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# The Jordanian Parliamentary Institution: A Study in Political Representation

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed at identifying the scope of political representation of the Jordanian Parliament from the perspective of studying the minorities and the indigenous people. To achieve the objectives of the study, legal, analytical and statistical approaches were used. The study concluded that the representation of the minorities and the indigenous people in the Jordanian parliament depend on the quota system and it has been characterized by steady and permanent presence in the parliament since the establishment of the state. Finally, the study provided specific recommendations including: the need to review mechanisms of election for the minorities to strengthen the national identity, and other related technical and substantive matters of the elections' law. It is necessary to reconsider the quota system for the Bedouin, and the minorities according to their weight within the population.

**Keywords:** Political Representation, The Minorities, The Indigenous Peoples, Electoral Law, Electoral System.

## INTRODUCTION

The realization of popular representation is considered one of the most important functions of the parliament. As contemporary parliaments have passed many stages of development, both in terms of form and institutional structure, or in terms of the social base and the extent of their representation of the total individuals, and character of public. Inform or structure the parliament has gone from being a mere "forum" appointed by a king, at his leisure, to a permanent institution and a cornerstone of the modern state to the extent that it has become rare today to find a country without a parliament. With the development in the formation of parliament and competence, it has socially moved from a council of the elite to that of the masses. (Betham, 2006:8-11).

The main features of a democratic parliament can be summed up as to be representative of all segments of society, and represents a spectrum of people, socially and politically, through the development of a system and an electoral process that is free and fair by following means that ensure the representation of all sectors of the society and their participation in ways that reflect national diversity. (Al-Sawi, 2002: 63)

Different political systems seek to represent minorities and nomads in their multiple and different political institutions in improving their level of participation in the political process; therefore, these political systems have set aside a place in the parliamentary institution for them, and as an attempt to reduce exclusion and marginalization. Hence, the idea of the study has emerged in order to deepen the understanding of the status of minorities and nomads in the framework of the Jordanian political system with regards to parliamentary representation.

## Research Goals

This study aimed to achieve the following purposes:

1. Showing the limits and extent of the representative function of the parliamentary institution in Jordan.
2. Assessing the social weight of minorities in comparison with their political representation in the parliament.
3. To distinguish the extent of quantitative and qualitative representation of the minorities.

## Importance of the study

The scientific and practical importance to the issue of our study is as follows:

### a) Scientific importance

Firstly, the scientific importance of the research is that the talk about minorities is necessarily a talk about the representative nature of the parliament, which constitutes the primary function of parliaments in the world; if the Parliament is the central institution of democracy, and that the form of indirect democracy represented by the Parliament is the most applied, it is assumed that Parliament is a representative of the electorate in all its components.

Secondly, dealing with the representation of minorities and nomads in the most important political institution in the context of the political system scientifically falls within the domain of comparative politics.

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Thirdly, dealing with minorities and marginalized groups and the indigenous population is considered one of the topics addressed by the International Humanitarian Law, International Law and international covenants on human rights.

### **b) The practical importance**

Strengthening the representation of minorities would increase the possibilities of deepening the unifying national identity of the state and promote political integration; where no minority feels excluded or marginalized and living in a state of political alienation. Participation of minorities is a guarantee to improve political participation as a whole in the state, which contributes to political stability. Therefore, the political system can, through the parliament, work on the integration of minorities and nomads in the most important political establishment; increase their participation in the political process; reduce marginalization and exclusion cases that are likely to arise; and enhance the opportunities to devote the unifying national identity that would provide the political environment that deepens co-existence, stability and social peace.

### **Research Question**

The study focuses on the effect the fundamental question:

**"What are the limits of the quantitative and qualitative political representation of minorities and indigenous people in the Jordanian Parliament, both the House of Representatives and the Senate?"**

### **Research Approach**

Based on the Research Question, the study will use several methods represented by the legal approach based on the analysis of legal rules governing the representation of minorities in successive electoral laws and systems. The analytical approach, on the other hand, will present deep and detailed analysis of the minority representation in the Parliament with a relative comparison of their representation weight with their demographic weight within the social structure. In addition, a statistical approach is used to show the qualitative and quantitative representation in the Parliament, its committees and its different parts.

### **Central concepts of the study**

The study dealt with a number of concepts and terms that will be clarified to determine the conceptual framework for the necessities of the systematic control of the study and to avoid confusion.

#### **1- Minorities**

The problem with this concept lies in that some perceive minorities from a quantitative perspective in relation to the total aggregate of the people and others perceive them from a qualitative political perspective in relation to the closeness to the political power. There is a lot of sensitivity shown by some systems towards this concept as one that reflects a bias against groups (a), (b) or (c) on the basis of being a threaten to the national unity and social peace. (Van Dam, 1995:109)

**In this study, the concept of minority will be dealt with procedurally as follows:**

Minorities are those specifically mentioned in the successive electoral laws in the light of the allocation of seats specified in the parliament to quotas (Al-Kharouf, 2010:138) In this context, through review of regular and temporary election laws, electoral systems and the distribution of election seats of constituencies for many years, minorities in Jordan are limited to Christians, Circassians and Chechens, in spite of the existence of other minorities such as Druze, and Baha'is; however, they are not covered by the quota system. Therefore, the term "minorities under the law" will be used by the researchers to show that the state has dealt with these social groups with the mentality of "minorities".

#### **2- Indigenous People**

The operational definition of the Indigenous people in this study are the nomadic and non-nomadic tribes living in Jordan before the founding of the Emirate in 1921; the study will focus on the Bedouin tribes only, because the laws governing the electoral process in Jordan distinguish them with the system of quotas, through the allocation of seats for them in the parliamentary institution since 1929. Thus, "indigenous people" means "Bedouins" in the study.

There is a precise difference between the Bedouin and the clan; the clan is a pattern of relationship that may exist in rural, urban and the desert areas whereas nomadic tribes depend on travelling. The passage of time, establishment of the Jordanian state and drawing of the political boundaries of the kingdom have limited the movement of nomads; furthermore, the process of settling them continued, which is a feature contrary to travel and its absence necessarily precludes nomadism; nomadism involves people who depend for their living on movement and travel for six months or more per year.

Keeping track of the proportion of nomadism, we find that the concept itself has witnessed a drastic shift, the old concept of the Bedouins as nomadic tribes who do not know the stability and who have to move to take care of their cattle, which formed a pattern of life, is no longer the current reality. The internal conflicts of the nomadic- pastoral system have led to its collapse. Further, one must consider the long upgrading process of

settling nomads. In light of the above, the use of the term Tribes of Nomadic origins is the expression that is more accurate than the continued use of the word Bedouins; for the purposes of the study, the terms Bedouins and the tribes of Nomadic origins will be used with this meaning.

### **3- Political representation**

For the purposes of this study the Political representation is the representation of minorities and indigenous people in the official political institution - the Parliament. Moreover, the researchers employ the concept of quantitative/ numerical political representation and qualitative political representation in this study. The researchers mean by political quantitative/ numerical representation the amount of the weight of minorities and the Bedouin in the institution of the parliament in Jordan. The qualitative representation means the weight and political importance of the Parliament and the Senate in accordance with specific indicators: Permanent Bureau (Parliament Speaker, Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Assistants to Speaker of Parliament) and the Standing Committees; so as to enable the study of the methodology uncover harmonization between the quantity and quality of political representation.

### **4- The electoral system**

The electoral system is used to mean the translation of votes into seats representative in the parliament (Reynolds and others, 2010, 18). In this study, the electoral system, from the perspective of operational definition, means the successive Jordanian election laws and the seats allocated to the minorities and nomads from 1928 until the Law of Election to the House of Representatives in 2010, in addition to electoral systems and laws proposed by the committees formed at the national level.

### **Limitations of the study**

- **The spatial limit:** it is limited to the degree of representation in the parliament, both the Senate and House of Representatives.
- **The time limit:** The study will focus on the political representation in the democratic transformation period in Jordan from 1989 until 2012, taking into account the possibility of the researchers to go back to predate; where this necessitates addressing legislations (the Constitution, laws and electoral systems) and to go back to a stage before 1989 to deepen understanding about minority representation in parliamentary assemblies formed in different periods in the history of Jordan.
- **The demographic limit:** the Chechen and Circassian, Bedouins and Christians in Jordan.

### **I- Minorities and the Bedouin in Jordan's social structure**

Jordan has a population of about (6.388.000) people in 2012, according to data issued by Department of Statistics. (Department of statistics, 2013:28) Jordanians - members of tribes, and clans of nomadic origins, and Jordanians of Palestinian origin are the largest proportions in the social component of Jordan. The term (Eastern Jordanians) refers to those who inhabited the east of Jordan (Trans - Jordan) before the founding of the Emirate. (Khaza'leh, 1993:47) Most of them are nomads who had played a key role in the establishment of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. (Abu-Diyyah, 1990: 54-55).

The Sunni Arabs form the majority of the total population, estimated percentage amounts to 93.5%. They have been living in harmony with other groups of the Jordanian society of Christians, Circassians, and Chechens who make up no more than 8% of the total population. (Abdel-Hay, 2006:127) The population of Jordan is homogenous in terms of culture and the vast majority of the population is Muslim, and they, in turn, belong to the Sunni sect. Jordan includes five small ethnic groups, namely: the Circassians, Chechens, Kurds, Armenians, and Assyrians who live in the major cities: Amman, Zarqa and their suburbs. The first three groups embrace Islamic religion, while the last two groups, Armenian and Assyrians, embrace Christianity. The Circassians are the largest of these groups. They and the Chechens came from the Caucasus in the late nineteenth century, that is, between 1880 and 1905; their number now does not exceed thirty thousand people. (Zahra, 2009: 69-70)

The Jordanian political system has been keen on the fairness of the representation of the minorities, particularly Circassians and Chechens, so they get 3.7% of the seats in the House of Representatives at a time their number does not exceed 2% of the total population. (Hilal, 2002: 112) There is a contradiction in the official position of the state as seats have been allocated for Circassians and Chechens through the electoral legislation in spite of being Muslims, while the Druze and Kurds did not receive the same treatment because of being considered minorities by the state on the consideration that they are Muslims.

It is noted that there are multiple and conflicting statistics that determine the weight of the demographic minority, particularly with regard to Christians. According the old view to the emergence of the state, their numbers are estimated to be 10%; others see them as 6%; while other studies provide smaller figures. As for the Circassians / Chechens and other minorities, it is found that there is a consensus on that their proportion in Jordan does not exceed 2%. Due to the scarcity of governmental sources that show the actual number of

minorities in Jordan and to the confidentiality of the data at this level, the researchers had to resort to various other available sources to reach a degree of accuracy in determining their numerical weight especially in relation to the number of Christians in Jordan.

**The first source:** Academic sources: many studies and research refer to a significant difference in the proportion of minorities, including:

1- The numbers issued by the Catholic Church in Jordan (The Catholic Church in Amman, 2012) confirmed that the figures of Jordanian Christians in the Kingdom fell to 3% of the total population, of a session 6 million people. Further, according to approximate statistics prepared by the Media Committee of the preparations for the visit of Pope Benedict XVI to Jordan, the number of Jordanian Christians reached 250 thousand while the number of residents in Jordan ranged to 170190 thousand. The study attributed the causes of decline in the number of Christians in Jordan to several factors, including those linked to social, economic and political conditions, as well as cultural, professional characteristics, and immigration.

Christians in Jordan are situated in the north and south of the country, particularly in the areas of Madaba, Ajloun, Fuheis, Alhuson, Mahis and Karak. They are represented in the Parliament with nine seats out of 110; furthermore, they are represented in the government and various official institutions and organs of the State(Media Committee of the Preparations for the Pope's Visit to Jordan, 2009) The Secretary-General of the Council of Heads of Churches, Archbishop Hanna Nour, prepared a study in 2006 in which he attributed the decline in these ratios over the past century to three factors: social, economic and political conditions, as well as cultural and professional characteristics, in addition to the attractiveness of the countries to which they have migrated. The study (Nour, 2006) showed that the number of Christians living in Jordan has reached 146,720, with a growth rate ranging from 2.8 to 3.2%, and that the attrition rate during the forty-five years due to migration and death amounted to 7839 cases per year. The study showed that the number of Jordan's population in 1952 amounted to (586,000) people, and the proportion of reproductive growth was (7.6%). The percentage of Christians in Jordan during 1956 was 12%. The President of the Royal Institute for Interfaith Studies Kamel Abu Jaber confirmed the existence of a decline in the number of Christians in Jordan by about 3%. He said that "the figures of the Catholic Church in Jordan stressed that the number of Christians in the Kingdom has fallen to 3% of the total population (6 million people), reaching up to 250 thousand, while the number of those living in the Kingdom ranged between 170 to 190 thousand". He pointed to the decline in the number of Christians in Jordan from 12% of the total population in 1956 to less than 4% at present. "He attributed the causes of decline in the number of Christians in Jordan to several factors, including those linked to social and economic conditions, political, professional and cultural characteristics; in addition to immigration and the attractiveness of the countries to which they have migrated. (Abu Jaber, 2012)

2- Massoud Thaher's study, which indicates that the Christians in Jordan (mostly Arab Orthodox and Roman Catholics, including nomadic families) make up about 5% of the population; whereas Circassians (Sunni Muslims, of whom Alabzakh, Alcyprrtaa, Albzadogh and Shabsogh) make up 1.6% of the population. There are also Chechens (Sunni Muslims), Armenians, Kurds, and Turkmen. All of these make up about 1% of the population; while the Druze constitute about 25,000 people. (Thaher, 2005)

3- An article by researcher Shaker AlJawhari noted that the number of Circassians in Jordan does not exceed 79,000 people (making 1.29%) and that the proportion of seats allocated to them in the parliament surpasses their number which applies to Christians whose number is (159870) people (Al-Jouhari, 2004) including 2.6% of the population.

**The second source:** Referring to the website of King Hussein Ibn Talal to understand the reality of the social structure and location of minorities, it can be seen that more than 92% of Jordanians are Sunni Muslims and approximately 6% Christians. The vast majority of Christians belong to the Greek Orthodox Church whereas the rest of the Christian denominations are Greek Catholics, Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox and Protestants. Further, there are small groups of other religious minorities scattered throughout Jordan, such as the Druze, and a range of Turkmen Armenians, Bahais, who moved from Iran to Jordan in 1910. There are also national minorities such as Circassians, originally from the Caucasus who have immigrated to Jordan in 1878. Their number is estimated to be between 20-80 thousand people. Even if we assume controversially the upper limit for the number of the Circassians, based on the site of His Majesty King Hussein Ibn Talal, the percentage is equivalent to 1.3% of the total population estimated at (6113000) people, including Chechens, who migrated to Jordan from Grozny in the year 1901 when 700 families came through Turkey where they settled for a period of two years and then traveled to Syria and came back to Jordan in 1903. They have been absorbed into the Jordanian society while maintaining their own culture.

**The third source:** the CIA website, which indicates that the Sunni Muslims make up 97.2% of the population, Christian 2.2%, - 2010 est.(CIA Website).

**The Fourth Source:** the International Religious Freedom Report, issued by the U.S. Department of State (DOS) in 2006, showed the percentages of minorities in Jordan. The text of the report exhibited that "more than 95% of the population are Sunni Muslims, and the numbers of the official government Jordan estimated the numbers of Christians by about 4% of the population. There is no reserved seat for the Druze, but they are allowed to occupy positions under their state classification as Muslims.(DOS, 2006)

The international religious freedom reports released by the U.S. Department of State in 2009 and 2011 show the decrease in the number of Christians in the light of its description of the minorities in Jordan as follows :(DOS, 2009, 2011)

The status of respect for religious freedom by the government was unchanged during the reporting period. The government continued to play a prominent role in promoting interfaith dialogue and harmony relations between Muslims and Christians generally were good. The population is estimated to be 6.3 million people; more than 92 percent of the population is Sunni Muslim. Official and unofficial estimates of the number of Christian citizens vary from 1.5-5 percent of the population. According to church leaders there are an estimated 150.000 Christians.<sup>□(1)</sup> There are a small number of Shi'a Muslims, approximately 1000 Baha'is, and an estimated 14.000 Druze. There are no statistics available regarding the number of persons who are not adherents of any religious faith. Whereas the report of the U.S. Department of State on religious freedom, published in 2011, indicates that the current population of Jordan is about 6.300.000 people, and according to estimates, the number of Christians ranged between 1.5% - 3% of the total population.

In light of the above perplexed data, it can be concluded that there are no figures agreed for the number of minorities in Jordan due to the complete absence of official statistics for reasons that deserve detailed analysis in their own rights<sup>(2)1</sup>. It can be said, that the number of Christians in Jordan less than 3%, it ranged between 2% - 2.5% of the total population. The percentage of other minorities are estimated to be about 2% of the population, including (Circassians, Chechens, Kurds, Druze, Baha'is and a very small number of Shiites). The Circassians and Chechens are the largest minority. Some estimate their number between 20.000-80.000 people, and others say that they are about 30000 people. It can be said that their number around 1%.

**II- The quantitative representation of Minorities and Indigenous people in the parliamentary institution**

The researchers deal with the degree of representation at the level of the parliamentary institution as a whole, through the House of Representatives and the Senate as follows:

**II-I- The House of Representatives**

The following table shows the representation of minorities and nomads in the House of Representatives within the framework of quantitative representation.

**Table (1)  
Representation of Minorities and Indigenous people in parliaments from 1989 until 2012**

Council	Minorities / indigenous	Number of seats allocated to the minorities /indigenous	Percentage of seats allocated for minorities / indigenous	Total percentage
House of Representatives XVI (120) Members	- Circassians / Chechens	(3) Seats	2.5%	19.2%
	- Christians	(10) Seats	(8.3%)□(3)	
	- Bedouins	(10) Seats	8.3%	
House of Representatives XV (110) Members	- Circassians / Chechens	(3) Seats	2.73%	19.1%
	- Christians	(9) Seats	8.2%	
	- Bedouins	(9) Seats	8.2%	
House of Representatives XIV (110) Members	- Circassians / Chechens	(3) Seats	2.73%	19.1%
	- Christians	(9) Seats	8.2%	
	- Bedouins	(9) Seats	8.2%	
House of Representatives XIII (80) members	- Circassians / Chechens	(3) Seats	3.75%	22.5%
	- Christians	(9) Seats	11.25%	
	- Bedouins	(6) Seats	7.5%	
House of Representatives XII (80) members	- Circassians / Chechens	(3) Seats	3.75%	22.5%
	- Christians	(9) Seats	11.25%	
	- Bedouins	(6) Seats	7.5%	
House of	- Circassians / Chechens	(3) Seats	3.75%	22.5%

Council	Minorities / indigenous	Number of seats allocated to the minorities /indigenous	Percentage of seats allocated for minorities / indigenous	Total percentage
Representatives XI (80) members	- Christians	(9) Seats	11.25%	
	- Bedouins	(6) Seats	7.5%	

**Source:** the Table is prepared by the researchers based on electoral law which relates to each stage and the amount of quota allocated to each category.

Through careful and accurate reading of Table 1, the following observations can be recorded:

1. The stability of representation in the proportion of seats reserved for religious, ethnic minorities and nomads, is noted.
2. It is found that the lower percentage of representation for minorities is 19.1% which is high, and the highest rate is 22.5% compared with the demographic reality. It is found that the percentage of minority representation far outweighs their numerical weight, which is remarkable, and puts the question to the goals of the state in raising the representation of minorities in excess of their actual number. The Christians do not exceed 3% and their percentage of representation is high. This applies to the Circassians and Chechens who do not exceed 1%, which explains the issue of officially hiding their real number in Department of Statistics.
3. The paradox is greater when you approach the proportion of representation for them with the true weight of their number. The number is also represented in the successive governments. By almost constant proportion, pushing on to say that the situation of Jordan is distinct from other cases not from the perspective of the claim of better justice for the minorities as far as getting more representation that exceeds their demographic weight.
4. In the Parliament XVI, it happened that women succeeded relative to their quota. This raised the proportion of Christian representation to 10 seats which is greater than the quota allocated by the state for them, which was not in the calculations of the electoral process. This was true in the case of the Bedouin as their number to 10 with the success of women for the quota, which affected the efficacy of the electoral law and the principle of the quota and gave minorities and tribes of nomadic origins high representation.
5. The stability of the quota for the Christians, Circassians and Chechens despite an increase in the number of members is noted. While there is an increase in the seats for the Bedouins from 6 seats to 9 seats in the Parliament XIV.
6. It is clear that the mechanism of the State dealing with the issue of minority representation is not based on a numerical weight as far as in being subject to other political considerations.

To deepen the study, the researchers had to return to the period before 1989 to examine the status of minorities in the parliamentary institution, through the analysis of legislation and elections that were held as follows:

### **1- The Law on Election of Members of the Legislative Council for the year 1928:** (Official Gazette, 1928)

On the basis of this law, the first five legislatures were elected and in accordance with Article 5 of this law the Emirate was divided into four constituencies: Balqa, Ajloun, Karak, and Ma'an. Balqa district elected five Muslim members two of them Circassians in addition to a sixth member who shall be Christian; Ajloun province must elect three Muslim members and a Christian member; Karak district must elect two Muslim members and a Christian member; and Ma'an district must elect one Muslim member. Under implementation of the intended purpose of this law, the capital province and township Jerash are considered parts of Al-Balqa district. Article 16 of the law has pointed to the election of two members to represent the Bedouins through the committees of the elders of the northern nomads and the south nomads and each committee to choose one member of the Legislative Council.

It is noted that the first electoral law included the representation of minorities (Circassians and Christians) as well as indigenous people, and ultimately, the idea of representation of minorities was present at the emergence of the Jordanian state and that the first parliament took into account the representation of minorities and Bedouin. A study by Dr. Ali Mahafzah (1973) pointed out that the number of the representatives of Bedouins in the first five legislative councils were 10 members, (i.e., Two representatives in each Legislative Council according to the law above) The number of representatives of Circassians was 4. (Mahaftha, 1973: 74)

**2- Law of Election to the House of Representatives No. 9 for the year 1947** (Official Gazette, 1947) which considered the first election law after the independence of Jordan. This law limits the number of the members

of the House of Representatives to twenty members. On this basis, the First to the Fifth Councils of the House of Representatives of Jordan were elected - noting that since the Second Council, half of the members of the House of Representatives have been from the West Bank of Jordan.

a) Article (2) of the law states that: the word "Badawi" (Bedouin) refers to any member of the nomadic males, according to the intended purpose of this law, nomads are divided into two parts: North Bedouins and South Bedouins; where the number of their representatives is settled to be two members.

b) Article (18): states that "the Kingdom is divided into nine electoral districts... and these districts elect the following number of Representatives in accordance with Table No. 2.

The data in table 2 indicates the equality of the degree of representation of minorities such as (Circassians/ Chechens) with the majority of the population of the Kingdom, through allocated two seats for them in Amman, Jerash, and Madaba, regardless of their population size. It is concluded here that the Jordanian state has dealt with minorities not in terms of quantitative weight only, but in terms of political considerations. As well in addition, four seats allocated for Christians and two seats for Circassians / Chechens of twenty seats, with the addition to the Bedouin representation of two seats, the overall ratio of total percentage of (Bedouins and minorities) becomes 40% of the total seats on the Council.

**Table (2)**  
**Representation of Minorities and Indigenous People in the electoral law of 1947**

Number	Region	Representation
1	Amman Province including Jarash and Madaba townships	2 Muslims 2 Circassians / Chechens 1 Christian
2	Salt Province	1 Muslim 1 Christian
3	Irbid Province including Ajloun township	2 Muslims 1 Christian
4	Karak Province	2 Muslims 1 Christian
5	Ajloun Province excluding Ajloun township	1 Muslim
6	Jarash Province excluding Jarash township	1 Muslim
7	Ma'daba Province excluding Ma'daba township	1 Muslim
8	Tafilah Province	1 Muslim
9	Ma'an Province	1 Muslim
10	Bedouins- North and South	2 Bedouins

Source: Electoral law by which the First House of Representatives was elected on 16/04/1947.

**3- The Additional Act of the Law of Election to the House of Representatives No. 55 of 1949** (Official Gazette: 1949)

After the unity of the two banks of Jordan on 24/04/1950 during the period of the House of Representatives II, the representation of members of the West Bank began, equally with the members of the East Bank, and as follows:

In light of the amendment that occurred in the election law of the House of Representatives No.9 in the year 1947, Article II provides that twenty representative's join the House of Representatives should elect from the West Bank, then governed by the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Article III of the Act provides that the representatives are elected for constituencies in that area as follows:

- For Jerusalem Province with Jericho two Muslim representatives and one Christian representative.
- For Bethlehem Province one Muslim representative and one Christian representative.
- For Ramallah Province two Muslim representatives and one Christian representative.

The continued observance of the religious Christian minority representation is noticed, even with the unity of the two banks on 24/4/1951, which dedicates to them a permanent presence in the parliament and provides them with participation in the political process.

**4- The Temporary Election Law of the House of Representatives No. 24 of 1960** (Official Gazette)

On the basis of this Act, parliaments from the sixth to the ninth were elected; Chapter IV of the Act states the activation of the constituencies and the seats allocated to them, as set out below in Table 3:



**Table (3)**  
**Representation of Minorities and Indigenous People in the electoral law of 1960**

Number	Region	Representation
1	Amman Province including Jarash and Madaba townships	6 Muslims 2 of them are Circassians / Chechens 2 Christians
2	Salt Province	2 Muslims 1 Christian
3	Ma'daba Province excluding Ma'daba township	1 Muslim 1 Christian
4	Irbid Province including Ajloun township excluding Bani Hasan tribes	5 Muslims 1 Christian
5	Karak Province	1 Muslim 1 Christian
6	Bedouins – North, Middle, and South	3 seats

**Source:** the table is prepared by the researchers in pursuant to the Election Law of 1960.

From the extrapolation of the table, the increase in the number of seats allocated to Christians is noticed. The number of seats was raised to six seats. With respect to the Bedouins, the number increased from two seats to three, while the Circassian/ Chechen remained represented by two seats. The total ratio of Bedouins and minorities are 22% of the total number of members of the fifty seats of the parliament (the sixth to the ninth). This is high compared to their population size, and it comes as a confirmation of the status of minorities and to ensure non-discrimination against them. On the contrary, seats for them were allocated beyond the limits of their population size.

The representation of minority from the West Bank representatives is shown in Table 4, as follows:

**Table (4)**  
**Representation of Minorities in the West Bank**

Number	Region	Representation
1	Jerusalem Province including Jericho	3 Muslims 2 Christians
2	Bethlehem Province	2 Muslims 2 Christians
3	Ramallah Province	3 Muslims 1 Christian

**Source:** the table is prepared by the researchers in pursuant to the Election Law of 1960.

This table indicates the stability of the representation of the religious minority in the Jordanian successive election laws. The table also showed that the legislations take into account the issue of minority representation to enhance the State's respect for human rights.

## II-II - the Senate

The following table shows the representation of minorities and indigenous people in the Senate in the quantitative representation as set forth in Table (5):

Table (5)

## Representation of Minorities and Indigenous people in the Senate from 1988 to 2013

The Senate	Date of Formation	Date of Dissolution	Number of seats allocated to the minority and Bedouins	Percentage of seats to the total number of Council members	Total percentage
The Twenty-fifth (60 members)	25/10/2011	25/10/2013	- 6 Christians	10%	18.3%
			- 1 Circassians	1.6%	
			- 4 Bedouins	6.7%	
The Twenty-fourth (60 members)	25/11/2010	25/10/2011	- 6 Christians	10%	16.7%
			- 1 Circassians	1.7%	
			- 3 Bedouins	5%	
The Twenty-third (60 members)	12/17/2009	11/25/2010	- 5 Christians	8.3%	16.7%
			- 2 Circassians / Chechens	3.4%	
			- 3 Bedouin	5%	
The Twenty-Second (55 members)	29/12/2007	17/12/2009	- 2 Circassians	3.6%	16.4%
			- 4 Christians	7.3%	
			- 3 Bedouin	5.5%	
The Twenty-first (55 members)	17/11/2005	11/28/2009	- 1 Circassian	1.8%	16.4%
			- 4 Christians	7.3%	
			- 4 Bedouins	7.3%	
The twentieth (55 members)	17/11/2003	11/17/2005	- 4 Christians	7.3%	23.6%
			- 3 Circassians	5.4%	
			- 6 Bedouins	10.9%	
The Nineteenth (40members)	23/11/2001	17/11/2003	-3 Chechens / Circassians	7.5%	32.5%
			- 4 Christians	10%	
			- 6 Bedouins	15%	
The Eighteenth (40 members)	11/23/1997	11/23/2001	- 2 Circassians – Chechnya	5%	22.5%
			- 3 Bedouins	7.5%	
			- 4 Christians	10%	
The Seventeenth (40 members)	23/11/1993	11/22/1997	- 1 Circassians	2.5%	17.5%
			- 3 Bedouins	7.5%	
			- 3 Christians	7.5%	
The sixteenth (40 members)	11/23/1989	11/22/1993	- 2 Bedouins	5%	17.5%
			- 2 Circassians	5%	
			- 3 Christians	7.5%	
The Fifteenth (30 members)	12/01/1988	11/23/1989	- 3 Bedouins	10%	20%
			- 1 Circassian	3.3%	
			- 2 Christians	6.7%	

**Source:** the table is prepared by the researchers on the basis of the successive councils according to the documents of the Jordanian Senate and with assistance of Mr. Mohammad Al-Adwan, former Director General of the Royal Jordanian Hashemite Documentation Center.

**Through a review of table (5), the following conclusions can be reached**

1. The study shows that there is a fixed representation in the Senate for minorities ranging from one member to two members of the Circassians and Chechens compared to three to six members of Christians and three to six members of the tribes of nomadic origins.
2. It is clear that the proportion of minority representation in the Senate is larger than their real demographic size.

3. No senate - under consideration - is void of minorities and Bedouins (tribes of nomadic origins), which indicates the status of the stability of their representation in the designated institution.
4. It is noticed that the lowest percentage of representation of minorities and Bedouins reached 16.4% which is high if we accepted that the total minority is no more than 5% of the total population, and the highest percentage of representation amounted to 32%, which is high and indicates that the proportion of minority representation is not subject to the population - numerical standard, but for political considerations in the State.
5. It is clear that the strategy of the state does not only represent minorities and Bedouins with a defined quota in the organizations elected, but also deepens the issue of representation of the boards designated as well. This has led to a high proportion of their representation in the Parliament as a whole; for example, if we take the representation of minorities and Bedouins in the House of Representatives XVI and the current one, we find that the proportion is 18.3%; while in the current Senate it is found that their representation rate is also 18.3% for a total of 36.6% of the total parliament as a whole (180 members), which is high.
6. The state still gives the name Bedouin to the tribes that were characterized by nomad features -based on moving and travelling before and after the establishment of the Jordanian state although the living conditions of the tribes of Bedouin origins have gone beyond the concept of Bedouin approved by the Jordanian legislation during the emergence of the state. Bedouins still have the fixed seats in the Senate along with the reserved seats in the House of Representatives. It is more scientifically accurate instead of using the word "Bedouin" to say "tribes of Bedouin origins". Insisting on using the term "Bedouin" explains that the state is still dealing with them in terms of the beginning of the founding of the state up to this day. This demonstrates political ends, which needs re-examination and re-reading, as there is a thorough and fundamental difference between giving the name Bedouins, or tribes of Nomadic origins. The former refers to a style of living that no longer exists, and the second emphasizes the understanding of the changes that hit the structure of the Bedouin, and that these tribes of nomadic origins are like other tribes in Jordan.

To enhance the scope of the research of the representation of minorities and Bedouins in the second chamber of a parliamentary institution, the Senate; and when returning to the previous councils, representation appeared as set forth in Table (6):

**Table (6)**  
**Minorities and Indigenous people in the Senate from 1947 until 1963**

The Senate	Number of membership of the Council	Christians	Bedouin	Circassians / Chechen	Percentage
The first 1947	10	2	2	1	50%
The second 1950	20	2	2	-	20%
The third 1/9/1951	20	2	-	-	10%
The fourth 1/11/1951	20	2	-	1	15%
The fifth 1955	20	1	-	3	20%
The sixth 1959	25	2	2	1	20%
The sixth 1962	30	1	2	1	16.7%

**Source:** the researchers based on documents of the Senate and the names of the members and verified with assistance of Mr. Mohammad al-Adwan, former Director General of the Royal Jordanian Hashemite Documentation Center.

**According to table (6) the following can be concluded**

- 1- It is clear from the review of the Senate, from the first to the sixth sessions, that the Jordanian regime created a permanent representation of minorities and nomads in the senate designated as a general rule, except in two cases only, was void of the representation of certain groups.
- 2- The percentage of the minority and Bedouins representation in the first council reached 50%, which is somewhat high compared with the number of population.
- 3- The Senate that witnessed the least representation of minorities is the Third Council as there was 10% only of the numerical representation.
- 4- The Christian did not disappear from the representation in the senates under study, while the Bedouins disappeared in three councils, and the Circassian/ Chechen representation disappeared in two councils.

5- The issue of representation of the minorities and Bedouins has been established even in the designated councils that it seemed to be constant in the Jordanian political mind.

### III- The qualitative representation of minorities and Indigenous people in the parliamentary institution

#### III-I-The House of Representatives

As opposed to quantitative representation, the researchers deal with qualitative representation whose indicators were identified by the permanent office (Speaker) and the Standing Committees, according to the (Speaker of Parliament, Deputy Speaker, assistants to following tables<sup>□(4)</sup>:

**Table (7)**

#### Qualitative representation of Minorities and Indigenous people -

#### The House of Representatives XI 1989-1993<sup>(5)</sup>

Parliamentary Position	Parliamentary Session	Christians	Circassians / Chechen	Bedouins
Chairman of Administrative Committee	The first	-	-	1
Chairman of the Committee on Palestine and the occupied Arab territories	The first	1	-	-
Chairman of Administrative Committee	The second	-	-	1
Chairman of Administrative Committee	The third	-	1	-
Chairman of Administrative Committee	The fourth	-	1	-
Chairman of the Health Committee	The fourth	-	1	-
Chairman of the countryside and the desert Committee	The fourth	-	-	1
Assistant to Speaker of Parliament	The First	-	-	1
Second Deputy Speaker of Parliament	The second	1	-	-
Assistant to Speaker of Parliament	The second	-	-	1
Assistant to Speaker of Parliament	The third	1	-	1
First Deputy Speaker of Parliament	The fourth	-	-	1
Assistant to Speaker of Parliament	The fourth	1	-	-

As for the Eleventh House of Representatives, it is noticed that the Bedouins presided three standing committees versus two permanent committees for Christians and the same number for Circassians/ Chechens. Bedouins were represented in the Permanent Bureau through the Assistant to Speaker of Parliament three times, and position of the first Deputy Speaker of Parliament once, while the Christians assumed the position of the second Deputy Speaker of Parliament onetime and the position of the assistant to Speaker twice. Circassians/ Chechens did not assume any position in the Permanent Bureau.

**Table (8)**

#### Qualitative representation of Minorities and Indigenous people – the House of Representatives XII 1993-1997

Parliamentary Position	Parliamentary session	Christians	Circassians / Chechens	Bedouins
Assistant to Speaker of Parliament	The first	1	-	1
Speaker of Parliament <sup>□(6)</sup>	The second	-	-	1
Speaker of Parliament	The third	-	-	1
The First Deputy Speaker of Parliament	The third	-	1	-
Assistant to Speaker of Parliament	The third	-	-	1
Speaker of Parliament	The fourth	-	-	1
The First Deputy Speaker of Parliament	The fourth	-	1	-
Assistant to Speaker of Parliament	The fourth	1	-	1
Chairman of the Legal committee	The first	-	1	-
Chairman of the Administrative Committee	The first	-	-	1
Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Water Strategy	The first	1	-	-
Chairman of the countryside and the desert Committee	The first	-	-	1

Parliamentary Position	Parliamentary session	Christians	Circassians / Chechens	Bedouins
Chairman of Administrative Committee	The second	-	-	1
Chairman of the Committee of public freedoms and the rights of citizens	The second	-	-	1
Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee <sup>(7)</sup>	The third	1	-	-
Chairman of the Committee on Health and Environmental Safety	The third	-	-	1
Chairman of the Committee of Arab and international affairs	The fourth	1	-	-
Chairman of the Committee on Health and Environmental Safety	The fourth	-	-	1
Chairman of the Committee on Labour and Social Development	The fourth	1	-	-
Chairman of the public rights and the rights of citizens	The fourth	-	-	1

With this Council a striking escalation of the qualitative representation of the Bedouins and minorities appears: the Bedouin held the office of Speaker of Parliament three times and the position of assistant to Speaker of Parliament twice; while the Christians occupied the position of assistant to Speaker of Parliament twice, as well as Circassians / Chechens occupied the position of the first Deputy Speaker of Parliament twice and is the best advanced position to them even today. For the standing committees, we find that the Christians have had four times the committee chairs, the Bedouins seven times, and the Circassians/ Chechens once.

**Table (9): Qualitative representation of Minorities and Indigenous people - the House of Representatives XIII 1997-2001**

Parliamentary Position	Parliamentary session	Christians	Circassians/ Chechens	Bedouins
Speaker of Parliament	The first	-	-	1
The First Deputy Speaker of Parliament	The second	1	-	-
The First Deputy Speaker of Parliament	The third	1	-	-
The Second Deputy Speaker of Parliament	The fourth	-	-	1
Chairman of Arab and international Affairs Committee	The first	-	-	1
Chairman of the Administrative Committee	The first	-	-	1
Chairman of the Committee of Education, Culture, Youth	The first	1	-	-
Chairman of the National Steering Committee	The first	1	-	-
Chairman of Administrative Committee	The second	-	-	1
Chairman of the National Steering Committee	The second	1	-	-
Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Mineral Resources	The third	1	-	-
Chairman of the countryside and the desert committee	The third	-	-	-
Chairman of the Committee of Finance and Economy	The fourth	1	-	-
Chairman of the countryside and the desert committee	The fourth	1	-	-

It is noticed that in the House of Representatives XIII the absence of representation of the Circassians / Chechens, while the Bedouins assumed the Speaker of Parliament once and the second Deputy of Speaker once, and they had the presidency of five committees, whereas the Christians assumed the position of the first Deputy Speaker of Parliament twice and the presidency of five committees.

**Table (10)**

**Qualitative representation of the Minorities and Indigenous people - the House of Representatives  
XIV 2003-2007**

<b>Parliamentary Position</b>	<b>Parliamentary session</b>	<b>Christians</b>	<b>Circassians / Chechens</b>	<b>Bedouins</b>
The First Deputy Speaker of Parliament	extraordinary session	-	-	1
The First Deputy Speaker of Parliament	The first	-	-	1
The Second Deputy Speaker of Parliament	The second	-	-	1
The First Deputy Speaker of Parliament	The third	-	-	1
Assistant to Speaker of Parliament	The third	-	-	1
The First Deputy Speaker of Parliament	The fourth	-	-	1
Chairman of the National Steering Committee	The first	1	-	-
Chairman of the Committee on Health and the Environment	The first	-	-	1
Chairman of the National Steering Committee	The second	-	-	1
Chairman of the Committee on Health and the Environment	The second	-	-	1
Chairman of the countryside and the desert committee	The second	-	-	1
Chairman of the National Steering Committee	The third	1	-	-
Chairman of the Committee of public freedoms and the rights of citizens	The third	-	1	-
Chairman of the countryside and the desert committee	The third	-	-	1
Chairman of the Committee of Education, Culture, Youth	The fourth	1	-	-
Chairman of the Committee on Health and the Environment	The fourth	-	-	1
Chairman of the countryside and the desert committee	The fourth	-	-	1

It is noticed that the representation of the Bedouin in the House of Representatives XIV is larger in terms of quality compared to the representation of minorities. Additionally, the minorities - Christians- had a share in the presidency of the standing committees, as seen in three out of four sessions; however, the Circassians/ Chechens assumed the presidency of one session out of four, further, it is clear that the Bedouins and minorities were not excluded from the committee chairs, regardless of the number of standing committees of which they assumed the presidency position, which is an indicator of their qualitative presence side by side with the quantitative presence.

**Table (11)**  
**Qualitative representation of Minorities and Indigenous people – the House of Representatives**  
**XV of 2007-2009<sup>(8)</sup>**

Parliamentary position	Parliamentary session	Christians	Circassians / Chechens	Bedouins
Permanent Bureau	The First	-	-	-
Chairman of the National Steering Committee	The First	-	-	1
Chairman of the Committee of public freedoms and the rights of citizens	The First	1	-	-
Chairman of Countryside Committee and the desert committee	The First	-	-	1
Chairman of the Education Committee of Culture and Youth	The second	-	-	1
Chairman of the Committee of public freedoms and the rights of citizens	The second	1	-	-
Chairman of the countryside and the desert committee	The second	-	-	1
The First Deputy Speaker of Parliament	The second	-	-	1

It is noticed that with the Fifteenth Parliament there is a qualitative decline in the representation of minorities and Bedouins, where parliamentary positions were void of any member of the Circassian / Chechen; the Bedouins occupied the presidency of the committees four times and position of the first Deputy Speaker of Parliament at once, the Christians occupied the presidency of the Standing Committees twice.

**Table (12): Qualitative representation of Minorities and Indigenous people - the House of Representatives XVI 2010 – 2012<sup>(9)</sup>**

Parliamentary position	Parliamentary session	Christians	Circassians / Chechens	Bedouins
Speaker of Parliament	The First	-	-	1
Chairman of the National Steering Committee	The First	1	-	-
Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Mineral Resources	The First	1	-	-
Chairman of the countryside and the desert committee	The First	-	-	1
Second Assistant to Speaker of Parliament	The second	1	-	-
Chairman of the National Steering Committee	The second	-	-	1
Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Mineral Resources	The second	1	-	-
Chairman of the countryside and the desert committee	The second	-	-	1
Chairman of the Committee on Public Services and Tourism and Antiquities	The second	1	-	-

It is noticed that in this Council the Bedouins occupied the Speaker of Parliament once, and the committee chairs three times, while the Christians had chairmanship of the Standing Committees four times and the position of Assistant to Speaker of Parliament once, while the Circassians / Chechens did not occupy any parliamentary position.

**Through a review of tables 7-12, the following conclusions can be reached**

**First**, it is noticed that the Bedouins- indigenous people- had occupied advanced positions politically in the House of Representatives, compared with the minorities, and especially regarding the position of Speaker of Parliament; the most important political position. This is something that the other minorities did not reach in time limits of the study and was confirmed by reviewing documents of the Parliament as listed below in Table 13:

**Table (13)  
Bedouins and the position of Parliament Speaker**

- The Parliament VIII: From 12/23/1966 until 07/08/1963
- The Parliament X: From 16/01/1984 until 30/07/1988
- The last three sessions of Parliament XII: From 11/23/1993 until 09/01/1997.
- The first regular session of the Parliament XIII: on 11.29.1997.
- The extraordinary session of the Parliament XIV 2003.
- The first regular session of the Parliament XVI 11/28/2010.

On the other hand, the Speaker of parliament has not been assumed by any Christian, Circassian or Chechen so far. Further, the Bedouins had the chance of assuming the chairmanship of the several standing committees and the membership of the Permanent Bureau as described previously.

**Second**, the Christians, Circassians, Chechens and Bedouins held positions in the Permanent Bureau of the House of Representatives, ranging from First Deputy Speaker of Parliament to the Second Assistant to Speaker of Parliament. This is an empirical index that the House of Representatives provides political representation qualitatively for minorities and Bedouins, and not only quantitative representation, a point worthy of being noted.

**Third**, the Christians assumed the presidency of several parliamentary committees, which is politically considered the center of political action in the House of Representatives. This indicates the absence of discrimination or marginalization of the Christian minority in the House of Representatives. As for the Circassians and Chechens, despite their little number in the Council, they were present in many cases in the Permanent Bureau in the post of the first Deputy Speaker of Parliament twice and have had the chairmanship of the standing committee three times. This is an important indicator that confirms that despite their small number, the House of Representatives allowed them a qualitative presence in the Council as an indicator of not marginalizing this minority; while Christians and Bedouins have had a semi-permanent presence in the standing committees.

**Fourth**, through the analysis of the qualitative representation of the representation of minorities and Bedouins in the sixteenth House of Representatives in its first and second regular sessions, the following becomes clear:

- The Speaker of Parliament at the first regular session is from the Bedouin community.
- Two committees were chaired by Christians and one committee by the Bedouins; whereas there was a small numerical representation of the Circassians and Chechens which explains the weakness of their constant presence compared with the Christians.
- The presence of a Christian as the second assistant Deputy Speaker of Parliament at its second regular session.
- Two permanent committees were chaired by Christians and two by the Bedouins.

**Fifth**, it is obvious that there was a relative weakness of the political qualitative representation of the Circassians/ Chechens in the parliamentary positions under consideration. It is possible that this is due to their small numerical weight in the Parliament, and the nature of election to the House of Representatives.

**III-II- The Senate**

There is a distinction and differentiation in concluding qualitative representation indicators of minorities and Bedouins between both the House of Representatives and the Senate due to the following considerations:

1. Political power in the House of Representatives is entrusted through election while the Senate through appointment, this is significant in the nature of electing the Permanent Bureau and committees in both houses as the Speaker of the Senate is appointed for two years by the King (the Jordanian Constitution,



1952: Article 65) contrary of the term of Speaker of Parliament who is elected one year. This confers on the Senate a method of work electing its standing committees and permanent bureau that are mostly by consensus (with the exception of President of the Council who is appointed. Necessarily, there is a difference in the political and parliamentary mobilization in the election of committees and the Permanent Bureau, including the Presidency of the Council.

2. The conservative nature of the Senate is avite clear due largely to virtue of the terms of the categories specified by the Constitution for the appointment of its member. (The Jordanian Constitution, 1952 Article 64).
3. The chairmen of the Senate were the heads of the standing committees until 2006, and under the amended the by -laws of the Senate of 1998, which provided for electing the chairman of each committee from its members (by-laws of the Senate, 1988: Article 14).

Based on the qualitative indicators of representation of the Senate, the following observations can be monitored:

**Table (14)**  
**Circassians and the position of the Speaker of the Senate**

- The Speaker of the fifth Senate on 04/12/1956
- The Speaker of the sixth Senate on 01/11/1961. Due to the resignation of all members of the Council on 28/11/1962, it was restructured, returned and chaired on 21/4/1963
- The Speaker of the seventh Senate on 11/01/1963
- The Speaker of the eighth Senate on 01/11/1967
- The Speaker of the ninth Senate on 11/01/1971
- The Speaker of the tenth Senate on 08/21/1973

It is noticed that a Circassian was appointed 7 times out of 25 until today, representing 28%, while no Bedouin or Christian assumed this position since 1947 to 2012, which indicates that some minorities in Jordan enjoy the status of "more than fair. "The presence of Circassians in this important position may help in compensating them for the weaknesses in the quality of their representation in the House of Representatives.

2. No one of the positions of the Permanent Bureau of the Senate was assumed by any of the minorities and Bedouins in the period under study.

3. In relation to committees, the minorities and Bedouins were present in the position of the chairmanship of some of them- with the need to keep in mind that before 2006 there was no chairman of a committee, but a rapporteur who served as its chairman - as follows:

**-The Senate (XVI to XVIII), from 1989 - 2001:**

There were not any minorities and Bedouins in the Permanent Bureau- Speaker of Senate, Deputy Speaker, assistants to Speaker; therefore, qualitative representation was only in committees, as follows:

- The Senate XVI from 23/11/1989 until 23/11/1991: Rapporteur of Finance Committee, 1 Christian, and the same person from 5-12-12/1991 until 12/12/1993.
- The Senate XVII from 28/11/1993 until 28/11/1995: Rapporteur of Finance Committee, 1 Christian.
- The Senate XVIII from 12/04/1997 until 11/22/1999, Rapporteur of the Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, 1 Christian; Rapporteur of the Committee on Educational and Cultural Affairs 1 Circassian / Chechen.
- The Senate XIX from 11/28/1999 to 11/23/2001: Rapporteur of the Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, 1 Christian; Chairman of the Committee of Administrative Affairs, 1 Christian; Chairman of the Committee on Educational and Cultural Affairs, 1 Circassian / Chechen.
- The Senate XXV, from 2011 to this day: Chairman of the Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, 1 Christian), no one from the minorities and Bedouins in the Permanent Bureau.

**Through the review of the reality of the Senate according to the qualitative representation, the following can be concluded:**

1. Bedouins and minorities are not represented at the Permanent Bureau of the Senate, to the same degree as the House of Representatives.
2. There is weakness in the representation of minorities and Bedouins in the Standing Committees of the Senate.
3. Since 1947 there has been one Circassian who assumed the post of Speaker of the Senate with an average of 7 times, although the proportion does not exceed 1% of the total sum of minorities. Their share of qualitative political representation is disproportionate with their numerical size; this is an indication that the Jordanian state

does not deal with the minorities in numerical terms; however, this goes to other considerations for which this study makes a basis to build on.

4. It is clear that the reality of minority representation in the House of Representatives is deeper in understanding than that in the Senate, which is likely to be due to the representative nature of Parliament which monopolizes political representation, compared with the Senate whose members are appointed.

**The political participation of minorities and Bedouins in parliamentary elections**

Finally, to provide a more in-depth picture about the reality of minorities and Bedouins in a way that shows that political participation in the parliamentary elections can be reviewed as an indicator and an important part of the issue of their participation in the political process within the context of their political representation in the parliament to exhibit their numerical weight, as the Sixteenth Parliament (2010-2012) whose elections took place on 11/09/2010 will be addressed. Table 15 shows the reality of their political participation as follows:

**Table (15): Participation of Minorities and Bedouins in the parliamentary elections of the Sixteenth Parliament (2010-2012)**

Minority / indigenous people	Number of votes in the whole elections (Winners and losers)	The proportion of votes of the total number of public votes in the state	The number of votes of eligible voters in the constituencies allocated to them	The proportion of votes obtained by the minorities/ indigenous people compared with the total number of votes of the constituency	The number of constituencies allocated to the minorities
Christians	53.844 votes	4.3%	564.002 votes	9.54%	Eight main constituencies and nine sub- constituencies of the 108 sub-constituencies (Amman, Irbid, Karak, Madaba, Ajloun, Zarqa, Balqa)
Circassians / Chechens	14.139 votes	1.12%	304731 votes	4.63%	Three main constituencies and three sub-constituencies (Amman, Zarqa)
Indigenous people - Bedouins	108.643 votes	8.63%	136.561 votes	79.5%	Three main closed constituencies and nine sub- constituencies

**Source:** the table is prepared by the researchers based on documents and statistics from the Ministry of Interior related to the file of the parliamentary elections of Parliament XVI, taking into consideration that voting in Bedouin constituencies is closed and exclusive on tribes of Nomadic origins specified in the election law; therefore, all votes given to the Bedouins are from the Bedouins only.

In light of the review of the file of the electoral process of 2010, the following facts can be illustrated:

1. According to sources in the Jordanian Ministry of Interior, the percentage of voting was 52.99%; the number who actually voted was 1,257,987; and the number of people entitled to vote was 2.37 million.
2. It is noted that the State did not only determine the percentage of quota allocated to each minority, but also identified the electoral constituencies for the election of their members of the Parliament exclusively; where it selected nine sub-constituencies within the framework of eight main constituencies in seven provinces: Amman, 1 seat; Zarqa, 1 seat; Irbid, 1 seat; Ajloun, 1 seat; Balqa, 2 seats; Karak, 2 seats; and Madaba, 1 seat, out of twelve provinces. This explains where they reside.
3. In relation to the Circassians and Chechens, the seats assigned to them was limited in the province of the capital Amman, two seats, and Zarqa, one seat only. This indicates the places of their gathering and their deployment, and also shows their real size of population, that is generally restricted in two out of twelve provinces.
4. In relation to indigenous people-the Bedouin, two things are noticed: first, Limiting of Bedouin constituencies in matters of nomination and election, and the second, the rate of their participation is high compared with the number of those entitled to vote. This shows the interest of the tribes of Nomadic origins in parliamentary participation, taking into account that the clan is the dominant feature of the social reality of Jordan, and the tribes of nomadic origins are part of the Jordanian tribal

cluster which forms the majority, which explains the high numbers compared with the numbers of minorities.

5. Limiting of Bedouin constituencies, and the limitation of seats for minorities in the specified constituencies would not contribute to the promotion of national integration and the unifying national identity; where it appears that the Bedouin tribes congregations are those who elected Bedouin seats, and the places of the congregation of Christians and Circassians and Chechens have almost contributed to the success of the seats allocated to each of them; which predicts that the electoral system enshrines the narrow loyalties at the expense of national loyalty; thereby weakening the case of political integration which falls within the narrow local loyalties that prevail at the expense of higher national loyalty.
6. It is also noted that the overall of the total votes that voted out for the Circassians and Chechens clearly demonstrate that their proportion of population in the state cannot exceed 1% in any way compared with those who are eligible to polls and vote.
7. It must be emphasized that the votes given to the Christians, Circassians and Chechens are theoretically possible not be all of the same race or caste, although the majority of the votes may be as such; on the contrary of the votes given to the Bedouins; all of them are the votes of the tribes of Nomadic origins because of the strategy by which the State formulated the election of the Bedouins.
8. In light of the total vote rate in Jordan, which did not exceed 53% of the number of eligible voters, and approaching the proportion of votes obtained by the Christians (53,844 votes), the sum of the winners and losers, of the total votes of all the constituencies that have been identified for the seat of the Christian (564,002 votes) and approaching the total of who actually voted at the national level (1257987) votes, it statistically appears that their population proportion is not as addressed by some as 6% and more; but it is less than that; where the percentage of votes they received compared with the total vote in the country is 4.3%, this is the same for the Circassians and Chechens; where the numbers obtained by the winners and losers indicate that the rate is around 1%.

### Conclusion

This study tried to monitor the reality of "minorities under the law," represented in Christians, Circassians and Chechens as well as the Bedouin – indigenous people from the Political Representation perspective. The study reached many findings that can be summarized as follows:

1. Stability and consistency of the representation of minorities and Bedouins figures are existed prominently in the working of the Jordanian state; where it has taken into account their representation in the parliament according to the mechanism of allocation of fixed seats to them; and with the development of time, the seats saw a significant increase, especially the Bedouins and Christians. The successive parliaments have not seen any absence of minorities except in reported in a few cases to the Senate; therefore, the representation can be described as "more than fair."
2. The study found that the ratio of the number of Christians according to the analysis of many studies - in the absence of complete official statistics for no demographic objectives - does not exceed 3% of the population, it ranged between 2%-2.5%; and that the proportion of Circassians/ Chechens around 1%; in exchange for the allocation of seats for them in the Parliament, both the Senate and House of Representatives without regard to the fact of their demographic reality.
3. The study found a paradox by a multi-review of studies that provided statistics for the number of Christians in Jordan in two trends:

**The first trend** the phenomenon of exaggerating their numbers at the representation, and **the second trend** of "diminishing their numbers" From 10% 80 years ago to range between 3-4% in the nineties, and between 2% - 2.5% in 2010; opposed that decrease, stability of their political representation in Parliament can be seen; where the state did not take the issue of decline in their numbers demographically into account; but on the contrary the state continued in the allocation of 9 seats for them in the Parliament, representing 7.5% of the total number of members of the House of Representatives; that is more than their real weight population. With Parliament XVI, a Christian woman succeeded to become the tenth member; representing a growth of 8.33%; and this percentage is much higher than their demographic weight, which does not exceed the rate of 3%. This raises the question about the goals of the state behind the continuation of the representation of religious minorities, including what is called by researchers as "above what is fair". This applies to Circassians – Chechens, where the proportion of their representation in the House of Representatives is 2.5%. This topic does not stop at this point, but it increases with the quality of positions - quality of political representation - both parliamentary and even governmental - assumed by the minorities.

4. In light of the previous findings, the study shows with no doubt, that the Jordanian political system has certain objectives – not intended to be studied in this research - by giving the minority: Christians, Circassians and Chechens seats in Parliament, not commensurate with their population weight, on the one hand, and the absence of any official and announced government statistics about their numbers, on the other hand. Our study leaves this subject for another coming studies to consider this issue, which is likely to reveal and explain some of the reasons for the high proportion of their representation.
5. For the Bedouins- indigenous people, it is found that the political system dealt with the allocation of fixed seats for them, despite the decline in the proportion of Bedouins to a large extent, even though the definition of the Bedouin reported by Jordanian legislation does not currently match with the reality of tribes of Nomadic origins who have settled; so what is the justification for the continued allocation of seats for them and the continuation of the strategy of distinguishing them from the rest of society; even the mechanism of the election of the Bedouins is based on a tribal not geographical basis; this means that the election seat of the Bedouin are not in accordance to specific geographic areas, but on tribal bases. The proportion of Bedouins since 2004 has disappeared almost entirely, in spite of that, the state still persists in giving the term “Bedouin” to some of the tribes, and allocates parliamentary seats to them in the elections law. On the other hand, it is found that the indistinguishable electoral system sides with the tribes of nomadic origins specified in the law. Bedouins are today tribes from the rest of the tribes of Jordan; and the allocation of nine seats to them - according to certain specific tribes- is a lack of justice with the rest of other tribes, especially since there are many of the tribes of Jordan of Bedouin origins that are not mentioned in the list of Bedouins in the electoral system. The paradox is that whenever the percentage of Bedouin declines, the greater the number of representative seats for Bedouins. This paradox drives to the question about the potential political feasibility behind it.
6. The current electoral system does not enhance the national unity and the Political integration, but increases the social divide and weakens national integration. As a result of the above, the electoral law does not encourage construction of a unifying national identity.

#### NOTES

- 1) If we controversially accept what is defined by church leaders regarding the Christian population, the percentage - compared with the estimated population in 2009 contained in the figures of Department of Statistics, which is 5.98 million people - is 2.5%. This is an indication that the true proportion does not exceed 3%, and it is highly unlikely to be the true proportion of the number of Christians the ratio that lies between 1.5 - 5% according to the report above. What increases the likelihood of this result is the decline in numbers each year because of migration among the Christian mainly.
- 2) The last census of population in Jordan was in 2004, and it did not include any information about minorities, until writing this study.
- 3) The researchers make here a notice and an important paradox : The quota for Christians is 9 seats only, however, there are ten Christians in this Parliament; where there are nine seats through the Christian quota and one woman through the women's quota, in which a Christian woman succeeded for the first time since application of the quota. This casts shade on the potential of increasing the number of Christians above the rate set by the state, which has not been taken into account by the State in accordance with the equation of the representation of Christians. Assuming the success of more than a Christian woman, for example, this may cause an apparent disorder in the equation of representation; this also applies to the Bedouins, to whom the state has allocated 9 seats, but the number increased with the success of a woman of Bedouin origins through the women's quota, raising the number representing the Bedouins to ten instead of nine seats only allocated to them; this means that the State has estimated specific seats for their representation and did not expect that the proportion of their representation will rise through the women's quota.
- 4) The researchers used the issuance of the Secretary General of the Senate Dr. Khalaf Alhmissat and researcher Khaled Zoubi in the book named the Parliamentary Life in Jordan 1989-2001, Amman, the authors, 2003, p. 207 and beyond, in addition to systematic scrutiny of the names of the election results published in the Official Gazette on the occasion of the publishing the election findings; where the constituency name and the position which was won (Muslim, Christian, Circassian / Chechen, Bedouin)

was mentioned, making it easier for classification researchers contained in the tables above to check the names.

- 5) It should be noted in this context that the number of the standing committees was 11 committees in accordance with the by-laws of the parliament of 1952 and its amendments. And with the by-laws of the parliament of 1996 that issued in the Official Gazette dated 16/3/1996, became 14 committees.
- 6) The term of the speaker of the parliament is one year, and he may be re-elected, according to Article 69, paragraph 1, of the Jordanian Constitution of 1952, as amended.
- 7) It should be noted that in this session the new by-laws for the year 1996 have been applied, and the number of standing committees was raised to be 14 committees with new names for some of them.
- 8) Documents of the Jordanian House of Representatives, the General Secretariat of the House of Representatives
- 9) Documents of the Jordanian House of Representatives, the General Secretariat of the Council of Representatives; and the researchers mention that the first session was held on 28/11/2010 and the second on 26/10/2011 .the royal decree to dissolve the parliament XVI issued on 5 Oct 2012.

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## المؤسسة البرلمانية الأردنية: دراسة في التمثيل السياسي

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### ملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد نطاق التمثيل السياسي للبرلمان الأردني من منظور دراسة الأقليات والسكان الأصليين، ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة اعتمدت على المنهج القانوني والتحليلي والإحصائي. وقد توصلت الدراسة إلى العديد من النتائج، أهمها: أن تمثيل الأقليات والبدو في البرلمان يتم من خلال نظام الكوتا، وقد تميّز تمثيلهم بثبات وحضور دائمين في البرلمان منذ تأسيس الدولة. وأخيراً، قدمت الدراسة توصيات محددة تتضمن: ضرورة إعادة النظر بآليات انتخاب الأقليات من خلال إتباع آليات انتخابية تسهم في تعزيز الهوية الوطنية. والمسائل الفنية والتقنية الأخرى ذات الصلة بقانون الانتخاب، ومن الضروري إعادة النظر بنظام الحصص للبدو والأقليات وفقاً لوزنهم السكاني.

**الكلمات الدالة:** التمثيل السياسي، الأقليات، السكان الأصليين، المؤسسة البرلمانية الأردنية.

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