



POLITECNICO
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Honors thesis

MASTER COURSE OF

Territorial, Urban, Environmental and Landscape Planning

Abstract

**The Jordanian refugee camps between temporary settlements
and permanent settlements: the relationship between Za'atari
refugee camp and the surrounding territory**

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by

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The presence of the refugee camps in Jordan. The country has a long tradition of welcoming refugees. For more than seventy years on its territory there are over fifteen refugee camps of various sizes and in different contexts. The research thesis, after explicate the concept of camp, it describes the camps in Jordan and the created instruments for their implementation and management. Finally, it deepens the relationship between the camp of Za'atari and the its surrounding territory. The thesis is divided into six chapters:

In the first chapter of the thesis, I propose a critical review of the definitions of the settlement concept and how this concept has evolved over time. Then I will introduce a new concept of distinction or that between “permanent and temporary settlements” that is the key element of differentiation between a traditionally evolved town and a refugee camp that artificially evolved. Finally, as the temporary camps for some, over time, it is transformed into permanence.



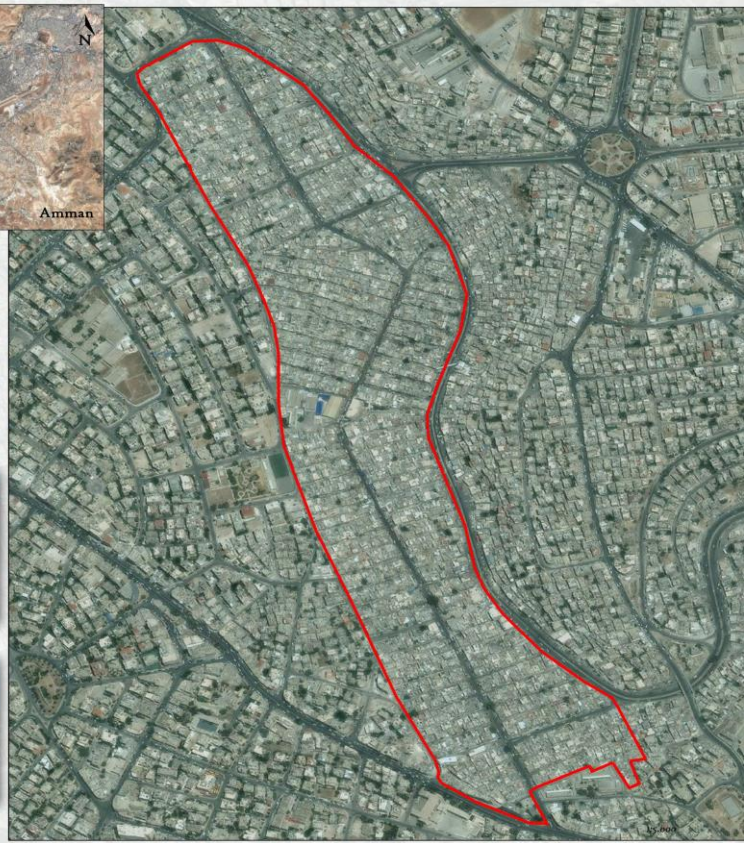
Za'atari Syrian refugee camp, Mafraq Governorate, Jordan.

In the second chapter I will explain the reasons for the choice of Jordan country as a geographic area of study and I will provide physical, morphologic and human characteristics of its territory and the regional geopolitics in which Jordan is inserted.

In the third chapter, it will deepen the Jordanian permanent settlement development and its strong acceleration initiated by the creation of the current state (since independence from the UK in 1946). In particular, they analyse the processes of human settlement and urbanization of the country in relation to the topography of the area and the mono-centric role of the capital Amman.

Jabal el-Hussein palestinian refugee camp in Amman

Jabal el-Hussein camp is the third of four camps established in Jordan after 1948 to accommodate refugees who left Palestine as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. The camp was set up in 1952 for 8,000 refugees on an area of 0.42 square kilometers, northwest of Amman. Nowadays the refugee housed in this camp are approximately 32,000 Palestinians refugee. The refugees replaced the original tents with more durable shelters and UNRWA provided roofing. The camp has since grown into an urban-like quarter and has become part of Amman. As with other camps in Jordan, Jabal el-Hussein camp faces severe overcrowding. There is no more space for further building.



- Foto by Enrico Palitani
- Map own production of orthophotos in arcgis

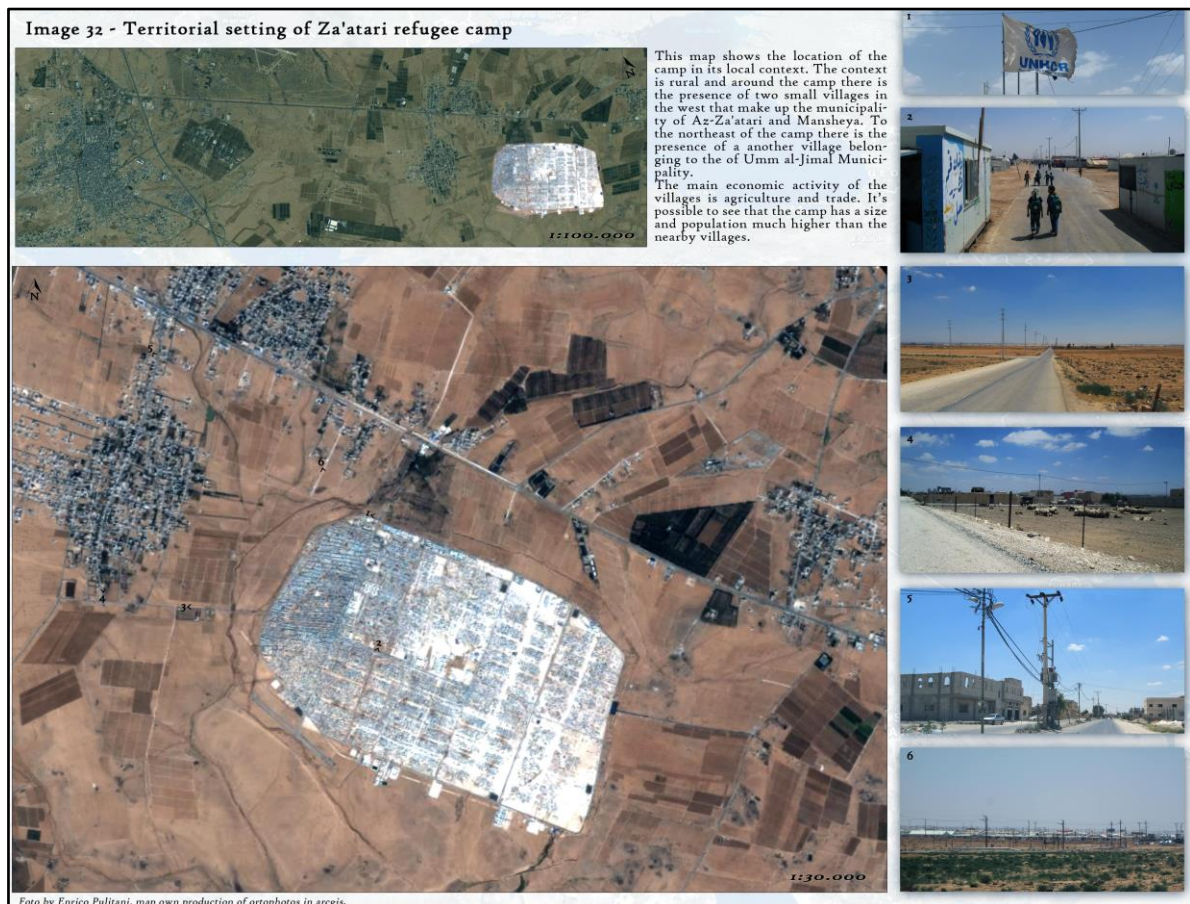
Jabal el-Hussein Palestinian refugee camp in Amman city, Amman Governorate, Jordan.

In the fourth chapter, I will deepen rather the question of refugee camps and how in the last seventy years they have evolved and the settlement policies and urban and regional instruments created ad hoc for the emergency are modified. Then highlight the differences between the Palestinian camps and the Syrians regarding especially their position in the region and their integration with it. The first made, all close to the main urban agglomerations and now integral parts of their urban fabric in the form of quarters. The Syrian camp are realized in most isolated areas.

In the fifth chapter, has reported an overview on the main instruments produced specifically to deal with the arrival of many Syrian refugees in Jordan cause of the civil war in their country. So, I will deepen how the Jordanian government together with the United Nations fielded actions and practices to mitigate that impact and producing specific tools for its management. In addition, I will deepen the Emergency Handbook that containing information on the implementation and management of specially made refugee camps to meet emergency housing for refugees.

In the sixth and final chapter, I will drop to greater geographic scale relating to Governorate of Mafraq and the homonym capitol city in the north of the country. This governorate, which borders Syria for about 300 km, and the second of the largest but also one of the last by population and urbanization. It hosts, on its territory, the refugee camp of Za'atari with a current population of about 80.000 people, and it is also one of the largest camp in the world with an area approximately of 6 km². Moreover, considering the camp as an actual urban

settlement, it would represent in the top ten of the Jordanian cities (in Jordan there are more than 50 municipalities with a population of more than 6,000 inhabitants). Furthermore, I will compare the information on the minimum standards provided for the Emergency Handbook with those actually present in the camp of Za'atari. After having completed a spatial analysis of the governorate relatively urbanization and socio-economic system, I will deepen the relationship between the camp and the surrounding territory in which it is inserted and the relationship with the governorate capital city, Mafraq, which is less than 10 km away from the camp, and the towns and villages closer to the camp.



Territorial setting of Za'atari refugee camp

I will analyze the territorial relations between the various entities and I will try, after processing the data collected directly on the site and interviews with figures involved in this strategic territorial process of mutual adaptation, to trace a result of the relationship of the camp on the territory complementarily and the impact of refugees residing in the nearby town of Mafraq. They almost doubled its population. Also in this last part, relatively to the Governorate examined, I have tried to detect the effectiveness of policies and measures introduced by both the national government and by international organizations and especially the UNHCR.

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