

## 5. Main legal provisions in the cultural field

### 5.1 General legislation

The legislation for culture is not fleshed out. Overall and starting with the National Charter, culture is mentioned within the framework of an Arab and Islamic identity, and the Arabic language is also mentioned as an important part of culture. The definition of culture is not outlined clearly, and tends to sway between Arab and Islamic on the one hand, and Jordanian with loyalty to the nation on the other. The Laws that govern culture maintain centralization with the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Youth.

#### 5.1.1 Constitution

In 1991 a National Charter was adopted which drafted guidelines for the conduct of political party activity in Jordan. Within the charter a chapter is dedicated to culture, and in 8 points, it defines that the Arabic language is the framework from which cultural identity is defined, and local folklore as the fabric of national culture. It also denotes that cultural heritage as well as the attainments of all artists and thinkers should be preserved through documentation and disseminated throughout the whole country through databases, libraries, theaters, exhibitions...etc.

Finally, the charter mentions the importance for artists to enrich themselves in all possible means, but "without detriment to Arab and Islamic values", all the while stating the need to respect copyrights through legislation, which it acknowledged the need for up-dates.<sup>1</sup>

As for the constitution, there is no mention of culture, heritage, cultural rights, creativity or copyrights. Only freedom of expression, education and language are mentioned in the following articles:

#### Article 6

- (i) Jordanians shall be equal before the law. There shall be no discrimination between them as regards to their rights and duties on grounds of race, language or religion.
- (ii) The Government shall ensure work and education within the limits of its possibilities, and it shall ensure a state of tranquility and equal opportunities to all Jordanians.

Article 19 Congregations shall have the right to establish and maintain their own schools for the education of their own members provided that they comply with the general provisions of the law and be subject to the control of Government in matters relating to their curricula and orientation.

Article 20 Elementary education shall be compulsory for Jordanians and free of charge<sup>1</sup> in Government schools.

The word creativity is mentioned several times in the context of education, leadership, critical thinking and distinction in the reform Agenda in June 2004. Royal patronage of creativity and leadership qualities are encouraged through the King Abdullah II prize for leadership and development.

#### 5.1.2 Division of jurisdiction

The Ministry of Culture maintains a hierarchal system of management of all activities and funds as well as administrations of the cultural centers around the country. These centers' activities are directed through an annual plan dictated by the Ministry itself. Also, all cultural organizations registered under the Ministry of culture are monitored through representatives from Ministry through an appointed person who attends board meetings, and a financial report is to be submitted to the Ministry at the end

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/charter-national.html>

of the year. Also, while these registered organizations are free to source their own funds, any funding needs to be declared to the cabinet of Prime Minister for approval.<sup>2</sup>

“The Ministry of culture is the official body directly responsible for culture and for the drawing up of general policy and culture, implementing it with the cooperation and coordination of other related organizations, in accordance with the country’s laws and regulations”<sup>3</sup>

This structure enables the Ministry of Culture to closely monitor all activities within culture for both its own representative centers in other cities, as well as other cultural organizations registered through the Ministry. It is also worth mentioning that the registration of a non-profit organization is becoming increasingly difficult in Jordan, and as is the case with Makan, the legal status today stands at a non-profit company, a status which need to be changed to a profit making company by the end of 2010.

### **5.1.3 Freedom of expression and association**

Within the constitution “Article 7 Personal freedom shall be guaranteed” there is a clear mentioning of freedom of expression and opinion, religion “Article 14 The State shall safeguard the free exercise of all forms of worship and religious rites in accordance with the customs observed in the Kingdom, unless such is inconsistent with public order or morality.”

None-the-less, these freedoms are restricted by the law, which in turn is restrictive when it comes to issues concerning the state, the monarchy and religion and there is always a clause that leaves violation of these laws undefined, which places the state always in a position of power in declaring where these boundaries are, thus leaving citizens in the dark and in a place of insecurity. The articles below without need for elaboration explains this.

#### **Article 15**

(i) The State shall guarantee freedom of opinion. Every Jordanian shall be free to express his opinion by speech, in writing, or by means of photographic representation and other forms of expression, provided that such does not violate the law. (ii) Freedom of the press and publications shall be ensured within the limits of the law.

(iii) Newspapers shall not be suspended from publication nor shall their permits be revoked except in accordance with the provisions of the law.

(iv) In the event of the declaration of martial law or a state of emergency, a limited censorship on newspapers, publications, books and broadcasts in matters affecting public safety and national defense may be imposed by law.

(v) Control of the resources of newspaper shall be regulated by law.

#### **Article 18**

All postal, telegraphic and telephonic communications shall be treated as secret and as such shall not be subject to censorship or suspension except in circumstances prescribed by law.<sup>4</sup>

While the articles in the constitution clearly state rights to freedom of expression and freedom in media, these are not practiced. Control and censorship of media is seen throughout the public establishment and maintenance of the most widely distributed newspapers. Also, and up until the wide dissemination of satellite television stations in the 90’s, Jordan TV was the only station (aside to the Syrian, Israeli and Cypriote) available to the public. This indicates that the media and its content were under state control until the wide accessibility of satellite.

### **5.1.4 Allocation of public funds**

Public funds for arts are made available through the ministry of Finance, and recently, a law that taxes advertising at 1% was passed for the support of culture. Also, a special artist fund comes directly from

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<sup>2</sup> Khamis, Lina “Aspects of Cultural Policy in Jordan”, Exeter PhD. 1998

<sup>3</sup> Khamis, Lina “Aspects of Cultural Policy in Jordan”, Exeter PhD. 1998

the Royal Courts. Organizations registered under the Ministry of Culture are also free to source their own funds as long as they are declared and approved by the Ministry of Culture through the Prime Minister's office.

Public tendering is not requested by law for the acquisition or for the application for funding for arts and cultural activities. Proposals are simply submitted to the respective offices for consideration.

As for funding in support of organizations registered through the MOC, some funding is allocated towards their running costs, but these figures are very small. For example, the Association of Plastic Artists receives an annual fund of JD5,000 from the MOC. This sum covers the expenses of the employment of one staff member and covers rental and bills of their offices.<sup>4</sup>

#### **5.1.5 Social security frameworks**

Generally, cultural practitioners' social security status depends on the field they are working in and the government body they are represented by. At the moment, only the Artist Syndicate, which represents artists working in the performing arts field, offers its members social security. Otherwise, all other practitioners working independently may only achieve security if they cover themselves.

##### Article 8

The Jordanian laborer who works for an employer or is being self-employed, whether residing inside the Kingdom or abroad, or the Jordanian insured person who becomes uncovered by the provisions of this law shall have the right to continue voluntarily to be covered under the insurance against old age, disability and death, provided that he/she shall pay in full the contributions due from the employer and the insured, in accordance with the regulations decided by the Board.

This clearly does not take into consideration the nature of the work of the artist as one who functions outside of the framework of an employer.

#### **5.1.6 Tax laws**

Exemption for the arts is very vague and is grouped within a selection of goods and services to include;

##### Article (22)

(a) Goods and services imported or locally purchased to the benefit of the following bodies shall be zero rated:

(2) Mosques, churches, orphanages, elderly people and handicapped centers, sport and cultural clubs, and individuals of special needs.<sup>5</sup>

One issue that presents itself here is the difficulty in the registration of NGO and independent cultural centers. Due to the restrictive laws, NGOs such as Makan are registered as non-profit companies, which is a threatening status as in the legal framework this would cause problems if court cases were ever to arise.

#### **5.1.7 Labour laws**

Perhaps it is the immaturity of the arts and culture as an industry is what explains the lack of clear laws to define taxes on the industry. On the flip side, knowing the high tax rates of Jordan, it is perhaps a good thing that this industry still functions outside of the law, otherwise, for artists depending on income from sales, consumer habits are sure to deter if taxes were introduced.

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<sup>4</sup> Dr. Khalid Khreis current director Jordan National Gallery Of Fine Arts. Interview August 2009

<sup>5</sup> (<http://www.ssc.gov.jo/english>)

Income tax The Income Tax Law of 1995

Article (3.1) Profits or gains from any work, craft, business, profession or vocation regardless of the period during which such work, business, profession, craft or vocation may have been carried out or exercised and from any separate transaction or deal which is considered as trade or business.

Article (7) :A) The following shall be fully exempted from Income Tax:

3- The income of Trade Unions accrued from business not for the purpose of profits.

4- The income of cooperative societies derived from a business not for profit purposes.

5- The income of any religious, charitable, educational, cultural, sport and health institutions of a public nature accrued from income not for profit purposes as well as income of charitable (trusts) Waqfs, and the incomes of the Orphanage investments.

B) Any person is permitted to deduct from his taxable income any amount which he paid in the Kingdom as a donation or contribution to a charitable or humanitarian, scientific, cultural or sport cause, if such cause has been recognized by the Council of Ministers provided that deductible amounts under the provisions of this law do not exceed one quarter of the taxable income before making this deduction and after making the deduction provided for in Para (A) of this article.

The laws present many loop-holes, on the one hand there is no clear definition of the cultural worker and the different working titles within the field. So under the broad title of culture and crafts, there is no clear identification of what may fall under the Income tax payments or exemptions.

### 5.1.8 Copyright provisions

In writing, the law protects copyrights. In application this is rarely implemented. Also within the laws listed below, clauses such as “ The use of a work of art shall not be considered as infringement of rights when such use occurs within a private family gathering or at an educational, cultural or social institution, provided that the source is mentioned.”<sup>1</sup> is very dangerous as it is again too open and too vague, leaving much for personal interpretation of a judge in case of a court ruling.

The protection of artistic work is detailed in the following laws;

- Protection of the collections of literary or artistic works, such as encyclopedias, anthologies, and data compilations, whether in machine-readable or other form.

- A performer is granted the right of prohibiting third parties from fixation of his unfixed live performance or reproduction of such a fixation by any means without his prior consent.

- The protection period of the rights of performers and producers of phonograms shall be for 50 years as of the date of fixation of the performance. The protection period of radio and television broadcasts has been fixed at 20 years.

- The financial rights of the author have been extended to a period of 50 years after his death or death of the last surviving co-author.

As for software, which is a very apparent phenomenon are protected under the following laws;

- Protection of computer programs, whether in source or object code.

- The copyright protection office staff shall be able, under the pertinent law, to exercise the powers of judicial police officers in the implementation of the provisions of the law, and shall have the power to inspect, seize, and destroy pirated copies, and to close down the business concern carrying out the infringement.

- The non-deposit of a work of art shall not prejudice the rights of the copyright holder of such a work.

- The maximum penalty for copyright infringement has been raised to imprisonment for a period not less than 3 months and a fine ranging from JD 1,000.00 to JD 3,000.00 (US\$ 1,400.00 to US\$ 4,200.00), or both penalties.

Unfortunately, the government has not been able to exercise control over copyrights, and infringement happens on many levels. For example the accessibility to pirated copies of movies, music and computer software is sold in shops on main streets in the country. The problem with applying the law in this example is that the penalty very low and the profit margins of these businesses is high enough to be able to afford paying the penalty at intervals. Also, and according to Wikipedia, the law does not actually define the term copyright, but only acknowledges that the “ law offers legal protection to any kind of original work in literature, art and science regardless of the value or purpose of the work.”

### **5.1.9 Data protection laws**

In one website it is stated that there is no data protection law. <sup>6</sup>

Although you can copy right your materials and creations at the National Library, and these are protected by law no 22 from the year 1992. The law acknowledges creations by artists, writers, programming, theater, speeches and seminars, music compositions / production, architecture, maps and illustrations. <sup>7</sup>

While the subject matter has gained much attention with efforts from the government to enforce the law, in reality the fines are too small to counter balance the profits gained for businesses such as DVD rental and sales which have been on the increase in the last 10 years.

It is also worth mentioning from a personal encounter teaching at University of Jordan from 2005-2009 that the professors, even those holding PhD certificates often do not understand the term piracy, and may be seen to unintentionally or otherwise practice piracy in their work. Also, students in universities still do not understand the legal implications around plagiarism.

### **5.1.10 Language laws**

According to the Language Law no 2634 / 1976-01-01 which falls under the control of the Ministry of Education; this law regulates the use of the Arabic language and keeps it up to date with the definitions in arts, sciences and literature. It is also attempts to maintain the language through the publication of dictionaries for the Arabic Language to be used as reference. These are to be achieved through research, writing and publication, translation of the ‘wonders of the world’<sup>8</sup> and distribution of these publications. Publishing new terminology in all possible mean of communication, and finally the production of a periodical under the ‘the center for the Jordanian Arabic Language’.

Also language is mentioned within the framework of the National Charter, constitution, as well as within the frameworks of the goals of the Ministry of Culture as well as the Ministry of Education. These always refer to the language in parallel to Islamic religion and a collective Arab identity.

### **5.2 Legislation on culture**

No specific legislation on culture. Culture is mentioned in the national agenda, the education, in the national charter and in the specific law of the Ministry of Culture.

### **5.3 Sector specific legislation**

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.privacyinternational.org/article.shtml?cmd%5B347%5D=x-347-559523>

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/laws/search\\_no.jsp?year=1993&no=10](http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/laws/search_no.jsp?year=1993&no=10)

<sup>8</sup> A term used within body text of the law to refer to the need for translating the important texts about the wonders of the world.

### **5.3.1 Visual and applied arts**

The visual artists are represented by the Artists Association, which is registered under the MOC. The Association's members are accepted through an application process and must have the necessary educational qualifications. The association is responsible for the dissemination of visual arts locally and internationally, and is the filter through which any official invitations are directed to the artists. It does not however present the artist with any protection or benefits. The status of the association has been in the decline over the last 10 years. According to an interview with the director of the National Gallery Dr. Khalid Khreis, who was also the director of the Artists Association the members of the association have been on the decline, many people choose not to renew their memberships as they feel that there is no benefit from the Association. Additionally, Dr. Khreis added that there is a need to an association to represent the artists' rights to social security, and retirement funds.

### **5.3.2 Performing arts and music**

The syndicate of artists falls under the Ministry of Culture and governs the activities of actors, dramatists (and subsequent professions involved in drama), producers (no specified if this includes film producers), musicians and singers, composers, as well as any other profession approved by the minister. To become a member of the syndicate, the professional needs to submit an application form for approval by the board. The board retains the right for refusal of the applicant. Professionals working in the field are considered illegal, and will be fined if they practice their profession without registration in the syndicate. This fine ranges between 300 - 500 Jordanian Dinar.

The syndicate role is define, spread and encourage the development of arts in Jordan, activate the local cultural scene and the artists through collaborations with official government bodies. Increase the level of artistic production, contribute to festivals and cultural programs in Jordan and internationally, grantee the freedom of the artist, and finally set up a retirement fund for the artist. The Syndicate has autonomy over its expenses and is operated by an elected board of directors.

The laws that govern the activities of the syndicate are very detailed about the operations of the staff and board of directors. The aims and objectives are as vague as most other institutions.

### **5.3.3 Cultural heritage**

Through the Ministry of Tourism and antiquities, heritage is acknowledged in the form of architectural and urban heritage, and an amended law was issued in 2005. The definition of urban is any monument that indicates to a historical event, and architectural refers to buildings, plazas and urban fabric that defines identity of the city. Under this law structures dating since 1750BC are protected. These locations are to be identifies and no partial or total destruction, or mutilation may be inflicted on the site. Any violations are fined with imprisonment -up to 4 months- and or fined, where fines start from JD400 up to 5000 depending on the violation.

Considering Jordan has a historical heritage dating back from the Neolithic age, the law is clearly focused on the recent history of Jordan and the identities formed in the 1700's. This naturally forms a major problem in the conservation of historical sites.

Also there is no mention of intangible history and culture, these were addressed by other non-governmental organizations such as UNECSO.

### **5.3.4 Literature and libraries**

Within the constitution, a bylaw describes the directorate for libraries' responsibilities. This directorate falls under the Ministry of Youth. Libraries are to include books, magazines, newspapers, photographs, maps, films, as well as microfilms, audio recordings, drawings, or any materials relevant to the directorate. The goals of the directorate of libraries is to create and manage national libraries, create departments responsible for documentation, information and archiving. Create a working and management system for the libraries and to find ways to revive culture, as well as coordinate with libraries in the region and internationally.

For the bylaw of the Municipality of Greater Amman library, which falls under the laws of directorates, dictates 11 objectives including the following. Encouraging citizens to better their general knowledge and spend their spare time in the library, and support talents in all fields and disseminate their achievements. And that the library is not only intended as an archive for material, as it is important to make this material accessible to the public. Also it is expected to carry out activities relevant to bettering knowledge for the people.<sup>9</sup>

What is worth noting is that the library is described as a place in which people can spend their spare time and not as an essential part to education. There is not mention of the relationship of the library to the school or the university. It is also worth pointing out that due to the poor recourses and funding for national libraries, the void was filled by the Abdul Hameed Shoman Public Library that summarizes its objectives in the following statement found on their website.

“...Established in 1986 in concordance with the objectives of Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, which espouse support for scientific research, institution of a modern library that would include various sources of information in different branches of knowledge, and making these sources available to researchers and reading public. The Library was officially opened on 8/1/1986... Considering the position it has attained, the Library was designated in early 2002 by the International Monetary Fund as depository for the Fund’s paper publications, and at the end of the same year, as depository for the Fund’s data bases.”<sup>10</sup>

This can also enable us to conclude that internationally Shoman Library has gained more international recognition and reliance.

Today, the Municipality of Greater Amman is in the process of building a new national Library within the premises of the City Hall grounds in downtown Amman.

For Literature it is included in information in chapter 5.1.10 and 8.4. There are no separate laws or bylaw for literature, but falls under the activities and responsibilities of the ministry of culture in terms of production and dissemination, and falls within the definition the Arabic Language as a form of heritage.

### **5.3.5 Architecture and environment**

The environment is controlled by the Ministry of Environment. These laws include bylaws for pollution's in air, water (including aquatic life), nature (including biodiversity), earth. Also there are bylaws for waste management, as well as dangerous and harmful substances. The ministry is responsible for putting the guidelines for the environment and maintaining them, issuing permits, carrying out research in environment related topics, emergency planning, and creating agreements internationally with similar organizations. The ministry may resource additional funding locally and internationally.<sup>11</sup>

While laws are present for the protection of the environment, and these have facilitated in the success of several conservation projects around the country, as well as one such area call Dana Nature reserve that won several international awards. Unfortunately, and due to 'development' projects as well as severe corruption on every level, bylaws are bypassed for the personal benefits on large scales, and even small individual efforts to maintain the environment are many times ignored.

Mainly the problem of Jordan is education and corruption within this domain.

For Architectural heritage, the laws for their protection fall under management and obligations of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. Buildings built after 1750 AD and that do not contradict the Law of

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<sup>9</sup> [http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/laws/search\\_no.jsp?year=1993&no=10](http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/laws/search_no.jsp?year=1993&no=10)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.shoman.org/en/library.aspx>

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/laws/search\\_no.jsp?year=1993&no=10](http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/laws/search_no.jsp?year=1993&no=10)

Archeology no 12 of 1988 <sup>12</sup>

The law defines architectural heritage as any location, building, plaza, or elements that account for historical or cultural that are telling of relevant occurrences. Cultural heritage is defined as any man or animal made imprint made within a 4,500-year range. These locations are documented and protected by the ministry.

The major problem facing conservation of archeology and architecture in Jordan falls within two main issues. On the one hand, Jordan has an archeological history that dates back to the 11<sup>th</sup> millennium BC and includes sites for Bronze Age settlements <sup>13</sup>. The lack of registration of the many sites and archeological artifacts throughout the country result in many of them being lost in construction, or theft. Additionally, due to the inconvenience and stalling that results from declaring any archeological findings to the Department of Antiquities, persons constructing a site will try to quickly and quietly get rid of the findings in one way or another without declaring the findings. The Department of Antiquities, which is responsible for their conservation, does not have the resources to manage these sites.

It may also be relevant to place education and culture into the equation. There is little interest or knowledge or education that acknowledges the importance and relevance of ancient history. Another threat to architectural heritage is due to the ownership of many older buildings by individuals who choose to destroy the structures for better investment opportunities; this is especially prevalent in major cities where the price of land has risen in the last decade.

Also, and up until this last year 2008, there was no museum of archeology apart from a very small building located downtown at the archeological site of the roman citadel. Now the building of the new museum is underway. Hopefully this will change attitude and funding, law enforcement towards heritages.

### **5.3.6 Film, video and photography**

The activities of the audio-visual industry operate through The Royal Film Commission, who's overall descriptions is outlined as;

“The Royal Film Commission – Jordan (RFC) was established in July 2003, with a mandate to contribute to the development of an internationally competitive Jordanian audio-visual industry through the advancement of human, technical and financial capacities. In addition, it provides comprehensive production support services to local, regional and international productions. The RFC is a financially and administratively autonomous government body, led by a Board of Commissioners chaired by HRH Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein.”<sup>14</sup>

The activities is governs are not only directly in film making / production, but also includes TV, radio and advertising production, photography, cartoons and animation, games and gaming. The RFC is responsible for the market Jordan as a location for filming and hence the facilitation of film productions including permits for filming and entry of equipment.

The RFC is simultaneously working on building local capacities in the industry in order to create working opportunities for professionals on local, regional and international productions in all aspects of audio and audio visual industries. While this part of their work was initially carried out through departments within the single office of the RFC; 2009 saw the inauguration of the Film House, which still operate under the RFC, but focuses on capacity building and the dissemination of a audio-visual culture throughout the country. The film club operates in Amman and other cities / towns throughout

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<sup>12</sup> [http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/laws/search\\_no.jsp?year=1993&no=10](http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/laws/search_no.jsp?year=1993&no=10)

<sup>13</sup> Maani, Jarir, Field Guide to Jordan, Maani.us, 2008.

<sup>14</sup> [www.rfc.com](http://www.rfc.com)

the country through film-screenings, and audio-visual labs which provide equipment for free for filming and editing.

There is no indication in the law of the need for professionals in the field to apply for memberships or register to work in the field.

The law under which it operates allows it more freedom than other official bodies in Jordan. For example it operates with a board of commissioners, the head of commissioners is appointed by Royalty (HRH Prince Ali Bin Al Hussien). They in turn appoint a director.

The RFC can hire both local and international employees - other bodies may only hire Jordanians. And their annual budget is secured from both government allocations as well as international funding. The RFC may also establish companies that operate within the scope of work of the RFC.

It is worth mentioning that the autonomy of the RFC from any other relevant ministries, along side its initiation through a select number of persons who have worked in the field, and the King's personal involvement in the set up of the commission has made its activities distinct from those of other official bodies. The RFC has played a role in increasing awareness for international location hunters for Jordan to become a location for filming, as well as build local capacities in areas throughout the kingdom. It has also been instrumental in the creation of a film school in the city of Aqaba in south of Jordan.

### **5.3.7 Cultural industries**

This is not acknowledged as an industry in the Jordanian Law.

### **5.3.8 Mass media**

TV and Radio.

A law of 16 clauses that focuses on the work structure also includes a list of the activities all determined within the National Agenda, and the communication policies. The organizations are otherwise responsible for setting up TV and Radio stations, purchasing all necessary equipment to do so, transmission of stations, making any relevant agreements (not specified what, or with whom these agreements may be). And finally, "any other business related to the responsibilities of the organization"<sup>15</sup>

From these clauses it can be concluded that the law for Tv and Radio is merely to define the workflow and otherwise the content will be controlled within the framework of government policy.

The main elements of the law are summarized as follows.

Press will exercise its work freely and present information on various subjects within the limits of the law, and it points towards objectivity, invasion of privacy and breaching human rights. Press freedom is further defined within the acquiring of information that are of interest to the nation, as well as a form of expression of opinion, and that official bodies are responsible to provide the necessary information to facilitate the journalists' job. All the while, journalists have the right to secrecy of their sources unless these sources are requested for presentation in the court of law. Licenses are granted to Jordanians only and will also be given to political parties and ministers' cabinet as well as any individual who fulfills the necessary requirements legally and financially. Content that cannot be published includes; news that involves the king and the royal family (negatively), Special forces, religions that are recognized by the state, national unity, classified government information, or any information that may disrupt international relations.<sup>16</sup>

There are seven daily newspapers (one in English) and 23 political periodicals. The government

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<sup>15</sup> [http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/laws/search\\_no.jsp?year=1993&no=10](http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/laws/search_no.jsp?year=1993&no=10)

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/laws/search\\_no.jsp?year=1993&no=10](http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/laws/search_no.jsp?year=1993&no=10)

controls shares in the most widely distributed papers, in Al-Rai it holds 53%, and 35% in Al-Dustur. Jordan Television is the state run station with two channels, one local and one satellite. Other channels include the disputed ATV (which is yet to launch after a ban on airing in 2007 - more details below) and Normina. Up until 2007, there were 15 licensed to FM stations, but only one has the right to transmit news and political programs.<sup>1</sup> Recently a surge of blogs and websites are initiated and cover a broad range of topics including social issues. Up to date, there seems to be little censorship of these blogs. Blogs are not recognized or defined in the law for Press and Media in Jordan, which implies that the government has not (yet) recognized this media as a form of communication with the masses.

While the constitution declares freedom of speech as mentioned in article 15; the reality of this freedom within the Media is a different one. According to the report published by both the UNESCO and IFES in 2007 the following outlines the state of media in Jordan.

“In Jordan, the press generally is under the control of the government and supports its interests. That law gives the cabinet the power to reject media licenses. In Jordan, it is illegal for non-Jordanians to even invest in the press. The government has no power to close any newspaper or seize its assets without court permission. The application of these laws has been politically motivated, arbitrary and an abuse of power”

A good example of the abuse of this power is the case of ATV which was stopped by the launching one day prior to the launching date, “ the decision of the so-called Audiovisual Commission to halt the launching of Jordan's first independent TV stations (Al Ghad TV) is the one the wins the title in a landslide victory, especially that the decision was signed by non-other than Faisal Shboul the acting head of the Audiovisual Commission and the head of the Jordan TV the main competitor to ATV.”<sup>17</sup> Clarity with regards to the reasons behind such drastic actions was not published.

After the abolishment of the Ministry of Information, the media was then monitored by the Higher Council for Media. Censorship of media is under the watch of security agencies, who are also responsible for the monitoring of advertising content. Due to the lack of a centralized body for the control of media, different authorities become involved and thus exercise power and censorship.

“...while journalists rarely suffer physical abuse, many fear official humiliation and receive threats from the security agencies. Referring journalists to the investigative courts is another widely used method to terrorize them...From 1993 to 2004, there were 300 cases against journalists recorded. The government of Jordan initiated half of these cases, although it was unsuccessful in 90 percent of them. Indeed, the civil courts have not sent one journalist to prison... These statistics are a strong indicator that the government of Jordan is abusing its powers and arbitrarily using the media laws for its own political purposes, including censorship. They also suggest that the courts are trying to uphold the rule of law.”<sup>18</sup>

On another not that points towards journalists freedom of movement “While Jordan has not restricted journalists' freedom of movement, this does not necessarily mean they are not harassed by those countries' security forces”<sup>19</sup>. Another incident that made it on several regional news channels in January 2009, is the attach of the Jordanian police of on the Al Jazeera's news reporters who was

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.jordanwatch.net/> Batir Wardam, Jordanwatch Friday, August 24, 2007.

<sup>18</sup> Comparative Report on the State of the Media in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco. Dr. Sassan Assaf, Professor Keith Henderson (English Editor), IFES, may 2007, UNESCO, Arab Center for the Development of Rule of Law and Integrity

<sup>19</sup> Comparative Report on the State of the Media in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco. Dr. Sassan Assaf, Professor Keith Henderson (English Editor), IFES, may 2007, UNESCO, Arab Center for the Development of Rule of Law and Integrity

covering the national protests against Israel's war on Gaza. The assault was recorded on camera and aired. A formal apology was extended to the reporter and the Station.

While on a much smaller scale is the behavior of police and security forces towards cameras, individuals (amateur photographers) taking photographs around the city have been reportedly stopped and under the pretense of 'it is against the law'. This sort of behavior is common in Jordan and questions the medias' rights, and is a good example of the general attitude of government towards journalists.

### 5.3.9 Legislation for self-employed artists

There is no reference to an acknowledgment of self-employed artist in Legislation.

### 5.3.10 Other areas of relevant legislation

none

## 6. Financing of culture

### 6.1 Short overview (funding trends and procedures)

Expenditure on culture is defined very badly; especially that information and breakdown is not easily available, the numbers are based on information from the Implementation Program budgets in the Ministry of Planning and International Relations annual expenditure report 2007 - 2009 that gives a breakdown of the budgets of the last 3 years on the main sections that include culture.

### 6.2 Public cultural expenditure per capita

### 6.3 Public cultural expenditure broken down by level of government

Table below shows the expenditure breakdown by government / ministry which are all involved in culture.

Item	2007	2008	2009 expected	Total each Ministry
Education	55,547	91,150	81,150	227,847
Higher Education	6,640	7,360	9,680	23,680
Culture	1,850	7,260	7,260	16,370
Youth	9,420	4,370	4,270	18,060
<b>Total by Year</b>	<b>73,457</b>	<b>110,140</b>	<b>102,360</b>	<b>285,957</b>

Source: Ministry of Planning and International Relations annual expenditure report 2007 - 2009

Clearly Education has the largest budget, and within education there are specific budgets allocated towards culture, which again is a term used to refer to issues in nationalism, loyalty to the state, and doesn't refer to creative cultural activities such as theater, music or visual arts. Even socio-civic activities are not mentioned or included in the expenditure. Below is a breakdown of the expenditure of the budgets of education, culture and youth. While budgets for culture enjoyed a substantial increase, expenditure on programs for youth have seen a decrease in the last three years.

### 6.4 Public cultural expenditure broken down into administrative, assets and program costs

The breakdown below is for the public expenditure of the Ministry of Culture specifically, and is broken down by year for the last three years. As 2009 is included in the breakdown, then these figures are an estimation of the budget and not the actual expenditure.

Projected expenditure (in JD1000) per year for different programs of the ministry of culture in the last three years:

<b>Ministry of Culture</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009 expected</b>	<b>total by program</b>
Council for Arts and Culture	0	50	50	100
Fund for support of the arts	0	0	0	0
Capacity building	0	15	15	30
Digitizing information of the Ministry	25	25	25	75
Cultural Development through the internet	-	10	10	20
Infrastructure and buildings	1,230	5,000	5,000	11,230
Dept of the Martyr Wasfi Attal	100	50	50	200
Art activities (exhibitions, art centers, festivals...)	285	2,050	2,050	4,385
Archive of Jordanian documents	150	0	0	150
Communication and Community culture	40	40	40	120
National program for development of communication	20	20	20	60
<b>Total by year</b>	<b>1,825</b>	<b>7,160</b>	<b>7,160</b>	<b>16,145</b>

Source: Ministry of Planning and International Relations annual expenditure report 2007 - 2009

Within the budget / expenditure of the Ministry of Education, a separate budget under clause no 5 is described as the "Development of National confidence for students in the Kingdom, to solidify their identity as a Jordanian, Arab, Islamic, human identity" this is explained further as a method to further establish national loyalty of the students, openness to other cultures, and development of all civil /

social studies education in school programs.<sup>20</sup>

Within the breakdown of the expenditure on education, a separate budget is allocated for culture related activities. Below are the numbers and the percentage of how much of this is spent on culture in education.

All figures are in 1000 JD

<b>Ministry of Education</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009 expected</b>
total expenditure on education	55,547	91,150	81,150
of which is spent on development of culture and identity	50	1,000	1,300
% of this program to total expenditure	0.09%	1.09%	1.6%

Source: Ministry of Planning and International Relations annual expenditure report 2007 - 2009

Within the ministry of youth, some programs are dedicated to some form of cultural activities, but again these activities are nationalistic, in nature and not geared towards creativity in any form.

All figures are in 1000 JD

<b>Ministry of Youth</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
total expenditure	9,420	4,370	4,270
expenditure on "youth and culture and media"	100	100	100
percentage of budget on culture	1.06%	2.28%	2.34%

Source: Ministry of Planning and International Relations annual expenditure report 2007 - 2009

The budget allocated for "Youth and media and culture" has not changed in the actual amount of money spent on the programs, but in comparison to the overall budget of the ministry, the percentages do give the impression of an increase, although this is only as a result of the reduction of the overall budget in the last 2 years.

According to Dr Tal's research, the cultural program includes; cultural heritage, nationalism, international cultural understanding, as well as national, Islamic, Arab and contemporary cultures. Moreover; under the title of General Knowledge is; world knowledge, foreign language (presumably the English Language), Knowledge of the law, technology, ideology, and medical knowledge and finally, art and literary knowledge. Taking all these topics into consideration, the budget allocated to them is quite a small budget, and the question that comes to mind is that after further distribution to all these sub-programs, how much is really spent and is it effective on any level.

### 6.5 Sector breakdown

There is no information on the sector breakdown in the ministry of culture budgets. Within education

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Planning and International Relations annual expenditure report 2007 - 2009

and youth, there are budgets allocated to certain programs.

#### **6.6 Private sector expenditure**

Numbers not available.

#### **6.7 Independent (civil) sector expenditure**

Numbers are not available.

#### **6.8 Foreign agencies expenditure**

Number not available.

### **7. Cultural institutions and new partnerships**

#### **7.1 Re-allocation of public responsibilities (privatization, restructuring, etc.)**

Privatization of public centers / organizations has not happened in Jordan yet.

#### **7.2 Status/role and development of major cultural institutions**

State funded organizations are considered to serve two functions. On the one hand, a venue for exhibiting / dissemination of arts by providing a venue rental fee for functions of the private sector. On the other hand, small offices within these institutions are delegated the task of managing public organizations' activities, in addition to a minor budget allocated by the ministry where activities such as lectures and perhaps film screenings are presented to the public. These activities don't include a fee for the public; and function under the definition of educating and involving the public with the arts.

The state also supports different festivals, including poetry, song, music, books, crafts and folklore. An example of one such state funded activity that highlights a large and diverse festival is what is known as the "Jordan Festival". This festival was initiated last year, led under the management of the Ministry of Tourism, and this year under the management of the Ministry of Culture. This festival is a replacement for a longer standing festival that took place annually in the city of Jerash, called "The Jerash Festival", which continued for 25 years before it was stopped. The Jordan festival now takes place all over Jordan, in an attempt to decentralize cultural activities from main cities and spread them to all municipalities around the country. Through this action also a wider spectrum of cultural activities can be presented, and not only restricted to theater style performances as was the case in Jerash. Jordan festival operates on a separate budget - as did the Jerash festival- issued from the Prime Ministry.

Another example would be small size festivals that take place in rural areas such as the Olive Oil festival. These fall under the management of the Ministry of Agriculture. Sometimes these small festivals would include local singers and musicians.

Private NGOs and international representatives (foreign cultural centers) assume a role usually depending on the leanings and interest of the director / founder of the institution. Generally there is an interest from these bodies to support a range of activities from grass-root popular cultures, heritage as well as contemporary artistic happenings.

Separately, the Royal Film commission (RFC) and the Film House, which functions with a board of commissioners who generate activities within the goals of the RFC that are defined by the law under which the organization functions. Apart from the focus on marketing Jordan as a location for film productions, the RFC developed a project called the Film House. The Film houses' focus is on the capacity building and providing facilitates for amateur and emerging film-makers. These facilities include equipment, a library, film screenings, and workshops. Eventually the aim for the Film House is to be a separate legal entity from the RFC so as to function as an independent NGO. The RFC has also played a part in disseminating audio-visual culture and knowledge outside of Amman through film house projects where capacity building is achieved through audio visual technological training in the

form of workshops, and also film screenings.

For the visual arts, the institutions that mainly play roles are the NGOs. Darat Al Funun, The Khalid Shoman Foundation, Makan, National Gallery of Fine Arts. These organizations provide workshops, symposiums, screenings and talks / lectures by visiting artists. For example, The Darat Al Funun had a summer artist's academy that selected young artists from Jordan and the region to participate to further their painting skills. Other workshops that also played a part in capacity building for the visual arts is the French cultural centers' video art workshop which took place annually over several years and through a call for application, taught aspiring video artists to use the medium. On a government level, and for the last 2 years, a monthly artist talk program was presented by the Ministry of Culture in the Royal Cultural center.

In theater, dance and performance, the main centers that have been playing a role lie in the field of education for youth. On a more focused level, the Performing Arts Center, which is part of the Queen Noor Foundation, is dedicated to -clearly- performing arts in particular. While the Haya Cultural Center offers training in the performing arts, but has also offered other arts related activities for young people. The only independent space that offers a space for work and presentation for younger theater and performance artists is Muhtaraf Rimal. Otherwise, there is a large gap in this field for professional groups or organizations that are dedicated to the support and production of theater and dance. Most festivals that take place in the domain are in the form of international festivals in which some local groups may be able to work on a production and presentation of their works.

For Music, the National Music Conservatory is the sole standing institution that provides education (certified for a range of levels) in music education. They also manage and present musical performances, almost solely in the classical domain. Other forms of musical presentations are offered through small scale activities presented by private entities / companies. The most prominent company for the support and marketing of music is "OrangeRed" for Music and Cultural Event Management. The activities of the private sector are minimal and are mostly seen in collaboration with foreign cultural bodies. The French Cultural Center has always presented musical performances in Fete De La Music (The Feast of Music), which is arguably the most consistent presentation of music in Amman.

The Municipality of Greater Amman; department of culture was set up in 1997 and its goals are to disseminate arts to the citizens by working with local and international artists on exhibitions, performances of different kinds and these can also be supported financially by the municipality, artist meetings, seminars, as well as the publication and the purchase of the rights of books.

### **7.3 Emerging partnerships or collaborations**

Mainly, there are collaborations between NGO's and international cultural representatives / centers, as well as the local government bodies, mainly the Ministry of culture and the Municipality of Greater Amman. Some private companies and banks have shown some involvement with the arts and cultural industries, their activities ranging to include funding exhibitions within the commercial sector, as well as workshops, festivals and performances.

The issue of private sector involvement was brought up in a meeting under the headline of Corporate Social Responsibility in 2006, a forum hosted by the Municipality of Greater Amman in an attempt to bridge the divide between NGO's functioning in the cultural industries and the private sector. Under the pretense of national responsibility as well as tax free initiatives for arts and culture funding, the private sector is encouraged to maintain and support. Interest increased since then, but a focus on social development NGOs functioning in less privileged areas receives more funding than organizations working solely in the arts even if those activities are geared towards the less fortunate.

Overall, the definition of supporting the arts is still a very premature one. Private companies are still

unaware of the importance of their involvement in support of arts and culture, or the repercussions of their lack of support either. This may be attributed to several issues, one of which is a general lack of appreciation, definition or understanding of arts and culture, and hence-forth a reluctance to support particularly activities in contemporary arts and culture. With this ambiguity towards an understanding of arts and culture, many companies find it easier to fund culture through organizations and activities that involve child and youth development.

## **8. Support to creativity and participation**

### **8.1 Direct and indirect support to artists**

The Ministry of Culture supports artistic productions for the different fields. There is no formal call for application, but project proposals are submitted to the MOC and selection is based on the recommendations of an 'undeclared jury'<sup>21</sup> from people in the field, specifically mentioning was made to the professors at Universities who are consulted on the proposals submitted for funding. Based on the jury's feedback, the project is given full or partial funding. This process of consultation is an attempt to maintain fairness in the selection process and avoid 'wasta' (which is a phenomena close to intermediary heavily used in all day-to-day work in Jordan).

The undeclared jury may present a problem with the consultants of the MOC for the project proposals. If these consultants work in public universities - which is most likely the case, then their interpretation, definition and acceptance of arts is biased, with an inclination to classical, traditional and folkloric presentations, and also to the older generation of artists, or even their allies / friends. This means that artists outside this circle / definition have slim chances of receiving MOC funding.

It can also be concluded that the inclination of Ministries to work together in Jordan also points towards a closed pool of ideas, goals, and caliber of people working in the public sector. If goals were set to include the private and NGO sectors in planning and decision-making, then a change of service and attitude may be seen.

On the other hand, an artists' professional development fund at the Ministry of Culture has been set up since 2006 (more details in 8.1.1)

It has been suggested that financial resourcing for arts, through a new Culture Law in which a 5% tax would be added on all media sales in TV, press and magazines, which would feed into the budget of the Ministry to Support arts and culture. This law went through much debate until "The Lower House... endorsed an amendment to the Culture Law as referred by the Senate, which imposes a 1% cent tax on media advertising revenues to support the cultural sector".<sup>22</sup> One of the reasons for lobbying against the law and an eventual reduction of the percentage came from the media, claiming that the media is struggling with advertising sales, and that the law would add more burden to the struggle.

For film-makers, the Royal Film Commissions' Film House (a government body functioning according to an independent law for government institutions) focuses on capacity building, production, and dissemination of Jordanian film productions through several channels. Workshops for the professional development of film-makers from Jordan and the region are offered on an annual basis. In addition, Jordanian film-makers are exposed to professionals in the field through the RFC's network with universities, festivals etc. Additionally, the Film House has a growing library of international films and

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<sup>21</sup> Undeclared, meaning not elected but selected by the Ministry of Culture directly based on personal relations, or based on good connections of certain artists with the ministry.

<sup>22</sup> Jordan Times - 07/08/2009 "Jordan's Parliament extraordinary session adjourned"

offers equipment and editing services free of charge to film-makers and today is working on a residency program for film-makers from around the world.

Alternately for film-makers, The Amman Film-makers Cooperative has been active a little over 6 years and started to offer free workshops in film-making; and in 2006 started the Amman International Short Film Festival. Other minor activities in capacity building come through workshops offered by other local and international cultural centers.

For the Visual Arts, the main funding for travel, production and dissemination of works comes through regional and sometimes international funding bodies. Some local funding for production is available mainly from the independent space Makan and from Darat At Funun; The Khalid Shoman Foundation. Funding would usually be for the occasion of a festival, workshop, symposium or exhibition. On a very minimal level, these NGOs may formally and informally offer working spaces / studios or facilities to artists for free or a negligible fee.

Recently an award for architecture has been launched for final year and recent architecture graduates. The winners are selected by a jury from Jordan and the region.

For Theater/dance/performance.

For literary publications, the ministry of culture offers to cover printing for local publications as well as the chance for the Ministry to purchase the copyrights of the publication. This takes place through an application form made to the MOC and a selection committee decides if the book is of interest to the ministry. Also, the Municipality of Greater Amman (GAM) also sponsors book publications, and these can vary between fiction or research based books.

This is in reserve to awards, grants and prizes that are offered from regional organizations (more in 8.1.2)

### **8.1.1 Special artists' funds**

As mentioned in 8.1 the Ministry of Culture has a fund for projects by artists, writers, research in theoretical, applied, and social sciences. This fund is defined by the MOC as a support award. The application is through the MOC, and a jury is selected by the Minister of Culture. The fund's finances are allocated as a separate budget from the Prime Ministry, and it may also outsource funds from local or international sources,<sup>23</sup> and is open to artists under the age of 40 with an active CV. A jury representing the different specialization is appointed by the ministry for the selection of the applications. Proposals need to have not applied for other local or international awards, and research is under three years since its writing. The award includes a 15,000JD cash prize as well as a certificate.<sup>24</sup>

Also, another award, initiated in 2007 which translates to mean a full-time creative sabbatical<sup>25</sup> and is allocated for production of artist projects. The Jury of 8 persons is assigned by the ministry to select an artist to receive a 15,000JD grant for production. The total annual number of prizes is ten and can be awarded to individuals and groups, the latter regarded as one grant. Jury member are not eligible for the prize. Copyrights of the works produced go to the MOC for the period of 3 years. Prize winners can reapply for the prize after 3 years of receiving the prize. The bylaws for this fund is described under the guidelines for the fund.

The difference between these two grants is not very clear, and as their amounts are the same, evokes

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<sup>23</sup> [http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/laws/search\\_no.jsp?no=36&year=2006](http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/laws/search_no.jsp?no=36&year=2006) cultural patronage law no 4759 / 2006-05-16

<sup>24</sup> [http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/bylaws/search\\_no.jsp?no=111&year=2008](http://www.lob.gov.jo/ui/bylaws/search_no.jsp?no=111&year=2008)

<sup>25</sup> A period of paid leave granted to university professors for research

a little confusion. The persons eligible for the prize only vary in that the latter prize applies for production of artist projects and the former for research and writing.

### **8.1.2 Grants, awards, scholarships**

Small production grants are available from local NGOs, but the main funding comes from regional and international organizations supporting creative production (Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Al Mawred Al Thaqafi, Al Qattan Foundation, Young Arab Theater Fund, Sharjah Biennial production funds among others). Smaller production grants and awards are seen from different NGOs. One such example is the Ismaeel Shammout Prize is offered to painters. This prize is coordinated with the National Gallery of Fine Arts of USD5,000, and is awarded to a painting that has not been exhibited previously. An Artist of the Year Award was offered by the Ministry of Culture on irregular basis for visual arts. This prize is for artists who are registered with the Syndicate of Plastic Artists. This prize is inconsistent and was offered last in 2007.

In education, and ever since the late 1960's the Ministry of Education and MOC has offered educational scholarships to artists from different sectors to support their education in countries around the world. These scholarships are contract based, and are linked to the candidate serving a certain amount of working years mainly in university education. Recently, the Royal Film Commission has played a part in securing scholarships for local talent in the film industry through their contacts with universities in the USA and Europe without a commitment on the candidates' part.

Inconsistently, the NGO Darat Al Funun has supported emerging artists in higher education as well as workshops on an international level, the artist is not tied to contract for this scholarship. One example is the support of the Master's education of an emerging architect in SOAS in London in 2005. Otherwise, foreign cultural centers may formally offer education scholarships. For example, the British Council's Cheavening award may sometimes be awarded to a person working in the field of arts and culture, and at times this funding would come through recommendation from a local university. The French Cultural center has also supported on a very informal level artists for workshops in France, this is usually dependent on the interest of the director at that particular time. Internationally, some funding organizations such as the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Qattan Foundation, and Karim Rida Foundation formally offer awards for scholarships in culture education.

On a governmental level, honorary awards are offered to artists of outstanding contribution and high achievement.

### **8.1.3 Support to professional artists associations, unions or networks**

Artists association and syndicate are present in the form of the Artists Association which if registered under the law of the ministry of culture, will receive funding from the MOC. Nevertheless, the funding for these organizations is very minimal, for example the Visual Artists Syndicate receives an annual sum of JD5,000. The sum usually covers the rent of the location and the employment of a secretary. The rest of the team (which is elected through a bi-annual election of a committee) are not compensated.

Some NGO's which are also registered under Royal Patronage, example of which include Royal Film Commission, and the Royal Society of Fine Arts -under which the National Gallery of Fine Arts is registered- as well as the Performing Arts Center. These organizations benefit from obtaining public funding due to their Royal patronage, which is something other NGO's do not gain. This may explain the frequency of such organizations in Jordan, as they seem to be able to financially sustain themselves from both public and private capital.

This legal status, as well as the frequency of occurrence of these organizations -vs. independent ones- would also question the autonomy and freedom these organizations exercise on the artists and their productions; in the content they present.

## 8.2 Audiences and participation

There is a severe lack in the numbers and statistics of audience participation both in governmental or non-governmental organizations, so it is hard to try and track success and failure of certain festivals and events. One thing that has been in discussion is the difficulty in guaranteeing audiences in certain seasons due to the repetition of similar activities. Examples include the sudden surge of film festivals in the last 5 years. Initially, the European film festival was the only audio visual presentation of films. Today, there is the Arab Film festival, the short film festival, the Palestinian film festival, as well as other regular film screenings that may or may not accompany another festival like the Jordan Festival which include films within its overall program.

On the other hand, in the Jordan Festival, which this year presented a large selection of musical performance, and some by popular singers, did see good turnout of audiences. Although, these numbers were not consistent to every performance, the more popular the performer, the better the numbers. This may be an indication towards the quality of presentation that people are drawn towards.

### 8.2.1 Trends and figures

Figures are not available at the moment.

But in terms of spending the following quotation may give an indication of where culture comes in terms of priority. "The study shows that expenditure on food as a percentage of total expenditures declined for all groups, and that highest rise in expenditure occurred on clothing. These are signs of improving socioeconomic situations for households. However, expenditure on culture, leisure and sports declined for all groups. This reflects the shrinking amount of remaining expendable income for households to fulfill other aspects of their personal welfare."<sup>26</sup>

### 8.2.2 Policies and programs

In a 2008 the MOC put down a plan for cultural development for the coming 3 years, and the details of this plan summarized in the following. The vision was focused on creating better awareness of what defines Jordanian culture and 'cultured peoples'. To find better ways to market Jordanian cultural products through dissemination and funding. Provide equal opportunities for different Jordanian cultures which seem to point towards minorities in the country and finding ways to connect on a local level with representatives of the cultural scene in both the public and private sectors. In addition to fostering international connections through the Jordanian Embassies, through which the dissemination of Jordanian cultural products can be marketed.

The Ministry of Culture acknowledges a lack of cultural policy and sets to develop one. The basis of this development is tied with the basis on which these goals are hoped to be achieved, which begins by emphasizing religion and heritage, the vision of the Monarch and the Prime minister, the National agenda, government bodies and being an extension to the national security of the country. For the Ministry of Culture, this vision points to a very strong adherence to the national definitions of culture and can be understood as a passive role in setting its own agenda; as there is no mention of finding problematic with the existent systems or definitions of culture on a national level. Also, visions, goals and developments are put forward based on the outlooks and achievements of several of the ministry's colleagues'<sup>27</sup> There is no mention of making such developments on the basis of qualitative or quantitative research, or through meetings with members of the cultural sector.

On the one hand, several programs focusing on the presentation of different arts have been

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<sup>26</sup>Saif, Ibrahim and Tabbaa, Yasmeen, How the Middle Class is coping in Jordan, The richest 30 percent in Jordan own 60 percent of total income, Center for Strategic Studies, 2008

<sup>27</sup> Dr. Ahmad Hattar interview at Ministry of Culture, August 2009

developed in Jordan, some are funded by the government, and others have been initiated through local cultural centers, sometimes collaborating with regional and international partners. The most prominent of these festivals include the following:

#### *Music, Dance and Theater*

Jerash Festival recently announced a change in management and rebranded as Jordan Festival. Fawanees Theater festival. Contemporary Dance festival which is a fairly recent addition to the festivals that take place in Jordan, and is in collaboration with regional partners in Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine, initiated and managed by Haya Cultural Center. Fete Du La Musique (Feast of Music) a French festival that takes place annually worldwide.

#### *Film*

European Film Festival. Jordan festival for Short films and video. Others include film festivals that present a program of screenings from specific countries, or a group of them presented at galleries, theaters, and the Film House (Royal Film Commission).

#### *Visual and Contemporary Arts*

Meeting Points Festival for contemporary arts, brainchild of the regional organization Young Arab Theater Fund together with Makan in Jordan. In 2010 will be the 6th edition of the festival displayed in the Arab and European countries.

#### *Other*

Small scale festivals have taken place and may not have continued such as the Jazz festival which took place outside the city of Amman, in the district of Madaba, as well as the Electronic Music Festival in which musicians from Jordan, Palestine and Egypt presented experimental works but was discontinued in 2009 due to funding problems.

MOC's policy towards the dissemination of culture is very much geared towards spending on infrastructure elements. This is seen through the building of cultural centers in the different cities around the country. This is part of the 2007 policy set by the MOC for the dissemination of culture outside of Amman. This policy is however debatable as the main critique for the culture sector should be one geared towards capacity building first, which would mean create a pool of professionals and artists in cultural field who are capable of running such centers. Additionally, with such a small budget allocated for culture, large expenditure towards buildings in itself is a questionable policy.

### **8.3 Arts and cultural education**

#### **8.3.1 Arts education**

Arts are part of the curriculum and are given to students once a week under the course title of Art Education. Theater is informally taught as workshops depending on the availability of a theater/drama teacher at the Ministry of Education, the same applies to music.

The most significant note for arts education is that the arts fall under the Department of Activities. Also the grades achieved do not amount in relation to the overall average with total subjects, and the class is suspended after 9th grade. This indicates that the arts are viewed as a leisurely activity and not a subject that a student may consider as a career. The contradiction with this; is that public universities offer BA programs in visual arts, music and theater. However with the current status of art education at school, the level and attitude of art students is not of good standards where it could provide university teachers enough groundwork from which they can take the student's education forward at a university level.

Also, in conversation with an art teacher working with the Ministry of Education pointed out that as the

art teacher is monitored by the Department of Activities, the level of attention given to art class depends on whether the head of the department of activities is an artist, dramatist or physical education specialist; according to this persons specialization, attention may be given to art class, or not. Also, during the discussion, it was pointed out that the art teachers themselves do not have an interest in teaching the subject. This results in the class not to be taken seriously by the students. Finally, it was also conclusive that the type of art activities are mainly focused around national activities, meaning that assignments are given on the occasion of a national celebration, and not about inward self expression.<sup>28</sup> This also draws us to conclude that the art teachers themselves, even if they were passionate and dedicated, are still limited in their understanding of the term 'creative expression'.

Finally, the teacher also mentioned that there are differences between the course material in the books used by the students for art education and the art teachers' manual for teaching the course. This discrepancy on the one hand leaves room for confusion for the teacher, and on the other, raises the question of and ulterior motive - if any - that may lie in the need to have discrepancies between the two. There are text books for art education, but the technique and the structure of teaching art is very outdated and archaic, and is counteractive to the notion of using creativity as a form of individual expression. As for Crafts education this course runs under a separate department, but it faces the same problems of the art education.

Several public and private universities offer a range of fine art, design, music, TV and film production as well as and theatrical studies. The highest numbers of students tend to be in applied arts, such as design, graphic design, interior design and architecture. Also, courses in Islamic Art, Islamic Architecture and Music is offered in the University of al Al Abayt.

The standard of education specifically in the public universities is approved to be of mediocre standard. Private universities offer a slightly better standard of education, but still the quality varies and is dictated by the tutors giving the courses and not by the department.

### **8.3.2 Culture in education**

Culture is defined within religion and the state. There are several subjects in which culture is interjected, under the subject headings of Islamic Cultural studies, National and Civil Studies, vocational education, Arab Language, Contemporary Arab History, General Cultural Studies. These subjects focus on the quotations of Islamic studies, the monarchy, major historical sites in Jordan....etc.<sup>29</sup> The content of the course books are very dogmatic and are very much geared towards maintaining the monarchy and faithfulness to the country. Also the information tends to lean towards less useful facts and tools that do not broaden the scope, definition and understanding of culture.

### **8.3.3 Vocational training for arts & culture**

A government organization under the title of The Foundation of Vocational Training, operates over 40 training centers around the country, separated in centers in the Northern, central and southern regions. The programs offered only specify training in crafts of weaving, pottery, embroidery and sewing, and flower arranging. There is also a law, no. 4369 / 1999-08-01 under which the activities of the foundation are monitored. The law also denotes the activities and legal frameworks for all those registered with businesses in this field.<sup>30</sup>

## **8.4 Socio-cultural interventions and community arts**

Under the hierarchy of the MOC, several activities are carried out under the umbrella of the Ministry of

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<sup>28</sup> Dr. Ahmad Hattar interview at Ministry of Culture, August 2009

<sup>29</sup> Ministry of Education books from the years of 3rd, 6th and 11th grade.

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.vtc.gov.jo/Training%20Program%202009%20from%20Abu%20Khalid/index.htm>

Culture to promote local culture and heritage. These activities can include the Olive Oil festival, or the Festival of Poetry. These are carried out in collaboration with local municipalities and may include presentation of local crafts, or arts concurrently within the activity.

On another level, several NGO's have been established as early as the 1980s which aim to develop local crafts for sustainable development. One example of such project is the Noor Al Hussein Foundation set up in 1985 who's activities covered a wide range of projects such as the Noor Al Hussein prize of children's literature, and the Bani Hamida, a sustainable development project for the women of the southern town of Bani Hamida know for its rug weaves.

#### **8.4.1 Non-professional cultural activities.**

No information was located for this.

#### **8.4.2 Cultural houses and community cultural clubs**

The term culture centers is used to describe organizations under the government of the Ministry of Education and describes these centers as places for workshops of various lengths. These centers have no autonomy. The bylaw under which they operate is listed as Bylaw for Cultural centers note (43), Legislation of Ministry of Education no 3/1993.<sup>31</sup>

Cultural centers are present throughout the kingdom and all fall within the hierarchy of their respective local municipalities. Within these centers a range of cultural activities may take place initiated by the municipality, ministry of culture, or sometimes -yet rarely- in collaboration with a local or international organizations.

The most active of these municipality-led community centers are those under the management of the Municipality of Greater Amman. These centers have recently seen refurbishment and a concentration of activities focusing on creative skill development for youth as a way to compensate for the lack of art education in schools; this falls under the execution of the 'Child- Friendly City' program in the Municipality of Greater Amman (GAM). Several other culture centers are privately funded and focus on the development of creativity and culture depending on the personal interest of the funder.

## 9. Sources and Links

### **9.1 Key documents on cultural policy, Key organizations and portals**

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<sup>31</sup><http://www.vtc.gov.jo/Training%20Program%202009%20from%20Abu%20Khalid/index.htm>

## **Portals**

Batir Wardam, Jordanwatch Friday, August 24, 2007. <http://www.jordanwatch.net>

<http://www.vtc.gov.jo/>

<http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/charter-national.html>

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## **Other references**

Dr. Ahmad Hattar Interview at Ministry of Culture, August 2009

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Dr. Khalid Khreis, Director of the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, Interview 2009