegetation were featured in photographs. As a general rule, outsider photographs situate Bedouin in desolate desert environments. Our archive however, featured 134 photographs of lush green plant life, ranging from 15 foot tall fig and carob trees, to low-growing shrubs that are used to make tea. Another symbol I was surprised to see was the presence of ibex. 4 photographs were taken featuring ibex skulls, 2 photographs of live ibex in the mountains, and 2 photographs of ibex feces. Each photograph featuring ibex were taken during times I was away from the project. The ibex skull photographs had been taken after I left one afternoon, and the live ibex and droppings had been photographed by Abdullah, near the top of local mountains.

Table 5.3 also identifies the category “familial themes”. For the purpose of this study, I have defined familial themes as photographs whose compositions are inclusive of the photographer’s relatives. This also includes fictive kin, such as myself, in relation to the Manaja’a family (and vice versa).¹⁷⁶ The category of familial themes, while not represented through any one particular visual symbol, is paramount to the Manaja’a family’s identity. Of the 1291 photographs produced by members of the Manaja’a family,

¹⁷⁵ At the time of the goat roast in 2004 the Manaja’a family had not started their tour business.

¹⁷⁶ The final counts for photographs featuring familial themes would be approximately the same if they did not include fictive kin. This is because in nearly every photograph I was featured interacting or standing with a member of the Manaja’a family. Greg is not categorized as fictive kin in this study, however is considered my kin. Accordingly, photographs that I took of Greg are included in the familial themes category.

522, or 40.4% of photographs taken, embodied familial themes.¹⁷⁷ This number far exceeds the percentage of any other category represented on Table 5.3. The categories of camels, *kaffiyehs*, and plant life—the next most represented symbols of Bedouin identity—were portrayed in just 13.7%, 14.7% and 9.4% of the photographs produced respectively.¹⁷⁸ The number of times that familial themes are represented in the archive produced signals the importance of family to the Manaja’as. This category also provides a look at Bedouin life not commonly seen in outsider photography. Outsider photography under represents the importance of individual families in Bedouin communities. Western ethno-photographers tend to stress the fraternity of Bedouin tribes, emphasising symbols of masculinity and warfare, and the Hashemites stress the role of Bedouin leaders (the head of a house, the *sheikh* of a tribe). Western ethnographers generally segregate men and women in their photography, rarely representing events where men and women work in partnership.¹⁷⁹ This is a-typical of Bedouin families in Jordan which are made up of, survive, and flourish from the collaboration of both men and women. The Hashemites represent Bedouin as a regal people, with the king being the leader of the nation. When the king as Bedouin is presented in a context that relates him to others, it is usually as to other political leaders (generally male) rather than household members.¹⁸⁰ Both of these

¹⁷⁷ The numbers are similar when including the photographs taken by Greg and me. Of the 2,048 images taken during the project, 831 photographs, or 40.6% were of a familial theme. This is only a 0.2% increase from the Manaja’a family total.

¹⁷⁸ These totals change slightly when incorporating photographs taken by Greg and myself. The percentages of visual symbols then change to 12.5% for *kaffiyehs*, 12.0% for camels, and 6.5% for plant life.

¹⁷⁹ This may be due to issues of access experienced by the photographers many of whom may not be permitted to meet with Bedouin women. Vivian Ronay’s work is much more balanced in this respect, see Figure 2.5.

¹⁸⁰ This does not mean that family portraits and other photographs of the Hashemite family do not circulate in the popular media. Photographs featuring the king with his wife and children are present in the media, however, appear to be less in number than images of the king working within a political capacity. While King Hussein’s wife Queen Noor (born in Washington, DC, and raised in America) has represented herself in Bedouin dress, as a queen of all tribes (see footnote 28), King Abdullah II’s wife Rania (born in Kuwait

outsider representations are contrary to the experiences of the Manaja'a family in which each member of the family exists in complex relationship with the others.

The Manaja'a family's focus on familial themed photographs provides an intimate look at the interpersonal family relationships more so than any other category I have identified as being related to Bedouin identity. These relationships are evident in the eye contact and body language existing between sitter and photographer, or in the interaction between multiple sitters and photographer. The family members witnessing the photographic act also affect the ways in which sitters choose their positioning, and photographers select their compositions. Figure 5.6 by Muna al Manaja'a is such an example. Nassr poses for Muna while wearing a *kaffiyeh* and sun glasses. Jazi, passing through carrying a bucket for a chore he is in the midst of performing, wants to be included in the photograph, and has stepped into the frame to stand next to Nassr. As Nassr smiles for the camera, he pushes his younger brother back with his left arm. Nassr had wanted to be the sole person featured in the photograph. Nassr's attempt to protect the integrity of the photograph's composition by holding Jazi away from him demonstrates one way the production of photographs in this research were contingent on

to Palestinian parents) does not appear in this manner. This may be because of Rania's Palestinian origins, and a strategic way to emphasize difference between Abdullah's Bedouin identity and hers as a Jordanian of Palestinian origin. Queen Rania's parents are from Tulkarm, a city in the north-west region of the West Bank.



Figure 5.6
Featuring Nassr and Jazi al Manaja'a (left to right)
Photograph by Muna al Manaja'a, 2007.

social interaction and negotiations. Jazi contests Nassr's assertion that he should be the lone subject of the photograph by physically making himself present in the frame.¹⁸¹ Figures 5.7 and 5.8 also demonstrate how these insider photographs were dynamically produced. Shot in succession, these photographs feature Nassr, Abdullah and Jazi interacting with Wafa, Swelem, and myself, as Wafa directed them how to pose for their

¹⁸¹ Jazi continued to contest Nassr's composition of the photograph after the shutter was released and the image capture. Jazi verbally complained to both Muna and Nassr about the situation.

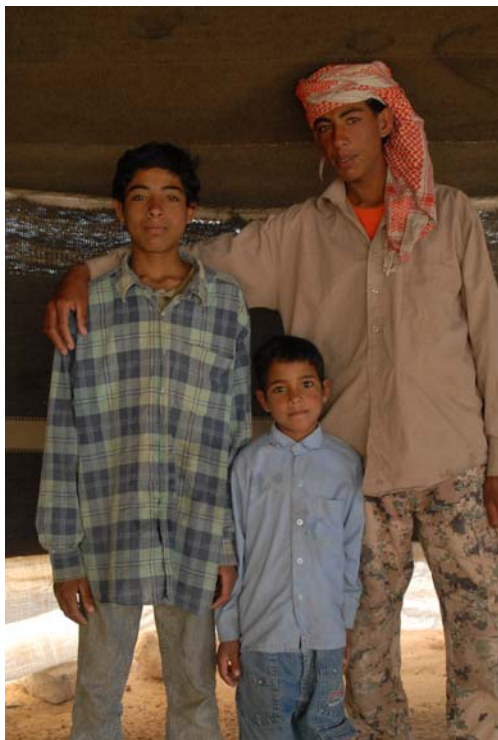


Figure 5.7 (left) Featuring Nassr, Jazi, and Abdullah al Manaja'a (left to right)
Photograph by Wafa al Manaja'a, 2007.

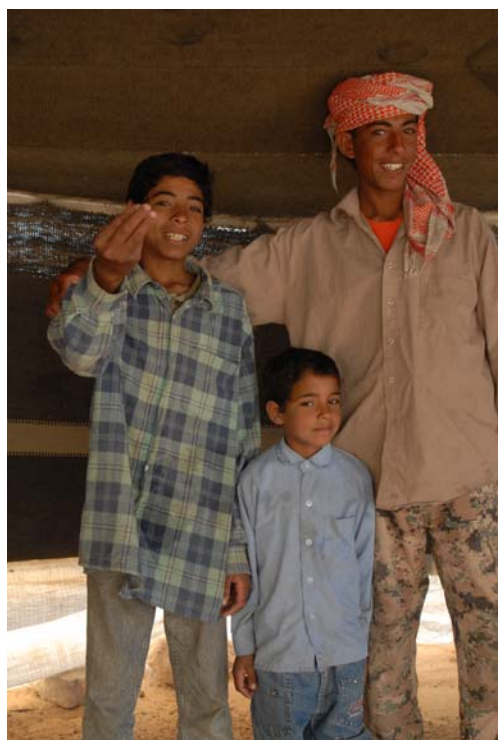


Figure 5.8 (right) Featuring Nassr, Jazi, and Abdullah al Manaja'a (left to right)
Photograph by Wafa al Manaja'a, 2007.

portraits. Wafa requested Abdullah place his arm around Nassr, and instructed her sons to look directly into the camera with closed mouths (Figure 5.7). Swelem, who was standing next to the photographer, cat-called Nassr, which resulted in Nassr's hand gesture towards Swelem (as well as Abdullah's smile)(Figure 5.8). Laughing, Wafa scolded her sons for their behaviour, and decided to move on to photograph her other children. Throughout this research the photographs created by various authors were produced in situations where the sitters, photographers, and those witnessing the photographic event, negotiated the compositions and subjects of the photographs through dynamic social interaction.

Table 5.3
Overview of symbols in photographs by author.

		NUMBER OF SYMBOLS FEATURED IN PARTICIPANT PHOTOGRAPHS												
		Wafa	Sabah	Salwa	Swelem	Abdullah	Muna	Nassr	Sahar	Manaj'a family sub total	Robbyn	Greg	Robbyn & Greg sub total	GRAND TOTAL
SUBJECT MATTER REPRESENTED IN PHOTOGRAPHS	familial themes	83	1	27	162	17	101	102	29	522	294	15	309	831
	camels	0	0	24	62	48	27	24	5	190	56	0	56	246
	livestock	0	0	9	9	3	1	5	2	29	7	11	18	47
	kaffiyeh	14	0	27	60	3	49	19	5	177	79	0	79	256
	thawb	0	0	5	55	3	0	18	0	81	60	0	60	141
	mensef	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	1	2
	coffee	0	0	0	12	0	0	2	0	14	11	2	13	27
	embroidered dress	0	0	0	6	0	11	7	0	24	0	0	0	24
	wells	0	0	5	4	4	0	13	4	30	5	0	5	35
	cars ¹⁸²	0	1	1	19	2	0	34	16	73	7	5	12	85
	plant life	0	0	45	21	15	40	0	0	121	3	10	13	134
	cameras	0	0	3	39	1	0	8	1	52	97	0	97	149
	rebabah	0	0	0	4	2	0	3	0	9	18	0	18	27
	ibex ¹⁸³	0	0	0	0	4	1	2	1	8	0	0	0	8
	dagger	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	3
harvest/food imagery ¹⁸⁴	0	0	2	17	0	0	9	0	28	1	0	1	29	

¹⁸² Includes Abu Sabah's 1978 Toyota truck; Sabah's taxi; Robbyn's rental car; water truck

¹⁸³ Includes skull, live animal, and animal droppings.

¹⁸⁴ Excludes coffee/tea, *meseef*

Table 5.4 is an overview of the locations project participants photographed in. Most photographs in the project were taken at or in the immediate vicinity of the family home. More than double the amount of photographs were taken in the women's section of the tent. Only four project participants took photographs in the reception area of the home. Swelem took 52 photographs, Nassr took 29, Muna shot 3, and I took 49. In contrast, every project participant who used a camera during this research took at least one photograph in the women's section of the *bayt*.¹⁸⁵ While the reception area of the tent is traditionally thought of as male, the statistics in this archive indicate that more activity was being conducted in the portion of the home more oriented to internal family socialisation. As Bedouin in outsider photography are often depicted in (or as part of) landscapes, I was curious to see how many photographs in our archive would be composed of landscapes alone (i.e., no objects or people in the frame) as compared with photographs that featured elements of the land, but also other ideas. Interest in taking landscapes by themselves was relatively low. Swelem and Abdullah both showed interest in photographing landscapes by taking 89 and 66 photographs each. These numbers were high in comparison with other photographers who, by in large, took less than a dozen each. Perhaps the discrepancy in these numbers reflects an age or gender division. Swelem and Abdullah are both adult males. They tended to travel further than other project participants to take their photographs.

¹⁸⁵ With the exception of Sabah, who only took one photograph in the archive, and Greg who was not invited into the private portion of the *bayt* as the Manaja'as were meeting him for the first time.

Table 5.4
Overview of photograph locations by author.

		NUMERICAL BREAKDOWN OF LOCATIONS BY PHOTOGRAPHER											
		Wafa	Salwa	Swelem	Abdullah	Muna	Nassr	Sahar	Manaj'a family sub total	Robbyn	Greg	Robbyn & Greg sub total	GRAND TOTAL
LOCATIONS REPRESENTED IN PHOTOGRAPHS	women's area of bayt	87	54	24	1	21	56	21	264	21	0	21	285
	men's area of bayt	0	0	52	0	3	29	0	84	49	5	54	138
	bayt (any part of exterior structure)	0	14	33	13	5	27	21	113	36	0	36	149
	other peoples tents	0	1	1	4	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	6
	landscapes with people or objects (i.e., not close-ups)	0	72	184	93	91	43	16	499	299	16	315	814
	landscapes with no people or objects	0	4	89	66	15	3	1	178	45	0	45	223
	Humayma Site	0	0	53	0	0	0	0	53	149	9	158	211
	archaeological structures/objects	0	1	120	0	0	0	0	121	218	3	221	342
	Petra	0	0	112	0	0	0	0	112	252	0	252	364
	school	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	2

The following section of this chapter, section 5.3, offers commentary on three photographs taken during this research. These photographs were selected by me for detailed analysis because of the manner in which their creation and subsequent discussion with the Manaja'a family, relates to the outsider representations of Bedouin presented in chapters one and two. These three photographs dispute outsider assumptions about Bedouin identity by portraying themes not commonly seen in outsider images of Bedouin. In addition, the visual symbols present in the photographs—those which relate most to Bedouin identity—are different from, or used in different ways, than those produced by outsiders. These three insider photographs, created by members of the Manaja'a family, resist and contest the conventions of Bedouin identity created by outsiders through the authoring of images relevant to their own experiences, values and beliefs.

5.3 Commentary on three photographs



Figure 5.9
Featuring Swelem and Salam al Manaja'a (left to right)
Photograph by Sahar al Manaja'a, 2007.

Figure 5.9 presents Swelem and his younger brother Salam sitting together in the private quarters of their family home. Swelem has dressed himself in a *thawb* and *kaffiyeh*. He is holding an ibex skull while he sits in an upright posture. When discussing this photograph, I asked Swelem where he got the ibex skull. Swelem provided me of an account of a hunting trip he had taken with his father, older brother Sabah, younger brother Abdullah, two of his uncles and several of his cousins. Swelem talked about driving into the local mountains, then travelling by foot for a few hours. Swelem explained that his uncle had a gun that they used to kill an ibex they were able to track. He said that the gun made it much easier to kill the animals now; however, tracking the

animals takes special skill. When I asked why Swelem dressed in his good clothing to be photographed with the skull, he told me that the skull was a valuable item. Swelem and his family's ability to track and kill was a talent to be respected. This photograph contrasts outsider representations of Bedouin in several ways. First, Swelem, though posing in what is viewed as "traditional" Bedouin clothing, is sitting adjacent to his younger brother who is wearing Westernised clothing. This juxtaposition of traditional and modern is rarely made in outsider photographs. Swelem has chosen to present himself in this clothing to express his relationship with Bedouin identity. By wearing his dress cloths and presenting the skull, Swelem signifies that the skull is an important object. Second, Swelem is holding an item not associated with outsider symbols of Bedouin. Instead of offering hospitality to the viewer of the photograph, Swelem holds the ibex skull like a trophy. The trophy provides an index Swelem's skill as a hunter, and his ability to navigate mountainous terrain. Swelem is framed by the photographer (Sahar), deliberately juxtaposing himself with an object of symbolic significance. This object has been used by Swelem to provide insight into his identity (Loescher in Grimshaw and Ravetz 2005:59) Significantly, Nassr, Sahar and Muna also had their pictures taken holding the skull in a similarly composed photograph. Third, Swelem has staged this photograph by himself, or with the help of his family members. He is representing himself in a manner that he chooses, rather than being posed or caught unaware by an outsider photographer. Two additional pictures of an ibex are present in this archive. Abdullah took the photographs while the ibex was at long-range on a local mountain top, perhaps indicating he could not get any closer to the animal. Shot in succession, on his walk up the mountain, were two close-up photographs of ibex feces.

Abdullah documented these “clues” of the ibex’s whereabouts before he sighted the animal. These photographs demonstrate Abdullah’s interest in the animal, and act in a similar manner (demonstrating Abdullah’s skill as a tracker) to the ibex skull Swelem holds in Figure 5.9.



Figure 5.10
Featuring Swelem, Abdullah and Abu Sabah al Manaja’a (left to right)
Photograph by Abdullah al Manaja’a, 2007.

Figure 5.10 depicts Abu Sabah rolling *heeshee* (local plant used for smoking, similar to tobacco). Swelem is seated in the background attempting to make a flame from two pieces of flint he is holding in front of his body. Moments before this photograph was taken, Abu Sabah asked Swelem to make a fire for tea. He then pulled a piece of fabric from his pocket, presented it to Swelem, and laughed good naturedly. Contained with the cloth were two pieces of flint that Abu Sabah occasionally uses to make a fire. When I

asked Swelem if he could make a fire with flint, Abu Sabah laughed and said “No! He uses this!” as he pulled a lighter from his other pocket. Abu Sabah then said, “He is not *real* Bedouin. Only *real* Bedouin can make a fire from flint.” Swelem, upset from his father’s teasing, moved off to attempt to make a fire with the flint. This instance of defining what a *real* Bedouin is—even in jest—was suggestive of outsider attitudes about Bedouin. Clearly Abu Sabah doesn’t believe his children are not Bedouin, but he is making fun of their reliance on certain technologies. The Manaja’a are aware (and expressed humour towards the idea) that outsiders put conditions on who can and can not be Bedouin.

Bedouin use of technology is a hot topic with outsider photographers. Outsiders are constantly lamenting the unrelenting loss of Bedouin culture because of modernisation. This idea brought me to ask Abu Sabah about a story Swelem had briefly alluded to. During a previous discussion Abu Sabah explained: when Abu Sabah’s eldest children were quite young (maybe six and four years old) he had walked with them into a remote area to pick some figs. While he was walking down the mountain, a deadly poisonous snake bit him on the ankle. With no car, and no means of communication (no cell phones to call for help), he was frightened that he would die before he reached his home. To prevent this, Abu Sabah took his dagger and sliced three lines into the flesh of his ankle to stop the poison from spreading (as Abu Sabah explained this, he motioned his fingers across his ankle like a knife). He then took his *kaffiyeh*, ripped it in two, and tied it around his ankle to stop the flow of blood. Wounded, with two small children in tow, Abu Sabah miraculously found his way back home. Wafa ran to a neighbour who had a truck, and Abu Sabah was immediately taken to a local hospital. The poison was so

strong that Abu Sabah had to be transferred to a hospital in Aqaba, and then again to Amman, so he could receive the treatment he needed. Swelem told me they were lucky his father survived. The parallel between the technologies of a lighter and a cell phone are close. Because the technology exists, Abu Sabah now carries a cell phone with him wherever he goes. He emphasised the importance of the technology to me by stating that he could now call for help wherever he goes. The Manaja'as use technology daily, and yet, are not in danger of losing their Bedouin identity. Rather, the family, like many Bedouin (and others), see technology as a part of their daily lives. While Figure 5.10 appears to be a photograph of a man rolling a cigarette (with a couple people in the background), the image is indexical to other meanings and narratives regarding its subject's lives.



Figure 5.11
Featuring Swelem al Manaja'a (shadow)
Photograph by Swelem al Manaja'a, 2007.

As stated in section 5.2 of this chapter, Swelem immediately defined his project goals through his interest in archaeology and his search for employment. Humayma is an economically depressed area without many local career options. Swelem has found sporadic contract-based employment through the Jordanian Department of Antiquities (DOA), however is working hard in hopes he may be able to secure a more permanent position. In Figure 5.11, Swelem documents an ancient Nabataean artefact he found while rebuilding a Roman wall for the DOA. When I arrived in Humayma, Swelem excitedly told me that he had something to show me at the excavation site. When we entered the site, he led me to a stone lying on the ground near by to a Roman wall. Flipping the stone over, Swelem said to me that he had discovered the stone during his work, and immediately noticed it held an inscription. He told me he hid the stone, face-side down (disguising it as his seat during tea-time) until he could return to the stone by himself to have a better look. Swelem told me that the script was Nabataean, and that it looked familiar to other inscriptions he had found carved into stone in the local mountains.¹⁸⁶ Swelem told me he had hid the stone and waited to show it to someone who worked for Dr. Oleson. Swelem knew (through email correspondence) that I would be coming to work with him during the summer, and so I was the first to see it. I told Swelem that he had made an amazing discovery, and we agreed that we should photograph the inscription to send to Dr. Oleson.¹⁸⁷ Swelem suggested the stone be placed in the Aqaba Museum in

¹⁸⁶ The following day Swelem took a project camera into the mountains to document some of these inscriptions. He requested I send the images to Dr. Oleson via email. Swelem told me he was hoping that Dr. Oleson might hire him to document inscriptions in hard to reach areas, or perhaps recommend him to another excavation director for employment.

¹⁸⁷ Swelem's discovery is truly unique; it is the longest and most substantial Nabataean inscription found at Humayma to date. Information regarding the inscription has been submitted to the *Journal of Semitic Studies* in an article by George Bevan, and M. Barbara Reeves entitled, *A New Nabataean Funerary Inscription from Humayma*. This article credits Swelem for his discovery.

the Humayma exhibit. We were both extremely excited about Swelem's find, and worked together to document the stone (Figure 5.11). Swelem identified the camera's potential for documenting his knowledge of ancient structures and inscriptions located throughout the Humayma region (Figures 5.1 and 5.2).

Swelem's insistence that the stone be moved to the museum, and his deliberate action to hide the stone until a trusted member of the excavation could see it, demonstrated his knowledge of illegal trade in antiquities. He directly stated that he was concerned that the stone would be stolen or sold. This awareness of issues of theft in archaeological practice contradicts popular outsider notions stating that Bedouin do not "understand the complete disjuncture between professional research... and networks of plunder," nor the "rationale behind archaeological practice" (Kersel et al. 2008:308-310). Swelem's active role in finding and identifying inscriptions also contrasts traditional outsider images of Bedouin as passive guardians of heritage. While Bedouin in Petra are continually portrayed lounging as part of a heritage landscape,¹⁸⁸ Swelem is actively working to preserve historical artefacts. Swelem's motives for doing this are not altruistic—while he desires to contribute to the preservation of heritage in his community, he is also looking for a career.

¹⁸⁸ Or as plundering thieves (cf. Kersel et al. 2008:307).

Conclusion

Throughout this thesis I have argued that photographs by cultural insiders and outsiders represent Bedouin identity in different ways. Historically it has been cultural outsiders—political notables and Western travellers—who have had the means and opportunities to embody their versions of Bedouin life through photography. This project is an inversion of traditional Western scholarship in the Near East which privileges this outsider voice. By facilitating the creation of expressive photography using the methodological frameworks of autoethnography and biodocumentary, a family of self-identifying Jordanian Bedouin, and a researcher from Canada, have communicated their experiences together, ideas, and relationships, through photographic images. Without setting guidelines for, or restrictions on, the content and composition of the images produced—project participants defined and communicated the aspects of their lives *they* wanted to share. The Manaja's family envisioned, produced and kept photographs for their own records and uses. The resulting images offer an alternative view of Bedouin life. By their design, autoethnography and biodocumentary endeavour to give voice to individuals so that they can tell their own stories. By integrating group collaboration into these self-reflexive research methodologies, photographs become multivalent—they are no longer the products of a single vision—images are dynamically produced through the sharing and contestation of ideas resultant from every day social practice. Each photograph produced during this research was discussed and challenged throughout its life: at its initial composition, when the shutter was released, through its editing, and through its display. Insider photographs produced in collaboration communicate a committee, or family, of

voices, not just that of a single outsider. It is not just Lawrence, Thesiger, Griffiths Belt, Ronay, the Hashemite kings, or indeed me, whose vision is seen.

Unlike previous photographs of Jordanian Bedouin, this research recognises the needs of both the researched and researcher through collaboration and discussion. Indeed, these are fluid categories: all the project participants have both imparted and procured knowledge to and from every other collaborator. By making photographs self-representative, the Manaja's family and I have moved beyond outsider imagery which presents the ideas and needs of the photographer over that of the sitter. Though body language and facial expression can convey powerful messages, these expressions can be negated or hidden when control of the viewfinder is held entirely by outsider hands. The photographs produced during this study are unique because they are the property of the Manaja's, to be used only with permission, in ways pre-determined by the family. This is not a case where pictures go home with an outsider, never to be seen again. Wafa's documentation of each of her children was a wish simple to fulfill. However, in a relationship where an outsider controlled the production of photographs, it would have been an improbable objective.

This project, in many ways, was produced as a micro-study. The research is limited to the experiences of a single Bedouin family, at a single point in time. However, by investigating the concerns of this single Bedouin family, I was able to distinguish numerous ways in which outsider and insider photography of Bedouin produce conflicting ideas about the lives and concerns of Bedouin in Jordan. It is my hope that this study has reached beyond the superficial, beyond mere social categorisation, to represent people as multifaceted individuals with complex histories and present-day lives.

As with the case of Abu Sabah and the snake bite, the realities of modernisation are not all negative, they are complex. Modernisation does not necessarily signal a loss of what was, but can also mean a strengthening of, and building upon, the past. The Bedouin of Jordan are not disappearing. They are using technology to aid and adapt to their lives while keeping the practices and values they hold as important.

Identity is not a natural phenomenon, it is an ideology constructed and disseminated through institutional structures of the state, groups of people, and individuals. These ideologies are used by both cultural outsiders, and insiders, to produce knowledge about the self and the Other. They can propagate the survival of a regime, nourish beliefs of cultural superiority, or express the lived realities of a family or community. The division between who is an insider, and who is an outsider, is not always clear. Regardless of their urban Hijazi origins, the Hashemites are a founding force in Jordan's history. Through a complex series of events, the Hashemites have influenced the nation's citizenry, created an international reputation based on *hiwar* and hospitality, and secured their sovereignty as rulers for over sixty years. It is interesting to consider what Jordan might look like without the Hashemites—at what point do these outsiders become insiders—or are they already? Further research among Jordanian Bedouin, non-Bedouin, Jordanian Palestinians, and others, is needed to establish how diverse groups of Jordanians throughout history regard the Hashemites. Westerners and other outsiders also exist in complex relationships with Jordanian Bedouin. They too can be considered as insiders. Westerners have been adopted into Bedouin families, many spending years and lifetimes, living with, or having contact with, their adoptive relatives. While not all tribes-

people will accept that these outsiders are Bedouin, the relationships between adoptive families and their new kin are real.

Those who self-identify as Bedouin are keenly aware of the relationship between signifiers of Bedouinness and Jordanian national identity. This awareness comes from engaging with media information, official government representations of the monarch, museum exhibitions, and other oral, visual, and textual sources. The right of ownership over these materials, images and identities, is a right to the prestige and power that these characteristics embody (Layne 1989:33). Bedouin culture is perceived as “an entity, [and] a possession” of “progress and history, honor and power” (Layne 1989:33). It is for these reasons that collaborative research focusing on self-representation is an essential way to communicate the ideas of insider Bedouin who have, for socio-economic reasons, historically been represented by outsiders.

Photographic images of Bedouin created by outsiders are, however, enduring. Outsider photographs present an arsenal of reoccurring symbols which fill the needs of Westerners seeking inspiration from people who they see as guides and gurus. Images of Bedouin as environmentally and spiritually aware, as possessed of a brotherhood, ethos, and code of conduct, inspire optimism in Westerners when their own values are seen to falter. Imagery of the desert, so visually dissimilar to the Canadian landscape, whether urban or rural,¹⁸⁹ is emphasised over symbols, such as plant life, that are shared in common as important to both societies. The emblems selected by Westerners to represent Bedouin identity are different from what most Westerners are familiar with in their daily lives. These images therefore, are seen as visually striking and beautiful—they imprint

¹⁸⁹ And most Western landscapes...

the mind's eye. Images of Bedouin created by the Hashemites are also enduring. The Hashemite kings present Bedouin as natural possessors of honour, generosity, diplomacy, and strength. These attractive qualities are highly sought after by the majority of people on the planet. To be a member of such an esteemed group has many rewards, both political and personal.

The ways in which we produce and interpret photographic images are at a crossroads. We can not afford to look at photographs without understanding the contexts in which they are created. Exposing the power dynamics between those producing photographs—and by asking questions such as, who benefits from such photographs, how do they benefit and why?—is crucial to appreciate the multifarious realities of the many different families and communities claiming Bedouin identity in Jordan. The disjunctures evident between insider and outsider representations of Bedouin—between the photographs produced by the Manaja'as compared to those created by the Jordanian Monarchy and Western ethno-photographers—are valuable as they demonstrate an increasingly multifaceted version of Bedouin identity. This complex vision of identity, while limited by its focus on a single family, may help contribute to further collaborative investigations of Bedouin identity in Jordan. Because photography is such a strong global currency, we must be wary of how we are implicated in the production and consumption of these images. By creating opportunities for collaborative self-reflexive, arts-based research, scholars may be one step closer to understanding more about each other and ourselves.

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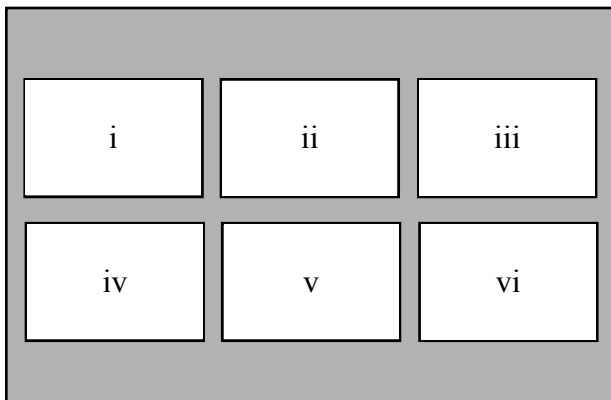
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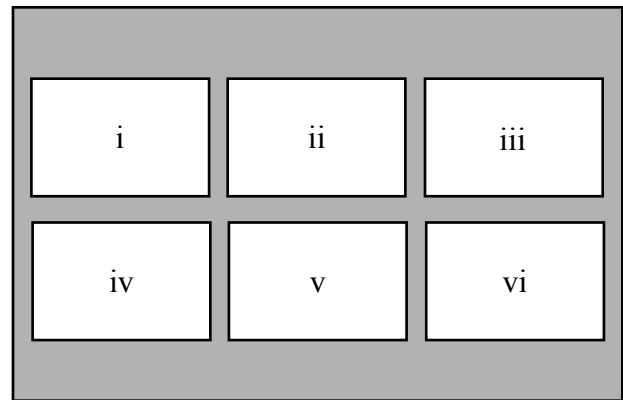
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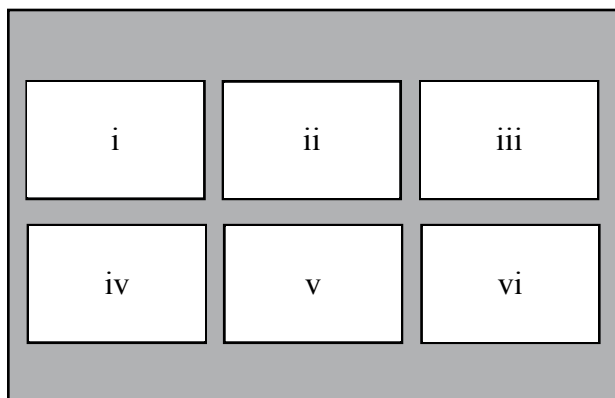
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- i photographer: Sabah al Manaja'a
featuring: Nassr and Salam al Manaja'a
(left to right)
date taken: June 13, 2007
- ii photographer: Sahar al Manaja'a
featuring: Sabah and Sahar [shadow]
al Manaja'a (top to bottom)
date taken: June 11–12, 2007
- iii photographer: Sahar al Manaja'a
featuring: Hamad al Manaja'a
date taken: June 5, 2007
- iv photographer: Nassr al Manaja'a
featuring: Wafa, Badra, Ghada
(left to right)
date taken: June 7, 2007
- v photographer: Nassr al Manaja'a
date taken: June 14, 2007
- vi photographer: Nassr al Manaja'a
featuring: Jazi, Achmed, Salam
al Manaja'a (left to right)
date taken: June 13, 2007



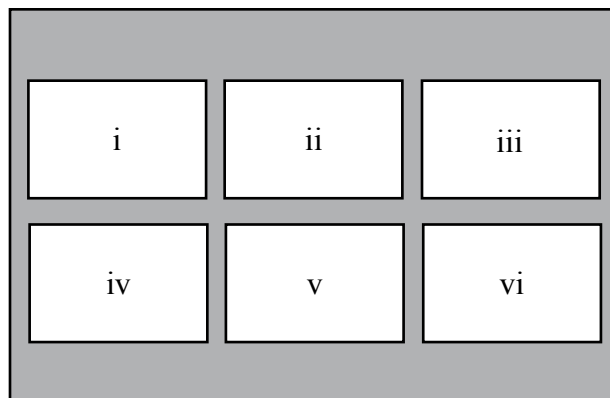
116

- i photographer: Nassr al Manaja'a
featuring: Salam al Manaja'a
date taken: June 14, 2007
- ii photographer: Nassr al Manaja'a
featuring: Salam al Manaja'a and
unidentifiable female [far background]
(left to right)
date taken: June 7, 2007
- iii photographer: Nassr al Manaja'a
featuring: Wafa al Manaja'a
date taken: June 7, 2007
- iv photographer: Salwa al Manaja'a
featuring: Salam al Manaja'a
date taken: June 7, 2007
- v photographer: Abdullah al Manaja'a
featuring: Achmed al Manaja'a
date taken: June 13, 2007
- vi photographer: Nassr al Manaja'a
date taken: June 13, 2007



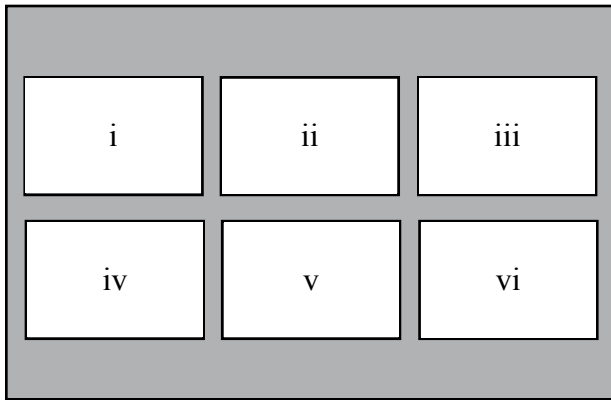
117

- i photographer: Abdullah al Manaja'a
featuring: Achmed al Manaja'a
date taken: June 10, 2007
- ii photographer: Abdullah al Manaja'a
date taken: June 13, 2007
- iii photographer: Sahar al Manaja'a
featuring: Swelem and Salam al Manaja'a
(left to right)
date taken: June 11–12, 2007
- iv photographer: Abdullah al Manaja'a
date taken: June 10, 2007
- v photographer: Salwa al Manaja'a
featuring: Abdullah al Manaja'a
date taken: June 11, 2007
- vi photographer: Abdullah al Manaja'a
featuring: Swelem and Abu Sabah (Eid
Swelem) al Manaja'a (left to right)
date taken: June 13, 2007



118

- i photographer: Abdullah al Manaja'a
date taken: June 10, 2007
- ii photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
featuring: Abu Sabah (Eid Swelem) [arm
and leg] Nassr al Manaja'a, Robbyn Gor-
don Lanning, Greg Lanning (left to right)
date taken: June 13, 2007
- iii photographer: Abdullah al Manaja'a
date taken: June 10, 2007
- iv photographer: Abdullah al Manaja'a
date taken: June 13, 2007
- v photographer: Abdullah al Manaja'a
featuring: Nassr and Abdullah [shadow]
al Manaja'a (top to bottom)
date taken: June 13, 2007
- vi photographer: Nassr al Manaja'a
featuring: Sahar, Jazi and Swelem
al Manaja'a (left to right)
date taken: June 7, 2007



119

- i photographer: Nassr al Manaja'a
featuring: Muna al Manaja'a
date taken: June 7, 2007

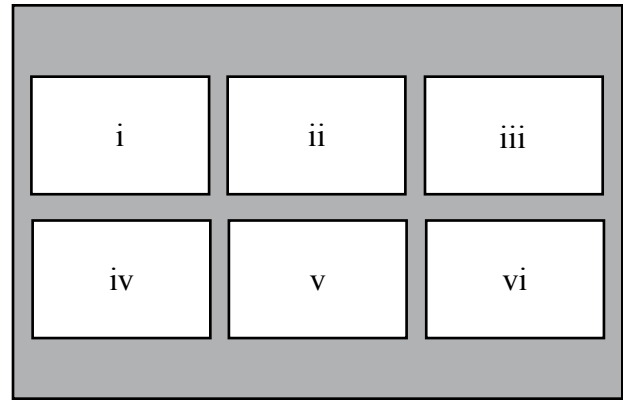
- ii photographer: Salwa al Manaja'a
featuring: Jazi al Manaja'a
date taken: June 11, 2007

- iii photographer: Salwa al Manaja'a
featuring: Badra al Manaja'a
date taken: June 11, 2007

- iv photographer: Salwa al Manaja'a
date taken: June 11, 2007

- v photographer: Salwa al Manaja'a
featuring: Abdullah al Manaja'a
date taken: June 10, 2007

- vi photographer: Salwa al Manaja'a
featuring: Salam and Ghada al Manaja'a
(front to back)
date taken: June 7, 2007



120

- i photographer: Muna al Manaja'a
featuring: Badra al Manaja'a
date taken: June 11, 2007

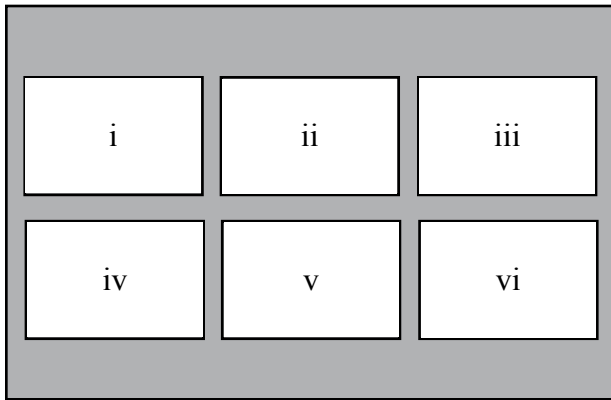
- ii photographer: Salwa al Manaja'a
featuring: unidentifiable female (possibly
Ghada) [far background]
date taken: June 7, 2007

- iii photographer: Salwa al Manaja'a
featuring: Hamad al Manaja'a
date taken: June 7, 2007

- iv photographer: Salwa al Manaja'a
featuring: Wafa al Manaja'a
date taken: June 11, 2007

- v photographer: Nassr al Manaja'a
featuring: Jazi [back and legs] and Badra
al Manaja'a (left to right)
date taken: June 14, 2007

- vi photographer: Muna al Manaja'a
featuring: Nassr al Manaja'a
date taken: June 10, 2007



121

- i photographer: Muna al Manaja'a
featuring: Badra al Manaja'a
date taken: June 11, 2007

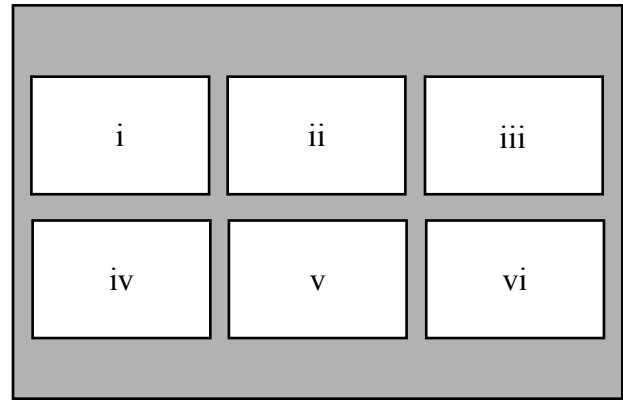
- ii photographer: Muna al Manaja'a
featuring: Abdullah and Jazi al Manaja'a
(left to right)
date taken: June 11, 2007

- iii photographer: Muna al Manaja'a
featuring: Abdullah al Manaja'a
date taken: June 11, 2007

- iv photographer: Robbyn Gordon Lanning
featuring: Swelem al Manaja'a
date taken: June 7, 2007

- v photographer: Muna al Manaja'a
featuring: Ghada al Manaja'a
date taken: June 11, 2007

- vi photographer: Muna al Manaja'a
featuring: Hamad and Nassr al Manaja'a
(left to right)
date taken: June 12, 2007



122

- i photographer: Muna al Manaja'a
featuring: Ghada al Manaja'a
date taken: June 11, 2007

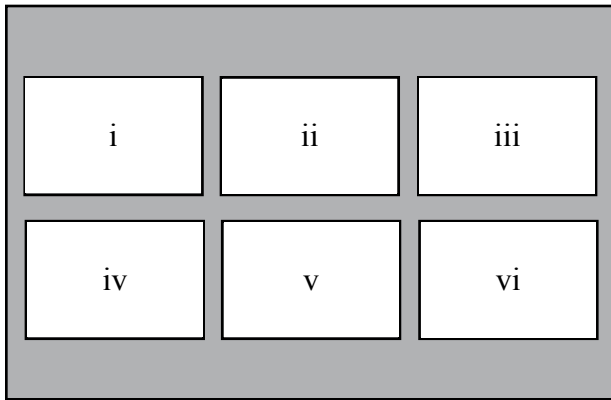
- ii photographer: Muna al Manaja'a
featuring: Ghada and Badra al Manaja'a
(left to right)
date taken: June 11, 2007

- iii photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
date taken: June 7, 2007

- iv photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
featuring: Abu Sabah (Eid Swelem)
al Manaja'a
date taken: June 10, 2007

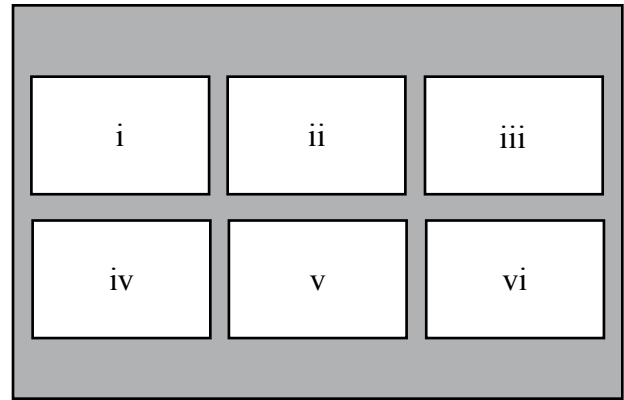
- v photographer: Muna al Manaja'a
featuring: Nassr al Manaja'a
date taken: June 11, 2007

- vi photographer: Nassr al Manaja'a
featuring: Ghada and Badra al Manaja'a
(left to right)
date taken: June 11, 2007



123

- i photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
featuring: Swelem al Manaja'a [shadow]
date taken: June 8, 2007
- ii photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
featuring: Abdullah al Manaja'a
date taken: June 10, 2007
- iii photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
featuring: Abdullah al Manaja'a
date taken: June 10, 2007
- iv photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
date taken: June 8, 2008
- v photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
date taken: June 7, 2007
- vi photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
featuring: Swelem al Manaja'a
date taken: June 10, 2007



124

- i photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
featuring: Wafa and Badra al Manaja'a
(left to right)
date taken: June 10, 2007
- ii photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
date taken: June 12, 2007
- iii photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
featuring: Abu Sabah (Eid Swelem) [arm]
and Achmed al Manaja'a (left to right)
date taken: June 7, 2007
- iv photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
featuring: Robbyn Gordon Lanning and
Greg Lanning [side of body] (left to right)
date taken: June 13, 2007
- v photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
date taken: June 12, 2007
- vi photographer: Swelem al Manaja'a
date taken: June 10, 2007

Appendix II

Appendix II features publicity materials generated for the *Inverting the Lens: Photographs by the Manaja' family, Humayma Jordan*, exhibit. Figure AII.1 is a reproduction of the exhibit poster. One hundred copies of the poster were distributed throughout the city of Victoria. The bilingual content of the poster reflects the collaborative nature of the research project, as well as Swelem's interests in the juxtaposition of Arabic and English text. As the research was conducted in an Arabic speaking community, I felt it was appropriate to ensure that the research results were inclusive as possible to the Arabic speaking community of Victoria.

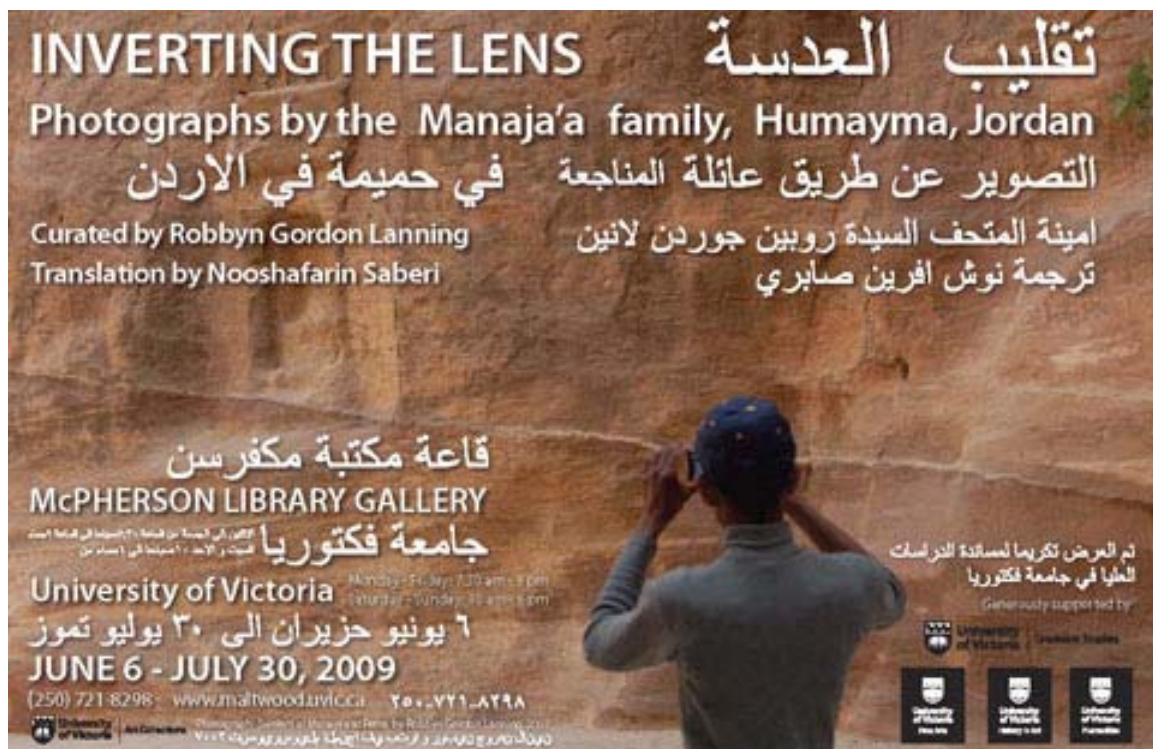


Figure AII.1 Inverting the Lens Exhibit Poster, featuring Swelem al Manaja'a Photograph by Robbyn Gordon Lanning, 2007 Design by Robbyn Gordon Lanning 2009.

Figure AII.2, presents the front of postcards created to advertise the exhibit. An English version was also created. For an example of the English version (which contains additional information regarding the exhibit's opening reception) see Figure AII.3. Each postcard had the same reverse side (Figure AII.4) which provided information about the show in both languages. Two hundred and fifty postcards were printed and mailed throughout Canada and internationally. Approximately three hundred additional electronic copies of these postcards were distributed via email.



Figure AII.2 Inverting the Lens Exhibit Invitation, front (Arabic)
Featuring Swelem al Manaja'a
Photograph by Robbyn Gordon Lanning, 2007
Design by Robbyn Gordon Lanning 2009.

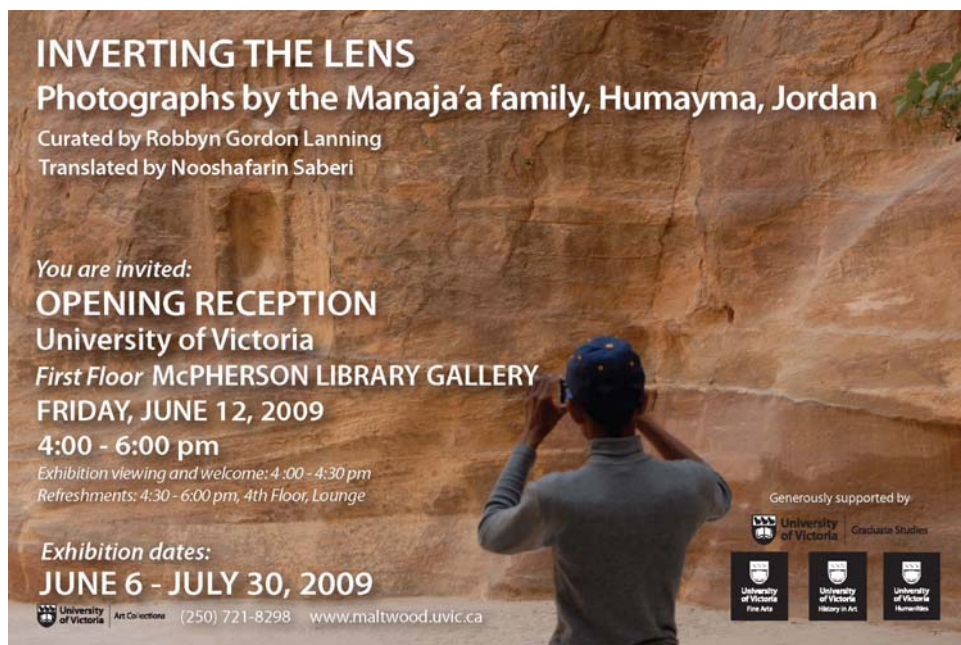


Figure AII.3 Inverting the Lens Exhibit Opening Reception Invitation, front (English)
Featuring Swelem al Manaja'a
Photograph by Robbyn Gordon Lanning, 2007
Design by Robbyn Gordon Lanning, 2009.



Figure AII.4 Inverting the Lens Exhibit Invitation, back (Arabic and English)
Design by Robbyn Gordon Lanning, 2009.

Figure AII.5 was presented in the University of Victoria newspaper, *The Ring*, by editor, Robie Liscomb, to promote the *Inverting the Lens* exhibit.



Figure AII.5 University of Victoria Ring, June 2009, p. 3
Featuring Abdullah al Manaja'a
Photograph by Muna al Manaja'a, 2007
Article by Robie Liscomb.

The following excerpt was presented to the public through UVic's Maltwood Art Museum and Gallery as the exhibit's official press release:

**Inverting the Lens:
Photography by the Manaja'a family, Humayma, Jordan**

Curated by Robbyn Gordon Lanning
Translated by Nooshafarin Saberi

**University of Victoria
McPherson Library Gallery
June 6 – July 30, 2009**
Monday – Friday: 7:30 am – 9 pm
Saturday – Sunday: 10 am – 6 pm

Inverting the Lens features photography created by the Manaja'as, a Bedouin family of the Howeitat tribe from Humayma, Jordan. In collaboration with UVic Interdisciplinary student, Robbyn Gordon Lanning, members of the Manaja'a family worked to produce an archive of over 2000 photographs. These familial self-portraits are key to investigating how the Manaja'as see photography as a way of documenting their lives and experiences for themselves, their families, and for cultural outsiders.

As residents of Humayma, a region of great historical cultural interchange, members of the Manaja'a family possess complex relationships with photography. The family has spent many years cultivating personal photographic albums comprised of images made by visiting cultural outsiders, and more recently, have participated as representatives of the Humayma community through photographic exhibits created for local museum spaces. These exhibits, co-curated by Robbyn Gordon Lanning, brought Ms. Gordon and the Manaja'a family together through their shared interest in photography. The relationships formed during this initial project acted as a catalyst inspiring their most recent collaborative research.

The photographs featured in this exhibition were created by members of the Manaja'a family to describe their experiences of community, place, family, relationship and identity as seen through their own lenses.

The exhibition text is displayed in both English and Arabic.
Everyone is welcome; admittance is free.

Media contact: Robbyn Gordon Lanning – robyn@uvic.ca