

Urban Policymaking in Amman: Shaping the City through Governmental & Municipal Power Structures

Sandra Hiari

DPhil in Sustainable Urban Development, University of Oxford

Abstract

This research seeks to investigate urban policymaking among governmental and municipal administrations through understanding how these institutions and their bureaucrats embed and reshape traveling urban planning concepts. These concepts are spatial by nature and constitute various forms of land development. Under this premise, the production of the built environment in cities is studied through the discursive institutional practices associated with the travel of urban policies. The research investigates the authorship of Amman's zoning by-law over the course of a decade to utilize it as a case study that sheds insights on how policies from abroad have been locally embedded and adapted. In 2007, the city hired a Canadian international firm to revamp its zoning by-law as part of an overall master plan for the city, the Amman 2025 plan, which was hailed for its innovative techniques in planning 201. Having injected the zoning by-law with new urbanism concepts, the firm developed and delivered the by-law over the course of two years after which the planning bureaucrats at Amman municipality undertook an eight-year long exercise to embed traveling urban planning concepts into the by-law (such as the introduction of mixed-use zoning categories). This research draws on both postcolonial thinking and urban policy mobilities to redraft a place for unlabelled cities like Amman to claim a place in the world. Postcolonial thinking opens up venues for introducing vocabularies describing non-Western conformist conditions while urban policy mobilities speak to the relational, power-laden structures in places where traveling policy is implemented.