

THE BEDOUIN KNOW
USING LOCAL KNOWLEDGE TO UNDERSTAND THE
EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT AT THE WADI RUM
PROTECTED AREA IN SOUTHERN JORDAN

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ABSTRACT

There are two central themes to this thesis. Firstly, it shows how the adoption of people-centered and greening development paradigms, designed to improve mainstream development problems of the late 20th century, continue to produce unsatisfactory and unsustainable results for intended beneficiaries in the 21st century. Secondly, it shows how the “intended beneficiaries” use their experiences and their knowledge of the development processes to analyze, explain and voice why it has not worked for them. Their *local knowledge* illustrates how beneficiaries continue to remain on the “outside” or peripheral to development instead of being equal partners as the people-centered discourse claims.

This thesis reviews the development of the Wadi Rum Protected Area (WRPA) in southern Jordan. This development fostered both conservation and tourism projects to assist members of the seven local Bedouin communities or clans whose historical rangelands constitute the protected area. Four significant development decisions and projects are examined to better understand how this development functioned. Many Bedouin commentaries and those of some non-Bedouin involved in the projects provide social, economic and environmental assessments of the protected area's progress over a ten year continuum. What emerges is a nuanced awareness of how the WRPA has not achieved its stated goals or the benefits promised to the Bedouin, but did support other developers', lenders' and government objectives. Bedouin knowledge also highlights how “development” has contributed to a near dissolution of their control over what had been their tourism industry, how it has usurped their control of their lands and villages, how the project has created greater divisiveness between and within the clans and how it has come to support the growth of tourism over environmental protection. In general, the development of the Wadi Rum Protected Area has not achieved its people-centered and green goals.

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DEDICATION

To Emily, Brayden, Mackenzie and all the little Strachans to come....just walk your path!

To Bill and Billy.....thanks for walking with me!

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

ARA	Aqaba Regional Authority
ASEZ	Aqaba Special Economic Zone
ASEZA	Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority
CAD	Canadian Dollars
CBO	Community Based Organization
DTC	Diseh Tourism Cooperative
DZC	Development Zones Commission
FN	Field Notes
HRH	Her Royal Highness
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
JD	Jordanian Dinar
JTB	Jordan Tourism Board
JTDP	Jordan Tourism Development Project
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MoTA	Jordan's Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
NES	National Environment Strategy for Jordan
RSCN	Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature in Jordan
PA	Protected Area
PC	Personal Correspondence
PVC	Productive Village Cooperative
RTC	Rum Tourism Cooperative
STDP	Second Tourism Development Project
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VC	Visitor Centre
VMP	Visitor Management Plan
WB	World Bank
WR	Wadi Rum
WRPA	Wadi Rum Protected Area
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

LIST OF TRANSLATIONS

ARABIC	ENGLISH
a'adel	big grain sacs
al jech alarabi	army jeep
Badawy	desert dweller
badia	desert
bait al sha'er	Bedouin tent known as a "hair house"
Bedu	Bedouin
bsat	carpet
dunum	a measurement of land
Eid ul-Fitr	Islamic holiday three days after Ramadan
farwah	long winter coat
Gadi Ashari	Judge
Gaza	November star
jamiah	cooperative
jebbeh	winter vest
mahmiah	nature reserve
makhad	cushions
mansef	traditional Bedouin meal
Marba'aneyah	fall winds in Wadi Rum
miskeen	insecure
muhafazah	governorates
mukhtar	chosen like a mayor
musha	land tenure
nawar	gypsies
rababah	Bedouin musical instrument
ribe	yoghurt
sa'aen	goat skin yoghurt maker
Sheikh	chief or leader
siq	canyon
Shea'ar	December star
Taresh	scout or guide
Tawjihi	general secondary education certificate
Thurayah	October star
wadi	valley
wasta	nepotism

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INTRODUCTION

A MEMORABLE CONVERSATION

On a hot summer day in 2007, I sat with Sleman Sabbah¹ Al Zalabiah, a Bedouin interpreter, and Salhsalm Salem Al Zalabiah², a Bedouin judge, under the latter's sugar and flour sac awning at his desert camp (Appendix 1: Photograph 1). It was a welcome reprieve from the scorching, desert sun and a short distance from the curious sheep and goats grazing nearby. While sipping sweet tea and eating a Bedouin meal of bread, yoghurt and goat fat, jokingly referred to as “cement” because it sticks to your ribs, the distinguished elder talked of his distrust and lack of respect for *mahmiah*³. I asked the highly respected judge, or *Gadi Ashari* in Arabic, a position delegated to the most knowledgeable and trusted clansmen about the Wadi Rum Protected Area⁴ (WRPA) being on his clan's historical rangelands:

Laura: Do you wish that the Reserve hadn't come in the first place?

Judge Salhsalm: They came in a sneaky way and now they do not come. The original idea was to keep the lands and to protect the land from people who were damaging them.

Laura: Was it worth it?

Judge Salhsalm: Why did ASEZA⁵ come to protect the area but didn't protect the area really? (IS 2007)⁶ (Appendix 1: Photograph 2).

¹ Pseudonyms have been used in some cases.

² While conducting my MA and PhD research in the Wadi Rum area, I interviewed clansmen and women from the seven clans living in the region to establish their knowledge and experiences of four development decisions made by the Wadi Rum Protected Area (WRPA) (see Footnote 9 below).

³ *Mahmiah* is the Arabic word used by many Bedouin to refer to the Wadi Rum Protected Area. Arabic words are italicized.

⁴ I will use the acronym WRPA for the Wadi Rum Protected Area.

⁵ ASEZA is the acronym for the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority located in Aqaba, Jordan. The WRPA is under ASEZA's governance.

⁶ I distinguish several sources of local, Bedouin knowledge that I have quoted in this thesis. When speaking with non-English speakers, interpreters were used and these translations are

In his view the Reserve⁷ developers had not kept promises made. He continued by explaining how the officials stated and “put into the heads of the people” that the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN)⁸ “was making Rum to protect us and to protect the area. Nobody will take anything from you” (IS 2007). He recalled how a group of assembled Zalabiah⁹ representatives were told by RSCN officials that they could continue to “live free” despite the presence of the Reserve on their lands. The men believed these declarations signing a document that they felt was meant to “protect us” declared Judge Salhsalm Salem¹⁰. He claimed that the Zalabiah later realized that “many things came up that the people (Bedouin) didn’t know about” (IS 2007). Such as the time men came to “count the distance between Saudi (Arabia) and Jordan” (IS 2007). This statement indicates the clansmen’s feeling that they were misled and lied to. The protection of the Wadi Rum habitat and promises of socio-economic improvement have fallen short of the developers’ assurances and Bedouin expectations. Why are so many Bedouin men and women unhappy with the operations that were supposedly designed to benefit them?

denoted as Interview Sessions (IS). Discussions with English speakers, whether formal or informal, are referenced as Field Notes (FN). References to e-mails, telephone conversations and other forms of correspondence not recorded while doing fieldwork are Personal Communications (PC). Interview sessions that were tape recorded are Taped Sessions (TS).

⁷ I will use Reserve, protected area, nature reserve and WRPA interchangeably.

⁸ The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature in Jordan (RSCN) was contracted to be the WRPA’s first manager by the Aqaba Regional Authority (ARA), later to be replaced by ASEZA.

⁹ One of the seven sub-tribes or clans living in the Wadi Rum area. The seven are: Zalabiah, Zawaydeh, Swailheen, Gedman, Emran, Mazanah and Dbour.

¹⁰ The judge did not have a copy of the document at his tent, but felt that all present signed it to guarantee the Bedouin’s rights.

The answers to this question are found in the diverse activities and interests of the groups coming together to develop the WRPA and the Bedouin responses to them. These varied actions are the focus of this PhD investigation.

A CASE STUDY OF DEVELOPMENT PROMISES, BENEFICIARIES INVOLVEMENT AND “LOCAL KNOWLEDGE”

Development in its many shades and colours is promoted by a vast array of organizations and governments and it is perceived by many around the world as the path to opportunity, growth and prosperity. Since the end of WWII, aid, assistance and development programs were the magic wand that would rescue the world’s underprivileged from poverty and despair. “Like ‘goodness’ itself”, anthropologist James Ferguson stated in *The Anti-Politics Machine* (1994), “development in our time is a value so firmly entrenched that it seems almost impossible to question it, or to refer it to by any standard beyond its own” (1994: xiv; see also Escobar 1995; 1997).

Reconfigurations of development philosophies began to emerge during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s to counter mounting dissatisfaction within development and conservation practices (Escobar 1995; 1997). Based on the failures of the earlier paradigms to meet their own goals, diverse alternatives emerged with a greater emphasis on the local community and greening of earlier models. In the 1990s, participation and inclusion of “local people” and “sustainability” became some of the lynchpins for future development projects.

My research at the Wadi Rum Protected Area (WRPA) in southern

Jordan shows how and why these newer models of development and conservation continue to fail local people and why those who are supposed to benefit remain dissatisfied. This case study elucidates how a claimed shift to more practical and locally relevant goals did not produce better results because developers continue to prioritize institutional stakeholder's objectives while not finding ways for local people, in this case Bedouin clansmen, clanswomen and others, to have effective roles in development processes.

This is not a new story nor is it an isolated case. Similar findings of continued failures have been reported in several regions of the world. In fact, this development narrative has historical echoes that have been reverberating around the globe for upwards of sixty years (Aronson 1981; Adams 1993; Peluso 1993; Ferguson 1994; Escobar 1995; 1997; Chatty 1996, 2002; Neumann 1997, 1998; Stevens 1997; Nederveen Pieterse 1998; Knippers Black 1999; Arce and Long 2000; Black 2007; Polak 2008; Davis 2009; Novogratz 2009; Dowie 2009).

This case study adds to this literature, extending its findings in another area and emphasizing an aspect of these histories that is less developed, namely how local people in experiencing and reacting to development come to live and develop "local knowledge" of the processes of development. It therefore details what many of the Bedouin of Wadi Rum whom I have spoken with understand about development, both tourism and conservation, and about how it functions and why it did not work for them. My focus is on their critiques of these

processes and of the roles they have been limited to in them. This makes clear how they envisioned their inclusion and participation, what they think should have been, but also why they continue to be involved. I also indicate their knowledge of the dangers they face if the development of the Wadi Rum area continues on its current path, as well as their visions of alternatives.

HASHEMITE KINGDOM DEVELOPMENT

The Middle East is a dynamic region, with a complex and rich history of religions, politics, cultures and traditions. It is also perceived by outsiders as having a history of conflict and sporadic uprisings that is different from other world regions. Contemporary skirmishes perpetuate long held perceptions by outsiders of regional risk and insecurity. But following the signing of the Oslo Accord in 1993 these beliefs began to change. Notions of increased regional security and safety facilitated a tourism boom in Jordan, Israel, the Palestinian Territories and Egypt (Appendix 1: Map 1). Within a few short years, tourism became a significant contributor to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's national coffers. For a country with few natural resources save potash and potassium (Chapin Metz 1989), its rich and dynamic human history and its fantastical landscapes became bankable national treasures, as they have been at several periods in the past. Travel to the Nabataean city of Petra, the Byzantine-era mosaic map of the Holy Land in Madaba, the Roman city of Gerasa or today's Jerash, the Crusader castle of Karak and the spectacular desert

and mountainous landscape of Wadi Rum gained prominence within the tourism industry.

In 1996, Jordan's Central Bank and Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA) reported that 1.1 million tourists visited Jordan (World Bank Second Tourism Development Project (STDP) Report No. PID3684)¹¹. This translated into foreign exchange revenues of over US \$750 million or approximately 10 percent of the country's GNP making it the second largest generator of foreign exchange after remittances (ibid.). Furthermore, the World Bank predicted that barring any unforeseen political upheavals in the region, tourism could continue to grow at over 15 percent per annum, a rate well above the expectations for any other part of the economy except construction and finance (ibid.). The importance of this growing industry for the Kingdom's advancement in its state building enterprises was clear.

On July 31, 1997 the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan represented by MoTA and the Aqaba Regional Authority (ARA)¹² signed an agreement with the World Bank to receive a loan for \$67 million (US) to support three important development projects:

1. the Second Tourism Development Project (STDP)
2. the Community Infrastructure Development Project and
3. Training Employment (World Bank Press Release No: 99/1892/(Middle East and North Africa (MENA), 1999).

The rationale for the Bank's involvement stemmed from its pre-existing

¹¹ As measured by accommodation arrivals.

¹² Predecessor of Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority or ASEZA, see Chapter 3.

relationship with the Kingdom for their promotion of “outward-oriented, private sector led growth” (World Bank Jordan: STDP Report No. PID3684, 1997).

The loan would assist in the formulation of a long-term tourism development strategy and associated policy and institutional measures to:

- (i) promote public/private sector interaction
- (ii) adopt a business strategy approach to tourism planning and, jointly with the private sector, develop Jordan's tourism sites
- (iii) create a competitive business environment by deregulating the industry and removing bureaucratic red tape that stifles investment
- (iv) develop infrastructure essential to attract the private sector
- (v) adopt measures necessary for creating a cadre of well-trained tourism professionals (ibid.).

The objective for the STDP was to support growth of four of the country's most important tourist sites: Petra, the Nabataean Rose City; Jerash, an expansive Roman city; Karak, a Crusader Castle; and, Wadi Rum, a spectacular landscape that is home to a Bedouin population. Thirty-two million US dollars were divided amongst the sites to help

1. create the conditions for an increase in sustainable and environmentally sound tourism; and to
2. realize tourism-related employment and income-generation potential at project sites (World Bank Jordan: STDP Report No. PID3684, 1997).

Ultimately, it was hypothesized that the project would improve the lives of affected populations while providing site protection:

The project would prevent further degradation of historical and ecological sites, thus ensuring their sustainability for future generations. Urban regeneration, including the delivery of better infrastructure, coupled with enforcement of land use plans, would improve not only the experience for tourists but also the quality of life for the local population at Petra (about 20,000), Wadi Rum (about 2,000), Karak (28,000) and Jerash (21,000) (World Bank Report No. 16485-JOJuly 11, 1997).

The Wadi Rum component is the focus of my research. The funding for the area's conservation-development project originally came from the World Bank's STDP while the impetus came from a combination of other factors.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WADI RUM PROTECTED AREA

Located in Jordan's southern reaches, near the Saudi Arabian border and close to Jordan's only port city of Aqaba, Wadi Rum is famous for its moon-like sculpted mountains and desert sands of orange and burgundy (Appendix 1: Map 2). The Wadi Rum area is the embodiment of the blending of the ancient, the Arabia of colonial pasts, with the contemporary. From pre-historic times to the battles of the Great Arab Revolt (1916-1918) and the legendary *Lawrence of Arabia* to present day, travelers have flocked to its natural wonders in search of water, respite, beauty and more recently for excitement, exoticism and adventure.

The Wadi Rum area is also the historical homeland for seven Bedouin or *Bedu*¹³ clans belonging to the famous *Hwaitat* and the *Al Enezah* tribes. Their ability to survive in this desert environment is renowned and has enabled them to occupy these lands for hundreds of years. Known for their hospitality, the Bedouin were the first tourism operators in the region providing their guests with unique desert experiences and local traditions and customs (Appendix 1: Photograph 3; see also Chapter 2).

As Wadi Rum gained popularity and international appeal as a tourist

¹³ Bedouin is the English translation of the Arabic word *Bedu* which is plural for *Badawy* or desert dweller or Arab. It will be used interchangeably with *Bedu* in this thesis.

destination for mountain climbers, hikers and others seeking unconventional tourism experiences, its physical landscape began to exhibit unprecedented degradation (World Bank Report No. 16485-JO). The cumulative effect of increased desert tracks, garbage and firewood collection, along with extended drought conditions and pressure from livestock grazing and hunting threatened the sustainability of the Wadi Rum ecosystem. Add to this the impoverished state of the local Bedouin clans, noted by HRH Queen Noor after a 1988 visit, and the area came to be perceived as prime for intervention (RSCN, No Date¹⁴).

In 1998, the WRPA¹⁵ was created to provide environmental protection to 540¹⁶ sq. km. of semi-arid landscape and to generate increased socio-economic tourism benefits for the local Bedouin clans whose historical rangelands were now part of the protected area (RSCN VMP¹⁷ 2003). This reflected the STDP goals negotiated by the World Bank and Jordan. It was also the first conservation project in the country to facilitate the inclusion of local Bedouin communities within a conservation site as part of the Kingdom's new conservation-development paradigm (see below).

The popularity of the WRPA has grown over time. The Jordan Tourism Board (JTB) promotes it as “a nature-lover's paradise” (www.jtb.com accessed March 2009). Mountaineers and trekkers alike, the first form of tourism in the

¹⁴ The document is titled *Rum Protected Area Management Plan, 2003-2008*.

¹⁵ This was not the original name in 1998. The reason for the change will be explained in Chapter 3.

¹⁶ Another 180 sq. km. was added to the original 540 sq. km. at a later date. At the time of writing this thesis, 2010-2011, the protected area comprised 720 sq. km.

¹⁷ VMP is the acronym for Visitor Management Plan.

area beginning in the 1960-70s, continue to traverse its landscapes and mountainous peaks (Appendix 1: Photograph 4). More recently, tourism has become diversified satisfying the interests of scramblers, boulderers¹⁸, trekkers, equestrians, film makers, researchers and vast numbers of tourists merely interested in the mixing of Bedouin culture with tourism activities and history. It has become an important site for developers and funders to situate their tourism oriented projects.

But behind the stunning mountain facades and the smiling Bedouin faces proffered in this desert oasis, the enmeshing of politics, economics and environmental protection with local culture and nature has received mixed reviews. Tourism and conservation development have infringed upon the lives of the Bedouin living in the surrounding villages and upon their desert landscape in diverse and often unsatisfactory ways. *Bedu* interviewed¹⁹ for the purpose of eliciting their views revealed that there is great disparity between what was promised to them and what came to be. There is an overriding Bedouin belief that they have not received what is rightfully theirs in addition to being lied to as will be highlighted in the following chapters.

Why do developers continue to use models that claim to *help* people and to *protect* environments? I think this research shows, along with that of others, that development models are *chosen* because they continue to serve the interests of

¹⁸ People who jump and climb large, freestanding boulders.

¹⁹ This is based on the evidence collected during my 2002 MA research and 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009 PhD research at the Wadi Rum Protected Area (see below).

some powerful stakeholders (Escobar1995; Knippers Black 1999; Polak 2008; Novogratz 2009). Therefore, despite development's failure to achieve improved conditions for local participants or those on the bottom rung of the economic ladder, it does serve a purpose for those who control it, in albeit unstated and obscured ways.

My PhD research shows how a development project under the new development-conservation-tourism²⁰ paradigm continues to produce unacceptable outcomes according to local people even when those beneficiaries are part of what makes their region attractive and a potentially viable object of tourism from which the development authorities benefit. Using their knowledge, their analyses and their experiences with the protected area, they have articulated this dissatisfaction. They show that it was not what the developers promised. The developments described below give credence to one clansman's observation that the "Bedouin are being used for tourism and promoting the country" (IS 2007).

ANALYTICAL OBJECTIVES

It is my position based on the literature cited in Chapter 1 (see below) and in agreement with numerous critics, that trying to change the effects of development interventions by reforming development paradigms maintains a top-down approach that perpetuates the predominance of non-local organizations. Many development interventions make little effort to attain local

²⁰ I refer to the Wadi Rum Protected Area as a development project that had development, conservation and tourism objectives.

goals other than those that serve the donor-manager objectives (Escobar 1995; 1997; Polak 2008; Novogratz 2009). Developers use local poverty and blame local people for the degradation of their ecosystems in order to *sustain* development agencies' interests in the business of development and conservation-tourism.

Based on my research I argue that projects continue to focus on the goals set out in lender-manager-private agreements rather than on the wishes of local peoples or the needs of ecosystems. As I show, this can become quite clear to local participants who can be well aware of the dangers it creates for them, their environment and for their projects. A large percentage of Wadi Rum's populace is angry and disillusioned a decade after the protected area's establishment.

An objective of my research is to establish if and how people-centred and conservation development alternatives work in practice. Specifically, this includes learning about local people's lives and their livelihood strategies before and after the establishment of the protected area. I seek to record "local thinking" in the Gustavo Esteva and Madhu Suri Prakash (1997) sense and to emphasize the value of local knowledge and understanding. I do so in order to determine how the local Bedouin communities view their inclusion or exclusion from decision-making processes and associated employment, how they see Bedouin traditions and changes affected by the Reserve's rules and regulations, and their analyses of the overall effect the development of the Wadi Rum region has had on their lives, livelihoods and on their historical landscapes.

I do this not by analyses that look at and inside the development machine such as those offered by Ferguson (1994) and Escobar (1994) or by looking primarily to the tools of neo-liberalism or other economic or political analyses for understanding development, by such scholars as Chatty (1996; 2002), Leybourne (1996) and Kressel (2003) who have worked in the Middle East and Escritt (1994 [a]; 1994 [b]), Brand (2001) and Chatelard (2003; 2005 [a], [b]) whom have written about Wadi Rum specifically. This investigation emphasizes in detail Bedouin responses, their tools and knowledge as they continue to engage development both critically and through actively seeking to change it. I record and present the perspective of the “intended beneficiary”. If development is for the good of the local community, it should be the local people who provide insight and reflection upon its progress, successes and its failures.

My goal is to understand how the Bedouin clansmen and women have responded to a protected area in their midst, how much they know about what is going on, who is involved, how they were included and excluded and how they have sought to negotiate their place in the protected area’s development thereby seeking their own interests and visions.

The problem therefore rests in understanding what Bedouin as a collective and as separate clans and individuals have had to contend with and the roles they have and seek to play. My case study therefore is not only about the development of the Wadi Rum Protected Area, but also about how the Bedouin have responded to it, what they have done about it, their responses to power

shifts created by development and how they have navigated the imbalances.

Fundamentally, this case study is about *living Bedouin knowledge*.

RESEARCHING AT THE WRPA

As my research progressed five principle objectives emerged for understanding the process of creating and elaborating the WRPA. The first was to establish and gain insight into the complex interplay between the diverse groups of participants at the Reserve. Understanding who, what, why and how particular groups, institutions and individuals helped or were excluded from the WRPA's development exposed diverse interests and objectives. I also investigated whether a 2003 shift in management altered the original development objectives, the degree of power given to aid organizations in exchange for funding and if this influenced project outcomes to better suite funders' objectives that may not be in line with those of the protected area, local people and intended beneficiaries.

An important objective was to learn how WRPA development worked on the ground, how policies impacted local Bedouin communities, and if development was selective in its choice of beneficiaries. I strove to understand how what is deemed by developers, aid organizations and governing bodies to be to the "locals' benefit" works in-situ and Bedouin responses to it. I learned of the on the ground effects mainly from communications with Bedouin, supplemented by other interviews and documentary sources.

The role Bedouin men and women play(ed) in the development of the

WRPA was the third investigative objective. Through communications with Bedouin I sought to establish which clansmen and women were included and participated and to what degree this occurred. I sought to establish if Bedouin were included in environmental protection and tourism development or merely advised of Reserve protocols. The objective was to establish how managers, developers and funders included and excluded Bedouin in decision-making processes and implementation.

The next objective was to ascertain the Bedouin's knowledge of development, including conservation and tourism. How they viewed what development projects have achieved and what the projects have done for them individually and collectively; what they conclude about the "hidden" objectives of developers; their level of importance and control over their lands, their villages and tourism; if development has affected the clans differentially; and, how local knowledge guides their critiques and responses.

The final objective of this research was to determine if development agencies and funder objectives take priority over local objectives and if Bedouin experiences and knowledge are included or ignored in their projects. I sought to establish how Bedouin perceived the level and breadth of their involvement in funder's projects and if they received benefits, who received aid and whether aid was sporadic or dependable.

The manner by which I investigated these five objectives was to examine four pivotal WRPA decisions and related projects; each one devised by the

developers, donors, consultants and management team for the advancement of the protected area. The decisions were:

- 1) to allow a local Bedouin community to remain inside the protected area;
- 2) to build an administrative hub to help control and redistribute tourism benefits;
- 3) to allow an international agency to participate in the development of the Wadi Rum region; and
- 4) to close an important *wadi* to facilitate a species reintroduction project.

The investigation into these projects established who the decision-makers were and the ideological and practical pathways that were instrumental in moulding the WRPA from the beginning to 2009. In this process, the stages of the project, diverging interests and respective involvements and diverse outcomes to date were examined.

Based on the information garnered from my interviews with Bedouin clansmen and women, WRPA employees and private sector stakeholders, what occurred at the Wadi Rum Protected Area can be separated into two distinct development phases; each one prioritizing a particular aspect of the protected area's advancement.

The initial phase was led by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature in Jordan (RSCN). It was during their managerial time that there was a concerted effort by the Reserve management team to initiate, manage and institutionalize environmental protection strategies, projects and an ideology that the local, Bedouin communities were participants. Reorganization, management and monitoring of the local tourism industry were prioritized in compliance with

government and lender objectives.

The second phase began in 2003 following the expiration of the RSCN's contract to manage the WRPA. This was the beginning of the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority's (ASEZA) supervision. At this time, evidence supports a conscious, although not publicized, shift from conservation to prioritizing economically driven initiatives through regional tourism development, as will be highlighted in the following chapters.

RESEARCH THEMES AND FINDINGS

A number of themes emerged from the research. The first theme pertains to justification for environmental protection as the foundation for external governance. A STDP objective to “conserve Wadi Rum as a protected area” for tourism expansion and the degree by which it has achieved this goal is critical to understanding how the project took shape on the ground. Evidence will show that under Reserve management the Wadi Rum ecosystem has been protected very inadequately, despite the good intentions of some WRPA staff. Since ASEZA took over in 2003, environmental protection has played a secondary role to tourism development.

Nevertheless, following my 2002 MA research many Bedouin men and women began to recognize the benefits associated with many of the WRPA's conservation by-laws. Evidence suggests that support for environmental protection regulations was increasing. Also, there was a notable and positive shift in attitude towards protected area employment. In this sense, the

development of the Wadi Rum area had achieved some successes and some praise from the Bedouin communities in addition to their critiques.

Another theme that emerged relates to how the WRPA has diminished Bedouin control over their villages and the tourism industry they helped to create. Rather than provide aid and assistance in the reorganization and revamping of the existing Bedouin tourism industry the *Bedu* have lost control of what had previously been theirs, and another form of tourism and control has been imposed. Justification for control of the area was and continues to be that management of the development of the local tourism trade is necessary to limit its effect on the local ecosystem. Bedouin commentaries suggest that tourism development was mainly for the growth of ASEZA's regional tourism, not for the Bedouin's benefit. Data will show that prior to the establishment of the WRPA there were emerging Bedouin towns and a developing Bedouin tourism industry that was flourishing. Local clansmen and non-Bedouin entrepreneurs worked together and individually to create Wadi Rum's tourism. But this industry did not serve regional governmental interests. Both intentionally and as an unintended consequence of development programs, the evidence supports how the Reserve's efforts to protect and develop the area ultimately led to regulations and monitoring of existing practices that created a new administration of the Bedouin towns. And how aid and assistance were provided to create a new tourism management and control rather than develop the tourism that Bedouin and other entrepreneurs had in place.

Another important theme concerns the uneven distribution of tourism profits, which existed pre-Reserve. Commentaries reveal that the distribution of benefits from today's tourism continues to be uneven despite a decade worth of projects and aid that claimed to create new local opportunities and greater equality. Local understandings suggest that protected area policies meant to alleviate earlier imbalances have intensified existing inequalities among Bedouin, and in some cases have been the cause of new inequities.

Evidence will reveal that the Reserve's intention to facilitate their development objectives has contributed to increased divisiveness amongst the various clans. Some Bedouin report that this was partly intended and therefore intensified by WRPA administrators while others believe it was an unintended consequence of external governance. Regardless of intent, there exists an intensified rivalry between clans most actively pursuing tourism as a livelihood strategy. The overall effect has contributed to a weakened Bedouin role in tourism and in the management of the protected area in general.

In addition, Bedouin highlighted how external funders such as USAID implemented projects to support their interests rather than those of the Bedouin they alleged to be helping. Firsthand accounts illustrate: how funding periods are too short in duration and leave little time to develop the skills and capacities of the local organizations and their staff; how job opportunities are limited and not dependable; how a large portion of the funding is allocated to consultants; what strategies have been employed by the Bedouin to try to keep these projects

afloat; and, how little, if any, aid is applied on the ground to assist in the protected area's conservation efforts.

And lastly, a central theme to this case study is how the Bedouin clans view themselves. Despite their critiques and feelings of betrayal outlined in the following chapters, it became very clear to me during all phases of my investigation that they do not identify themselves as innocent by-standers nor victims. In fact, if the men and women I know were to be confronted with this observation they would be deeply offended. Rather, these individuals are infinitely proud of their heritage, their *Bedouinity* and their commitment to uphold both. They have exhibited fortitude and tenacity as they strive to live their lives within a development project that was neither requested by them nor has it attempted to significantly include them, as will be shown below. Bedouin see themselves as active participants. There are those who choose to point the finger at developers, but in most cases the Bedouin participants recognize a degree of culpability for current circumstances. This admission adds yet another layer to the inherent complexity found at the WRPA.

As a collective, these themes provide a template that I see as emerging from both Bedouin and my analyses of the development decisions and projects that are profiled in chapters 4-7.

METHODOLOGICAL PRACTICE

The initial changes and effects of development decisions and projects were researched for my MA in the fall of 2002. I spent approximately six weeks

interviewing Bedouin men and women from the Wadi Rum region's seven clans to learn about the level of Bedouin satisfaction, participation, gains and losses regarding the WRPA's policies, management and intervention at that time. I lived in Rum Village while visiting Bedouin living in the surrounding villages and in the desert. I used a male interpreter and a Zawaydeh woman as my female interpreter when interviewing Bedouin women. The results from this investigation provided a baseline for future research and comparisons.

It was during my MA investigation that I established a relationship with the managers of the WRPA and the RSCN. Prior to traveling to Jordan, I contacted Mr. Yehya Khalid from the RSCN to inform him of my impending investigation. He offered to me the opportunity to produce a document on the historical lifeways of Wadi Rum's Bedouin clans in exchange for housing, an interpreter and transportation. This association facilitated access to organizational records, the management team, interpreters and drivers. The historical information provided an extensive knowledge and overview of changes to the Wadi Rum environment that have influenced the lives and the established livelihood strategies of these Bedouin clans, and that complimented what I learned from talking with Bedouin themselves (see Chapter 2).

My MA results revealed that policy driven environmental protection and socio-economic initiatives designed to improve the lives of the local Bedouin populace and help protect the ecosystem did not provide satisfactory results up to that point.

I returned to the Wadi Rum Protected Area to initiate the first phase of my PhD project in the fall of 2005. I implemented open-ended key-informant interviews and participant observation, similar to 2002. I lived in Rum Village with a Zalabiah family. Having become extremely ill, my ability to travel and interview Bedouin men and women was limited although I was able to meet with a few clansmen and women in nearby locations. I employed the female interpreter I had worked with in 2002 and a Zalabiah man when interviewing male informants. A large percentage of my time was spent observing tourism activities in Rum Village and talking to English speakers – tourists, Bedouin men and women and storekeepers. The men and women I first met in 2002 shared their knowledge of the changes since that time. This was a low period in Middle Eastern tourism due to the build-up associated with the Iraq War. It offered an opportunity to examine Bedouin responses to post 9-11 conditions. After 2.5 months of illness, I returned to Canada to convalesce.

The next phase of the PhD research, January-December 2007, constituted the heart of my doctoral investigation. After an absence due to my mother's illness and subsequent passing, I returned to the field to implement the same methodology that worked well during my MA research and in 2005. I lived in Rum Village located inside the Reserve from Monday to Friday with another Zalabiah family that had been involved in Wadi Rum tourism for an extended period of time. Living with this family allowed me the opportunity to see how families network in their efforts to advance their stake in the local trade. On

weekends, I lived with a second family in the neighbouring village of Ad Diseh located outside of the protected area. The family members were from the Zawaydeh clan. Unlike the Zalabiah family, they had only recently become involved in tourism. I was able to observe firsthand how tourism affected them. This was the family of the female interpreter I originally met in 2002. Our time together was spent interviewing 2002 and new participants, women and some older men from Swailheen, Gedman, Zawaydeh and Mazanah villages. I also worked with a Zalabiah woman who assisted with Rum Village female interviews. I hired a Zalabiah man as my male interpreter. He operated a tourism business, worked at the protected area's Visitor Centre and was my landlord. We interviewed men living in villages and in the desert. I spent many evenings with tourists visiting his desert camp.

The various phases of research have enabled me to investigate development at the WRPA over a continuum. By maintaining contact with earlier participants in the research, changes that had occurred since 2002 and 2005 could be tracked as well as how these changes were understood by these Bedouin men and women. Becoming reacquainted with earlier research participants granted me the rare opportunity to learn from them how they were experiencing the protected area during various phases of its development, perceived benefits, criticisms and their level of inclusion. Because many of them lived a lifestyle that involved much time in the desert, they were able to comment on any environmental changes they had witnessed. I was also

introduced to new key-informants who shared their experiences and views.

I took advantage of every opportunity to participate in Bedouin cultural events such as weddings, Bedouin tourism and meetings with members of the protected area. I visited the Bedouin Reserve rangers while they were on duty in the desert and members of the Reserve's management team at the Visitor Centre. Interviews with various cooperative and project leaders and participants focussed on the nuances associated with contemporary Bedouin living, clan and individual responses to government development decisions and projects, environmental management and challenges associated with livelihood choices. I also became acquainted with several non-Bedouin businessmen and learned about their contributions to the WRPA.

During this period I had the opportunity to serve as a short-term consultant for the Productive Village Cooperative located in Salhia Village, a Bedouin village on the outskirts of the WRPA. Due to my friendship with the manager who was also a member of the WRPA management team, I agreed to participate in discussions geared towards creating the *Bedouin Life Project* that will be discussed in Chapter 6 while meeting with intended Bedouin men and women beneficiaries. I collaborated on the development of a camel trek. I agreed to participate in the creation of this project because it provided access to what Bedouin ideas and practices were during a tourism development process. I did not receive financial compensation for my contributions.

The final stage of my investigation was conducted during the fall of 2009.

I returned to the WRPA to finalize the documentation project that was initiated in 2002 with the RSCN noted above and to explore any changes during my one year absence. While there I received a short-term consultancy with USAID to update the WRPA Socio-economic Survey as part of the USAID funded Wadi Rum Protected Area Nomination as a UNESCO World Heritage site. I conducted interviews, using the same methodologies implemented during my MA and PhD research, with Bedouin men and women living in villages and in the desert to learn their overall opinion on the protected area's successes and failures since 1998. This investigation complimented my PhD research providing an overview from which to look at the overall effects of the developers' decisions and projects over a decade. Analogous to earlier visits, I established the changes that had occurred since my last visit. I was also given insight into funder objectives and how USAID achieves its goals.

Four types of note taking occurred while conducting the various phases of my research. During sessions with non-English speakers, both the female and male interpreters translated the interviewee's responses. I hand wrote the translations adding details I felt were pertinent to the discussion. Later, I typed responses directly into my laptop computer. References to these interviews are denoted in the thesis by (IS) for Interview Session. Another type of note taking refers to verbatim quotations. Some interviews were tape recorded and then transcribed; they are referenced with (TS) for Taped Session. Many of my discussions were with English speakers. I did not use an interpreter during these

formal or informal sessions. Notes were taken during the discussion if the meeting had been pre-arranged or afterwards if it was a chance encounter. A (FN) identifies them in the thesis as Field Notes. Lastly, personal correspondence was an important form of data collection. E-mails, telephone calls or other forms of communication not involving face-to-face connections in the field are represented by (PC).

There was an inherent complexity associated with the writing of this dissertation as a result of my numerous visits and assembling of material spanning a decade of research. On the one hand, diverse factors led to many difficulties and visions for organizing materials and the dissertation. On the other, the Bedouin commentaries and my experiences with the men, women and children provided a rich and uninterrupted learning environment from which to write. Both the style of formatting and of writing emerged from these moments and the lessons they provided. This, my acquired knowledge, is often written and presented first, with supportive and often erudite Bedouin quotations, the source of my learning, following.

In the following chapters, Bedouin responses to and experiences with the WRPA, ASEZA and other development agencies and their respective personnel appear critical in nature with few if any comments on benefits or successes, such as environmental protection by-laws and new employment opportunities. I wrote from this perspective not because I wanted to showcase only a negative side to development, but because this is the lived Bedouin experience and the

collective knowledge of development and its associated projects as witnessed at the WRPA and told to me. Although I have written from this perspective, I am acutely aware that aspects of the overall project and members of the protected area management team I have worked with for over a decade and consider good friends have remained diligent in their efforts to move the project forward and maintain an optimistic outlook despite the mandates of governing bodies and agencies. It is their opinion and mine that much could and can still be done to improve the current situation at the Wadi Rum Protected Area for the benefit of the Bedouin clans, the developers and the ecosystem.

APPLYING RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTING BEDOUIN KNOWLEDGE

I also gained insight into development practices and agencies by feeding the results and products that this research was creating into projects the Bedouin wanted to see accomplished as part of the development processes. These applied research engagements were ways to meet some of the obligations that I had to Bedouin, ways to try to make the knowledge they shared relevant and available in development activities and ways to expand the forms of research information that I could access. I sought to use my research to have an impact in the way that Sillitoe (2002) and others suggest, that research should be both applied and knowledge seeking at the same time.²¹ I did this through a number of reports and projects I completed during various phases of my MA and PhD research,

²¹ For a discussion of doing research and applying research as an engaged process see Sillitoe (2002), which I discuss briefly in Chapter 1.

each of which applied some of my results up to that time, and in the process, afforded new opportunities to expand my investigation.

My original engagement with the RSCN in 2002 fostered interview sessions with local Bedouin men and women, some in villages and others at desert homesteads, to learn about their histories. This was my introduction to “local knowledge.” But my investigation also provided tangible evidence of what was happening in a contemporary context. Interview sessions began with discussions about the past then moved quickly to contemporary living conditions. Recording and understanding what these Bedouin men and women thought about, how they experienced change and how they analysed the processes that were now an intrinsic part of their living helped me identify why they were dissatisfied with the project and the “benefits” they were promised by the developers. As I listened and recorded the various exchanges, it became imperative that I showcase the Bedouin of Wadi Rum as the purveyors of *their* histories and *their* experiences with the WRPA. In this sense, I became a cultural translator for their expressions not an owner or an “expert.” I was able to do this first in my MA thesis entitled *Struggling to Balance Environmental Protection and Ecotourism with Bedouin Needs: The Wadi Rum Protected Area* (2004) and later by contributing to the making of an archive and associated projects, as will be illustrated.

Another impetus for including Bedouin knowledge in my thesis came from my experiences with many non-Bedouin while conducting my research.

Through various interactions I soon learned how many Jordanians felt about the Bedouin tribes in their midst. One encounter stands out and exemplifies the many comments I have heard in this regard. One day in 2007 I boarded a bus in Aqaba enroute to Amman. A distinguished gentleman in his thirties sat beside me. He was a physician whose patients were primarily Bedouin women, many from the Wadi Rum area. When I told him that I lived in Rum Village he did not hide his shock. He said, “Maximum, one day. I could only live with them for one day.” Now it was my turn to be shocked. It was okay for him to earn his living from these people, but he was unwilling to spend any time with them outside of a professional context. I soon found that this was not an uncommon response. Many of the developers and funding personnel I have met over the years shared similar sentiments. From my experience, colonial ideologies still exist with many of these developers and local administrators whereby they are in Wadi Rum to help people they perceive as unable and/or unwilling to help themselves.

While conducting my research, I ran into a number of unanticipated difficulties and hardships, namely the passing of both of my parents, all of which contributed to the prolonged completion of the promised RSCN document. Over the years and with my growing awareness about *local knowledge*, what was to have been a report ultimately to be filed away on a shelf in the RSCN’s library was transformed into something on a much grander scale with a potentially significant impact upon the protected area for the benefit of the Bedouin clans.

With the support of Jamal Al Zaidaneen, the WRPA's Nature Conservation Division Head, we received funding from the H. H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed A'al Nahyan Project for Arabian Oryx Reintroduction, UAE Ministry of the Environment & the Wadi Rum Protected Area, to act on our vision and further develop what had become a "project."

This collaboration resulted in the publication of a hardcover book based on the local knowledge garnered from the Bedouin men and women I interviewed in 2002. *This is the Life: An Archive of the Historical Lifeways of Wadi Rum's Bedouin Tribes* was written from the informant's contributions. The six main clans were represented as separate chapters (the Zalabiah and Mazanah clans were grouped together). Despite repetition due to each clan having similar responses to a shared way of life, the six chapters pay homage to each clan as an important contributor of local knowledge. Photographs of the various participants were included in each clan's respective chapter.

In the fall of 2009, the document was printed and presented to the Bedouin communities in an official presentation ceremony held at the WRPA Visitor Centre along with local dignitaries and government officials. Sixty copies of the Archive, as it is referred to, were given as gifts to participants, funders and local authorities as a token of appreciation. A large A2 size version was presented to the manager of the WRPA to be put on permanent display at the Visitor Centre. Due to its size and the vinyl used in its production, it was printed in three separate, leather bound books, now on exhibit. Three A2 copies were sent to the

Ministry of the Environment of the United Arab Emirates in appreciation for its support. Two copies were sent to the Hashemite Royal Family in Jordan with other copies presented to three libraries in Amman, representatives of ASEZA, the RSCN and the Bedouin participants. After the presentation of the book, all of the guests were given the opportunity to ride a camel to the designated lunch site where a traditional Bedouin meal was prepared for all. All of the Bedouin sheikhs and elders present took up the offer to ride camelback. It was a sight to behold and a moment that encapsulated the spirit of the event and the methodology.

Another aspect of this project was derived from the lack of Bedouin representation at the protected area's Visitor Centre, the location where tourists get their first glimpse of what the WRPA has to offer its visitors. Early on there was little evidence that Bedouin were thriving members of the Wadi Rum community, albeit for their employment at the Centre, the small exhibit inside the Interpretation Room and the cluster of Bedouin jeeps waiting to take tourists through the Reserve. Inside the complex there was little representation of their historical and current presence in the area. To complement the presentation of the Archive document, fifty photographs of Bedouin men, women and children were enlarged and framed and presented as part of a permanent display at the WRPA's Visitor Centre. Five of the photographs were historical pictures I was able to borrow from local clansmen; forty-five were mine from various phases of my research. The "Peopling of the Visitor Centre" has had an unanticipated

outcome. Many of the Bedouin men and women who participated in various phases of my research have passed away. This exhibit now honours their memory and their contributions to the region and recognizes them as part of what is now the WRPA.

CHAPTER OUTLINES

Chapter 1 is a review of two bodies of literature foundational to my research. *Bedouin and development* and *local or indigenous knowledge* are reviewed. I indicate how this thesis will expand upon and contribute to this scholarship.

Chapter 2 situates Wadi Rum and the Hwaitat and Al Enezah Bedouin clans who lay claim to its lands. It spotlights the region's physicality, its human history and the changes that led to sedentary living by most Bedouin in the pre-WRPA period. Based on Bedouin commentaries, private sector stakeholders and WRPA management commentaries and documentation, the early years of Wadi Rum's tourism are profiled to establish pre-existing conditions from which to examine the four development decisions and projects I focus on.

Chapter 3 traces the establishment of the WRPA. It explores the conditions that facilitated its creation, the early years of the RSCN's management and the shift to ASEZA governance. It highlights Bedouin responses to the various development phases emphasizing some of the Reserve's successes and failures along the way.

The focus of Chapter 4 is the examination of the decision to leave a

community inside the protected area and the consequences of this decision. Rum Village is the only village to exist within the Reserve's boundaries. The investigation probes into the realities of living inside a conservation site and how the rules and regulations used to govern the protected area have affected village inhabitants²² and how this situation is seen by Bedouin as more complex than was originally envisaged. In it I show how most of the residents have developed an extensive knowledge of how the protected area and tourism development work, of developers' agendas and potential consequences for the Bedouin.

In Chapter 5, I explore the decision to build a multi-million dollar administration Centre as the protected area's new tourism hub. The discussion highlights how the location of the new Centre, approximately seven to eight km. north of Rum Village, has generated many outcomes that have affected the Bedouin tourism operators, the clans and the local tourism trade contributing to a shift in tourism benefits. I show how Bedouin men and women evaluate tourism development and how they critique the failure to develop it in a way that keeps pace with Bedouin population growth and needs, albeit acknowledging the uncertainties the industry faces. I show that Bedouin from all clans have critiqued how the benefits of tourism are allocated by development planners in ways that systematically keep Bedouin in opposition to each other and that Bedouin awareness of this process is one

²² This is different from the Bedouin families who live inside the protected area in tents.

basis of their criticism of the social and political effects of the management of tourism developments. Bedouin commentaries reveal that the new tourism hub has weakened them in their dealings with the authorities because they are more divided post-WRPA creation.

Chapter 6 highlights how the decision to allow international institutions such as USAID into the area's development has affected the Bedouin participants and camp owners, women's cooperatives and the environment. Four case studies are investigated to show how external aid functions and how it assesses the effectiveness of projects that are oriented towards increasing socio-economic benefits. I show that Bedouin critique how the needs of international funding agencies have clear precedence over local wants and aspirations and that many Bedouin have learned how projects do not create conditions that make sustained programs possible. They also critique agencies for manipulating the appearance of Bedouin participation by seeking high profile *Bedu* to support projects with promises of benefits that are often unfulfilled. Such local consent lets agencies claim that there is local participation and that projects are a success when it is clear that the opposite is the case. To preserve their claims, agencies have a further impetus to ignore Bedouin and their understandings.

The decision to close an important wadi to facilitate the reintroduction of Arabian Oryx to the Wadi Rum area is the focus of Chapter 7. Bedouin commentaries indicate how this decision has affected members of three Bedouin clans. The investigation reveals how development promises remain

unfulfilled and how outside needs continue to take precedence when seeking “approval” from the local community. In it I show how the Bedouin’s appreciation of their need for and pride in the tourism potential of their lands, and their pride in their own ways of life and skills leads to a willingness to cooperate with tourism agencies and projects. This remains the case despite their systematic exclusion from effective participation and the repeated failure of projects. I also show how development projects do not recognize Bedouin participation, inputs, costs or losses and how they can actually reduce people’s well-being and resources.

Chapter 8 discusses the overall results and conclusion. It reviews the *living Bedouin knowledge* of the four decisions and how Bedouin experiences, analyses and comprehension of the overall project have been both intuitive and astute. Their commentaries support accusations that conservation was a ruse for the WRPA’s development and that control of the local tourism industry was the ultimate objective, whether it was for different development agencies and managers, intentional or consequential. A summary of the research’s contributions to the literature follows as well as future directions for the WRPA and conservation and development projects more generally.

CHAPTER 1 LITERATURE REVIEW AND MY CONTRIBUTIONS

BEDOUIN AND DEVELOPMENT

This thesis will contribute primarily to two bodies of literature - *Bedouin and development* and *local or indigenous knowledge*.

The scholarship dedicated to *Bedouin and development* is very diverse. In my review I show the variability in meaning of “development” for the Bedouin tribes as well as the scholarship that exists for diverse regions of the Middle East where Bedouin communities exist. The review also shows how scholars think about Bedouin in terms of development from the 1990s onwards, changes to an historical lifeway, relations with governments and involvements with international development projects and how each have affected various Bedouin groups.

Various scholars have highlighted the desire of diverse Middle Eastern governments to develop the Bedouin through a variety of debedouinization projects. Sedentarization schemes were implemented to change what was viewed as an inferior lifestyle (Powell Cole 1975; Falah 1985; Barakat 1993). Arab novelist and sociologist Halim Barakat supported this in *The Arab World: Society, Culture, and State* (1993) where he stated that Middle Eastern countries exerted great “pressure and enticement to encourage (B)edouin to abandon their primitive way of life and settle down” (1993: 54). But, Powell Cole, an anthropologist who studied the Al Murrah Bedouin of Saudi Arabia, noted in

Nomads of the Nomads: The Al Murrah Bedouin of the Empty Quarter (1975)

that it was cultural prejudice that enforced settling initiatives (1975: 145). In his essay, *How Israel Controls the Bedouin in Israel* (1985), geographer Ghazi Falah suggested that the official reason behind the controlling of the Israeli Bedouin can be found in that government's desire to appropriate their land and animals (1985: 42).

A number of scholars have written about Bedouin and development in terms of their identity in changing nations. Gideon M. Kressel, an applied anthropologist, in *Let Shepherding Endure* (2003), surveyed Bedouin history to illustrate “that nomadic life in the Middle East represented a political adaptation as well as an ecological one” (2003: xvi). Tribalism as a form of political identity was explored by Linda Layne in *The Dialogics of Tribal Self-Representation in Jordan* (1989). Beginning with the late King Hussein, the Hashemite family have publicly claimed descent from the noblest of Bedouin tribes. The implication of this declaration transformed the Bedouin in Jordan to that of a national icon (Barakat 1993).

Other scholars have focused on issues of identity and resistance to the state. In social anthropologist Nigel Rapport's 1992 essay, *Discourse and Individuality: Bedouin Talk in the Western Desert and the South Sinai*, the Mzeina Bedouin of the Sinai Peninsula speak about their social reality. Both men and women look to symbolic reconstructions of identity and community in their daily accountings of Bedouin life through their stories and legends as a

form of resistance against Israel (1992). In this way, the Mzeina recite allegories that “symbolically confront the spatial and temporal boundaries of the occupying state (Israel)” (1992: 18).

Identity and resistance were also the focus of Longina Jakubowska’s 1992 essay *Resisting Ethnicity: The Israeli State and Bedouin Identity*. In it she identified Bedouin actions as a form of resistance to the Israeli government. She claimed that it was the Bedouin’s choice to remain in marginal, isolated areas and their

refusal to participate in the discourse of nationalism is an effective means of resistance against state hegemony over identity (1992: 86).

Marina Leybourne’s 1998 research on Syrian Bedouin provides a geographical review of agro-pastoral Bedouin of the Syrian steppe. In *The Adaptability of Syrian Bedouin Production Systems* she demonstrated how Bedouin groups have managed to adapt their production systems to environmental changes and encroaching modernization in an effort to maintain pastoralism as a lifestyle and as a major source of income (1998). She emphasized the importance of Bedouin production systems to the country’s economy and how the eradication of pastoral nomadism would be detrimental to all.

In *The Tribes of Jordan at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century* (1999) Ghazi bin Muhammad described how the Bedouin can be both a danger and resource to governments. The chapter, “The Predicament of the Tribes in the Modern World,” highlighted his view on the Bedouin’s struggle to exist and

to maintain their nobility during changing times. He stated:

...the predicament facing the Arab Tribes at the beginning of the Twenty-first Century – and *ipso facto*, the challenge facing their governments – is how their choleric energy can be channelled and made to serve socially productive and economically self-sustainable goals, and thereby provide them with honourable employment that allows them their ancient dignity and their virile nobility, whilst sublimating or (better yet) utilizing their martial passions (1999: 58).

A number of scholars have written about Bedouin from the perspective of international development projects and changing environmental conditions.

One scholar in particular, anthropologist Dawn Chatty, has written extensively on these issues. In *Mobile Pastoralists: Development Planning and Social Change in Oman* (1996) she exposed how a people-based United Nations Development Program (UNDP) project in the Sultanate of Oman (1981-1983) created social change for the Harasiis Bedouin it was meant to assist. The theoretical objective for UNDP aid was to provide modern social services to some of Oman's remote Bedouin tribes while encouraging the continuation of their nomadic lifestyle. Her investigation came at a time when participation was becoming important in development planning. She revealed that the new infrastructure changed the Bedouin's environmental space while having serious implications for the continuation of a traditional Bedouin life without effectively involving the Bedouin. She revealed how putting people first is often regarded as little more than a goodwill appeal to the humanitarian feelings of project planners at the national level (1996:187).

In *Animal Reintroduction Projects in the Middle East* (2002) Chatty reviewed faunal reintroduction projects in Oman, Syria and Jordan. She showed

how the inclusion of local people into conservation projects has occurred primarily in the discourse. In fact, she stated that these projects have generated a “human-less” face to Middle Eastern conservation projects which while: often couched in the contemporary developmental jargon of ‘participation’ and ‘grass roots’ support, in actuality continued to regard local human populations as obstacles to be overcome – either through monetary compensation or with special terms of local employment – instead of as partners in sustainable conservation and development (2002).

Her essay showed how participation in protected area management is often nominal and participatory practices may take little account of indigenous institutions and processes of decision-making (2002). She argued that project failures will continue to persist if local people are not included.

The inclusion of local people was also the focus for Dawn Chatty and Marcus Colchester, a social anthropologist, in *Conservation and Mobile Indigenous Peoples* (2002). In it they highlighted how the inclusion of local people, including Bedouin, has often been a scheme for achieving the voluntary submission of people to protected area projects thereby supporting passive participation and participation for material incentives (2002: 10).

Of particular interest are the few scholars whom have written about Wadi Rum’s development and the Bedouin clans of the area. In 1994, Tony Escritt wrote about the growth and impact of tourism on the Wadi Rum region in *Will Tourism Kill Wadi Rum?* and in a survey for tourism development, *Wadi Rum, South Jordan A Visitor Survey* (1994 [a]). These documents were written years before the implementation of the Wadi Rum Protected Area. In the former he

highlighted that Jordan's tourism is the "meeting of two quite different minds," meaning the Bedouin's desire to break out of poverty and an "elitist group of visitors want(ing) to see traditional ways...." (1994 [b]: 62). He noted how the very thing visitors have come to see is being spoiled by poor management, inadequate resources, greed, and a lack of integrity in terms of information dissemination (ibid.).

Development of Wadi Rum was explored by Laurie A. Brand several years later in *Development in Wadi Rum? State Bureaucracy, External Funders, and Civil Society* (2001). In this essay she investigated

several tourism-related projects proposed for or carried out in Wadi Rum...in the 1990s. Rum's story illustrates the complex nature of state, external funder, and civil-society institutions' relations and makes clear the need for context-sensitive assessments of the role and potential for civil society in promoting more effective, transparent, and locally beneficial development policies (2001: 572).

This was supported by social anthropologist and historian Geraldine Chatelard who has written a number of essays on Wadi Rum's Bedouin and tourism. In her 2002 essay, *Conflicts of Interest Over the Wadi Rum Reserve: Were They Avoidable? A Socio-political Critique*, she discussed the development of the WRPA and the opposition that resulted between the Bedouin of Rum and the developers. Examining the political and cultural aspects of the conflict, she noted:

the argument is that the crisis was unavoidable because it had underlying causes that were neither technical nor managerial, therefore not falling within (or *only* within) the RSCN's competence. Typically, the planning and implementing agencies have tackled the whole question of the involvement of the local Bedouin community only from the socio-economic angle, as if economic well-being was able to dilute all cultural and identity claims. Neither at the planning nor at the implementation level was any consideration given to the political and cultural implications of the project for the local community (2003: 139).

Chatelard later wrote in 2005 in her essay *Desert Tourism as a Substitute for Pastoralism? Tuareg in Algeria and Bedouin in Jordan* about two desert tourism case studies – the Tuareg of the Algerian Great South and the Bedouin of Wadi Rum - to look at their similarities and differences. In terms of the latter's tourism, she claimed:

Tourism in Wadi Rum economically benefits the whole community and beyond, but it has also introduced inequalities of wealth, an inevitable trend as the local economy is becoming more tied up to global capitalist market forces. Because of these forces, it is unrealistic to expect that tourism will be efficient in reducing extreme poverty (2005[b]: 731-732).

In another 2005 essay, *Tourism and representations: Of social change and power relations in Wadi Ramm, Southern Jordan*, Chatelard explored how various representational systems and modes interact with each other when the logics of international and national tourism development come to meet the vernacular versions of place and identity (2005[b]: 194).

In her final analysis, she stated how

representations are also primary factors in the contest over power, recognition and survival in a world where the logic of economic globalisation of the ultra-liberal types can only be fought with the tools it has helped to create (2005[b]: 248).

This thesis builds on these earlier studies of Bedouin and development, and especially the earlier research at Wadi Rum in a number of ways. It supports many of the findings of researchers like Chatty and Chatelard with a detailed analysis from nearly a decade of research. But it also takes a distinctly different approach than that of Chatelard, and many other researchers, by not looking primarily to the tools of economic or political analyses of development for

understandings of responses to development, but by examining in detail Bedouin responses, tools and knowledge as they continue to engage development both critically and through renewed actively seeking effective participation.

It will also move beyond what has been written about Wadi Rum's development through its investigation of the impact of the WRPA project upon all of the seven affected Bedouin clans and their communities.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

The second body of scholarship my thesis will contribute to is an emerging literature that focuses on the question of "local or indigenous knowledge." Moving beyond popular traditional environmental knowledge (TEK), local knowledge as I and others use it encompasses all aspects of understanding, experiences with and evaluations of development. This is an important way for development researchers and practitioners to understand how projects are affecting local communities and how local communities understand relations between development by themselves and others. It can serve as both a critique of and a compliment to the development discourse critiqued by numerous scholars as reviewed below.

In *Encountering Development the Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (1995) anthropologist Arturo Escobar explored development discourse. In it he showed how it supported one body of knowledge while excluding others:

Development has relied exclusively on one knowledge system, namely, the modern Western one. The dominance of this knowledge system has dictated the marginalization and disqualification of non-Western knowledge systems. In these latter knowledge systems, the authors conclude, researchers and activists

might find alternative rationalities to guide social action away from economic and reductionistic ways of thinking (1995: 13).

He elaborated on development as a discourse in another essay, *The Making and Unmaking of the Third World Through Development* (1997). To better understand its power and dominance and exclusivity he stated:

The system of relations establishes a discursive practice that sets the rules of the game: who can speak, from what points of view, with what authority, and according to what criteria of expertise; it sets the rules that must be followed for this or that problem, theory or object to emerge and be named, analyzed, and eventually transformed into a policy or a plan (1997: 87).

Escobar provided another way to do anthropological work on development that moves beyond the study of the development machine in the sense developed by Ferguson (1990). In *Encountering Development the Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (1995) he emphasized the study of the effects of the institutions of development:

Unlike standard anthropological works on development, which take as their primary object of study the people to be “developed,” understanding the discursive and institutional construction of client categories requires that attention be shifted to the institutional apparatus that is doing the “developing” (Ferguson 1990, xiv). Turning the apparatus itself into an anthropological object involves an institutional ethnography that moves from the textual and work practices of institutions to the effects of those practices in the world, that is, to how they contribute to structuring the conditions under which people think and live their lives (1995: 107).

Economist Gustavo Esteva and educator Madhu Suri Prakash encouraged a new way of thinking in their essay, *From Global Thinking to Local Thinking* (1997). In it these two scholars suggested that

(w)e can only think wisely about what we actually know well. And no person, however sophisticated, intelligent and overloaded with the information-age state-of-the-art technologies, can ever ‘know’ the Earth – except by reducing it

statistically, as all modern institutions tend to do today, supported by reductionist scientists (1997: 279).

They proposed how local can be more effective in their applications:

Local proposals, if they are conceived by communities rooted in specific places, reflect the *radical pluralism* of cultures and the unique *cosmivision* that defines every culture: an awareness of the places and responsibilities of humans in the cosmos (1997: 285).

This is in fact what this thesis is striving to achieve by identifying local or indigenous knowledge from the experiences of those development has affected.

In *Anthropology and Development: Understanding Contemporary Social Change* (2005), Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan argued for a socio-anthropology of change and development that is a deeply empirical, multi-dimensional, diachronic study of social groups and their interactions, combining analysis of social practices and consciousness (2005). When discussing development's "Arenas and Strategic Groups", the anthropologist stressed:

Let me say it again: the inevitable 'discrepancy' between a development operation on paper and a development operation in the field is merely the result of the different ways in which actors 'appropriate' the operation in question. In other words, certain individuals or social groups have the ability to twist the project to their own ends, either directly or indirectly (2005: 186).

It is this ability to either control or "react" to the development institutions and their processes that produces diverse responses:

The ways in which actors employ their respective visible or invisible capabilities (active or passive, action or impediment, discreet or overt) in the face of the opportunities presented by a development project result in the emergence of a micro-development policy (2005: 187).

He suggested that in terms of anthropological research

this type of perspective obliges us both to examine the strategies that different

categories of actors deploy, and to do research on the diversity of social codes and norms of behaviour which serve as references to these strategies (of developpees and developers alike).....(2005: 187).

It is from these perspectives that local knowledge of development and its effects as well as the strategies of the “developpees” become part of a new development discourse. Whereby, the singular knowledge that has been foundational to development is not replaced but enhanced with the addition of an “alternative” or counter system that looks at, identifies and analyzes the development institution in ways that support the group of “developpees” and their environmental niche.

Anthropologist Paul Sillitoe stated that there is a revolution occurring in the pursuit of ethnography and few anthropologists are involved (2002: 1). In his essay, *Participant observation to participatory development: Making anthropology work* (2002), he referred to a shift from top-down intervention to a grassroots participatory perspective. He stated that the time has come for anthropology to consolidate its place in development practice, not merely as frustrated post-project critic but as implementing partner (2002: 1). He suggested that this should be done by engaging in dilemmas and by helping the people. It will be through a new field of specialization known as indigenous or local knowledge that anthropology becomes part of the development team (2002: 2).

A number of case studies highlight the intentions of various researchers to achieve a new knowledge and discourse in development research. In 1996 Joseph Hobbs, a human geographer, emphasized the importance of communicating with local Bedouin groups to achieve greater success in

environmental protection projects. In *Speaking with People in Egypt's St. Katherine National Park* he highlighted how talking with the four Egyptian Bedouin tribes that would be affected by the St. Katherine National Park before development helped to establish their role, contributions and benefits. He was all too aware of the difficulties associated with this new conservation strategy and the high likelihood that it may fall prey to the same types of mistakes made by other environmental protectorates in the past. In 1996 he remained optimistic that

(d)ialogue with local people may help create successful long-term means of reconciling human needs with environmental conservation” (1996: 1).

In *Residents' attitudes toward three protected areas in southwestern Nepal*

(2007), Teri D. Allendorf emphasized the importance of acquiring local input.

The author stated that

understanding people's beliefs and attitudes towards protected areas is a key factor in developing successful management plans to conserve those areas over the long-term (2007: 2087).

This study addressed the need to explore people's feelings toward protected areas in a way that allows them to define and describe the values they hold toward the areas and the relevant issues and concepts (ibid.).

Another case study that emphasized local knowledge is Stuart Kirsch's *Reverse Anthropology: Indigenous Analysis of Social and Environmental Relations in New Guinea* (2006). In it he investigated two political struggles of the Yonggom of Papua New Guinea using indigenous modes of analysis. He stated

(r)ather than treat indigenous analysis and modernity as though they were opposed or mutually exclusive, I seek to make explicit the contribution of Yonggom modes of analysis to their ability to comprehend and learn from their engagements with capital, the state, and global forces that might have been expected to overwhelm them (2006: 5).

I contribute to this diverse body of academic research and scholarship on development and local knowledge in a number of ways. Most importantly I do this by using the local or indigenous knowledge from the Bedouin or *developees* to understand how they think about a Jordanian conservation-tourism project, how they experienced it and how they analysed it. Understanding what these people say, why they are saying it and how their interactions with the development institution(s) have affected their lives at the Wadi Rum Protected Area is an exploration and contribution to these new ways of researching development. My thesis details how this developed in the following chapters and I review what was learned in the conclusion.

I was also able to do this by infusing local Bedouin knowledge into a number of reports I wrote for developers and funders. In *Improving Relations with Rum's Villagers: Identifying and Prioritizing Local Issues* (2009) and *Are Hybrids a Viable Option for the Wadi Rum Protected Area?* (2009), I used local knowledge to expose concerns held by many of Rum Village's inhabitants for ASEZA's Environmental Commissioner and the body representing the WRPA's World Heritage Nomination. This methodology was foundational when I updated the WRPA's socio-economic survey as part of the USAID funded World Heritage Nomination. I also provided recommendations for the

development of a new Wadi Rum Protected Area Management Plan. I used Bedouin experiences and their analyses of the protected area since its implementation to highlight changes that have occurred since 1998, what they felt did and did not work for them and their suggestions for the future.

This thesis will also contribute in another way, by bringing Bedouin voices to the forefront. This was done by moving the focus of my investigation beyond the development machine to the effects of the development institution on the Bedouin or *developees*. I move beyond earlier analyses that looked mostly at Rum's villagers in relation to development to provide a broad cross-section of the local Bedouin populace. By sharing their knowledge of what has happened to them, to their landscapes and to their livelihoods, the development of the WRPA has been showcased in a different light to what developers, funders, governments and other scholars have offered. What the Bedouin have expressed is that the project as a whole has hindered them more than helped them. By presenting "their local knowledge" this thesis will hopefully be important for them. And finally, the inclusion of local knowledge provides definitive evidence that Wadi Rum's Bedouin are highly knowledgeable and proactive people who are acutely aware of what is being done in their name.

CONCLUSION

Two broad bodies of literature were reviewed to elucidate the scholarly underpinnings of this research and the ways in which this thesis will contribute

to the existing literature. A review of contemporary scholarship on Bedouin and development revealed the diversity of research in the Middle East region and the variability in meaning of Bedouin “development.” It also showcased local or indigenous knowledge literature and that which supported its adoption in anthropological research.

In the following chapter, Chapter 2, Bedouin life prior to the establishment of the WRPA is profiled. Using local knowledge, Bedouin men and women recall the ways of the past, the factors that contributed to their sedentarization, and the emergence of Bedouin tourism in the Wadi Rum area. A number of non-Bedouin businessmen and members of the protected area’s management team involved in the early years of tourism also share their recollections of these times.

CHAPTER 2 BEDOUIN LIVES, SEDENTARIZATION AND BEDOUIN- LED TOURISM

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews how the Bedouin of the Wadi Rum area lived prior to the existence of the WRPA, the origins of regional tourism and the establishment of the Reserve. In it I explore how the intersection of environmental degradation, cultural practices and a regional tourism specialization was the impetus for the conservation-development project. I indicate how the clansmen and women who practiced a long and established local, livelihood strategy came to live with and to some degree be under the influence of regional and national governors and administrations, international development agencies and conservationists.

HISTORICAL VIEWS

Bedouin tribes have historically been represented in the literature as the quintessential primitive or pre-urban society, throwbacks to an earlier time in human history (Johnson 1918; Murray 1935; Elphinston 1944; Shanklin 1953; Harris 1958). Late 14th century historiographer Ibn Khaldun wrote about their simplicity and “natural state” (see Rosenthal 1958). In *World without Time: The Bedouin*, mid-twentieth century explorers Nevins and Wright claimed that the Bedouin practiced “a way of life essentially unchanged since the times of Abraham” (1969). The deep connection between the Bedouin and their desert environment is evident in the literal translation of the Arabic word for Bedouin -

badawy or *bedu*, meaning “inhabitant of the desert” (Murray 1935, Harris 1958, bin Muhammad 1999).

This latter reference was the case, at least until the middle of the 20th century, for the Bedouin of the Wadi Rum region. For hundreds, possibly thousands, of years the nomadic *Hwaitat* and *Al Enezah* tribes navigated the desert²³ margins of what is today internationally recognized as southern Jordan and northwestern Saudi Arabia. In the *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, T. E. Lawrence claimed that the Hwaitat identified their tribe as “true Bedu” (1966: 192). This is also said by many Bedouin of Wadi Rum today. Both Al Enezah and Hwaitat clansmen and women reported that the *Bedu* were the “first people” or the original people which came to be known as Arabs (IS 2002; 2005).

Cultural traditions and historical practices were instrumental in the Bedouin’s ability to live under desert conditions. Despite the hardships they could experience, they were known for their hospitality. They would never allow a desert wanderer to be turned away from a Bedouin tent. A guest, whether familiar or unknown, “may make himself at home for three days and a third” with no questions asked (Bailey: 17). Afterwards, the guest would be expected to leave or provide more information as to his intentions. To this day, hospitality and honour are foundational to Bedouin culture and to an individual’s self-identity. The seven sub-tribes or clans - Swailheen, Zalabiah, Zawaydeh, Mazanah, Dbour, Emran and Gedman - that accessed the pasturelands of

²³ The men and women interviewed referred to it as a “desert” or *sahara* in Arabic. I will use the term desert to maintain continuity with the commentaries.

the Wadi Rum area were further divided based on unilateral descent as they are today according to their patrilineage and practice of patrilocal living.

At the heart of the clans historical lifeways were their large herds of domesticated animals. Life revolved around meeting the dietary needs of their sheep, goats and camels. The family's survival depended upon the maintenance of a healthy herd. The successful adaptation of this symbiosis was vital to desert living.

Of great significance to the Bedouin were the Arabian camels (*Camelus Dromedaries*) (Appendix 2: Photograph 1). Their size, strength and ability to withstand long periods of time without water made them the ideal beasts of burden and mode of transportation. According to one male elder, Mohammad Swailheen, the Bedouin "taxi" as he called them were used in the past to carry wares purchased in Egypt and Palestine back to the Rum area (IS 2002). Status, both personal and familial, was often determined by camel wealth. Their cost far exceeded that of other livestock species. Many Zalabiah elders remembered that some of the rich men once had herds as large as sixty camels (IS 2002). The sheikh or headman was often the only one wealthy enough to own a substantial herd.

The majority of the animals in a Bedouin flock were the smaller livestock animals. Sheep or *naaj*²⁴ are highly adapted to the desert climate. The *Awassi* species was the primary breed raised by the families. This specialized fat tailed

²⁴ Italicized words are in Arabic.

variety is a “robust and vigorous, medium-sized sheep of milk and mutton type” (Epstein 1980).

Equally important were goats or *dhaiwi*. Bedouin families raised two different breeds. The *Baladi* or common black goat was smaller and more abundant than the larger *Shami*. Some of the elders noted that goats were preferred because they were able to access higher mountainous niches unreachable by sheep and camels (IS 2007). Zalabiah male elders recalled family herd sizes of two hundred sheep and goats (IS 2002). Abdullah Gedman remarked that the clan as a whole would have owned approximately 30,000 sheep and goats (IS 2002) (Appendix 2: Photograph 2, 3).

The Bedouin relied predominantly upon their livestock to meet the majority of their dietary needs. Livestock provided a constant supply of milk. The men and women believed that camel’s milk had medicinal qualities that aided them in times of poor health. Many men attributed their strength and virility to having drunk camel’s milk since childhood (FN 2007). Female camels produced large quantities of milk that were used in the production of other edibles. Sheep and goat milk were also consumed and used to make many everyday items such as butter, yoghurt, *ghee* (margarine-like) and dried yoghurt.

Livestock animals also provided the families with a supply of protein. Less costly than camel meat, sheep and goats were slaughtered for family consumption and to honour guests. *Mansef*, a traditional Bedouin meal, was

made from sheep meat during these times²⁵ (Appendix 2: Photograph 4).

Camels were only eaten on special occasions. These natural sources of sustenance were rich in essential vitamins and minerals and were “chemical-free” according to elders I interviewed (IS 2002). These individuals attributed their good health during pre-village life to the healthy condition of their animals.

The Bedouin left nothing for waste when butchering an animal. The skin and hair or wool were used in the production of utilitarian items fundamental to maintaining the *Bedu* desert lifestyle. Baladi goats provided the black wool hair used in the manufacture of the iconic black tents or *bait al sha'er* in Arabic known as “hair houses” (Appendix 2: Photograph 5). Women wove panels that were sewn together to form the backs, sides and roof of their tents. Cushions or *makhad*, pillow covers, stuffing, big grain sacs or *a'adel* and their carpets or *bsat* were made from sheep hair.

Sheepskin and hair were also used in the manufacture of Bedouin clothing such as winter coats or *farwah*, winter vests known as *jebbeh* and the belts used by the men to hold their weapons and bullets. Skins were also used to make the *gerbeh* or water sac, containers for collecting wild honey, for cooking fat and to cover the wooden frame of the *rababah*, a *Bedu* musical instrument (IS 2002) (Appendix 2: Photograph 6). The *sa'aen* was made from an intact goat skin for shaking milk in the production of butter and yoghurt or *ribe* (Appendix 2; Photograph 7). Camel hair and skin were used to manufacture tent dividers,

²⁵ Mansef is a traditional meal made from sheep and/or goat and yoghurt. It is served over Bedouin bread or *sharaq* and rice. It is usually made for a celebration.

containers for holding water, well covers and men's belts. The men used strips of camel skin to fix wooden tent posts and to secure items on their beasts of burden while traveling.

During earlier times, the animals and their by-products were invaluable sources of revenue. They were used in trade. The men traveled to urban areas in Transjordan, Palestine and Egypt for barter. The animals were also traded for knives and female tattoos from roaming bands of gypsies known as *Nawar*. According to one Swailheen elder it was during the 1940s when the *Bedu* began to buy block sugar, barley, rice, wheat and clothing in exchange for their animals (IS 2002).

The *badia* or desert was the source of life for the *Bedu* families and their large herds. Male and female elders reported repeatedly that the historical landscape of the northwest corner of the Eastern Hisma where Wadi Rum is located was dramatically different from that of today (IS 2002; 2005; 2007; 2009). Prior to the 1960s, they claimed that the area was “greener and lushier” and more bountiful with floral and faunal species when compared to today's conditions. Natural sources of livestock fodder were in greater abundance. As one Emran elder stated, “In the past, Emran territory was very fertile with many plants. It was like a forest” (IS 2002). This degree of fertility albeit within a desert ecosystem supplied ample feed for the large livestock herds.

The Wadi Rum *badia* or desert falls within a *dry tropical desert climate* designation (see Plate C.2 in Strahler and Strahler 1987). The indigenous

vegetation of the Wadi Rum region was sparse and intermittent. The livestock's ability to survive let alone thrive in such an ecosystem required unique consumption patterns and palates for drought tolerant trees and shrubs (Appendix 2: Photograph 8).

DESERT MIGRATIONS GAVE LIFE

If the *badia* was the source of Bedouin life, nomadic transhumance was the pathway that facilitated that lifeway. Nomadic migrations enabled the Bedouin to meet the dietary needs of their animals when local conditions were exhausted. Desert movements were not haphazard ventures executed on impulse. Rather, the Bedouin of Wadi Rum, as elsewhere, adhered to an established, systematic manner of movement based on historically garnered knowledge and tested practices. Migrations from summer to winter pastures could range from 100 to 120 miles or 161 to 193 km. (Patai 1958: 160). Local Bedouin commentaries over the years suggest that there were times when this average was exceeded (IS 2002; 2005; 2007; 2008). Hwaitat and Al Enezah seasonal migrations could extend as far north as Karak or Amman. Both were a great distance from their winter pasturelands in the Wadi Rum area (Appendix 2: Map 1).

The typical historical migratory pattern the families followed responded to three seasonal climates:

- winter October-late March
- spring late March-mid-June
- summer mid-June-September

As a rule, the Bedouin remained in the desert lowlands in and around the Wadi Rum area during the winter season. Locations at higher elevations, such as those found north of Ras Naqab experienced colder temperatures and greater snowfall from October – March (Appendix 2: Map 1 Star). Northerly migrations began in early spring when temperatures began to rise and continued until late August or early September when the families would begin their return to Wadi Rum to prepare for the next winter season.

The elders of the various sub-tribes proclaimed that Wadi Rum's moderate winter climate and forty natural springs made it an ideal winter refuge. Abdullah Swailheen stated, "There was a lot of rain that produced a lot of grass to support all of the animals during these times" (IS 2002). Furthermore, he and others over the years have commented that their days were occupied with hard work and, according to all of the female elders I interviewed, with much happiness. They said that they depended upon one another as if they were one big family (IS 2002; 2005; 2007). When the head of the household was away from his tent, the remaining family members only had to shout for help to attract the attention of the other families who were within earshot. This life was also very inexpensive. A large family of twenty-five could live on 100 Jordanian dinars (JD) per month, about \$160.00 CAD (IS 2002). This was a time the older women recalled with great fondness and longing and over the years have referred to as a time of "freedom" (IS 2002; 2005; 2007).

A concerted effort was made to use as fully as they could homeland

resources before beginning any outward migration. According to a Gedman elder, spring or “new grass” was available only for a short time, approximately one to two weeks (IS 2002). A typical grazing pattern used zones or sections (Appendix 2: Figure 1). The goal was to maximize the utilization of natural browse within each zone until the last of the spring grasses or edible natural browse was consumed by the herds. It was only “after the tops of the plants” had all but disappeared that the animals were moved to the next section (IS 2005). As Figure 1 indicates, the next area to be grazed was typically adjacent to the first. Williamson claimed that the daily distance covered was about 6-8 km when the grazing was good (in Epstein accessed February 2009). By adhering to this pattern, the vast majority of available fodder in the Wadi Rum area was consumed.

The Bedouin had a special system for calculating the changing of the seasons and to determine whether Rum would experience what the Bedouin called “good grass” in the spring. Star sightings were used to help in these predictions. The first star they waited to see was *Thurayah*. After appearing sometime in October, they would wait one month to establish how much precipitation had fallen since its sighting. If there was a large amount of rainfall, the forecast was for a good season and early grass. If there was no rain during this period, they would wait for *Gaza* to appear mid-November. Again, one month later they gauged the amount of rainfall that had fallen. If there was a lot of rain, there was a strong possibility that the grass and the area would be good

enough for them to stay for a longer period in the Rum area. If there was minimal precipitation, they waited for a third star, *Shea'ar*, to appear mid-December. If rain came after the appearance of this star, the *Bedu* knew that it would only be good for the trees and not for the spring grass. After the *Shea'ar* sighting they would begin preparations for their northward journey to Ras Naqab.

The migrations north usually began sometime in the early spring but the planning began months earlier in December when elders sent what they called a “special person” or *Taresh* to search for better grazing areas in other territories. The scout would inquire “about the stars and the amount of rain” in the new areas so that he could make informed decisions (IS 2002). Sometimes two men journeyed in search of new grazing locations.

Once the *Taresh* returned to Wadi Rum, the male elders gathered to formulate a plan based on his information in conjunction with local conditions. A destination was agreed upon and a date for departure was determined. The families' few material possessions were loaded onto the backs of the one-humped Arabian camels. The Bedouin historically traveled by foot and sometimes on the backs of donkeys with their herds in tow. There were fewer people to transport during these times due to what the elder women claimed was a high infant mortality rate (IS 2002; 2007). Once packed the small bands of families would begin their northerly trek.

After exhausting local resources, the families set out for Ras Naqab

following “roads that had been cut through these areas” to facilitate an easier passage from the Wadi Rum region to the Sharah Mountains where Ras Naqab was located (IS 2002). The Zalabiah informants claimed that it took them approximately 5-6 days to travel to grazing regions that were close (IS 2002). A typical move from one pasture area to another could take up to two or three weeks (Chatty 1996: 22).

Once at the new location, the herds grazed in the new pastureland using the zone pattern from the Rum vicinity. After exhausting Ras Naqab’s available forage, families would begin preparations for their northwest migrations towards the Shobak region grazing enroute (Appendix 2: Figure 2). Unlike the relatively flat grazing of Wadi Rum, the terrain in and around Shobak’s Crusader Castle was hilly.

Heading into the summer months, the path led north into the Dana, Bsaira and Tafilah areas (Appendix 2: Map 1). With escalating temperatures and withering vegetation, migrations sometimes took the families further north to areas such as Amman and Irbid. Hamd Zalabiah said that these more northerly treks required fifteen days of travel (IS 2002). Migrations to more distant pastures of 16 km a day were considered to be a fair rate of progress according to Williamson but, if pressed, flocks may be driven for as much as 35 km in 24 hours (in Epstein accessed February 2009).

The elders indicated that they did not practice any conscionable form of environmental protection during these times. They knew from experience that

extended periods of grazing in any one location compromised the growth of the vegetation for the following year. This is why only the "tops" of plants were consumed. Also, their deliberate absence from grazing areas allowed sufficient time for the "grasses" to grow without any significant human disturbance or long-term effects. The Bedouin believed that their historical practice of transhumance not only assured families' access to resources located in distant lands, but was also instrumental in protecting the natural environment for future usage (IS 2002).

Families would begin making preparations for their southerly migration back to the Wadi Rum area during late August and early September. It was important for them to return to their home rangelands before winter conditions were upon them. The timing was critical.

The winter season was a period of renewal. Rain and snowfall replenished water sources and nourished indigenous floral species for spring growth. The nomadic cycle had come full circle.

Of the forty natural springs in the Wadi Rum area, the main one, according to Hamd, was in Wadi Rum itself with others in Rumman, three in Khalazan, one in Furrah and an old Rum well (IS 2007). Asra remembered that when she was younger her clan, the Zawaydeh, traveled great distances by foot to reach Rum's springs (IS 2007). Frayja explained how "during the winter months when it was raining we drank water from the rocks in the mountains" (IS 2007). Hamd also pointed out that the Bedouin retrieved water from the "Disah sand" (IS

2007). They would dig a hole in the sand and wait for it to fill with water.

Artificial dams were made from natural pools between the rocks in the mountains. The *Bedu* captured water in these areas during the winter and spring months when there was a surplus.

The elders identified their past as a time of “self dependence” (IS 2002). This statement is indicative of their feelings regarding a time in Bedouin life when the clansmen and women relied almost exclusively upon their animals and their by-products for the majority of their daily needs and upon one another. The Bedouin were able to maintain this lifestyle for generations.

SHIFTING LIVELIHOODS AND LIFESTYLES

Many Hwaitat elders stated that little changed in the south from the time prior to the British Mandated Emirate of Transjordan (1921) and the establishment of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in 1946. Prior to the division of the Near East following WW1, the Transjordanian Bedouin had a long history of warring and raiding. In a lecture Toukan gave to the Royal Central Asian Society on April 19, 1944, he referred to their looting as being “the Bedouin sport and hobby” (1944: 254). Even T. E. Lawrence extolled the fighting and raiding prowess of the great Hwaitat leader *Auda Abu Tayi* in the *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (1966). He declared that, “Auda raided as often as he had opportunity, and as widely as he could” (Lawrence 1966: 192).

Bedouin tribes were known to routinely attack Muslim pilgrims traveling through the Transjordanian deserts enroute to Mecca from Constantinople. The

security of the *Hajj*²⁶ caravan route, according to Toukan, was one of the principle catalysts behind Ottoman occupation of the area (1944: 258). It was imperative that the road be protected against these marauders, but the Bedouin's inimitable ability to thrive in the desert facilitated the continuation of these raids. It was for this reason that the Ottoman government ultimately resorted to paying the Bedouin to stop their escapades in essence to leave the pilgrims alone (bin Muhammad 1999: 18). The Ottomans had no other option; they simply could not control *Bedu* activities outside of urban areas.

The relationship between the Ottomans and nomads changed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries according to Professor of International Studies Resat Kasaba in *A Moveable Empire* (2009). He stated:

as indigenous communities, tribal and otherwise, discovered new possibilities of expanding their own economic and political power by pursuing local, regional and even global opportunities, independent of the Ottoman Centre. The Ottoman state responded by taking its first steps toward settling tribes and controlling migrations (2009).

The Bedouin's fighting prowess was evident during the Great Arab Revolt of 1916-1918. As mentioned earlier, the *Hwaitat* Bedouin tribes under the leadership of *Auda Abu Tayi* joined forces with British liaison soldier T. E. Lawrence to gain independence from Ottoman hegemony. Initiated by Sherif Hussein ibn Ali²⁷ of Mecca to create a single, unified Arab state, the revolt was based on the unanimous efforts of Lawrence, the Hwaitats and Hussein's son Feisal.

²⁶ The *Hajj* is the pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia. A Muslim man who participates in a *Hajj* is called a *Hajj* and a woman pilgrim is called a *Hajji*.

²⁷ Sherif Hussein ibn Ali of Mecca was the late King Hussein's great grandfather and King Abdullah's, the current ruling monarch of Jordan, great-great grandfather.

Together they staged a strong, guerrilla campaign against the Turks, targeting their lines of communication. In the spring of 1917, a surprise attack was waged on the Turkish fort in Aqaba. This shifted the political tide setting in motion the end of the revolt and the end of Ottoman rule.

Although the insurgency was initially considered a success by the Arabs and Lawrence, the European powers had other ideas for the region and its people. The UN division of the former Near East and the implementation of a mandated system forever changed the political, economic and cultural fabric of the area and the world in general. For the Bedouin tribes, the loss they suffered was more personal. By the end of the nineteenth century, bin Muhammad suggests that the *Hwaitat* numbers had been dramatically reduced from years of bitter wars with the Turks and rival Bedouin tribes such as their greatest nemesis *Bani Sakhur* (1999: 10).

So much has been said and reported on regarding the liaison role that Lawrence played during the Arab Revolt. The American journalist Lowell Thomas in particular sensationalised Lawrence's reportage of the Revolt often painting him as the "hero." Not everyone supported this supposition. For Lawrence, *Auda* was a man amongst men. He exemplified everything that was Bedouin,

hospitable, generous, "his generosity kept him always poor," hard-headed, hot-headed, patient, modest, simple as a child, direct, honest, kind-hearted, and warmly loved (Lawrence 1966: 192-193).

For today's Bedouin of Wadi Rum, it was *Auda* and their Hwaitat ancestors who were the real heroes. Time and again the Bedouin laugh at the mere mention of

Lawrence instead holding their clansmen in high esteem.

The Bedouin's sense of honour ironically served in their readiness to come in from the desert facilitating the slow end to an historical way of life. In 1931 the British Captain John Bagot Glubb, or Pasha Glubb or Abu Hanaik, "Father of the Jaw²⁸," as the Hwaitat of Wadi Rum fondly referred to him, arrived in Transjordan. He was the founder of the Desert Patrol, a special branch of the Transjordanian army or the Arab Legion entrusted with the task of keeping order in the desert (Mansfield 2004: 208-209). The fundamental reasoning behind this new regime was to quell the legendary Bedouin tribal wars and to put an end once and for all to their raiding. This would be accomplished by targeting those who were doing the fighting. Mansfield pointed out that Glubb experienced "remarkable success in gaining the confidence of the Bedouin and persuading them of the advantages of stability and order" (2004: 201).

The Hwaitat tribes, according to Jureidini and McLaurin, were the first major Transjordanian tribe to succumb to Glubb's blandishments, ultimately becoming the backbone of the Desert Mobile Force (1984: 20). This was accomplished, according to many male elders of the Wadi Rum clans, by first targeting the sons of the sheikh or hereditary chief (IS 2002). Once convinced that this was a noble and honourable occupation other Bedouin fathers were more than willing to have their sons join Pasha Glubb and the sheikh's sons to fight for

²⁸ He allegedly had a very distinctive chin due to a battle injury.

their ruling family and country. Furthermore, Robins notes it was the honourable nature of militaristic activities and partly out of economic necessity that Glubb experienced success (2004: 42). Having a guaranteed income with a pension remains a primary reason for enlistment for the Wadi Rum clansmen.

The army facilitated a close relationship between the Bedouin and the Hashemites. It was their loyalty Gubser explained that proved very effective in actively defending the throne in the tumultuous 1950s and during the heavy fighting of September 1970 and its continuation into 1971 (1983:29). Bedouin involvement in the army literally absorbed them into the state, argued Robins, because they were honoured in the realization that they are an intrinsic part of this important Jordanian institution (2004: 42). The Wadi Rum Bedouin's devotion to their royal family cannot be overstated. This was fully demonstrated one day when tears of joy could be seen running down the face of a female elder as she watched her King on television.

There were no villages in or around the Wadi Rum area at the time of the Great Arab Revolt or for many decades afterwards. The Bedouin continued to reside in their *bait al sha'er* woven by the women from the hair of their livestock. In the 1930s a Desert Police Station was built near *Jebel Rum* in what is today Rum Village (www.wadirum.jo). It came to be known as the *castle*. When the families traveled to Rum Spring they would erect their tents near the castle.

The all encompassing immersion in transhumance kept the clans of Wadi

Rum removed from many of Transjordan's changes. For the most part, they were deeply embedded within the desert having minimal contact with urban areas. The people lived in “peace” and safety according to Salah who fondly remembered these times without vehicles, planes or other modern disturbances (FN 2007). She recalled that the clans were so “very deep within the desert that we were not even aware of World War II” (IS 2002). The transformation of their country from a “vast desert wasteland”²⁹ to a modern Middle Eastern state was initially of little consequence to the Bedouin clans. With time, the changes experienced elsewhere in the Hashemite Kingdom would make their way to the Wadi Rum area.

Every elder, both male and female, I spoke to about the period following WWII commented on the lack of rainfall that has plagued the Wadi Rum area for decades (IS 2002; 2005; 2007; 2009). The cumulative effect of an extended period of reduced precipitation³⁰ has had catastrophic consequences for the region as a whole (Appendix 2: Photograph 9). It has affected the rangelands, the animals and ultimately the Bedouin and their practices and traditions. The effects of drought were evident during explorers Nevins and Wright's 1967 visit to the area. They observed how

the scrub brush and salt grass that grow in tufts on the desert floor are not sufficient for long periods of grazing, and few nomads remain in Rumm for any length of time (1969: 178).

Many of the Bedouin recalled how 1994 and 2007 were the only “good years for

²⁹ This was how many scholars refer to Jordan before it was mandated as Transjordan in 1921, in particular Robins (2004).

³⁰ Seasonal precipitation including rainfall and snowfall.

rainfall” (FN, IS 2002; 2005; 2007). This did not mean that other years did not experience precipitation. Instead, this referred to the timing of the rainfall and how it affects their herds; if rain occurred early in the season smaller plants and flowers would have adequate levels of moisture for spring growth providing good grass for the animals (IS 2002; 2005; 2007).

Extended drought conditions also directly threatened the quantity and quality of local water sources and browse. Families found it increasingly difficult to locate enough water for their large herds and their personal needs. Conditions worsened to the point that during the 1960s the elders recalled that the only year-round source of water were the springs along the eastern face of Jebel Rum; a significant departure from the original forty (IS 2002). Less precipitation reduced the quantity and quality of replenishment to the man-made capture sites as well.

The loss of sustainable natural browse created a domino effect whereby reduced precipitation correlated with the loss of indigenous faunal species. Local knowledge praised the region's former richness in large game such as wolves, hyenas and even leopards (Appendix 2: Photograph 10). The late Sheikh Ali Al Swailheen remembered a tale about the last tiger seen in the area some fifty years ago (IS 2002). Story after story told of the large herds of ibex or mountain goats that once roamed the precipitous mountains of the Wadi Rum area (IS 2002; 2005; 2007). Finding less than adequate sources of local browse and water, wild animals began to search elsewhere.

With added stress on livestock herds and the cost incurred by supporting them, hunting took on greater importance. Needing to supplement their diets with alternative sources of meat, Bedouin hunters targeted game. Groups of experienced hunters set their sights on the large number of ibex, rabbits and ostrich. Over the years, many Bedouin male elders commented that hunting contributed to the depletion of these local game populations (IS 2002; 2005; 2007).

Clansmen began to implement adaptive strategies to ensure their herd's survival. One common response was the deliberate manipulation of the size through sale or trade. The Bedouin families would sell animals with the most expensive upkeep. No longer could Um Abdullah afford to keep her camels. She noted how her family was forced to sell thirty head to buy food for the remaining animals and wedding gifts (IS 2007). Salah's family's response typified what their relatives were doing. They once owned over one hundred goats and sheep but sold them to buy feed for the others (IS 2007).

The cultural and economic impact was obvious during Nevins and Wright's visit, "There were few sheep in the Rumm area, and it was customary at mansef to serve goat meat in the absence of lamb" (1969: 196). This was the effect noted by Hamd Zalabiah who claimed that the drought caused a "severe" decline in livestock numbers (IS 2002; 2005).

With on-going drought conditions, supplementing the meagre desert

offerings with store bought feed became increasingly difficult for the cash strapped families (Appendix 2: Photograph 11). Abdullah, a Gedman elder, commented on how this situation was further aggravated when a new tax was imposed by the Hashemite Kingdom on the herds during the 1960s (IS 2002). The Bedouin again were forced to sell a few animals to pay the tax. Large herds slowly became a thing of the past. Only rich families were able to maintain pre-1960s numbers. Some four decades later Salah's herd was only a fraction of its original size with 15-20 head remaining. This shift was instrumental in the transition from nomadism to sedentary living as will be shown, although other factors were at work as well.

In 1968, *mukhtar*³¹ Sabah Atieg Al Zalabiah drove his army truck or *al jech al arabi* into Wadi Rum. It was the first for the region. Sabah used his work vehicle to help his *Bedu* neighbours. His visits facilitated greater access to urban locations for the desert families. This left a huge impression upon the people. I heard countless stories praising his kindness and generosity more than 40 years ago (IS 2007). As more men coveted ownership of a vehicle, trucks disrupted established transhumance patterns (see Chatty 1996). For the families of the Wadi Rum area, vehicles helped to serve the development of the villages.

Despite drought conditions the *Bedu* might have continued to practice transhumance as their principle source of livelihood, but the expansion of urban areas and their infrastructure hindered that choice. Villages, cities, industry and

³¹ Meaning “chosen” in Arabic.

protected areas began to dot the landscape blocking the way for the Bedouin to carry on with historical nomadic patterns (IS 2002). Unable to travel great distances in search of greener pastures, the Bedouin had little choice but to stay closer to home. Overgrazing in some areas resulted from extended periods of time when fodder prices continued to skyrocket according to the elders (IS 2002). It simply became too expensive for these people to maintain their herds and their historical lifestyle.

Mid-20th century political and economic policies and programs began to affect some Bedouin cultural traditions. State sponsored and instituted “reconstruction projects” oriented towards the settling of Bedouin tribes were implemented in many Arab countries post-World War II (Elphinston 1944) although, as noted by Barakat, many modern Middle Eastern governments did not publically disclose their long-term plans and true intentions (1993: 54). Middle Eastern development ideology of this time was imbued with notions that tribes were a major obstacle to social and economic development (see Chatty 1996). In Saudi Arabia, Powell Cole claimed that the settlement projects of the 1970s were designed to “completely revamp the economic and family structure” of Saudi Bedouin (1975: 149). Gradually, similar projects and schemes began to ripple into the Wadi Rum region as in other areas of Jordan.

The late King Hussein of Jordan began a concerted effort to improve the quality of life for Bedouin tribes. Unlike other Arab governments whose aim was to assimilate their nomadic groups into mainstream society, the Hashemites

chose more benevolent tactics that would enable the continuation of their "Bedouinity". From Bedouin accounts, the late King Hussein considered himself a Bedouin and the head sheikh (IS 2002). It was perceived that by improving the Bedouin's living conditions the burden imposed by the harsh desert drought environment would be lessened (IS 2002). Anthropologist Dawn Chatty points out that settlement projects, army recruitment and agricultural development were used to settle the tribes in Jordan; eleven separate schemes were undertaken from 1960 -1980 (1996: 20).

Projects of this nature trickled into the Wadi Rum region during the 1960s. The sinking of wells facilitated sedentary living conditions. With the loss of rain and available natural browse, many families were forced to find refuge in areas with secure water access. This was not an overnight phenomenon but rather a gradual migration from the desert to the permanent water source over the course of three to four decades; facilitating a gentle and not traumatic shift from nomadic, to semi-nomadic to semi-sedentary to sedentary conditions.

The first wells to be sunk in the Wadi Rum region were located in Ad Diseh Village (Appendix 2: Map 2). Zawaydeh sources claim that it was at this time that the Zawaydeh sheikh, Sheikh Jilal, reached out to Crown Prince Hassan for assistance (IS 2002). The late King's brother felt compelled to help the Bedouin and agreed to sink a number of wells in the Ad Diseh area. According to extensive interview sessions with Zawaydeh and Zalabiah elders this was because of the regional aquifer that is located under Ad Diseh that stretches as far

south as Saudi Arabia (IS 2002; 2005; 2007).

Village growth correlated with the drilling of wells. Sleman confessed that he “followed the drilled wells the King provided for the people. The people wanted to be near them” (IS 2002). It was in 1962 after giving birth to her first son Um Abdullah moved into Ad Diseh with her husband (IS 2002). Im’ayaa’s family also moved into the village at this time (IS 2002). As was the case with many males, Im’ayaa’s husband moved back to the area of his birth after retiring from the Bedouin Army. Both women noted that there were a couple of permanent houses in the area of what is now Ad Diseh village when they arrived; they continued to live in their tents. Frayja, Sheikh Jilal’s sister, noted that it was because of her brother’s request for drilling that she came to live in Ad Diseh with her family in 1968 (IS 2007).

Sleman moved into Ad Diseh Village in 1970 (IS 2007). Analogous to so many of his clansmen, his family initially lived in a tent. In 1975, they transitioned into a house. For Sleman this was an easy decision because the tents required constant attention in addition to having to be replaced every two years. There were also fewer livestock to provide the necessary hair to weave the tent panels for the *bait al sha'er*.

Similar to Ad Diseh’s development, Rum experienced a progression from sporadic camping to permanent living. The origin of Rum Village was due to its close proximity to the natural springs found near Jebel Rum and later the Badia Police Fort. Geographer Tony Escritt stated that in 1962

the settlement at Wadi Rum was then little more than a Beau Geste police post with one or two Bedouin tents randomly scattered around it (2004: 58).

Five years later, in 1967, Nevins and Wright noted that it was little more than the little square fort³² of Rumm, surrounded by a scattering of Bedouin tents...flung out willy-nilly on the desert floor (1969: 178-182).

With the assistance of the Hashemite Kingdom, the clusters of tents slowly gave way to permanent structures through yet another project. To further encourage sedentary living the Hashemites provided cinder block homes for some of the families living in Rum and Ad Diseh villages. Zawaydeh and Zalabiah families, according to Sleman, were bestowed with these gifts (IS 2007). Only five of the “biggest men in a family” received assistance because “the government was not strong like it is today and could only afford five houses per clan” (IS 2002).

With time, permanent housing became the preferred lodging for the other Bedouin families (Appendix 2: Photograph 12). Capital from service in the Bedouin Police and the armed forces helped fund these permanent structures according to Escritt (1994: 58). The Bedouin did not seek or need official permission or permits to build homes during these times. In the 1970s, they built their homes on their lands because as noted by one elder “everyone knows whose land is whose” (IS 2007). This would change later as will be illustrated in Chapter 4. The simple cinder block structures provided protection from the elements that the tents lacked. Time was needed for families to earn enough money to build their homes on their lands, so the villages were slowly

³² The Badia Police Fort.

transformed with the permanent structures.

With the development of the villages, the Kingdom implemented a number of complimentary strategies to further entice the families to come in from the desert. The drive to educate the tribes was another such reconstruction project. Consensus has it that as Wadi Rum's mothers and fathers began to hear about schooling occurring in other areas of the country they wanted their youngsters to receive the same opportunities and benefits offered to other tribes living elsewhere (IS 2002; 2005; 2007). With declining conditions for historical livelihood practices, they realized that learning would enhance their son's chances of obtaining a "good job" (IS 2002). It was approximately forty years ago, recalled Salah, that her husband provided the first tent for the Rum school (IS 2007). Young boys were taught to read and write under its canopy. Girls did not actively participate at this time. Fathers prohibited their daughters from attending because they were expected to care for the livestock as well as maintain the cultural taboo that prohibited girls and boys who were not related from spending time together.

During certain times of the year, it was difficult to bring the children in from the desert on a regular basis. Attending classes was irregular at first due to the movements of the families and their herds and the children's participation in pastoral activities. With growing acceptance and greater understanding of its importance, parents began to remain within close proximity to the schools for longer periods of time contributing further to the clans' sedentarization.

For years, the only school available to the Bedouin youth was in Rum Village. Children residing in the Ad Diseh area such as Jilal along with his Zawaydeh friends had to travel to Rum to attend classes (IS 2007). In 1967, a military school was built in Ad Diseh Village. Im'ayaa recalled that her husband wanted to move into Ad Diseh Village because of the school and the new agriculture business (IS 2002). According to Jilal, the school accepted students of all ages (IS 2007). He remembered how he laughed with his friends at the old man who attended even though he had children and a wife. In 1989 a girl's school was constructed due to changing attitudes about female education.

Eid and his family moved to Ad Diseh in 1971-1972 (IS 2007). Their transition into a permanent structure was because “they wanted to be like the other Bedouin who had received services” (IS 2007). The objective was to establish themselves in a permanent structure before approaching the government with their requests. Eid explained what they would say, “We have a few houses so we would like services” (IS 2007). He claimed that the government would not have provided “modern services” if the families were living in tents.

One of the services that Eid and his fellow clansmen requested was a government funded medical clinic. Bedouin had historically been cared for by *hakeem* or *Bedu* doctors who used traditional knowledge of natural remedies such as desert plants, wolf's blood, snakes and scorpions to cure their patients. Bushra, who was born in Ad Diseh in the early 1960s, reminisced about her

father after he came in from the desert (IS 2007). He worked as a nurse for the Jordanian Ministry of Health. His job required that he travel into the desert on camel to give medical assistance to people still living in tents. His daughter noted how he administered TB and measles shots during the 1970s (IS 2007).

It was during the 1980s that Frayja reported that Bedouin women began to give birth to their babies in hospitals (IS 2007). Prior to this all babies were born at home in a tent in the desert. Many of the female elders recalled losing upwards of two to six infants and youngsters due to unsterile conditions, diseases and a lack of medical care (FN, IS 2002; 2005; 2007). Hospital birthing dramatically reduced these tragedies. Access to medical care greatly improved the quality of Bedouin life. Similar to education, clinics also facilitated village living.

The Ad Diseh and Rum areas continued to grow as families came in from the desert, and as more children survived with medical care. By the mid-1980s, wells had been drilled at other Zawaydeh villages - Twaiseh, Twail, Manasheer and Al Ghal (IS 2002) (Appendix 2: Map 2). The current distribution of Zalabiah and Zawaydeh villages directly correlates to permanent water sources.

Within a couple of decades, the villages of *Salhia* and *Shakriyyah* were established for the Swailheen clan (Appendix 2: Map 2 Red Ovals). Shakriyyah Village, the second Swailheen village, was founded in the 1990s by a Salhia splinter group. The late Sheikh Ali, the Hashemite recognized Swailheen leader, and his supporters remained in Salhia while Sheikh Atieg, Sheikh

Ali's brother-in-law, developed the Shakriyyah Village close to the Diseh-Rum junction and the railway tracks. The Gedman clan resides primarily in Rashdiyyah Village (Appendix 2: Map 2 Green Oval). All sub-tribes continue to access their historical rangelands located within the Wadi Rum Protected Area and on its periphery.

Even as desert conditions worsened some families, predominantly the elderly, maintained their land-based ways well into the 1990s and early 21st century residing in their *bait al sha'er* despite their younger family members moving into the villages. Even today these tents dot the Wadi Rum landscape. Some families, like those of the Dbour and Emran³³ sub-tribes, have children with them in the desert (Appendix 2: Photograph 13). Many of these children have never been to government schools, but are certainly educated in the ways of the land. Water, health, aging and poverty have been significant contributors to the reduction in desert living.

With a dramatic decline or in many cases the loss of a pastoral livelihood, the Bedouin of the Wadi Rum area were impoverished (IS 2002). Queen Noor, the wife of the late King Hussein, witnessed this firsthand when she travelled to southern Jordan in 1988. The story is told that on one of her visits to meet with the Bedouin clans living in the Wadi Rum area, she noted how dire the

³³ When the border between Saudi Arabia and Jordan changed in 1965, Jordan received more of the Red Sea coastline in exchange for Saudi Arabia having more land. As a result, some of the historical rangelands of the *Emran* and the *Dbour*, once solely in Saudi Arabia, shifted to Jordan. The Jordanian government made special concessions for these Bedouin clans. There are some Emran Jordanians, but the others and the Dbour are Saudi Arabian citizens who have free access to their lands in Jordan.

circumstances were for many if not all of the local inhabitants (RSCN 2003-2008). She believed in assistance and humanitarian aid from the Kingdom. This was one of the motivating factors for the WRPA project.

EARLY TOURISM, BEDOUIN TOURISM: 1960-1996

Early explorers and traders could be classified as the first tourists to the Wadi Rum region. Whether it was for exploration, exploitation of local resources, to follow a secret road between two Nabataean capitals or merely as a chance encounter, there is no denying that their travels marked the beginning of a long and compelling fascination with the area by Arabs and non-Arabs alike.

The most famous non-Arab to visit the Wadi Rum area was T. E. Lawrence or “Emir Dynamite,” as he was commonly referred to by the Bedouin (see Weintraub 1967). Working as a newspaper correspondent for the *London Times*, *The World's Work* and for the British Army, he wrote for an early 20th century European audience about the magnificence of Wadi Rum and the Bedouin (ibid.). In *A History of the Middle East*, Peter Mansfield claimed that the British public was captivated by the Arab Revolt in the desert because Lawrence’s “well-publicized romantic exploits provided relief from the squalid horrors of the trench warfare on the western front” (1991: 174). *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph* (original 1922) is an autobiographical account of Lawrence's experiences during the Great Arab Revolt (1916-18) with the Hwaitat Bedouin who were the ancestors of many of Wadi Rum’s clans. To this day, his descriptive prose of wind and water swept mountains rising out of

orange hued desert sand have long inspired travelers to Wadi Rum to view the geological spectacle for themselves:

...we wheeled into the avenue of Rumm, still gorgeous in sunset colour; the cliffs as red as the clouds in the west, like them in scale and in the level bar they raised against the sky. Again we felt how Rumm inhibited excitement by its serene beauty. Such overwhelming greatness dwarfed us, stripped off the cloak of laughter in which we had ridden over the jocund flats (see Weintraub 1966: 335).

Although his exploits have met with much controversy and criticism since his passing in 1935, there is little doubt that his prose catapulted Wadi Rum into the international spotlight.

Although Lawrence generated a keen interest and one can assume a fanciful longing for many to visit this part of the world one must keep in mind the regional tension that was percolating following the end of the Arab Revolt. Considered by some scholars to be the “turbulent period,” Jordan’s journey to statehood was undeniably volatile (Robins 2004). With the end of British tutelage, King Abdullah’s assassination, King Hussein’s accession, Jordan’s statehood and the 1967 Israeli War, Jordan or for that matter the Middle Eastern region was not considered a safe tourist destination. Furthermore, anti-colonial Arab sentiment and the formation of nationalist movements also kept potential visitors at bay.

As a result, Wadi Rum’s tourism prior to 1962 was simple and very limited from Bedouin accounts (FN, IS 2002; 2005; 2007). Escritt claimed that “(i)n those days desert expeditions were still a rarity restricted to those considered foolhardy enough to undertake them” (1994: 58). In 1961 the

English filmmaker David Lean filmed at Wadi Rum and its vicinity for the epic *Lawrence of Arabia*. This picture introduced viewers to Wadi Rum's beautiful vistas. Abdullah Awah Zalabiah recalled that during the filming many of the Bedouin men served as personal guides for crew members as well as working as extras (2007: 103). This experience provided the hired Bedouin with a rare opportunity to experience the ways of others.

Local tourism after the release of the movie continued to be a “very simple” enterprise according to Salah (IS 2007). She, like many of her Zalabiah relatives, saw her first tourist or “foreigner” in the Rum area during the 1960s. Her husband was one of the first men to garner employment as a climbing guide for visiting mountaineers. Salah recalled how her spouse would invite guests into the family hair tent for some *Bedu* hospitality. He used camels to escort the visitors to and from various desert locations.

Zawaydeh memories suggest that there were a number of families involved in Ad Diseh's early years of tourism. Asra and Fhaydeh recalled that their first experience with foreigners was sometime in the 1960s when Sheikh Jilal invited visitors to his house³⁴ and his tents (IS 2007). The women remembered how the villagers came out in droves to watch the tourists with “some of the younger girls putting on make-up” for the viewing (Fhaydeh IS 2007). According to these women, the Sheikh knew that the tourists liked to see “strange *Bedu* stuff” so he provided them with entertainment. *Nawar* or gypsies

³⁴

According to local participants, Sheikh Jilal had the first cinder block house in Ad Diseh.

were hired to dance for the guests because Bedouin women would never participate in such a display. While the women danced, the guests were served *Bedu* coffee and tea. Asra and Fhaydeh remembered that the sheikh was the sole beneficiary of these early tourism activities (IS 2007). According to Fhaydeh, there were times during the early 1960s when tourists paid 10 JD per night to sleep in a “real Bedouin tent” for an authentic *Bedu* experience (IS 2007). Sometimes the tourists would watch the Bedouin women make traditional carpets leaving them a little *baksheesh* or gratuity of 15 JD for 10 tourists (IS 2007).

As mountaineering grew in popularity and reputation so too did the interest of those not so athletically inclined. Alfie, an Egyptian national and former employee of the Government Rest House located in Rum Village, suggested that the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA) recognized the importance of creating visitor services to facilitate growth in Rum's tourism sector (IS 2007). The Government Rest House was built at the entrance to Rum Village in the early 1980s. Its strategic location facilitated servicing projected increases in local tourism activities. It had a camp with “Bedouin tents, not like now” remarked Alfie in 2007 (IS 2007). The combination of low costs, simple tourism packages and few people involved in the business resulted in high profits for those involved.

British climbers Tony Howard and Di Taylor traveled to the area in 1984 to engage in “discovery and exploration of Wadi Rum for rock climbing and

trekking” (www.nomadstravel.co.uk accessed 2010). Sheikh or Hajj Atieg and his family were the first to welcome the climbers into their “desert camps before the village really existed” (ibid.). The Zalabiah elder recognized the value of his guests’ visit and vision. According to Howard,

(h)e fully supported our explorations for climbing and trekking and saw their potential in bringing income to what was then a poor area (ibid.).

Authors of what has become the Wadi Rum climber’s bible, *Treks and Climbs in Wadi Rum* (1987), the couple with their mountaineering expertise and local Bedouin knowledge helped to create an integral aspect of regional tourism that remains popular to this day.

The early Bedouin pioneers in this new income generating enterprise were Atieg Eid, Salem Laffy, Aoda Suleiman, Hamden Atieg and Difallah Hamden from the Zalabiah clan and Salah Gasm and Mohammad Mosah from the Swailheen clan (IS 2009). Based upon the needs of their clientele, many male Bedouin developed businesses that provided transportation, guiding and lodging for their guests. Over time their expertise became renowned and their services expanded. For some of these individuals, their clientele growth was exponential. They allegedly became wealthy, by local standards, from these early exploits (FN 2007; 2009). It was the beginning of significant locally organized tourism or as Abu Rami, the standing manager of the Government Rest House, coined as the period of “unorganized Bedouin tourism” (IS 2007).

During the 1990s, tourism in Wadi Rum entered a new phase in its advancement. According to Escritt, excursions from Aqaba and Petra to Wadi

Rum increased rapidly to around 32,000 people a year, and accounted for almost 6,000 people a month at the height of the Easter season (1994: 58). Guides such as Difallah Atieg, Sabah Eid and Abu Msalem were becoming well known. These individuals along with the Government Rest House and anyone else involved in tourism were experiencing the “benefits” of the growing tourism industry firsthand earning good money (IS 2007).

EARLY PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERS

Many people have had a vision for the development of the Rum tourism industry, but none with as big an impact as that of Mahmud Khajil Al Hillawi of Aqaba. Jamil or Abu Rami, Mr. Hillawi’s associate, claimed that “the first idea to make something really unique in Wadi Rum” came from Hillawi (TS 2007). In 1992 he took over the management of the Government Rest House and implemented measures to improve the quality of tourism service. Two years later Jamil arrived to work in Wadi Rum. He had been employed at one of Aqaba’s high end hotels and was eager to apply his knowledge to Rum’s emerging tourism industry.

On October 26, 1994, the same year Jamil and Hillawi joined forces, Jordan signed a peace agreement with Israel. After the Israel-Jordan peace negotiations, Jordan as a whole benefited from the signing of the document. Abu Rami recalled how “the world woke up” to Wadi Rum meaning that regional Middle Eastern peace had an immediate impact upon the way others viewed this part of the world (TS 2007). Israeli tourism expanded into Jordan

with vigor as did the European and American markets (Jamil TS 2007).

Hillawi and Abu Rami knew that the beauty of the area would win people over, “it was a game you are not going to lose from. The biggest gift to the people of Wadi Rum is its beauty” (TS 2007). The duo recognized the intrinsic value of making a good, first impression. Adopting a Bedouin tradition, they began to offer Bedouin tea to the new arrivals in a Bedouin tent erected close to the Rest House. Abu Rami recalled how this was a deliberate move to show the connection that existed between tourism and the local Bedouin community (TS 2007).

The duo believed that success and growth were intimately connected to greater inclusion of the locals and a promise of shared profits (TS 2007). Their business plan targeted high-ranking Bedouin men from Rum Village who were already involved in the industry and had established a significant clientele. Abu Rami recalled that they held two or three meetings with Mohammad Atieg, Abu Yasser and Blouie and a number of other men in an attempt to persuade them to join forces recognizing that each one had a specialty to offer (TS 2009). It was agreed that an entrance fee of 1 JD per person would be charged to all visitors. The fees would be collected at the Rest House and campsite. Half of the proceeds would be allocated to the community with the other half to the Rest House. A fixed price of 3 JD per person per night for accommodation in the tents at the Rest House was established. Thirty percent would be assigned to the Rest House with the remaining seventy percent for the locals (Abu Rami TS

2007).

Success depended on “personal efforts to be nice to everyone and to work in cooperation with trust” according to Abu Rami (TS 2007). He proudly stated during our 2007 interview that there was

something really great with the Bedouin from the beginning. One benefit was for me and the other for the people of the village (TS 2007).

He said that they were

intermingled. There were some misunderstandings, but standing next to each other in serious situations empowered all of them (TS 2007).

Many of the Bedouin men I spoke to agreed and even attributed Rum’s tourism successful growth to Hillawi and Abu Rami (FN 2007; 2008; 2009).

This was the beginning of a joint effort and collaboration between the Government Rest House managers and the Bedouin of Rum Village who had already established themselves in the tourism business, albeit on a smaller scale. All involved agreed that collaboration was necessary for the growth and success of their tourism. In interviews, Abu Rami and the local *Bedu* emphasized this association while stressing their own roles (TS, FN, IS 2007). It came to be known as the time of organized tourism in Wadi Rum. This collaborative relationship exists to this day.

Abu Rami and Hillawi’s shift in tourism management included advertising with MoTA. Slowly with regional stability and reputable services the ministry began to send tourists to the area. Lured by the call of Lawrence this was a time of the “adventure tours” (Abu Rami TS 2007). In 1994 Escritt commented that

“large air conditioned coaches disgorge up to 100 visitors at a time” (1994: 61). The backpackers were still arriving, but they were “doing it on (their) own” (Abu Rami TS 2007). They were not the big money makers. Greater profits could be gleaned from packages geared towards the adventure travelers. This is what Abu Rami excelled at. It was also at this time that Tony Howard began to bring groups of climbers from England to scale the area’s challenging mountains (Abu Rami TS 2007). Abu Rami noted that these visits were approximately ten nights in length and the larger groups had an immediate impact upon tourism practices, the village and the villagers (TS 2007).

Abu Rami recalled how he along with Hillawi helped the Zalabiah and Swailheen from Rum Village create a Bedouin cooperative or *jamiah* to coordinate their efforts into an organized tourism entity. This move cemented the relationship between Hillawi and the local community. Previously, only a handful of men and their families had received benefits. A “cooperative gave people great life for the future” (Abu Rami TS 2007). One of the ways that it worked was through the rental of large Bedouin tents to the Rest House for the growing number of large parties. Revenues of 150 JD per tent per package were commonplace (Abu Rami TS 2007). Furthermore, the Bedouin were to ensure a constant supply of water and firewood. Fundamentally, Abu Rami coordinated the tourism and the Bedouin from the cooperative provided their expertise on the ground.

The Rum Tourism Cooperative (RTC) was comprised primarily of

Zalabiah members from Rum Village, in addition to some Swailheen clansmen. According to Sheikh Ali Al Swailheen, the two clans had lived together in the Rum area during earlier years and a number of Swailheen lived in what is today Rum Village at the time the cooperative was organized (IS 2009). These individuals “were one of the first members” of the RTC (Sheikh Ali IS 2009). Jeep, camel and camping activities were managed through respective rotas whereby all RTC members followed a specified system.

Other clans from surrounding villages later followed suit. In 1996 the Zawaydeh clan established the Dseh Tourism Cooperative (DTC) to handle tourism growth for the Zawaydeh and the Mazanah clans. Analogous to their Zalabiah counterparts, each cooperative member paid annual dues with expectations of a return on their investment annually. In 1998 the DTC managed fewer than 20% of tourists to the protected area (Rowe 1998). In 2000, the Swailheen developed their own cooperative to support clansmen living in Salhia and Shakriyyah villages. Some clansmen held dual membership with the RTC.

With the influx of people to the area, jeep requests skyrocketed. Abu Rami remembered how jeep tours escalated from two per day to multiple vehicles per day (TS 2009). The Rest House hired vehicles from the RTC. The jeep rotation system coordinated all members who owned a vehicle in an organized distribution of tours. Many jeep requests meant “a lot of resources” for the Bedouin (Abu Rami TS 2009). At this point, Wadi Rum’s tourism had two distinct components: the Rest House and the Bedouin of Rum Village. The

DTC worked independent of the Rest House.

In 1995, Adel, another restaurant operator from Aqaba working in Rum Village, noted that Difallah Atieg, Sabah Eid, Sabah Atieg, Msalem, Eid Sabah, Assad and Mater, Zidane, Mohammad Sabah, Atieg Ali, Atieg Sabah and Atieg Auda were actively working in the Wadi Rum business (TS 2007). During this time, tourists arranged their travels with “one man. It was quiet. Now (2007) there must be a fax to accompany the tourists” (TS 2007). Adel was referring to how local Bedouin operators worked directly with their clients. Prior to the WRPA, everything was done “with Bedouin hands and one family and everyone can help make business very, very good and tourists like these people” (TS 2007). Adel was occasionally hired to cook at the Bedouin camps.

By 1996, Wadi Rum's tourism had grown significantly. Abu Rami felt that this was an important “point in our history when we started to see big buses” meaning the birth of the mass tourism industry (TS 2007).

Italian, French, German, everyone was coming to Wadi Rum. From March to June, the community was very busy with people spending money (Abu Rami TS 2007).

He remembered 24 May 1996 as if it was yesterday,

the people were seated on the edge of the restaurant. We only had 400 plates and I needed to clean all 400 before I could feed more people (TS 2007).

He considered this to be a

big move in my life because I was stuck in Wadi Rum serving like a machine out and in, camping inside the desert and inside the restaurant. It was full of Canadian tents to accommodate all of the visitors (TS 2007).

Abu Rami attributed this unexpected success to his ambitious promotional

campaigning. He generated a lot of interest with travel agencies by inviting them “to come and see Wadi Rum” (TS 2007). Jordan’s MoTA promotions continued to fuel this growth in addition to the advertising that was taking place in Israel. Petra was being promoted “as a gift for their own benefit. Tours started to go to Petra for one day and would include Wadi Rum” (Abu Rami TS 2007). The Rest House had to ensure that there were enough jeeps for these large groups because “before people waited for jeeps” (Abu Rami TS 2007).

Speaking from his personal experience, Abu Rami noted how along with Hillawi they “now needed to move up and start to create new ideas” (TS 2007). To further enhance the tourist experience, they decided to put tables in the Bedouin tents, double the mattresses and cutlery for those staying for longer periods. “To give more service. That was the golden boom and everybody wanted to touch the desert” (Abu Rami TS 2007).

Many of the Bedouin men were grateful for the efforts put forth by Abu Rami and Hillawi because their work helped to expand Wadi Rum’s tourism business which benefited many of Rum’s villagers. The effects of a growing tourism industry resonated into Bedouin life and the growth of the villages. Abu Rami recalled,

the number of men owning jeeps had skyrocketed from 2 or 3 to 70. And we made a lot of money. All of us and all of the Bedouin. Some of the local guides were taking tourists out 3 to 5 times a day earning approximately 30 JD per time (Abu Rami TS 2007).

More people were moving from the desert to stay in the villages. Tourism revenues went towards village homes and vehicles according to the many

Bedouin involved (FN 2002; 2005; 2007). With growth came improved living conditions.

The next step in Wadi Rum's tourism development came from the Bedouin themselves. A few enterprising men in Rum Village made the leap from "family camps" to a permanent touristic version. Using information learned from their own experiences, the Rest House and Abu Rami, and drawing on their own views of hospitality, the area and Bedouin culture, they expanded their tourism services to meet a particular niche.

In their own tourist camps, visitors experienced Bedouin tourism. These camps were often located at favourite locations maybe where the family had once lived, but without impinging upon the owner's wife and children. Tourists would stay in the *bait al sha'er*, under a rock overhang or sleep under the stars. The camps were simple without washrooms or kitchens. Food was cooked over a campfire or in the sand known as *zerb*.

Changes brought about by the growth in tourism were complex. One example was how the introduction of vehicles undermined the earlier importance of camels in tourism trekking. For men such as Salah's husband, the shift meant the end of an era (IS 2007). He bowed out of tourism when vehicles usurped the camel. The ships of the desert are still available to tourists, but jeeps are faster and can cover greater distances in shorter periods of time. They are preferred by most *Bedu* guides because they enable multiple tourist trips per day and also provide speedy access for families checking on the whereabouts of their sheep,

goats and camels. Consequently, the area was soon buzzing with the sound of vehicles and the landscape began to show signs of this increased usage.

ENVIRONMENTAL WOES

With the boom of the 1990s, eco-friendly tourism practices in the Wadi Rum region had not been a consideration for those involved. Pollution, something the tribal elders stated was not a concern only a few decades ago, had reached critical levels in the villages and even within some desert niches. The elders and other tourism operators I interviewed did not correlate their actions with local conditions at this time (IS 2002; 2005; 2007).

By the early 1990s, livestock overgrazing had become an environmental concern. Escritt observed how the Bedouin move in and out of Wadi Rum with their flocks on a daily basis only moving afield seasonally to take advantage of new spring pasture (1994[b]: 2). He stated that "where once there was adequate grazing for Bedouin livestock, now there are growing expanses of bare sand" (1994: 4). The men and women I interviewed did not take responsibility for a generalized overgrazing, although they did indicate why it had occurred in a specific area. According to many Bedouin sources, the older Bedouin, namely women, who were unable to walk long distances, had become the primary shepherds due to children attending school or participating in tourism activities (IS 2002). These individuals were limited in their movements therefore their animals stayed closer to the villages contributing to the bare sand, as noted by Escritt. The elders' recollections of historical grazing strategies suggest that overgrazing was a step by step process

that resulted from a combination of reduced herd sizes, aging shepherds and extended drought conditions.

During this time period, the Bedouin clans were also suspected of egregious hunting, plant collecting and green wood cutting (see RSCN 2002; 2003). The Bedouin I interviewed did not claim responsibility for any of these acts nor did they link their activities with environmental degradation.

Another growing concern was the increased number of vehicles entering the desert on a daily basis. As ownership increased so too did the cumulative effect on the landscape as evidence was mounting that the multiplicity of excursions was destroying the natural vegetation while inhibiting future growth. Drivers were known to drive haphazardly running over trees, shrubs and smaller floral species. Desert tracks criss-crossed the landscape. This was supported by Escritt who in 1994 referred to the "myriad of tracks and the abundance of plastic waste" (1994: 4) (Appendix 2: Photographs 14-15).

As the 1990s' came to a close, worry concerning other unmonitored tourism practices escalated. There was mounting evidence that mountain climbers were leaving an increased number of climbing bolts in rock faces potentially contributing to cracks and fissures (PC 2002). Random graffiti and the defacement of local antiquities were on the rise. Refuse such as toilet paper was becoming a noticeable feature across the landscape. Escritt stated that "(d)espite the revenue from tourism, it is clear that the facilities in place cannot cope with the seasonal onslaught.....(1994[b]: 61).

MoTA and ARA were the overseers of the area's development at this time.

According to a member of the WRPA's management team

they lacked a mandate and the kind of management such as rangers to regulate the area. Their absence on the ground caused a failure in the management of the pre-existing services (PC 2009).

A strong argument for action began to take shape. Justification for external intervention and protected area status was soon to be realized.

CONCLUSION

For the better part of the 20th century, life for the Bedouin clans of the Wadi Rum region revolved around nomadic pastoralism. With an extended regional drought, their lives experienced changes as each decade brought greater challenges and transformations. Couple this with the encroachment of the non-Bedouin world and both Bedouin and government initiatives, all fostered sedentary living. But a growing tourism industry, partly developed by Bedouin as a response to their changing circumstances, helped pave the way to more viable sedentary Bedouin lives and communities. But by the 1990s it also provided justification for external intervention. Unmonitored and unregulated tourism practices contributed to the degradation of the Wadi Rum area. Something needed to be done, although there was no agreement on the causes or what should be done.

The genesis of the Wadi Rum Protected Area is the focus of the following chapter. Its evolution from a Special Regulations Area to protected area status is reviewed. Bedouin responses to early phases of its development are profiled as

is their knowledge regarding tourism intervention, environmental protection strategies and changes associated with the shift from RSCN management to that of the regional authority, ASEZA.

CHAPTER 3 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL MANAGEMENT TAKEOVER OF CONSERVATION AND TOURISM

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the creation of the Wadi Rum Protected Area. In it I explore its formative years under the management of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature in Jordan (RSCN) and the decisions and projects they implemented. I then explore the transition to ASEZA governance and how it altered the direction of the Reserve's development. Bedouin commentaries highlight this as well as analysing the consequences of having a protected area on their historical rangelands and in their lives during various stages of its advancement.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, CLASSIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT

Beginning in the 1960s under the patronage of the late King Hussein, an environmental awareness campaign developed in Jordan. The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature in Jordan, a Jordanian non-governmental organization, became the Kingdom's official environmental expert agency. Their policies fostered the country's emerging conservation ideology linked to development. This is stated in the RSCN's mandate:

devoted to the protection of nature through sustainable development and is responsible for the establishment and management of protected areas and the enforcement of wildlife protection laws in Jordan (RSCN 2003)

The RSCN was instrumental in bringing this new awareness to other Jordanians,

most notably the youth.

In 1962, His Majesty invited a team of British scientists to investigate the country's wildlife (Escritt 1994[a]: 58). Over a decade later, in 1978, an International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) sponsored study was conducted worldwide in search of potential nature reserve locations. "A Proposal for Wildlife Reserves in Jordan," written by J. E. Clarke in 1979 recommended a number of locations one of which focussed on the lands in and around Wadi Rum "because of the great diversity found within the vast, single ecosystem" (<http://whc.unesco.org/>; RSCN 1999). The study claimed that it was important:

to protect and preserve a representative area of the Eastern Desert (Hisma) land type, together with its indigenous flora and fauna; and to preserve a large section of the scenic mountains of Rum (see Clarke 1979).

This simple, non-specific declaration helped set the stage for future conservation -development in the Wadi Rum area.

During the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, as highlighted by Chatelard, even if Rum's inhabitants were barely aware of it, competition was running high for planning and controlling the expected development of the (Wadi Rum) area as a tourism site (2003: 141). In 1985, the RSCN updated the IUCN survey to establish any environmental changes sustained since Clarke in 1979. The government "approved the IUCN/WWF study in which Wadi Rum was proposed as a protected area" and adopted its recommendations (RSCN No Date: 3). In 1991, the National Environment Strategy (NES) for Jordan identified Wadi Rum

as an important site, describing the creation of the Wadi Rum Protected Area as having top priority (RSCN 1999: 4). Environmental protection for this area was premised on its biological diversity, cultural presence, importance for tourism and its archaeological record:

Wadi Rum is at an important juncture, and steps must be taken to avoid further endangering the very fragile environmental balance that makes it so attractive (World Bank Report No. 16485-JO).

During the 1990s various groups were vying for control of the development of the Wadi Rum site. It was in late 1995 that “MoTA reported that it had already received seventy requests for permits to establish hotels...” according to Laurie A. Brand (2001: 574). She stated

MoTA was not concerned with the potential environmental impact and the Aqaba Regional Authority (ARA) claimed its rights to Rum and that they would have the final say about the form that investment in Rum would take: Under Director-General Fayez Khasawnah, the ARA appeared most interested in promoting short-term, big-investor interests, showing little concern for the local Bedouin or for protecting the environment (ibid.).

The RSCN claimed their jurisdiction based on the 1978 investigation. A committee of representatives from MoTA, the Department of the Environment, the Ministry of the Interior, ARA, RSCN, the Ministry of Finance and the Bureau of Lands was formed to resolve the clash of interests and to follow up on the state of tourism at a number of sites (ibid.). Meanwhile, “the local Bedouin - who tried to become involved but were told not to - were lost in the middle” (see Brand 2001: 574).

On November 15, 1997, twenty years after the IUCN study’s recommendations, 540 sq. km. of land in the Wadi Rum area was delineated as a

Special Regulations Area, which, according to Brand, was a vague designation, “thus raising serious concerns among the local community and outsiders regarding what the future would hold” (2001: 575). Located approximately 370 km south of Amman and about 60 km north east of Aqaba, it rests along the northern edges of the Arabian Desert and stretches toward the border with Saudi Arabia (Appendix 3: Map 1). *Rum Nature Reserve*, as it was referred to early on, was jointly governed by the Aqaba Regional Authority (ARA) and the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA) at this time. In 1998, the government of Jordan, represented by both MoTA and ARA, signed the agreement for the World Bank loan to develop Wadi Rum (RSCN 2003). The principle objectives targeted four areas:

(a) off-site infrastructure, mainly a new access road of about 4.4 km from the Disi Road to the visitor reception area and a new entrance gate; (b) development of new visitor facilities and administrative buildings; (c) planning and development of a new village to accommodate increases in the local population; and (d) improvements to the existing Rum Village (World Bank Report No. 16485-JO).

It is important to note that during the planning and implementation stages, according to the Bedouin I interviewed and supported by social anthropologist Geraldine Chatelard, the Rum Bedouin were not included. Chatelard noted that

At the planning stage, experts at the World Bank never asked if the Rum Bedouins were in a position to convey their views about their own development, or what were the competing conceptions of the status of the land on which the protected area was to be established. In the implementation phase, indigenous systems of knowledge acquisition and transmission about the environment were not incorporated and little consideration was given to the local dynamics of social change (2003: 139).

In June of that same year, the RSCN was contracted by ARA and MoTA

to implement the Wadi Rum component of the World Bank's Second Tourism Development Project (STDP) over the next three years. The goal was the establishment of policies and activities with a socio-economic benefit in conjunction with environmentally friendly practices:

develop tourism in Wadi Rum in a manner that provides tourists with a highly positive experience and ensures that visitor flows are well managed in order to prevent negative environmental impacts (RSCN 2003).

The strategies implemented during the first years of the Reserve's existence were shaped in part by its development under the IUCN nomenclature classification as a nature reserve. Each IUCN categorization coordinates with a specified IUCN approach to environmental protection. It was for this reason that the original Special Regulations Area was contested by some Bedouin of Rum Village according to the WRPA's former Nature Conservation Division Head Jamal Al Zaidaneen (PC E -mail 2010). In particular, one Zalabiah leader, Abu Yasser Al Zalabiah, withheld his acceptance of the name claiming that the classification was limiting because of its exclusion of local populations and of recognition and support of Rum villager's flourishing tourism industry (PC E-mail 2010). It would take some time and consultation to correct this situation, as I will discuss below.

One of the initial projects implemented by the RSCN³⁵ was to gather preliminary data on the newly designated 540 sq. km. Reserve and its

³⁵ Members of the WRPA on site management team were originally RSCN employees. They worked in collaboration with their superiors at the RSCN headquarters in Amman. The RSCN worked under the authority of ARA, later ASEZA and MoTA.

inhabitants. With no official management plan in place, a team began surveying eight key topics in order to establish a baseline accounting of the new Reserve from which to determine changes from 1998 onwards. Data revealed the current state of indigenous floral and faunal species and effects from hunting, drought conditions, Bedouin pastoralism and tourism practices (Appendix 3: Figures 1-2). The evidence supported Bedouin commentaries I have heard over the years that there were fewer Chukar birds, wolves, foxes, ibex and hyenas in the area (IS 2002; 2005; 2007; see Chapter 2). The loss of these species was attributed to excessive hunting primarily by the Bedouin and the effects of drought. Additionally, green wood collection had compromised the viability of some floral species. Local clansmen and women were blamed for the depletion of trees, bushes and some herbal plants due to excessive collection although this was not confirmed by the Bedouin I interviewed. Regardless of blame, the RSCN was committed to eradicating the practices responsible for the degradation. Anti-hunting and green wood collection regulations were foundational to the new stewardship.

Each survey also provided vital information needed to help set part of the agenda for initial intervention, implementation and management for the Interim Visitor Management Plan that was finalized in 1999, followed by the Wadi Rum Protected Area Management Plan (for the period 2003-2008). Stakeholders' objectives were integrated into these plans. Provisional regulatory guidelines were established for the preliminary phase of operations.

In 1999, the RSCN began the process of hiring local Bedouin men to serve as Reserve rangers. The Reserve's Nature Conservation Division Head, Jamal Al Zaidaneen, noted that this was an important move intended to help “the Reserve become firmly rooted in the community” (FN 2009). The RSCN felt that the employment of locals would facilitate acceptance and the support needed from the Bedouin communities. Bedouin rangers would enforce the new Reserve rules and regulations through monitoring schemes looking for perpetrators, thought to be mostly Bedouin, of green wood cutting, hunting or committing other environmentally degrading offences. Al Zaidaneen stated that the rangers were given “full support for anything during the early years” and were committed to upholding the responsibilities bestowed upon them by the RSCN (FN 2009).

The hiring of local rangers was also meant to promote increased socio-economic benefits to the local communities as per the STDP and the Reserve objectives (Al Zaidaneen FN 2009). Seven men were recruited from five of the seven Bedouin clans - Emran, Swailheen, Zalabiah, Zawaydeh and Gedman – to “create a balance between the tribes” noted Al Zaidaneen (FN 2009). These individuals were chosen because “they were saturated with a love of nature,” they earned 150 JD per month (Al Zaidaneen FN 2009). One extra man was hired from the larger Zalabiah and Zawaydeh clans. Even though the Dbour rangelands constituted part of the Reserve, their clansmen were Saudi Arabian nationals and according to Hashemite laws of employment could not be hired.

Likewise, only one Jordanian Emran³⁶ clansman was hired.

The RSCN began to hire specialists to run the daily operations of the Reserve. Jordanian professionals with diverse specialties in ecology, animal husbandry, law, tourism and agriculture were selected to make up the on-site management team. Three of the men were local Bedouin from three of the surrounding seven clans³⁷. This was another strategy used by the RSCN to integrate the local communities into the project (Al Zaidaneen FN 2007). The team originally ran their operations out of two small offices located in Rum Village.

In 2000 the RSCN was officially appointed manager of the Reserve although it had been acting in that capacity for two years. With a three year contract from ARA and MoTA the new site managers set forth on an ambitious environmental protection project, their specialty. They were also responsible for the preservation and protection of an extensive and prolific archaeological assemblage (Appendix 3: Map 2). Striving to be proactive and contemporary, the RSCN's mandate was to become people friendly adhering to their environmental protection motto, "Protecting nature, protects us all."

The restructuring and supervising of the flourishing Bedouin tourism industry was a primary objective, one that anthropologist Geraldine Chatelard

³⁶ Some Emran carry Jordanian passports while others are Saudi Arabian nationals. It is illegal to hire non-Jordanians without proper visas.

³⁷ In 2002, when I first began my graduate research, the protected area management team consisted of seven Bedouin and non-Bedouin men with diverse backgrounds. Since this time, the team has expanded, but these men remained the key members during my 2005, 2007, 2008 and 2009 research.

stated was “not aimed at developing tourism but at *re*-developing it” (2003: 139). What was once the domain for the private sector, the Zalabiah, some Swailheen and Hillawi and Abu Rami in Rum Village and some Zawaydeh in Ad Diseh now fell under the auspices of the Reserve team. They undertook the task of re-organizing the jeep and camel tours and Bedouin camping (see below).

After extended negotiations and approval from the Royal Hashemite Court³⁸ the name of the Rum Nature Reserve was officially endorsed as the Wadi Rum Protected Area in 2001 thereby appeasing the Bedouin and satisfying all of its stakeholders. The new name automatically posited it within the protected area classification. Under Category V of the IUCN classification system, the management of a protected area would need to accommodate recreation:

CATEGORY V	Protected Landscape/Seascape: protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation
Definition	Area of land, with coast and sea as appropriate, where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant aesthetic, ecological and/or cultural value, and often with high biological diversity. Safeguarding the integrity of this traditional interaction is vital to the protection, maintenance and evolution of such an area (www.unepwcmc.org/protected_areas/categories/index accessed 2010)

This new designation acknowledged the Bedouin’s presence and their existing tourism business.

³⁸ The Royal Hashemite Court is the necessary political and administrative link between His Majesty the King and the Central Government, the armed forces and the security forces (www.kinghussein.gov.jo/royal).

In 2001 ARA was replaced by the Aqaba Special Economic Zone (ASEZ) and the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority or ASEZA. It is responsible for

the financially and administratively autonomous institution responsible for the management, regulation, and the development of the Aqaba Special Economic Zone (www.aqabazone.com accessed 2010).

It administers to both terrestrial and marine environmental protection within its zone.

Management of the Wadi Rum area was spelled out in ASEZA's Regulation for the Development of the Wadi Rum Area (No. 24 of the year 2001). Twelve articles specified the objectives and the tasks ascribed to the new governing body.

The WRPA management team under the direction of the RSCN now under the umbrella of ASEZA set forth to administer to the Wadi Rum project based on the stakeholders'³⁹ needs, objectives and desired outcomes:

- (i) conserve Wadi Rum as a protected area
- (ii) develop tourism in Wadi Rum in a manner that provides tourists with a highly positive experience and ensures that visitor flows are well managed in order to prevent negative environmental impacts
- (iii) help local residents share in the benefits of tourism through income-generation activities (RSCN 2003).

The wording is critical, especially regarding environmental impacts and local benefits, when analyzing Bedouin commentaries in the following chapters.

In 2001 the RSCN divided the protected area into three zones based on activity level and environmental status. The Intensive, Semi-intensive and

³⁹ This includes the World Bank loan objectives for the STDP.

Wilderness areas were determined using data from the baseline surveys (Appendix 3: Map 2). The Intensive and Semi-intensive zones received most of the tourism traffic and Bedouin activities. The Wilderness Zone provided corridors and extended areas for wildlife movement, most notably for various carnivore species. Removed from the tourist sites, this area had fewer visitors. But Bedouin clansmen, particularly from the Emran, Gedman and Dbour clans, frequented this area as did rangers and other Reserve personnel.

In January 2002, the Reserve team received official authorization to expand the protected area to accommodate a rich area located further south. By adding an additional 180 sq. km. of the Eastern Hisma, the total area of 720 sq. km. made the WRPA the largest protected area in Jordan (Appendix 3: Map 3). To facilitate the expansion, the protected area was rezoned into two working areas or zones eradicating the Semi-Intensive Zone (Appendix 3: Map 4). The Intensive Use Zone (Brown Shaded Area) as of 2009 received the highest degree of tourism traffic and other human related activities. Bedouin tourism guides continue to focus their tours and have their permanent tourist camps located in this region. The second zone, the Wilderness Zone (Yellow Shaded Area), remains a restricted area. By minimizing intrusive elements such as vehicles, it was perceived that floral and faunal rejuvenation would occur naturally. Bedouin and Reserve personnel continue to have free access in this zone. Under these conditions some Bedouin, mostly from Emran and Dbour clans, are able to maintain a more traditional lifestyle on their ancestral rangelands.

It was in late 2002 that Jamal Al Zaidaneen began to work in his official capacity as Nature Conservation Division Head under the RSCN management. He put forth numerous conservation proposals for future livestock grazing management schemes and data collection, and further research to understand how the management of tourism was affecting the protected area (FN 2009).

One of the RSCN's early conservation efforts was a species reintroduction project. In 2002, twelve captive-bred Arabian Oryx were released into a designated section of the WRPA (see Chapter 7). Another project attempted to minimize environmental degradation from excessive driving by means of a designated track system while another was to increase environmental awareness of the Bedouin youth. Local residents and WRPA employees Ahwad Al Mazanah and the late Ayed Al Zalabiah worked in coordination with local boys' and girls' schools teaching youngsters about nature and conservation efforts. Ahwad was responsible for the establishment of nature clubs in the surrounding villages. Awareness was also highlighted in tourism pamphlets.

The protected area classification banned agriculture of any kind on Reserve lands. This automatically prohibited Bedouin from farming on their historical lands. For many Bedouin this was an unacceptable conservation strategy as will be highlighted below (IS 2002; 2005; 2007).

THE DIVERSITY OF BEDOUIN RESPONSES TO NON-LOCAL MANAGEMENT

Until 1998 and the creation of the WRPA, the Bedouin clans of the Wadi Rum region had lived their lives unaccustomed to extensive external governance

of their practices, management of their historical lands or development of local tourism. The implementation of a protected area with its conservation ethic and a formalized, institutionalized management plan including socio-economic objectives was a major transformation for the local clansmen and one that was initially met with resistance from many Bedouin, especially Rum's villagers.

Initially many Bedouin were unaware of the Reserve's existence and its purpose. One outraged Zalabiah man explained how in 2002 the Reserve laws were not understood by the majority of the *Bedu* and many felt that it was threatening their management and governance of their historical lands:

And in my mind I think 20% only (knew) that and now because the law has changed.... last year. There was no one there.....not one law (prior to the WRPA)...the people cannot understand exactly what's that or who is the manager or who is the ministry of this site.....(TS 2002).

In general, Bedouin commentaries regarding the RSCN's efforts to minimize or eradicate practices that threatened the viability of indigenous floral and faunal species and the regulation of the Bedouin's tourism industry were not held in high regard, although there were other views expressed as well. These early WRPA efforts often came into conflict with established Bedouin ways and Bedouin-led tourism fuelling feelings of frustration, disillusionment and contempt amongst the *Bedu* who were now expected to change their ways. The majority of the Bedouin men and women I interviewed believed that the Reserve was an external force imposing its will upon them. As was evident by one Dbour elder's irritation over the presence of the Reserve and the restrictions placed upon his clan's use of their lands:

Will God give us lots of rain? Where is rain? Where is the manager? Why can't we build? Government is a problem and we are people of the government. Protected land is not supposed to keep us from the land (IS 2002).

The brunt of the Bedouin anger and frustration at this time was directed towards the rangers and the role they played for the Reserve. Many of the clansmen felt as if the rangers were working against the Bedouin even though they were fellow clansmen. Some believed that they were abusing their authority, supporting suspicions of co-optation and betrayal. One Zalabiah man suggested that they were constantly harassing the Bedouin:

They (rangers) are frightening the people so much. They police them more than what is normal and they try to check the cars and if you pull up little wood for you from the desert you know they try to stop it. How can I make you my coffee or my tea? ...the rangers are pushing so much....Where you come from? Where you come? What you doing? Why you are here? What are you doing? And then you find that they are going behind you and see from the other side (TS 2002).

He did not see their hiring as a socio-economic bridge as was perceived by the RSCN.

The rangers and the RSCN faced many problems during the preliminary phase of the hunting prohibition. A number of local men continued to hunt despite the new anti-hunting regulations. Some of these perpetrators felt that there should be no control over what they deemed was their historical and cultural right. Problems were exacerbated when the Bedouin rangers suspected that someone in possession of a gun was using it for illegal purposes. The late Difallah Al Zalabiah explained:

The rangers are always asking for the weapon because the person who carries a weapon within the Reserve is considered to be hunting or something. One of the

Bedu traditions is to carry a weapon while traveling (TS 2002).

He claimed that it was carried for protection from wild animals and drug smugglers crossing through the area from Saudi Arabia:

You are not allowed to have a gun in this area. How I protect myself? If I have problem with other people you know I could stop them otherwise they come they kill me. How I protect if I have tourists, I cannot protect my daughter, I cannot protect my wife? Not from here. Sometimes once a year or two I need to have something with me. It is important anybody could run out of the border, running out of the other government, out a problem or a smuggler or maybe a camel could fight me. Okay, maybe a wolf could fight me. Maybe I need the help and I saw somebody I could shoot in the air so they could know that (Difallah TS 2002).

He further wondered who would protect him if he did not carry his gun because “they (RSCN) never protect me” (TS 2002). Some of the clansmen suggested that this tension could escalate,

One day there will be serious problems between the rangers and the Bedouin. I smell a problem between the hunters and the rangers (IS 2002).

One explanation for this friction stemmed from the fact that some Bedouin did not want to be controlled by the Reserve, even if that control was implemented by their own kinsmen. This was clear from Abdullah Sabbah’s commentary in 2009 when reflecting on the early years of the WRPA, “It was hard for the rangers. It was a hard time and some of them (Rangers) were hit by people (other Bedouin)” (FN 2009). He named some of the culprits claiming that they lived in Rum Village, but were from the Swailheen clan. Abdullah believed that these individuals were:

hitting because they were working with tourists before the Reserve so they didn’t accept the (Reserve’s) rules. They thought they (rangers) were working for money for themselves and not working to help the environment. The rules were

hard also if rangers found someone cutting wood they had to go back and get someone from the ministry to fine them (IS 2009).

These tensions were also explained by Fahad Dmeethane Zawaydeh, one of the original Bedouin men hired as a ranger, during a 2009 interview:

Some of the people who faced some problems with the rangers during the creation time with the families when they sit in a place some rangers come and if families with them they don't apologize that they come and disturb. This causes some embarrassment from them. They need to be more friendly to the families. This is why they fear the rangers and feel insecure (IS 2009).

Not surprisingly, during 2002 interviews not one Bedouin man admitted to hunting although some admitted that a few of their tribesmen continued to hunt despite new anti-hunting regulations. Those interviewed stated that there was nothing left in the desert for them to hunt.

Still other Bedouin were satisfied with the Reserve's efforts and results to date. They believed that progress had been made and that the environment was benefitting from the hunting restrictions. These individuals felt that hiring Bedouin as rangers was a good strategy, "The RSCN hires some of the local men for the ranger positions. This is a better choice than a non-Bedouin" reported one man (IS 2002).

The Bedouin men and women responded to green wood collection allegations in the same manner as they did to the hunting accusations. They blamed outsiders from Amman and Israel for the loss of vegetation. According to many individuals, Bedouin culture and their religion does not support green wood cutting. They acknowledged the importance of preserving the green wood as fodder for their camels, sheep and goats (IS 2002). They admitted to

occasionally gathering small amounts of herbs for medicinal purposes.

According to the late Atallah Al Zawaydeh:

The Reserve should respect the *Bedu* culture because *Bedu* have always collected only dead wood and nothing else. We always avoided the cutting of a green tree in the past and present (IS 2002).

This was a common Bedouin commentary in 2002.

SHIFTING STEWARDS, SHIFTING WAYS

In 2003, the RSCN's 3-year contract with ASEZA and MoTA came to an end and ASEZA took over managerial operations of the site. This meant that it now controlled the operations on the ground in addition to other aspects of its development, including finances and the funds from the STDP loan.

The protected area management team as a whole was concerned about ASEZA in 2002 when I first met them as part of my MA research. At that time the management team conveyed their apprehension about the impending transition to ASEZA governance, the changes that would follow and the implications for the protected area and for them as a team. The men were most concerned about management differences that did not prioritize conservation, even though the RSCN crafted Wadi Rum Protected Area Visitor Management Plan (2003) remained the basis for ASEZA's management.

The shift to ASEZA based supervision altered the established course of environmental protection and tourism development from 2003 onwards. Jamal Al Zaidaneen claimed that changes occurred after the building of the Visitor Centre in 2004 (see Chapter 5). This is when ASEZA began to notice the potential of

Wadi Rum's tourism (FN Discussion 2010). The WRPA is the Hashemite Kingdom's second most visited site and one of three important tourist sites located in the south. Through marketing schemes a broader tourism experience was created by ASEZA uniting the Red Rose city of Petra with the golden sands of Aqaba and the sandstone mountains and deserts of Wadi Rum to create the *Golden Triangle* (Appendix 3: Map 5).

ASEZA assigned one of its Aqaba members as the primary WRPA manager and for lack of a better word demoted the original manager Mahmoud Al Bdour, a former RSCN employee schooled in agriculture and environmental protection. He was replaced by Mr. Jabri whose professional career was business oriented. During Jabri's two year reign, Mahmoud Al Bdour co-managed as an environmental protection specialist. In 2005, Jabri was replaced by Khalil Abdullat, another ASEZA employee who had a BA in Business Administration and a strong development background.

According to Geraldine Chatelard, the RSCN and ASEZA have diverge(d) in their long-term aims and in their approaches to community participation, a fact that has impeded effective involvement of the indigenous population in the implementation of the project in Wadi Rum (2003: 139).

POST-RSCN COMMENTARIES

During my second visit to Wadi Rum in 2005, the initial phase of my PhD investigation, many Bedouin commentaries echoed similar sentiments as those heard in 2002 suggesting that little had changed for the Bedouin during my three year absence. In particular, Bedouin informants continued to make complaints

about the rangers. Sleman Moussah Dbour was perturbed for a variety of reasons:

rangers take a wage from the protected area.....I was collecting wood and told by the ranger not to use it. I told them it was dry (IS 2005).

He viewed the shift in the rangers' actions as a form of betrayal and as a cultural setback, "people are no longer together. Each one has an idea" (IS 2005). He also accused the rangers of committing unlawful acts, "Rangers hunt rabbits and other animals," something I heard time and again (IS 2005). But there were some men who viewed the rangers as a contribution to conservation. In fact, in 2005 Magdooah Mohammad Gedman believed that the Reserve should hire more rangers (IS 2005). Living in the north-western corner of the protected area he had witnessed many environmental protection offences. He felt that the management should "control more" because he was powerless to tell hunting and green wood perpetrators to stop (IS 2005). It was his belief that offences escalated due to a lack of monitoring.

But a new trend was apparent. It appeared that there was a greater proportion of Bedouin who were more complimentary in their appraisal of the Reserve's environmental protection strategies than in 2002. Three additional years of conservation had resulted in tangible results in the view of these individuals. Abu Salem Gedman witnessed some of the changes:

The Reserve is good. Nothing is different. They look after bushes more than before. They are good. They look after mountain goats, rabbits and make people pay fines (IS 2005).

Commenting on what he liked about the Reserve in 2005, he said that "it helps to

protect the wildlife. There is more wildlife now” (IS 2005).

This trend did not extend to increased socio-economic benefits. Seven years following the WRPA's creation, some clans - Gedman, Dbour and Emran - still had not received benefits similar to the Zalabiah, Zawaydeh, Mazanah or Swailheen clans. When asked about Dbour involvement in WRPA affairs, one Dbour elder commented that the “Reserve is government and the government doesn't let the Dbour play a role because the government knows best” (IS 2005). This was a critical reference to the Jordanian government disallowing the employment of Saudi nationals despite their historical rangelands constituting a portion of the WRPA. Gedman and some Emran were employable but remained unhappy with their limited involvement.

During the third phase of my investigation in 2007, interview sessions were structured to identify changes from 2005. Similar to 2002 and 2005, many Bedouin continued to purport that there had not been any noticeable changes to the environment or to their lives. Abu Eid Al Zalabiah claimed that before the Reserve there “were more wild animals, more grasses before now – see this hill, before lots of trees on hill now not” suggesting that the decline was a result of the Reserve (IS 2007). When asked if the desert was in a better condition, Dkelallh Salem Al Zalabiah's emphatically stated that nothing had changed:

Laura: What do you think the Reserve is doing?

Dkelallh Salem: Nothing. Somebody is cutting Reserve wood and is still hunting (IS 2007).

Laffy Emran, one of the few Emran living for extended periods of time in the

desert, was unwavering in his belief that there was nothing to praise since 2005:

Laura: Is the desert coming back?

Laffy: No change. Less grass, less rain. This year is a bit better than good.

Laura: What is good about the Reserve?

Laffy: They don't protect the animals (IS 2007).

Abu Ahya Dbour, a man who lived in the desert with his wife and nine children, supported Laffy and Dkelallh's evaluations:

Laura: Is there a difference with nature from Mahmiah?

Abu Ahya: No, it is the same (IS 2007).

Eid Jthanian Al Mazanah felt that there have not been any identifiable changes to the environment and that the protected area has done little in terms of protecting it over the past decade:

Laura: Is the desert better or worse as a result of the Reserve?

Eid Jthanian Al Mazanah: No change. They have done nothing. The Reserve is open. The Reserve is big and can't be controlled (IS June 3, 2007).

For these individuals, their commentaries offer firsthand accounts of any changes to the environment in which they reside. They live and breathe the *badia*. Environmental changes of any size would have been noticed by them.

In 2007, a negative attitude towards the Reserve's progress permeated discussions. Feelings of distrust and ulterior motives were especially evident.

Mohammad Sabbah Al Zalabiah was very clear in his statement that "the protected area doesn't protect" (IS 2007). According to Sleman Sabbah

Mazanah of Manasheer Village,

people in Wadi Rum don't want *mahmiah* (WRPA). Now the area is controlled where you are going. We feel like foreigners in our lands (IS 2007).

He suggested that the management had a hidden agenda that reached beyond the

preservation of local resources:

Laura: Why does the Reserve think that the Bedouin cut green wood when they all say that they don't?

Sleman S: It is part of RSCN (ASEZA) plan to give them justification to manage the area therefore economic. They protect nothing. It is all business (IS 2007).

A number of Bedouin men were unabashedly annoyed at the Reserve's decision to prohibit agriculture within the WRPA's boundaries. Abu Ahya typified sentiments felt by Bedouin who continued to maintain a more historical lifestyle in the desert, "bad thing for farming in area. (It is) not allowed":

Abu Ahya: In Jordan, everyone buys from Amman. Why don't we grow here?

Laura: Have you been stopped from growing crops?

Abu Ahya: No, but other people have.

Laura: What did you grow in the past?

Abu Ahya: Wheat and barley

Laura: Were these crops for people or for animals?

Abu Ahya: For people

Laura: When was the last time you grew something?

Abu Ahya: 1994⁴⁰ (IS 2007).

Mohammed Faraj Dbour angrily noted "we used to grow things and now we can't because the government said we couldn't" (IS 2007). Even limited agriculture helped some Bedouin families make ends meet before the Reserve.

Similar to 2002 and 2005 commentaries, Sleman Sabbah Mazanah adamantly denounced any claim that the Bedouin were the perpetrators of environmental degradation:

The problem in Diseh and Rum is the people live in nature and love nature and live in desert about 600 years. People are important to nature. Love natural, tree, animals, desert, soil, rocks. Don't do bad things to desert. The government is wrong. Reserve is not important in Rum. People in Rum understand the

⁴⁰ 1994 was a good year for rain.

desert and know the area and protect the nature (IS 2007).

Jomaa Dbour explained further that “in Islam⁴¹ (it is) not allowed to cut green wood” meaning that the Bedouin were not responsible for illegal wood cutting (IS 2007). Abu Mteha also known as Sheikh Hammed Dbour was very concerned with the damage being done by people coming from outside of the Wadi Rum area:

people come from inside the country and play in the dunes and play with cars and damage many plants. The young guys fight with him and run away because they are hunting rabbits...They come here and destroy the plants and are noisy in the area and won't be quiet. They aren't hungry just hunting, hunting and killing and killing. Not part of Bedouin culture. When we were young and went with goats and passed rabbits we eat one and leave the other rabbits. We saw 30 ibex and take one to eat and not all. This land is no longer ours (IS 2007).

After nine years of official operation some Bedouin were still unaware of the Reserve's purpose, while others noted how it was taking control away from them. Comments such as those from Abu Ahya Dbour indicate how the protected area was not under Bedouin governance and how it continued to exclude them:

Laura: Do you know what the protected area is doing to help the area?

Abu Ahya: It is government business.

Laura: Do they talk to you about the Reserve?

Abu Ahya: Rangers come and sit and leave.

Laura: Do they ask you about what you are doing?

Abu Ahya: No (IS 2007).

⁴¹ The IUCN's *Environmental Protection in Islam* states: He (the Prophet Muhammad, upon him be blessings and peace) forbade that one needlessly and wrongfully cut down any tree which provides valuable shelter to humans or animals in the desert, and the aim of this prohibition may be understood as prevention of the destruction of valuable habitat for God's creatures (Bagader, Abubakr Ahmed, Abdullatif Tawfik El-Chirazi El-Sabbagh, Mohamad As-Sayyid Al-Glayand, Mawil Yousuf Izzi-Deen Samarrai and Othman Abd-ar-Rahman Llewellyn 1994: 11).

In 2009, with over a decade of environmental protection at work, the WRPA had time for its presence to take effect, but for a number of Bedouin men there were more important issues at hand such as the hardships of living a desert lifestyle. Drought continued to plague the region thereby disturbing Bedouin culture as noted by Sheikh Sabbah Eid Al Gedman, Mukhtar Ali Aoda and Mgoul Hamd:

Because of the drought the Bedouinity is gradually disappearing. There are only nine families and they are always moving looking for water. They are getting closer to Titn Village (IS 2009).

The indication was that these families were experiencing tough times due to a lack of water and natural browse and as a result there were fewer families living in the desert than during the early years of the protected area. There was no aid from the protected area to help them maintain their historical lifeways.

Discussions in 2009 revealed a growing appreciation for the Reserve's conservation objectives since earlier phases of my research. It appeared many people living in and around the protected area seemed to have garnered a greater acceptance and gratitude for conservation having witnessed the results of the RSCN's earlier prohibition acts.

Gedman clansmen Sheikh Sabbah Eid Gedman, Mukhtar Ali Auda and Mgoul Hamd praised "the role of the Reserve as one of the best projects. We consider it a saviour for the wildlife and the vegetative cover" despite their lack of inclusion in protected area affairs (IS 2009). Manasheer villager Sleiman Sabbah Al Mazanah, 59 years old, was complimentary, "they protect the area

and kept it clean....” (IS 2009). Desert dweller Dkhefallah Al Zalabiah stated that “I am absolutely happy with the role of the Reserve” (IS 2009). Sheikh Hammed Dbour stated that “we support the presence and the efforts of the Reserve” (IS 2009). Even Zalabiah leader Abu Yasser from Rum Village had praise if only minimal, “There is considerable improvement in conservation not optimum, but considerable improvement” (IS 2009). It is as if a settling-in period had taken place and the results of earlier practices had had enough time to materialize. It is important to note that this praise pertained exclusively to the long-term conservation benefits not the overall WRPA project as will be highlighted below.

The passage of time also appears to have softened the overwhelming distrust and anger towards conservation that was palpable in 2002 and 2005 for many Bedouin men. There appeared to be an increase in the number of individuals who confessed that their rangelands had needed external intervention. Commenting on the condition of Dbour rangelands pre-1998, Jomaa Msalem Dbour admitted in our 2009 interview that “before the Reserve most of the vegetation cover couldn’t be seen and no one took care” (IS 2009). In addition, some clansmen and women were more open to the mistakes of the past recognizing that many of the environmentally damaging acts had been the result of Bedouin perpetrators. “They (Bedouin) were hunting all the time and cutting wood” reported Zawaydeh Judge Abdel Salam Moordie Al Zawaydeh from Twaiseh Village (IS 2009). It was hunting, according to Sheikh Hammed

Dbour, that was the principle contributor to the depletion of local faunal species,

Drought is not the reason (for the animals leaving). The rabbit can live and survive on shrubs without water (IS 2009).

He blamed other Saudi Arabian tribes:

Most of the hunting occurred in our territory by people from Saudi Arabia. Some are Dbour and some are out of Dbour like Billy and Hwaitat (IS 2009).

Fahad Dmeethane Zawaydeh from Ad Diseh Village agreed with the sheikh, stating that

there are lots of people coming from outside to hunt and collect wood. The rangers feel it is their duty to keep their land and they are doing their job very well (IS 2009).

There were many people like Abdel Salam Moordie Al Zawaydeh who felt that the Reserve's prohibition on hunting and green wood collecting was working:

they (WRPA) protect the animals and the grass. Some people hunt and cut wood and the Reserve does their job like asking people to pay fines (IS 2009).

Respected Mazanah elder Ayed Sabbah from Manasheer Village agreed with the judge shedding light on the importance attributed to conservation:

The advantages of the Reserve are they kept the wood and the animals. If they didn't do this they would be gone one day (IS 2009).

Hereditary Zawaydeh sheikh, 41 year old Sheikh Naif Al Zawaydeh of Ad Diseh Village, expressed gains he had observed:

the Reserve was based to do some objectives like protect the area, keeping and protecting birds and animals and wood and organizing tourism. I feel they are successful (IS 2009).

Some Bedouin commended the advances made in the prohibition of hunting. Abu Yasser suggested that changes in hunting could be used as a

measure of the WRPA's success:

Can measure by observing the hunting habits before the plan (WRPA). Anyone could hunt in groups. Now there is a big difference in that. Now if someone wants to do it they will hide. Only a few are hunting (IS 2009).

As per his comment, anti-hunting strategies have helped reduce the occurrence of hunting resulting in the faunal increases noted above. Living in the desert provided Dkhefallah Al Zalabiah the opportunity to witness this firsthand, "I observed that there is increased number of ibex" (IS 2009). This was confirmed by 80 year old Sheikh Hammed Dbour who frequents the more southerly region of the protected area:

We see there is an influence from the Reserve to make a presence for the animals to be preserved. We like that because we like seeing animals again (IS 2009).

Even Salahy Hassanb Gasm Swailheen, the 53 year old man who lost so much from the closing of Wadi Rumman (see Chapter 7) emphasized some positive changes, "Just to tell the truth there is very good progress for the conservation of vegetation and for the animals especially the ibex" (IS 2009). This supports Nature Conservation Division Head Jamal Al Zaidaneen's claim that one of the Reserve's successes was the Rangers and their efforts to enforce WRPA rules and regulations (IS 2009).

Gedman clansmen Sheikh Sabbah Eid Gedman, Mukhtar Ali Auda and Mgoul Hamd were delighted that floral species were being protected, "Even for the wood collection there is protection for the trees and plants by conservation" (IS 2009). Dbour clansman Jomaa Msalem witnessed signs of progress in the south, the "vegetation cover especially in Wadi Um Ghadah has increased" (IS

2009). Similar praise was heard from Fatimah Salem Mansour Al Zawaydeh, in her 50s from Ad Diseh Village:

The Reserve really protected the area and they kept the wood because people started to cut the green wood and we feel safe. The people shouldn't cut the green wood. They should keep it (IS 2009).

But despite these advances environmental protection continued to be controversial in 2009. Former Reserve ranger and Ad Diseh resident Fahad Dmeethane Zawaydeh recognized a change in WRPA management due to ASEZA. Having worked at the protected area during its infancy, Fahad was familiar with the conservation ideology implemented by the RSCN. In the beginning, he recalled how the Reserve operated under a stricter environmental protection philosophy than today in 2009 (IS 2009). Conservation deterrents such as green wood collection and hunting were principle objectives:

The RSCN took care of this (wood collection). It was in a good way and moved in a good way. At the beginning the rules were really clear and they (PA) didn't allow people to give ideas and opinions.

Tourism, which created degradation such as desert tracks and garbage, was initially administered in an effort to meet environmental standards, but Fahad noted that this too has changed:

the Reserve was founded to keep the environment and to keep the wood and the animals in a good way. Tourism was the exception not their main objective because now they control the tourism. Tourism is now the first and the environment changed (with it) (IS 2009).

This was not something that was initially identifiable or publically announced by ASEZA. He further stated how he had witnessed the new economic emphasis filtering through to the management team, "Even the managers, employees,

chiefs changed completely” stated Fahad (IS 2009). All of this he claimed began after the transition to ASEZA management:

there is a mistake with the managers. Some see a good way and some see taking wood and ignore this. This is a bad thing. It depends upon the supervisor and is not really controlled like in the beginning (of the PA). I see changes.

Unlike earlier on, Fahad stated that

now there are lots of opinions and each one does what he wants. At the beginning they (employees) loved their job, but now they are working for the salary (IS 2009).

This was of particular concern to former Reserve manager Mahmoud Al Bdour who recognized changes in orientation using the growth of jeeps accessing the area as a measure:

in 1984 there were 86 vehicles. In 1998 there were 235 Rum jeeps and 100 Zawaydeh jeeps. In 2003 there were 270 for Zalabiah and 127 for the Zawaydeh (FN 2009).

These numbers did not include vehicles from outside the area that were permitted to enter the protected area. The cumulative effect resulted in an astounding escalation in vehicle entries per day.

Mahmoud Al Bdour also commented on what he believed was a conflict of interest that occurred after the RSCN’s departure. Reserve employees were now (2009) involved in tourism activities, whereas formerly this had been considered taboo and was not permitted by the RSCN. Even some management team members were now engaged in income-generating projects to bolster their salaries (FN 2009). Under the new management it was no longer a concern, possibly because personal gain was now considered a gain for the area in

general. The implication is that conflicts of interest and an unequal distribution of benefits are now more accepted.

Commentaries from sheikhs, villagers, pastoralists and housewives revealed that hunting and green wood collection continued to be a threat to the area in 2009, despite the praise noted above. Although measures have been implemented by the management to thwart such activities and some results have been observed, the environmentally unfriendly acts have not been eradicated. Although Abu Yasser Al Zalabiah felt that there were some advances he also stated that “I don’t think it is greener now than in 1994” (IS 2009). Violations of green wood collection were noted by Nawah Ali Al Zawaydeh, 26 years old:

I see people collecting firewood. Collecting even green wood. People are waiting for the wood to get bigger to cut it and are keeping it for themselves. They are cutting for themselves and not for the protected area (IS 2009).

The culprits according to Abdl Salam Moordie Al Zawaydeh are “people from this area and some from Saudi. The fines should be paid in the court” (IS 2009).

There remained a significant percentage of the local population who were less than complimentary about the WRPA’s conservation progress especially when it came to hunting and the rangers who enforced conservation by-laws. In fact, their responses echoed sentiments similar to those heard earlier in 2002, 2005 and 2007 in orientation, dissatisfaction and tone. Madella Mohammad Atieg Al Zalabiah, 36 years old from Rum Village, was one of these individuals. He claimed that,

Nothing has changed. Before mahmiah there were more animals and now (we) don’t see anything. I don’t know what is happening (IS 2009).

Twenty-six year old Rum villager Ahwad Al Zalabiah was unabashedly angry at the Reserve's presence when I interviewed him in 2009 (IS 2009). He was not satisfied with any of the Reserve efforts, "there is more hunting and more wood cutting after the WRPA than before" (IS 2009). Father and son, Dkhefallah, 63, and Difallah, 22, agreed that, "there are a lot of violations for hunting in the surrounding areas. We see that sometimes" (IS 2009). As in 2007, Sheikh Hammed Dbour believed that hunting still occurred although he had witnessed improvements:

....people are coming from outside affecting everything even Reserve lands when we track the animals there. We also had some problems with people from Queryira hunting ibex. We had problems to make them get out of our lands. We try sometimes to stop, but it is out of our way (IS 2009).

One hypothesis for the perpetuation of hunting and green wood collecting was that some tribesmen still felt that it was their inherent right. Similar to comments heard in 2002, it was the stance of some Bedouin men that the area and all of its resources belonged to the Bedouin clans to use any way they desired (FN 2009). Conservation or the "authority" has provided an excuse for some Bedouin men to be resistant in their response to a governing body.

Dkhefallah and Difallah Al Zalabiah suggested that, "some people are seeking problems and troubles. They go there to create problems for the Reserve" (IS 2009). Their perspective was that these individuals choose to be defiant:

Even before the Reserve it was usual to see the ibex movement and people ignored them, but with the presence of the Reserve people try to challenge the Reserve by trying to hunt these things. The forbidden things are the most desirable things (Dkhefallah Al Zalabiah IS 2009).

Anne Vilkas, a French national who has been working in Wadi Rum's tourism sector for several years, is alarmed by the changes she has witnessed over the past few years (PC E-mail 2010). She is very concerned with Bedouin declarations of their disrespect and desire to continue disregarding Reserve protocols, "the manager is afraid of us" according to discussions she has had with some of the younger, Bedouin men (PC E-mail 2010). She was troubled by comments such as, "*al mudir b'raf min el Bedu*" meaning "here it's our land, and we, Bedouins, do what we want in our land" (PC E-mail 2010). Some even added,

He (the manager) made a problem one day with some Bedouin and the Bedouin wanted to kick him and he ran away (PC E-mail 2010).

Eighty year old Sheikh Hammed Dbour also referred to some Bedouin's deliberate neglect of Reserve rules and regulations. He stated that in the past hunting was a necessity whereas in 2009 he felt that it was a selfish act that was not only unnecessary but was also disrespectful:

During the past, we found the bird and rabbit tracks like the livestock numerous. But we hunted because we had morals not like this time because people have no morals. At this time they hunt with no respect - just to hunt. Sometimes they hunt twenty rabbits and they don't need them (IS 2009).

These individuals will not be denied access nor will they accept the Reserve as an authority figure.

Abdullah Sabbah Al Swailheen felt that "some individuals committed these crimes to attract the Reserve's attention" (IS 2009). By acting out, the individual demonstrates his knowledge of the environment in the hope that the

Reserve management views his actions as beneficial and will hire him as a ranger:

Ali Sleman (head ranger) said that some of the Bedouin men who are hunting are doing it to show that they know where the animals are and that they are good in protecting, even though they are hunting the animals. He said that these people want jobs and are creating a situation so that they will be noticed (IS 2009).

But, he thought, unlike these individuals, the team of rangers currently employed have proven their loyalty and dedication to the protection of the WRPA by not committing unlawful acts. Abdullah Sabbah also stated that head ranger

Ali said that even if he wasn't a ranger and he saw an ibex he wouldn't shoot it because there is no reason nowadays like in the past when they hunted to eat and survive (IS 2009).

At the time of my 2009 interviews, many Bedouin men continued to condemn the role of the rangers even suggesting that they were as culpable of environmentally unfriendly acts as were the Bedouin they were allegedly monitoring. Ahwad Al Zalabiah, not a fan of the protected area, claimed that “the *Bedu* rangers hunt animals and I have had a rabbit bar-b-que with them” (IS 2009). When confronted with this accusation, the Nature Conservation Division Head and supervisor of the Ranger Division in 2009, Jamal Al Zaidaneen, claimed that the accusations were baseless (FN 2009). Having previously heard similar allegations he suggested that

they aren't so because we have implemented various strategies such as surprise visits and monitoring of the rangers to see if this is true. No one has ever been caught doing this (FN 2009).

He went on to say that he “believed his rangers before the naysayers” meaning that they have proven themselves in the field (FN 2009).

Allegations such as those made by Ahwad Al Zalabiah contributed to a conspicuous tension in 2009. Abdullah Sabbah Al Swailheen, a newly appointed Oryx Ranger, confirmed there had been a number of significant exchanges between some of the Bedouin and the rangers, the Bedouin “don’t like them (rangers)” (FN 2009). He explained a recent (2009) incident whereby a Swailheen ranger had shots directed at him by a Zalabiah man from Rum Village. The seriousness of this situation rippled through the WRPA and the Bedouin communities. Reserve management dealt with it swiftly by engaging in a dialogue with the man who happened to be a high profile camp owner. Another incident occurred in the Wilderness Zone where Sheikh Hammed Dbour’s brother had allegedly used a vehicle to remove a tree for firewood. On the day of my Dbour interviews, head ranger Ali Sleman did not want to drive me into Dbour territory because of the tension associated with this altercation. An Emran ranger drove me instead.

Desert dwellers Dkhefallah and Difallah Al Zalabiah believed that problems between protected area management and a Bedouin populace are inevitable (IS 2009). Even Abdl Salam Moordie Al Zawaydeh (IS 2009) from Twaiseh Village noted that there was a colliding of management with some of the Bedouin as did Fahad Dmeethane Zawaydeh from Ad Diseh Village who further suggested that the angst was unavoidable:

with conservation ways and some of the work of the Reserve will collide with the Bedouin (IS 2009).

For Madella Mohammad Atieg Al Zalabiah the perpetuation of hunting and green wood collection has little to do with strong willed Bedouin. Rather, he felt that it was due to a deliberate turning of an eye because of a lack of interest in environmental protection by the Reserve:

There are a lot of people hunting. Many cars and nobody takes care of the hunting. If you see tracks of animals they kill it. If see tracks of ibex they kill it. They (PA) aren't looking at that and don't care if people do (hunt) (IS 2009).

Madella's comments highlight a theory held by others in 2009 that the Reserve now has little to do with environmental protection. His perspective supports comments from others such as Ahwad Al Zalabiah who stated, "this isn't a protected area. What do they protect?" (IS 2009). Most sharing this viewpoint were Zalabiah clansmen from Rum Village working in the tourism industry. Their discontent for the WRPA remained palpable a decade after its creation despite "efforts" to include them.

CONCLUSION

From its beginnings, the WRPA was designed, implemented and managed according to national, regional and international stakeholder objectives, which were expressed in new sustainable development paradigms. The RSCN's conservation ethic helped to craft, implement and manage a variety of environmental protection policies and projects. Five years later, governance was transferred to the regional authority, ASEZA.

This chapter concludes by reviewing the diversity of Bedouin responses to conservation developments. Despite a range in reactions two themes recurred

during each of the periods that I did field research. Many Bedouin remain strongly critical of the WRPA because it is a means by which local management and governance of the region and of tourism have been seized by regional and national organizations leaving the Bedouin without an effective role or control. Also, many but not all of those Bedouin who spend the most time on the land seem convinced that the protected area has not effectively improved the general recovery of vegetation and animal life, although some improvements have been witnessed and the continuing drought limits what can be done. At the same time many Bedouin recognize that the shift to regional management has downgraded conservation issues as regionally organized tourism has become the dominant priority.

Chapters 4 to 7 will examine four WRPA development decisions and projects. Evidence of their effect on the local ecosystem and Bedouin life will be proffered by the local clansmen and women in addition to various non-Bedouin sources. Bedouin knowledge will be explored as will their responses to these imposed projects. The first decision to be examined is the one that allowed a Bedouin village to remain inside the protected area.

CHAPTER 4 WADI RUM AND THE NEW CONSERVATION IDEOLOGY: LETTING THE LOCALS STAY

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I explore the consequences of the decision to allow Bedouins to continue living within the Wadi Rum Protected Area's boundaries and how the Bedouin understand that decision. In earlier environmental protection projects in Jordan and in many other countries, people were viewed as outside of and incompatible with nature. Numerous conservation sites practised this ideology by removing human populations from their historical landscapes. This was a common practice that frequently resulted in a backlash from local communities whose livelihoods were intimately connected to the lands they could no longer access (Chase 1986; Cronon 1996; Stevens 1997; van Wyck 1997; Neumann 1998; Spence 1999; Nash 2001; Dowie 2009).

During the mid-1990s in Jordan, as elsewhere, these environmental management models were slowly abandoned and a restructuring occurred in an effort to generate more equitable outcomes for local people and their communities (Chatty 1996; Cronon 1996; Stevens 1997; Neumann 1998; Mitchell 1997; Nash 2001). This shift, as noted in Chapter 3, emphasized greater community inclusion and participation in environmental protection projects and is central to understanding Wadi Rum's development and Bedouin responses to it.

As part of this new ideology, the WRPA was the first conservation project

in Jordan that was planned from the beginning to not remove people from their ancestral lands. This appeared to be a benevolent response to local concerns and complaints about earlier projects. But how did it work? Were there measures in place to manage these projects effectively so that local populations received full involvement so that they could assure adequate consideration for their culture, traditions and livelihoods alongside the other concerns of the conservation administration?

Bedouin responses reveal how the administration of this decision affected them. Their statements indicate how Bedouin culture and history were woven into the management fabric in limited ways, the types of restrictions Rum's villagers must contend with and their views for the future.

PAST MISTAKES BECOME A CATALYST FOR CHANGE

One of the most influential factors in the development of the new policy of including people in protected areas in Jordan came from problems encountered at one of the nation's leading nature reserves. Established in 1989, the Dana Nature Reserve was Jordan's largest reserve at the time (www.rscn.org.jo accessed 2008). The RSCN was commissioned to be the chief steward for all of the Kingdom's conservation sites (see the National Environment Strategy for Jordan (NES) 1991) including Dana. The adopted protocol was to remove the humans, who were seen as perpetrators of environmental degradation, from the site. In the Dana case, the local population of Bedouin was extricated from their historical grazing lands to areas outside of the newly created Dana Nature

Reserve. In the beginning fences were used to define and protect tracts of land and to keep people out.

One result of this decision was that Bedouin livestock animals began to lose weight and were of lesser market value than pre-nature reserve (PC 2002; 2005). Unable to sell their animals, a principle contributor to Bedouin incomes was diminished. The Bedouin owners expressed their disapproval of the new measures by pressuring management to allow them to graze their animals on lands within the Reserve as was their custom (Johnson & Abu Hawa 2002). For the project to be successful, the RSCN deemed it necessary to shift its mandate to one that was more participatory and inclusive (Brand 2001). Fences were removed, grazing zones were established and greater access was granted for the Bedouin. This shift became foundational to future RSCN projects thereby making the Dana experience a catalyst for change (Johnson & Abu Hawa 2002).

Future Jordanian projects were designed and managed according to this new template, which was representative of a global trend to stop the removal of people from their homelands, as noted above (Chase 1986; Stevens 1997; Neumann 1998; Spence 1999; Dowie 2009). Objectives, strategies and priorities were realigned to find a balance between environmental protection and meeting the needs of local peoples (Johnson & Abu Hawa 2002). Subsequent RSCN projects were oriented towards the integration of conservation with socio-economic development from their outset.

The establishment of the Rum Nature Reserve in 1998 allowed Bedouin

clans from the Hwaitat and Al Enezah tribes to remain on their historical lands and in Rum Village (Appendix 4: Map 1). Desert dwellers and villagers were promised that despite the presence of a protected area life would go on as normal, as noted earlier by Judge Salhsalm Salem (IS 2007).

LETTING THE LOCALS STAY

Located at the southern end of Wadi Rum, approximately seven to eight km. south of the *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* is Rum Village. Although many Hwaitat and Al Enezah Bedouin clans live close to the borders of the protected area and continue to access their respective ancestral rangelands within the WRPA's boundaries, Rum Village remains the only residential community inside the Reserve (Appendix 4: Map 2). According to the Hashemite Kingdom's 1999 census, Rum Village was home to 1000 men, women and children the majority of which were Zalabiah clansmen (www.wadirum.jo accessed 2009). There were 115 families of which 109 were Zalabiah and 6 were Swailheen (ibid.). In 2001, Chatelard reported there were 1,200 inhabitants (Chatelard 2005 [b]: 194). Head of the WRPA's Tourism Division, Nasser Al Zawaydeh⁴², stated that the population had expanded to approximately 1,500 inhabitants in 2012 (FN 2012) (Appendix 4: Photograph 1).

As detailed in Chapter 3, Rum Village started to take shape during the early 1960s as Bedouin families began to stay for longer periods of time around Rum Spring to be closer to a permanent source of water⁴³ (IS 2002; 2007).

⁴² In November 2011, Nasser Al Zawaydeh was appointed manager of the Wadi Rum Protected Area. He is the first local Bedouin to hold this position.

⁴³ It is important to note that although the families were staying for longer periods of time around water sources they were still mobile. Even with village homes they continued to leave for

From that time onwards, the village grew in relation to the dramatic increase in disposable income from the burgeoning tourism industry and army employment. Bedouin earnings were beginning to be spent on non-pastoral wants and needs. A permanent structure became a status symbol and “luxury” and initially only the wealthiest of families were homeowners. Other families began to follow suite, building in areas where their tents had once been staked (IS 2002; 2005; 2007; 2009). In 1994, Escritt commented on how the village could be referred to as a shanty town (1994[b]: 58). The infrastructure was minimal (Appendix 4: Photograph 2-3). Two years later, ARA decided to give those living in Rum Village alternative pieces of land at the site of a proposed new village despite having not consulted with the villagers. A land survey was conducted to officially set the boundaries of the existing village and lands that were not owned by citizens were then to be registered in the name of the treasury in preparation for declaring the area a national park with special regulations (Brand 2001: 575). In a 1997 World Bank document, plans for “improving” the existing conditions for tourism were already underway:

(a) the restriction of the growth of the village across the wadi and encouragement of a distinctive village form; (b) enhancement of the appearance of the village by improvements to existing buildings, walls, open spaces, etc.; (c) encouragement of redevelopment and changes in use to tourist accommodations and facilities, craft manufacture and commercial activities; and (d) promotion of a more attractive urban area that will encourage visitor contact and improve economic benefit for villagers (World Bank Report No. 16485-JO July, 11, 1997).

periods of time to be with their flocks as they grazed in other areas. This still occurs to this day in some cases. For this reason, population statistics during the early years of village expansion were difficult to secure.

It is important to note that there was no mention of “improving” conditions inside the walls or spaces for the benefit of Bedouin living; tourism satisfaction was prioritized.

It was also in 1997, one year prior to the inauguration of the Rum Nature Reserve, that Zalabiah Judge Salhsalm Salem’s father and two other Zalabiah head clansmen – Mohammad Hamdan and Abu Yasser – were invited by the RSCN to visit the Dana Nature Reserve to experience its operations firsthand (IS 2007). During this meeting they were informed of plans for their historical rangelands in the Wadi Rum area. As noted earlier, the men were told that the RSCN “would protect the Bedouin, protect the area and nobody will take it from you. You can live free” reported the judge (IS 2007).

The Reserve began its official operations one year later in 1998. Legislation emphasized the improvement and development of the economic and social aspects of the Wadi Rum area, and the conservation and preservation of its natural environment and cultural heritage (see The Regulation for the Development of Wadi Rum Area No. 24 of the year 2001; www.aqabazone). Rum Village’s size had been restricted to 40.4 ha to “minimize the impact of expansion of Rum Village on the Protected Area” (WRPA Visitor Management Plan 2003). Rum villagers were hence forth legally restricted from building outside of the designated area. Initially this was not of any considerable concern for the villagers. There was still plenty of room for families to grow.

It was also at this time, according to Judge Salhsalm Salem Al Zalabiah

(IS 2007) and Rum villager Sleman Al Zalabiah (PC 2007), that some villagers of Rum were given deeds to their lands officially recognizing their ownership and thereby granting them permission to build on these lands. In many ways, these patterns resembled how families lived in the desert only now it was in a permanent structure. Sons built their homes next to their brothers on the patriarch's now sometimes papered or titled land. In cases with multiple wives, the man sometimes had multiple homes. But the Bedouin soon became aware that their very presence in the protected area meant abiding by the rules and regulations that various agencies used to govern it. They were not exempt. A conservation bureaucracy had emerged as the new law of the land.

Beginning in 2002, the village underwent an extensive infrastructure upgrade and facelift or “beautification” funded by the STDP and based on its 1997 review:

The project would establish boundaries to the present village, control growth within the village, and enhance current buildings and land. The project would encourage rebuilding of plot walls in suitable materials and/or rendering and painting; rendering unfinished houses and painting; tidying streets and removing waste material; and landscaping - planting trees and desert bushes both on-and off-plot. The project would also invest in utility improvements: water distribution, sanitation, and solid waste disposal (World Bank Report No. 16485-JO July 11, 1997).

Loan money was allocated for the construction of cinderblock walls along every village street. Each walled section was between 4 -5 feet high. The exposed side was given a plaster overlay then painted in varying shades of beige, rose and brown to compliment the desert surroundings (Appendix 4: Photograph 4). Built

in three stages the improvements cost approximately \$943,000.00 (USD) all paid for from STDP funding (www.web.worldbank.org – accessed 2008).

Many walls were constructed in front of older structures that had been built by the various homeowners (Appendix 4: Photograph 5). Bedouin homes remained within these newly sectioned off areas creating a compound-like appearance and feeling. In addition, the sand streets were paved, light standards were erected, public garbage bins were strategically located and speed bumps were built to deter speeding. The village was surveyed and lots were recorded as titled or government recognized lands. Plot sizes varied according to current ownership and subsequent subdivisions. Bedouin informants claimed that no money from the STDP loan was provided for local residents to improve their homes, animal shelters or to assist Bedouin in any other way contrary to the project projections noted above (FN 2005; 2007) (Appendix 4: Photograph 6).

It did not take long for villagers' needs to exceed what the original planned site of the village offered. With a steady growth in tourism incomes, more men were now able to afford marriage. A Bedouin groom is expected to have a house for his new bride as part of the bride price or *maher*. In addition, with greater wealth more men were able to afford multiple wives than in the past. The maturing of many sons from plural wives in some families required multiple houses needed for each one. For example, one Rum village *mukhtar* or mayor-like representative has three wives and 29 children. Twelve children are male and nine are married with homes of their own. In four cases, the sons have

multiple wives. All of these families require separate housing preferably close to the patriarch.

Diagram 1 (Appendix 4) illustrates the typical distribution of housing on one patriarch's titled land. His wives are represented by W. Each woman's son (S) has the same colour on the diagram. Some sons have multiple homes due to the number of wives they have (S1 or S2). A few homes are currently rented (R) generating extra income for the family. Each home has a garden area where fig, lemon, olive and orange trees are grown. There is also an area for walking, driving and parking in the Centre. This patriarch's twelve sons are between the ages of 4 – 55 years. Sons that are too young today will one day need a home close to the father's place of residence. Each son will expect the same for his sons. This particular patriarch already has a married grandson who has a young family. They reside outside of the walled area (G) because there is no room next to his father's house. This family is only one of several families of similar size living in Rum Village.

With so many of Rum's families experiencing similar growth, it did not take long for most of the titled lands to be built upon and legalized space to be at a premium. The heart of the village has become the most densely populated. Zalabiah elder Abu Sleman explained, "now everyone is around the (boy's) school", which is located near the castle (IS 2009). Men have responded by moving beyond "papered" or registered lands to the untitled village lands that belong to the government. For the Bedouin this has created a paradox whereby

building on deedless lands is considered illegal in the eyes of the authorities, but for Rum's villagers it was done on the lands recognized as Bedouin lands according to historical Bedouin land rights. Not one Bedouin man or woman felt it would be to their advantage to move to another location.

In 2004, shortly after the RSCN's departure, ASEZA-WRPA turned their attention to land issues in Rum Village and the habits of its villagers (FN 2009). ASEZA implemented strict regulations and building codes under the jurisdiction of ASEZA's Ministry of Planning which restricted expansion of the village outwardly and upwardly (meaning multiple stories). All construction was halted until official permission was obtained through a newly enforced permit schedule (PC 2009). Fees were now required to obtain a building permit.

For the Bedouin this constituted a dramatic shift in established ways of accessing land and how they viewed their presence in the village and as WRPA residents. This shift in policy, implementation and enforcement became a principle contributor to escalating tensions between the villagers, the management of the protected area and its governing body, ASEZA. Complaints regarding the right to build could be heard from one end of the village deep into the desert.

On 26 April 2004 an agreement was signed between ASEZA and a number of Bedouin representatives in a bid to circumvent escalating tension between the Ad Dseh and Rum cooperatives with regards to tourism distribution (see Chapter 5). The agreement of fourteen items was signed by leading Zalabiah

and Swailheen clansmen, WRPA representatives and the presiding ASEZA governor and environmental commissioner at that time. It included ASEZA's recognition and commitment to rectify land issues in Rum Village. Regulation Number 14 stated that:

ASEZA will take the needful measures and arrangements to dedicate pieces of land for those people who live outside the official Rum Village plan in a way that will contain them within the village (Translated from Arabic see Appendix 5).

This discussion and agreement remain important for three reasons: 1) It temporarily appeased the Bedouin leading many to believe that the housing crisis in Rum Village had been resolved. 2) The people believed that they would finally receive legal recognition of all of their lands within the village. 3) It is confirmation of a promise that has not been kept, as will be highlighted below.

LAND RIGHTS AND THE RIGHT TO BUILD

In theory, the decision to leave the Bedouin in Rum Village or in desert camps within the protected area was perceived to be the most responsible and effective approach to managing a conservation site with a substantial population with historical ties to the area. But the desire to safeguard the desert ecosystem, facilitate tourism and to limit overflow into the wadi meant the enforcing of building constraints within the village. Bedouin responses illustrate how these measures were not created in the interest of Bedouin culture and traditions or with their collaboration.

When I visited Judge Salhsalm Salem Al Zalabiah in 2007 he was extremely frustrated with the imposed legislation (IS 2007). His aggravation and

obvious disappointment were palpable as he highlighted some of the struggles faced by his clansmen:

Judge: They put into the heads of people these ideas so that they would sign the paper to protect us. Many things come up that people don't know about such as the Visitor Centre. Now we can't build in the village for our children. We can't build one room without asking ASEZA's permission. The village is not ours we were told. It is forbidden to build.

Laura: When did building become forbidden to the Bedouin of Rum Village?

Judge: Now when we go to responsible people they say "we can't give you lands inside the Reserve. We can give you lands outside instead." This divides families.

Laura: Who are the responsible people?

Judge: Dr. Bilal and the big ASEZA commissioner. They said that this is Rum but we can give you land outside of the protected area.

Laura: What were you trying to get permission for?

Judge: At the start of *mahmiah*, there was a paper that said you can build inside of the village. Now there is a man who made problems with the building in Rum.

It was obvious that he was upset at the depth to which the Zalabiah and Swailheen residents had lost control of what they had once considered was theirs and with the promises that had been broken. Equally distraught was Rum resident Abu Sleman when he said during a 2009 interview that, we (Zalabiah) need more land and houses and our children can't find rental homes. Lands within the (village) walls are without official ownership (IS 2009).

He went on to say that

they made the place after us who have been here 100 years – don't build outside, don't build second floor, don't go out of the wall, no lights in the streets,.....(IS Fall 2009).

He felt the Bedouin are the owners, my word, of Wadi Rum but they must now live within the rules and regulations of the protected area and ASEZA. He no longer felt that he had any freedom in housing which is controlled and monitored

by Reserve personnel. Not one Bedouin man or woman I interviewed felt that a new village would help alleviate the problems associated with a growing population. Rather, it was their right to remain in the wadi even if it meant building on untitled lands.

Rum villager and young mother Alia Ahwad Al Zalabiah agreed with the men's comments,

Originally we heard that the Reserve was from Lawrence Springs and outwards from Wadi Rum. We were allowed to go as before but then we heard that this changed (IS 2009).

Alia and her family were under the belief, as were other Rum villagers, that the original entrance to the WRPA would be located south of the village thereby leaving the village outside of the protected area and villagers undisturbed (Appendix 4: Map 3). Instead, the village rests inside the Reserve and has become a major point of entry for Zalabiah and Swailheen tourism operators wishing to access other protected area destinations.

The new housing regulations stated that the Bedouin must have the deed to the land before a building permit would be granted. As noted by Judge Salhsalm, one of the main issues for the Bedouin has been the acquisition of official recognition of land ownership (IS 2007). Abu Eid Al Zalabiah, who lives in the desert with his wife and livestock, noted that

some people didn't take land originally and now when they ask the government (but) they don't get it. The lands for people in Rum Village were before the Reserve (IS 2007).

He stated that this was a common experience for many of the older villagers.

The elderly continued to live as they always had not realizing that the times were changing and the government would confiscate lands not legally registered. According to Abu Eid, he was told by ASEZA officials in Aqaba that the property in question was no longer his (IS 2007). It had been classified as government land due to him not claiming it earlier. He said that, “they gave it to other people” meaning it was sold, given to another family or registered to the government. In 2007, he continued to spend most of his time in the desert with his wife herding their flock of sheep and goats. One of his sons had to move to Manasheer Village, located on the outskirts of the protected area, with his new wife because his father did not have land in Rum Village. This was unusual for Bedouin families who practice patrilocal residency.

The late Abu Hammad Al Zalabiah permanently moved to the village in 2004 after his wife suffered a debilitating stroke. The elderly couple were no longer able to maintain the desert lifestyle they were living when I originally interviewed them in 2002. The respected elder told me that the village offered sanctuary and a place for him to “be close to his tribe” (IS 2007). Abu Hammad’s story was similar to that of Abu Eid, “We had land with no license because in 1972 we didn’t think of asking for it” (IS 2007). Although he had a very small plot of land in the village - 5m x 5m – it was too small to build a house. He claimed to have a larger plot that was originally his father’s where he had hoped to build a small home for his ailing wife, but he did not have the legal deed to claim his rightful ownership. He tried numerous times to obtain legal

rights to the larger plot. In 2006, he officially requested that ASEZA deed him his father's land. He said that they promised that they "would give me a section large enough to build a house on and that they would come to see me at the end of April 2007" (IS 2007). He erected his tent on government land in the meantime.

Like other men and women of his clan, Abu Hammad was frustrated,

We have lands here but they don't want to give them to us. They have agreed to give land anywhere just not in Rum (IS 2007).

He believed that the refusal for deeding the land was because the village was in the WRPA. Sadly, Abu Hammad passed away in the fall of 2008. No one from ASEZA had contacted him prior to his death.

Desert dweller Dkelallh Salem Al Zalabiah ran into similar problems when attempting to build a house for one of his sons next door to his village residence.

According to Dkelallh, although he had "follow(ed) the system," his son had been told by the protected area to stop building:

This usually took one week but it is now over three months. We were told to go to the WRPA. The ASEZA guard isn't helping. He said no and he is supposed to help us take the papers to Aqaba. Now we must see what the WRPA says because there is no more building allowed. ASEZA said we have stopped the building in Wadi Rum and you must see the management of the WRPA (IS 2007).

The irony is that unlike Abu Hammad and Abu Eid, Dkelallh's family had the deed for the land where the house was to be built:

Laura: Do you have a license for the land?

Dkelallh: Yes.

Laura: Have you run into problems like this before?

Dkelallh: No. This is the first time. It is just two rooms. Not a big place. Okay, these are my papers so give me a building permit (IS 2007).

The moratorium on construction temporarily derailed his son's dream of a house and his marriage. This family like others were entangled in a bureaucratic process that they were ill-equipped to handle.

Established Bedouin practices have become secondary to the Reserve's rules and regulations. Many of the Bedouin stated their disadvantage because they lack information about or the means to comply with or systematically challenge these new laws. In fact, the Bedouin are incensed with the use of city regulations to govern their small village. This was a principle concern for Judge Salhsalm Salem in 2007, "They (ASEZA) follow us with a city system although we are a small village" (IS 2007). Difallah Dkelallh Al Zalabiah supported the judge's evaluation:

They think of us in Aqaba. Even standards are for Aqaba. They do not consider Rum as a village. We are experiencing a lot of problems considering we are a village and are connected to Aqaba (IS 2007).

Even non-residents such as Sleman Sabbah Mazanah of Manasheer Village recognized the absurdity in this legislation, he sarcastically asked during an interview, "Rum Village is like a city such as Aqaba?" (IS 2007).

Fees associated with the new regulations have complicated the situation further. Many of the Bedouin feel that they are too high for the local population, again a reflection of city legislation. With the new regulations villagers must have a building plan prior to being granted a building permit; some plans cost up to 700 JD. Dkelallh's son was told by the protected area management that he

had to have a plan from an ASEZA engineer in Aqaba who would “make a design for the house which costs 250 JD” according to Dkelallh (IS 2007). Not only do the villagers have to pay for the cost of the permit, they are required to travel to Aqaba to obtain it. Afterwards, the son was instructed to go back to the WRPA manager to get his permission and for him to sign the papers to take back to Aqaba to ASEZA’s head office and maybe then we will be given permission to build (Dkelallh IS 2007).

Prior to 2004, permits and associated fees were unheard of as homes were literally built according to the owner's wishes (IS 2007). Egyptian men have been building Bedouin homes for years without a blueprint, permit or fees. Judge Salhsalm Salem Al Zalabiah continued to hold out hope that one day someone from ASEZA will come to Rum and admit that “we made a mistake. You should pay village prices” instead of Aqaba fees (IS 2007).

Monitoring of the building by-laws, something that had not previously existed, was incorporated into the WRPA’s managerial duties as of 2004. Patrols were conducted by members of the management team as I observed in 2007. Employees drove through the village looking for construction offences. Any form of building that did not have a permit was considered illegal and subject to being torn down. Dkelallh Salem Al Zalabiah felt that the “guard was supposed to help them” meaning that the ASEZA employee or guard assigned to assist the locals was instead making it more difficult for the villagers (IS 2007). Furthermore, when a structure was built on land that was officially recognized as government land the owner of the home could not sell the house. This meant

that the money put into construction would never be recouped. Impoverished families were especially vulnerable in this regard.

Land claims also exposed that a number of large plots of land remained empty despite the needs of the villagers. When asked about these lands, Bedouin referred to them as either government lands or owned by non-residents living elsewhere.

The cumulative effect of the rules and regulations left one Bedouin man asking,

Why is our fate to live here? Why is it that all of Jordan is allowed to have land and have houses? (IS 2009).

Equally perplexed, elder Abu Sleman added, “The village came before the Reserve and they (ASEZA) have to respect that” (IS 2009). It was difficult for Mohammad Sabbah Al Zalabiah to hold back his disillusionment with the protected area during our 2007 discussion. He reiterated what I have heard many times in the desert and in village homes,

they said they would help, but no land and no home. Why take my family’s land and business and not give us land? Nobody listens to the Bedouin (IS 2007).

The late Atieg Sabbah Al Zalabiah of Rum Village believed:

It changed because ASEZA wants to make problems between the families within the last 2-3 years. They don’t want to make the village bigger. They want to press people inside and then they will go outside of the Visitor Centre. This is like the Palestinians and the Israelis. They like to control us with a plan (IS 2009).

The Palestine-Israeli analogy is one that I have heard numerous times when Bedouin describe their feelings about the protected area and how it has

affected their lives. The removal of the people “outside the Visitor Centre” meaning outside of the protected area continues to be a palpable threat to the Zalabiah clan in particular as will be discussed next.

FEAR OF REMOVAL

Rumours and fears have circulated about the impending Bedouin expulsion from Rum Village and relocation to a secondary site since the protected area’s inauguration. This was first presented to Rum’s villagers in 1997 without their consultation or coordinating with their representatives (Brand 2001: 576). Mohammed Al Zalabiah, the Rum Tourism Cooperative’s president at the time, wrote a letter to a member of the royal family stating that the locals refused to move to the new site because it was inappropriate and would not allow for future expansion.....(and) by moving out, the locals would in effect give outsiders....a way to participate in determining the future of the area (ibid.). Brand further stated that the elders and sheikhs of Rum continued to protest that no one from the World Bank, the ARA, or MoTA had spoken with them about plans for the village (ibid.). Aghast at the idea of being systematically removed from what they considered to be their ancestral lands and their rightful place, not to mention the promises made in 1997 and in 2004, the Bedouin of Rum Village have spent the subsequent years fearing removal from their homes and lands.

According to Madella Mohammad Atieg Al Zalabiah, there have been numerous attempts to

send people outside of the village. They don’t think about how people are feeling. I am not moving from my house. It is like someone kills you. This person is not a good person to remove you from your house (IS 2009).

After the RSCN's 2003 departure, there was a wide-spread rumour reporting ASEZA's desire to remove all of Rum's villagers to a location north of the protected area (Appendix 4: Map 4). Apprehension surrounding imminent removal escalated, according to Judge Salhsalm Salem, when the residents protested, "The people said no we have a license" (IS 2007). The villagers stood their ground secure in the knowledge that the main families possessed government issued land titles. They felt that Reserve rules and village limitations were secondary to their rights as the heirs to these lands.

A second widely held fear has been the removal of the younger families to a secondary location. With families growing and maturing, younger Bedouin fear they will be forced to build their homes further north leaving their elders behind. This strategy would essentially separate families. In 2007, Judge Salhsalm Salem Al Zalabiah believed that removal would not give control back to the Bedouin,

in the future there is another village for the children, but this will also be controlled. We still won't be able to sell land or build. Leave the old people in Rum Village (IS 2007).

Villagers are reluctant to move for yet another reason according to Ahwad Mohammad Al Zalabiah, a young man whose grandfather was the hereditary Zalabiah chief during the early 20th century. He claimed that if a new village was to be built across the street from Shakriyyah Village and outside of the protected area, as is rumoured, this would cause a serious dilemma for Zalabiah families (IS 2009). Their concern would be that young Swailheen men from

Shakriyyah would drive through the new village in search of young, Zalabiah women and girls. For a culture that looks poorly upon young women talking to non-relative males, the idea that other clansmen could be “cruising” for their girls is disrespectful and infuriating for the male family members. Due to the established nature of Rum Village, namely that families are close by and neighbours are known this is not a fear here.

Another source for the villager’s perpetual frustration comes from neighbouring communities. As part of ASEZA’s mandate, Rum Village is regulated hence the implementation of permits. Other clans, such as the Swailheen and the Zawaydeh who live on the outskirts of the protected area, are not governed by the same legislative body nor are they governed in a similar manner although they are only a short distance away and continue to access their ancestral lands within the WRPA. Their villages fall under different administrative bodies. Salhia and Shakriyyah villages are governed according to the Municipality of Queryira. Ad Dseh and surrounding Mazanah and Zawaydeh villages fall under a local administration. Due to their village locations outside of the WRPA, tribesmen living in these villages are able to sell their homes and lands and build homes under the dictates of a governing body not oriented towards environmental protection or tourism. This difference is a constant source of frustration for Rum's villagers. Judge Salhsalm Salem Al Zalabiah’s comment reflects this shared sentiment, “the Zawaydeh have lots of land and can grow and sell their land. They are also in tourism” (IS 2007). This

also appears as a pressure created by authorities so that village residents will choose to move.

During the fall of 2009, the fear of removal continued to be a real threat essentially galvanizing the community. Men like Dkelallh Salem Al Zalabiah were deeply concerned especially for their children:

Laura: Do you think there will come a time when the Reserve kicks the Bedouin out of Rum?

Dkelallh Salem: Yes

Laura: Where?

DS: Outside of the Reserve or in another village. I will not move to another village. This is our land. We grew up here (IS 2009).

Abu Rami, the manager of the Government Rest House and long time participant in Wadi Rum's tourism development, diplomatically stated his thoughts regarding Bedouin removal. He suggested that the families of Rum have been "asked to move over there which is more polite" (FN Discussion June 2009). Such a move he suggested would enable them to remain involved in the tourism industry as participants. In the view of many Bedouin they are the rightful owners of the local tourism industry – as previously indicated. Abu Rami explained how

Wadi Rum's tourism needs them, so they won't be kicked out; instead I foresee a gentle push to the side to enforce the idea that it would be to their advantage (FN Discussion June 2009).

In this sense, the Bedouin would be encouraged to recognize on their own that there is no room for them in the village and a secondary location would be the best solution. ASEZA could then offer to construct a new village to show their appreciation for their decision.

These fears were confirmed when reviewing the STDP (1997)

documentation and map of the proposed site. The Wadi Rum section referred to plans for a secondary location, highlighting future plans:

Wadi Rum: new settlement. The largest part of the Wadi Rum component is to refurbish structures and improve basic infrastructure within the existing village, and to provide alternative nearby (about three km) housing and other facilities to accommodate future growth and the needs of residents who want to undertake commercially related activities within the existing village. Households taking advantage of the Government's offer for an additional house would still retain ownership of their home in the traditional village. The risk of residents' not respecting agreed building and growth controls has been mitigated through discussions with village inhabitants and agreement that current residents of Rum village, should they desire it, will be given serviced plots at no charge within the new village site (World Bank Report No. 16485-JO, July 11, 1997).

Although this may have originally been considered for the most benevolent of reasons, the fact remains that removal was conceptualized prior to the protected area's creation without Bedouin consultation despite claims to the contrary. This was not mentioned during meetings with the Zalabiah men who went to the Dana Nature Reserve when the WRPA was discussed and before the WRPA's official inauguration. Villagers were assured they would not be asked to move. But moving has been discussed and worried about ever since.

Zalabiah camp owner Madella Mohammad shed light on how a government official should broach the idea with the Bedouin:

if you want to take someone from his land and move him from place to place you should make him happy. He sits with you and says okay I am going to move. There is a way to talk to him and this is not so easy to move from your house and his land to move to other place (IS 2009).

But as tourist operator Eid Sabbah Al Zalabiah from Rum Village said "They (ASEZA) have to forget moving the village" because there will be a "bigger

problem for the poor people” in his estimation (IS 2009). He believes that organizations, such as USAID, are coming in to “make the village touristy will have money therefore making the other people poorer” (IS 2009). This is part of a belief that once the Bedouin leave the village it will be made into a tourist attraction and the developers will get richer while the Bedouin will become poorer. If this was to occur, it would go against the very premise of increasing socio-economic benefits for the local community.

Whether young or old, male or female, business owner or pastoralist, Bedouin have remained resolute in their desire to live in Rum Village. They believe strongly that the lands are their ancestral and legal homelands and they are willing to fight for what is theirs. This has become part of the Zalabiah discourse that unites the community. Sentiments such as those from Zalabiah elder Abu Selman, emphasize this point, “nobody will move from their family and move from their father’s land” (IS 2009). This statement can be heard on any given day in the Wadi Rum area.

HIDDEN AGENDAS?

Many of Rum’s villagers support Atieg Sabbah and Abu Rami’s hypotheses that ASEZA is intentionally making living in Rum Village difficult so that the people will leave out of sheer frustration (IS 2009). A number of theories have emerged based on tangible experiences in the community.

One factor to mention in support of their ongoing fear of expulsion is the gifting of government housing to the underprivileged households in surrounding

villages while such housing has not been provided for villagers in Rum Village. Also, Shakriyyah Village has been the recipient of a new fire hall and a medical clinic. Rum Village has not received anything similar although it continues to be in the heart of tourism.

Another observation is the poor state of Rum Village's infrastructure despite the 2002-2003 upgrades. Sheikh Abu Yasser Al Zalabiah complained about ongoing problems (IS 2009). The Sabbah brothers are particularly perturbed by the community's inefficient electrical system (IS June 2009). Blackouts are commonplace during hot and cold seasons. The current power grid is inadequate to support the increased usage of air conditioning systems and portable heaters that tourism incomes have made possible to purchase. It is not unusual for the electrical system to be out of commission for many hours or even days. For the villagers this has caused unnecessary hardship. In addition, businesses such as the Government Rest House and local shops in the village that require refrigeration for perishable items suffer.

Street lights have also been an ongoing problem. The system that was implemented as part of the STDP village enhancement in 2002-2003 has all but been destroyed, allegedly by the villagers. The Bedouin ruined the light standards according to protected area management and some Zalabiah clansmen because they generated too much light. According to local sources the illuminated village was attracting wolves in the evening and may have exposed some secretive ways that some villagers preferred remained a mystery (PC

Discussion 2007; 2009) (Appendix 4: Photographs 7-8). Instead of changing the style of lamp standard to a more subdued glow, Judge Salhsalm Salem believed that the WRPA has left the broken standards as a ploy to make the villagers

feel neglected so that they will move easily to another village. The people in the village don't want to move (IS 2007).

According to the Reserve's electrical engineer, many attempts have been made to fix the problem, but the Bedouin keep destroying the lights (FN Discussion May 2009). In the fall of 2009, there was an effort to erect a new style of lighting system that was tamper proof. As best as I can discern, there has been no effort to establish lighting needs from the point of view of the residents.

Since 2004, village building by-laws require electrical permits for new construction as discussed. Eid Sabbah paid 1,600 JD in 2009 for electricity for his third home (FN Discussion July 2009). Prior to 2004, permits were unnecessary for his first two homes. Villagers feel that this is meant to complicate their lives fuelling the theory that it would be easier for them to move to another village than live under these new restrictions.

Water continues to be an ongoing problem in Rum Village. Villagers store water in rooftop tanks. New regulations stipulate that they abide by a rotation system to fill these tanks every other day. The reason for this regulation has mystified the villagers considering one of the largest aquifers in the Middle East is a few kilometres away under Ad Diseh Village. Rum resident Sleman Sabbah also noted that when Rum's infrastructure was upgraded in 2002-2003,

water pipes were placed under paved roads, making future access to the water supply difficult (FN Discussion June 2007). Consequently, Sleman must share the same intake hose with his brother Atieg, who lives next door, instead of having a double line that meets each family's needs. The inefficiency of this system has greatly affected local residents.

The village walls, built with STDP funding, have generated yet another example of how locals feel authorities have created intended discomforts for villagers. Many people believe that their construction was merely a million dollar facelift meant to improve village aesthetics for tourists driving through the village enroute to their desert destinations. When sightseeing from the back of a jeep, it is difficult if not impossible to see what is on the other side of the walls, hiding the *real* Bedouin village. According to countless interviewees not one villager was consulted prior to their construction. No one was asked how the walls would affect them, if they had any recommendations about their construction, where the entrance to their property should be located or what was a desirable height. The Bedouin had walls constructed prior to the STDP upgrading, but these walls were built according to the owner's wants, needs and left in their original cinder block state. The funding did not support any form of upgrades to these walls. Nor was there funding for the inside of the new walls, the part that is exposed to the Bedouin families' areas. They remain as unfinished cinder blocks that are often crooked with exposed mortar.

The effects of the walls on the villagers have been diverse. Bedouin

families living in the desert lived close to one another in open spaces. Walls offer a closed, compound-like atmosphere which differs from the established style of habitation they were familiar with. Some Bedouin have actively engaged in the destruction of the costly infrastructure. Desert coloured walls have received unabashed defamation in the form of graffiti and the removal of sections and/or additions more fitting to the owner's needs (Appendix 4: Photographs 9-10). Some walls were built higher for extra privacy. Street speed bumps have also been deliberately destroyed (Appendix 4: Photograph 11).

The infrastructure upgrades have come to represent power and control, as exemplified by the commentaries noted above. They are also seen as a waste of money that could have been used in other ways to help the local community.

Before his passing, Abu Hammad commented that he did not like the walls. He said that they were

not good. They are dangerous for cars and children. You can't see what is behind the narrow streets (IS 2007).

According to some well-informed officials, the wall construction was not for the benefit of the locals. "The walls were an ASEZA idea," according to a member of the management team (FN Discussion May 2009). The STDP loan period was expiring shortly and ASEZA needed

to spend the STDP money on something or anything because if you spend the money then you can show the lenders that you did a good job (FN Discussion May 2009).

The "beautification" of the village was considered a wise use of the money because ASEZA felt that the existing walls were not constructed on the correct

property lines (FN Discussion May 2009). But whose property lines mattered was not discussed, the walls were built with ASEZA plans leaving the old walls in place. How the walls have helped the Bedouin has never been revealed in any of my discussions with WRPA personnel or villagers.

Regardless, the lack of attention in all regards is seen by local residents as supporting their beliefs that they are being targeted for removal. Rum villager Mohammad Al Zalabiah was quoted saying, “They are choking the life out of the Bedouin” (IS Discussion July 2007).

CULTURAL POLITICS

Land issues and building restrictions have challenged the very essence of Bedouin life. Enmeshed within the Bedouin’s backlash are their feelings towards land rights and rightful stewardship. The landscape of Rum Village holds great meaning to the local residents; the village is not just a collection of permanent structures. It is their belief that they are the true owners based on their long presence in the region. The land where the village now stands was once where their ancestors watered their livestock and prayed to their God, took respite from the heat of the desert and buried their dead. Many Bedouin have commented that they would fight the government in order to remain in the village. They believe that it is their hereditary right to remain and continue to access their lands. “If people are given a million dinar they won’t leave” according to Madella Mohammad Atieg Al Zalabiah (IS 2009). This sheds light on why it was so important for Abu Hammad to have received official

recognition of land ownership prior to his passing. He wanted to ensure that the “land will go to the children as an inheritance” (IS 2007). In effect, this simple act would allow his grandchildren to remain on land he considered was their rightful place.

Another key factor for understanding Bedouin responses is that land claims and building regulations have become a flashpoint due to perceived hereditary rights of a growing populace. Grown children do not simply require housing. Tradition dictates that each male child lives within close proximity to his father and brothers’ homes on the patriarch’s property, as indicated above. Passionate objections come from sons not wanting to break with tradition.

Another consideration is recognizing the strong ties that exist between parents and their children into adulthood. Alia Ahwad’s situation typifies a recent phenomenon in the village (IS 2009). Due to her mother-in-law’s recent illness, it was imperative for the elderly woman and her husband to move from their desert camp closer to their children and to the medical clinic in the village. Their sons pooled their resources to build their parents a small home, but on untitled land. The difficulty of arranging such housing and the associated insecurities have become a common complaint for elderly moving in from the desert and their families as was the case with Abu Hammad and his wife.

The people will not move from the village because “they need to stay close to the family” according to Atieg Sabbah (IS 2009). Elderly parents do not live alone. Custom dictates that they live with their youngest son. It would be

shameful for a family to allow an elderly relative to live in the village without other family members to assist them at a moment's call. Mothers, especially those who are divorced or are co-wives, live with their sons. A second village would cause the Bedouin to break with these traditions and the social networks many depend on and value. A partial removal is just as scandalous as a total eradication.

Building and land rights have affected Bedouin families in yet another way. There remains great economic diversity in the community. Some families have secured a lucrative income from tourism while others such as Alia Ahwad's sister's family are less fortunate. Fees associated with the new building regulations have made the prospect of them owning even a small plot of land and building upon it nothing more than a dream. In 2009 they were living in a tent on the outskirts of the village. Alia and some of her family members believe that the protected area should give these families land because the land is tribal land (IS 2009). Or, at the very least, allow for multi-storied structures where extended families could help one another. The growth of the village needs could thus be met.

Village constraints have impacted Bedouin pastoral traditions as well. Families not only need land to build on, but require plots large enough to keep their livestock close. Despite herd sizes declining over the years, the Bedouin still hold animal husbandry dear. The older women in particular maintain small herds of 2-10 animals, sometimes for nostalgia sake. Under current legislation,

papered plots are often too small for young men to build a home and have land to pen their animals. Likewise, if a father gives sections of his land to his sons there is little land left over for his needs. This was a concern for Abu Sleman:

We are forced to put the animals outside of the village due to the small size of properties of land inside the walls. Animals could get killed outside. Land is now for building homes (IS 2009).

With time and stronger enforcement of village rules, a growing fear is that livestock in the village may become a thing of the past; another break with tradition despite the fact that sheep and goats are still important sources of sustenance for families especially during celebratory times.

Bedouin resistance is escalating within the confines of the village and is representative of how the Bedouin feel about government interventions. The villagers have taken it upon themselves to dismantle sections of walls, spray paint graffiti, cut out areas of walls, add cinderblocks to the walls to meet their requirements, disassemble street lamps, remove central sections of speed bumps and create alternative routes to avoid speed bumps. Rather than being destructive, unappreciative or “backwards,” these acts could be explained by their agency in demonstrating the mounting dissatisfaction and disregard for conservation efforts and their lack of inclusion and participation in decision-making processes. All of these actions express the villager’s power and their rejection of what ASEZA and the WRPA felt was best for the protected area, the village and its inhabitants. These acts are blatant displays of disapproval and disrespect.

With the government not recognizing ancestral ownership, some Bedouin have resorted to less obvious strategies to ensure their rightful place. One additional example is Eid Al Zalabiah, who tends to a garden located on the eastern side of the village towards the mountains (IS 2009). In the past, it was recognized as belonging to his father, but is currently zoned as government land. Although his father is one of the fortunate Bedouin to legally own many parcels of land in the village, he did not receive legal title for this particular plot. Eid was promised that he would be granted the deed to his father's land "but the government changed its mind" meaning that the request did not pass under the new legislation (FN 2009). Ever resilient, Eid felt justified in pursuing his rightful land by planting a garden. This is a deliberate strategy to circumvent the new legislation that impinges upon the Bedouin's ancestral rights. When the time comes for official ownership, he is hoping that his improvements to the landscape will be viewed by ASEZA authorities as ownership rights. He was not alone in this pursuit.

CONCLUSION

The Dana Nature Reserve experience was a watershed moment and it was instrumental in the reshaping of a conservation philosophy not only for the RSCN, but for the country as a whole. But, leaving a community inside the WRPA without making a serious commitment not only to let people stay, but to involve local people in control of the area, to understand the cultural, social, religious and historical implications of their presence and to put their needs as

priorities along with conservation and tourism has failed to meet their living needs or to gain their support. It has created a complex web of circumstances that have served as a restrictive barrier in unexpected ways. For the Bedouin, human and land rights have been violated in addition to not receiving the benefits they were promised when the WRPA was established. The protected area management also enforced laws aimed at tourism and conservation and chose to control and ignore Bedouin resulting in an ongoing conflict between the Bedouin community and the conservation and tourist institutions of ASEZA.

These sentiments were also felt by many Bedouin in response to the building of a new tourism hub. The implications of a new Visitor Centre are the focus of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

THE WRPA'S VISITOR CENTRE: TAKING CONTROL, EQUALIZER OR DIVISIVE?

INTRODUCTION

The building of a Visitor Centre for the Wadi Rum Protected Area, according to the Reserve's Head of Tourism Nasser Al Zawaydeh, was to construct a complex that would "control tourism activities, provide site information and to keep an accurate accounting of all tourism activities" (IS 2009). It would thus facilitate the transference of power from Rum's "private sector"⁴⁴ such as the Zalabiah Bedouin operators and the managers of the Government Rest House to the WRPA. It has largely accomplished the transferring of many of the controls to the WRPA authorities. Nevertheless, five years following its creation, the Centre has had outcomes, both calculated or unanticipated, that have affected the industry, the Reserve and the Bedouin while increasing opposition and divisiveness in many ways

In this chapter I show how the presence of the Centre affected Wadi Rum's tourism operations and the effect it had upon the Bedouin clans and their associated tourism cooperatives. I will use Bedouin commentaries to indicate the various concerns experienced by the three clans who are the principle recipients of the local industry - Zalabiah, Zawaydeh and Swailheen. These partly diverging accounts offer insight into how the Centre's operations and

⁴⁴ For the WRPA, the private sector is any business in the Wadi Rum area for private profit and is not controlled by state agencies. For example, the Bedouin entrepreneurs, Mr. Hillawi and Abu Rami and shop owners.

physical presence have contributed to escalating tensions and shifting power relations between management, cooperatives and among clans. I show how the Centre has been central to reorganizing tourism activities by the WRPA managers, thereby usurping Bedouin control. I will also indicate the inequalities that are the result of tourism, both inside and outside the boundaries of the WRPA, and how the Centre has become a nexus for widespread, but not universal, Bedouin feelings of hostility and resentment towards the WRPA and its management agencies.

WADI RUM'S TOURISM CENTRES - PRE-WRPA

During the 1990s the hub for tourism activities was the Government Rest House located in Rum Village, as highlighted in Chapter 3. During these years, the Zalabiah clan was the principle Bedouin operator due to their long term involvement in the industry. Other Bedouin clans, such as the Zawaydeh and Swailheen, engaged in various aspects of tourism, but for the most part followed other means of livelihood such as agriculture and military service. As best as I could establish, other regional clans - Dbour, Emran and Gedman - had virtually no participation in tourism at this time. Clan elders mentioned that in the past they occasionally came across visitors while traveling through the desert, but they were not involved in any form of formalized tourism activity (IS 2005).

Private sector interests strongly influenced the region's development. From the mid-1990s onwards, Mr. Hillawi and his manager, Abu Rami, as previously noted, leased the Government Rest House from MoTA and ARA. In

the WRPA Visitor Management Plan (VMP 2003)⁴⁵, an operational strategy compiled by the RSCN team for the purpose of managing the WRPA, the situation prior to the establishment of the WRPA was explained:

The current manager⁴⁶ plays a very influential role in the organization of tourism on site. He deals directly with outside travel companies and is largely responsible for arranging the itineraries of pre-booked tours, including lucrative special interest tours such as camel trekking, climbing and long camping trips (RSCN VMP 2003: 17).

The Rest House hired local Bedouin men who were members of the Rum Tourism Cooperative (RTC) or *jamiah* in Arabic to run the tours:

Most of the business brought to Rum by the Rest House manager is subcontracted to the RTC and in this sense he acts as a “middle man” for services such as jeep tours and camping (RSCN VMP 2003: 17).

This strategy contributed to a regional monopoly for both the Rest House and the RTC. The Zawaydeh and Swailheen continued to be minor players at this time.

The Zawaydeh worked out of the Ad Diseh area while some Swailheen were RTC members, but their participation was minimal compared to the Zalabiah. As Wadi Rum’s tourism grew so did the profits and the power the Rest House and the RTC wielded according to Abu Rami and many Bedouin men I have interviewed over the years (IS 2002; 2005; 2007).

The WRPA Management Plan claimed there was no consideration for environmental protection or service improvements pre-protected area:

None of the current tourism income is invested in site protection or improvement of services (VMP 2003: 24).

⁴⁵ The WRPA Visitor Management Plan (2003) documents the state of tourism pre-protected area.

⁴⁶ Mr. Hillawi and his team.

This statement stands in contrast to claims made by Abu Rami in Chapter 3 where he stated that the Rest House provided toilets, a restaurant and camping

Beginning in the mid-to-late 1990s, entrance fees were institutionalized. Visitors paid one Jordanian Dinar (JD) per person to access the Wadi Rum area through the Rest House. RTC members, according to Nasser Al Zawaydeh, took turns working the ticket booth, rotating monthly (IS 2007). Each one was paid a salary of 150 JD per month by the RTC. Entrance proceeds were split with 30% allocated to the Rest House for “upkeep of services offered to the tourists” as noted by Abu Rami (IS 2007). This provided visitors with access to the only public toilets in the area in addition to a complimentary tea or coffee. The remaining 70% was paid to the RTC. There were no other formalized regulations at this time according to Nasser (IS 2007).

In 1998 when the RSCN began their stewardship of the WRPA, there were 235 RTC jeeps and 100 Dizeh vehicles according to the protected area’s first manager Mahmoud Al Bdour (FN 2009). These figures were indicative of privately owned Bedouin vehicles registered to cooperative members. Officially each (RTC) member was entitled to only one vehicle (RSCN VMP 2003: 16). Only RTC vehicles operated through the Rest House and they were lined in a neighbouring vacant area according to their placement in that day’s rota. The first vehicle in line was the next driver to receive tourists unless a Bedouin guide had a private arrangement with established clientele. The camel rota, another important tourism activity, operated in a similar manner.

During the late 1990s, it was becoming increasingly apparent that some Bedouin entrepreneurs had greater access to tourism benefits than others. It was determined that some tourism practices orchestrated through the RTC, “were benefiting a select few” according to Nasser Al Zawaydeh (IS 2007). This was also highlighted in the RSCN’s Visitor Management Plan (VMP):

The financial benefits from tourism are not fairly distributed, either within the RTC or between the RTC and private sector operators, and especially the manager of the Rest House (RSCN VMP 2003: 24).

Abdel Salam Moordie Al Zawaydeh, 21 years old from Twaish Village, confirmed that the situation was confusing:

When the Reserve came people were in a big mess.....and tourism was in a mess because it was not organized and anyone could come and take the tourists without organizing (it) (IS 2009).

One way in which this allegedly occurred was through the deliberate manipulation of entrance ticket sales. Al Zawaydeh explained how there was a hidden agenda or agreement between some of the Jordanian guides⁴⁷ handling large groups and some local ticket sellers who were members of the local cooperative (IS 2009).

These individuals were purportedly selling tickets to large groups providing them with complimentary tea and coffee. After the tourists indulged in the local hospitality, their tickets were “resold to another group therefore they manipulated ticket sales” confirmed Nasser (IS 2009). This strategy he claimed increased the perpetrator’s salary significantly to estimates of “more than 700 JD per month with these hidden deals” (IS 2009).

⁴⁷ This statement referred to non-Bedouin guides from other parts of Jordan who were working in collaboration with some RTC members.

It was also determined that the RTC had lenient guidelines for its jeep rota providing opportunity for exploitation. According to Nasser, if a local driver paid “extra money (to the RTC representative) he could move his car through the rotation quicker” (IS 2009). Therefore, drivers and guides with money and more than one vehicle enhanced their opportunity to be hired more than individuals or families who had limited access to similar resources. This contributed to an unequal distribution of tourism benefits between RTC members.

These issues contributed to a disproportionate allocation of tourism benefits amongst the RTC members and other Bedouin clans and their cooperatives. These imbalances were used as justification for government agency intervention.

THE WRPA’S EARLY ATTEMPTS AT TOURISM INTERVENTION

In compliance with the Second Tourism Development Project (STDP) objectives for Wadi Rum, outlined in the Introduction and Chapter 3, the World Bank “commissioned consultants to prepare a basic development strategy for Rum” (RSCN VMP 2003: 21). It was established that

(c)urrent tourism activities are poorly organized and underfunded, there is little effort to promote regulations to preserve the site, and there is no proposal to maximize the returns from tourism (the current admission fee is I JD) (World Bank Report No. 16485-JO).

In response, part of the new management plan focused on “organizing tourism activities” according to Nasser Al Zawaydeh while attempting to destabilize the deeply-rooted tourism practices that had facilitated the imbalances (IS 2009).

MoTA and ARA asserted that the WRPA should take control of the local guides,

camels and vehicle rotas stated Al Zawaydeh (IS 2009). WRPA promises of increased benefits through better organization and greater access fuelled Bedouin expectations of increased benefits.

The RSCN implemented an Interim Visitor Management Plan (1999). But according to the RSCN's 2000 Report for the Fifth and Sixth Quarters (July – December 1999), RTC members did not support the WRPA's management role. Their opposition was highlighted under "problems encountered" in the Visitor Management Plan which recognized:

the resistance shown by the local people to RSCN's role in tourism management as prescribed in the Interim Visitors Management Plan. Upon receipt of the plan, RTC in particular was not willing to accept the RSCN's overall tourism management role and initially refused to cooperate in the implementation of the plan (2003).

Many of the RSCN's recommendations had been ignored by the RTC:

The RTC, as the principal community-based tour operator, has implemented few of the recommendations of the institutional review, continues to invest little in service improvements or site protection. Efforts should continue to develop the capacity of this organization to provide better services (RSCN VMP 2003: 23).

According to Al Zawaydeh, RTC leaders eventually agreed to the RSCN's plan although they remained less than enthusiastic in their acceptance of the new governance (IS 2009).

It was in 2001 that tourism activities were delegated to the WRPA's Tourism Division under the supervision of Nasser Al Zawaydeh, a Zawaydeh clansman hired from Ad Diseh Village. He claimed that the "RSCN gave me all of these problems" (IS 2007). The management's goal at this time was "to stop all Private Sector activities" (IS 2007). In particular, the MoTA and the ARA

recommended that the WRPA “should get the entrance fees not the private sector” meaning that entrance sales should be governed by the protected area not by the RTC and Mr. Hillawi (IS 2009). Protected area employees took control of ticket sales in addition to the jeep and camel rotas. Entrance fee collection was transferred to the newly instated WRPA railway car reception located next to the Rest House (Appendix 5: Photograph 1). Tours were organized with fees displayed on a board for all to see (Appendix 5: Photograph 2). Vehicles were renumbered and guides eventually had to meet certain expectations to receive a guiding license (Appendix 5: Photographs 3-4). As a consequence, the Rest House, Mr. Hillawi and Abu Rami and the RTC lost valuable sources of revenue.

In the VMP, the RSCN stated that the WRPA’s supervision and monitoring of the RTC’s vehicle pool “has created more equality in the distribution of benefits to RTC members and has improved the service for tourists” (2003: 7). But, according to some Bedouin men I interviewed during my 2002 research, changes to the established protocols had still not been accepted by many of the RTC members. One Zalabiah man summed up how RSCN administration of tourism itineraries, pricing and locations affected RTC operators in addition to the spontaneity and the freedom of choice for tourists:

If you rent something 12 years ago or more (for a) desert program and they (Bedouin) sell it as a program they (WRPA) cannot change it. Now they (WRPA) said they have to ask more money from the tourists. We cannot ask (for) more money because people will go to another village...(TS 2002).

A prime example of this came from a prominent Zalabiah man who was one of the first guides to benefit from the tourism industry in Rum. He was nervous

that tourists would hire Bedouin from the Diseh Tourism Cooperative (DTC) rather than pay the entrance fee to the protected area because of the way the WRPA now controlled access to the area and the RTC members. He felt that what was happening at the DTC was relaxed in comparison. He continued

...you cannot choose the one (Rum guide) you want or you cannot work with the guide you have asked to work with every year... now things (have) changed. Now you come to work to see one (guide/driver) you don't know. You have to take this car (first driver in the rotation). So we (had) a lot of meetings and we discussed this and they (WRPA) said okay you (established guides) have to go with him (the first guide in the rota) but you have to pay this man ... (this means that) I get this money for the car and maybe little guiding and this money goes to someone else. I have to go in his car. He will not drive me exactly where I want (to go) because I know (the tourist) needs more... but maybe we (can) look there and can we go there. People (are) happy to come back and pick the (guide they know) and if (I) use the car more than normal (I) have to pay more so then they (tourists) have trouble....(TS 2002).

The Zalabiah man's story revealed that Rum guides with established clientele had to operate within a new set of rules and regulations that did not necessarily support the interests of all RTC operators. All of the men were now required to work within the rotation guidelines. If they had tourists and it was not their turn in the rota they would have to utilize the driver who was next in line even though this individual may not offer the same tour to visitors as was the guide's custom. Also, the established guide was now required to pay the rota driver to take his tourist creating an added expense that had previously not existed. If a driver was bumped out of the rotation due to someone else's tourist, the guide who jumped ahead was required to pay a fee or penalty to the RTC. There was an added concern that when a customer returned for a specific guide they would not have access to him and the services he offered due to the new

rota regulations especially if the tourist had not notified the Bedouin guide forty-eight hours in advance as was the new requirement. This, it is implied, weakened RTC members' links to returning clients.

The gist of the established guides' argument was that the men who had worked to establish their tourism businesses and to secure established clientele prior to the establishment of the Reserve felt a sense of ownership and a will and a right to maintain these operations. With the protected area's new rotation regulations and strategies to disperse tourism benefits to more individuals, these men were upset at their loss of control, lack of input and reduced incomes.

These effects resulted in a dramatic stand-off between RTC members and the WRPA in 2001 (E. Rehns TS 2007). The Bedouin's outrage over how the changes directly affected Rum tourism operators and how vehicles from other villages were entering through Rum Village culminated in the clansmen banding together outside of the Rest House in Rum Village. To protest their discontent they stood in the main street blocking tourism traffic coming in and out of Rum Village with their vehicles. It lasted approximately two days (E. Rehns TS 2007).

On another occasion a young Zalabiah man living in Rum Village was extremely agitated over the presence of the protected area (IS 2007). To show his displeasure he set fire to one of the new Reserve vehicles. This criminal act resulted in his incarceration for one year, but his displeasure was clear to all.

RELOCATING AN ALREADY ESTABLISHED TOURISM HUB

World Bank STDP consultants recommended the construction of a large Visitor Centre at the WRPA to

provid(e) a single gateway protected area, in an attractive and dramatic setting and a much needed operational and administrative hub for management and tourism operations (RSCN VMP 2003: 21).

A new Centre would foster greater control over the whole of the WRPA. Of great significance were projections that a new hub would facilitate the dispersal of tourism benefits to clans outside of Rum Village and the RTC. This was highlighted in the VMP under “Summary of Main Issues and Problems”:

Local communities have largely been responsible for developing tourism in Rum and they receive most of the financial benefits, but these benefits are not fairly distributed and the recipients are concentrated in one tribal group when there are several others with land fronts inside the protected area (2003: 21).

The preferred site for the new Centre was strategically chosen by the World Bank experts (Appendix 5: Map 1-Red Star). It would be located on the northern edge of the WRPA, approximately seven to eight km. north of Rum Village and the former tourism hub (Appendix 5: Map 1-Green Triangle):

The Visitor Centre would be located on the existing access road to Rum Village, situated on the steeply sloping southern end of a low range of hills looking south. Visitors would approach the Centre as they drive south along the new access road, leaving their car or coach in a parking area set in a landscape of desert flora and boulders, and walking up a rising pedestrian route that climaxes at the summit of the saddle with a dramatic elevated view. This view would be framed by stone towers forming the control over movement along the road and the Visitor Centre (World Bank Report No. 16485-JO).

The structure would overlook the iconic landmark dubbed by T. E. Lawrence as the *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* while buffering and subsequently controlling the only paved road leading into the protected area and Rum Village (Appendix 5:

Photograph 5). It would be built on the historical lands recognized by the tribes as belonging to the Swailheen clan according to Swailheen Sheikhs Ali and Atieg (IS 2009). In October 2000, the United Engineers Contracting Est. was awarded the \$2,390,000 (USD) contract to build the complex (<http://web.worldbank.org> accessed 2009). Construction began in 2001 and the Centre was formally completed in January 2004.

Control over access to the WRPA was a critical element for the advancement of the STDP project and the WRPA administration. During the early years of the Reserve there were multiple points of entry from which Bedouin and non-Bedouin were known to access the area. The new hub would remedy this:

To ensure full and effective visitor management, all visitors should access the protected area through the Visitor Centre. The Diseh access point should be gradually closed, following consultation with the Diseh Tourism Cooperative (RSCN VMP 2003: 23).

A controlled entrance would strengthen the management of the area through the monitoring of visitor movements. It would also aid in the acquisition of lost private sector entrance revenues as all visitors to the area would be required to pay a fee before entering the protected area.

The new complex included a gateway at the point where the road and the Visitor Centre meet. WRPA employees known as “guards” are required to greet each and every vehicle wishing to enter the protected area by road:

The most important aspect of the Centre is that it will be the only significant gateway to the protected area and virtually all visitor movements and activities, including vehicle tours, will be controlled and managed from it. In effect, it will

centralize visitor management and make it easier to administer (RSCN VMP 2003: 21).

This road is also the only road leading to Rum Village. Bedouin families residing in Rum Village or in desert locations beyond the village are permitted to pass without interference, but guests of Rum villagers or any visitor wishing to proceed further south are questioned as to their intentions (Appendix 5: Photograph 6). For this reason, many locals dubbed the Visitor Centre the “guard house” (FN 2007).

At the time of the Centre’s construction (2003-2004) former manager Mahmoud Al Bdour stated that the RTC held 60% of the local tourism trade while the DTC had the remaining 40% with the Swailheen dispersed between the two (FN 2009). Gedman, Dbour and Emran clans continued to remain outside of tourism, but not entirely by choice.

ZALABIAH ROTATION FRUSTRATION AND ANGER

There were “big problems at first” according to Nasser Al Zawaydeh as he reflected on the early years of the Visitor Centre (IS 2007). What was not expected by the WRPA management was the breadth and depth of the Bedouin’s displeasure with the Centre and the new modus operandi, which the changes created. The most dramatic reactions came from Zalabiah RTC members. Feelings of lost ownership and power ignited their already simmering disdain for external interference.

With new regulations stipulating that all jeep tours now originate at the Centre, RTC members were required to drive the eight km. from their Rum

homes to the Centre to pick up their clients, go to desert sites by driving back through Rum Village only to return once again to the Centre to drop off their clients (Appendix 5: Map 2; Photograph 7). Each tour added fuel costs and time. Individuals who formally operated out of the Rest House were disgruntled by the amount of time they had to spend waiting for their turn in the day's rota. Ahwad Al Zalabiah, a young RTC member, was especially concerned about this issue (IS 2007). The unpredictability of tourism meant that many men remained close to their vehicles in the event that they would be needed or hired. As a result, families began to spend longer periods of time apart.

The RTC members were also incensed at the prospect of combining their tourism with the Zawaydeh and Swailheen and their respective cooperatives. Former Nature Conservation Division Head Jamal Al Zaidaneen remembered that during the

1st stage of the Visitor Centre, Rum people refused to come and join Zawaydeh at the same Centre as they were afraid that ASEZA was aiming to unify the tourism (PC E-mail 2011).

Al Zaidaneen stated further, "And so they remained at Rum for around 7 days" as a measure of protest (noted by Judge Salhsalm Salem Al Zalabiah in Chapter 4). It was only "after a lot of effort they accepted to join the Visitor Centre (but with some conditions" he recalled (PC E-mail 2011).

In response to the Zalabiah's discontent, ASEZA and RSCN representatives were prudent in calling a meeting to quell escalating dissatisfaction. Zalabiah, Zawaydeh and Swailheen leaders were brought

together to agree on procedures to activate the WRPA Visitor Centre as the new tourism hub. The collaborative nature of this gathering was meant to “relieve tribal conflict over tourism” as noted in the “Summary of Main Issues and Problems” in the Visitor Management Plan:

Relieving tribal conflicts over tourism is vital to ensuring coordinated development and effective protection for the whole of the site. This will be very important in the context of the Visitor Centre, since it will provide the only gateway to the protected area and all local tourism cooperatives will be required to operate out of this Centre (2003: 24).

Gedman, Dbour and Emran clansmen were not part of this assembly.

The genesis of a new system emerged from this gathering with an agreement (outlined in “Meeting Regarding the Activation of Wadi Rum Visitors Centre” dated April 26, 2004 [Appendix 5: Document 1]). It stipulated that entrance fees were to be collected at the Centre and only vehicles from the aforementioned clans would be permitted to transport tourists. Of great significance to RTC members in particular was the distinction made between the Rum and Diseh cooperative tours. Operator 1 was the new designation for the RTC, and Operator 2 for the DTC, for their respective vehicle, camel and camping services. Complimentary to this division was the establishment of separate tourism zones within the protected area outlining specific sites for the cooperatives to take their tourists. The agreement also outlined how Swailheen vehicles were to be equally distributed between the two operators. Zalabiah, Swailheen and Zawaydeh leaders signed the document acknowledging their support even though it was not to every member’s liking. Although the clans did

not amalgamate their tourism efforts into one large cooperative, the implication was that bringing all operators together at a single location was a defeat for the RTC. In 2007, Judge Salhsalm Salem Al Zalabiah referred to this agreement as the beginning of the “mixing of the tribes and the tours” (IS 2007). Their loss of control to the WRPA in conjunction with the government stipulated inclusion of other clans was a significant blow.

It is important to note that the separation of Operator 1 and Operator 2 was considered a tourism business strategy that was needed to appease the Zalabiah. The clans are “cousins” and remain amicable outside of tourism related issues.

OPPOSING ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES

Following the April 2004 meeting and agreed upon procedures, the Zalabiah remained dissatisfied. They continued to harbour a deep sense of infringement upon what they perceived was their rightful place. Before agreeing to make the move to the new Centre, as noted by Jamal Al Zaidaneen, they needed to have yet a number of other conditions met:

1. Building of a proper place for drivers.
2. Differentiate the packages available at the Visitor Centre and show them on brochures and maps.
3. ASEZA should guarantee that Zawaydeh are banned from using Rum areas in any tourism activities (Al Zaidaneen PC E-mail 2011).

After “a lot of effort” to appease the rumblings, ASEZA and WRPA representatives met for a second time on September 13, 2004 with Zalabiah and Swailheen leaders to amend the April agreement (Al Zaidaneen PC E-mail 2011). The Zalabiah’s demands were met. In particular, the new agreement

stated “ASEZA will be responsible for building buildings for the drivers” (Appendix 5: Document 2-#4).

By dividing the tourism industry into two, each Operator had its own area and set of tourism sites within the WRPA. This was a strategy to facilitate increased participation and benefits for a wider Bedouin populace while keeping the groups separate. With the inclusion of the Zawaydeh and Swailheen in greater numbers, more options were made available to tourists, but this came at a price. With two operators and three clans, the RTC had to share what had previously been almost exclusively theirs. They remained dissatisfied with this decision as of 2009.

UNEXPECTED CONSEQUENCES OR ANTICIPATED RESULTS?

One example of sharing tourism that upset the clans pertained to the designated waiting area. A proper wait area was constructed as promised but not to the clans' liking. It was a singular building instead of separate Operator waiting areas as each cooperative believed they had been promised. From the start all drivers refused to utilize it as was intended. This was a conscious decision made by both Operators not to mix their tourism interests at any level. Instead of waiting in and enjoying the luxury of the official Waiting Area together, the drivers chose to wait in separate areas on either side of the Centre entrance in pitched tents. The Zawaydeh drivers erected their *bait al sha'er* or Bedouin tent on the northern side of the gateway parking their vehicles in the adjacent lot (Appendix 5: Photographs 8). The Zalabiah staked out the southern

side of the entrance as their waiting area. Their vehicles lined a long stretch of the main road leading to Rum Village (Appendix 5: Photograph 9). They also waited for their turn in the rota in a Bedouin tent pitched next to the Centre. Swailheen drivers dispersed between the two as per the 2004 agreements. Drivers ate, prayed and waited in their respective areas all in plain view of the visitors. It congested the area. In 2009, the designated, well-equipped Wait Area had become the office for the WRPA managers of the Arabian Oryx Reintroduction Project.

With over 200 vehicles at the time of the WRPA's takeover, the number had increased to more than 400 by the fall of 2009 with estimates of 500 by some WRPA personnel (FN Discussion 2009). At first glance the increase could be viewed as greater inclusion therefore more cooperative members were benefiting, but upon closer review this was not the case. Individuals and/or families with multiple vehicles garnered a more substantial take of the tourism pie based on their vehicles' placement in the RTC rotation for a particular day. Members with greater financial means such as Judge Salhsalm Salem Al Zalabiah benefited accordingly. The Judge reported in 2007 that his "family had seven cars in the rotation" despite the single car registry noted in RSCN documents (IS 2007). Dkelallh Salem Zalabiah who only had one vehicle in the rota in 2007 received "one trip every 2 weeks. During high season my jeep may be hired twice in a week" (IS 2007). By ASEZA not capping the number of vehicles in the rota or enforcing the single registry, inequalities were enhanced

and jeep owners such as Dkelallh waited longer periods of time between trips.

With tourists entering the protected area via the Centre, private sector operators most notably Mr. Hillawi and Abu Rami from the Government Rest House were also affected, as well as many storekeepers in Rum Village. Rather than risk a significant decline in tourism revenues, Hillawi and Abu Rami established another camp outside of the protected area. The newly instated *Hillawi Camp* was built in the Zawaydeh area close to Ad Diseh Village and to the WRPA although it remained outside of the protected area's administration and its authority (Appendix 5: Map 4). The popularity of this camp and others that followed contributed to the development of a second tourism hub for the region and the needs of large tour operators.

Hillawi Camp can accommodate 400-500 visitors at one time, providing an alternative to the smaller and more expensive Bedouin camps located inside the protected area. Connected to travel agencies around the world, it did not take long for tour operators to recognize the economic benefits associated with this type of touring. Busloads of tourists began to make their way to the Ad Diseh area by-passing the official entry to the WRPA (Appendix 5: Map 4). Hillawi Camp hires Zawaydeh guides, vehicles and camels to escort their tourists both inside and outside of the WRPA. The majority of its employees are Egyptian nationals.

Similar camps have been built within close proximity to the Hillawi Camp. One in particular, *Zawaydeh Camp*, is owned and operated by a Zawaydeh

family living in Ad Diseh Village. Others are owned by tourism operators from outside the area such as Aqaba and Wadi Musa (also known as Petra) (Appendix 5: Photograph 10). It is common place to see many large buses taking the alternative route heading towards Hillawi Camp, for example, in lieu of the Visitor Centre, wishing to capitalize on the Wadi Rum experience without paying WRPA prices or an entrance fee (Appendix 5: Photographs 11-12).

By-passing the Visitor Centre to access these camps has resulted in a number of unanticipated outcomes. Firstly, avoiding the main entrance means lost revenue for both the protected area and the Operators. When Bedouin and non-Bedouin tour operators opt for the Ad Diseh camps rather than the WRPA, they avoid paying the mandatory entrance fee. These individuals also work outside of established protocols when they hire Zawaydeh guides working outside of their own cooperative and rotas. These drivers and guides charge less to encourage repeat business. In some cases, entry into the protected area still occurs due to the lack of closure of Ad Diseh entry points by the WRPA.

Another outcome has been the appropriation of the Wadi Rum name for the sake of non-protected area tourism endeavours. The Zalabiah feel that Wadi Rum proper is in their tourism zone and others guides are using the name. This has contributed to the divide that exists between the Zalabiah and Zawaydeh clans. When I was discussing this point with a respected Mazanah elder, he insisted that “all of this is Wadi Rum” attempting to argue the point on behalf of the Zawaydeh (IS 2009). When I asked him what it was called before the

establishment of the WRPA, he replied “Hisma” or desert and smiled.

By the fall of 2009 evidence indicated that there had been a major shift in the distribution of tourism benefits based on the various changes noted above. The Zawaydeh, who had held 20% of the tourism market in 1998 (VMP 2003: 18), now had approximately 70% of the overall business as confirmed by Nasser Al Zawaydeh (IS 2009). The Zalabiah and the RTC suffered the most with a decline of approximately 30% of their business⁴⁸. Swailheen involvement remained low in comparison to the Zawaydeh and the Zalabiah because there were fewer members involved as will be explained below.

The redistribution in tourism benefits has culminated in a power-based shift for the Zawaydeh and their Mazanah clansmen and women. Ayed Sabbah Al Mazanah, a 55 year old man from Manasheer Village Diseh, was very pleased with his clansmen’s efforts to usurp Zalabiah interests:

(our) cooperative is working well in general because four years ago people in Rum used their vehicles more than us (Zawaydeh). Now we have more than them in number of people and number of trucks. This makes us have big rights more than them (IS 2009).

As will be highlighted, the Zalabiah are acutely aware of the changes and the implications the shift in power has for their future.

A NEW SOURCE OF EMPLOYMENT

The establishment of the Visitor Centre has increased the number of Bedouin who view WRPA employment in a more positive light although many

⁴⁸ This estimate refers to an overall shift in benefits and revenues. There are estimates that approximately 25% of RTC individuals continue to do very well due to their business endeavours outside of the rotas and the cooperatives according to local sources (IS 2009).

continue to view the process of accessing employment as not working correctly. During a 2009 interview, Sheikh Atieg from Shakriyyah Village commented on this phenomenon, “the people now look to the WRPA as a source of benefits and a sector for employment” (IS 2009), which is very different from earlier commentaries. For these individuals, the Centre offers a guaranteed income in addition to the possibility of upward mobility, something that is unattainable in tourism. Some of the families who were openly antagonistic towards the WRPA during earlier phases of my research had male offspring either working or actively pursuing employment at the Visitor Centre in 2009 (FN 2007; 2009).

But Visitor Centre employment has come at a price. Although many of the clans now aspire to be employed by the Reserve many others suspect that it is a result of a phenomenon known as *wasta*. In the Arab world, *wasta* or *wasata* is an unfair method by which an individual attains something due to a bias or favouritism. It is akin to nepotism. According to some Bedouin men and women I interviewed, it is a common phenomenon in Jordan that is held in high regard if you are on its receiving end, but it is also a basis of complaints if you are not (IS 2009). Many of these individuals felt that Visitor Centre employment was a result of *wasta* not hard work or education.

Another concern held by many of the interviewed Bedouin pertained to the protected area hiring of non-Bedouin employees. Madella Mohammad Atieg Al Zalabiah, a 36 year old camp owner from Rum Village, felt that the WRPA supported itself rather than the Bedouin:

Mahmiah (Reserve) gives more work for Mahmiah himself. To take care of animals, bushes, trees in desert and people taking work from people here (IS 2009).

Part of Madella's discontent stemmed from the fact that the Zalabiah do not hold high ranking positions at the Centre like Zawaydeh and Mazanah clansmen.

Other members of the management team were hired from outside of the Wadi Rum area. There are also a number of Egyptians working at the Centre but these men work primarily as janitors and perform domestic services for the management team; these positions are not coveted by the Bedouin men.

But for Rum villager Eid Al Zalabiah his employment at the Visitor Centre was not as other Bedouin have perceived it (IS 2009). His time at the Centre was short lived totalling only 45 days during its early years. He said that he did not receive payment because he quit first. It was his stance that protected area employment did not benefit the Bedouin, his family or him personally. Part of his job required that he convey conditions within the protected area. This meant that he would have to report on his clansmen. He was not willing to do that. "I didn't want to become this way and the government makes you this way" he said (IS 2009). He felt that gainful employment or the "car and phone" he was given was not worth it.

DIFFERENT CLAN PERSPECTIVES OF THE VISITOR CENTRE AND WRPA TOURISM, FALL 2009

In the fall of 2009, the ripples of Bedouin disgruntlement still echoed deep into the desert and into the surrounding villages virtually affecting all of the clans. In addition, the Zalabiah, Zawaydeh and Swailheen were embroiled in a

complex struggle over their respective clan's rights, benefits and inclusion in the local industry as governed through the Visitor Centre.

ZALABIAH'S STANCE

The Zalabiah clan has been more vocal in their dissatisfaction towards the protected area's administration of tourism operations than either the Zawaydeh or Swailheen clans, based on the interactions I have had with all three. They have experienced the greatest alterations to their established livelihood strategy compared to the other clans. They have suffered from the loss of control, the re-organization and the development of a new Centre of tourism activity and lost revenue. So intrinsic is tourism to their survival that anyone else seeking to share in its benefits challenges their hold. Their deep involvement, reliance and sense of entitlement stems from their belief that they are the rightful heirs to the region's tourism industry, having developed it as outlined in Chapter 2. Their stance remains that they should have and are owed the lion's share of the benefits. Rum Villager Mohammad Sabbah alluded to this perspective earlier in a 2007 interview, "People grow with tourists" meaning that the Zalabiah have grown alongside the industry unlike the Zawaydeh or the Swailheen (IS 2007). It is therefore deemed their rightful place to be at the forefront of the industry despite the presence of the Centre and the WRPA.

Education has provided opportunity, mobility and power for those who have it. In this regard, the Zawaydeh stand out from the other clans. A number of educated Zawaydeh men are members of the management team. Madella Al

Zalabiah noted his frustration in this regard. He believes that “people are taking work from people here (in Rum Village)” (IS 2009). He, like many of his clansmen, is concerned that men from neighbouring clans have been hired by the Visitor Centre when the job should have been given to a Zalabiah man. Judge Salhsalm Salem Al Zalabiah also noted his clan’s frustration in the distribution of tourism through the Centre during a 2007 interview (IS 2007). He felt that the Zawaydeh “have tourism and (their) people work in growing vegetables. Now they want our business also” (IS 2007). He then lashed out at “Mahmoud and Dr. Bilal⁴⁹” explaining it as if they were present, “if you want them (Zawaydeh) to share our lands (tourism) let us share in making olive oil and their business” (IS 2007). He was referring to their many agriculture businesses and the Reserve's regulation that has prohibited any form of agriculture inside the protected area. His standpoint was supported by his clansmen during other 2009 interviews.

In general, the Zalabiah have put the majority of their efforts into the development of the tourist industry. In one way or another every family in Rum Village is connected to some aspect of tourism unlike the Swailheen and Zawaydeh. When the Zawaydeh were seeking post-secondary education for their younger generations or working at the agriculture company outside of Ad Diseh Village, the Zalabiah were allowing their young males to quit school to join their families in the pursuit of tourism revenues. As a result few Zalabiah

⁴⁹ Dr. Bilal Al Bashir was ASEZA's Minister of the Environment at this time.

males have their *Tawjihi* or general secondary education certificate while a large percentage of the Zawaydeh clan have post-secondary degrees, including females. The Swailheen have remained more traditional in their pursuits; the quest of a military career was not unusual for their young men.

RTC monies in 2009 had dwindled when compared to pre-protected area numbers (IS 2009). This is surprising considering the WRPA had doubled the entrance fee after the creation of the Visitor Centre and visitors numbers have on the whole increased despite setbacks associated with world events such as September 9, 2001. Abu Yasser of the RTC described in detail what has happened:

the RTC income before the plan (WRPA) had 110-120,000 JD and now the best is 75,000 JD (per year). The cooperative took 1 JD/person. Thirty piasters went to Hillawi (Rest House) for the free tea and toilets. Seventy percent went to the cooperative. Now we get 70 piasters from each 2 JD entry. This is 35% of the total which is a 50% decline in percentage. There was an agreement with the RSCN in 1996-7. We discussed the percentage with the RSCN and agreed on 1 JD. We received 70 and 30 for the restaurant after RTC head Salem Faraj accepted 70 piasters from the 1 JD. We are back to 70-30 power shift. It has flipped (IS 2009).

It was Abu Yasser's position that the RTC not only lost income from entrance fees, but it also lost its influence. He was also clear that the cooperative has had its own problems,

the lack of an organizational structure in *Bedu* cooperatives. There is no strong building for policies and procedures because any new cooperative manager will try to build another way of work without building on old experience (IS 2007).

By this he was referring to how new leaders implement their own agendas despite prior agreements, plans and promises.

This was supported by other RTC members. Madella Al Zalabiah (IS 2009) and Aoda Al Zalabiah (FN 2009) attributed many of the problems to the cooperative managers over the years. They alleged that leaders have abused their privileges and treat themselves to more than their share of the tourism benefits. Madella belongs to both the RTC and Moon Valley Cooperative (see below), both from Rum Village, and sees problems with the current leadership.

He stated that

good people are needed in *jamiah* (cooperative) to work for everybody and not for special business for himself. From the beginning, *jamiah* works to collect business for himself (head) and to be a big man in front of the people (clan) and in front of the government (WRPA and ASEZA). There is no good program for *jamiah* to follow and no big heart to work for the good of everybody” (IS 2009).

But as noted by an anonymous source there are difficulties associated with outing a leader such as the one claimed to be “taking money and things for himself and his family” from the RTC (FN 2009). This man explained how accusing someone would affect his family:

We don’t complain about (him) because it will hurt for example my father and his job. Out of respect for my family I am not going to say anything to hurt my father (FN 2009).

Based on this statement, it is the “old people” who adhere to tribal norms meaning that the old men follow their leaders. Younger generations respect their fathers therefore sons cannot say anything untoward about cooperative heads despite allegations of corruption. This person’s father was friends with the head and had a job connected to him. “If my father says to follow I follow out of respect for him. This is a big web of problems” (FN 2009). He was so frustrated

by the situation that he considered moving to northern Jordan or out of the country. He added that he had “to give up his dreams and plans in the village because it won’t change until maybe my son is grown” (FN 2009).

The frustration was widespread. Mohammed Blouie, a camp owner living in Rum Village, said “the WRPA is not here to help the environment or the Bedouin” (IS 2009). Mohammed felt that it existed only for the money. (It is) for the country to ask for aid from foreign countries. If they have done nothing what is their purpose? To manage the tourism activities?” (IS 2009).

Ahwad Al Zalabiah’s perspective was similar,

the Reserve is looking after money now and only looking at things for tourists to keep everybody coming through the Centre. They are running after the money for the tourists (IS 2009).

“From the beginning, this is the reason for *mahmiah* (WRPA) to start” claimed Madella, another Rum Villager (IS 2009). Alia Ahwad was also frustrated with the protected area’s actions. She works for her husband’s Rum tourism business and has worked for others due to her English skills and believed that the Centre put a knife to the people’s throat. They control them. The tourism is not like before. The government took it and takes a lot of money for the nature. They ask money for something, but they don’t do good things. The money comes from the WRPA and from the Americans (USAID). What do they do? (IS 2009).

Madella felt very strongly that the tension between the Visitor Centre and the Bedouin has reached a critical level,

some people from ASEZA, like the manager, has strong mind. He will kill the people (Bedouin) if he can. If there is a hell he will send us there (IS 2009).

During a 2007 interview, hereditary Zalabiah Sheikh Kriem Al Zalabiah

summed up how tourism and external governance has affected his people:

Laura: Do you think it is good for the Bedouin to be involved in tourism?

Sheikh Kriem: No, because it breaks the traditions. People break the traditions.

Laura: How?

Sheik Kriem: They moved the entrance of the WRPA to the Visitor Centre.

People are going for business and start to fight (IS 2007).

ZAWAYDEH STANCE

Before the establishment of the WRPA, the Zawaydeh clan helped to lay the foundation for Bedouin tourism in the Wadi Rum area on the Ad Diseh side. Some of their clansmen actively participated in tourism as early as the 1960s although it was on a much lesser scale than what was happening in Wadi Rum with the Zalabiah (IS 2002; 2005; 2007). The Zawaydeh were also engaged in other economic pursuits such as agriculture and military service. Education was held in high regard, as noted above. Young men and women pursued post-secondary education; an anomaly for this time and area. The popularity of the area and the growth of the tourism industry helped generate new employment opportunities for the Zawaydeh. Ad Diseh tourism numbers began to increase as noted above as more and more men became involved in the jeep, camel and camping aspects of the local trade.

The Zawaydeh were less critical than their Zalabiah cousins and in general they have not suffered the same losses. The expansion of their tourism involvement vis-a-vis the Visitor Centre and the Ad Diseh camps has been a recent phenomenon. Tourism revenues are an important part of their economy, but unlike the Zalabiah they are not the principle contributor. Their tourism is

only partly subject to WRPA administrators' management, most is beyond that control, and they do not see themselves as dependent upon tourism. When asked about the two operators, Fahad Dmeethane Zawaydeh from Ad Diseh Village summed up the situation:

Laura: What do you think about Operator 1 and Operator 2?

Fahad: Zalabiah are not educated in general, but speak English very well and know how to catch the tourists. In Diseh most have jobs and are not as free as Zalabiah. We are new to do this (tourism). They are used to being with tourists. If we lose the tourism it is nothing for us but for them it is everything. No mixing of tribal tours because if we will work together we will take most of the work because we are more than them, 10,000⁵⁰ (IS 2009).

So tense was the rivalry between the different clan members involved in tourism in 2009 that Zawaydeh drivers would not venture into Rum Village unless it was absolutely necessary.

The divisiveness between the clans Fahad Al Zawaydeh believed has been to the government's advantage:

the government needs this problem between the two groups because the government will take the Reserve lands. The (Bedouin) fighting is helping the government control everything....even the tourism they will take (IS 2009).

As will be discussed in Chapter 7, Swailheen leaders felt that the divide between the clans facilitated the government's acquisition of their lands for an Arabian Oryx enclosure.

SWAILHEEN STANCE

The Swailheen stance differed significantly from that of the Zalabiah and

⁵⁰ The population of Rum Village was approximately 1,200 in 2005 and consisted mostly of Zalabiah families (see Chapter 4). The Zawaydeh including their Mazanah relatives live in the villages of Ad Diseh, Twail, Twaiseh, Manasheer and Al Ghal. According to Nasser Al Zawaydeh, the population of all of the villages was approximately 7,000 in 2012. He estimated that it was closer to 4,000 at the time of the Reserve's creation in 1998.

the Zawaydeh and their respective cooperatives. The late Sheikh Ali Al Swailheen and former head of the Swailheen clan, alleged that they have been classified as a minor stakeholder in comparison to the Zalabiah and Zawaydeh clans (IS 2007; 2009). According to Sheikh Atieg, another Swailheen elder, the protected area “deal(s) with us as a percentage” (IS 2009). The size of the clan determined, according to his statement, the level of participation. Therefore, the larger clans such as the Zalabiah and the Zawaydeh by virtue of their size received more than the Swailheen⁵¹ who were the smallest of the three clans. “The first and most important issue for the Swailheen is justice” stated Sheikh Ali during our 2009 interview. He had become increasingly vocal over his clan's involvement in tourism over the years and the injustices he had witnessed.

The root of the inequality originated long before the WRPA's creation (Sheikh Ali IS 2009). It began at a time when the Swailheen lived in Rum Village before the establishment of their villages:

(We are) original residents of Rum Village and we have lands and houses there. The Swailheen heard that the government was planning to create and dedicate a tourism village before 1990. These thoughts are so old, older than the recent fights. Because we respect the decision and did not have a problem we created our own villages (IS 2009).

Because of this, Sheikh Ali felt that the Swailheen should receive the same benefits as the Zalabiah,

I believe that we have all of the rights from Rum Village (even) after we established our villages (Shakriyyah and Salhia) (Sheikh Ali IS 2009).

⁵¹ The Swailheen live in Salhia and Shakriyyah villages on the outskirts of the Wadi Rum Protected Area. Some members live in Rum Village.

By this he was referring to the fact that they were also founding members of the RTC in collaboration with the Zalabiah members. Salah Al Swailheen, Sheikh Ali explained, was one of the original RTC members (IS 2009). Sheikh Ali and the other elders use this to support their position that their clan deserves benefits equal to those of the Zalabiah and the Zawaydeh.

The Swailheen also claim rights based on their historical rangelands.

Sheikh Ali argued that the Swailheen's strength is in their historical connections to the landscape where the Visitor Centre now sits:

More than 95% of our historical range is now controlled by the protected area....Now there is no justice in the distribution of tourism in the Visitor Centre despite the fact that most of the lands in and around the Visitor Centre are historically ours (IS 2009).

The Swailheen, like many Zalabiah and Zawaydeh, blamed Abu Yasser Al Zalabiah the head of the RTC for the injustices bestowed upon them, not only the WRPA authorities, though they see the two as closely linked. "He is using Rum propaganda to create a fear of something" claimed Sheikh Ali (IS 2009). Furthermore, Sheikh Atieg believed that some cooperative heads, including the RTC, were causing problems to support their personal agendas:

Most of the problems now in tourism and with the cooperatives originated from the selfishness of some people because they want to restrict all of the benefits to them. Part of the problem was contributed by the protected area by dealing with the strong side and with people who have claws. Those people are always there. Issues and their problems are solved by the WRPA and those who respect laws and stay quiet remain outside (IS 2009).

Sheikh Ali felt that if the clans were to come together Abu Yasser's power would be diffused:

if everybody agreed on a solution I don't think Abu Yasser will have any authority to disagree with a group. Even in the old agreement Abu Yasser respects that (IS 2009).

He was referring to the 2004 agreements.

Another problem was associated with how ASEZA and the RSCN gave cooperatives power from the outset, especially the RTC. Sheikh Ali claimed that they allowed the cooperative heads to designate the sites each one would include in their respective tours thereby creating "tourism zones" (IS 2009). This should not have been their decision to make according to the sheikh. He felt that the government should have taken the upper hand, but they may also be key to a solution:

There is a very big mistake from the government and the tribes. It is bigger than Jebel Rum; an old and recent mistake. The mistake is letting the tribes have the first word in designating areas for tourism as a territorial designation. The tourism in Rum should be distributed to all. It should be generalized. (For example, the) Zalabiah shouldn't go to Diseh. This isn't their right (to make that decision). The government should have the first right in deciding this (who goes where) (IS 2009).

He felt that the government and the WRPA made a critical error in giving this degree of power to the cooperative leaders. ASEZA and the protected area should have been "stronger in deciding where tourism should go and who should benefit from it" (IS 2009).

This was evident when observing the power wielded by the RTC under Abu Yasser's management in 2009. He had attained significant command and influence over Wadi Rum's tourism industry. According to Sheikh Ali this was the root of the problem and believed that "No one should have this level of

control” (IS 2009). The authority this one individual brandished was a result of a “weakness in the management and the government” claimed the sheikh for they constantly referred to Abu Yasser (IS 2009). It was his stance that

Abu Yasser gained his power from the failure in the WRPA management team. They gave him a size bigger for him than what he deserved. If we (Swailheen) want to do something that (has already been) agreed and management has the document (from 2004) they (WRPA management) should not make us go to Abu Yasser for approval. They already have the approval. Why do we have to go to Abu Yasser? Even when we pressure them they work in a sneaky way (IS 2009).

Salamah Al Swailheen and Sheikh Atieg concurred, claiming further,

We always highlight this problem whenever there is a chance or a meeting with the protected area because we believe this personal issue is the reason for all of that. If people knew how to apply the regulations. There shouldn't have been a problem from the beginning (IS 2009).

In fact, this goes against the original objective of equality between the clans.

Sheikh Atieg and others like him disapprove of the Reserve in general:

Nature conservation was dealt in a way that forced us to be convinced of different ways through employment, but we have a heritage and culture (IS 2007).

CONCLUSION

The establishment of a Visitor Centre at the WRPA was deemed by the World Bank, ASEZA and the RSCN to be an advancement in the protected area's development which would benefit the local clans. But six years after its creation Bedouin responses indicated that it had been less than successful in attaining its stated goals. Despite efforts to establish a more equitable, controlled tourism system it had become a catalyst for escalating regional tension. Discontent, a sense of mismanagement, loss of Bedouin control, ignoring of

histories and perceived injustices and a lack of transparency contributed to a host of adverse effects on Bedouin. The developments also favoured some clans more than others thereby shifting tourism benefits and creating dissatisfaction and dissension between the clans along with a new form of inequality. The creation of the Centre did not destabilize Mr. Hillawi's hold on regional tourism. He simply helped establish a secondary tourism hub that thrived due in part to the WRPA's weaknesses.

Fundamentally, the relocation of the tourism hub has been a means for the WRPA administrators to reorganize tourism activities, thereby usurping existing Bedouin control of tourism within the protected area. While weakening Bedouin controls, but not eliminating them, Bedouin opposition to the WRPA control grew. The development of the Visitors Centre has done this both unintentionally and, some Bedouin think, intentionally, giving excessive control to a few Bedouin who work closely with the WRPA administration. The Centre has also become a nexus for widespread, but not universal, Bedouin feelings of hostility and resentment towards the Reserve, the government and other management agencies, as will be illustrated in the following chapter.

The appropriation of Bedouin in tourism and their reduced role in tourism operations is further examined in Chapter 6. This chapter examines how aid agencies have contributed to the Bedouin's minimized role in the development of the protected area and the growing frustration of its cooperative members to understand who is in charge and what is in their future.

CHAPTER 6 INTERNATIONAL PROJECT FUNDING: CREATING LOCAL BENEFITS OR DRAINING LOCAL RESOURCES?

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I examine the ways that externally funded income-generating projects at the WRPA not only bring funds to the area but also draw on and direct how local funds and resources are used while influencing how the WRPA is managed. Since 2005 USAID has become a key stakeholder in the WRPA's development providing financial support to an array of tourism-related ventures. Non-profit agencies created and governed by local communities to address local needs known as Community Based Organizations⁵² (CBO), formerly known as cooperatives, have become conduits for accessing funds from USAID's Jordanian tourism division known as Siyaha. After five years of aid projects in the Wadi Rum area, the general Bedouin consensus points to less than satisfactory results for the beneficiaries of the various USAID initiatives. In fact, one Zalabiah clansman claimed that "nothing ever comes of aid" (FN 2009). He suggested that there are always problems, "projects that set out to help the Bedouin are forgotten or lost or something" (FN 2009). Why have USAID projects been viewed in this light? If nothing ever comes of aid, what has transpired?

I show in this chapter, as others have shown elsewhere, that aid is a means

⁵² Community Based Organizations were formerly recognized as cooperatives in the Wadi Rum area. Prior to 2009, the WRPA management team and Bedouin referred to locally based organizations as cooperatives. This seems to have shifted with USAID.

to facilitate other agendas. I do this by highlighting firsthand Bedouin accounts of the local effects of external funding. I look at whom and what received fiscal aid, how the funding was disseminated, the length of time it took to establish projects, methods of accountability and the benefits for the recipients during and after a project. I begin by profiling a project aimed at empowering Bedouin women, followed by other projects that sought to enhance the quality of Bedouin tourist camps. Three CBOs, each with their own camping projects, are examined to determine how aid works on the ground, how the camps have been affected and who the beneficiaries of these initiatives are. These case studies clarify the relationships between the CBOs, USAID, the WRPA, ASEZA and the Bedouin. I weave a couple of personal experiences into the chapter to provide another lens from which to assess if USAID funding has been supportive, controlling or simply opportunistic.

BACKGROUND

In 2007 while discussing changes to the WRPA with Nature Conservation Division Head Jamal Al Zaidaneen, he commented on the “waves of funding” that have rolled through the protected area (FN 2007). The first or inaugural wave he referred to was the one that institutionalized environmental protection at the Wadi Rum site – the World Bank’s Second Tourism Development Project (STDP) (World Bank Press Release No: 99/1892/MENA 1999). Funds for the Wadi Rum component were meant to target four key objectives:

1. To increase tourism revenue generated at the site.
2. To maximize economic returns to the local community.

3. To enable local Bedouin women to gain direct benefits from the protected area.
4. To conserve the ecological and archaeological resources (Rum Protected Area Management Plan No Date: 1.1.4.2.).

From 1998-2003 these objectives were foundational to the RSCN's stewardship activities. The RSCN management team sought to upgrade existing Bedouin tourism practices. Jeep tours, guiding and Bedouin tourist camps were subjected to newly enforced rules and regulations (as discussed in chapters 3 and 5). In addition, the RSCN established a women's handicraft center to provide an opportunity for local Bedouin women to share in the benefits of the growing tourism industry.

In 2002, my investigation showed that three years following the Reserve's creation the Bedouin tourism operators of Rum Village were disillusioned by what many felt was the intrusive way the protected area management team tried to secure donor and governmental objectives.

In 2005, after seven years of fiscal aid to the WRPA and other key sites in Jordan, the STDP loan expired and contractual operations ceased. From 2005 to 2008, the Jordan based division of USAID initiated the Jordan Tourism Development Project (JTDP) a project that in many ways mirrored that of the STDP. Siyaha, USAID's Jordanian tourism division, funded tourism-related projects at three cities - Madaba, Petra and Wadi Rum.

In a 2006 press release, *Jordan: New initiative to enrich Wadi Rum tourism experience*, Siyaha Chief of Party Ibrahim Osta was quoted as saying, the Wadi Rum component sought "to enrich the tourism experience...by taking

advantage of the cultural appeal of the unique Bedouin way of life in the desert”

(Hindi in the *Jordan Times* October 2006). Furthermore Osta claimed that by

(w)orking through local CBOs, USAID/Siyaha’s ultimate objective, was to improve the cultural experience by offering diversity and quality for visitors... in the hope that tourists will spend more time in the area and more money on food, lodging and handicrafts (ibid.).

In 2006, a document was sent to various Wadi Rum tour operators and others to promote these objectives. “Launching the Wadi Rum Project” outlined a diverse array of Siyaha projects that would receive support (PC Document 2007). Nearly half a million dollars of JTDP grants were allocated to five Wadi Rum cooperatives to finance their tourism-related projects. It was intended that each CBO would utilize its funding to promote their particular niche in the local trade. Some of these diverse pursuits were outlined in Hindi’s 2006 *Jordan Times* article,

weaving, making leather products for souvenirs, jewelry and soap, as well as training local residents to grow and package desert herbs (*Jordan Times* 2006).

Others would use the money to focus on developing

camel treks, improving handicraft products, creating authentic Bedouin experiences, improving camping inside the Reserve, developing small enterprises and empowering the community with women in particular....in addition to a combination of production equipment, labour, materials, advertising and capacity building for the organization (ibid.).

The JTDP ended in 2008 only to be followed by the third and most recent program and wave of funding. USAID/Siyaha secured another five year term for the Jordan Tourism Development Project II (JTDP II), in partnership with Jordan’s MoTA. It received \$28 million USD to improve Jordan’s

competitiveness as an international tourism destination through a host of initiatives such as

developing a new national hotel classification system, improving tourism research and destination marketing, enhancing ecotourism, developing better handicrafts, upgrading vocational training in tourism (www.siyaha.org accessed 2009).

Some of the allocated money would be channelled through CBOs as a revolving contribution or an open-ended loan. In particular, Mr. Steve Gonyea, USAID'S Director of the Office of Economic Growth, stated during a 2009 interview at his office at the U.S. Embassy in Amman that USAID will focus on Bedouin camps to provide toilets and hygiene training to camp owner-operators. The money will assist only Bedouin camp owners who are members of the Wadi Al Qamar Cooperative and the Ad Diseh Cooperative. The JTDP II will further develop women oriented projects to enhance the handicraft sector.

The two phases of USAID aid are profiled in the following four case studies. All share common development strategies based on USAID objectives, protocols and governance.

CASE #1 – PRODUCTIVE VILLAGE COOPERATIVE “WOMEN’S CRAFT WORKSHOP”

The Productive Village Cooperative (PVC) was established to assist members of the Swailheen clan living primarily in Salhia Village. It operated primarily under the authority of a committee comprised of a manager, Abdul Rahman Al Hasaseen - a Bedouin man from another clan living in Queryira Village who was also a member of the WRPA's management team, the late

Sheikh Ali Al Swailheen, the newly instated Sheikh Hussein Ali and a number of other Swailheen clansmen. In addition, a young woman, Fatimah Al Zawaydeh from Ad Diseh Village, was hired to help administer the new cooperative due to her previous employment with the Diseh Tourism Cooperative (DTC) when her brother was the manager. Anis Coquin, a French national with English as her second language, was employed for a short period to assist with marketing. Abdullah Sabbah Al Swailheen was hired from Salhia Village to serve as the manager's assistant.

The overall objective, according to Abdul Rahman was to have “projects to live and last with the local community” meaning that the PVC would be sustainable unlike other CBOs in the area (IS 2007). His role as the manager was to “see what the local community needs” (IS 2007). I asked Sheikh Ali about his family, the community and USAID:

Laura: Does anyone from your family work in the cooperative?

Sheikh Ali: Nobody. I give jobs to poor people. My son works as the head of the cooperative for no money (IS 2007).

He explained why the PVC accepted USAID funds for their projects:

this is a great job (project) and there is income for families here especially for poor families with no income or small incomes. We took aid from USAID. We made projects for the future (IS 2007).

Abdul Rahman explained, “Now there are 12 girls from the local community working here and two men” (IS 2007).

A lot of money was spent on research prior to the actual operations according to Abdul Rahman (IS 2007). By this he was referring to the many

USAID consultants that were employed to assist PVC in its early development. He further stated that he has learned that funding has conditions based on outside rules and standards. The cooperative was mandated to adopt USAID's business model which included the employment of a prescribed number of USAID employees, spending a pre-determined percentage on advertising, using USAID specialists and lending from USAID furniture, computers and signage with USAID IDs (IS 2007) (Appendix 6: Photograph 1).

USAID also supplied the PVC with technical support in the form of business training and consulting, which according to USAID Chief of Party Ibrahim Osta in a *Jordan Times* media release,

provided essential skills for local entrepreneurs seeking to expand or start new businesses in order to enhance the management and diversity of area tourism businesses (Luck in the *Jordan Times* 2008).

These skills were determined by USAID. Abdul Rahman participated in a six-month training program which "focused on the administrative capacity to consider projects, evaluate and reach markets and develop production plans" (ibid.). He was quoted in the release that he felt the training

provided the main elements to enhance the growth of projects and ensure sustainability and economic development for cooperative members in Wadi Rum (ibid.).

The *Women's Craft Workshop* was one of the PVC's key projects in 2007. Socio-economic issues in Salhia Village were the impetus for its development according to Sheikh Ali (IS 2007). During one of our 2007 interviews, he claimed

that we have our own purpose to find and create an opportunity for the ladies to find some employment from this project. The women have benefited from some training and learned new skills....based on USAID training opportunities (IS 2007).

The women were making products to be sold at the PVC's store at the WRPA's Visitor Centre. Their product line emphasized, as noted by the female manager Nawal Salem Al Swailheen in a 2006 USAID/Siyaha press release, "inspiration from our surroundings and heritage." She stated further that the "project has benefited all women of the village by giving us employment opportunities" (www.siyaha.org accessed 2010).

Attempting to be different from other women's CBOs in the region, the Swailheen women crafts were made from fur, leather and silver. Falasteen Awad, the USAID consultant who had also provided consultation to the Burdah Women's Cooperative in Rum Village, was hired to help this group develop their product line and improve the quality of their items. It is important to note that the manager Abdul Rahman did not hire Falasteen. Her consultancy was through USAID and part of the development program funding.

Sheikh Ali when asked in 2007 if he was happy with the projects he replied "*Al Hum da la lah*," he was very happy. "Sometimes we pay from our pockets but I am happy to see people working and getting money" (IS 2007). He had great faith in the PVC project and the manager although he admitted to using personal money to support it:

Laura: Is the cooperative the way of the future for other clans?

Sheikh Ali: Of course good for the future. It is a good start. We sold 3,600 JD in four months. One stick you can break but many sticks you can't break (IS 2007).

His last comment referred to his belief that there is strength in numbers meaning that the more people employed the better it would be for the Swailheen clan. Each of the female employees received a monthly paycheque of 130 JD per month, according to the sheikh, from the USAID allocated funds (IS 2007). Nawal was paid 160 JD per month for one year. Similar to other CBOs, the ultimate goal was for the PVC to achieve independence and be able to sustain itself after the one year funding period expired.

One day in June 2007 while visiting the PVC office in Salhia Village, I stumbled across a women's training session already in progress. It was part of a project to provide computer instruction to women for a period of one week per clan. In this case, it was the Swailheen's turn. Through an interpreter I asked the young trainer, 22 years of age from Aqaba, what she was teaching the two women in her class. She explained that she was instructing them, one was approximately 55 years of age and the other one was much younger, how to use the Paint Program. I inquired as to what she would be teaching them next. Her comment was that she would show them how to open a file. When I asked what they would put into the file she looked confused. Having established that the older woman was illiterate, I enquired again about what she would put into a file. The trainer did not have an answer. She had received three months of training in Aqaba prior to the start of the program. I mentioned this exchange to the

Tourism and Community Development Specialist in charge of the Wadi Rum sector, Ramez Habash. He did not respond to my comment that it might have been to her advantage to teach her how to read and write before pursuing computer training. The point was that they were providing “training” that on the surface appeared to be of benefit or as Falasteen had commented “improvements to the people” (IS 2007). But when you are illiterate, what is the value in one-week of computer training?

Later that same year, Abdul Rahman indicated that the PVC was experiencing some unexpected troubles (IS 2007). He highlighted that he was waiting for “permission from ASEZA” to move forward with other PVC projects meaning approval for the funding. He referred to his concern that there was a committee of “6-7 heads (that) meet and make decisions” (IS 2007). His worry was that ASEZA’s bureaucracy was too complex and caused problems for USAID funded projects such as his. As the PVC’s manager he was in the middle. I have the flexibility to work with people, but I am surprised by ASEZA and their rules. I gave my proposal (for the overall project) to ASEZA to study for two years.... (IS 2007).

The latter comment referred to preliminary studies using consultants.

Furthermore, “they altered all of the projects. (Now) all of the projects are wrong” (IS 2007). ASEZA appeared to be a major stumbling block for the PVC at this time. As he explained it, USAID money is channelled through ASEZA to the various CBOs. Their approval is required to release any funding. The PVC was unable to move forward without external aid.

During a later session with Sheikh Ali he noted other problems that the PVC was facing (IS 2007). He highlighted a similar difficulty noted by the manager from Rum's Burda Women's Cooperative, "we didn't have a sustainable (source of) money to sustain ourselves" after USAID funding was received (IS 2007). The problem stemmed from the fact that cooperative employees' salaries were paid from project funding that was guaranteed for only a one one-year period. Similar to other USAID funded CBOs, these projects were for a limited time and were not a dependable source of income for the employees. Sheikh Ali professed that "we face a problem because when the funding ends the pay ends" (IS 2007). Although the project had generated some income from the sale of crafts at the Visitor Centre shop it was unable to sustain itself past the funding period. The sheikh blamed it on the "bad tourism season, our sales were minimal" although he was pleased with the sales earlier (Is 2007). Sheikh Ali's son and new leader, Sheikh Yousef, was not pleased as well, "They (ASEZA) take our lands and make projects and work for you guys, but don't" (IS 2007). His comment referred to how the Swailheen had tried to make the project work by committing some of their personal but limited resources in exchange for promises of employment.

A young, Zawaydeh woman revealed during an interview in 2007 how bad it had become for the PVC. She had worked at their store at the Visitor Centre but quit "before they stopped," meaning before they were forced to close due to not having the financial resources to keep the store open after the funding period

and during low tourism seasons (IS 2007). Her friend also worked there but “didn’t receive all of her salary” as was owed to her (IS 2007).

In late 2007 there were discussions with USAID to move the PVC project into another phase of funding. “There are a lot of negotiations taking place,” according to Sheikh Ali who remained optimistic during this interview, “on how to improve the idea. The funders want to bring specialists to develop and bring benefits for the future” (IS 2007). Sheikh Atieg Al Swailheen was one of many Bedouin who felt that aid was not simply an act of helping. He stated, “Why give money to us? For free? Because we have black eyes? Nothing is for nothing” he stated in 2009 (IS 2009).

By the fall of 2009, very little was in place on the ground. Fatimah Al Zawaydeh had quit her job. The Visitor Centre store had closed its doors. Anis went back to France and the first phase of the project had ended with little benefit to the local community albeit for some wages for a limited period of time, questionable training and a host of personal sacrifices. The local good will and material commitments were squandered to support projects that were unsustainable beyond the funding period.

CASE #2 – PRODUCTIVE VILLAGE COOPERATIVE *BEDOUIN LIFE*

Productive Village Cooperative’s *Bedouin Life* project was to provide a new tourism experience for the Wadi Rum area outside of mainstream WRPA tourism. It was meant to support some of the poorer Bedouin families while generating a tourism experience that exposed visitors to the daily lives of the

Bedouin clansmen and women. The premise was for visitors to spend time with a Bedouin family living a more traditional existence or as Sheikh Ali Al Swailheen described in a 2007 meeting, “we make Bedouin life (for them).” Participating families would be expected to provide Bedouin hospitality to their paying guests. Each family will “make tea, coffee and food” as noted by Sleiman Salem Al Enezah, an elderly Bedouin man who lived in the desert with his wife in 2007 (IS 2007). The PVC would, according to the sheikh, help move the project along by “bringing water and things. (We would) try to make tourism with them (the families)” (IS 2007). In 2007 Sheikh Ali and the project’s manager, Abdul Rahman, were very enthusiastic and equally optimistic about the project’s future, another USAID funded PVC enterprise.

Bedouin Life depended on Bedouin families living in the desert, but there were no longer any Swailheen families living this type of lifestyle in the Salhia area. Sleiman Salem Al Enezah stated,

the Swailheen have come into some money recently. They are rich from selling their lands. They don’t go to the desert with big families anymore (IS 2007). He revealed how the Swailheen were selling some of their property⁵³ to rich people to buy new cars. He went on to say that the Swailheen “wouldn’t return to the desert or have anyone live in the desert” (IS 2007). Rather, they lived in the village. Therefore, in order for the *Bedouin Life* project to proceed, the PVC needed to include families from other clans living close to Salhia Village.

⁵³ Salhia and Shakriyyah villages are located outside of the Wadi Rum Protected Area. Rum Village is located inside the protected area and subjected to different rules and regulations of governance as previously noted.

The first family approached by Abdul Rahman and his team was that of Sleiman. I first met this elderly man in 2002 while conducting my MA research (Appendix 6: Photograph 2). At that time he was close to seventy years of age living in the desert with his elderly wife, Um Mohammed. His family was one of only a few remaining in the area that was making ends meet from pastoralism. At this time they were able to sell enough livestock to sustain their chosen way of life. By 2007 conditions had changed. He had experienced a number of financial setbacks due to problems beyond his control. Lack of rainfall had affected local grazing conditions. Sleiman declared when I next saw him in 2007, “I have not sold even one goat. The babies are late in the year and small.” Without a stable income it had become increasingly difficult for Sleiman and his wife to remain in the desert. Outside of their herd of approximately one hundred sheep and goats they had few extras (Appendix 6: Photograph 3).

The invitation to participate in the *Bedouin Life* project came at an opportune time for the elderly couple. When asked about his level of participation, Sleiman shared the details of his meeting with Abdul Rahman,

Laura: Did the manager ever ask you what you need?

Sleiman: No. What they said was what they will do for us. They will bring water and food for the animals if we make tea and food and we live here (IS 2007).

Sleiman was enthusiastic at the prospect of “making tea, coffee and food. I am ready to do it” (IS 2007). He added that he will also make *sharaq* for his tourists. This is a special type of bread the Bedouin bake over a metal dome placed over a fire. He was eager to begin entertaining. I asked him about his

expectations:

Laura: What do you hope you will get from the project?

Sleman: They (team) said they would give us 120 JD for food for the goats and (maybe) people give money as tips (IS 2007).

He believed that his participation would help his family with the high cost of feeding their large herd.

The second family solicited to participate in *Bedouin Life* was a woman named Um Mohammad Al Enezah. The forty something year old widow and her youngest son lived in a tent in a *wadi* close to Salhia Village. Her older children were either married or lived in the family's small home in Rashdiyyah Village. During the school year, Um Mohammad returned to Rashdiyyah so that her son could attend school without having to travel great distances. When school was out she like Sleiman and his wife preferred desert life to that of the village. It was for this reason that she saw the project as an opportunity to generate some extra income for her family while doing what she loved. Both families had aspirations of sustaining their pastoral activities.

The project required that each family move their camps to two designated sites chosen by Abdul Rahman and his team. The families needed to be close to Salhia Village in order to facilitate easy access for tourists and supplies but still far enough away for the tourist to feel that they were in a remote location in the desert. When asked if he had helped choose the location, Sleiman commented that he had met with the PVC management team in Salhia Village to discuss moving. He said it was during this meeting that Abdul Rahman,

put thoughts into my head. They (the PVC team) said I have to be there. Abdul Rahman said it was a good income if I go there” (IS 2007).

Sleiman said that he had been sick at the time and was told to move to the designated site once he had regained his health. With the help of his only son, Mohammed, the elderly couple moved two months later (Appendix 6: Photograph 4). No one from the cooperative assisted. The younger Um Mohammad was expected to move to another location within the wadi she was already living in. She was not happy about the move or the new location (IS 2007). She was not consulted about the location choice either.

A number of months after meeting with the two Al Enezah families, I returned to the designated camp locations to establish the project’s progress and to see how the families were faring. Younger Um Mohammad had abandoned the project early on. She was living in Rashdiyyah Village so that her son could attend school in the village. As for Sleiman and his family, it did not take long after my arrival for the elder to reveal his discontent with the progress to date. The development of *Bedouin Life* and the status of promises made were the focal point for his consternation. One of the most pressing issues for the elderly couple was that the new location did not meet the family’s needs. There was very little to offer them and their large herd of sheep and goats. Sleiman’s wife explained how the new place “had no shade, was rocky and had no water. What is the benefit?” she asked (IS 2007). The combination of the three factors was contributing to a difficult situation. Their displeasure was evident. There had only been one water delivery from the PVC. It was not enough. “My animals

are hungry and thirsty” stated Sleiman because the site is “hot and there is no water” (IS 2007). He said that he had called Abdul Rahman to ask him “why did you lie to us?” By agreement, water was to be delivered so that they could remain at the new location that was not conducive to a pastoral lifestyle but did meet the needs of the project. Frustrated, the elder stated that, “...they want to leave us here for one month with only one tank of water. We left a good place” (IS 2007).

On this particular hot July day, their son Mohammed had delivered the much needed water to his parents’ tent in his little pick-up truck. Recognizing the dire circumstances for the livestock, he took it upon himself to fill water canisters and drive them to the new site. Sleman Sabbah Al Zalabiah, my Bedouin interpreter, commented that it was not so much the cost of the water that was causing this family angst rather it was the associated cost of benzene needed to drive the water to the site (FN 2007). He estimated that the cost to transport the water was approximately 9 JD for the family in lieu of it being delivered as promised. Sleiman’s “salary isn’t enough to pay for all of this” according to Mohammed (IS 2007). In addition, the elderly couple had been promised 120 JD per month for their participation. They had planned to use the money to purchase feed. As it turned out, due to the lack of natural browse in the new area their livestock required more than 120 JD worth to survive. As with the water, transporting feed to the site was an additional expense incurred by this family to help move the project along. Furthermore, store bought fodder

is drier than natural browse. This meant that the animals needed to be watered more frequently hence the problem was exacerbated.

They also reported that they had not received the *bait al sha'er* or Bedouin tent they had been promised. New tents purchased with USAID funds were a cleaner alternative to the family's tattered tents and were more suitable for tourists visiting the couple. According to Sleiman he had been told by Abdullah Sabbah Al Swailheen, Abdul Rahman's assistant, the tent was to be delivered on this day, but it had not arrived while I was there (IS 2007). It was in Salhia Village where I later saw it bundled on the ground.

Sleiman and Mohammed were also disturbed by the lack of payment for services rendered by Mohammed for the work he had done for the Women's Craft Workshop. He claimed that he had not received money owed to him from the PVC for wood he provided for the crafts. He said that "I worked for three months for free. If no money, I don't want to work for you" (IS 2007). He had lost faith in the project and the people who managed it. Mohammed claimed to have "told Abdul Rahman that he had lied. He said he didn't" (IS 2007). It is as if there is an expectation on the part of administrators that Bedouin families will pay from their own pockets until the project can support itself.

It was also during this time that I was invited to join Abdul Rahman and Anis Coquin, the French national working for the PVC, to meet with Ziad I. Asfour, the USAID consultant overseeing the *Bedouin Life* project, and Zaid Masannat, a designer from *Z Creations* in Amman, to discuss the project's

marketing strategy. The meeting was held at one of the most exclusive hotels in Aqaba, the Mövenpick Hotel and Resort, because this is where the men were staying. The discussion revealed that a substantial percentage of USAID's funding was to be allocated to promoting the project. Brochures were fundamental to targeting high-end hotels. Publishing the material was a priority despite the fact that the operational aspect of the project was nowhere near completion let alone ready for advertising as I made clear to the men. Sleiman still had not received what he had been promised.

Another visit to Sleiman's camp in the summer of 2007 found that the family had still not received the promised water, feed or tent. Nor had they entertained a single visitor to the area, "It is not here. Where are the tourists?" asked Sleiman impatiently (IS 2007). I inquired about the promised funds:

Laura: Have you received the co-op money?

Sleiman: No money yet. Hajj Ali (Sheikh Ali) and Abdul Rahman do not give from their pockets (IS 2007).

The family was also beginning to feel pressure from the Swailheen clansmen and women residing in Salhia Village because they were Al Enezah not Hwaitat

Swailheen:

Sleiman: It is the people. I don't trust them. The Swailheen aren't nice people. They are fighting over the government housing (in Salhia Village).

Laura: Do you think you will get a house?

Sleiman: No. I don't think the Swailheen will give one to me (IS 2007).

They were worried. Although they were one of the poorest families in the area, they were confident that the Swailheen would not consider them for the new government housing in the village because they were Al Enezah although it was

okay for them to work with *Bedouin Life*. They had few options other than this project.

Despite all of the problems, Sleiman insisted that he still wanted to continue with *Bedouin Life* because he wanted to work but his family felt that it would be difficult because the “the Swailheen won’t leave me (us) alone if we take this job” (IS 2007). It was alleged that some families in the village who were better off than Sleiman were now offering to go to the desert so that they could receive a new *bait al sha'er* and some USAID money. Sleiman feared that if anyone from the clan reported him to the authorities, the government would terminate the 60 JD he was currently receiving per month (as social assistance or from a pension). He did not want to compromise his only guarantee of income. He was also concerned that Mohammed would lose the 100 JD he was receiving each month. I questioned their future plans:

Laura: So what will you do now?

Sleiman: I will do nothing.

Laura: Will you stay here?

Sleiman: Yes. I will wait and see. There is no safe job with these people. Tomorrow they will come and say here is your salary. I don’t want it.

Laura: Why don’t you move back to where you came from?

Sleiman: I am the only person who can do this. Swailheen have big families and can’t go. They asked me to work with them on this project. I will move back. If we are there, it is better (IS 2007).

By this time, Sleiman was so frustrated with the PVC, Abdul Rahman and the Swailheen he would not take money if they handed it to him. Despite his feelings, he remained optimistic. He took pride in the prospect of working for the project although the new site was “catching his freedom” (IS 2007).

On another day I discovered that Mohammed was especially incensed by the actions of the cooperative manager. Abdul Rahman had brought a photographer and USAID associates to Sleiman's camp to take photographs of female family members for a brochure while the men were away despite a lack of progress regarding the camping aspect of this project. Mohammed did not hold back his irritation:

I am not here and they were taking photographs of my mother. I don't want to see them again. They didn't ask. Abdul Rahman is of the same Bedouin and he let it happen. They are taking pictures of poor people and (telling people) they are helping. They write about what they want not asking the people (IS 2007).

This was deemed by Mohammed to be extremely disrespectful. The proper approach would have been for Abdul Rahman to talk to Mohammed and his father beforehand. With the men's permission, the team could have proceeded without incident. I asked Mohammed if he had reported the situation to Sheikh Ali:

Laura: Did you tell Sheikh Ali?

Mohammad: His wife is dead. It is not a good time to visit him and tell him (IS 2007).

The sheikh's wife had recently passed away. Mohammed felt that those in charge were "...laughing and playing with us" (IS 2007).

During one of my visits Sleiman asked my Bedouin interpreter for his advice on how best to work with the cooperative. Sleiman Sabbah comes from a well respected Zalabiah family (IS 2007). He recommended that the duo:

1. Do not sign any papers
2. If there is outside money, take it.
3. Ask for water delivery every ten days.

4. Ask for food for the animals (IS 2007).

According to the older Sleiman, whenever he broached his concerns to Abdul Rahman the response was always the same, “it will arrive tomorrow” and that everything will be remedied by the end of this month (IS 2007). Sleiman felt that the best course of action was to

wait until the end of the month... approximately 20 days with little food and some water. If there is nothing we will move then (IS 2007).

In the midst of all of the disorder, consultant Ziad I. Asfour attempted to move the project to the next stage. He elected to bring a select group of industry people to Salhia Village to experience *Bedouin Life* firsthand. It was intended to be a preliminary run but every time he tried to contact Abdul Rahman the manager allegedly did not answer his telephone. The group never visited the area to the best of my knowledge.

The funding eventually ended and the project officially closed. The family never hosted a guest, received the promised tent, monthly income or water and feed. In addition, they had not received any instruction regarding tourism protocols such as hygiene, basic English lessons or even how to host visitors. This experience cost them more than what they had received.

In the fall of 2008, Sleiman Salem passed away. Before his death he had moved his wife and livestock to a location that was better suited to their needs. In 2009, I visited his widow to pay my respects and to see how she was faring. Well into her 70's, Um Mohammed was still living in the desert and still raising livestock, only now it was with Sleiman's sister. The two elderly women

complained about how the changes to the environment were affecting their herd. *Bedouin Life* was not mentioned.

COMMON PROBLEMS AT THE PVC

From the outset there were sceptics who did not foresee a successful outcome for the PVC and its projects. When interviewed in the summer of 2007, Salhia resident Nasser Al Swailheen commented on the state of the PVC (IS 2007). Although a resident and clan member, he had distanced himself from actively participating in the cooperative due to what he called “internal problems” (IS 2007). He predicted that the project as a whole would fail.

In the fall of 2008, I spent some time with Abdul Rahman’s assistant Abdullah Sabbah Al Swailheen. He spoke of the problems associated with the PVC and the cooperative leaders having too much power and giving their relatives jobs. Later in 2009, he reported that “the Productive Village is nothing now.” He revealed how the final funding tally was approximately 120,000 JD not 200,000 as was reported by other tribesmen in the area. When asked where the money was he believed that it had been spent on bringing in experts such as the consultant hired through USAID to provide instruction to the women and to develop *Bedouin Life*. He also claimed that the money was “now on paper because it is not in the projects” (FN 2009).

Eid Sabbah Al Zalabiah, a WRPA camp owner, felt that the PVC had no direction or foundation “because they don’t know what they are doing or where they are going” (FN 2007). Atallah Al Swailheen, one of the PVC members and

the owner-operator of a local horse riding company (see Chapter 7), said that “these people (Swailheen) don’t know and have never been involved in tourism” (FN 2007). Part of the problem according to Atallah was that he and others like him are too busy to check up on Abdul Rahman therefore they do not know what the results of the committee’s actions have been. Anis, the French woman hired to assist, quit the PVC because she “lost confidence in the project and the manager” (FN 2007).

During a 2007 meeting, I asked Abdul Rahman if he had ever managed a project prior to the PVC. He responded, “Yes, sheep, goats and about 1,000 chickens, but never people” (IS 2007). He told me one day that he governed according to what “God was telling him what to do” (FN 2007). I am left to ask if USAID evaluated the PVC before giving it money.

During my 2009 meeting with Director of the Office of Economic Growth, Mr. Steve Gonyea, he commented that USAID/Siyaha was having difficulty retrieving its loan from both the Ad Diseh and Productive Village cooperatives (IS 2009). He stated that in order for CBOs to receive money guarantees are made for the loaned amount. “We have to be strong with them” he stated (IS 2009). The money to the Diseh Cooperative was to support a water project. The PVC loan was for \$100,000.00 which included some cost sharing. USAID representatives had called in their loan but Mr. Gonyea said that “Sheikh Ali said no. He thought that we gave it to them and that it couldn’t be withdrawn” (IS 2009). But Sheikh Atieg Al Swailheen declared that

for them (USAID) it is right, but you bring it (funding) to us. Why didn't we go to them (USAID)? Because we are poor? They use us to keep us like this for the tourists (IS 2009).

OTHER FUNDING OF BEDOUIN CAMPS

The problems described for the *Bedouin Life* project were related to other initiatives to provide more tourists with Bedouin camping experiences. Tourists from around the world come to Wadi Rum to experience the unique camping opportunities offered at the WRPA. As noted by Sleman Sabbah Al Mazanah from Manasheer Village in 2007, the “reason tourists come to the area is because of the Bedouin tent. Since the beginning they come for this reason” (IS 2007).

During the RSCN's tenure, one of their key development objectives was to improve Bedouin camping conditions:

Almost one third of visitor's camp overnight but camping provision is not adequate to meet demand and the standards need to be improved. Other forms of overnight accommodation also need to be considered (RSCN VMP: 2003).

The JTDP, under USAID/Siyaha governance, provided funding for various types of camping projects in the Wadi Rum area. Two CBOs responded to USAID's plan to upgrade camping facilities within the protected area and a third planned a new camping experience.

During a chance encounter in 2007 with Eric Johnson from USAID's Economic Division our conversation drifted from women's handicrafts to USAID expectations for the local camping industry. He stated that Siyaha was targeting tourists spending approximately \$200 USD per night (FN 2007). He claimed that this goal would not be attained in “those camps,” referring to the

current state of Bedouin camps inside the protected area. He said, “Bedouin camps are 99% not acceptable in terms of our standards” (FN 2007). When pressed about whose standards were being used as the measure he replied “the US Forest Service” (FN 2007). USAID had allegedly contracted a team of US Forest Rangers to assess the Jordanian camping conditions within the WRPA. According to Mr. Johnson they determined that health and hygiene conditions especially those pertaining to cooking and toilets need to be upgraded. Mr. Johnson emphasized their poor state by adding “my sister would not stay in a camp like that” (FN 2007). I informed him that I had visited over half of the questionable camps noting that many were beautiful. He replied, “You and I would stay in them, but not the tourist we are attempting to target” (FN 2007).

In a 2007 *Jordan Times* article USAID/Siyaha confirmed their allocation of 200,000 JD to the WRPA to upgrade Bedouin camps. The money was to be used to improve camping conditions due to

sub-standard bathrooms, kitchens and tents, to issues of hygiene, conditions in some of these campsites are not up to par and do not always meet the expectations and needs of international tourists (Dajani in the *Jordan Times* 2007).

According to the statement, USAID/Siyaha Component Leader Joseph

Ruddy stated that campsites, like hotels, should conform to a similar system of standards so they guarantee quality services to visitors. He stated that

.... hotels are rated and licensed, it is important to have a similar system in place for campsites, particularly in Wadi Rum, which is one of the country’s most popular attractions (Dajani in the *Jordan Times* 2007).

To upgrade Bedouin camps, a Minimum Standards Weighting System for

licensing was developed by USAID/Siyaha in collaboration with the WRPA and ASEZA and without Bedouin input as best as I could determine. It was designed to provide a set of requirements that each camp owner would need to meet before having their operating license renewed. The new regulations required that camps meet 26 mandatory requirements, 36 additional safety requirements, 18 comfort requirements and 23 requirements that consider authenticity and the environment (Dajani in the Jordan Times 2007). Camps not meeting the minimum standards would be given six months to make improvements or “face having their operating licenses revoked” according to the statement (ibid.).

CASE #3 - RUM TOURISM COOPERATIVE CAMPING

The Rum Tourism Cooperative (RTC) in addition to offering desert tours has a long history of providing Bedouin camping services. In 2007, it had a committee of fourteen volunteers, an elected head or leader, a salaried manager, an accountant and assistant. There were 625 members according to Abu Yasser Al Zalabiah, the cooperative’s longstanding leader (IS 2007). He explained how CBO heads are not paid employees (IS 2007). They receive “gift like” or in-kind contributions based upon their activities. He elaborated, if I was working for a project i.e. an interview in Amman for the cooperative then I would receive special expenses for this of approximately 120 per month (IS 2007).

The amount varied, but in 2007 it could average 200 JD per month all of which would be paid from CBO funds.

While discussing the RTC’s camping project in 2007, Abu Yasser claimed

that USAID is “slowly helping to develop the local community. They give money slowly not all at once” (IS 2007). He also stated that it was because of USAID that they have a manager and an accountant; something they did not have during the CBOs early years. The funding they received for the project also went towards paying the salaries of these employees. Abu Yasser stated that the accountant alone received 190 JD of which USAID funding covered only 70%. This meant that the CBO was left to pay the remaining 30% out of their coffers for an employee they did not have before USAID funding. He stated that he preferred the cooperative in the past because it had no manager and accountant hence it did not have to pay extra wages.

The project of most concern in 2007 was the “Big Camp” or *Bedouin Nights* funded by USAID/Siyaha. The RTC had developed in collaboration with USAID a unique camping project that would offer visitors to the area an experience of “original tribal, typical, Bedouin life” stated Abu Yasser (IS 2007). He claimed that it will provide:

dancing, singing, Bedouin courtesy, *rababah* playing and camel riding. The main attraction will be a Bedouin night show and (people) will pay more. It will begin two hours before dusk and show off Bedouin life. Rum villagers will work it. It is most important to show the real Bedouin life (IS 2007).

It is important to note that Bedouin women did not historically dance or sing for strangers or tourists. The project was designed to be “a VIP style camp. We don’t want the 10 JD cheap tourists. We want the American tourist” Abu Yasser explained basically reiterating comments I had heard from Mr. Johnson a few months earlier (IS 2007). The plan was to offer dinner and a show and then

return the guests to either Aqaba or Amman to spend the night in one of the city's hotels. The RTC would also offer small Bedouin tents with modern conveniences for those visitors wanting to stay in the WRPA for the evening. On the outside the tents would look like a traditional Bedouin tent, but inside they would have solar energy, electricity and even a private toilet and shower. The plan was to start with twenty tents. "The 2006 agreement" according to Abu Yasser, "was to have forty Bedouin Nights in this year (2007)" (IS 2007). The project was to be marketed to "journalists, travel agents and people interested in seeing Bedouin life in advertising" (Yasser IS 2007). The plan included the production of brochures and booklets to be distributed to airports, hotels and even in Europe (Yasser IS 2007). He stated that the RTC had already received funding from three agencies: USAID, Global Environment Facility's Small Grants Programme in the amount of 10,000 JD and International Cooperation's Qudorat program from the Ministry of Planning in the amount of 14,000 JD. These funds were used to "purchase tents, metal and other stuff" for the camps (Yasser IS 2007).

Although the project's proposal had been submitted to MoTA and ASEZA in 2006, stating that "it was to help people," Abu Yasser explained how it ran into a significant hurdle in 2007 (IS 2007). According to him, it was "now experiencing problems between ASEZA and the RTC" (IS 2007). The dilemma stemmed from the proposed location for the camp. A site had been selected behind the Government Rest House close to Rum Village. The RTC had

received approval from the RSCN, ASEZA, MoTA, Abu Yasser, the Head of the Diseh Cooperative and the management of the WRPA that the location was “good for camping and that they could start”, but they had not received approval from ASEZA’s Head Commissioner:

The problem is with the big commissioner in Aqaba. At the start he was with us and the people got aid from USAID. The big chief didn’t like the location. “Why are Bedouin tents here?” he asked (Abu Yasser IS 2007).

Abu Yasser took his concerns to the then Environmental Commissioner, Dr. Bilal Al Bashir, to better understand the situation, but no reason was given for the Head Commissioner’s reluctance to support the location. Abu Yasser suspected that the commissioner’s stance was because he

wants to close the Rest House and push tourism outside of the village. This is a personal decision as head of Aqaba. He will make us late, but will not stop us (IS 2007).

He felt that the commissioner’s position stemmed from his desire “to help the people outside in Shakriyyah and Ad Diseh” before assisting those in Rum something I heard from other villagers (IS 2007). He felt that rich people have a way to push decision-makers. Maybe there is a friendship between the commissioner and rich people (IS 2007).

His comment referred to the development in Ad Diseh and future plans for Shakriyyah Village.

Within ten days of this interview, Abu Yasser informed me that all of the paperwork and the project’s study had been sent to Aqaba to show that it would “help the local community by bringing tourists which helps people with money” (IS 2007). He commented:

We don't need money just an okay. We took some USAID money. If this camp does not work USAID will not give us the rest of the money. It wants to know it is okay before giving the rest of the money. We are sure we are getting permission by following the right steps. What is the difference between us and the other local communities? They want to close the Rest House (IS 2007).

Once they receive permission from the Head Commissioner they will begin because "everything is in place. Even the invitations are ready" according to Abu Yasser meaning that allocated funds had already been utilized (IS 2007). "We just need the okay" he stated adding that "we will go to the King and get help if need be. We are 100% sure it will work" (IS 2007).

In 2007, I asked Judge Salhsalm Salem Al Zalabiah how the RTC helped its members, he responded:

Laura: What does the cooperative do for its members?

Judge: This cooperative does nothing now. We tried to do a camp but ASEZA didn't give the permission. It has stopped for now.

Laura: When will you get the permission?

Judge: They share our business between us and Dseh (IS 2007).

As of the fall 2009, the project had still not moved forward for undisclosed reasons. The tents, brochures, invitations and other purchased items sat in limbo waiting for the RTC to receive the commissioner's approval. I asked Abu Yasser about the practicality of accepting aid in a 2009 interview:

Laura: Has external aid helped?

Abu Yasser: I have my personal judgement for these projects. They (USAID) established a huge propaganda without something on the ground. There is a big difference between USAID and Small GEF. The Small GEF is the best program as well as the Noor Hussein Foundation and the Ministry of Planning because they work on phases consistent with the projects. Not like USAID who came and put huge budgets on projects and do not implement them (IS 2009).

Part of the propaganda he was referring to can be seen in a USAID/Siyaha press

release stating the benefits and work done with various Wadi Rum CBOs:

Over the past year the project has created almost 250 job opportunities in the various areas of CBO management and administration, camping, musical and cultural experiences, handicraft development and guiding (<http://www.rmportal.net/library/> accessed November 2010).

CASE #4 - MOON VALLEY COOPERATIVE (MVC)

The final camp study was receiving the most attention in Rum Village during the fall of 2009. The USAID funded project to improve Bedouin camp conditions targeted two local CBOs – Ad Diseh Cooperative and Moon Valley Cooperative (MVC) or Wadi Al Qamar Cooperative in its Arabic translation (Appendix 6: Photograph 5). The MVC, located in Rum Village, was established by Rum villager Salem Al Zalabiah as a society for eco-tourism. It also functions as a vehicle to improve camping conditions for twenty-five campsites within the WRPA. Salem was formerly the assistant to the WRPA's Head of Tourism and more recently the WRPA manager Nasser Al Zawaydeh (FN 2007). He had also been employed as a protected area supervisor for camel and jeep rotations in addition to other tourism activities before undertaking this role.

As noted, improving hygiene conditions at Bedouin camps was a top priority for USAID in 2007. Funding was allocated to MVC for upgrading camp toilet facilities. For camp owners wishing to participate in the project there were many rules and regulations they had to abide by including choosing a location for the new washroom, construction materials and the design. USAID assumed financial responsibility for one half of the cost while camp owners were expected

to pay the other half (IS 2007). The total amount was determined by the project and sent directly to USAID and MVC without the owners seeing the estimates (IS 2008; 2009). According to Sleman Sabbah Al Mazanah from Manasheer Village, “each camp has to give directly and they improve your camp. They don’t give us money they just fix the camp” (IS 2007). The late owner-operator of *Lawrence Camp*, Atieg Sabbah Al Zalabiah, claimed shortly after a team inspected his camp in 2007 that “they (USAID) want everything to be the same. Toilets and tents” (FN 2007). This meant that all improvements were identical and adhered to a model that may go against camp owners’ personal wants and needs (Appendix 6: Photographs 6-7).

In 2007 many Bedouin owner-operators considered participation in this project to be a great advantage as noted by Eid Sabbah Al Zalabiah in 2009 (IS 2009). While reflecting on the early years of USAID’s presence at the WRPA, Eid had remained sceptical of the project from the outset. He noted how he now thinks the Bedouin were stupid because when USAID first came they thought a big name and didn’t know about the future. They were told to pay half and USAID would pay the rest. People thought it is a good thing and they don’t look at the future (IS 2009).

Although camp owners are not obliged by the WRPA to participate, Eid’s brother Atieg Sabbah felt that the “Bedouin have their hands tied” (IS 2009). They are required to improve their camp’s condition to have their licenses renewed. The project provided an opportunity to have half of the costs covered by someone else, but even this he claimed was flawed:

You have to pay the rest, but you don't know how much you got from USAID. How much did they spend? How much did they pay for the toilet? You bring the tank and doors. But USAID is working for the camps so why doesn't it pay the total amount? (IS 2009).

Atieg and Eid's brother Mohammad Sabbah Al Zalabiah was one of the first Bedouin camp owners in the area (IS 2007). He established his camp during the early years of the WRPA (Appendix 6: Photograph 8). In 2007 he highlighted problems with the toilet project. One of the main issues for the Bedouin owners was that the "aid" would cost them money. Whether it was 1,500 JD or even 500 JD it was too much for many of the Bedouin to pay. He felt that the owners needed to participate although not be required or penalized. The outcome of not upgrading could result in the protected area not recommending your camp. They needed time. He also felt that "the design is not something we all agree on" meaning that the design provided by USAID consultants did not support desert camping needs according to many of the Bedouin (IS 2007). Atieg Sabbah agreed that "they (USAID) did the toilet in a bad way because they (USAID) supported their own design for the camps" meaning that the Bedouin camp owners had not been consulted (IS 2007). Eid hedged his bet by signing the paperwork to install new toilets, but remained apprehensive about participating in the project. In the end, he preferred to remain autonomous paying for everything out of his pocket. In this way he was not beholden to anyone or anything (Appendix 6: Photograph 9-10).

In the fall of 2009, the USAID-Jordan Tourism Development Project II was underway. This time the focus was on improving camp kitchens.

According to Eid Sabbah Al Zalabiah, “a specialist was brought in to construct a model camp” for the other camp owners to copy (IS 2009). He was not keen on this idea due to the results of the 2007 experience. He stated once again that “USAID does not think about the future” (IS 2009). The results are still pending, but the discontent revolving around USAID’s presence in 2009 was palpable.

This was not the first time that Bedouin camp kitchens were targeted for improvements. The RSCN and the WRPA had tackled this issue while I was conducting my MA research in 2002. The methods by which kitchen upgrades were executed in the past have become today’s campfire anecdotes. One story in particular continues to reverberate throughout the desert five years after the incident occurred. The *Bedouin Meditation Camp* owned by Zidane Al Zalabiah from Rum Village was one of the first and highly recognized Bedouin tourism operators in the Wadi Rum area. Allegedly, Zidane’s kitchen did not meet new WRPA standards. According to a group of men including one of Zidane’s brothers, the protected area wanted to bulldoze the kitchen he had built, but he resisted. Zidane, according to Sleman Zalabiah and Sleman Mazanah, went to court in 2004 to stop the demolition (IS 2007). He lost his case. His kitchen was demolished and he had to rebuild it with the mandatory metal roof recommendation. Six months later the Reserve management allegedly changed their minds again after they realized that a metal roof was the wrong material for a desert kitchen. It was established that it contributed to extremely hot

conditions for the cook. Zidane had to rebuild the kitchen yet again at his expense only this time using the newly designated cinder block product.

In 2009, one of the principle complaints, according to Eid Zalabiah was that USAID was “doing things that were forbidden for us before” (IS 2009). He was referring to conditions that had been set by the WRPA during earlier years especially with regards to conservation efforts established by the RSCN. The Bedouin knew where they stood with the WRPA before USAID. They came to understand the rules and regulations even if they did not fully support them in the beginning. USAID’s presence has translated into a shifting of power brokers according to Eid during one of our many 2008 and 2009 interviews:

Where is the WRPA management now? How does the power go from the WRPA to USAID’s hand? Nowadays I don’t know who manages here or who they are.

A prime example of the changes he was referring to can be found in the WRPA’s monitoring program. In the past, any new camp construction in the desert would have been halted and/or eliminated pending official authorization; Zidane’s kitchen is an example. A camp received approval only after the Steering Committee and ASEZA agreed upon the camps location stated Eid (IS 2009). During Mahmoud Al Bdour’s managerial period, a number of Bedouin camp owners were asked to move their camps to a more suitable location while others were forced to close. Nowadays Jamal Al Zaidaneen noted that people are just building walls to stake their claim as was evident by the flurry of camp construction in 2009 (IS 2009). Al Zaidaneen and Eid agreed that there were at

least 12 illegal camps none of which had received official approval pre-construction (IS 2009). “We (WRPA) have exceeded the visitor capacity for camps” stated Al Zaidaneen (IS 2009) (Appendix 6: Photograph 11).

In effect, what has transpired, according to Eid Al Zalabiah and *Wadi Rum Horses* operator Atallah Al Swailheen, is that the established ways have been changed and an unfamiliar system has emerged (IS 2009). Atallah provided a recent example that left him baffled and concerned about the future. In 2009 he claimed that he was told by an employee at the Visitor Centre that he would have to pay four JD to the RTC for camping privileges in the protected area. He claimed:

I have never been asked this before. Ten years with this system. They can't put me in the system for Zalabiah camping. Some people are taking money and the big people get the money. I won't pay. We should all be the same. Because you are really strong you do what you want? (IS 2009).

Atallah has been operating a tour business for many years under an established system. He stated that this has changed, the management is not clear. The manager is not a strong manger. It is not the system. There is lying in the story (IS 2009).

Eid Zalabiah felt “there are people under the law” meaning that some individuals respect the Reserve’s rules and regulations while “others are over the law” meaning that they do whatever they want to do despite protected area laws (IS 2009). He explained how “some people came last week to check my camp for the license” while other individuals who have built illegally haven’t been stopped. Everyone can build camps wherever they want. No system. No Law. Now there are too many camps in the desert and it is too much

for the desert. This must be fixed by Nasser and the manager. Why not stop it before? It is not good for the future. We need more power to follow the law in the WRPA business and working (IS 2009).

It has contributed to a host of problems and competition for legitimate camp owners like Eid and his brothers who are also competing with the Ad Diseh camps. They also fear that the illegal camps are showing the WRPA in a bad light that reflects upon everyone in the area.

Attempting to clarify USAID's impact on camping, Jamal Al Zaidaneen felt that their power and influence was also facilitated by local owner-operators (IS 2009). He stated that

USAID pretends that there is something on the ground. They show Maher's camp (the model Bedouin camp) as part of their upgrading when they had done nothing. He (Maher) didn't say anything. He is part of the cooperative and maybe it works to his advantage to do this. Maybe give your share without doing anything (IS 2009).

Jamal's comment suggests that USAID claims the glory without a true dedication to the project and a genuine care for the environment and the people and that Bedouin like Maher contribute to the problems experienced by all.

HELPING OR SELF-SERVING?

Bedouin responses indicate that they felt that funding supported development agency agendas rather than offering aid and assistance to meet the needs and wants of the local communities. Aid is not for the "people" or all of the clans, but only for those connected to tourism and only for those connected to a CBO. This was evident when a male, Zawaydeh teacher wrote to USAID requesting aid in the promotion of Bedouin children's education. The e-mail

response from USAID's Office of Program Management stated:

While we strive to create employment opportunities for the local community, the visitor experience is our main concern, the ...educating students is not within the objectives of the USAID project, however, I will investigate other USAID education...that could be interested in education (PC 2007).

USAID has chosen to assist the local community in a select manner. USAID proved to be of limited effect in achieving desired results for the Bedouin, but for USAID it supported their cause. This was most obvious when the manager of the PVC, Abdel Rahman, was invited to a Jordanian conference to report on his cooperative's success as a result of USAID funding. Despite the failures of the Women's Craft Workshop and the Bedouin Life Project noted above, the manager and the PVC were hailed by USAID as successful according to Jamal Al Zaidaneen (FN Discussion 2009). This showed the lack of credibility of such self assessments.

Their successes were also highlighted on the USAID/Siyaha website. The Productive Village Women's Craft Workshop was touted as a success story:

As well as breathing economic life into the village, this support from USAID has encouraged the revival of traditional handicrafts, providing benefit to the local community, visitors and tour operators, as a result of the greater diversity of products and services (www.siyaha.org/v2/success_stories/105 accessed 2010).

In this way, the PVC remained a prime candidate for future funding endeavours.

In 2009, I was informed of USAID's plans to fund yet another PVC project; a major tourism initiative in Salhia Village.

During a 2009 discussion, Sheikh Atieg Al Swailheen explained the Bedouin's plight:

There are no big benefits from the cooperative, but we are forced to move through the cooperatives because the government and protected area laws refuse to deal with groups and representative bodies and not the individual. The rich will get richer and will continue unless it changes (IS 2009).

The Wadi Rum situation serves the funding agencies which need local agents through which to legitimate their initiatives and interventions. I personally experienced this in the fall of 2009 when I met with a USAID project manager in Amman. He spoke of the Rum Tourism Cooperative leader, Abu Yasser of Rum Village, as if he was the sole Bedouin leader. This man presented himself as someone who would not make a move without Abu Yasser's approval. This suggests that there was a deliberate effort on the funding agency to seek out a leader from whom to attain permission. At the same time he would fund Abu Yasser. It was this approach that has fuelled the power of these individuals and of the funding agencies while creating, divisiveness, suspicion and rivalry amongst other members and other CBO leaders.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have explored the relationships that exist between USAID/Siyaha and three CBOs operating in and around the WRPA. I have described how four USAID funded projects have unfolded and their implications for the cooperatives, their members, the WRPA, USAID and even the environment. A review of the various projects revealed that all showed similar flaws in their design, execution and monitoring. Bedouin and non-Bedouin accounts indicate that from 2005-2009, USAID projects have been unsustainable due to a minimal amount of time to develop them according to local needs,

standards and infrastructure. They were governed by rules and regulations designed by outsiders with little if any local input. The projects lacked meaningful consultation whereby a large portion of the funding went to outside consultants not locals. Funding paid for facilities that were not supportable by local people or for local infrastructure that was not adaptable to local conditions. Additionally, there were no observable accountability measures in place to stave off ill-directed funds or mismanagement, despite sometimes funding accountants as part of the project.

In terms of benefits for the Bedouin, all of the projects indicated that despite substantial quantities of USAID funding and limited training, the results have been unsatisfactory. The money spent locally did not result in dependable benefits to assist those in need for longer than the funding period, despite USAID proclamations of success. Instead, there appears to have been a pattern whereby Bedouin gave of their own time and money and made commitments of their limited resources to aid projects only to have their goodwill gestures and material offerings squandered by the project's lack of execution and management.

Similar development flaws are further explored in Chapter 7. In it the development of an Arabian Oryx Reintroduction Project is examined.

CHAPTER 7

CLOSING WADI RUMMAN: THE HUMAN DIMENSION OF WILDLIFE TOURISM

INTRODUCTION

In 2006, the WRPA's Arabian Oryx Reintroduction Project sought to remove Bedouin from a section of one of the most important wadis in the protected area to establish an enclosure for a small herd. The chosen site, Wadi Rumman, had been a prime livestock grazing area for some families and a principle transportation route and home for others. It was part of the Swailheen clan's historical rangelands. But the project's closing of this area has had serious cultural, spiritual and livelihood repercussions for the local Bedouin. Its closure also challenges established conservation protocols primarily going against the commitment to allow Bedouin to continue living inside the protected area.

Extended drought conditions from the 1960s until today, as explained in Chapter 2, have resulted in the near disappearance of nomadic pastoralism as a primary livelihood strategy in the Wadi Rum region. This dramatic shift was further enhanced by the adoption of sedentary living. But for some Bedouin the abandonment of nomadic pastoralism was not accepted. Even with the inauguration of the WRPA in 1998, some families continued to live off their ancestral lands making a living from their animals. These individuals constituted a select group, who in general were older, had some wealth in livestock and maintained an emphatic longing to practice a valued way of life. But for some Swailheen, Al Enezah and Gedman the decision to close Wadi Rumman for the

reintroduction of Arabian Oryx meant that these individuals could no longer access the area they continued to use as their home (Appendix 7: Map 1).

In this chapter I will examine the human dimension of the Arabian Oryx Reintroduction Project. Commentaries will highlight the effects of this decision on individuals who had previously accessed the area, on the landscape as well as on the Swailheen clan's historical connections to this wadi. Bedouin responses will also show how new paradigms of inclusion and participation have been put into practice by the developers.

THE ARABIAN ORYX REINTRODUCTION PROJECT

Bedouin tribes of the Arabian Peninsula have historically held the Arabian Oryx⁵⁴ or *Oryx Leucoryx* in high esteem. They were admired for their agility, beauty and grace. This deference has been immortalized in Bedouin poetry, which continues to be a part of their oral tradition to this day.

The Arabian Oryx were once abundant in the Wadi Rum area according to many Bedouin I have interviewed over the years (IS 2002; 2005; 2007). Although revered, local clansmen considered them to be a stock animal for food. Hunting the wild antelope was a strategy that allowed the Bedouin to save some of their livestock animals from slaughter. But over time and with an extended drought overhunting occurred along with the decline in browse due to the low moisture, resulting in the species extinction from the area during the 1960s (IS 2002; 2005). For the Hashemite Kingdom as in other Arabian countries, a

⁵⁴

Also known as the White Oryx.

proliferation of sport hunting by wealthy foreigners and national elites contributed to the near depletion or extinction of this wild species by the 1970s.

In 1978 a concerted effort was initiated by the RSCN to reintroduce Arabian Oryx back into some of their former habitats in the Kingdom. A small herd of eleven animals was released into Shaumari Nature Reserve in north-eastern Jordan by the RSCN in 1978 (Harding: 2007). By 1983 the herd had grown to thirty-one animals. By 1997 its numbers were well beyond Shaumari's carrying capacity. To ease the escalating pressure, the RSCN relocated some of the animals to other locations within Jordan and to other Middle Eastern countries. In 2002, ten Arabian Oryx were released into a remote section of the WRPA (see Chapter 3).

Unlike the success witnessed at Shaumari Nature Reserve, the WRPA relocation was unsuccessful. By 2006 all but two of the original ten Oryx had died. The WRPA's Nature Conservation Division Head, Jamal Al Zaidaneen, provided speculation about the loss to the *Jordan Times*, either they fell over heights or (it was) simply due to the difference between Wadi Rum and Shaumari environment and climate (Namrouqa in the *Jordan Times* 2008).

The Bedouin I interviewed in Wadi Rum held a different opinion. They claimed that the protected area personnel were misguided in their approach, releasing the animals into an area that did not support the animal's dietary needs while having less than life-sustaining moisture levels (IS 2002; 2005; 2007). One former Reserve employee said in retrospect that the project had resembled "setting up a

zoo or an Oryx exhibition,” meaning that it had little to do with conservation and more to do with tourism or the RSCN’s desire to expand a pet project (FN 2010).

In 2006, a decision was made to re-reintroduce another herd of Arabian Oryx into the WRPA. With approval from ASEZA and its Environmental Commissioner at the time, Dr. Bilal Al Bashir, an agreement was signed with the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD) from the United Arab Emirates (UAE). According to H.E Mohammed Ahmed Al Bowardi Secretary General of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council and Managing Director of EAD:

.....reintroducing the Arabian Oryx into its natural habitats in Jordan is part of the UAE's efforts to conserve this species. The species is not only endangered but also an important part of the Arabian Peninsula's heritage (www.ead.ae/ accessed 2009).

The project received \$1.19 million from the Crown Prince after whom the H.H Sheikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Arabian Oryx Reintroduction Project was named (www.ead.ae/ accessed 2009).

The developers and funders had high expectations for a successful re-introduction. This second attempt would differ from the first in several ways: the Oryx would be released in another location within the protected area as will be discussed below; the herd would come from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), constituting another blood line⁵⁵; and the project would be under the auspices of ASEZA, the WRPA and the Abu Dhabi Environment Agency of the UAE (FN 2010).

⁵⁵ There was some speculation by protected area staff that the 2002 herd had been sickly prior to arriving in Wadi Rum.

The project would consist of three successive phases over a three year period. The first phase included the release and adaptation of the twenty head from the UAE. In 2007, eight male and twelve female Oryx were released into a closed, fenced section of Wadi Rumman inside the WRPA (Appendix 7: Map 1; Photograph 1). Al Zaidaneen stated that the length of time needed for them “to adapt to their new environment, climate and plants” would depend upon the animals (Namrouqa in the Jordan Times 2008). Once they were thriving, a satellite monitoring system would be installed prior to their release from the enclosure (Al Zaidaneen FN 2010). The second phase would see the monitoring of their unrestrained movements within the protected area by the trained “Oryx Rangers.” Upon the successful completion of this phase, an additional forty animals from the UAE will be released into the Reserve.

In addition to the reintroduction and rehabilitation of the Arabian Oryx, according to the WRPA’s 2009 director Khalil Abdullat, the pilot project is the first to be implemented in the Middle East and is expected to help boost the Reserve’s tourism revenues (www.ead.ae/ accessed 2009). Unlike the RSCN’s attempt in 2002, this project was planned from the beginning to add a tourism element for anyone interested in seeing an iconic wildlife species. Increased tourism revenues were touted by Abdullat as a socio-economic benefit that would “help local residents start income-generating projects to improve their living standards” (ibid.). He did not elaborate on how this would be accomplished.

ESTABLISHING A NEW LOCATION

The reintroduction of a locally extinct species was part of the WRPA's foundational conservation plans according to Jamal Al Zaidaneen. He stated that "part of the WRPA's management plan is to develop and renovate habitats and reintroduce floral and faunal species" (FN 2010). Due to the deaths of eight of the ten Oryx reintroduced in 2002 and to ensure a more successful outcome the second time around, a new location within the protected area was deemed necessary. This decision was a "technical decision" based on environmental management (Al Zaidaneen FN 2010). The WRPA team examined a number of potential sites using a set of criteria:

1. Adequate space for an enclosure
2. Removed from proximity to tourism vehicles
3. Vegetation type
4. Quality of vegetation
5. Quantity of vegetation (Al Zaidaneen FN 2010)

Also factored into the decision were the Bedouin clans whose rangelands these proposed sites were located. This consideration took into account the number of individuals and families living in an area, the number of grazing animals and whether the area was a thoroughfare (Al Zaidaneen FN 2010).

After evaluating all of the proposed sites, Al Zaidaneen declared that "the best option technically was Wadi Rumman", an area recognized as the ancestral rangelands for the Swailheen clan (FN 2009). Until this time the details of the project had been established without any Swailheen input according to those interviewed (IS 2009). More specifically, Bedouin families living in the wadi had not been included in any discussion nor had they been approached by any

Reserve employee (FN 2009). But due to new approaches in conservation development, local inclusion was now expected to be part of such processes. After the decision to close this important area was made, the results were presented to the Swailheen sheikh, Sheikh Ali, by the manager of the reintroduction project, Mahmoud Al Bdour, for the sheikh's approval, but only his approval according to informants.

For Sheikh Ali the decision was not a simple one. He had to weigh a number of factors before giving his consent (IS 2009). Firstly, he perceived that there would be a “big advantage for closing the area because it was subjected to people cutting trees and getting wood”:

Laura: Why close Rumman?

Sleman Zalabiah (Interpreter): But there is no investment for you guys?

Sheikh Ali: In 1952 my father died. (Before his passing he) told us about trees 400 years old (in Wadi Rumman). I went hunting with a guy from Rumman in 1952 and caught 9 rabbits. You could find rabbits and many ibex in mountains and gazelle (Oryx) with 10-20 in a group there. Now people are putting ropes on trees and cutting them. Now we are good and relaxed because Wadi Rumman is closed (IS 2007).

In his estimation, Wadi Rumman's environment would benefit from this decision because wood collection and hunting would stop as a result of the closure.

Secondly, he felt that his cooperation would be viewed as a

strong point for more employment....Considering the recent situation here (lack of employed members) and the low number of livestock, I didn't consider the closing of Rumman and banning of any grazing as a big influence (problem) because they (Swailheen Bedouin) already lost their herds and their great dependence upon herding (IS 2007).

He believed that if he complied with the project the Swailheen clan would receive employment in return. He stressed that the success of the project and

“the sacrifice will create jobs” (IS 2007). He could foresee more rangers being needed to tend to the growing Oryx herd. He also claimed that there were no Swailheen practicing pastoralism in Wadi Rumman, therefore its closure did not carry the same weight as if there had been someone or a family living in its midst.

Laura: What about people with goats and sheep who go through there?

Sheikh Ali: There are no Swailheen with goats and sheep. Everyone with goats and sheep have them here (in Salhia Village) now.

Laura: Who are they then?

Sheikh Ali: People from Rashdiyyah, Dbour, Queryira (IS 2007).

This would prove not to be the case. Although he acknowledged that he was aware that people from other clans continued to access the wadi, he gave his consent to close it.

During an interview with the sheikh in 2007, a Bedouin interpreter stated what he believed to be Sheikh Ali’s rationale for agreeing to the closure. He felt that to secure the leader’s approval both the manager of the project and the ASEZA commissioner made promises that would benefit his family:

They (WRPA) told him (Sheikh Ali) what they wanted Rumman for. They talked to the sheikh in a special way. They told the sheikh “we will make more business for you and make jobs for your sons” (IS 2007).

One aspect of seeking his approval would be that his family would receive employment. Sheikh Ali’s eldest son and newly appointed head of the Swailheen clan, Sheikh Abu Yousef⁵⁶, was one of many Swailheen elders who opposed the closure in 2007. He felt that the wadi was an important tourist draw

⁵⁶ In 2009, Sheikh Abu Yousef was the official Swailheen sheikh although his father, Sheikh Ali, remained a key negotiator for the Swailheen clan. Both men are called Sheikh.

for the Swailheen clan as a whole and could have been used in other ways. “The biggest disadvantage for the Swailheen is that we will lose our advantage for tourism” claimed the new sheikh (IS 2007). It was his position that Wadi Rumman offered

opportunity and promise for our tourism in that area. It is perfect for recreation, for growing and for taking families to (visit) (IS 2007).

But with the closure, future tourism initiatives would be blocked and there would be no benefit for any of the clansmen.

Of greatest concern for many of the Swailheen were their historical, cultural and spiritual connections to this landscape. Wadi Rumman is part of the Hwaitat ancestral territory. It has historically been recognized as belonging to the Swailheen where previous generations had survived on its plentiful resources. According to Shakriyyah Village’s Sheikh Atieg Al Swailheen, it is not just our recreation site, but it also represents our heritage because most of our grandfathers’ places and storage areas are located there (IS 2009).

Their ancestors built storage areas or enclosures into the sides of mountains or in crevices to store their goods as they moved throughout their lands. Many also built wells or dams for their families and livestock that continued to serve as reliable sources of water in 2009. It is also a sacred place where loved ones and ancestors were buried. It “resembles Mecca for the Swailheen” according to Sheikh Abu Yousef (IS 2009). Its closure would be irreverent.

Despite the opposition from other clansmen, Sheikh Ali gave his approval for the project to move forward. In 2006, the WRPA team began the process of

closing the wadi by embarking on the long and arduous task of erecting wire fencing around the delineated area. With heights of approximately 7-9 feet, fencing stretched from one side of the wadi to the other at both the northern and southern ends (Appendix 7: Photograph 2). Mountain ranges bordering the eastern and western sides running parallel to one another provided a natural deterrent for ibex movements and for predators or humans wishing to gain access.

During the building phase, the few Bedouin living in the area in addition to those accessing it were permitted entry. It was not until near completion in 2007 that they were advised, according to Al Zaidaneen, that they would have to leave (FN 2010). With the last wire panel in place a moratorium on access prohibited residents, pastoralists and other travelers from entering an area that had for centuries been available to the Bedouin.

CONSEQUENCES OF DENIED ACCESS

Until 2007, pastoralism for the Gedman⁵⁷, Al Enezah and Swailheen had meant life in Wadi Rumman. Whether it be erecting their tents in its midst, grazing their herds on its grasses or accessing its water sources there had been a continuous Bedouin presence. For individuals such as Nasser Eid the decision to close the wadi was “bad” (IS 2007). Even Sheikh Abu Yousef lamented, “It contains our history and our heritage and now we are banned from it” (IS 2009). According to him, cultural and familial losses are priceless, “It is our storage and

⁵⁷ Although Wadi Rumman is recognized as Swailheen ancestral lands, some Gedman and Al Enezah clansmen accessed the area regularly.

was our grandfather's storage and where we grew wheat" (IS 2007). The inference is one of ownership and longstanding Bedouin entitlement to the resources located in the wadi in addition to a Bedouin historical and cultural attachment.

But beyond the emotional and spiritual losses incurred by the closing has been the physical dismantling of established lifeways by human displacement.

Families who once lived in the wadi were forced to relocate to other areas.

Tammam Sleiman Al Enezah, a poor, young mother with one son, exposed how this decision has affected her family and her kinsmen:

I had to stop going to Wadi Rumman. When they first made that project they kicked the people out of that area and until now they stopped letting people take their sheep and goats (IS 2009).

The implications of denied access for her animals meant breaking from an established way of life and close proximity to a reliable source of natural browse for her animals.

One of the hardest hit was 53 year old Salahy Hassan Gasm Al Swailheen. Despite Sheikh Ali's declaration that there were no Swailheen clansmen living in Wadi Rumman, the loss of access to the wadi has had a devastating effect upon this Swailheen clansman and his family. The locked enclosure prohibited his entry into the only home he has ever known:

I used to live in Rumman. For my whole life – more than 50 years. I was born there. I have nine children and they used to live as Bedouin in Rumman. We used good lands and in good years we grew cereals for our use and our animals. I was forced to get out of the gate (enclosure) (IS 2009).

Once removed, Salahy had no choice but to find another site to set up camp for

his family and large herd (Appendix 7: Map 2 Star). His abrupt departure meant that he was unable to gather all of his belongings. Sheikh Atieg was bothered by this realization,

they (WRPA) closed the wadi with his (Salahy's) stuff in the enclosure and our (Swailheen) artifacts are still there (IS 2009).

Salahy was once considered a wealthy man in Bedouin terms due to his large herd. With his removal has come the near dissolution of a once viable livelihood as a livestock trader. Since moving he has lost many head of sheep and goats as was evident by the multiple carcasses behind his tent on the day of our interview (Appendix 7: Photo 3). His new campsite offered minimal vegetation and water in comparison to the reliability of what he had known in Wadi Rumman (Appendix 7: Photograph 4). In lieu of waiting for his herd of approximately 300 animals to all succumb to food and water deprivation, he had resorted to the Bedouin practice of selling a portion of his herd to support the remainder:

I don't know where to go. I try to seek a better place, but I don't know where to go for enough feed for my livestock. This led me to lower my livestock numbers from 350 in Rumman now to only 40-50. I do not have the financial capability to build a house or own land. Sheikh Atieg gave me land, but there is no true ownership for the land in the village so I can't build a house in the village (IS 2009).

Eventually, there will be no animals left to sell. He has found it difficult if not impossible to reclaim the life he had only a short time ago. He was unsure of what the future has in store for him. In 2009, he had not collected his belongings from inside the Oryx enclosure.

Salahy's story was echoed by a number of Gedman clansmen. Abu Salem Al Gedman lives in Rashdiyyah Village and confessed that the closing of Rumman not only bothered him, but his clansmen as well, "Rumman had water (wells) and good grasses. Now it has fences and the people are out" (IS 2007). Salem Eid Al Gedman and his family were one of two Gedman families living exclusively in Wadi Rumman at the time of the closure (IS 2007). They, like Salahy, experienced similar effects. Once self-reliant men, all were concerned about the future and those of their families.

Another significant impact was felt by those individuals who practiced pastoralism whether living in the wadi or not. Movement of livestock herds is critical to nomadic pastoralism as previously emphasized. With the last chain-link panel came the end of their movements in and out of Wadi Rumman, creating an impediment to some pastoral activities that were from outside the area. The wadi was important because the long-standing regional drought conditions increased the need for productive areas that helped to meet the animals' dietary needs. Those affected have had to find alternative locations to graze their animals. Tammam Sleiman Al Enezah, who regularly grazed her animals inside Wadi Rumman, changed her route "to the fence of the enclosure and come back. Now I (most often) stay in this area" (IS 2009). The region Tammam was referring to was close to her tent. It offered more rocks than vegetation for her animals (Appendix 7: Photograph 5).

With advancing age, many of the pastoralists are limited by their inability

to walk to new areas therefore hindering their herds' grazing capabilities. The animals are forced to eat the limited natural browse within close proximity of their owner. Salahy, for example, said that he "tak(es) the animals around Wadi Sons of Hussein," which lacked natural browse (IS 2009). This contributed to overgrazing and an inadequate diet for his animals. Salahy and others like Tammam were forced to purchase supplemental feed to keep their animals alive. This was an unexpected side-effect that these individuals could ill afford, but were forced to accept.

With the closing of the *wadi*, the vegetation within the enclosure's confines grew lush. Tammam, also known as Um Sultan, commented, "There are places in the Reserve area that have good grass because goats and sheep are not allowed to go there. The Oryx has a special place. These places are full of grass now (IS 2009) (Appendix 7: Photograph 6).

The realization that the grass within the area the Bedouin once used was luxuriant while their new grazing areas offered little vegetation and contributed to livestock deaths was difficult for the Bedouin to accept. Despite "the Oryx having the best place for our sheep and goats" Um Mohammed Al Enezah, an elderly woman who with her late husband Sleiman (see Chapter 6) maintained a large herd, admitted that "if we could use it we would like to use it" (IS 2009). I witnessed firsthand the abundant vegetation inside the fenced enclosure compared to the sparse vegetation on the outside.

Another significant implication of the closure has been the loss of a reliable water source. Before the drought, goats and sheep needed to be watered

every 2-3 days during the summer months (IS 2002). They were watered less often during the spring and winter due to climactic conditions and the moisture found in new, spring grass (IS 2002; 2005; 2007). With an extended drought and supplemental feed, animals nowadays need to be watered daily due to the high fibre content in the feed (FN 2002, 2005, 2007). The Bedouin were able to meet these needs in Wadi Rumman by finding water between rocks, in manmade dams or in wells and cisterns. For Salahy water in Wadi Rumman meant that his herd thrived:

When I was in Rumman, I had a well, some dams and an old well more than 40 meters in the ground. We used to save water from rain and pull the water out from it for our use (IS 2009).

Being denied access to these sites has had catastrophic repercussions as was evident by the livestock carcasses I witnessed behind Salahy's tent. Some families were relying upon family members living in surrounding villages to bring them water. Others resorted to traveling great distances to retrieve water from natural sites or purchased it from neighbours; an added expense. With his removal, Salahy tried to locate new sources of water for his herd and for his family, but was unsuccessful. The once resilient, self-sufficient man relied upon the kindness of others:

Now water comes by car...from people for free...usually my relatives in the village give me water they pay for from Rashdiyyah (Village) (IS 2009).

The reintroduction project also affected those who were using Wadi Rumman as a transportation route, not just a migration route. The fences prohibited any passage through the wadi. When asked if the closing was good

for the Bedouin, the late Sleiman Al Enezah who was mentioned in Chapter 6 said, “No. Forget the animals. Now we have to go around to see our family” (IS 2007). Similarly, Nasser Eid Al Swailheen, a 75 year old man who spent most of his life in the desert, and his family now travel to Titn Village by going out of their way through Rum Village or Rashdiyyah Village (IS 2007) (Appendix 7: Map 3). Dbour clansmen also noted their dissatisfaction with the wadi’s closure because they historically travelled from their lands located further south through Wadi Rumman to more northerly locations. Extra fuel is needed to travel these distances. This has created a new and unexpected expenditure for Bedouin who were already struggling.

Also affected by the project’s decision to close the wadi were local tourism entrepreneurs. Owner-operator Atallah Sabbah is a Swailheen clansman who owns a local horseback riding company as mentioned in the preceding chapter. His tours prior to the closure included passages through Wadi Rumman enroute to more southerly locations in the protected area. These routes by-passed the heavy traffic sites such as Rum Village providing a more natural experience for his clients. After the closure, he, like his fellow clansmen, had to discover alternative routes adding extra costs to his business and to his tourists (IS 2009).

SYSTEMMATIC FLAWS: EXCLUSION, SELECTIVE INCLUSION AND IGNORING EFFECTS

Following the old saying, “actions speak louder than words,” the process of Wadi Rumman’s closure revealed much about how the WRPA operates. Most stunning was how developers paid little or no regard to the local population

throughout the development of this project. The manner by which the WRPA and ASEZA included certain individuals while excluding others highlights a significant flaw in development and conservation management. The only person that mattered was the head man, Sheikh Ali. Project managers and ASEZA representatives targeted only his approval for the wadi's closure. Salahy suggested that this was a common response in Bedouin communities, usually when someone comes to see about our (Bedouin) life they go to the sheikh and the sheikh usually gives the brilliant side of our life so that the person can support the sheikh and his family (IS 2009).

Promised benefits help to explain secretiveness and personal agendas. Sheikh Atieg felt that Sheikh Ali had given away what belonged to all of the Swailheen in exchange for his family's financial reward:

..... originally the agreement was between Dr. Bilal and Sheikh Ali in a secretive way. He (Dr. Bilal) gave him (Sheikh Ali) a lot of promises to get a lot of benefits for himself....(IS 2009).

Sleman Al Zalabiah referred to this strategy when attempting to explain the sheikh's compliance, as noted above.

Securing the sheikh's approval may have been deemed respectful by upper management, but many of the Bedouin felt that the closing of Wadi Rumman was not Sheikh Ali's decision to make. Salahy felt that the Reserve made an agreement with Sheikh Ali for the project for Salhia Village and (it was) not his right to give his permission for this (IS 2009).

In this sense, Salahy believed that the sheikh was no longer the supreme ruler of clan society. In the past, the head man held broad power, but today this role has been restricted by governments and contemporary society. Sheikh Atieg

explained,

It is not the same as what it was in the past. Sheikhs do not have the same authority or respect. Today they are figure heads more than anything else (IS 2002; 2009).

Therefore, the project managers were either adhering to historical ways out of respect, duty or habit or they sought to meet the expectation of increased inclusion by seeking a singular participant expecting that they would be able to persuade the sheikh.

Ease of influence by governmental bodies could also be explained by a weakness in the clan. For many decades there has been a significant rift between those clan members living in Shakriyyah and Salhia villages. This Sheikh Atieg felt provided opportunity for exploitation by ASEZA and the WRPA:

Our fragmentation makes us suitable for those unfair decisions from the government. If we had a single word it wouldn't be dealt with this way but because there are some people who gain private benefits from that we cannot do anything from that (IS 2009).

As those directly affected indicated above, from the project's beginning in 2006 until the winter of 2009 the clansmen and women were blatantly ignored by ASEZA and the WRPA. Their exclusion had become such a recognized element of development that when given the opportunity to speak for himself as part of my research, Salahy was shocked, "This is from the rare times that some people come to interview us," meaning that his opinion mattered (IS 2009). The thoroughness of their exclusion was most evident in how individuals were notified of the wadi's impending closure. Notification came late in the process ultimately leaving these individuals and their families confused and dismayed by

what was happening to them. For community elders such as Sheikh Atieg,

it was so shocking for us to find out we were banned from the area. It was like what is happening between Israel and Palestine, but in a more civilized way. Rumman resembles our memories so they basically stole our memories. That was so shocking for us (IS 2009).

Salem Eid Al Gedman reported that he had been informed by the head ranger, Ali Sleiman Al Swailheen and Mahmoud Al Bdour, but not until after the project had been put into motion (IS 2007). He was given one week to leave the wadi.

Nasser Eid was equally frustrated by the closure:

Laura: Were you asked about the closure?

Nasser Eid: This is your land and you are banned from there. I am against this law. You grow up there and at the end of your life you get kicked out.

Mahmoud Al Bdour said it was okay to close it. The people in the village opened the door for this, but in the end it remains closed (IS 2007).

Salahy concurred:

They didn't consult me or let me know in advance they were establishing an enclosure while I was living there. They didn't even give me the time to complain or write anything and suddenly I was outside the enclosure with the contractor. It was obligatory for me to leave and I did not want to make any problems (IS 2009).

The late Sleiman Al Enezah who frequented the wadi with his animals reported that no one from the protected area spoke to him, "No. Only Sheikh Ali Al Swailheen" (IS 2007).

These comments challenge the principles and the ethics upon which the WRPA was established. Those affected by the Arabian Oryx Reintroduction Project could have been consulted by their leaders and by the project team prior to the closure of Wadi Rumman.

By 2007, Sheikh Ali was beginning to feel a sense of betrayal by those

who had made promises. His support for the closure of Wadi Rumman had not resulted in benefits as he had anticipated. He explained the lack of manager's commitment to be forthright in its objectives during a 2007 discussion:

Sheikh Ali: They lied to me and didn't do anything. They point and then break their word in ten minutes.

Laura: If you know this is the pattern why do you keep agreeing?

Sheikh Ali: I didn't know they lied to the Zalabiah (another clan that had been "helped.").

Laura: When did you find out?

Sheikh Ali: When I went to them and said I have people to work and they said yes and then (they) lied to me.

Laura: How long ago was that?

Sheikh Ali: Approximately two years ago. I put my big name on the line in red. You lied to me.

Laura: What are you scared of? What would happen to you?

Sheikh Ali: I don't care. They (WRPA and ASEZA) lied to me from the start to the end. I don't care. If they lie to us it is because there is no money. I am always saying the truth. And if anyone says, "Is this the truth?" they can come to me and I will tell them the truth. I think the work in Salhia is good because the Bedouin are working for themselves (IS 2007).

Recognizing that Sheikh Ali should not be held solely responsible for the *wadi's* closure, many of the Swailheen Bedouin also placed blame on the shoulders of Dr. Bilal Al Bashir, the ASEZA commissioner who provided his approval at the time of signing. In 2007, Sheikh Sabbah Al Gedman, the hereditary Gedman clan leader, conveyed his displeasure with the lack of action by ASEZA:

Laura: Do you have lands inside the WRPA?

Sheikh Sabbah Al Gedman: Yes, in Rumman, Marsad and Rum. They (mahmiah) take land and Emran land. They gave a job to one Emran.

Laura: The Reserve is supposed to help people whose lands are in Wadi Rum, did you receive help?

Sheikh Sabbah: No.

Laura: What have you done about it?

Sheikh Sabbah: I went to Dr. Bilal one year ago and asked him for help with jobs. He said yes we will give them to you. Agriculture jobs. I went many times to see him.

Laura: Have you given up?

Sheikh Sabbah: Yes. Dr. Bilal always says he will come, but it doesn't work out.

Laura: Did you receive any compensation?

Sheikh Sabbah: No, no (IS 2007).

Again this is striking because Dr. Al Bashir had authority over the WRPA and according to the Bedouin did little to assist those asking for help. As per the sheikh's comment and others, the commissioner made many promises that remain unfulfilled⁵⁸. The people directly affected by this project felt that their concerns fell on deaf ears. Salahy claimed that he informed both of the

Swailheen sheikhs of his situation. He was told that they:

wrote a complaint to the Reserve and asked for official help from Dr. Bilal. They didn't support me with anything. The sheikhs didn't help. Nobody helped me. I just sold around 40 out of 300. Most of my livestock have died (IS 2009).

During a conversation regarding changes to the environment, Nasser Eid revealed his assessment of the current state of affairs including his complaints:

Laura: Has mahmiah improved the desert conditions?

Nasser Eid Al Swailheen: They protect nature, but they control tree cutting which is not good. They closed Wadi Rumman. They put the Oryx in one corner, fenced and gave the Reserve a road to control the land.

Laura: Have you told anyone about your concerns?

Nasser Eid: I told Dr. Bilal and Mahmoud, but nobody listened to me (IS 2007).

The sheikh and other clansmen felt powerless in this regard.

According to those interviewed, lying was only part of what disturbed the Bedouin clansmen. The effects of denied access have not been acknowledged by

⁵⁸ I tried on numerous occasions to interview Dr. Bilal Al Bashir in 2007. The one time I made contact he directed me to talk to Mahmoud Al Bdour although I requested a meeting with him specifically.

the authorities nor had anything constructive been done to reimburse or compensate them for the life-altering losses caused by the *wadi*'s closure. Even though this in itself would not remove the sense of loss, they emphasized its importance during many discussions. Sheikh Ali shared his frustration with the developers' lack of compensation:

Laura: Did you get money for the Oryx?

Sheikh Ali: They didn't give us anything.

Laura: Rent money?

Sheikh Ali: No. Nothing. ASEZA is strong. They closed Rumman and they talked with me and asked. I gave Mahmoud permission (IS 2009).

Nasser Eid confirmed that no one received compensation for their losses (IS 2007). Likewise for Salahy, "there was no compensation from the Reserve" (IS 2009). Sheikh Atieg felt robbed:

(There was) no compensation (for the clan)but we (the Swailheen) lost Rumman and our own breathing site (IS 2009).

He felt that the loss was two-fold - land and government assistance:

Sheikh Ali sacrificed a good relationship with Dr. Bilal. Now we have lost Dr. Bilal and our lands. This is not only my opinion wherever you go (people say this) and nobody consulted us they were working in the enclosure and everyone will tell you this (IS 2009).

Before his passing Sleiman Al Enezah, who was part of *Bedouin Life* highlighted in Chapter 6, revealed that *mahmiah* or the Reserve had promised him a house if he moved because "the Bedouin sleep in caves during the wintertime. My cave is in the area designated for the Oryx" (IS 2007). Despite abject poverty, Sleiman did not receive a house nor did he benefit as promised from the *Bedouin Life Project*. Now deceased, his widow lives in a tent barely

making ends meet as previously noted.

On the day of Salahy's 2009 interview, I was accompanied by Jamal Al Zaidaneen. Salahy shared his detailed accounting of the aftermath of the conservation development decision with us. Jamal and I joined Salahy as he pointed out the many livestock carcasses that lay wasting in the *wadi* behind his tent. Salahy commented that "they didn't offer anything to me" referring to employment opportunities or money because

they thought I was still rich because I had a lot of animals in Rumman. But not now because I don't have my source of livelihood. I used to be a livestock raiser, but no longer (IS 2009).

While making this disclosure, one of his goats was taking its last breath only a few feet away from where we were talking. Salahy, obviously distracted by the animal's death cries, as were Jamal and I, continued by noting that,

some of my animals are threatened by starving and I do not have enough money to feed them. I am thinking of quitting the whole story (IS 2009).

He claimed that

they give us a very big reason for the Oryx project to give us big benefits. Mahmiah will not let me register my 2 wheel (vehicle) so I am the biggest loser in this (IS 2009).

As we drove away, Jamal, who had participated in selecting Wadi Rumman as the new Oryx site, was noticeably disturbed by what he had just experienced. Until this moment, he had no understanding of how the project had affected Bedouin like Salahy. Salahy's declaration revealed unrequited promises and a lack of commitment to help someone who was not only displaced but was in genuine need of financial assistance. He was not looking for handouts. He

had a two-wheel drive vehicle that could have been used to drive tourists through the desert as part of the jeep rotation out of the Visitor Centre. But because his vehicle was not a four-wheel drive the protected area would not permit him to register in the rotation. He felt that he should have been offered assistance to buy a 4-wheel jeep or be employed as a ranger or even an Oryx ranger. Al Zaidaneen realized that there had been a lack of integrity by the project, “If you take something away from the Bedouin you must give something back” he stated as we drove away from Salahy’s tent (FN 2010). He claimed that ASEZA did “not play a positive role in this regard. They block anything to do with budgetary requests” indicating that financial compensation was not supported (FN 2010).

By 2009, five Swailheen men were employed as Oryx rangers. Sheikh Abu Yousef was one of them. But for Sheikh Atieg this was no justification for the clan’s loss, in fact it supported his original comments,

Sheikh Ali only got promises with no benefits. Just the small benefits for his son in the project. But the benefit cannot be compared to the loss of the whole wadi (IS 2009).

His grief was still undeniable:

when I pass by Rumman there is a piece of my liver broken and I cannot restore it. It is emotionally hard. And what makes it more difficult for us is that we haven’t gained anything from this big loss, no compensation (IS 2009).

Salahy, who lived his entire life in Wadi Rumman and lost so much, was not one of the employees, neither was Tammam or any of the Gedman.

CONCLUSION

The decision to close Wadi Rumman remains controversial. The scientific, technical and top-down approach of the Arabian Oryx Reintroduction Project orchestrated through ASEZA and the WRPA lacked cultural and human merit. Evidence shows that the objectives of its developers superseded the rights, needs and intended benefits for the local Bedouin. This challenges the WRPA and ASEZA's concepts of Bedouin inclusion and participation in decision-making and planning. Consultation, notification and compensation were virtually non-existent. In essence, the Bedouin profiled in this chapter considered themselves to be excluded from the process from beginning to end despite selective inclusion by the project leaders.

At its very core this case study shows how the policy changes that claimed to accommodate Bedouin residence in and participation in the WRPA were never fully implemented and have been ignored by governing bodies, the protected area and even the local sheikh. The diverse reactions from tribal leaders illustrate how for some financial benefits were more important than continued access to an historical landscape. As the project developed no significant benefits emerged, even after repeated complaints. What did surface were the human costs, frustrations and anger at this process and its effects.

A review of all of the development decisions and their effects is the focus of the following chapter. In it I challenge the successful adaptation of development paradigms at the WRPA according to the views expressed by the intended Bedouin beneficiaries.

CHAPTER 8 BEHIND THE VOICES: REVIEWS AND CONCLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters, four key development decisions and projects to implement those decisions were investigated to understand how each one independently and cumulatively affected local people, how they responded and how they understood these development processes. Local experiences and evaluations reflect viewpoints that contrast with those which funding organizations and developers offer. Bedouin knowledge shows that the promulgation of practices that were supposed to promote local participation and inclusion did not systematically seek to accomplish these goals or to understand the impact these decisions and projects have on intended beneficiaries and the local environment.

In this chapter I review the findings discussed in previous chapters and examine their significance. I review how despite some positive comments about conservation and Visitor Centre employment, the majority of Bedouin are not satisfied with a decade of external intervention. My review indicates that they had minimal involvement in the planning, execution and maintenance of these diverse decisions and projects, how the Hwaitat and Al Enezah clans of the Wadi Rum area developed a distinct and critical understanding of the WRPA's development and how they reject the needy, impoverished and desperate images of them used to legitimize external intervention. Using Bedouin knowledge, I

provide insight into how the WRPA project could have been more beneficial if the intended beneficiaries, the Bedouin clans, had been fully involved.

REVIEW OF THE FOUR DEVELOPMENT DECISIONS & PROJECTS

In terms of the WRPA, the mixing of a spectacular landscape and intriguing history with an indigenous population during a period of a “safer” Middle East was the perfect setting for national and international investment. Developing the Wadi Rum region was heralded as an opportunity for success for all involved. But as the responses to the four development cases have illustrated there continues to be a clear disconnection between what is perceived to be productive, helpful and in the best interest of intended beneficiaries and the outcomes needed by administrative and funding agencies. This is the case even where the focus on local residency and participation are formally acknowledged and past errors of exclusion are recognized and said to be changing (for similar findings see also Escobar 1994; Ferguson 1994; Chatty 2002).

LEAVING THE LOCALS IN THE VILLAGE

The decision to allow a functioning, thriving Bedouin community to remain inside the WRPA must be examined using Bedouin local knowledge. The decision was shown to have been either naïvely or ingenuously conceptualized and implemented. Bedouin responses indicate that this decision lacked a complete understanding of the local inhabitants, their ways, their history and how they would respond to protected area governance and to a lack of substantial Bedouin involvement in planning and implementation. In addition, it

highlighted how the decision to leave Bedouin inside the protected area meant control and monitoring of their ways. The manner by which ASEZA and the WRPA managed the growth of Rum Village, most notably after the RSCN's departure, paid little attention to Bedouin life or to their knowledge.

Commentaries revealed how Bedouin needs have been ignored in the name of environmental protection, but ultimately for the benefit of administrative control and tourist requirements, and how these processes are clear to Bedouin who do not accept their legitimacy or imposition.

The protected area was started with the paradigm that Bedouin would reside in it as well as benefit from it. Rum's villagers see this commitment as being continually undermined and contradicted, and they think that the opposite is true; the authorities wish to displace them over time. This was clearly stated by local Zalabiah representative, Sheikh Abu Yasser, who in 2009 said that the Reserve's management plan was not "expansive enough for all life [people and livestock] in the villages and the outputs didn't cover the objectives from that plan" (IS 2009). He further claimed that "in general the people of Wadi Rum haven't felt any progress from the plan" (IS 2009).

One of the most discussed and disconcerting issues for Rum's villagers pertained to the limitations put on the size of their village. Natural growth and other factors including Bedouin values, increased wealth, multiple wives and improved healthcare have contributed to a vibrant community. Family growth has rapidly increased pre-village and pre-protected area Bedouin numbers

putting a high demand on village space to accommodate new families. Diverse Bedouin highlighted how village plots have been divided and subdivided into areas that are often too small to build upon let alone accommodate comfortable living for these growing families. This was recognized as inhumane according to ASEZA's 2009 Environmental Commissioner (FN 2009).

The villagers' need for more land has been further hindered by issues surrounding the regulation and scarcity of titled land and the resulting land claims in the village. As many Bedouin emphasized, government administrations have appropriated lands they recognized as belonging to their tribe and their respective clan based on their history in the Wadi Rum area. Restrictions placed on land ownership have collided with Bedouin customs and traditions highlighted by Rum's villagers and indicate a genuine lack of desire and understanding by developers and managers to mitigate this situation. Many Bedouin men commented on the conflicts between their understandings and lives and the government land registry practices.

Another issue to emerge from the discussions pertained to how ASEZA and protected area management implemented legislation that shaped the village. Bedouin responses indicate that village expansion outwards and even upwards has been restricted by the application of urban construction by-laws. As part of the WRPA, Rum Village is governed under ASEZA rules and regulations. Aqaba City building codes were applied to Rum although the village is a rural community within a protected area. They governed village growth and

institutionalized building permit fees that the villagers felt were ill-applied, too costly and ambiguous. The response has been a situation whereby some individuals were building out of desperation in places that were not legally recognized as theirs or outside the designated village parameters. Their responses made clear their commitment to reside in what they perceived to be their lands. The conditions in which they have to build resulted in both environmental degradation and expansion into the wadi itself. They continue to view the lands in Rum Village as theirs despite a protected area and ASEZA.

Bedouin also highlighted how the improvements to Rum Village's infrastructure have not been to their interest or liking. The village underwent a major transformation in an attempt to upgrade its shabby appearance into an aesthetically pleasing, functioning community complete with underground wiring, water pipes and street lamps with funding from a World Bank loan. These improvements may appear to be of a positive nature, but Bedouin commentaries and actions offer an alternative view and evaluation of their benefit to the local community.

Every Bedouin interviewee commented that their opinion or agreement was never sought for these village changes. The villagers questioned whether the upgrades were made for visitors to the area and as a way to hide what was inside the walls. They asked why they were not involved in the decisions and detailed planning if the improvements were for their benefit. It was implied by a Reserve employee that the changes may have been a way to utilize the last of the

World Bank STDP funding. The villagers responded to key changes in diverse ways. Walls, street lighting and speed bumps have been modified, defaced or destroyed indicating their disapproval, disrespect and possibly outrage at their removal from the decision-making that directly affects their daily living.

Many Bedouin felt that the aim of the protected area management of Rum Village has been to get them to remove themselves. Rumours, analyses of events and intuition have left many inhabitants on edge and many predict that their removal is imminent. In fact, villagers feel that the many problems they have encountered since the establishment of the Reserve have been deliberate efforts to remove them from their homes and village. Consensus has it that if the situation in the village becomes too difficult the villagers will decide to leave, seemingly of their own volition. The interviewees concluded that this was the case on the basis of analysing the various means by which the WRPA has “improved” the village, how it burdens them with new regulations and restrictions and how it repeatedly excludes Bedouin in decision-making. Allowing villagers to remain inside the WRPA but making infrastructure upgrades that did not involve local inhabitants but put obstacles in the paths of Bedouin ways of living in the village supports these fears. The needs of ASEZA-led tourism were seen by many Bedouin as deciding the fate of the village and narrowing the opportunities for them to create the village they wanted and the type of tourism that would maximally benefit them. Zalabiah leader Abu Yasser’s comments summed up his clansmen’s feelings, “they take

people out of the village to put more tourists in the village” (IS 2009).

The objective of building a secondary village to accommodate the growth of Bedouin families fed a fear among the Zalabiah clan in particular that they would be relocated against their will at any moment. This possibility is explicitly clear in review of the STDP planning documentation that indicates that a secondary village to limit the growth of Rum Village had been a key development objective since the 1990s, and even earlier according to the late Sheikh Ali Al Swailheen. World Bank documents support allegations that there was an intent to limit Rum Village prior to the Reserve’s development and that the obstacles to further development at Rum Village were planned and not a figment of Rum villagers’ imaginations (see also Chatelard 2003)

Bedouin knowledge of events does not support the 1997 World Bank document highlighting a *New Rum settlement*:

Because Rum Village has reached its full capacity for growth, consultation with the local population led to the selection of a site within Wadi Rum for a new settlement that would accommodate the population growth in the area resulting from greater opportunities in tourism (World Bank Report No. 16485-JO July 11, 1997).

The statement makes apparent the link between a new village and tourism development in Rum, even if it attributes the planning link and the initiative incorrectly to the Bedouin of Rum Village.

Distrust, anxiety and for some panic has only intensified over the years as Rum villagers recognized that surrounding Bedouin villages were undergoing a construction boom, were profiting from the sale of their lands, the Hashemite

Kingdom was providing housing for other clans' poorest residents and town services such as fire departments were being built. Rum villagers did not receive any of these benefits. These village changes and plans make clear why many Bedouin, most notably the Zalabiah, harbour ill-feelings towards the developers of their traditional homelands. Bedouin accounts repeatedly implied a lack of trust and a disconnection between the local community and the WRPA's governing bodies.

Allowing a local population to remain in their native habitat was deemed a necessary and a benevolent step forward in conservation development in Jordan, but the operational mandate to secure development objectives that promoted tourism has led to doing it in ways that have contributed to environmental degradation, impinged upon Bedouin traditions and culture and created a greater divide between Bedouin residents and developers. Evidence visibly indicates how the decision claimed to serve Bedouin did so only secondarily and that development at Wadi Rum has actually taken control of the village and village lands away from the Bedouin and put them in the hands of WRPA authorities and regional governing agencies.

THE BUILDING OF A VISITOR CENTRE

The second decision that I examined was the building of a new tourism hub to advance the development of the Reserve. A centralized area for the WRPA's administration, the World Bank funded Visitor Centre was meant to improve tourism from the viewpoint of the tourists, tourist managers and

operators, including the local Bedouin cooperatives. But according to the Bedouin responses and the state of affairs as of the fall of 2009, a new tourism hub generated more problems than it solved.

I showed that the new Visitor Centre served as a catalyst for change that resulted in the takeover of tourism within the Reserve from Bedouin by WRPA authorities. According to the men and women I spoke to, the Centre and the new tourism organization changed the local industry in several significant ways that gave Bedouin clans reason to question the role of donors, management interests and competence. It also affected the different Bedouin communities and their associated cooperatives unequally and enhanced their polarization with one another and with the WRPA specifically.

The first significant outcome was experienced by the Zalabiah clan living in Rum Village. The new hub contributed to the dissolution of their “lion’s share” of tourism benefits and the loss of some of their intensive and long-standing control in Wadi Rum’s tourism, a WRPA objective. This happened in two ways. By virtue of moving the hub seven to eight km. north of Rum Village the Rum Tourism Cooperative lost much of its control of the organization of tourism activities and the revenues many Zalabiah had become dependent upon. Secondly, the Centre, according to the WRPA plan, served to facilitate greater opportunity for other Bedouin clans residing outside of Rum Village, namely the Zawaydeh and the Swailheen.

Evidence supports that the Zawaydeh gained from the move as they were

closer to the hub than when it was in Rum Village and have become more involved due to the new WRPA tourism allocation system. The Swailheen's inclusion has increased, but they remain unsatisfied. They believe that they deserve even greater inclusion and participation. They also asserted that they were the historical owners of the land upon which the Centre was built, but have not received compensation for the appropriation of their lands, as discussed in chapters 3 and 5.

The flood of tourist camps developed outside but on the periphery of the WRPA on the Ad Diseh side was partly a response to the WRPA takeover of tourism from the earlier Bedouin and non-local operators and the building of the Visitor Centre. Bedouin camp owners in the protected area remain at a competitive disadvantage when they have to comply with building upgrades required by ASEZA and funding agencies such as USAID. They must abide by conservation rules and regulations, whereas camps outside the protected area do not adhere to these laws. Tourists who visit these latter camps do not pay entrance fees. The Zawaydeh and their cooperative have benefited from these increased operations while the Zalabiah have lost opportunities to fully benefit from the tourism expansion. Abu Rami and Hillawi's share remained strong in 2009 following the creation of Hillawi Camp.

Bedouin responses and actions indicate that the pendulum has swung to a dramatic shift in benefit distribution towards another Bedouin clan. Instead of generating greater equality between the clans, the "lion's share" of tourism now

belongs to the Zawaydeh as a result of Reserve changes, the location of the Visitor Centre and because of unplanned effects such as the creation of tourism facilities and services on the outskirts of the protected area.

The redistribution of benefits has resulted in a growth of Bedouin participants in tourism, but because tourism levels were not expanded accordingly more people working in the industry has not translated into greater benefits for all households. The new Centre has not had the desired effect of achieving higher incomes for all families and a more balanced distribution of tourism access and incomes. For the vast majority of the men their involvement in tourism remains too limited and too irregular to support their families. This issue does not appear to have been addressed in the planning for the new hub, nor did I find any systematic response by managers to these complaints of the Bedouin involved in tourism. Additionally, Bedouin commentaries indicate that *wasta*, an Arab version of nepotism, has become an unofficial method for achieving benefits for some Bedouin.

The new organization of tourism by the WRPA has been selective in its choice of beneficiaries. As of 2009, the Emran, Gedman and Dbour clans have been mostly excluded. These inequities have been another cause for increased rivalry between the clans and this is contrary to original development objectives. WRPA managers have both created and used these inequalities. They repeatedly offer opportunities unevenly in order to get planning consent from certain Bedouin by going to clan leaders and cooperative heads and offering them clan-

based benefits. The focus has been on the Zalabiah, Zawaydeh and the Swailheen clans. This serves the managers and some Bedouin, but many locals in every clan criticized the process and its effects. Evidence illustrated that greater care was taken in ensuring environmental conditions for the Centre than in addressing human costs.

Instead of being a clear benefit to development by and for Bedouin, the Visitor Centre has generated deep frustrations, divisiveness and a broad disgruntlement among the intended beneficiaries. The *Bedu* have much less control of tourism today, and the WRPA and the cooperative leaders the WRPA works closely with have the most control. Despite the anger felt by many Bedouin, there remains a willingness by some leaders to work with the WRPA administration to change things.

FUNDING AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS

The third development decision I reviewed pertained to external funding agencies. Original initiatives by the World Bank under the Second Tourism Development Project (STDP) were to “help local residents share in the benefits of tourism through income-generation activities” (STDP 1996-7). But according to the Bedouin increased socio-economic benefits have not been achieved and aid has not necessarily meant help or benefits to the intended beneficiaries.

Starting in 2005, USAID/Siyaha funding was provided to create positive economic opportunities for the local Bedouin of the Wadi Rum region, as well as create new authentic tourism tools and enhance existing services (Hindi in the

Jordan Times 2006). To achieve these goals, each funding project targeted locally based, tourism-oriented community based organizations (CBOs). The premise was that by strengthening these cooperatives the local community would benefit. But my review of CBO experiences revealed that in most cases there were systemic flaws that resonated throughout all of USAID's projects. Evidence suggests that these projects have been duplicitous in their intent and execution and that they have had adverse impacts for the Bedouin and tourism development that continues to affect local communities.

The first case that was analyzed was how the development of a Women's Handicraft Centre affected the Bedouin women it was meant to assist. The Productive Village Cooperative's Women's Handicraft Centre was established to provide local Swailheen women with greater opportunity and benefits and to profit from the protected area's development. In a 2007 e-mail from USAID's Office of Program Management, it stated:

Through our activities, we have supported over 240 jobs of which are women producing handicrafts in Wadi Rum, Salhia, Ad Diseh (FN 2007).

But upon review of an array of responses I found that the program was not sustainable and that it was only 12 women in Salhia who were helped.

The women's project also exposed how the *helper* knows what is best for the *helped*. The type of instruction the women received was based on USAID ideas regarding what was pertinent. Providing women with computer training sounds wonderful, but for illiterate women the objective serves only the helper. Actual needs were not investigated.

Another issue that emerged was USAID's limited funding period. Short term aid was proven to be insufficient to establish strong projects that were capable of sustaining themselves past the contractual one-year period. Funding provided increased income for some of the CBO recipients during the funding period. USAID's view was that after its funding the women should have been paid from the sale of their products. But one year was shown to be an insufficient time to develop local skills, to develop a product-line and to create markets among international tourists. Not one of the four CBO projects profiled was able to support itself after the funding period. In fact, the PVC closed its shop at the Visitor Centre and was not able to meet its financial obligations. Limited funding created a dependency rather than establishing independence. It fostered a need for more funding as was evident by the re-funding of projects and the desire by some Bedouin to continue to participate in the projects.

Another issue was how the funding allocated to help locally was used to support consultants and other non-local staff. The PVC was used to employ individuals from the development consulting world. In many cases where there was no individual in Salhia capable of working in these capacities, neither time nor money was put into training to create these skills locally. As a result, when funding ran out those non-locals with skills went elsewhere rather than continuing to contribute to local initiatives.

Tourism CBOs experienced similar effects. "Strengthening the Rum Tourism Cooperative," initially outlined in the WRPA Visitor Management Plan

(2003), was an important initiative during all waves of funding. The STDP and USAID financing were meant to improve the state of the CBO in order to bolster RTC member incomes from various tourism oriented endeavours. Bedouin and non-Bedouin responses suggest that their incomes have not increased as a result of these interventions and that their projects have all encountered similar problems. This was expressed by the RTC manager Abu Yasser who emphatically claimed that USAID and ASEZA had caused this CBO many setbacks. He described the problems associated with the *Big Camp Project* and how the various issues delayed its implementation and needed revenues. In addition, he shed light on how money allocated to the cooperative had been used to pay for brochures and camping supplies produced elsewhere and for an accountant from USAID. Camp improvements were put on hold while the money needed to set them up sat in limbo, blocking the projected “benefits” for the members.

An impoverishment of beneficiaries by tourism development projects happened often. Each of the case study projects I looked at showed how they drew from local people’s limited resources. When the projects ended, withdrew or just failed, they left some Bedouin less well off and sometimes the poorer participants were impoverished.

This was found at the PVC where two Bedouin families forfeited their established sites in anticipation of developing new family-level tourist camps even paying for the basic supplies they were promised, with no program follow-

up. At the end of the funding period there was no project for either of the PVC families. The project ended before entertaining one tourist. The Women's Craft Workshop was unable to support the women after the funding period and the camps to offer tourists experiences of *Bedouin Life* never materialized. The late Sleiman Al Enezah and his family lost money from their involvement with *Bedouin Life* and had become disenchanted with the cooperative and its leaders. The community lost out on the opportunity to move itself forward in its quest to find a place in the local tourism industry.

The PVC *Bedouin Life Project* also exposed the rivalry and competition that is prevalent as a result of each CBO and respective clansmen competing for a greater piece of the tourism pie. The money allocated to the various CBOs from USAID is coveted by all parties; each group thought that they deserved more than what they were currently receiving and did little or nothing to create grounds for more cooperation.

Moon Valley Cooperative's licensing required that the Bedouin camp owners make changes to renew their camping license. If they chose to participate in the project they were responsible for half of the cost for the upgrades with USAID paying the other half. But Bedouin responses indicate that they were unable to determine or negotiate the price, explore other contractor options or confirm that they were paying half. They were not happy with the final product feeling that they had been duped.

In addition, it became evident that there were little or no efforts in place to

establish the effects, whether good or bad, from the funding. Aid is beneficial because it works for the funding agencies, as was demonstrated. Aid accomplishes in their self-reporting their own goals and it legitimates their continued existence. Funding agencies need local agents through which they legitimize their initiatives and interventions.

With USAID funding channeled through cooperatives, cooperative leaders have gained power and influence in the community, as well as in more modest ways within USAID. Many Bedouin have discussed how cooperatives have provided opportunity for those in charge to benefit from aid for their own purposes at the expense of its membership. Comments from Bedouin, WRPA managers and a USAID representative revealed the power some leaders have garnered from their position as CBO leaders. The responses indicate that CBO members have become suspicious of their respective leadership. They question their intent, the allocation of benefits and their increased wealth.

The PVC brochure incident with Um Mohammed being photographed without her husband or son's approval illustrated a disturbing trend whereby lenders ignore the culture of the people they are representing. It also exposed the stratification of power and co-opting of locals wanting to participate in the USAID project. For example, I know from personal experience that the Bedouin project manager would never have allowed a group of foreigners to photograph women in his family, but he not only escorted a group to Abu Mohammed's camp but facilitated the taking of photographs of the women. USAID's

development model prioritized the production of the brochures for marketing.

Overall, external funders support for local tourism oriented projects disclosed how these agencies meet their own requirements in order to show success, maintain funding and gain influence. USAID promoted itself as having successfully aided projects locally, but it is evident from diverse discussions with Sheikh Ali, Sheikh Abu Yousef, Sheikh Atieg and Sleiman Al Enezah at the PVC and Abu Yasser from the RTC, to name some commentators, that this objective was not met.

The histories told by Bedouin participants indicate that when they committed to working with the project managers they, in numerous instances, had to dedicate their own limited resources and time to facilitating projects. In each of these instances the project drew more from the most modest or impoverished participants than it provided to them and it left them less well off. In these instances, development projects produced declining conditions for local people.

CLOSING WADI RUMMAN

The closing of Wadi Rumman was the fourth decision to be probed to better understand the relationship between external governance and enhanced benefits to local communities. Fencing an important *wadi* to accommodate a herd of Arabian Oryx sent life-altering ripples into the Swailheen, Gedman and Al Enezah clans. The decision exposed how developers and funders are still quite willing to remove local inhabitants to further their projects despite

declarations that this practice is a thing of the past.

To legitimize this decision required gaining local consent. The decision exposed how governing authorities target headmen first and sometimes exclusively despite the fact that the project affected many in the clan and diverse clans. Sheikh Ali Al Swailheen agreed to the closing in spite of the *wadi*'s deep sentimental and historical value. With nothing on the table or in writing, the sheikh allowed the project to move forward because he felt that his clan would receive increased employment as a result. But promises were not kept by managers from ASEZA and the WRPA. Sheikh Ali expressed his consternation and regrets in 2007. This indicated how control rests with the funders and regional development agencies.

Exclusion was also apparent in the team's technical evaluation of what the desired location should include. The process highlighted by Al Zaidaneen referred to scientific calculations. This type of evaluation provided the team with what they perceived to be the best results based on quantitative data (FN 2009). But technical approaches by virtue of their orientation lacked the inclusion of qualitative data such as the Bedouin's historical, cultural and spiritual involvements. My conversations with the protected area management team disclosed that they were trained in biology, agriculture, law and tourism. None were trained in social sciences or understood Wadi Rumman like the Bedouin quoted in this investigation. They knew about precipitation and fodder in the *wadi*, but not who lived there, used it and considered it home.

It takes little imagination to appreciate that the Bedouin are the experts of the Wadi Rum region, meaning that they have a long established knowledge of and ties with the environment. This knowledge base exceeds that of developers, funders and conservationists, and it provides insight into non-scientific understandings and approaches of the local environment both past and present. But this was excluded from the “technical” calculation as well as others. This does not imply that the Bedouin voice was the only voice to pay attention to in such cases, but it was certainly one that could have provided insight into environmental processes, historical conditions and cultural nuances. Local knowledge can inform developmental and scientific studies by providing alternative sources of data from those derived from non-local expertise; Al Zaidaneen learned this after our discussion with Salahy Al Swailheen when he saw for himself the unanticipated changes Salahy and his family had endured.

Issues that emerged from this development decision weighed heaviest upon those calling Wadi Rumman home. A number of families were expelled from their historical rangelands with virtually no advance notice and without regard for their personal attachments or belongings. The cost of this decision has been particularly hard on Salahy Al Swailheen’s family. His commentary suggested that no consideration was given to his historical ties to the area or his pastoral livelihood based on established grazing areas and sources of water. He was unable to find an alternative site that would provide him with what he had lost from the Reserve. This loss was also felt by Bedouin who had utilized the

area for grazing and transportation.

The decision exposed a lack of empathy and commitment to fulfill promises made by the WRPA and international decision-makers. Bedouin responses suggest that the removal of a number of Bedouin families contributed to their personal and financial losses. The affected families were essentially treated as collateral damage in achieving development conservation and tourism goals. Their commentaries indicate that there was no institutional follow-up conducted to ensure their well-being.

Lastly, Bedouin responses highlight that not one of the affected individuals, families or clans had been given compensation of any kind as of 2009. “Helping local residents start income-generating projects to improve their living standards,” as promised by the Reserve’s manager Khalil Abdullat, had not occurred at this time. In essence, the Bedouin were casualties despite their obvious efforts to assist the project to succeed.

MY CONTRIBUTIONS

The WRPA, established to protect and conserve a tract of the Eastern Hisma, as well as for Bedouin and tourist development purposes, was still a complex, multifaceted and dynamic project a decade after its inauguration. In 2009, it was riddled with diverse issues and complications not unlike those it was meant to resolve in 1998.

In this thesis I strove to establish the Bedouin views, expressed in their voices, of their understanding of these “developments” and how the project as a

whole has helped or hindered them. I focused on development from a local perspective, not from inside a project with a developer's point of view, or from the workings of the development machine (in the Ferguson sense, see 1994), but rather from those who remain on the periphery of development and are its supposed beneficiaries. Bedouin commentaries revealed *their* knowledge, individually and collectively, of the WRPA and the effectiveness and effects of its operations on the ground.

I profiled four decisions and projects that have provided clear evidence, largely from the Bedouin, on how the WRPA has not achieved its proclaimed goals or those benefits promised to the Bedouin. Diverse responses and actions from members of the seven clans, in addition to an array of other stakeholders I met and spoke to, contrast dramatically with the appraisals of the same decisions and projects by aid agencies and government officials. The failure to meet original development objectives that support local communities shows that developers and lenders' projects do not in practice serve local people, and that the latter are excluded from decision-making despite new participatory development paradigms.

In particular, I have demonstrated how decisions made in the name of development at the WRPA have had mixed and commonly adverse affects for the Bedouin beneficiaries. The investigation revealed that despite a philosophical shift in management justifications to put a priority on not relocating local people and on assuring their active involvement with

conservation and development projects at all levels, projects continue to result in a lack of involvement between project managers and intended local beneficiaries. In fact, I have shown that Bedouin inclusion was not a development objective in leaving a village inside a protected area, building a Visitor Centre, facilitating external aid grants and closing an important *wadi*. In all cases, a concerted effort to increase tourism was evident. In the pursuit of this goal, local benefits and conservation were relegated to secondary and tertiary positions.

My research also disclosed how the critical commentaries and actions by several types of participants, including some in managerial roles, first encountered in 2002 remained common throughout the subsequent seven years. Promises not fulfilled led to Bedouin feelings of betrayal and allegations of being lied to, which increased suspicion and disregard of the governing bodies and were the impetus for their mostly critical responses constituting this analysis.

Expressing a common view, Aoda Al Zalabiah said in 2009:

There needs to be a way of making it better for the Bedouin with more rights to do it ourselves and more rights for us, the Wadi Rum Bedouin (IS 2009).

Bedouin comments such as Aoda's show how inclusion, participation, local benefits and sustainability remain trendy bits of jargon woven into development tapestries and practices which serve regional governments and international funding agencies. Transparency and accountability measures in addition to an authentic and effective commitment to involve the local community at any level or during any phase of development did not occur.

The research indicates that rather than being about and for people and the environment the main decisions and practices were indicative of business strategies meant to move the Reserve further in pursuit of objectives of outside managers and an outside tourism industry that focused on increasing revenues in Aqaba where ASEZA, the manager of the WRPA, is located. Wadi Rum tourism became part of the promotion of a regional multi-stop tourism development where most tourists stayed and spent most of their time in Aqaba or Petra.

Funding agencies' self-assessments of their own good will and charity were self-legitimizing. Bedouin and some Reserve managers indicated that the tourist oriented local development projects they funded did not help Bedouin. In fact, their projects and the money they "provided" contributed to a shift in power relations interpreted by many Bedouin as the usurping of control of local tourism and lands by the WRPA.

The decisions and projects revealed how local communities are recognized for the value they add to tourism and projects rather than as partners developing and sharing mutually defined goals. "The government gets money and a picture," stated Eid Al Zalabiah, "they don't care about the locals. The government is stronger than us" (IS 2009). This reference supports the commentaries of other Bedouin who felt that ASEZA controlled the area and did not care for the Bedouin, who were seen as inconsequential, with little knowledge of or say in development matters. When Sheikh Atieg Al Swailheen

asked the question, “Why do the developers want to keep us in the past?” (IS 2007) his words exposed the presence of antiquated perceptions of Bedouin culture and of their use in promoting regional development goals. The image was noted time and again in lender documents and press releases such as this one by USAID:

The project seeks to enrich the tourism experience at Wadi Rum by taking advantage of the cultural appeal of the unique (B)edouin way of life in the desert (Hindi in the Jordan Times 2006).

In all cases, the WRPA has been most beneficial for external tourism stakeholders and some Bedouin entrepreneurs attempting to cash in on her splendour. This became clear after multiple discussions emphasized what the Bedouin perceived to be power and controls exercised by managers, ASEZA and international funding agencies. In 2007, a Zalabiah man from Rum queried, If you have the people over here and the management over there what do you have in the middle? The problems will never be fixed (IS 2007).

Sheikh Atieg referred to the management of the Reserve and ASEZA being an extension of the colonialism from the British Mandate period,

We (Bedouin) are poor. (They) use us to keep us like this for tourists. British occupiers left, but left (their) strategies (IS 2009).

This large gap between the developers and the Bedouin a decade after the protected area’s creation indicates that Bedouin were being administered *to control* as opposed to being administering *with*.

These issues have been shown to have been part of the original intervention. The RSCN, an environmental protection specialist, had to work

within conditions set by Jordan, ARA, MoTA and the World Bank, and later ASEZA, pursuing both the mandates of environmental protection and tourism development. Brand (2001) and Chatelard (2003) commented on several of the complexities. Some of the managers involved sought to advance conservation and local development goals with serious intent and some modest successes during this time. Their work helped to bring some benefits to local people and the environment, but they had little effect on regional or national agency decision-making most notably from 2003 onwards. Their staff offered some of the critical statements quoted throughout previous chapters, as was indicated by notes on the speakers' employment and positions. They provided evidence, as did the Bedouin, which supports a shift in managerial strategy from 2003 onwards. It was at this time that ASEZA's economic interests crystallized as tourism precedence further reduced conservation and local community interests.

The research also showed that the WRPA has been unsuccessful in protecting the site or in helping the local Bedouin increase their incomes or retain control of their lands, villages and tourism industry. This has resulted in adverse effects on Bedouin society, economy, culture and familial relations.

It has been shown that many Bedouin met with greater hardship, obstacles, inequality and rivalry. Their overwhelming criticism also showed that Bedouin knowledge and experience has not been one of victimization, but one of constant engagement, analysis and adaptation. To this day the clansmen and women remain committed to tourism and conservation successes by moving projects

forward in nuanced ways. For it will be with the success of the WRPA that they too will achieve greater success.

It is therefore my opinion that the development of the Wadi Rum Protected Area, both with respect to conservation and tourism, has not made sufficient strides forward in attaining basic objectives set out in funder and developer proposals. If the goal was to have local Bedouin communities benefit, sufficient effort would have been allocated to understanding and involving them in protected area development during all of its phases. The proof is in the outcomes.

BEDOUIN ASPIRATIONS, DEVELOPMENT AND THE FUTURE

The *Bedouin knowledge* profiled in this research translates as *their* critique of development in their midst. It was not meant to point fingers, cast blame, show victimization or perpetuate *othering*. Rather, the purpose behind their words was to identify how a conservation-tourism development project has affected them, how they understand it and how they contend with it on a daily basis.

By using their statements as a measure of the project's success in achieving its goals, they clearly illustrated how "not" to conduct development. The clansmen and women were stating that this style of development has not been to their liking or to their benefit. It did not respect them, their culture, their knowledge or their inclusion. Their defiant demonstrations and critical remarks were indicative of standing up to those who wished to control and transform

them. They do not support colonial ways. They seek partnerships that facilitate sharing in control, decision-making, profits and even in the mistakes. Successful collaborations could help perpetuate Bedouin traditions and practices, and create new ones. There needs to be a shift in consciousness whereby groups such as the Bedouin are recognized for their contributions to the land and all those who use it, and to tourism. How best then to blend tourism and conservation strategies with Bedouin aspirations and knowledge?

Solutions, I argue, should be found within the local communities from the people who are most in tune with local needs, wants and desires; for most Bedouin I spoke with this is what they envisage and want. Before his passing, Sheikh Ali Al Swailheen shared his hope for the future. He believed that success “(wa)s so simple. It is to be just and to deal with all of the people as equal members of the community” (IS 2009). By following this way, he foresaw “satisfaction for everybody and for God” (IS 2009).

The importance of local knowledge cannot be overemphasized. The Bedouin's lived experiences offer insight and help in identifying development's weaknesses on the ground that instead of being used only to inform development of its mistakes could assist in achieving results-oriented endeavours that support *all* participants. If this knowledge was to be recognized as a legitimate source, new models for development could be created and the effectiveness in achieving promised outcomes for the "intended beneficiary" could be enhanced. The goal then is to use these findings to move ideas about conservation and tourism

development and local communities forward, linking theory to practice, so that all participants benefit, and success and sustainability are realized in the true sense of the words.

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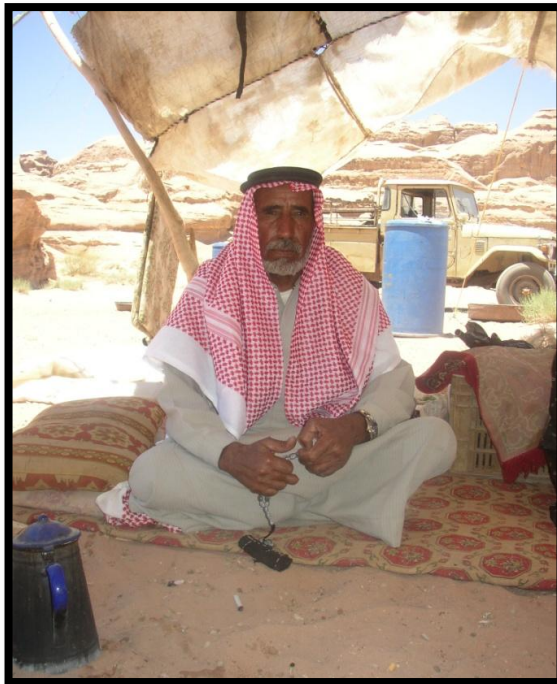
USAID/Siyaha. *Siyaha Launches Wadi Rum Eco-Tourism Development Project*. Amman: Siyaha. October 13, 2006. (<http://www.siyaha.org> accessed 2010).

USAID/Siyaha. *Traditional Crafts Support Women in Wadi Rum*. Amman: SIYAHA. (http://www.siyaha.org/success_stories/105 accessed 2010)

APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHS AND MAPS FOR THE INTRODUCTION



Photograph 1 Under Judge Salhsalm Salem Al Zalabiah's awning at his camp in the Wadi Rum area.



Photograph 2 Judge Salhsalm Salem Al Zalabiah at his camp (2007).



Map 1 Map of the Middle East
(www.globalresearch.ca/articlePictures/Middle-East)



Map 2 Map of Jordan (<http://static.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/>). The Wadi Rum area is represented by the black circle.



Photograph 3 Dbour Bedouin men providing “Bedouin hospitality” for their guests. They are preparing coffee at their desert camp.



Photograph 4 A view from inside the Wadi Rum Protected Area.

APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHS, MAPS AND FIGURES FOR
CHAPTER 2



Photograph 1 Arabian Camels grazing in the Wadi Rum area.
Photographer William A. J. Strachan (2007).



Photograph 2 Bedouin Shepherd with his herd of sheep and goats in
the Wadi Rum area.



Photograph 3 Grazing sheep (white) and goats (black).



Photograph 4 A Zalabiah celebration. The men are preparing *mansef*.



Photograph 5 Back of a *bait al sha'er* or “hair house” tent.



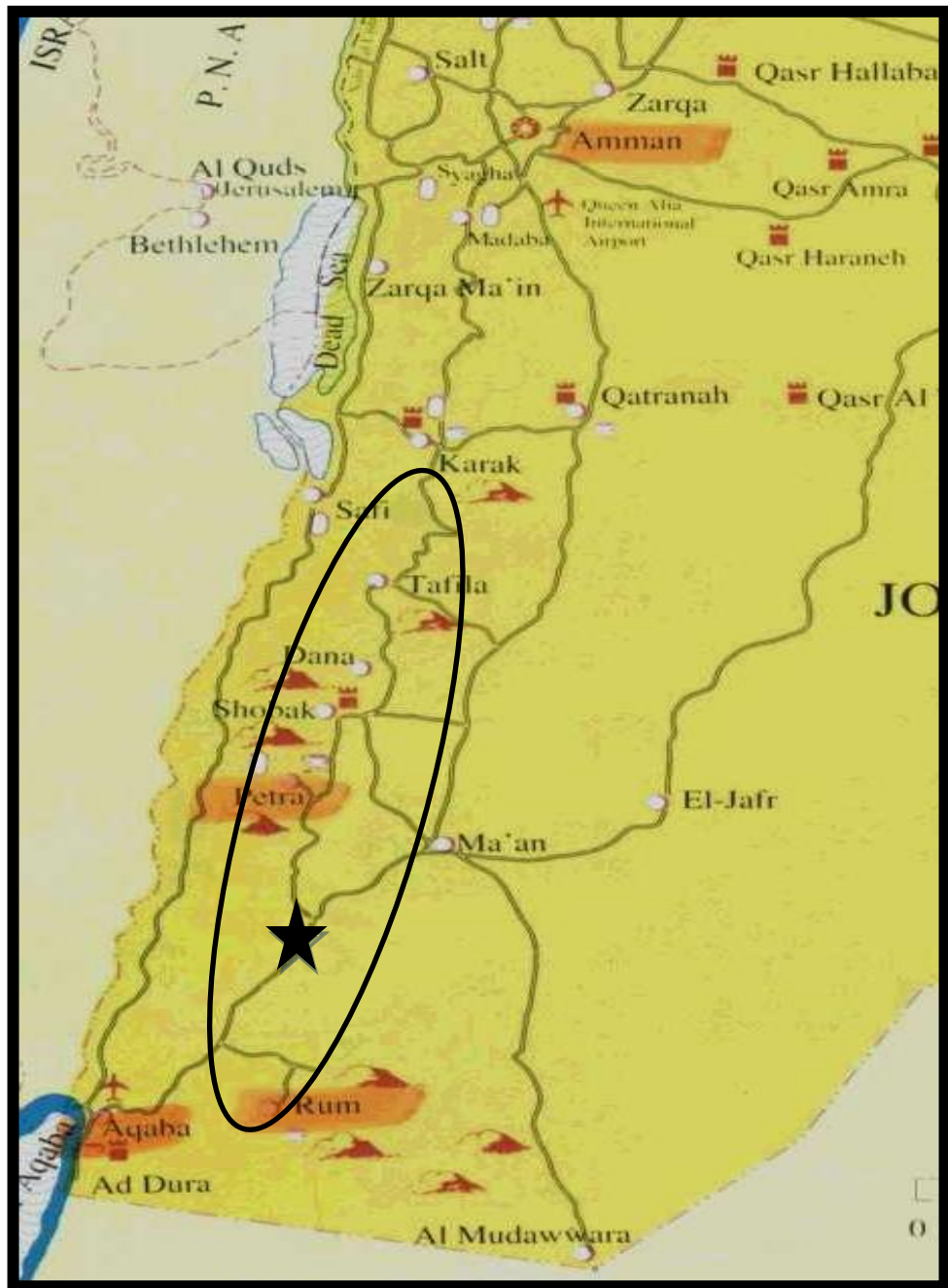
Photograph 6 Zalabiah man playing the *rababah* inside his tent.



Photograph 7 *Bedu* woman working with the *sa'aen* or goat skin sac.



Photograph 8 *Baladi* goats eating spring vegetation.



Map 1 An example of clan migrations. Ras Naqab is represented by the black star (approximately).

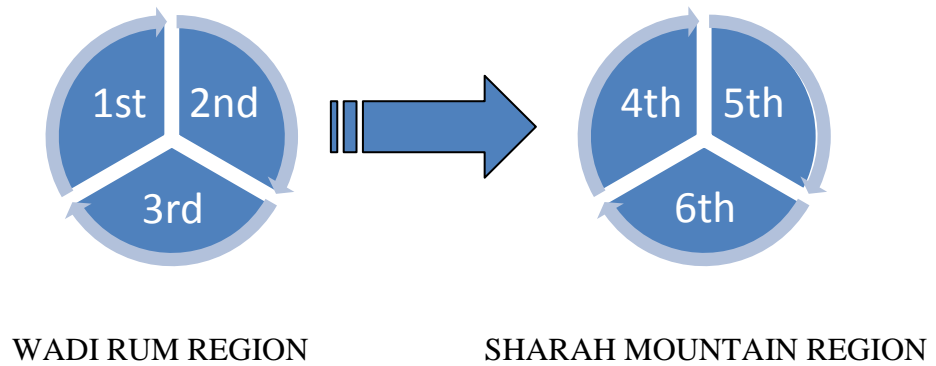


Figure 1 An example of local grazing zones before heading north.

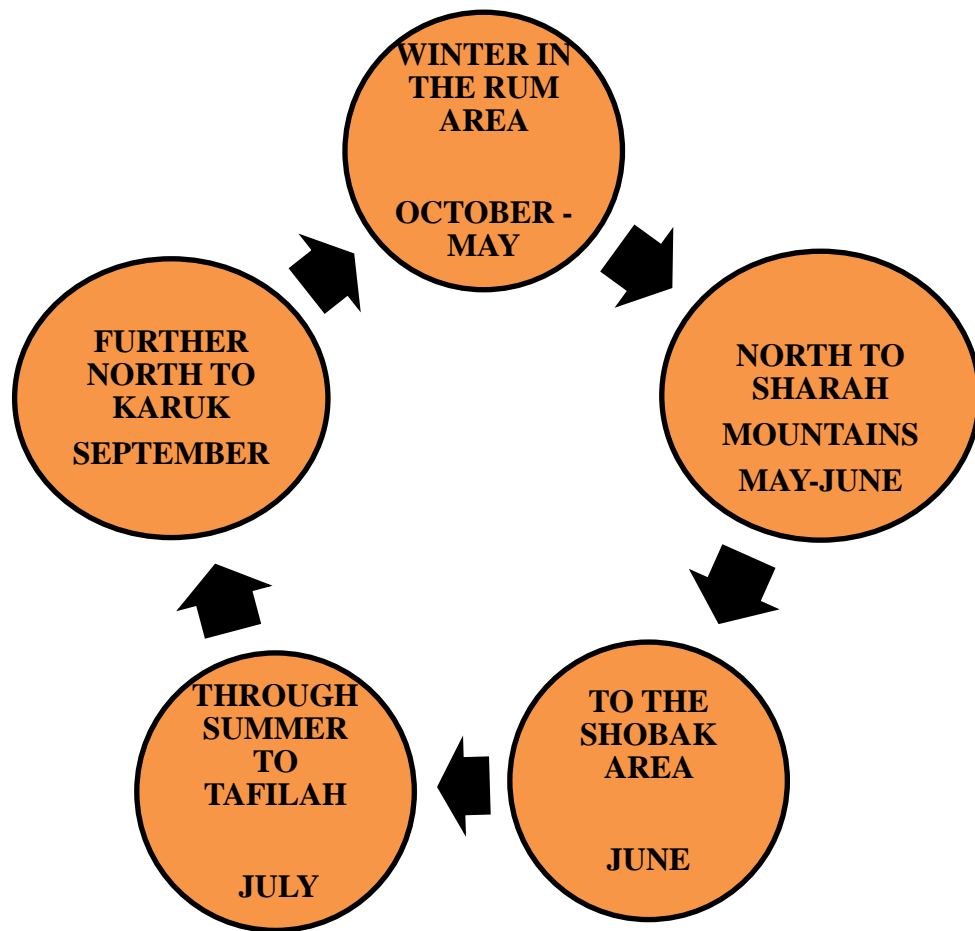


Figure 2 An example of a former seasonal migration route.



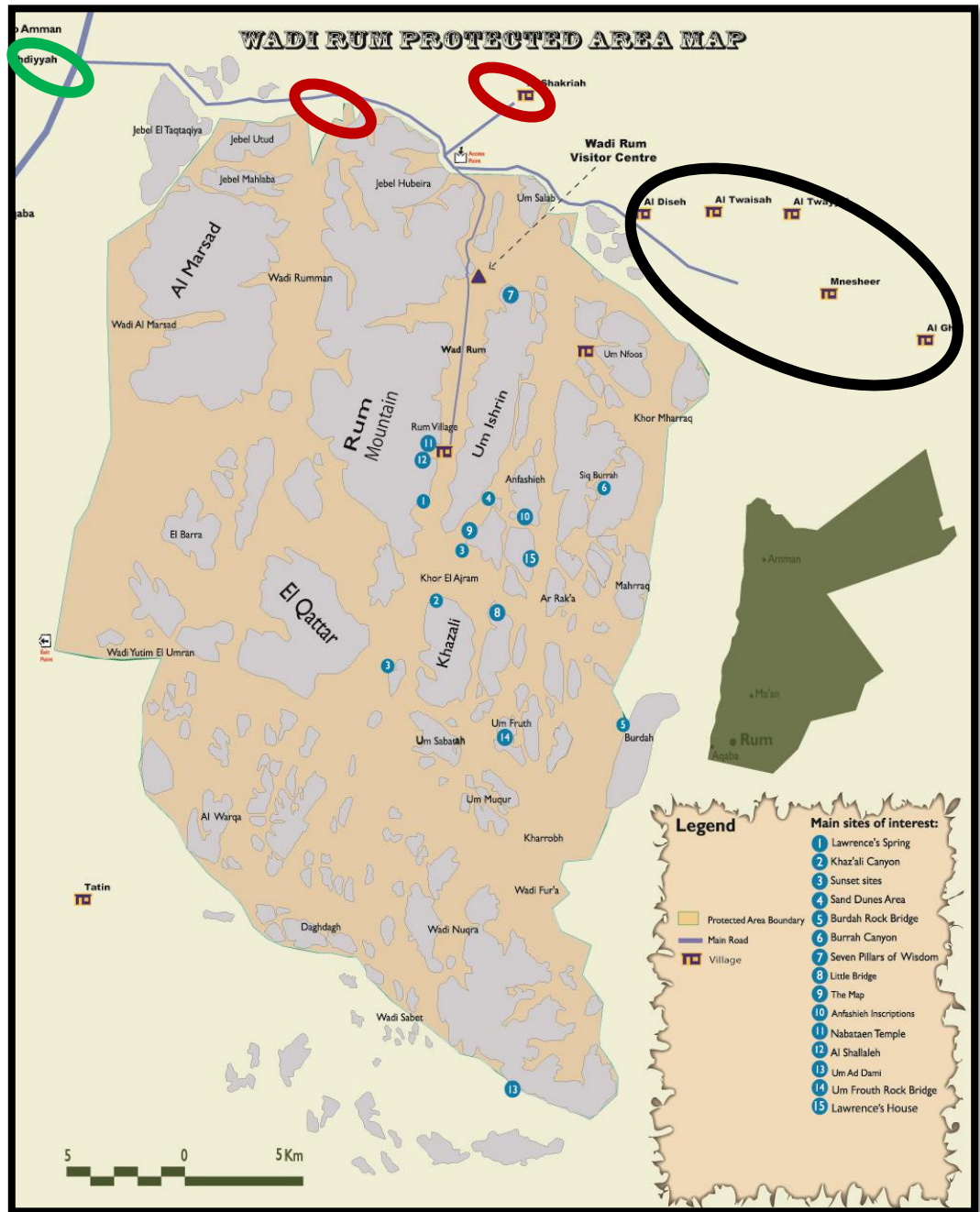
Photograph 9 Semi-arid desert landscape. Note sparse vegetation and the camel in the background.



Photograph 10 Zalabiah sheikh with leopard skin from the early 20th century (Courtesy of Ahwad Al Zalabiah 2009).



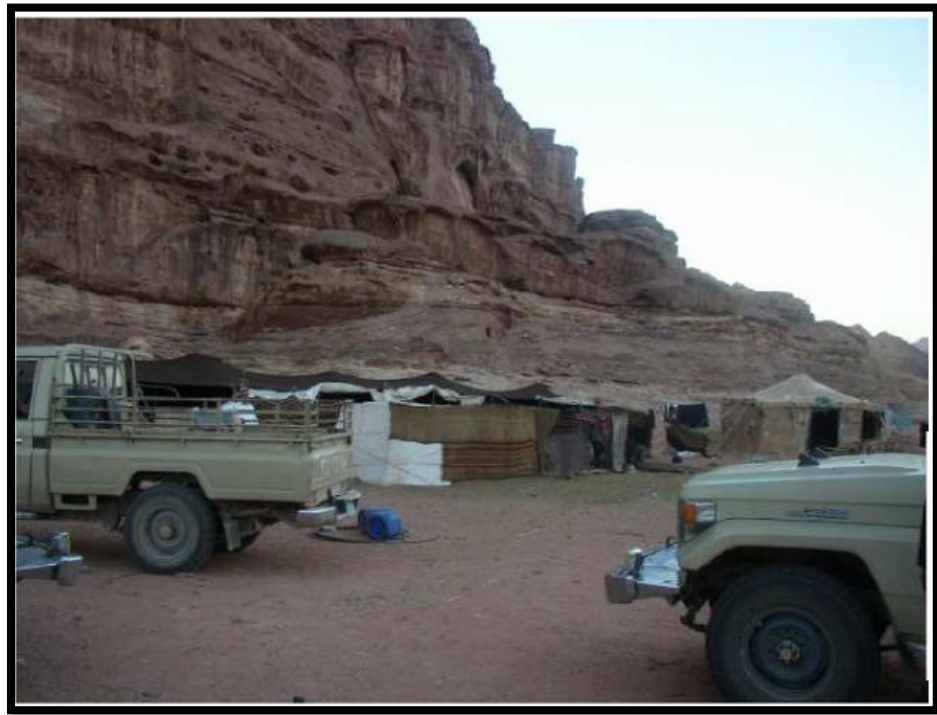
Photograph 11 Zalabiah clansman preparing store bought feed for his herd (2007).



Map 2 Map of the Wadi Rum Protected Area and respective Bedouin villages (WRPA). Many of the first wells were sunk in the Ad Diseh area (black oval). The red ovals represent the Swailheen villages of Shakriyyah and Salhia. The green oval represents the location of Rashdiyyah Village.



Photograph 12 Typical cinder block house with jeep for tourism.



Photograph 13 A Dbour camp in 2007

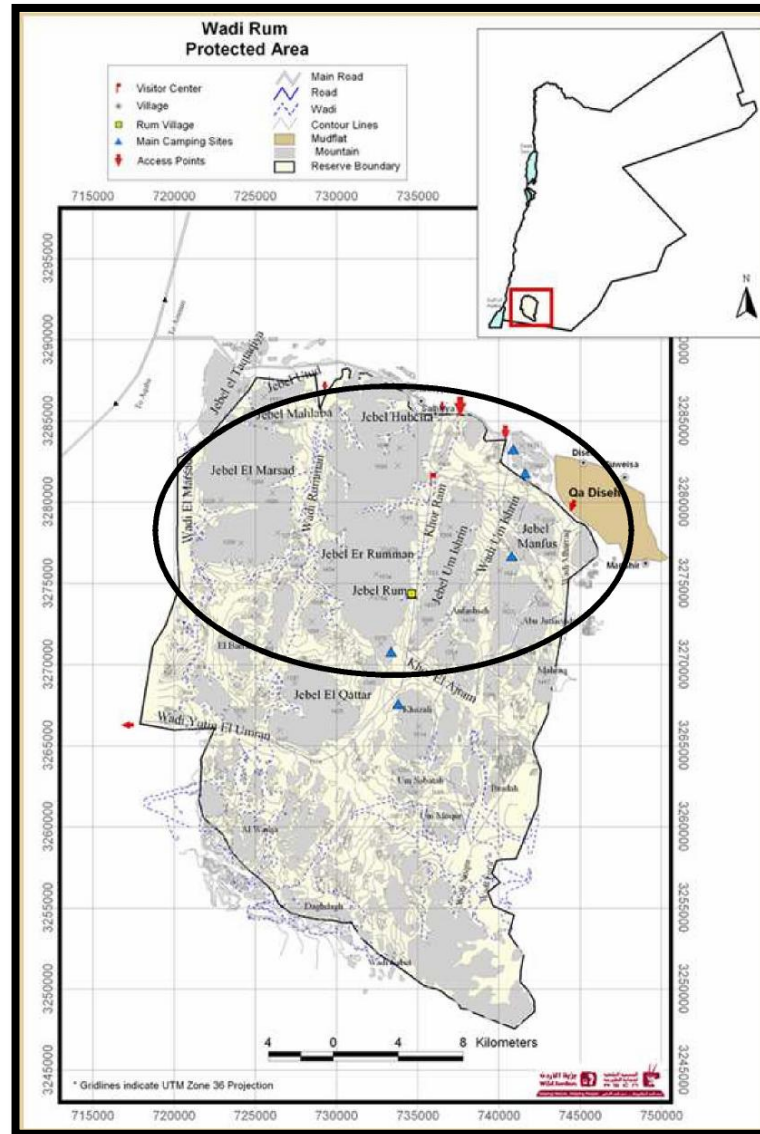


Photograph 14 Vehicle tracks in the Wadi Rum Protected Area. Note the lack of vegetation.



Photograph 15 View from Rum Village. Note excessive desert tracks.

APPENDIX 3: MAPS AND FIGURES FOR CHAPTER 3



Map 1 Location of the WRPA in Jordan. Black oval indicates the main valleys or wadis (www.rscn.org.jo/). Note this is a map of 720 sq. km. not the original 540 sq. km. as in Map 2 below.



Map 2 Map of the WRPA at the time of 540 sq. km. Original 3 Zones: Pink: Intensive or Free Access; Mauve: Semi-Intensive or Controlled Access; Light Pink: Wilderness or Restricted Access.

Vegetation Types	% Representation of vegetation type to the total area of Jordan	% Representation of vegetation type from the total area of the protected area	% Representation of vegetation type in the protected area compared with the country
Sand Dunes	1.6	76.3	28.7
Hammada	75	20.4	0.16
Acacia and Rocky Sudanian	3.37	3.3	0.6

Figure 1 Example of type of data collected through the surveys. Vegetation Types (www.wadirum.jo/)

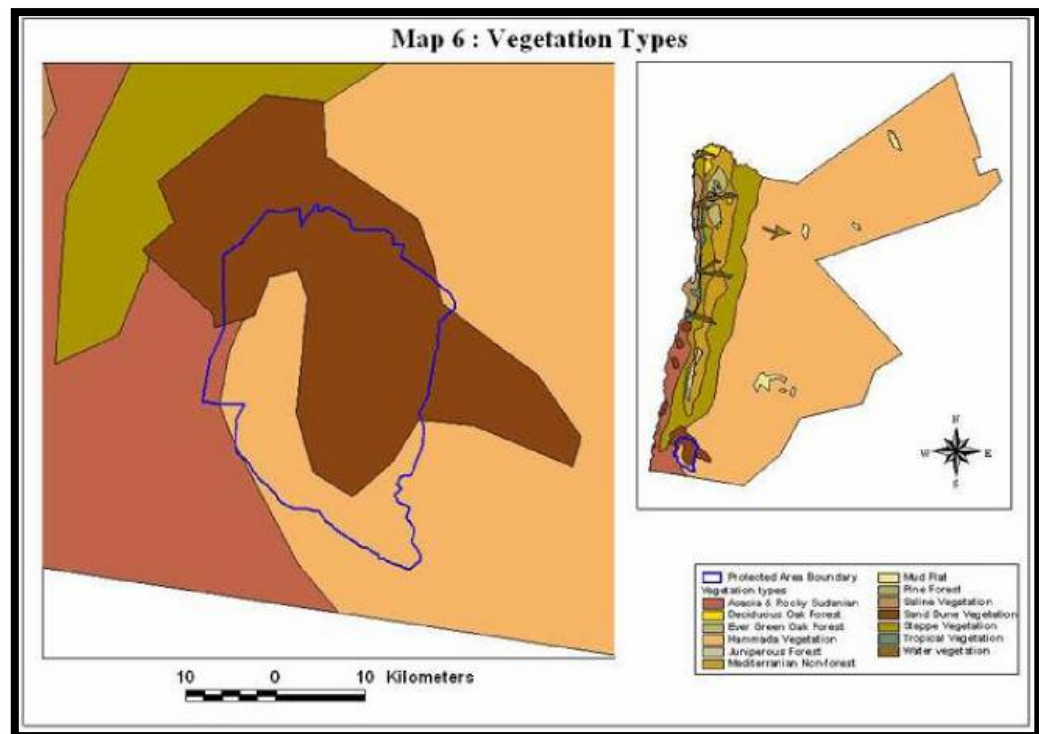
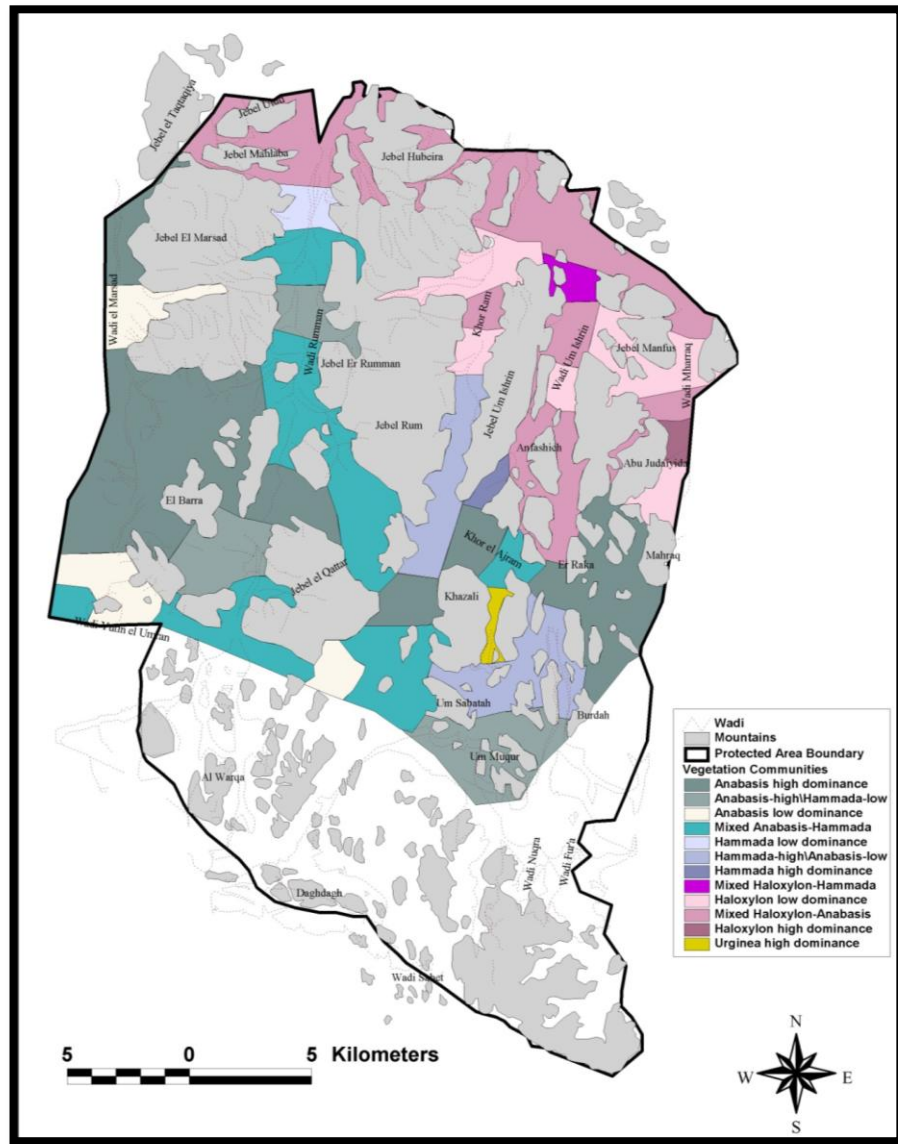
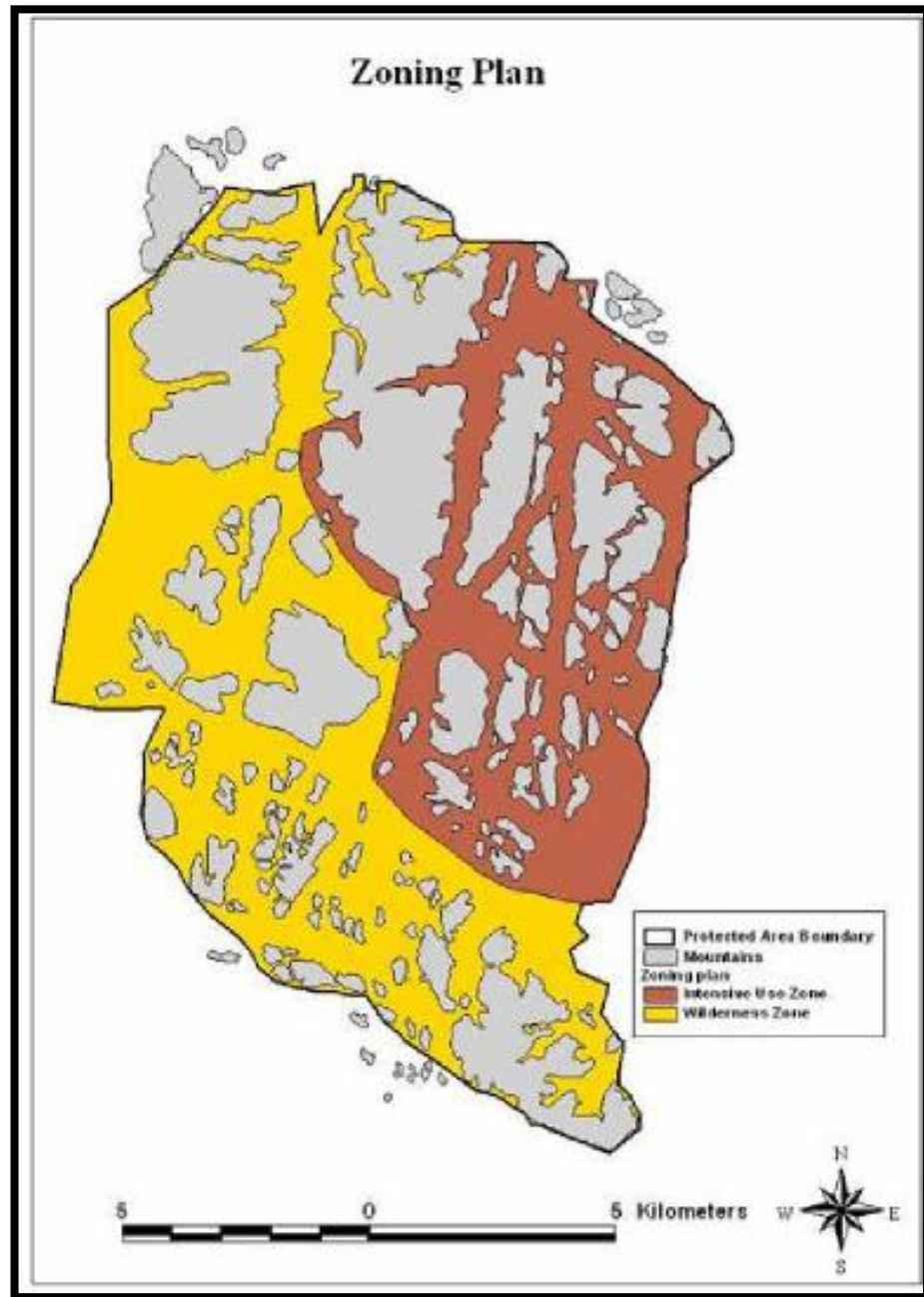


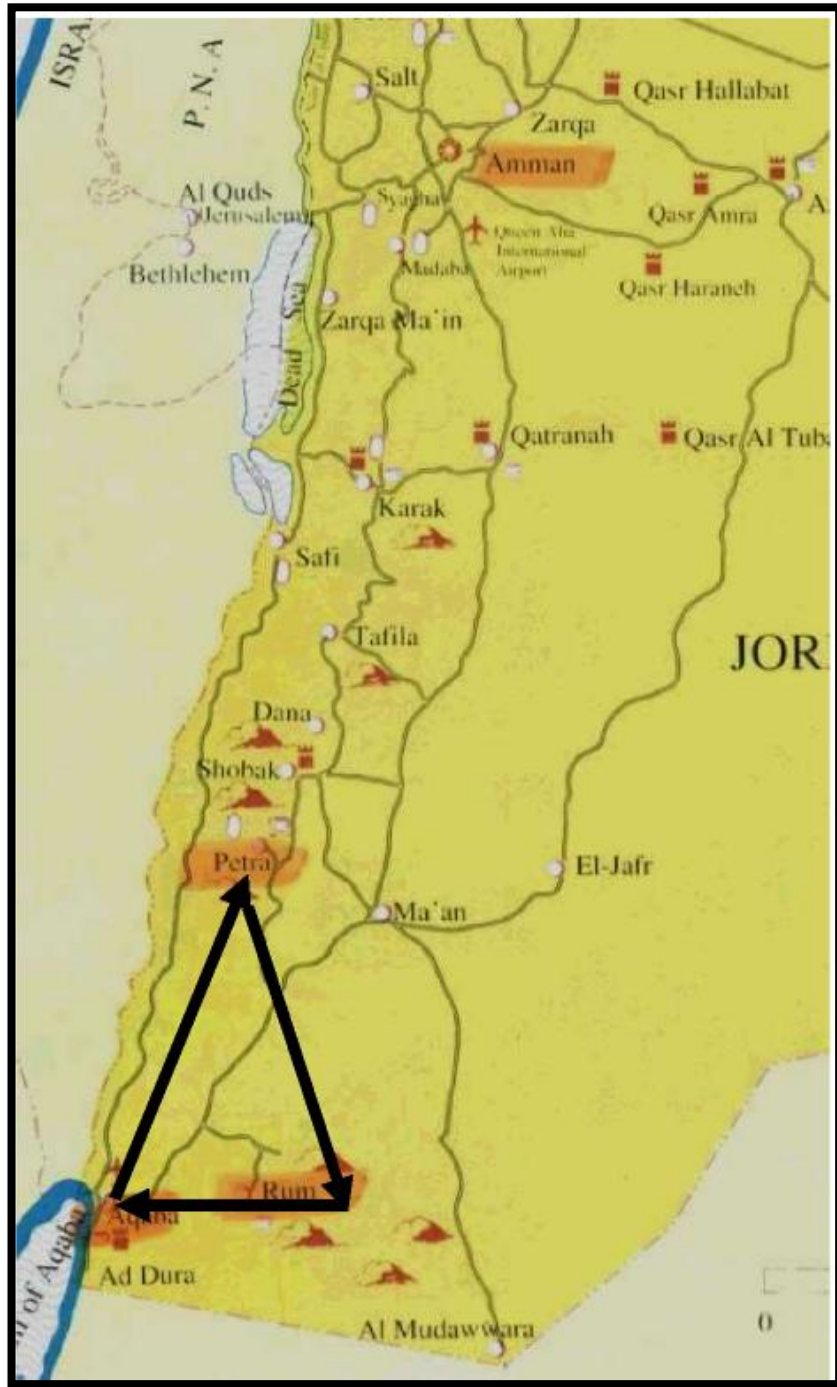
Figure 2 An example of the early data. Map of Vegetation Types in the WRPA (www.wadirum.jo/).



Map 3 The white section at the bottom is the 180 sq. km. addition to the WRPA. The coloured area above denotes the original 540 sq. km. (www.wadirum.jo/).

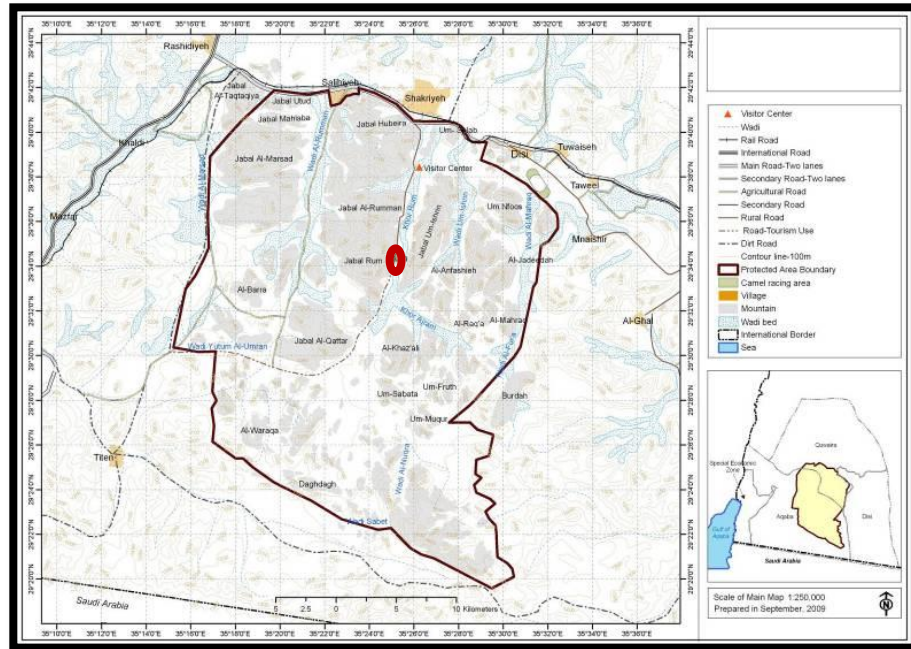


Map 4 A WRPA 2 Zone Map (www.wadirum.jo/). The brown area represents the Intensive Use Zone and yellow indicates the Wilderness Zone.



Map 5 The “Golden Triangle” of Aqaba-Petra-Wadi Rum.

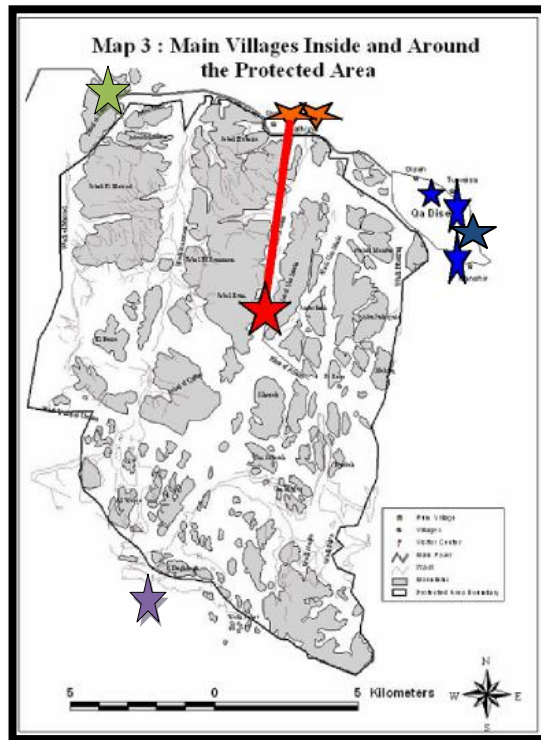
APPENDIX 4: MAPS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND DIAGRAMS FOR CHAPTER 4



Map 1 The Wadi Rum Protected Area with Rum Village circled in red. (RSCN 2009).



Photograph 1 A view of Rum Village following the village upgrades. Compliments of Jamal Al Zaidaneen (2009).



Map 2 Map of the Wadi Rum Protected Area and locations of the various Bedouin villages (stars) inside and on the periphery of the protected area.



Photograph 2 Rum Village's main street in 2002 prior to the upgrade. Note sand streets and the above ground electrical.



Photograph 3 A typical street in Rum Village in 2002 before the upgrades. Note the above ground power lines and light standards.



Photograph 4 A street after the upgrades – paved road, walls, light standard (broken on left), garbage bins and underground electrical.

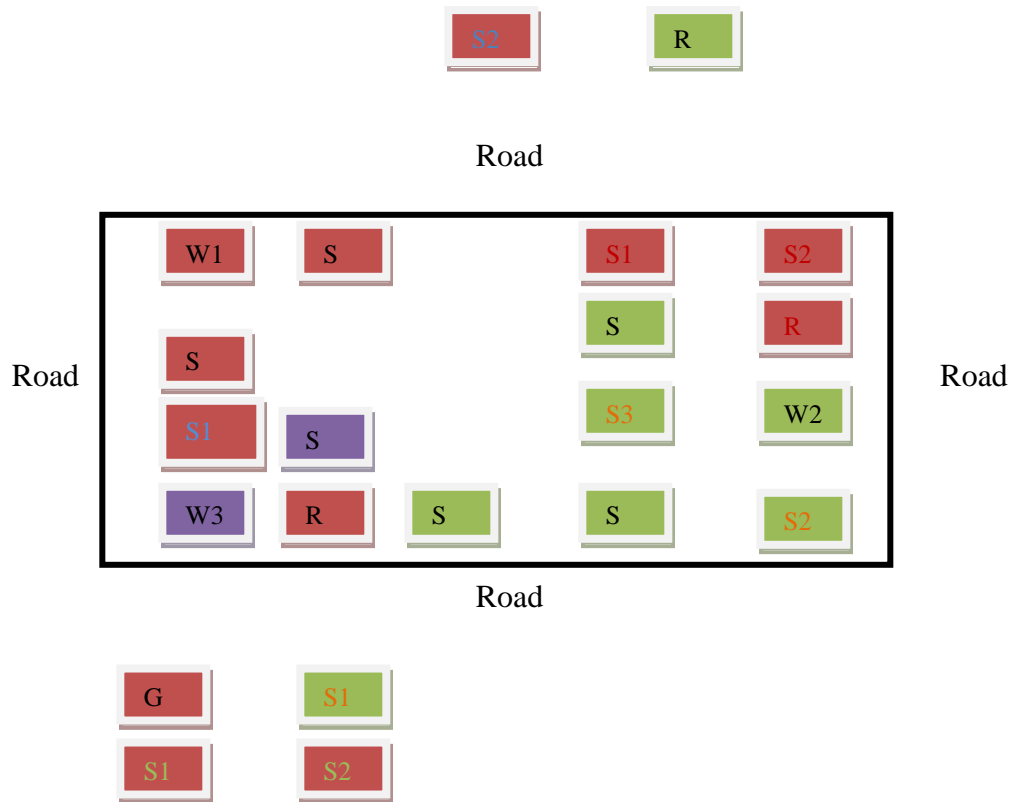


Photograph 5 An example of the original walls with a new wall built in front. Notice the graffiti on the new wall.



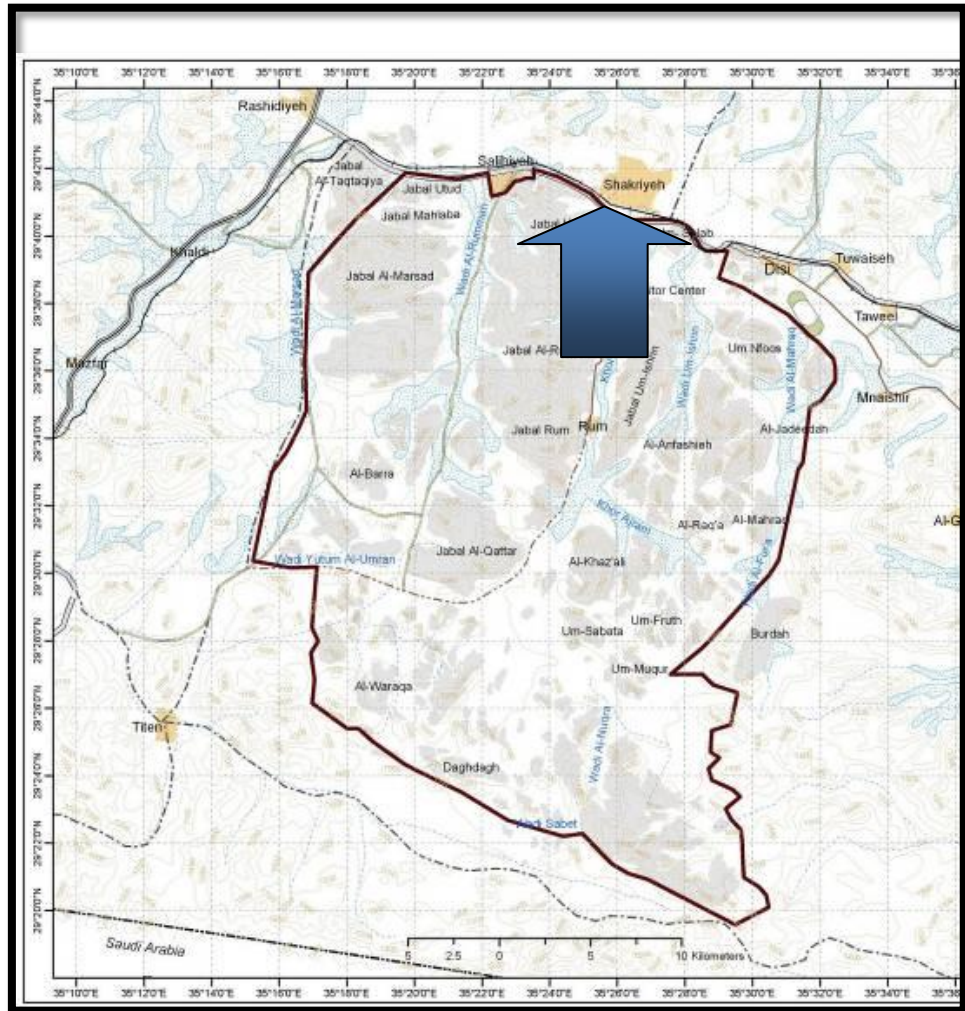
Photograph 6 A typical view inside the old walls after the upgrades.

Diagram 1



One family's housing distribution on the patriarch's titled land. Each rectangle is representative of a house. Each colour is representative of one of this man's three wives. Their homes are represented by a "W" in pink, green or purple. "S" is representative of a women's son. S1, S2, and S3 indicate the number of houses belonging to a son with multiple wives. "G" is representative of a grandson.

Homes inside the black rectangle are within the patriarch's titled land. The homes outside of the black rectangle were built on land outside of the main fenced area and may be on titled or non-titled land, but on land recognized by Bedouin as belonging to this particular man.



Map 4 Map of the Wadi Rum Protected Area. The blue arrow indicates the alleged proposed village site and relocation site for Rum villagers (WRPA Map).



Photograph 7 An example of a destroyed light standard in Rum Village.



Photograph 8 A Rum Village street after the 2003 upgrades. Note the broken light standard right of the doorway on the right-hand side.



Photograph 9 Bedouin modifications to one of the village walls. The owner took it upon himself to fill in a large opening to the left of the door. Additionally, the wall to the right of the door has had a row of cinder blocks added to give the wall height so that no one passing by can look over the structure.



Photograph 10 Another wall that received local modifications. This wall had a section removed. Note the vacant land inside which has not been built upon although there is a lack of available land inside the village.



Photograph 11 Photograph of a dismantled speed bump in Rum Village.

APPENDIX 5: PHOTOGRAPHS, MAPS AND DOCUMENTS FOR CHAPTER 5



Photograph 1 The early protected area Visitor Reception in Rum Village next to the Government Rest House.



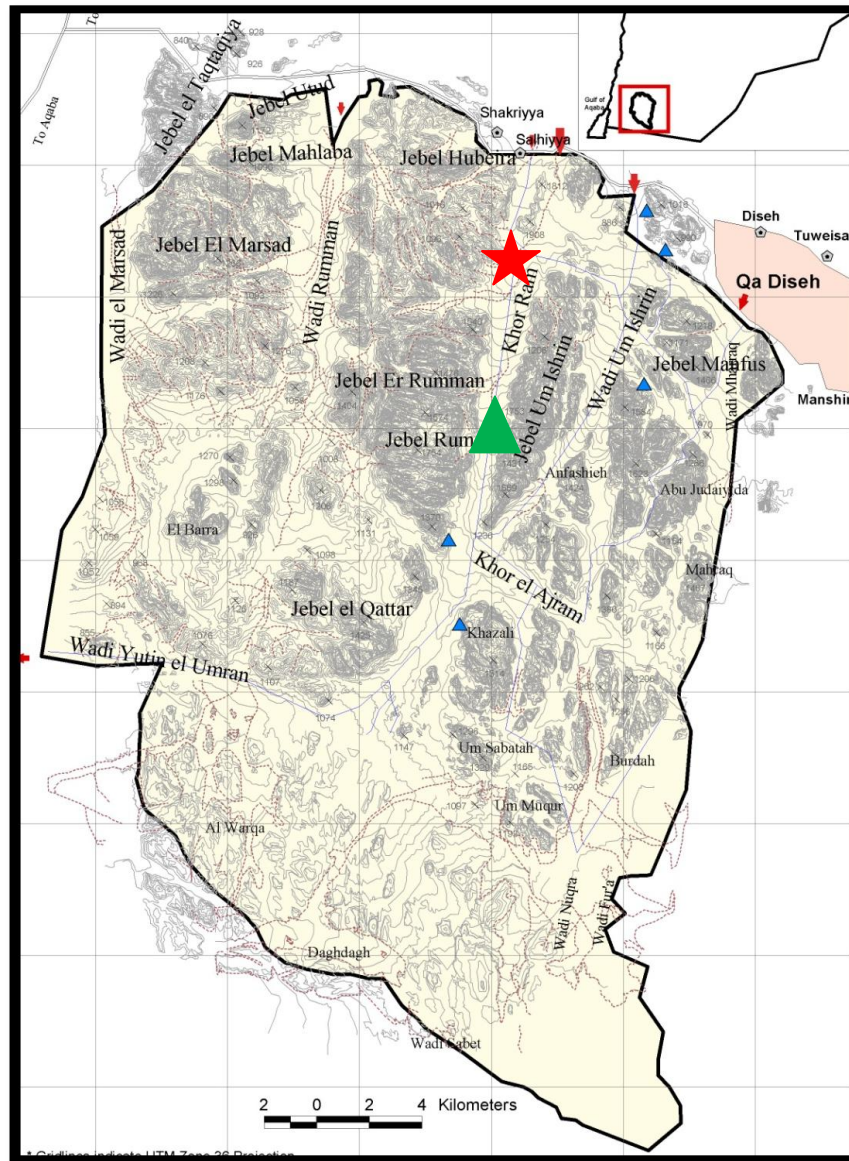
Photograph 2 Early protected area organization of vehicle tours, pre-Visitor Centre, in Rum Village outside of the Government Rest House (2002).



Photograph 3 A Bedouin tourism vehicle with numbering associated with the cooperative rota.



Photograph 4 Bedouin guide training and identification.



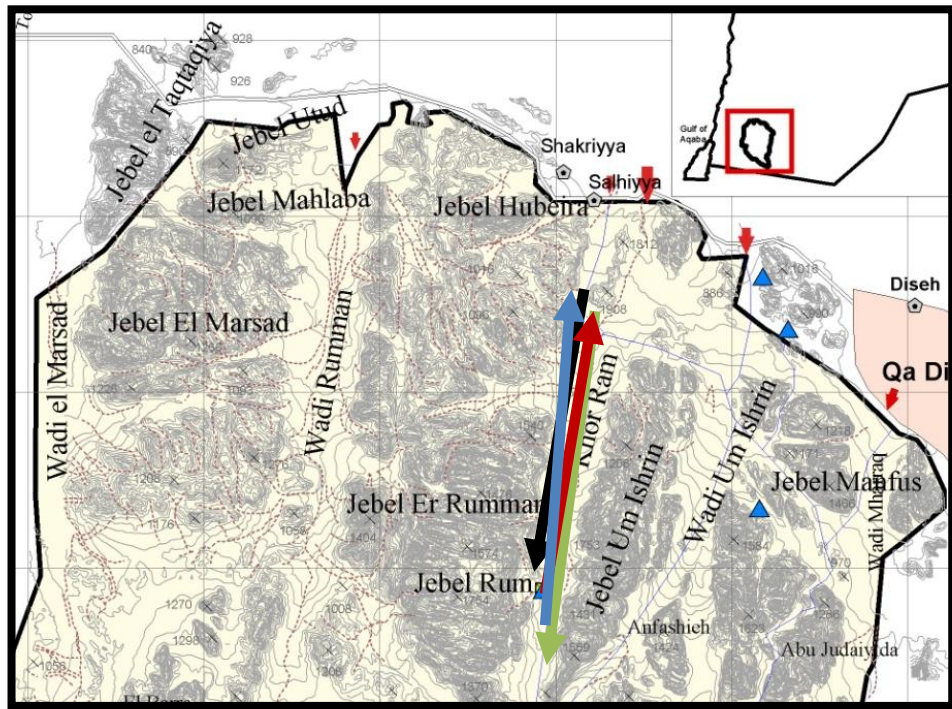
Map 1 Map of the Wadi Rum Protected Area with Rum Village (green triangle) and the WRPA Visitor Centre (red star) (WRPA Map).



Photograph 5 A view of the *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* from inside the WRPA Visitor Centre.



Photograph 6 Two towers serve as a gateway where vehicles are stopped by WRPA guards before entering into the protected area. The Bedouin tent to the left of the second tower is the waiting area for the Zawaydeh drivers. The Zalabiah tent is on the other side of the towers. This is the official entry point for the protected area.



Map 2 Map of the WRPA illustrating the amount of travel for the Zalabiah as a result of the transference of the tourism hub from Rum Village to the Visitor Centre. One guiding trip amounts to four trips not including the time spent in the desert (WRPA Map).



Photograph 7 Bedouin jeep driving tourists back from Rum Village to the Visitor Centre.

DOCUMENT 1

Translated by Leen Al-Hadban

Meeting Regarding the Activation of Wadi Rum Visitors Center

Location: Al-Aqaba Governorate Hall

Date: 26.4.2004

Attendants:

Name	Signature	Name	Signature
Governor of Aqaba	Signed	Mutlaq Salama Al-Zawaida	Signed
Deputy of Environment (ASEZA)	Signed	Ali Lafi Al-Zlabia	Signed
Al-Quaira Commissioner	Signed	Atallah Faraj Al-Zlabia	Signed
Sabah Atiq Al-Zlabia	Signed	Atallah Mohammad Al-Zawaida	Signed
Salem Faraj Al-Zlabia	Signed	Suleiman Sabah Al-Mazna	Signed
Ahmed Adnan Jabri (ASEZA)	Signed	Hashem Al-Quthat(ASEZA)	Signed
Mahmoud Al-Bdour (ASEZA)	Signed	Nasser Al-Zawaida (ASEZA)	Signed
Ali Al-Swailheen	Signed	Mohammed Atiq Al-Zlabia	Signed

Attested By:
Governor of Aqaba

The meeting has been held to agree on the procedures to activate Wadi Rum Visitors Center in cooperation with the representatives of the local communities of the region. It has been agreed to:

1. The Visitors Center should be the major and sole complex for all tourism services. All visitors are obliged to enter and register in the center.
2. An entrance fee is to be collected from the tourists at the Visitors Center.
3. Organization of tourist transportation by vehicles and camels belonging to local communities is as follows:
 - A. There are two rounds for the first transporter (Rum Society) and the second transporter (Al-Deesa Society).
 - B. The first transporter runs excursions to its allocated zone.
 - C. The second transporter runs excursions to its allocated zone.
 - D. There could be combined excursions for interested tourists (non-group tourists).
 - E. Private vehicles from outside the region are prohibited to enter and transport tourists.
4. The vehicles of Al-Salhiya and Al-Shakiriya society are to be distributed according to the former agreement between the societies and new vehicles will be distributed evenly between the first and second transporters.
5. The areas are to be allocated as follows:

Rum Society: Al-Ain, Al-Qaza'ali, Al-Rimal, Al-Nuqoush, Um Frouth, Barda, Seek Al-Barra, Bait Lawrence

Al-Deesa Society: Al-Ameileh, Um Al-Tawaqi, Al-A'amida Al-Saba'a,

Seek Al-Barra, Um Frouth, Barda, Bait Lawrence.

Note: Um Frouth and Bait Lawrence are combined areas provided that the former agreement does not stipulate against that.

Signed by: Atiq Musa Al-Swailheen

DOCUMENT 2

Translated by Jamal Al Zaidaneen

Meeting minutes

Date: 13th September 2004

Place: Aqaba governance H.Q.

Attendees:

RIGHT COLUMN

1. Aqaba Governor.
2. Wadi Rum PA Manager
3. Sheik Saleh Salem Al Zalabiah
4. Mohammed Sabbah Al Zalabiah
5. Salamah Gasem Al Swailhein
6. Daifallah Otaig Al Zalabiah
7. Abdullah Ali Al Zalabaih (Mokhtar “the choosen”, Rum)
8. Owdeh Hamd Al Zalabaih (Mokhtar “the choosen”, Rum)

LEFT COLUMN

9. Environment Commissioner
10. Rum Liaison Officer (Hashem Al qudah)
11. Rum Site Manager (Mahmoud Al Bdour)
12. Matar Owdeh Al Zalabiah
13. Rum Cooperative Head (Salem Faraj Al Zalabiah)
14. Zayed Mohamad Al Joyan (Al Zalabiah)
15. Faraj Fraij Al Zalabaih
16. Attalah Frarj Al Zalabiah.

MEETING MINUTES

1. Regarding the shared areas between Rum and Al Disi which is (Um Frouth, Al Qsair) it will be dealt with as per the letter from the Ministry of Tourism based on the Aqaba governor letter to the aforementioned ministry.
2. Cars belonging to the members of Slahyah and Shakriah cooperative which are owned by people residing in Slahyah and Shakriah and are members of the cooperative will be distributed between Disi and Rum equally as per the initial agreement signed between the cooperative societies in the area dated 26th April 2004.

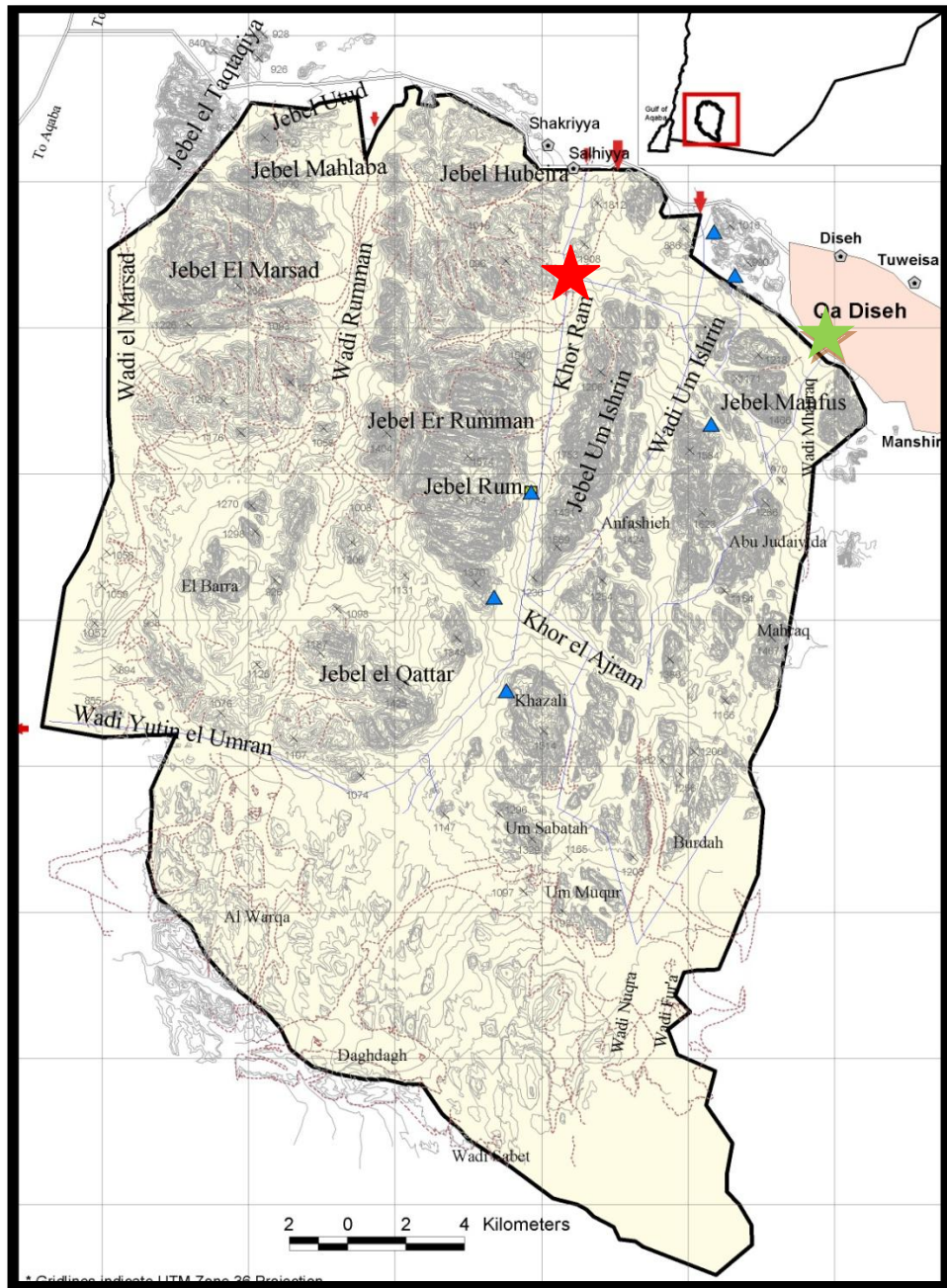
3. Desert trips starting locations will be separated between Operator 1(Rum) and Operator 2 (Disi) as well as the places of waiting dedicated for the jeep drivers as per the architectural designs that will be prepared for that purpose.
4. ASEZA will be responsible for building buildings for the drivers.
5. Switching or exchanging vehicle rotation is prohibited.
6. A separated map for trips will be prepared for each operator.
7. Drivers under the age of 18 are banned from driving visitors.
8. Visitors coming to the protected area without pre-reservations are requested to follow the rotation of (camps, cars and camels)
9. As for the local guides work:
 1. Submit the reservation letter to the visitor Centre prior 48 hr of visitors' arrival; another original copy from the reservation letter should be with the visitors to be submitted in the check in.
 2. Groups under six people, the guide should pay 2 JD to the cooperative and 1 JD for any extra night, this process should be covered by an invoice from the cooperative representative.
 3. For groups over six people, no charge will be taken from the guide but the guide will be obliged to hire a car for all the numbers over the six from the rotation cars.
 4. Hiking groups, the guide will use his car but he should pay 2 JD for the cooperative for the 1st and 2nd nights and 1 JD for any extra night.
 5. Camel riding groups, the local guide can use 2 camels out of the camel rotation 1 for the guide and one for the local guide, the rest of camels dedicated for visitors should be taken from the camels' rotation.
10. The cooperative has the right to register any numbers of vehicles as long as these vehicles are good to go and licensed.
11. All drivers will have an allowance period till 1st March 2005 to get a driving license; no driver will be allowed to drive visitors' tour without having the license.
12. Rum Cooperative society's organizational capabilities will be subjected to major improvement that will insure better management and accountability measures.
13. This agreement should be considered as an addendum to the previous agreements signed 26th April 2004 in the Aqaba Governance building.
14. ASEZA will take the needful measures and arrangements to dedicate pieces of land for those people who live outside the official Rum Village plan in a way that will contain them within the village.



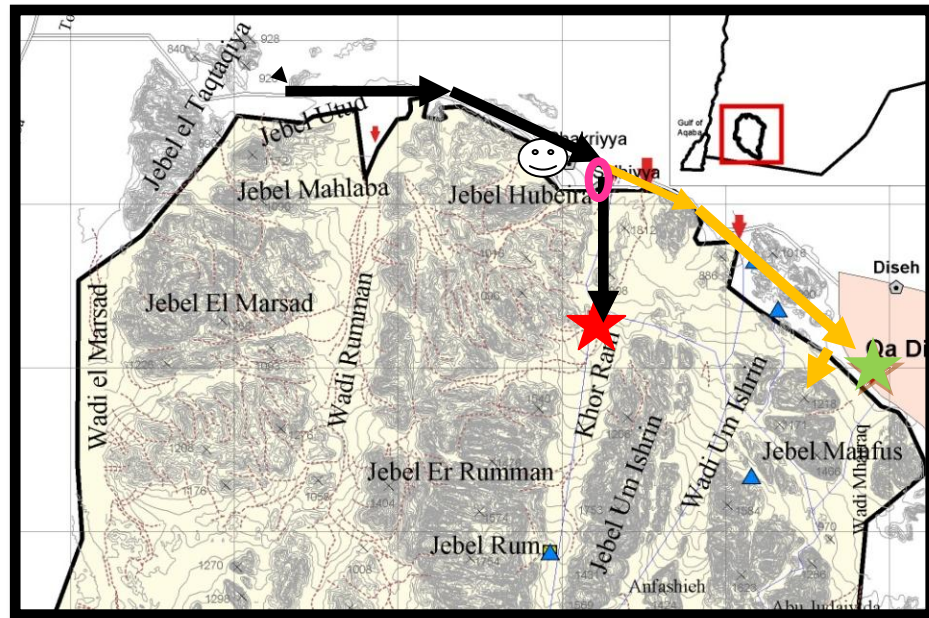
Photograph 8 Zawaydeh drivers waiting on the north side of the Visitor Centre gateway.



Photograph 9 Zawaydeh jeep line-up outside of the Visitor Centre on the south side of the gateway.



Map 3 Map of the Wadi Rum Protected Area. The Visitor Centre is represented by the red star. Hillawi Camp is represented by the green star outside of the protected area in the Ad Diseh area (WRPA Map).



Map 4 Map of the Wadi Rum Protected Area illustrating how by-passing of the Visitor Centre (red star) is occurring. The Black arrows indicate the route used to officially enter the WRPA through the Visitor Centre. The pink oval is the junction where vehicles turn for Ad Diseh Village. The yellow arrows indicate the route used to by-pass official entry to access camps in the Ad Diseh area such as Hillawi Camp (green star) on the outside of the protected area but close enough to access its landscape (WRPA Map). The happy face is where some Zalabiah felt the Visitor Centre should have been located.



Photograph 10 Tourist accommodations at one of the Ad Diseh camps.



Photograph 11 Buses at the junction headed to the Ad Diseh camps; by-passing the Visitor Centre entrance to the WRPA.



Photograph 12 Buses at one of the Ad Diseh camps.

APPENDIX 6: PHOTOGRAPHS FOR CHAPTER 6



Photograph 1 An example of USAID signage on computers and “gifting” to help the local communities.



Photograph 2 Sleiman Al Enezah (right) and Abdullah Al Swailheen (left) at Sleiman’s camp before his move to the *Bedouin Life* location.



Photograph 3 Sleiman and Um Mohammed's herd grazing on natural browse before moving to the *Bedouin Life* location.



Photograph 4 Sleiman and his son Mohammed (driver) with baby goat on moving day in 2007.



Photograph 5 Moon Valley Cooperative's USAID sign.



Photograph 6 The beginnings of a new USAID toilet for Lawrence Camp in the WRPA.



Photograph 7 The finished toilet at Lawrence Camp. This was not a design held in high regard by the owner.



Photograph 8 An example of a Bedouin camp not preferred by the WRPA.



Photograph 9 Eid Sabbah's Camp tucked into the shadow of the mountain. Note washrooms (two doors) against the rock. This is one of the highly regarded camps in the area.

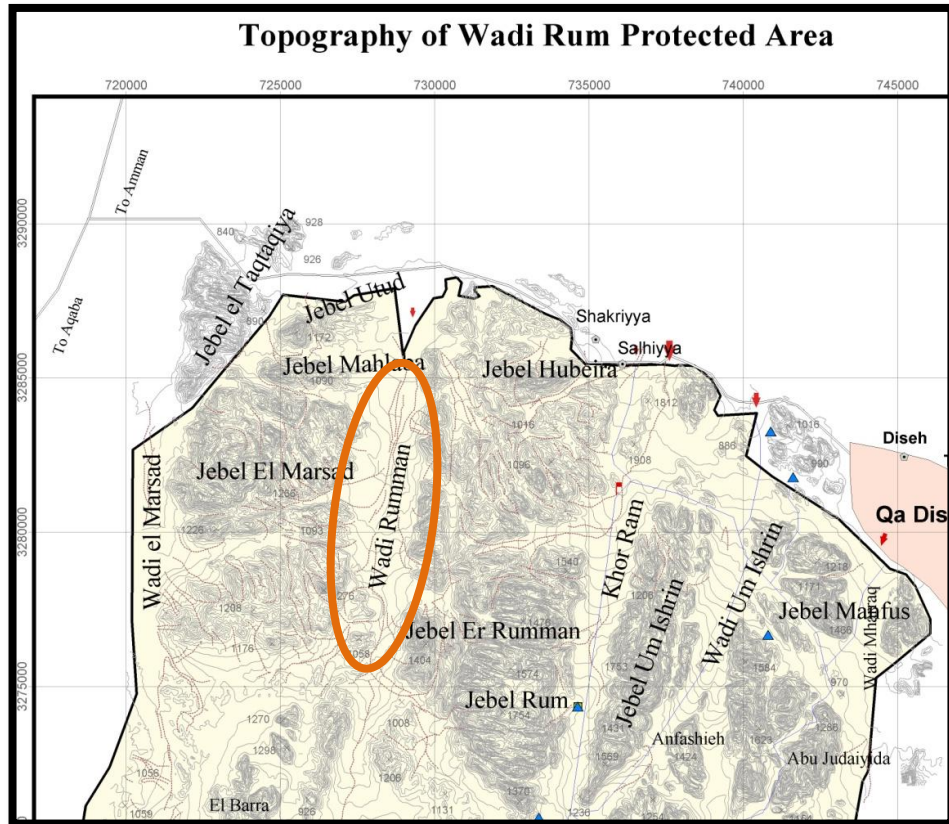


Photograph 10 Eid Sabbah's Bedouin camp is held in high regard. He paid for the upgrades, but in compliance with the WRPA. Note how the camp compliments the surroundings.



Photograph 11 New camp construction in the middle of the wadi versus blending in with the local ecosystem. This camp is one of many new camps in the WRPA that other camp owners are complaining about.

APPENDIX 7: MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS FOR CHAPTER 7



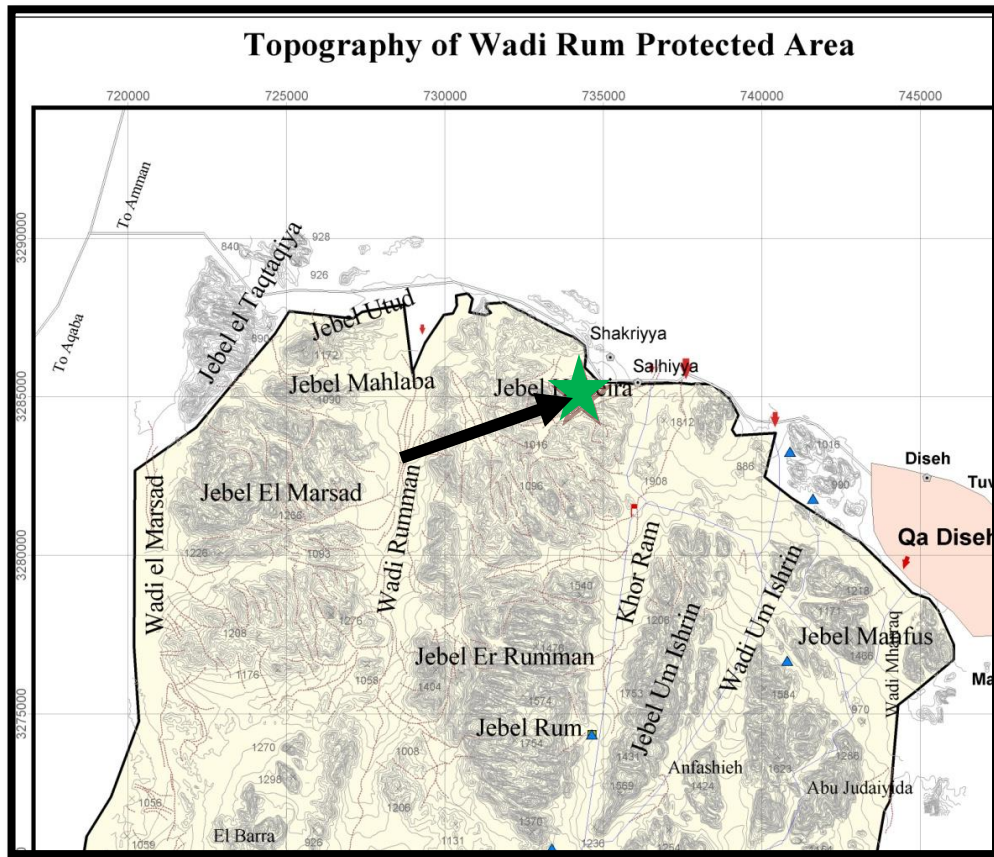
Map 1 Location of Wadi Rumman (orange oval) within the Wadi Rum Protected Area (WRPA map). The Oryx enclosure is inside Wadi Rumman.



Photograph 1 Arabian Oryx inside the Wadi Rumman enclosure in 2009.



Photograph 2 The fenced enclosure located in Wadi Rumman, 2009.



Map 2 The arrow shows Salahiyya's move from Wadi Rumman to his current location marked by the green star (WRPA map).



Photograph 3 One of Salahy's dead goats behind his tent at the new location.



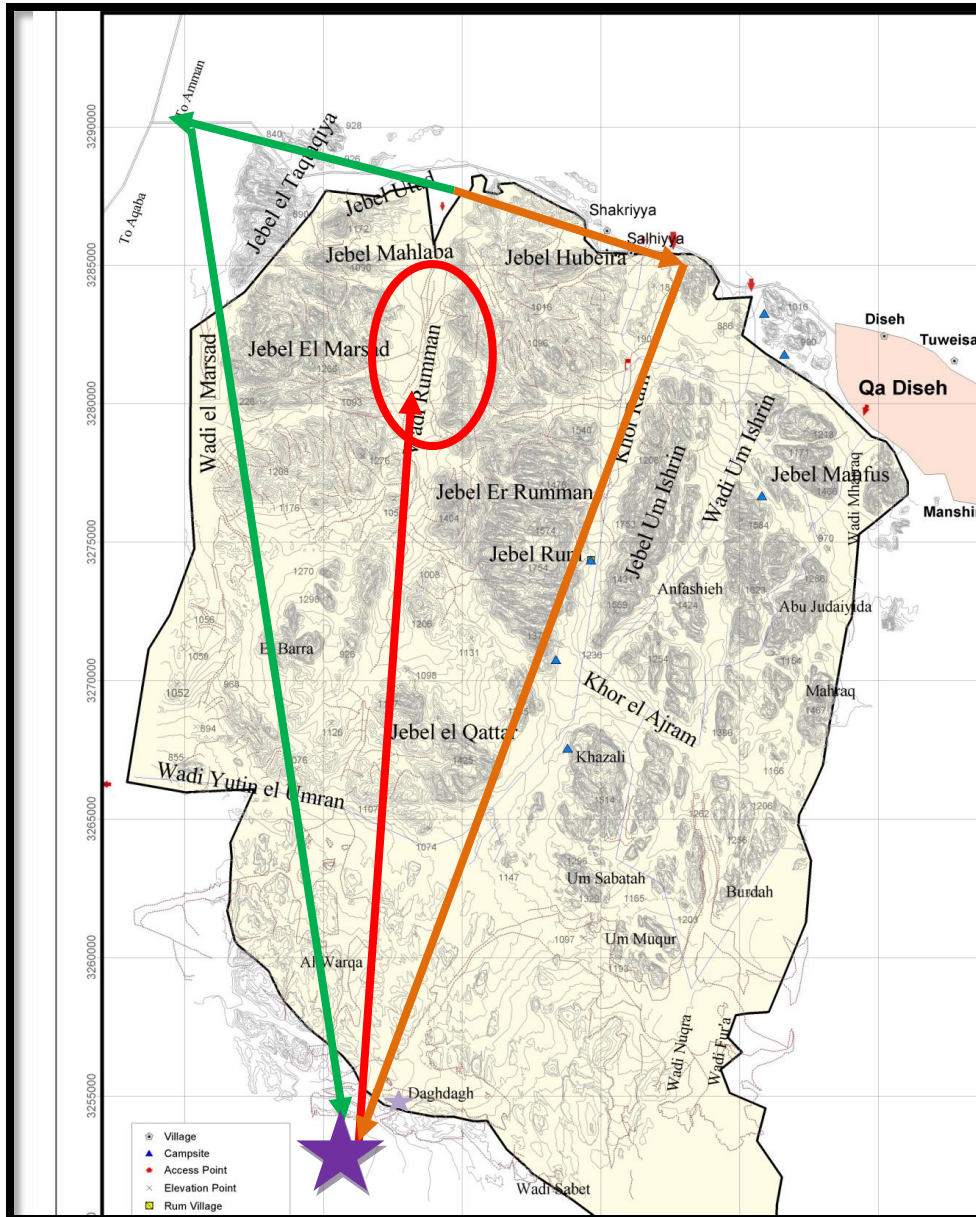
Photograph 4 Salahy's new rangeland behind his tent. Note the lack of available vegetation.



Photograph 5 Tamman's area where her small herd grazes. It is outside of the Oryx enclosure.



Photograph 6 Lush vegetation inside the Oryx Enclosure (2009).



Map 3 Map of the WRPA showing transportation through Wadi Rumman – green and orange arrows indicate new routes by-passing Wadi Rumman to Titn (purple star). The former route in red was shorter and more direct (WRPA Map).