



Philanthropy in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia Lifestyle and Liberty in the Name of Piety and Islam

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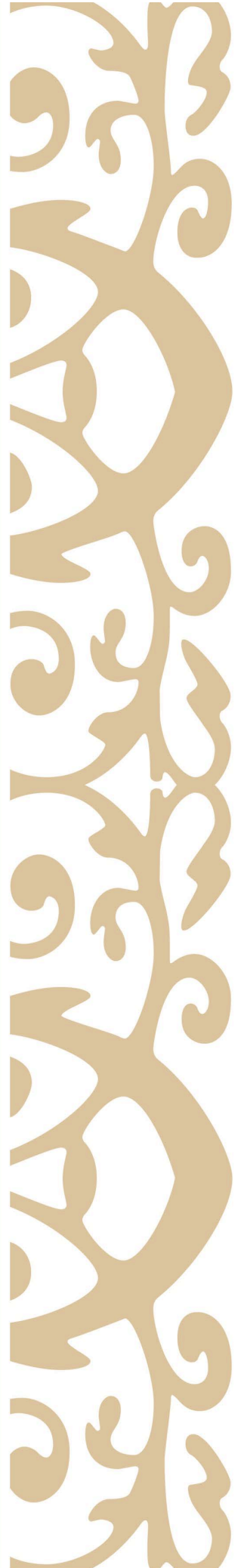




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Philanthropy in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia


Lifestyle and Liberty in the Name of Piety and Islam

While Saudi philanthropy is usually characterized as a tool for terrorism, there is little awareness outside of the Kingdom about the vibrant culture of benevolent giving and community support that shapes the every-day life of many Saudis. This frequently overlooked activism sheds new light on the debate about civil society in Saudi Arabia. Within the philanthropic field lies great potential for participation and civic engagement. Hence, it seems surprising that in the context of Saudi Arabia, charity as a social phenomenon is largely ignored by cultural, social or political sciences.

Current State of Research

Numerous studies point to the many benevolent initiatives of the Kingdom. ⁽ⁱ⁾Yet only the political scientist Amelie Le Renard has begun the systematic examination of this trend. In her essay "Pauvreté et Charité en Arabie Saoudite" ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾(2008), Le Renard sheds light on the practical experience of benevolent women's associations (jam'iyyat khairiyya nisa'iyya) in Riyadh and develops the thesis that a notorious mixing of welfare state and charity serves as a power-retaining technique for the ruling elite. In the same year (2008) Karim Shalaby adds to the discussion a survey of the main institutionalized forms of charity in Saudi Arabia ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾. In his essay he highlights the extremely restrictive, un-transparent nature of the benevolent sector and notes that there is no statistically firm data on the amount of aid and the number of charitable initiatives for the country as a whole. Caroline Montagu (2010) adds her remarks on the deficient state of research on charitable initiatives in Saudi Arabia. ^(iv) At the same time her essay sheds light on the connection between the voluntary sector and the ruling Al Sa'ud family. Montagu highlights the relevance of the topic by showing how voluntary social involvement in Saudi Arabia takes on the shape of an active and lively civil society.

Montagu's essay takes a stand opposite the prevailing academic opinion which characterizes Saudi Arabia as an autocratic, absolute monarchy where democratic institutions, freedom of expression, political groups and hence civil society are heavily circumscribed or rather non-existent. ^(v) Although Montagu's thesis has been taken up as fairly stimulating and thought-provoking ^(vi) it is nonetheless problematic in several aspects concerning the philanthropic field. Montagu mistakenly bases her paper on the assumption that there is no academic work by Saudis on civil society in the Kingdom ^(vii) Her study starts with a Nortonian definition of civil society: "a mélange of associations, clubs, guilds, syndicates, federations, unions, parties and groups come together to provide a buffer between state and citizen. ... the functioning of civil society is literally and plainly at the heart of participant political systems." ^(viii) This definition is overthrown a few lines later in favor of a less "hard-edged definition", as to "more fluid processes of traditional interaction" or any "formal and informal initiatives in society which have a direct bearing on the political level" or finally simply "rates of activism". The reader is left with no clear idea of the central concept of her study. This vague idea of civil society is then applied to the charitable attitude of Saudis with little consideration on the cultural relativism of applying a concept that was developed in and reflects a European context, to the Middle East. Without differentiating much, Montagu wrongfully describes the most diverse forms of 'benevolent' associations (welfare associations and charity organizations, but also state institutions such as the National Dialog, private schools and colleges,



hospitals and the chambers of commerce) as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or not-for-profit organizations (NPOs) with an intrinsic political ambition in order to prove her thesis that “Saudi Arabia has a thriving civil society.”^(ix) The author refers to a few, contradictory examples to support her thesis. For example, she introduces Al-Birr Society first as an NGO and criticizes that “ignorance exists in the West about the prevalence of domestic non-governmental organizations (NGOs)”^(x). Later on she admits that actually “Al-Birr is almost part of the government ”.^(xi)

Unlike Montagu, this study does not start from a theoretical angle but from benevolent practice. The following observations are based on six months of empirical research conducted while I was enrolled as a visiting Masters student at King ‘Abd al-‘Aziz University (KAU) at Jeddah. This paper aims at ‘mapping’ the voluntary sector in Jeddah. It will give an overview of the benevolent field that encompasses the three central forms of institutionalized, not-for-profit philanthropy: the welfare association (jam‘iyya khariyya); the charity organization (mu‘assasa khariyya); and corporate giving of companies (CSR-initiatives).^(xii) The first part of the paper (I.) examines their legal framework in the current political system. It follows an outline of today’s main fields of action, which touches upon the history of these institutions within Saudi society: Who are the major players in the benevolent scene today and whom do they help? The analysis then concentrates on two very prominent actors in the philanthropic field, women (II.) and adolescents (III.).^(xiii) This practical approach is placed within the theoretical framework of Bourdieu’s ‘theory of practice’.^(xiv)

I. Overview: Institutionalized Philanthropy in Jeddah

The oldest kind of benevolent institution, which is examined in this paper, is the welfare association (jam‘iyya khariyya). The first welfare association was established in 1964 with the foundation of the Women’s Welfare Association in Jeddah (al-Jam‘iyya an-nisa‘iyya bi-Jidda). The establishment of welfare associations is therefore much older than the second kind of benevolent institution examined in this paper, the mu‘assasa khariyya, which can be translated as ‘benevolent’ or ‘charity’ organization, of which the first were founded in Jeddah in 2000. Namely these are the Charity Organization of Abu Dawud (Mu‘assasat Abu Dawud al-khariyya) and the Charity Organization for the Mother of Prince Thamir b. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz (al-Mu‘assasa al-khariyya li-walidat al-amir Thamir b. ‘Abd al-Aziz). Today, there are more than 420 welfare associations and 42 charity organizations registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs (Wizarat ash-shu’un al-ijtima‘iyya, MOSA) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.^(xv)

In the province of Mecca (mintaqat Makka), the most populous province in the Kingdom, there are 107 welfare associations registered with MOSA; 22 of these institutions are located in the Jeddah district (muhafathat Jidda). Of these welfare associations, 7 are only-for-women’s associations (jam‘iyyat khariyya nisa‘iyya). In contrast to the welfare associations, which are mainly located in Mecca, most of the benevolent organizations are situated in Jeddah, the economic capital of the province: the province of Mecca has 22 benevolent organizations under the auspices of MOSA, 15 of which are settled and active in the district Jeddah.^(xvi)

Since CSR-initiatives within the context of companies and corporations are not obliged to register with a state ministry, there are no accurate figures on how many businesses are active in community support.^(xvii) However, local sources suggest that today every enterprise with a handful of employees carries out CSR at least in its external communication and corporate design.^(xviii)

Historically there has always been a strong connection between the merchants (buyut tijariyya) and the communities in Jeddah, with the commercial elite being very active in the politics of the city and community services. ^(xix) Due to the increasing popularity of the term CSR ^(xx), we find that long-existing charity measures and community services are increasingly referred to as 'CSR-initiatives'. For example, the all incomes-serving philosophy of Al-Magrabi Hospitals, which was founded in Jeddah in the 1950s, is nowadays labeled as CSR, whereas older self-portrayals talk simply of a vision of "compassionate capitalism." ^(xxi)

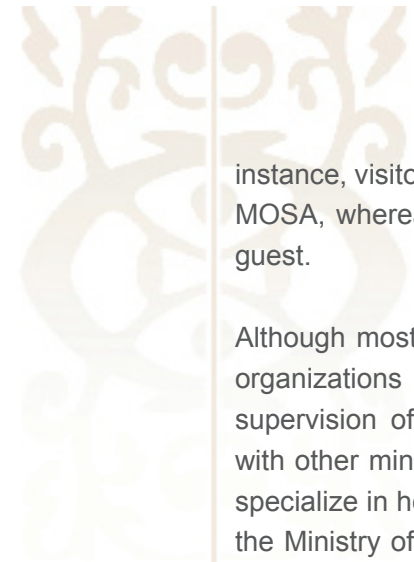
The Legal Environment

At first glance, the Saudi Basic Law of Government (an-nizam al-asasi li-l-hukm), seems to explicitly encourage philanthropy.^(xxii) "(§ 27) The state guarantees the rights of the citizen and his family in cases of emergency, illness and disability, and in old age; it supports the system of social security and encourages institutions and individuals to contribute in acts of charity." ^(xxiii) However, at the same time, citizens are missing essential rights like freedom of expression or freedom of assembly; human rights that seem to be the basis of any organized benevolent, voluntary or civil action.

All associations and organizations in Saudi Arabia need to be registered with the state and listed by the National Authority for Associations and Civil Organizations or NAA (al-Hai'a al-wataniyya li-l-jam'iyyat wa-l-mu'assasat al-ahliyya). ^(xxiv) The NAA is a governing state body responsible for developing the civil society sector. This sub-organization of MOSA is directly overseen by the royal family and is responsible for the supervision and evaluation of welfare associations as well as benevolent organizations. ^(xxv) At the same time, it sets up the rules and structures that govern these institutions. So, the role of the NAA resembles - at the first glance - that of the Charity Commission in England or the Stiftungsaufsicht in Germany. However, the authority of the NAA goes much further. It has a veto power, which may apply to program development, permissions to receive visitors, or approval of board members. If the activities of the group do not match the vision of the NAA it can dissolve the organization or initiate a fusion with another group.

In its Draft Regulations of Associations and Civil Society Organizations the NAA requires welfare associations (jam'iyyat khairiyya) to have at least 20 founding members of Saudi origin who have not been convicted of a crime against honor or decency. If the NAA approves the association, it receives generous yearly financial support from the National Fund for Supporting Associations ranging from 50 000 to 5 million SRA depending on the nature of its activities and its geographic location. Moreover, material support from the NAA, such as land gifts, technical equipment, dates to be distributed among the poor during the fasting month of Ramadan, or privileged prices for electricity and water, is common. ^(xxvi) The NAA also dictates financial modalities to the associations: they may collect donations (*sadaqat* or *zakat*) and member fees, or set up a trust (*waqf*) to finance their activities. ^(xxvii)

A benevolent organization (*mu'assasa khairiyya*), on the other hand, can be founded by any individual Saudi. However, such organizations have no claim to financial support from the state and are not allowed to collect donations in public. As a result, benevolent organizations are financed solely by the private assets of their founder(s), member fees or endowments (*awqaf*). This relative self-financing grants organizations a certain liberty and relative autonomy in their activities. For



instance, visitors to welfare associations must first make the effort to receive a visiting permit from MOSA, whereas benevolent organizations may decide themselves whether or not to receive a guest.

Although most benevolent groups are registered with MOSA, there are some associations and organizations registered with other ministries, some of which seem less restrictive than the supervision of MOSA. ^(xxviii) No figures exist on the total number of organizations registered with other ministries. The practice is most visible in the area of benevolent organizations which specialize in health services. Due to their focus on health-related issues, they are registered with the Ministry of Health rather than MOSA. Prominent examples are the Help Center (Markaz al-'Aun) and the Home Health Care Organization (al-Mu'assasa al-khairiyya al-wataniyya li-ar-ri'aya as-sihhiyya al-manziliyya). One explanation for this is that the Ministry of Health is one of the few employers in Saudi Arabia that allows men and women to work together in health services with no time-consuming, hard-to-get special permission. The Help Center, which offers a day-care program and vocational training for handicapped persons, openly talks about this advantage. Due to its registration with the Ministry of Health, the institution is allowed to accept handicapped boys and girls in its program. It also benefits from the fact that its employees might be men and women in a mixed environment. This mixed gender setting is a necessary and pragmatic consideration: there is not enough qualified male nursing staff in the country to do without women. ^(xxix)

MOSA's tight supervision of benevolent groups is often framed in the context of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which were financed by the Saudi welfare association Al-Haramain. ^(xxx) Due to international pressure the Saudi government has since been trying to hinder individual, uncontrolled donations. The influence of the state on benevolent action is increasing: Mosques, for instance, are no longer allowed to put up donation-boxes for collecting zakat, the obligatory religious alms for all Muslims, to support their local welfare associations. ^(xxxi) Additionally, the collection of donations as part of charity campaigns by private entities, such as university groups, is extensively examined and requires the approval of MOSA. ^(xxxii)

In 1995 the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA), together with the Interior Ministry and the commercial banks established regulations in order to hinder money laundering. As a consequence of the increasing threat of regional and international terrorism, these regulations were updated in 2003. The updates specifically targeted the financial activities of benevolent institutions, greatly tightening government control over such activities. Titled Rules Governing Anti-Money Laundering and Combatting Terrorist Financing, ^(xxxiii) the updated regulations were distributed to all financial institutions of the country with the aim of re-establishing state control over all financial transactions within the philanthropic field.

This creates a burden on philanthropic institutions as it restricts their financial independence. For instance, the regulations deny welfare associations the ownership of a credit or debit card as well as any ability to possess liquid assets. For all benevolent organizations and associations it is forbidden to accept international financial contributions.

In the face of the strict legal environment governing welfare associations and benevolent organizations, CSR-initiatives enjoy the relative freedom of a legal grey zone. There are no outer official limits and regulations imposed on CSR-activities. Therefore, companies and business

corporations possess a unique opportunity for individual and family philanthropy: “an accommodation to and haven from some of the restrictions and risks that philanthropic work entails under the current legal and administrative systems.”^(xxxiv) Depending on the size of the business and the emphasis on corporate giving, CSR-initiatives tend to be organized as ‘corporate foundations’, like the very prominent Abdul Lateef Jameel Community Service Programs, or simply as ‘departments within a company’, a path which the large Saudi conglomerate Dallah Albaraka chose “to serve the corporation’s commitment to sustainable development and social change”^(xxxv). Even more often ‘CSR’ is used to describe singular financial donations directed at local welfare associations or benevolent organizations, which carry out the actual philanthropic project.^(xxxvi)

In between there are mixed forms between the classic welfare association (*jam'iyya khairiyya*) and the classic charity organization (*mu'assasa khairiyya*) and the most recent phenomenon of CSR-initiatives. For instance, some benevolent organizations, founded by influential business families, are logistically and financially bound to corporations and not to state ministries.^(xxxvii) Hence, they enjoy the relative legal freedom of a CSR-project, while offering the fixed structures of a benevolent organization and its independence from market-economy-structures.

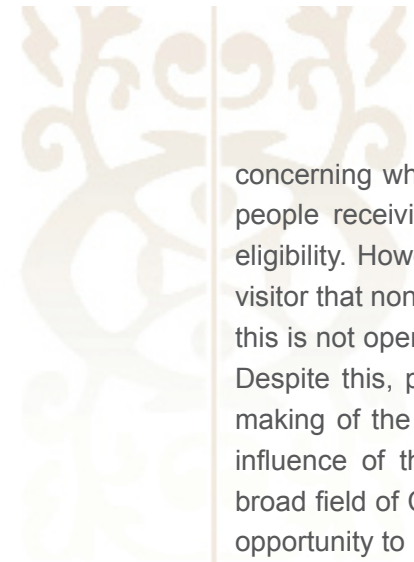
Today's Fields of Action: A Renaissance of Giving

Empirical research into the philanthropic sector of Jeddah shows that increasingly more and more Saudis ‘are doing good deeds.’ The enormous increase in benevolent work is remarkable: since 2005, as many new welfare associations (*jam'iyyat khairiyya*) were established as in the previous forty years.^(xxxviii) The institutional continuity that characterizes women’s associations (*jam'iyyat khairiyya nisa'iyya*) and the considerable material, financial and social assistance that these women have been offering over half a century to women in need seems noteworthy. By contrast CSR is a very young social concept whose virtues are intensely debated in Saudi society.^(xxxix)

In an environment of expanding volunteerism, it is surprising to find that the fields of action of benevolent groups are expanding only slowly. So far most of the benefits are directed towards certain disadvantaged groups of society: orphans, the poor, the old, widows and divorcees and handicapped persons. Of the 16 welfare associations in Jeddah, 7 provide services to these marginalized groups. Jeddah businesses have recently added a focus on youth development programs by offering internships and vocational training, most notably to female students.^(xl) Following the national, state-sponsored Saudiization-strategy, some businesses see their corporate social responsibility fulfilled by employing and training young Saudi nationals.^(xli)

The focus on solely supporting socially disadvantaged groups - and not the engaging in other areas such as sport or cultural activities, music and science, which are important areas in the international philanthropic scene - appears to stem from the religious tradition of Islam. On numerous occasions the Koran calls for giving to the poor (*al-fuqara'*) and helping the people in need (*al-masakin*), but also to the indebted (*al-gharamin*) and to those who have fallen unintentionally into dependence or slavery.^(xlii) The correlation between the recipients of Saudi benevolent practice and the legitimate recipients stipulated within the Islamic tradition is telling of the motivation behind this focused giving.

The Saudi state exercises great influence over criteria defining those who are eligible to receive the services of benevolent institutions. Welfare associations in particular face strict regulations



concerning who they may help.^(xliii) While foreigners used to make up a high percentage of the people receiving aid,^(xliiv) since 2004 Saudi nationality is a nearly universal state-criterion for eligibility. However, visiting orphanages the outer appearance of some children suggests to the visitor that non-Saudi or half-Saudi children are sometimes taken in by these institutions although this is not openly discussed. This suggests an exception to the rule of nationality in some cases. Despite this, plenty of other examples exist where the autonomy and degree of self-decision-making of the benevolent institution depends to a great extent on the financial and/or political influence of the founder(s) or patron(s) of the organization or association. Furthermore, the broad field of CSR-initiatives offers the financially independent, influential business (families) the opportunity to become active without government restrictions.^(xlv)

The aid programs of charitable organizations are very diverse and go much further than to simply hand out a benefit payment or social security (*ad-daman al-ijtima'i*).^(xlvii) The activities mostly target symptoms of poverty, for example, through the allocation of foodstuff or donated used clothing. It seems, however, that a trend emerges towards more strategic help directed at long-term capacity development. This is indicated for instance by the Welfare Association of Modesty (*Jam'iyyat iktifa' al-khairiyya*), the youngest women's association in Jeddah. Founded in 1998, this is the only women's association in the city which does not serve the socially disadvantaged. Instead, Iktifa' targets poverty through the strategic collection of data in poor neighborhoods. This data is used to ascertain the root causes of poverty and financial dependence. Iktifa' then shares its findings with collaborating classical welfare groups in order to develop best-practice methods.^(xlviii) Other examples of this sustainable trend are the Welfare Association of Handicraft (*Jam'iyyat al-aiyadi al-hirfiyya al-khairiyya*), which offers vocational training to the unemployed and the conservative approach of the Charitable Welfare Association to Help Young People to Marriage and Focus on Family (*al-Jam'iyya al-khairiyya li-musa'adat ash-shabab 'ala az-zawaj wa-at-taujiyya [sic! recte taujih] al-usari*), which sees the roots of poverty in a dysfunctional Islamic society. These examples also prove the tendency towards an increasing specialization of services, in contrast to the older institutions which try to help whoever knocks at their door in need.

Furthermore, empirical research sheds light on the surprising fact that a great deal of benevolent action in Jeddah - especially by newer initiatives - takes place in the arena of healthcare. Out of 16 welfare associations in Jeddah, 8 are committed to health services. The discussion of this strong medical orientation is complicated: A national comparison of the profiles of welfare associations and charitable organizations is essential in order to assess whether this phenomenon is a specific feature of the city Jeddah or a national trend. From a historical perspective, an expansion of existing quarantine and health stations, and the presence of special medical facilities is conceivable as a result of Jeddah's function as a pilgrim's harbor. A special structure of need within the urban population of Jeddah cannot, however, be ruled out.

From a broader socio-political perspective, it would also be conceivable that the increasing philanthropic activity in the medical field correlates with a nationwide trend towards the privatization of health services. For the catalyst of this seems to be, amongst other things, the defective condition of the state-provided social health care.

The Saudi government appears to be unable to guarantee free medical care which meets the needs of the population. A steady demographic pressure, rising unemployment and an unwanted

dependence of the state budget on oil revenues has increasingly forced the government to push for a diversification of the economy and privatization of public welfare. The Kingdom is nowadays known for its free, though bad medical services, which is why more and more wealthy Saudis seek treatment abroad. It is logical, given this situation, that the philanthropic field will fulfill the growing needs of those who are unable to find adequate medical care in the public healthcare system or seek better treatment abroad. ^(xlviii)

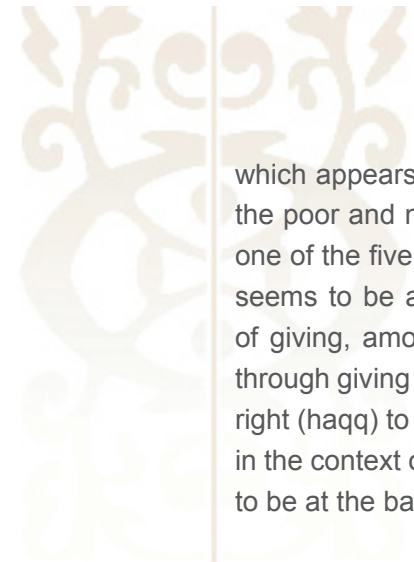
The results of this mapping-approach of the philanthropic field of Jeddah can also be read in reverse: in what areas are the philanthropic initiatives of Jeddah not active? As noted before, philanthropic initiatives tend to be least active in areas which are traditionally valued by international philanthropy such as: sports, science and culture. ^(xlix) In the long run though, CSR initiatives seem to strive towards these areas, as the focus on youth and educational assistance, or financial support for the recently established King ‘Abdallah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) suggests. Moreover, in a national comparison, this approach can already be found in the Saudi capital of Riyadh, where the King Faisal Foundation offers one of the most excellent research centers and library in the Kingdom.^(l) Perhaps this indicates that, in the future, museums and libraries will be built through philanthropic initiatives in Jeddah.

Especially for Saudi Arabia, it is also remarkable that the institutions described here do not explicitly engage in the religious sphere. In other Muslim countries, the philanthropic commitment of Muslims is described as penetrated by *da‘wa*, (Islamic precepts and proselytizing).^(li) The context of a religious culture of giving in which the legitimate recipient of charity is defined in the Koran to be - in addition to the poor and needy - those who “should be won (for the cause of Islam) (*al-mu‘allafat qulubuhum*)” and those “in holy war (on Allah’s way) (*fi sabil Allah*)” raises some expectation of a missionary approach.^(lii) This not-explicitly-religious giving could be the result of the Saudi state’s monopoly on religion which discourages private religious efforts by philanthropists. An additional explanation for this may lie in the fact that the religious sphere in Saudi Arabia is already seized by seemingly philanthropic state-institutions such as the omnipresent International Organization for Memorizing the Holy Qur’an or the pious religious endowments (*awqaf*). Additionally, officially every Saudi in the Kingdom is already Muslim by birth and receives a profound knowledge of Islam through state education. Hence, philanthropists in Saudi Arabia might not see a need to offer further services to promote Islam.

Actors of the Philanthropic Scene

The following description of the actors of the philanthropic sector is based on four ideal typical benefactors that primarily appear in the benevolent initiatives of Jeddah: Women, adolescents of the upper class, merchants and the royal family.^(liii) The presented ‘types of actors’ are ideal constructions which shall help to explain why charity and philanthropy as a social phenomenon is more and more today becoming of increasing relevance. The proposed typology is not a reflection of reality. Rather, it is a guideline which, by bringing together all of the features that characterize one philanthropic type, aims to raise the awareness of the observer about the relationship between the charitable sector and its actors. ^(liv)

On one hand, philanthropic actors seem to act under the influence of a strong Arab (pre-Islamic) culture of generosity. On the other hand, they are exposed to the strong influence of Islamic tradition



which appears to penetrate most aspects of life in the Kingdom. The moral imperative to give to the poor and needy is a key component of the Islamic faith. Significantly, the alms tax (zakat) is one of the five pillars of Islam (arkan ad-din).^(lv) Additionally, in the Saudi philanthropic field there seems to be a surprisingly great knowledge of other religious concepts that promote a culture of giving, among others sadaqa (voluntary alms), waqf (religious trusts), the moral purification through giving or the merit of giving in the afterlife. Moreover, an implicit belief that the poor have a right (haqq) to the gift of the better-off appears to be the *illusio or doxa*^(lvi) of the philanthropic field in the context of Muslim societies.^(lvii) As an unspoken common belief this religious attitude seems to be at the base of action of all players in this religiously shaped philanthropic field.

The following analysis examines charitable actors against the question of how philanthropy shapes the relationship between the actor and his or her society. Following Bourdieu's 'theory of practice',^(lviii) the observation of the philanthropic scene as a social space, or in other words 'philanthropy as a field', helps to decipher the hidden forces and mechanisms acting between the actors and their social environment. It is important to stress that the dynamics unleashed by the philanthropic field (i.e. the cultural and social capital that can be gained), are not to be understood as the individual and personal motives of the actors for their charitable commitment:^(lix) "What exists in the social world are relations - not interactions or inter-subjective relations between actors, but objective relations that exist *independently of consciousness and will of the individuals*."^(lx) Since awareness of these unspoken, implicit mechanisms seems only partially available to the benefactors themselves, one should not assume them to be the singular driving force behind philanthropic action. The following analysis aims to bring to light these unconscious and unnoticed motivations.

II. Overview: Institutionalized Philanthropy in Jeddah

The first welfare association founded in Saudi Arabia in 1964 - The Charitable Women's Association - was a women's-only-institution. Shortly thereafter, two more women's welfare associations were founded in 1975 and 1980. This means that women's associations (al-jam'iyyat al-khairiyya an-nisa'iyya) are dated much earlier than mixed-gender welfare organizations (al-jam'iyyat al-khairiyya) in the Kingdom. The first official participation of Saudi men in a mixed charitable organization didn't occur until 1983 with the founding of the Welfare Association of Piety (*Jam'iyyat al-birr*).

Since 1964 women's welfare associations have followed the same principle: women help women. So in theory, only women are employed in this type of charitable organization.^(lxi) This means that in the buildings of the institutions there is no dress code for employees as it is else usual in public.^(lxii) During the hours when the associations allocate food to the needy, only poor women enter the buildings, some to receive food for themselves, some to collect for their family. Medical treatment, which is usually offered for free by the women's associations, is carried out by a woman. The associations' internal working and training places are only available to women.

The theoretical claim to strict segregation offers Saudi women a remarkably free action space. This is in direct contrast to the social welfare agencies of MOSA and other ministerial institutions where women are usually denied access.^(lxiii) Because of the women-only premises within the charities, they are able to direct social assistance (ad-daman al-ijtima'i) directly to female recipients; in contrast to the regular social assistance, which only the male guardian (mahram) of a needy woman receives.

While women's associations are segregated in theory, in practice it is not possible to impose strict segregation. The female social workers appear with their male drivers at the association and are accompanied through their working day by the facilities' male drivers. In the buildings they meet security men and housekeepers and they tend to receive physical help from men in the distribution of goods and foodstuff. Due to the educational inequalities that women face in Saudi Arabia, they need male assistance in many legal issues. Finally, when communicating with donors such as owners of restaurants or supermarkets and in the management of the external properties of the welfare association, women interact almost solely with Saudi men.

Yet, women are not only active in female-only welfare associations but participate actively in benevolent organizations and CSR-initiatives too. The international stereotype of a Saudi woman is marked by passivity, oppression and powerlessness, while on the other hand in Western Europe and especially the U.S. - against a background of a long history of philanthropy and charity - women have only recently emerged as influential philanthropists.^(lxiv) In contrast, women in the history of the Islamic world have always been present and represented as philanthropists, be it as trustees or benefactors.^(lxv)


The following analysis describes the situation of 'the Saudi woman' in consideration of the legal discrimination and strictly enforced segregation faced by Saudi women. Analysis of the officially propagated role model of the ideal Saudi woman shows how the exploitation of women as a category helps to legitimize and stabilize the rule of the royal regime. The official, female role model is not only the basis of a latent discrimination against women, but also the key to why women can be actively involved in the philanthropic field.^(lxvi)

Women in Saudi Society: Facing Male Guardianship and Sex-Segregation

Although Western media emphasizes that ending forced veiling and the car ban would be important steps for the status of Saudi women, they are far more concerned with the legal immaturity and the powers of their male guardian (*mahram*) as a crucial initiator for the suppression of the female sex.^(lxvii) The Saudi regime deduces the legal basis of male guardianship from an ambiguous Koranic verse (sura 4, verse 34)^(lxviii), which states: "Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because God has given the one more [strength] than the other, and because they support them from their means."^(lxix)

In the political discourse of Saudi Arabia this Koranic passage serves as evidence that in general men are superior to women and, therefore, every woman is dependent on the help, protection and the better discernment of her mahram. In everyday practice, this interpretation means that in all areas of life a Saudi woman needs the consent of her mahram for major decisions: to begin school or university studies, to take up a job, to travel abroad or to go on a plane in her country, to visit a doctor's office or to get medical examination for her children. Women are also not allowed to not sign contracts without the consent of her mahram. Saudi women face tremendous difficulties when attempting to appeal to authorities or courts.

At the same time every-day life of women in Saudi Arabia is characterized by a strict compulsory segregation of the sexes.^(lxx) For the public welfare of the Islamic community and the maintenance of morality, un-related men and women should not encounter in everyday life. Restaurants and



cafes have separate-sex areas for men and women. Similarly, banks, schools and universities, archives and libraries are characterized by their separate women's sections or campuses. In Saudi Arabia there are shopping centers, gyms and travel agents only for women.

At present there exists hardly any public transport in Saudi Arabia - and where it exists, women are not permitted to use it on their own. Driving is forbidden to women and desert-like temperatures make a longer walk impossible. Thus, the implementation of gender-segregation requires Saudi families to exercise considerable organizational skills. Often, this requires considerable financial means. Women in families who cannot afford drivers are essentially isolated and immobile; they have no ability to travel or interact outside of the house. The much-cited discrimination and oppression of Saudi women is against this background - although often justified ideologically - rather a financial and organizational problem.

The Ideal-Typical Construction: The Saudi Woman as a Housewife and Mother

If one looks at gender relations in historical perspective, the trigger for the discrimination against women and their spatial separation does not lie solely in a uniform tribalism, conservatism and the patriarchal structures of Saudi society.^(lxxi) Rather, it seems that women are constructed in this way to serve the interests of the Saudi government.

The 'Saudi woman' is constructed as a category and as a symbol of national unity. Only in this function could she be the ideal Muslim woman: she is a wife as well as mother, and her sphere of influence is the family.^(lxxii) The American researcher Eleanor Doumato posits that this construct is used to maintain two 'myths' that legitimize and stabilize the rule of the royal family:

The first myth is that the Kingdom is a cohesive national entity fused by a common loyalty to Islam as shaped by the Wahhabi tradition, and that the Al Sa'ud family are qualified - and uniquely so - to defend Islam and to ensure the moral well-being of the Muslim community. The second is that the Saudi Arabian state is an extension of the tribal family^(lxxiii)

Within Saudi policy the woman is a 'national treasure' and her separation proves that the regime is advocating the Islamic character of the country and its cultural heritage.^(lxxiv) The binding of the woman to her *mahram* and the household embodies the image of a traditional family, counterbalancing social changes caused by technical and economic modernization of Saudi life and the influence of globalization.^(lxxv) The ruling family manages to portray itself as a legitimate patriarch, who works against a general uncertainty in society by the disenfranchisement of women before the law.

Three developments have contributed to the enforcement and implementation of the ideal image of the Saudi women in society. First, the economic prosperity of the country since the 1960s oil production boom,^(lxxvi) has allowed many families to give up on women as workers and to fully grant them 'protection in separation'.^(lxxvii) Second, the religious establishment ('ulama') has become more influential on Saudi political culture because of the ambiguous performance of the Saudi government in the Gulf crisis and burgeoning criticisms of Westernization.^(lxxviii) Finally, religious-Islamic norms have become institutionalized in state facilities, such as the ban of gender-mixed

workplaces in 1969 and the establishment of women's universities under the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, foundations, missionary work and guidance.^(lxxix)

That aside, there exist political reform measures which counteract this tendency and lead to a diversification of public opinion, especially on gender politics. The current head of state, King 'Abdallah, is considered liberal-minded and reform-oriented. We see today, what would have been unthinkable ten years ago: female news announcers or press columnists who do not shy away from reporting on once social taboo topics such as violence at home and against women. The national press reports with pride about women, especially women from the upper-class, who have become successful entrepreneurs. As a major step in a political and social reform process, Nura bt. 'Abdallah al-Faiyiz, who was made deputy education minister in charge of a new department for female students, is thereby the first female minister appointed in Saudi Arabia.

However, such steps do not seem to indicate a profound social change. Rather, they appear to be symbolic expressions of a gender policy which meets the expectations of an increasingly demanding social elite with token concessions. In particular, young, upper-class women are frequently outspokenly critical of the official female role image.^(lxxx) Their economic status allows such women to grow up with childcare and receive quality education which contributes significantly to their social development. Contemporary Saudi women have much more time to pursue other activities. However, the official discourse holds on to the traditional image of the ideal Saudi woman as a housewife and mother.^(lxxxi)

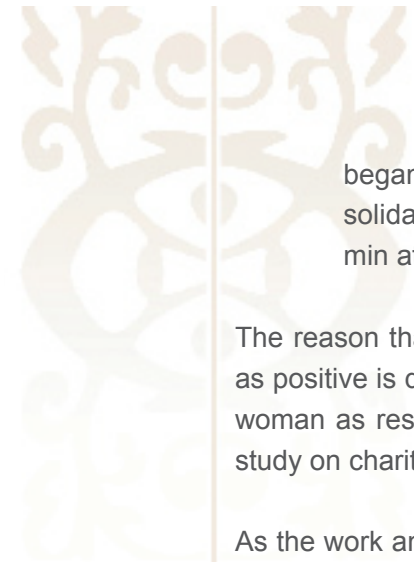
In Saudi Arabia, even if everyday practice offers occasional circumvention of strict segregation and legal discrimination,^(lxxxii) the maintenance of a segregated society is promoted by women as well as men. The political scientist Le Renard shows that there is no division of space in a domestic protected private sphere for the female usually the realm of the family versus a male public arena where power is held, political decisions are made and members of society beyond the nucleus of the family meet. There are public spaces for women, for instance women's universities and separate government offices. Rather, we find that a comprehensive female society ("*société feminine*")^(lxxxiii) has developed from this segregated system. As the illustration of the activities of women's associations - according to the principle of help from women for women - has shown, the female philanthropic field is to be assigned to this area.

The Image of Lady Bountiful

In both women-only organizations and mixed-gender initiatives the commitment of Saudi women is supported. The participation of women as active actors in the charitable work is presented almost as a natural evolution of society:

With the development of this concept [of a natural, altruistic nature of all humans] social work has not only become a right (haqq) that each citizen (muwatin) has of his charity, rather it has become the task (wajib) of each citizen towards his society. This is not only the case for men, but the woman has also become a part of all areas of life (jami' majalat al-haiya) and enjoys all her rights according to our Hanafi-Islamic faith (tatamati' bi-haqqiha kamilan tab'an li-ta'alim dinuna al-islami al-hanifi).

Accordingly, charitable women's associations (al-jam'iyyat al-khairiyya an-nisa'iyya)



began to spread everywhere in order to help the poor and to protect the family and its solidarity (takaful al-usra) and to protect her from disintegration and collapse (himayatuhamin at-tafakkuk wa al-inhiyar).^(lxxxiv)

The reason that active participation by women in the philanthropic field is tolerated and viewed as positive is due to the fact that such charitable work fits into the propagated image of a Muslim woman as responsible for family and household. Ahmad Salih al-Hajji, who wrote the standard study on charitable work of women in the Gulf region, describes the activities accordingly:

As the work and the goals of the women's groups are similar (mutashabiha) one can summarize them as follows: The objectives of the charitable women's associations and their social programs (ahdaf al-jam'iyyat al-khairiyya an-nisa'iyya wa-baramijuha al-ijtima'iyya):

1. Working to raise the living standards of the Saudi family to an appropriate economic, social and cultural level (al-'amal 'ala raf' mustawiyyat al-usra as-sa'udiyya, wa-wusul biha ila mustawa iqtisadi wa-ijtima'i wa-thaqafi munasib)
2. Supporting and strengthening the capability of the family [...] (tad'im salahiyat al-usra)
3. The empowerment of the Saudi woman [...]
4. Promoting the interest of the Saudi child [...] (al-ihtimam bi-at-tifl as-sa'udi)
5. Support of the disabled [...] (al-mu'aqiyyin)
6. Amongst the individuals of society: to increase an awareness for culture, faith, health and society.^(lxxxv)

As such, women's associations reflect precisely the role which the Saudi woman is to meet in society. As a wife and mother she may commit herself in the charitable sector for the Saudi family and its children - beyond her own household. Consequently, official representations of female initiatives emphasize mainly their desired role as a family-nurse, presumably to create a legitimate framework for their own commitment: "The services of the welfare association are directed towards the care of the family (ri'ayat al-usra) in view of the fact that this is the first pillar of society (bi-i'tibariha ad-di'ama al-ula fi al-mujtama')." ^(lxxxvi) However, the officially legitimate framework within which women's associations can situate themselves offers the women much more than this. The self-representation of the women's welfare associations in Jeddah shows this process of official self-positioning; a background against which diverse community involvement beyond the public understanding of the role of women is further possible:

[The Welfare Association was founded] in order to meet the urgent needs of society, such as the support of motherhood and childhood (ri'ayat al-umuma wa-at-tufula), medical and social assistance, to combat illiteracy, to train women for working, to strengthen family relationships, to offer social advice, as well as material and financial support.^(lxxxvii)

The Philanthropic Field from a Female Perspective

How then do female benevolent actors situate themselves within official discourses? Within the philanthropic field, one can perceive two very different female groups of actors. First, there are women of the socio-economic middle and lower classes: the majority of the employed social workers who are financially dependent on a salary. They see the segregation as a blessing

because it enables them to support their own families with an income, while at the same time it allows them to 'be themselves'. In a female space, they see the opportunity to 'try themselves out' or experiment with the latest fashion trends.^(lxxxviii) In the other group, there is the socio-economic elite of the city of Jeddah, which occupies the top posts of the welfare associations. The welfare associations reflect the strong social and economic hierarchy of Saudi society.^(lxxxix)

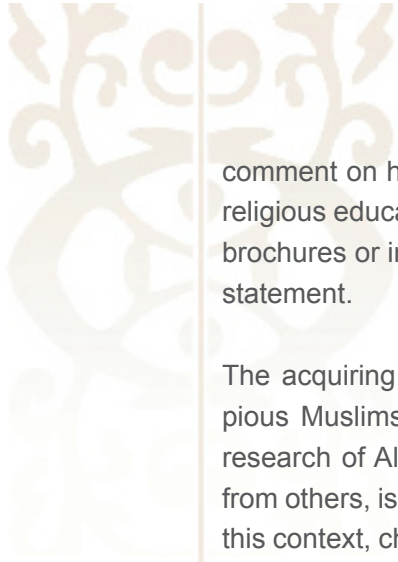
Although these groups of actors are very different with regard to their economic and social status, within the women's associations both groups exist in very similar structures and relations. The attractiveness of charitable work for both groups lies not least in the fact that it gives them the possibility to 'generate' their own capital. This is mainly social, cultural and symbolic capital, a fact, which has often been overlooked by studies on Saudi women. An insistence on the dichotomy of public and private, and a focus on economic capital as the key factor of power structures often leads to premature conclusions, such as an utter dependence of Saudi women on men and their absolute power over 'the Saudi woman'.

However, women do retain a degree of independence through social, cultural and symbolic capital, even if they - at first sight - seem excluded from economic processes. For example, many women cannot raise the financial resources to afford a personal driver. Female friendships and social networks may help in this situation, as the driver of one woman often picks up and drives her friend or colleague. 'Driver-sharing' is thus a clear example of the transformation of social capital (friendship) into economic capital (transport and financial independence from the *mahram*).^(xc)

Capital Acquisition

Actors in the philanthropic field can acquire social capital through charitable work in the form of friendships, contacts and social networks.^(xci) Charitable commitment is attractive to many women is because it is a legitimate space for social interaction outside the walls of their own homes. Female actors can get information from other non-related women, ask them for advice and discuss their opinions freely. Through the expansion of social relationships they create the basis for mutual support and assistance in emergency situations. Maintaining this network of relationships is an important investment for Saudi women: "In other words, the network of relationships is the product of individual or collective investment strategies, which deliberately or unconsciously are directed at creating and maintaining social relations, which sooner or later promise to be of direct benefit."^(xcii) Furthermore, membership in a women's association often brings members of the group 'material' benefits: welfare organizations often supply women with drivers who pick them up in the morning and deliver them after work to where they desire to go. Additionally, membership in a welfare organization allows women to utilize the premises and academic resources of the institutions such as libraries, computer rooms and recreational facilities. This is especially valuable because the traditional gender-criterion of access often dictates the action spaces of women. Social contacts serve as a door handle for access and a stepping-stone to gain cultural capital.

Once accepted to the community of respected philanthropists, the charitable female actor can acquire cultural skills, such as knowing how much zakat her family has to pay, or to whom and how much she should donate at the end of the fasting month Ramadan. The provision of religious education should also be regarded as cultural capital. In women's associations, one can observe that almost every woman, whether social worker or member of the board, is always able to



comment on her work with a suitable Koranic verse or a saying of the Prophet Muhammad. The religious education imparted on women in these institutions is reflected in the fact that documents, brochures or information boards in the welfare association tend to be accompanied by a religious statement.

The acquiring of cultural capital enables women to present themselves as both educated and pious Muslims. This self-representation attains high symbolic value in Saudi society. The field research of Altorky shows that social prestige, through which an elite family distinguishes itself from others, is composed of their reputation, descent, piety, wealth and personal achievements. In this context, charity can function as a status symbol, since “reputation... requires keeping an open and generous house.”^(xciii) Furthermore, philanthropic commitment can act as a sign of piety. The giving of alms can be a statement of one’s prosperity. A senior position within a welfare association speaks for a distinction of personal achievements. The position speaks for organizational skills, high performance, durability and popularity. In this context, the philanthropic field appears rich in symbolic capital.

Philanthropy as an Action Space

The possibilities of the previously outlined capital accumulation exist for both groups of female actors, those from an elite household, as well as social workers from a more modest background. The economic and social class does not per se seem to cause differences in the nature of the capital in the field and the process of their accumulation. Therefore, a distinction of the female actors, which orients itself on the usage of the acquired capital, seems more appropriate. Such a distinction can also provide information on how the described women locate themselves against the official discourse of the ‘ideal type’ of Saudi woman.

Two types of charitable actors can be identified according to their use of philanthropically acquired capital. One type seems to utilize their accumulated social, cultural and symbolic capital for complying as much as possible with the ideal role model of a Saudi woman as a wife and mother. To the outside observer, the other type seems indeed also to match this ideal image. However, a closer look reveals that the knowledge and capital acquired through charitable work are used specifically to bypass existing social boundaries. Other women emphasize the self-fulfillment and the feeling of being needed; leaving their home every morning gives them a feeling of leading an ‘active’ life.^(xciv) For some, philanthropy can also act as a stepping-stone for a professional career. Women can gain work experience and knowledge about how to use computers and practice foreign languages from participation in women’s associations, granting them benefits in life outside the association.^(xcv) In this way, women can also gain experience in management positions - in the business world a predominantly male privilege - that can be of great use in the labor market.^(xcvi) Finally, through their charitable work, women can actively build their own parallel power structures through the development of social networks which stand outside of the male-dominated public areas of politics and business as well as the private home environment, guaranteeing them some social security.

Conclusion: Liberty in the Name of Piety

In conclusion, it appears that the cause of discrimination against Saudi women, ideal-typical gender modeling, is at the same time the lever for their active participation in the philanthropic field and

combating societal grievances. Saudi women act at the forefront of two societal conflict zones: first through their social work for the collective good; second through living an independent, self-determined life outside of the traditionally-staged family household. The discrimination that Saudi women face in the every-day-life is not to be diminished by such observations from the benevolent sector, if only because the possibility of access to the philanthropic field is open only to a few due to legal, financial and organizational factors. Still, more and more take this prime opportunity which the philanthropic field offers for Saudi women to lead an active, independent and fulfilled life and to promote social change.

III. Dedicated Youth

“Yasmine Idriss... Charity begins at 16”

“Yasmine Idriss is a 16-year-old Saudi girl who knows no limits when it comes to charity. She always tries to come up with new ideas to make the world a better place. [...]” (Arab News 3.03.2010)^(xcvii)

Many Saudi adolescents between 15 and 30 years old are regularly involved in charitable projects with seemingly boundless enthusiasm. In this case the young girl Yasmine organized a basketball tournament at her private school, the American International School of Jeddah. The revenue of the sold tickets went to a relief project in Malawi. This example shows two trends: dedicated adolescents are generally part of the social and economic elite of the country, often attending expensive private schools; ^(xcviii) youthful charity is usually shaped by a highly enthusiastic event character.^(xcix)

A study by Altorky for the 1980s and 1990s shows that youthful charitable commitment is a relatively new trend in society. During the examined period, traditional forms of charity, such as the involvement in a welfare association, declined within the young generation of the elite. However, their parents were still expected to lead an open and generous household. If a family wanted to belong to the urban upper class, it had to fulfill the social expectations of the urban community. As a result of their wealth, it was expected that they arrange meals for the poor after great banquets, help out less fortunate neighbors and generally be open to pleas for alms. Altorky concludes that, due to economic reasons during the recession of the 1980s and 1990s, fewer and fewer young families of the upper class could fulfill these expectations and show social commitment as a sign of their social status and piety.^(c)

The following analysis shows that today’s charitable involvement among upper class young people offers them a new opportunity, not directly tied to funding, to comply with social expectations of the elite status while simultaneously strengthening their membership in the upper class.

Several factors lead to charity increasingly taking on the form of a lifestyle and an ‘event culture’ (Erlebniskultur) among young Saudis. The commitment appears to be an expression of piety while at the same time offering the opportunity to live a modern lifestyle and develop civic awareness. In light of today’s situation for the young generation, which even by the Saudi media is presented as precarious,^(ci) charitable commitment offers a socially accepted, varied and exciting activity which serves the desire for self-realization for the young generation. Such self-realization is restricted in many areas of Saudi society, for example in the art and culture of the country.



Socio-Economic Background of Young People in Saudi Arabia

Current estimates suggest that 60% of the Saudi population is less than 18 years old. In the 1990s, Saudi Arabia had one of the highest population growth rates in the world with an average of 3.5%. The continuing high growth rate of 2.6% is currently being absorbed in the education sector through the development of public schools and universities.^(cii) However, due to a generally poor level of education at public Saudi schools as well as a curriculum based on teaching religious values rather than labor-ethical values and technical skills,^(ciii) graduates are frequently unprepared for the labor market.

As a result, the labor market shows an increasingly high unemployment rate among young Saudis. Unofficial estimates put the unemployment rate at 30% among Saudi adolescents.^(civ) Every year, some 100, 000 primary school and university graduates enter the labor market which, according to official data, has roughly 454, 000 unemployed persons.^(cv) Ironically the Saudi labor market is at the same time characterized by a very high rate of foreign workers (4.6 million or 71% of the country's workforce). Hence, the government-promoted solution to this situation - the Saudiization development strategy - seeks to replace foreign workers with Saudis through various employment quota targets. However, as in most neighboring Gulf countries this goal is far from being accomplished.^(cvi)

The economic prospects are perceived as unsatisfactory and unsettling by many young graduates, as Yamani vividly shows in her field research on Saudi youth.^(cvii) The economic situation of the country, as well as a system of patronage and clientelism,^(cviii) based on kinship, has led to an increasingly widening gap between the wealthy elite, whose children enjoy private education, often abroad, and a lower class that does not enjoy such advantages.^(cix)

For the upper class, unemployment usually does not induce economic trouble. Instead, the young people complain openly about boredom (malal), or a great void (faragh). In a country where: concerts, bars and night clubs are forbidden; museums, art exhibitions, sports clubs, cinemas and public libraries almost don't exist; censorship and a lack of free expression are floating over all activities; print media is not the only one saying "in the end we are all bored." Even at the highest domestic-political level, the subject is heard. The Fourth National Dialog, a government initiative which has taken place annually since 2003, organized closed discussions dedicated to "issues of youth - current status and future prospects."^(cx1)

Faisal al-Mu'ammam, advisor to Crown Prince Sultan and head of the National Dialog, outlined three urgent issues for discussion: 1. The creation of jobs 2. The education system and the nature of vocational training in the Kingdom 3. Al-faragh, the emptiness or unfilled leisure time.^(cxii)

Graduates are not only facing economic insecurity and social boredom but also the influence of globalization and mass media. In particular among Saudi middle and upper class adolescents, these influences lead to a –an excessive consumer culture. The rush in the countless shopping malls anywhere in Jeddah on a Wednesday evening illustrates this consumption-centric behavior. A visit to the shopping malls is about more than buying goods. Rather, the malls are places for youth to meet one another and exchange thoughts; an escape from everyday life. In addition,

encounters with Western and Asian culture in everyday life - through trips abroad, interactions with foreigners in the country, Hollywood movies, satellite television, glossy magazines, countless web-forums and networks - often lead to a questioning of their own cultural values. Yamani's study on the identity of young Saudis clearly shows:

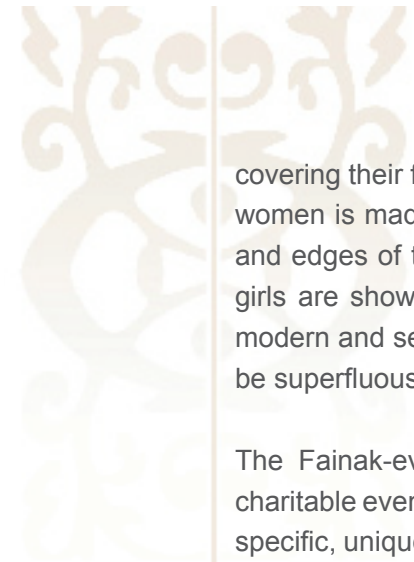
The key theme to emerge in all the interviews I conducted was the clash between a national, rigorous socialization and the uncertainties and promises stemming from wider access to different cultural influences. The majority of these young people recognize the nature and extent of the changes that they and their generation face. In their encounter with uncertainty most prove able to draw on three constants as a source of stability: the family, Islam and the nation.^(cxiii)

Case Study: The Youth Organization Fainak

The first case study of a youth charity, Fainak (est. 2007), is considered to be the first self-organized youth organization in Jeddah, if not Saudi Arabia as a whole.^(cxiv) With the help of a centrally located office space and word-of-mouth advertising, the group has formulated its goal: "Building an active concerned youth culture through innovative, entertaining events, programs and an interactive website... To expose youth to a wide range of experience, opportunities and resources. To drive positive change."^(cxv) Thus, the name of the organization, which literally means 'where are you?' translates to their program. The Fainak is led by 22-year-old Mariya Mahdali and is staffed mainly by students from Jeddah's private universities and colleges. Its efforts are focused on designing a creative, exciting and varied program to offer to the Saudi youth scene as an alternative to emptiness and boredom. At the same time, young people are called upon to actively, responsibly and confidently get engaged in community affairs and the common good. Legally, the group has the status of a CSR of the publishing house Rumman Company. Even if the name appears nowhere in the profile of the organization, its CEO is officially and legally the chairman of Fainak. He is also the father of the young team leader Mariya. This shows that young people build their charitable efforts on family support; just as they do in the economic sphere.^(cxvi)

As its biggest success so far, Fainak organized a 'garage sale for charity';^(cxvii) a kind of flea market by and for young people. All profits from the flea market went to local charities (*jam'iyyat khairiyya*). The event is part of an annual series of monthly, charitable activities, which are perceived as 'cool', 'exciting' and 'entertaining', since the simple idea of hosting a flea market in Saudi Arabia is a *novum*.^(cxviii) The flea market took place in the parking lot and the entrance area of La Promenade Center, one of the most fashionable shopping malls of Jeddah. The venue on the centrally located Tahliya Street clearly shows that this was a high society event.

Images that document the market show jolly, good-humored Saudi youth.^(cxix) The boys do not wear the white, Saudi robe (*thaub*), and a red-white or white cloth on the head (*shimakh* or *ghutra*), which is held by a ring (*'iqqal*), i.e. the traditional image of Saudi male. Instead, most young men wore jeans and colorful T-shirts with imprints of big labels like Diesel and Nike, or ironic sayings. Many wear baseball caps the wrong way around, some short pants and strikingly colored sneakers. The girls in turn, combine the black '*abaya*' with large leather handbags, and large aviator sunglasses in the style of the trendsetter Ray-Ban. The scarves are loosely thrown around the head. In contrast to the young girls of state universities, who usually wear the complete veil



covering their faces (*niqab*), here every girl shows her face. The elegant appearance of the young women is made perfect with simple make-up, lipstick and sparkling embroidery on sleeve hems and edges of the black robes. Not only the loose dress code, but the mere fact, that boys and girls are shown together on photos of the event, speaks to the pursuit of a Western-oriented, modern and self-determined lifestyle, where the traditional Saudi gender segregation appears to be superfluous.

The Fainak-event exemplifies a social development which is frequently observed at similar charitable events. The committed volunteers, especially young people, only engage themselves for specific, unique events which promise entertainment value but rarely in the regular everyday work of the institutions. ^(cxx) Thus, it comes as no surprise that - despite of the charitable, philanthropic claims of Fainak - no newspaper or news release names the recipient of the donation or the concrete aid project under the banner of a "Fainak Charity Garage Sale !!!". ^(cxxi) Even the Fainak-magazine reporting on the event, does not mention which specific aid project was supported through the profits from the flea market. Rather, the good mood of the event is emphasized. It seems that the entertainment value of the event is of greater importance to the young organizers than the charity aspect.

Case Study: The Young Initiatives Group

The second case study deals with the online presentation of the Young Initiatives Group (YIG) and their film YIG2.mov. ^(cxxii) YIG is a youth group founded in 2010 which conducts charitable initiatives such as collecting garbage in the old city of Jeddah, mentoring programs for orphans or collecting and distributing old clothes to the needy. The group intends to join the *Welfare Association of Majid b. 'Abd al-'Aziz for Development and Services*. ^(cxxiii) Assumingly the strict legal environment governing civil society in the Saudi Arabia, which prohibits independent unions and organizations, motivates this strategic fusion with the progressive welfare association promoting vocational education and financial help to low-income families. In the video, YIG presents its work and appeals to the young people of Jeddah to become involved in aid work.

In this call for greater engagement, religion plays a crucial role. The entire internet-video stands under the theme "What if God gave you less?" Then, images are shown accompanied by melancholy Arabic music. A picture of a run-down kitchen is titled "What if this was your kitchen? If you can even call no stove, no refrigerator, no gas, no cutlery, a kitchen." The image of a dirty latrine is commented with the words "What if this was your bathroom? If you can even call a bucket of water a bath." Further, no Saudi household may lack air conditioning, but "What if this was as cool as your A/C got?" A broken device is demonstrated to the audience. At this point the young person is reminded "But God gave you more!" and images are presented of girls (without showing their face) in leggings, miniskirts, a glossy BMW, toilet paper, an I-Pad, a Blackberry and a four-poster bed. This is followed by a *hadith* ^(cxxiv) and the invitation to behave generously in gratitude. It seems that YIG does not condemn prosperity, a non-traditional lifestyle and manner of clothing, but rather legitimize it as God's gift. This video indicates that a modern lifestyle can be compatible with the identity of a devout Muslim.

The group commits itself to the community through its projects as well as involvement with the urban population. At the same time the dedicated young people stand out - probably unknowingly - from

the broad, needy population. In the presentation of their work, the YIG-video shows an expressive photograph in which a girl dressed in white robes with a white, light scarf, is sitting between a group of veiled women in black, teaching them something. The needy women with black face veils (niqab) stand out strongly from the presence of the charitable girl with her attractive features. Another picture shows four girls helping an old woman to find a job. The girls are dressed well and beautiful in the picture while the old woman is in a simple, wide house dress (jalabiyya), which is very sha'bi (simple or 'popular'). The young people are dressed in tight-fitting black 'abayas with glitter at the seams and trendy, oversized Ray-Ban sunglasses; one of whom has an expensive mirror-reflex camera hanging around her neck. All wear their veils very loosely showing bits of their hair.

Probably the contrasts described here do not appear as clearly in the real activities shown in these pictures and on the website of YIG. The purpose of the website is to create awareness of the work of the youth initiative and to promote participation. In the context of these pictures, the emphasis on the differences between the needy and the benefactors seem to be used to emphasize the severe circumstances of the poor and needy. The presentation of the young appears to be reflecting the 'you-and-me' adolescent so as to motivate cooperation and support for the project. Truthful to the 'economy of attention', the images are focused on attracting the attention of younger viewers.

Nevertheless, the social practice of voluntary work not only reflects the social gap between rich and poor but it seems that it covertly emphasizes it at the same time. Thus, the young people of YIG clarify and establish, through communicating their knowledge (for example in English courses which they offer in orphanages), the hierarchy between the voluntary teachers, easily conversing in foreign languages and the ignorant students.

Conclusion: Charity as an Event and Lifestyle

These two case studies demonstrate a number of common features of the charitable, youth involvement: charitable work which is attractive to adolescents is characterized by a highly entertaining event-character; ethical and moral considerations are connected to consumption and lifestyle^(cxxxv); charity as an event culture (Erlebniskultur) makes it possible to meet the social expectations of the elite status, while at the same time serving the aspirations of young people for active participation in society.


Youth charitable activities must be seen against the background of the social environment facing Saudi youth; as Yamani shows, an environment which is considered by most Saudi adolescents as unsettling and uncertain. The trigger of the new awakening trend for charitable commitment among the young generation lies in the opportunities and possibilities for self-development which this socially recognized work offers to young people. A rising level of education without prospects or prosperity coupled with boredom and a lack of alternatives are factors which essentially shape charitable motivation. At the same time, such motivation is an expression of their Islamic faith. Charitable work allows young people to combine a Muslim religious identity with a Western, modern, self-determined lifestyle in which the traditional, boundaries of gender separation are removed. Simultaneously, charitable commitment also provides the opportunity to actively live out an authentic, self-concept of national identity.



End Notes

- i. See for example Glosemeyer, Iris, "Saudi-Arabien: Wandel ohne Wechsel?", Perthes, Volker (ed.): SWP-Berlin: Elitenwandel in der arabischen Welt und Iran, Berlin 2000, p. 172-188, p. 173; Schmid, Larissa: "Symbolische Geschlechterpolitik in Saudi-Arabien", Freitag, Ulrike (ed.): Saudi-Arabien. Ein Königreich im Wandel?, Paderborn 2010, p. 89-105, p. 93f.; Warnock Farnea, Elizabeth: "In Search of Islamic Feminism. One Woman's Global Journey," New York 1998, p. 338ff.; Vagt, Holger: "Die Frau in Saudi-Arabien zwischen Tradition und Moderne," Berlin 1992, p. 52f.
- ii. Le Renard, Amélie, "Pauvreté et Charité en Arabie Saoudite: la famille royale, le secteur privé et l'état providence," Critique Internationale 41 (2008) 4, p. 137-156.
- iii. Shalaby, Karim: "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," Ibrahim, L. Barbara and Sherif, H. Dina (eds.): From Charity to Social Change. Trends in Arab Philanthropy, Cairo 2008, p. 65-86.
- iv. Montagu, Caroline: Civil Society and the Voluntary Sector in Saudi Arabia, in: Middle East Journal 64 (2010) 1, p. 67-83.
- v. See Hertog, Steffen: "Modernizing without Democratizing? The introduction of formal politics in Saudi Arabia," Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft 3 (2006), p. 65-78, p. 68f., who describes the massive circumcission of civil society in Saudi Arabia. The benevolent initiatives, which Montagu (2010), p. 68 describes as "thriving civil society", mentions Hertog (2006), p. 69f. only on the side of his analysis as "anemic".
- vi. See the announcement of the Gulf Research Meeting for a workshop in Cambridge (6.-9.07.2011), which takes up Montagu's thesis URL: <http://grcevent.net/cambridge2011/index.php?page=workshop&wname=10> (17.11.2011).
- vii. Montagu (2010), p. 67 "A Saudi academic friend confirmed that there are no major books by Saudi scholars on Saudi civil society,...". But see amongst others: 'Abdallah al-'Ali an-Na'im, "al-'Amal al-ijtima'i at-tatau'i ma'a at-tarkiz 'ala al-'amal at-tatau'i fi al-mamlaka al-'arabiyya as-sa'udiyya," Riyadh 2005 and the project of Hassanain Taufiq (ed.) "Tatawwur dirasat al-mujtama' al-madani," Gulf Research Center, Dubai 2007.
- viii. Montagu (2010), S. 68. See also Norton, Augustus Richard (ed.): "Civil Society in the Middle East," Vol. 1 and 2, Leiden 1995.
- ix. Ibid, p. 68.
- x. Ibid, p. 67.
- xi. Ibid, p. 75.
- xii. There are plenty more Saudi institutions in Jeddah that are philanthropic in nature, as for example the religious trusts (awqaf), royal decree associations or private schools such as Effat University. The focus of the paper is founded in the nationwide spread of the kinds of institution that are described here exemplarily, and reflects their centrality in Saudi civil society due to their high numbers.
- xiii. This paper is an extract from my Masters' thesis "Philanthropie in Saudi Arabien. Bestandsaufnahme und Untersuchung der organisierten wohltätigen Praxis in Djidda", submitted to Free University Berlin in 2011, where you can find an overview of the philanthropic field of Jeddah in much more detail. The analysis of the philanthropic field there considers the four central actors of the benevolent field: women, youth, merchants and the royal family.
- xiv. Cf. Bourdieu, Pierre: "Raisons pratiques. Sur la théorie de l'action," Paris 1985, in German translation 1998.

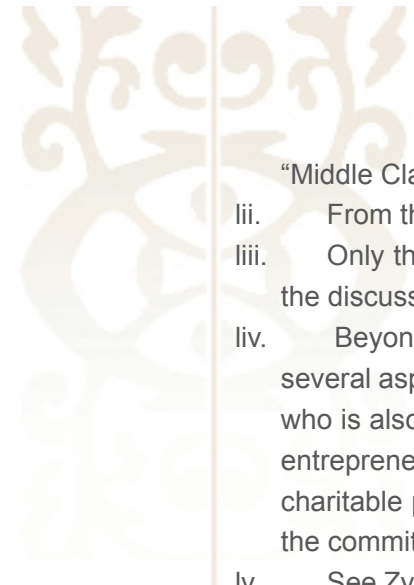
- xv. Shalaby (2008), p. 77.
- xvi. The numbers of the benevolent institutions were given to me by the Ministry of Social Affairs in Jeddah and represent the status quo from January 2010.
- xvii. For my Masters' thesis I collected information from 25 businesses in Jeddah, which are evaluated here.
- xviii. Most Saudi businesses use themselves to describe their charitable activities - even in Arabic running texts - the English term CSR. Only rarely is CSR translated into Arabic as *khidmat al-mujtama'* or *mas'uliyya ijtima'iyya*.
- xix. Cf. Field, Michael: *The Merchants*, London 1984, where, for instance, Muhammad 'Ali Alirida is described as a successful merchant and influential philanthropist of the beginning of the 20th century.
- xx. See "Newspaper hits rise but CSR not yet defined" Arab News (15.02.2010) URL: <http://arabnews.com/opinion/columns/article17398.ece?service=print> (14.03.2011): "A search in the archives of the top 5 Saudi newspapers on corporate social responsibility and variations of the term shows an increase by more than 12-folds from 2005 to 2009 reaching 6,481 hits."
- xxi. Amin El-Maghraby in an interview on CNN in November 2009, URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NmS8FbCrBA> (4.10.2010).
- xxii. The basic law is a set of laws and rights that was enacted in 1992 by royal decree of King Fahd (1982-95), that resembles up to date the unofficial constitution of Saudi Arabia. The royal decree in turn describes in its first article (§1) the Koran and the sunna, that is the sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad, as the constitution (*dustur*) of Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom therefore knows no formal constitution. For more detail on the Basic Law and its importance for Saudi Arabia see Al-Fahad, H. Abdulaziz: *Ornamental Constitutionalism*. The Saudi Basic Law of Governance, in: *The Yale Journal of International Law* 30 (2005), p. 375-396 and Nevo, Joseph: *Religion and National Identity in Saudi-Arabia*, in: *Middle Eastern Studies* 34 (1998) 3, p. 34-53, p. 35f. and 37f.
- xxiii. Basic Law of Government (§27), URL: http://www.mideastinfo.com/documents/Saudi_Arabia_Basic_Law.htm, (7.07.2010), §1-28 (of 83§s). See also the website of the Saudi Foreign Ministry for a publication of the Basic Law, URL: <http://www.mofa.gov.sa/Detail.asp?InNewsItemID=35297> (4.08.2010).
- xxiv. The official governing legal reference of the NAA was issued on 23.01.1990, the bylaws of charitable associations and organizations on 2.07.1992 and the model internal rules and regulations on 26.11.1992, cf. Shalaby (2008), p. 72. The documents are published in English and Arabic by the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) under "Draft Regulations of Associations and Civil Society Organizations", URL: <http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/library/showRecords.php?country=Saudi+Arabia> (4.08.2010).
- xxv. See Draft Regulations of Associations and Civil Society Organizations, § 4 for the composition of the board of the NAA: President of the institution is the Crown Prince, members include further the Minister of Social Affairs, the Minister of Islamic Affairs, Endowments and Guidance, the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Finance.
- xxvi. See Shalaby (2008), p. 78.
- xxvii. See Draft Regulations of Associations and Civil Society Organizations, § 10.
- xxviii. See Shalaby (2008), p. 79.
- xxix. For details see the official website of the Help Center under URL: <http://www.helpcenter.med.sa/> (12.09.2010).
- xxx. In addition to 9/11 the wave of terrorist attacks on Saudi soil in 2003 and 2004,



although less pursued by international media, seems to be just as crucial for the restrictive policies of the Saudi government in dealing with charities and their financial policy nowadays. See Cordesman, Anthony/ Obaid, Nawaf: "National Security in Saudi Arabia. Threats, Responses, and Challenges," Westport 2005, p. 128ff. and 348f. Al-Haramain was dissolved in 2004 in Saudi Arabia, preceded by the closing of its branches in Kenya, Pakistan, Tanzania and Indonesia because of their financial nearness to terrorist organizations like al-Qa'ida and Al-Ittihad Al-Islami.

- xxxi. See Shalaby (2008), p. 71.
- xxxii. Observation of the author at King 'Abd al-'Aziz University in Jeddah, where a group of sociology students wanted to organize a spontaneous fundraising for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. After intensive efforts, even from teachers, the fundraising had to be cancelled due to the fact that it was impossible at such short notice to get an official permit, with no permit, however, it was too risky.
- xxxiii. Available at the SAMA homepage under URL: <http://www.sama.gov.sa/sites/samaen/RulesRegulation/Rules/Pages/Home.aspx> (28.09.2010).
- xxxiv. Shalaby (2008), p. 74.
- xxxv. Shalaby (2008), S. 75.
- xxxvi. For example, the conglomerate Savola Group is working to support disabled children, together with the Charity of Sight, see "Corporate Giant Building Bridges with Society" Arab News (24.1.2006) URL: <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=1§ion=0&article=76718&d=24&m=1&y=2006> (6.10.2010), while Al Rabie Saudi Food Manufacturer Co. Ltd. based in Jeddah is going in cooperation with the charity of Prince Fahd b. Salman against liver and kidney diseases, see "Al Rabie honored for philanthropic role" Saudi Gazette (27.6.2010) URL: <http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentID=2010062776454> (6.10.2010).
- xxxvii. See for example the Mu'assasat 'Abd al-Qadir Bakr al-Bakri al-Khairiyya or Muassasat Hasan 'Abbas Sharbatli, both founded in 2001.
- xxxviii. This observation corresponds to the boom that philanthropic institutions are currently enjoying in most parts of the world, see, for example for Germany Der Tagesspiegel (8.11.2010) "Vermögen und Vorsorge: Stiftungen - Vorteile für alle": The capital Berlin employs 670 independent foundations under civil law, of which alone 50 were founded in 2009. Never before was such a high increase reported.
- xxxix. See for example "CSR... What is all the fuss about?", Arab News (11.12.2006) URL: <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=6§ion=0&article=89860&d=11&m=12&y=2006> (6.10.2010) and "Corporate Social Responsibility", Arab News (28.01.2008) URL: <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=13§ion=0&article=106157&d=28&m=1&y=2008> (6.10.2010). For further information on CSR in Saudi Arabia consult the website of the first and only Saudi consultancy specialized on CSR Tamkeen Development and Management Consulting URL: <http://www.tamkeenconsult.com/faq.php?lang=EN> (4.10.2010).
- xl. See "Effat University gets smart classrooms" Arab News (16.11.2009) URL: <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=1§ion=0&article=128497&d=16&m=11&y=2009> (6.10.2010) or "SEDCO donates funds for KAUST advanced research" Saudi Gazette (1.05.2010) URL: <http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentID=2010050171011> (6.10.2010).
- xli. See "Savola Bridge for National Employment" Savola Group URL: http://www.savola.com/savolae/Savola_Bridges3.php (6.10.2010) and for the Naseer Trading Group "55 young Saudis to benefit from Bab deal with Naseer Group" Arab News (20.05.2010) URL: <http://>


- arabnews.com/saudi Arabia/article55524.ece (14.03.2011). As'ad Jauhar, Professor at KAU and business analyst criticizes that businesses receive state benefits for employing nationals as a form of corporate responsibility when, in fact, they are offering poor CSR-programs, see "Private Sector flayed for not contributing to community work" Arab News (4.05.2010) URL: <http://arabnews.com/saudi Arabia/article49823.ece> (13.10.2010).
- xl. The concept of sadaqa appears 24-times in the Koran, see for instance: Sura II: verse 263, IX: 79, II: 264, LXXVI: 8, II: 265, II: 261, XXX: 39, II: 245 for zakat see IX: 103, II: 261, XXX: 39, II: 110, XXII: 78, XXIV: 56, LVIII: 13, LXXIII: 20, XXXIII: 33, II: 43, II: 219, II: 267, VI:141, IX: 34, II: 267, LI: 19, LXX: 24 the most prominent passage of zakat being IX: 60.
- xli. See the regulations of MOSA under URL: <http://www.mosa-d.gov.sa/daman/en/thebill.html> (12.09.2010).
- xlii. Several interview partners stated this independently from one another.
- xliii. For a detailed description of the CSR-scene in Jeddah see my Masters' thesis mentioned above.
- xliiii. In 1962 by King Faisal (reigned 1964-75) adopted Law on Social Security (royal decree no 18 and no 19 of 18.3.1382 hijri) states that people in need have a right to a monthly benefit from MOSA. Eligible for social security are orphans, single women, handicapped and elderly people without or with a low income. Since 2004, recipients must also prove Saudi nationality, see The Bill of the Saudi Security System, § 2 under URL: <http://www.mosa-d.gov.sa/daman/en/thebill.html> (09.08.2010). It is very difficult to obtain Saudi citizenship. There are numerous immigrant families living for generations on Saudi soil, which do not have the Saudi citizenship. In 2010 the monthly support was 862 SRA (about 170 €) for a single household, for each additional person in the household, the allocation increased by about 280 SRA (60 €) up to a maximum of eight persons per household, see Table of Social Security Pensions and Subsidies under URL: <http://www.mosa-d.gov.sa/daman/en/table.html> (08.09.2010).
- xlv. See the website of Iktifa' for further information URL: <http://www.ektfaa.org/> (14.03.2011).
- xlv. See Booz, Allen Hamilton: "The new Saudi Arabian healthcare market," AMEinfo.com under URL: <http://www.ameinfo.com/113280.html> (29.10.2010) and "Experts call for change in health care system" Arab News (15.11.2009) URL: <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=1§ion=0&article=128456&d=15&m=11&y=2009> (29.10.2010); Malik, Monica/ Niblock, Tim: Saudi Arabia's Economy: the Challenge of Reform, in: Aarts, Paul/ Nonneman, Gerd (eds.): Saudi Arabia in the Balance. Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs, London 2005, p. 85-110.
- xlv. The European Union, which has proclaimed the year 2011 'Year of the Volunteer' identified in the course of the festivities that in the countries of the European Union sport makes up the area with the highest volunteer participation with 34% of total volunteers participating here, followed by 2. education, arts, music and cultural associations (22%), 3. religious or church groups (16%), 4. welfare and social associations (17%), 5. labor unions (13%). See "EYV 2011: Schwerpunkt EU. Zahlen zur Freiwilligentätigkeit in der EU" URL: <http://europa.eu/volunteering/en/press-media/press-room> (28.01.2011).
- l. See King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies under URL: <http://www.kfcris.com/> (29.10.2010).
- li. See for instance the remarks on international Muslim philanthropic commitment of Benthall, Jonathan/ Bellion-Jourdan, Jérôme: "The Charitable Crescent. Politics of Aid in the Muslim World," London 2003 and with a regional focus Clark, Janine: Islam, Charity, and Activism.

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- “Middle Class Networks in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen,” Indiana 2004.
- lii. From the Koran, ‘verse of zakat’, Sura IX: verse 60.
 - liii. Only the group of women and youth are discussed in the following analysis, you can find the discussion of the two other groups in my Masters’ thesis mentioned above.
 - liv. Beyond this proposed scheme it is quite conceivable that a philanthropic actor consists of several aspects of the here proposed types: for example, a teenager who works in a company, who is also a member of the royal family and engaged in philanthropy, or a charitable female entrepreneur, as opposed to the here proposed ‘generous merchant’. Not infrequently, charitable projects are implemented under the auspices of a ‘generous merchant’, but in fact the committed benefactors are the female relatives of the entrepreneur.
 - lv. See Zysow, Aron: Zakat, in: Encyclopedia of Islam, vol XI, Leiden 2002, p. 406-422, p. 406.
 - lvi. See Bourdieu, Pierre: “Meditationen.” Zur Kritik der scholastischen Vernunft, Frankfurt a. M. 2005 (original 1997), p. 129: “To discuss arguments you have to believe that they do deserve this, and above all that the debate deserves to be carried out. The *illusio* is not one of the explicit principles, the theories, which one puts up and defends, but the acting, the routine, the things that you do because they should be done and because they were always done.” Here in translation by the author. Similarly in Bourdieu (1998), p. 141.
 - lvii. See Singer, Amy: Charity in Islamic Societies, Cambridge 2008, p. 35: “The pre-Islamic idea that any property contains a surplus, which its owner must give away, finds a companion notion in the Qur’an verses 70:24 and 51:19, which asserts that the poor have a just claim (*haqq*) to a share in wealth. Both of these ideas also find an echo in Mauss’ understanding of the transformation of gift into alms based on the obligation of those with a surplus to share their riches.” The research of the French sociologist and anthropologist Marcel Mauss (1872-1950) was long considered pioneering regarding archaic societies and the phenomenon of the gift economy.
 - lviii. Cf. Bourdieu (1998). For the field-concept, see also the discussion in Fuchs-Heinritz, Werner/ König, Alexandra: Pierre Bourdieu, Konstanz 2005, p. 139-157.
 - lix. It could be speculated that major motives for charitable work are believed to be a religious obligation, or the opportunity for self-fulfillment and self-realization. A study which deals with this complex phenomenon in the European context is Adloff, Frank/ Sigmund, Steffen: Die gift economy moderner Gesellschaften. Zur Soziologie der Philanthropie, in: idem (eds.): Vom Geben und Nehmen. Zur Soziologie der Reziprozität, Frankfurt am Main 2005, p. 211-237, p. 213ff.
 - lx. Bourdieu, Pierre/ Wacquant, Loic J.D. (eds.), “Reflexive Anthropologie,” in German translation Frankfurt am Main 1996 (original 1992), p. 127.
 - lxi. In practice, the leadership positions of welfare associations are occupied by men only, since women are considered life-long perpetual minors before the law in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, they cannot take on the ‘guardianship’ of an institution.
 - lxii. All women in Saudi Arabia, even non-Muslim foreigners, must wear the ‘abaya, a black, coat-like wrap, in public, i.e. in mixed-gender rooms.
 - lxiii. There are, as far as I know, two exceptions to this rule: MOSA has a women’s branch in Jeddah and one in Riyadh.
 - lxiv. The historian and leading scholar in the field of female philanthropy, Mc Carthy, highlighted the marginal role that women is granted (even today) in the U.S. as a philanthropist, in her lecture ‘Women, Philanthropy, and Science’ on 14.10.2010, at a conference of the Berlin Academy of Sciences on the subject ‘To donate, to make gifts, to shape’, see also Mc Carthy,

- Kathleen D.: *Parallel Power Structures: Women and the Voluntary Sphere*, in: idem (ed.): *Lady Bountiful Revisited*, New Brunswick 1990, p. 1-34; Taylor, Shaw: *Reinventing Fundraising. Realizing the Potential of Women's Philanthropy*, California 1995; Ginzberg, Lori D.: *Women and the Work of Benevolence. Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States*, New Haven 1990.
- lxv. See Zilfi, Madeline C. (ed.): *Women in the Ottoman Empire. Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era*, Leiden 1997, therein Meriwether, Margaret L.: *Women and Waqf Revisited: The Case of Aleppo*, p. 153-168 and Fay, Mary Ann: *Women and Waqf. Property, Power, and the Domain of Gender in Eighteenth-Century Egypt*, p. 28-47. For the perception and presentation of female philanthropic initiatives see Ruggles, Fairchild D.: Introduction, in: idem (ed.): *Women, Patronage, and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies*, New York 2000, p. 1-15.
- lxvi. The basis for this analysis are the studies of the sociologists b. Afif, Su'ad 'Ubud: *al-'Amal at-tatau'i fi al-mujtama' al-madani: Dirasa li-daur al-mar'a at-tatau'i fi muhafazat Jidda bi-l-mamlaka al-'arabiyya as-sa'udiyya*, unpublished dissertation, handed in at KAU, Jeddah 2008 and idem: *Mujtama' ar-rubut: Dirasa wasfiyya li-asalib ar-ra'aya al-ijtima'iyya fi buyut al-fuqara' bi-madinat Jidda bi-l-mamlaka al-'arabiyya as-sa'udiyya*, unpublished Masters' thesis, handed in at KAU, Jeddah 1993.
- lxvii. Vgl. Schmid (2010), p. 91f; Human Rights Watch 2008: *Perpetual Minors. Human Rights Abuses stemming from Male Guardianship and Sex Segregation in Saudi Arabia*, URL: <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2008/04/19/perpetual-minors-0> (3.11.2010) or Doumato, Eleanor: *The Ambiguity of Shari'a and the Politics of 'Rights' in Saudi Arabia*, in: Afkhami, Mahnaz (ed.): *Faith and Freedom. Women's Human Rights in the Muslim World*, London 1995, p. 135-160.
- lxviii. For other interpretations of this koranic verse see Human Rights Watch (2008), p. 10ff.
- lxix. Cf. Yusuf Ali: *"The Holy Qur'an. Text, Translation and Commentary,"* Maryland 1983.
- lxx. And possibly even more so the reality of single men, who - on their own - are not even allowed to enter family sections or on family days, which is possible for single women.
- lxxi. One example against the myth of a historical uniform tradition of Saudi Arabia is the 'abaya. Before the 1980s, the black coat was worn only from women of the central region Najd. Today, the 'abaya as a symbol of national unity has indeed replaced the regional costumes from different parts of the country, but still for many parts of the country, it cannot be considered an indigenous, conservative custom or tradition ('adat wa-taqlid).
- lxxii. For the role image of the Saudi woman, a significant study is Doumato, Eleanor A.: *Gender, Monarchy, and National Identity in Saudi Arabia*, in: *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 19 (1992) 1, p. 31-47, esp. p. 33.
- lxxiii. Doumato (1992), p. 36f.
- lxxiv. See Doumato, Eleanor A.: *"Women and Work in Saudi Arabia: How flexible are Islamic Margins?"*, *Middle East Journal* 53 (1999) 4, p. 568-583 and on the state interest for gendering: Doumato, Eleanor: *Getting God's Ear. Women, Islam, and Healing in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf*, Columbia 2000, p. 26f.
- lxxv. See Doumato (1995), p. 149. Therein significant factors that have an influence on the changing of society: Mass media, education, independent income of women, the world wide web, women's literature. See also Cook, Miriam: *Women Claim Islam*, London 2001, p. xvii.

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- lxxvi. See Al-Khateeb, Salwa: "The Oil Boom and its Impact on Women and Families in Saudi Arabia," Alsharekh, Alanoud (ed.): *The Gulf Family*, London 2007, p. 83-108.
- lxxvii. Altorky, Soraya: *Women in Saudi Arabia. Ideology and Behavior among the Elite*, New York 1986, observations on the relationship of the living standard of families, the working force and the attitude towards women: "these observations attach yet another value to the concealment of women. It serves as a status marker, symbolizing the socioeconomic rank that facilitates its enforcement.", p. 22f.
- lxxviii. See Doumato (1992) and idem (1999).
- lxxix. See Prokop, Michaela: *Saudi Arabia. The Politics of Education*, in: *International Affairs* 79 (2003) 1, p. 77-89, AMEinfo: *Women's education in Saudi Arabia: The way forward*, URL: <http://www.ameinfo.com/199773.html> (15.04.2010). Until 2002 all girls' education was subject to the Ministry of Religion as opposed to boys' education which has always been under the auspices of the Ministry for Higher Education. In 2002 the responsibilities for boys and girls were brought together under the Ministry of Higher Education.
- lxxx. See Yamani, Mai: "Changed Identities. The Challenge of the New Generation in Saudi Arabia," London 2000.
- lxxxi. See Schmid (2010) for symbolic gender-policy and the question of a change in Saudi society.
- lxxxii. For example, very few shopping malls check whether mixed-gender groups are actually relatives or not. Even the restaurants' family area could be used for secret meetings of unmarried couples. In addition, women inevitably in everyday communication with drivers and domestic workers are confronted to non-related men.
- lxxxiii. See Le Renard, Amélie: "Only for Women': Women, the State, and Reform in Saudi Arabia," in: *Middle East Journal* 62 (2008) 4, S. 610-629. In the société feminine women manage to bypass many existing isolation- and discrimination-processes, however, their perpetual minority remains in force.
- lxxxiv. The ancient director of the Charitable Women's Welfare Association, Hasan Qabil, in: *Kutaib asdarathu al-jam'iyya an-nisa'iyya al-khairiyya bi-munasabat murur 20 sana 'ala ta'sisiha*, Djidda 1982, p. 19. Here in translation of the author.
- lxxxv. Ahmad Salih al-Hajji, Sa'd: *al-Jam'iyyat an-nisa'iyya al-ijtima'iyya bi-duwal majlis at-ta'awun li-duwal al-khalij al-'arabiyya*, Kuwait City 2000, p. 314. Here in translation of the author.
- lxxxvi. Preface of the president of the Charitable Women's Welfare Association, Fawziyya Fauwwaz, in: *the Charitable Women's Welfare Association* (1982), p. 16, in translation of the author.
- lxxxvii. Presentation of the fields of action of the Charitable Women's Welfare Association, in: *Charitable Women's Welfare Association* (1982), p. 35, in translation of the author.
- lxxxviii. Interview by the author with female social workers of the Charitable Female Association in Jeddah and with the sociologist Su'ad 'Ubud b. Afif in February 2010. See also Afif (2008) and idem (1993).
- lxxxix. See Vagt (1992), p. 53 and Altorky, Soraya: "The Concept of Citizenship in Saudi Arabia," in: Suad, Joseph (ed.): *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East*, New York 2000, p. 215-236.
- xc. The importance of economic capital, also in the philanthropic field, is neither to be underestimated here, not least because many social workers work to support their families with an income. Furthermore, economic capital can be translated into other sorts of capital, as is often the case in the philanthropic field, for example when the amount of the membership

- fee of a welfare association serves as a natural selection process over the exclusivity (the symbolic capital) of its members.
- xcv. See Shaheed, Farida: *Networking for Change: The Role of Women's Groups in Initiating Dialogue on Women's Issues*, in: Afkhami, Mahnaz (ed.): *Faith and Freedom. Women's Human Rights in the Muslim World*, New York 1995, p. 78-103 and Baron, Beth: *Women's Voluntary Social Welfare Organizations in Egypt*, in: Okkenhaug, Inger Marie/ Flaskerud, Ingvild (eds.): *Gender, Religion and Change in the Middle East. Two Hundred Years of History*, New York 2005, p. 85-102 and Afif (2008).
- xcii. Bourdieu (1983), p. 192.
- xciii. Altorky (1986), p. 16f.
- xciv. See Le Renard (2008), Pauvreté, p. 624f. and similar statements in interviews which the author held with committed Saudi women.
- xcv. "Women barge into men's domain, organize chocolate exhibition" Arab News (6.03.2010): The exhibition is considered to be the first major event organized by women. Both organizers have worked for a long time with the women's welfare association Nahda Philanthropic Society (NPS) and remarked "My previous experience as a PR supervisor and later as assistant general director of NPS has helped me a lot in this," said Al-Sabiq. 'My previous experience as head of the PR department at NPS has helped me organize the exhibition', said Al-Shammary".
- xcvi. See "A Golden Chance to Focus on Volunteer Work Says Al-Yafi" Arab News (29.10.2006) URL: <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=1§ion=0&article=87350&d=29&m=10&y=2006> (13.11.2010), Fatan al-Yafi was appointed head of the CSR-department of the enterprise Savola Group. This is the highest position that is occupied by a woman at Savola.
- xcvii. "Yasmine Idriss... Charity begins at 16" Arab News (3.03.2010) URL: http://arabnews.com/lifestyle/art_culture/article25621.ece (18.11.2010).
- xcviii. Similar projects are often conducted by students of the private Effat University or Dar Al-Hekma College, see "Students feeling responsible" Arab News (14.04.2009) URL: <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=1§ion=0&article=121512&d=14&m=4&y=2009> (18.11.2010).
- xcix. In addition to the described characteristics of the upper class, there are certainly, too, young, committed social workers who are simply dependent on income from permanent employment in a charity, but this seems to be a different phenomenon, which deserves an independent research, perhaps on poverty in Saudi Arabia.
- c. See Altorky (1986), p. 17, p. 44 and p. 48f.
- ci. See "Youth problems need everyone's attention" Arab News (10.06.2008) URL: <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=7§ion=0&article=110744&d=10&m=6&y=2008> (20.11.2010).
- cii. See for fluctuations in the numbers and difficulties in population estimation Steinberg, Guido: "Saudi-Arabien. Politik, Geschichte, Religion," München 2004, p. 125.
- ciii. See Prokop, Michaela: "Saudi Arabia. The Politics of Education," *International Affairs* 79 (2003) 1, p. 77-89, Bosbait Mohammed/ Wilson, Rodney: "Education, School to Work Transitions and Unemployment in Saudi Arabia," *Middle Eastern Studies* 41 (2005) 4, p. 533-545 and Kapiszewski, Andrzej: "Population, Labour and Education Dilemmas Facing GCC States," *Cross-Roads of the New Millenium. Proceedings of the Second Technological Education and National Development Conference*, Abu Dhabi 2000.
- civ. See Steinberg (2004), p. 125.

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- cv. See "RCC to hold employment exhibition" Arab News (2.03.2010).
- cvi. Further on the concept of Saudiization and the state's implementation see Looney, Robert: "Saudiization. A useful Tool in the Kingdom's Battle against Unemployment?", *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 27 (2004) 3, p. 13-31.
- cvii. See Yamani, Mai: "Changed Identities. The Challenge of the New Generation in Saudi Arabia," London 2000 and the current debate in Saudi media "Empty promises about jobs for Saudis" Arab News (9.03.2010) URL: <http://arabnews.com/saudiarabia/article27647>. ece (14.03.2011).
- cviii. See Champion, Daryl: "The Paradoxical Kingdom," London 2003, p. 11, who terms this form of political economy "asabiyya capitalism".
- cix. See Sowayan, Saad: Pressures of youth and rich-poor gap mean time right for Saudis to widen search for solutions, in: Craze, Joshua/ Huband, Mark (eds.): *The Kingdom. Saudi Arabia and the Challenge of the 21st Century*, London 2009, p. 248-252.
- cx. "Finally everyone is bored" Arab News (29.11.2004) URL: <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=7§ion=0&article=55244&d=29&m=11&y=2004> (20.11.2010). See also "Where are our youth going?" Arab News (28.10.2002) URL: <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=7§ion=0&article=19886&d=28&m=10&y=2002> (20.11.2010).
- cxii. More details on the website of the National Dialog under URL: <http://www.kacnd.org/> (19.11.2010).
- cxiii. Cf. Perthes, Volker: "Orientalische Promenaden. Der Nahe und der Mittlere Osten im Aufbruch," Berlin 2005, p. 180 f.
- cxiiii. Yamani (2002), p. 133.
- cxv. See "CNN visits fainak.com" (21.07.2008) under URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldXJbKU5EWg> (20.11.2010) and "Fainak. A website for events in Jeddah" Saudi Gazette (11.09.2008) URL: <http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentID=2008091116950> (20.11.2010).
- cxvi. "What is fainak?" on youtube under URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7hZFYlqDzs> (20.11.2010).
- cxvii. As indicated by Yamani (2002).
- cxviii. See "Young Saudis plan garage sale for charity" Arab News (3.09.2008) URL: <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=1§ion=0&article=113768&d=3&m=9&y=2008> (20.11.2010) and "'Garage sale' draws big crowd" Arab News (20.09.2008) URL: <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=1§ion=0&article=114564&d=20&m=9&y=2008> (20.11.2010). The second charity flea market was supposed to take place on March 11th 2011, see "The Festival" facebook URL: http://www.facebook.com/update_security_info.php?wizard=1#!/event.php?eid=182260035118605&index=1 (10.01.2010).
- cxix. Interview with the founder Mariya Mahdali during a visit to the author's office in February 2009.
- cx. See Fainak: Members Magazine, Rumman Company (ed.), Jeddah 2008, therein p. 3, in possession of the author.
- cxii. Thus mentioned for example by the director of the Charitable Women's Association in Jeddah and her social workers in interviews conducted by the author in January 2010.
- cxiii. Fainak-Magazine (2008), p. 3, also in the article "Young Saudis plan garage sale for charity" and "'Garage sale' draws big crowd" Arab News, as above mentioned. The receiving parties are only vaguely described as 'welfare associations' and 'needy people'.
- cxiiii. "YIG2.mov" (4min 26) on youtube URL: <http://www.youtube.com/>

- watch?v=1ycpzlUBdBw (21.11.2010). The video was also displayed on facebook by Yamen S. Al-Hajjar in the context of the Saudi Debate Society on the 25.09.2010 and discussed there.
- cxxiii. Details on the work of YIG on youtube “Ma hiya majmu‘at ash-shabab al-mubadirin?” (10.11.2010) URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5EOBN3Mv4g&feature=related> (21.10.2010) and there “Reasons” (12.11.2010) URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4k-4Aj0j8M> (21.10.2010).
- cxxiv. In YIG2.mov: “And for this privilege we have to be thankful in our thoughts and generous in our actions. The prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said ‘Do not turn away a poor man [...] even if all you can give is half a date. If you love the poor and bring them near you [...] God will bring you near him on the day of resurrection.’”
- cxxv. Similar observations can be found in the behavior of the young Egyptian upper class, see Buitelaar, Marjo/ Saad, Nirvana: “Ramadan in contemporary Cairo: Consumption in the name of Piety and Authenticity,” in: *Reconstruction* 10 (2010)1, p. 1-11.

