



Israel,
the
Hashemites
and the
Palestinians



The Fateful Triangle

Editors

Efraim Karsh

P.R. Kumaraswamy

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ISRAEL, THE HASHEMITES AND THE
PALESTINIANS

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Israel, the Hashemites and the Palestinians: The Fateful Triangle

EFRAIM KARSH

No regional group has exerted greater influence on the fortunes of the modern Middle East than the Hashemite family of the Hijaz. Not only did one of its prominent scions, Hussein Ibn Ali, the sharif of Mecca and perpetrator of the 'Great Arab Revolt', succeed in inducing Britain to surrender to his family substantial parts of the collapsing Ottoman Empire; he also drove British officialdom to seriously entertain the destruction of that empire. As late as June 1915, nearly a year after the outbreak of the First World War, British policymakers were still amenable to the continued existence of Turkey-in-Asia, as evidenced by the recommendations of an interdepartmental committee, headed by Sir Maurice de Bunsen of the Foreign Office, that regarded the preservation of a decentralized and largely intact Ottoman Empire as the most desirable option. Four months later, the British high commissioner in Egypt, Sir Henry McMahon, had been sufficiently impressed by Hussein's false pretence to represent 'the whole of the Arab nation without any exception'¹ to accept, albeit in a highly equivocal fashion, his demand for the creation of a vast Arab empire on the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, stretching from Asia Minor to the Indian Ocean and from Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean.

When this grandiose vision failed to materialize in its full scope, the Hashemites quickly complained of being 'robbed' of the fruits of victory promised to them during the war. (They were, as it happens, generously rewarded in the form of vast territories several times the size of the British Isles.) Thus arose the standard grievance that Arab intellectuals and politicians levelled at the Western powers, Britain in particular, and thus emerged the doctrine of pan-Arabism which postulates the existence of 'a single nation bound by the common ties of language, religion and history ...behind the facade of a multiplicity of sovereign states'.² The territorial expanse of this supposed nation has varied among the exponents of the ideology, ranging from merely the Fertile Crescent to the entire territory 'from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf'. But the unity of the Arabic-speaking populations inhabiting these vast territories is never questioned.

To be sure, this doctrine was already articulated by a number of pre-First World War intellectuals, most notably the Syrian political exiles Abd al-Rahman

al-Kawakibi (1854–1902) and Najib Azuri (1873–1916), as well as by some of the secret Arab societies operating in the Ottoman Empire before its collapse. Yet it is highly doubtful whether these early beginnings would ever have amounted to anything more than intellectual musings had it not been for the huge ambitions of Hussein and his two most celebrated sons—Faisal and Abdullah.

Indeed, it was Faisal and Abdullah who placed another imperial ideal—that of Greater Syria—on the Arab political agenda. Even during the revolt against the Ottoman Empire, Faisal began toying with the idea of winning his own Syrian empire independently of his father's prospective empire. He tried to gain great-power endorsement for this ambition by telling the Paris Peace Conference that 'Syria claimed her unity and her independence' and that she was 'sufficiently advanced politically to manage her own internal affairs' if given adequate foreign and technical assistance.³ When the conference planned to send a special commission of inquiry to the Middle East, Faisal quickly assembled a (highly unrepresentative) General Syrian Congress that would 'make clear the wishes of the Syrian people'.⁴ And by way of leaving nothing to chance, Faisal manipulated Syrian public opinion through extensive propaganda, orchestrated demonstrations and intimidation of opponents.

When all these efforts came to naught, and his position in Syria was increasingly threatened by the French, Faisal allowed the General Syrian Congress to proclaim him the constitutional monarch of Syria 'within its natural boundaries, including Palestine' and in political and economic union with Iraq. On 8 March 1920 he was crowned as King Faisal I at the Damascus City Hall, and France and Britain were asked to vacate the western (that is, Lebanese) and the southern (that is, Palestinian) parts of Syria. The seed of the Greater Syria ideal had been sown.

Neither did Faisal abandon the Greater Syrian dream after his expulsion from Damascus by the French in July 1920. Quite the reverse. Using his subsequent position as the first monarch of Iraq, Faisal toiled ceaselessly to bring about the unification of the Fertile Crescent under his rule. This policy was sustained, following his untimely death in September 1933, by successive Iraqi leaders. Nuri Said, Faisal's comrade-in-arms and a perpetual prime minister, did so, as did Abdullah, Faisal's older brother, who articulated his own version of the Greater Syria ideal.

Having been elbowed aside by his younger brother, Faisal, from what he considered to be his prospective kingdom, i.e. Iraq, Abdullah turned his sights to Transjordan as a springboard for an alternative empire embracing Syria, Palestine, and possibly Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Hence, when in March 1921 it was suggested by the British Colonial Secretary, Winston Churchill, that Transjordan be constituted as an Arab province of Palestine, under an Arab Governor amenable to him and subordinate to the High Commissioner for Palestine, Abdullah demurred. If a certain territory had to be incorporated into another as a province, then it should be Palestine into Transjordan, under his headship, and not the other way round: 'If His Majesty's Government could

agree that there should be an Arab Emir over Palestine and Trans-Jordania in the same relation with the High Commissioner for Palestine as that of the Emir Faisal with the High Commissioner for Mesopotamia, he was convinced that the present difficulties between Arabs and Jews would be most easily overcome.' Churchill's explanation that there was a fundamental difference between Mesopotamia, which had been provisionally recognized as an independent state, and Palestine, which had been entrusted to the administration of a mandatory, failed to impress Abdullah. 'His Majesty's Government proposed to have his brother Faisal in Mesopotamia with a High Commissioner or a mandate, or whatever term they might like to employ. He felt strongly that a similar regime should be adopted for Palestine and Trans-Jordania.'⁵

These imperial ambitions constituted the cornerstone of Hashemite interest in the Zionist enterprise. As products of the Ottoman imperial system, where religion constituted the linchpin of the socio-political order of things, both Abdullah and Faisal had no real grasp of Jewish nationalism, or for that matter of the phenomenon of nationalism per se. True, they had been the moving spirit behind the 'Great Arab Revolt'; however, the revolt had far less to do with the desire to unshackle the Arab Nation' from the chains of Ottoman captivity than with the ambition of substituting a Hashemite Empire, extending well beyond the predominantly Arabic-speaking territories, for that of the Ottomans. Hussein and his sons did not regard themselves as part of a wider Arab nation, bound together by a shared language, religion, history, or culture. Rather, they held themselves superior to those ignorant creatures whom they were 'destined' to rule and educate. It was the white man's burden, Hijaz style.

This was also the Hashemite attitude towards the Zionist movement: not acquiescence in Jewish national self-determination but its exploitation for the benefit of Hashemite imperialism. Due to their Ottoman upbringing and their own imperial ambitions, both Faisal and Abdullah viewed Jews, like other non-Muslim minorities, as members of a tolerated religious community (*millet*), deserving protection and autonomy in the practice of their religious affairs—but not a state of their own; given their perception of Jews as an influential, affluent and technologically advanced community, they were keen to incorporate them into their kingdom—as subjects. As the Transjordanian Prime Minister, Samir al-Rifai, told Brigadier I.N. Clayton of the British Middle East Office (BMEO) in Cairo on 11 December 1947: The enlarged Transjordan State with the support of Jewish economy would become the most influential State in the Arab Middle East.'⁶

It is in this light that Faisal's brief liaison with the Zionist movement should be viewed. The Balfour Declaration of November 1917, in which the British government endorsed 'the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people' and pledged to 'use its best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object', had transformed the general perception of Zionism from a fledgling movement into an omnipotent expression of the mythical 'World Jewry' and a potentially beneficial ally. Consequently, in January 1919

Faisal signed an agreement with Dr Chaim Weizmann, head of the Zionist movement, expressing support for ‘the fullest guarantees for carrying into effect the British Government’s Declaration of the 2nd November 1917’ and for the adoption of ‘all necessary measures...to encourage and stimulate immigration of Jews into Palestine on a large scale’. Meanwhile, however, Lawrence of Arabia, Faisal’s foremost champion, was reducing expectations of potential Jewish-Arab collaboration. The Arabs hope that the British will keep what they have conquered [in Palestine], he told the cabinet’s Eastern Committee. They will not approve Jewish independence for Palestine but will support as far as they can Jewish infiltration, if it is behind a British, as opposed to an international facade.⁷

This is indeed what happened. No sooner had the ink dried on the agreement than Faisal, under the influence of his nationalist officers, reneged on this historic promise. Moreover, having been crowned by his supporters as King Faisal I of Syria, the newly installed monarch had no intention of allowing the Jewish national movement to wrest away any part of his kingdom. Hence the crowning ceremony was followed by violent demonstrations in Palestine, as rumours spread regarding the country’s imminent annexation to Syria. These culminated in early April 1920 in a pogrom in Jerusalem in which five Jews were killed and 211 wounded.

Abdullah’s interaction with the Zionist movement was far longer than his brother’s, yet not much more fruitful as he never wavered from his Greater Syrian ambition until it was dealt a mortal blow by the establishment of the state of Israel and its ability to withstand the pan-Arab attack of May 1948. It was this ambition that underlay Abdullah’s endorsement of the 1937 recommendations by the Peel Commission: not acceptance of the partition of Mandatory Palestine into independent Jewish and Palestinian states but rather the incorporation of these two communities into his kingdom. This is what he repeatedly communicated to the Zionist movement in the 1930s—before, during and after the Peel Commission;⁸ this is what he informed the follow-up Woodhead Commission of Inquiry (1938),⁹ and this is what he told Jewish leaders well after the Second World War,¹⁰ including the Acting Head of the Jewish Agency’s Political Department, Golda Meir, in their meeting on 17 November 1947. ‘Let me seize this opportunity to suggest to you the idea, for future consideration,’ he told Meir, ‘of an independent Hebrew Republic in part of Palestine within a Transjordan state that would include both banks of the Jordan, with me at its head, and in which the economy, the army and the legislature will be joint.’¹¹

It was only upon realizing that this solution was totally unacceptable to Meir, who insisted on a two-state solution in line with the impending UN Partition Resolution, that Abdullah opted for the lesser choice of incorporating the Arab areas of Mandatory Palestine into his kingdom. But even then he did not view this option as final, but rather as a tactical withdrawal on the road of his strategic goal: in early December 1947, shortly after the passing of the UN Partition Resolution and a fortnight after his secret meeting with Meir, Abdullah sought to

persuade the Arab League to finance Transjordan's occupation of Palestine, which he was prepared to undertake.¹² As his Arab partners were no warmer to the idea than his Jewish interlocutors, Abdullah renewed his efforts to convince the Jewish Agency to cede him some of the territory awarded to them by the UN or even to forego the idea of an independent state altogether and to become an autonomous province in his kingdom.

The last such attempt was made during Abdullah's second meeting with Golda Meir on 11 May 1948, a mere three days before the establishment of the state of Israel and its subsequent invasion by the Arab states. 'Why are you in such a hurry to proclaim your state?' he asked. 'Why don't you wait a few years? I will take over the whole country and you will be represented in my parliament. I will treat you very well and there will be no war.' Meir's categorical rejection of the idea failed to impress the king. Even as she was taking her leave, Abdullah reiterated his request to consider his offer, 'and if the reply were affirmative, it had to be given before 15 May'.¹³

Just as Abdullah was totally impervious to the essence of Zionist aspirations—national self-determination—so the Zionists would not concede to the king what he considered to be rightfully his. It is true that the Zionist movement preferred Abdullah over the militant Palestinian leader, Hajj Amin al-Husseini, the former Mufti of Jerusalem and Hitler's sidekick, as their direct neighbour. But this did not *ipso facto* preclude the possibility of an independent Palestinian state that would be headed by this arch enemy of the Jewish national cause, especially in view of the Zionist wariness of Abdullah's imperial ambitions.

This was vividly demonstrated by Meir's refusal to condone Abdullah's annexation of the Arab parts of Palestine and her insistence on the temporary nature of Transjordan's occupation 'until the United Nations could establish a government in that part [of Palestine]'. It was further underscored by Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett at the Israeli cabinet meeting of 16 June 1948. Those were the days of the first armistice after the pan-Arab invasion of Israel the previous month. Fighting was about to resume in three weeks; several political solutions revising the UN Partition Resolution were being contrived, especially by the British government, and Sharett briefed his fellow ministers of the various options confronting Israel. 'At a certain stage we committed ourselves vis-à-vis the international community to a specific arrangement—that of the 29th of November', he said,

We gave our partial and explicit agreement to a specific arrangement, and now we are being asked in England and America: 'Do you wash your hands of it? But you would be reneging on your commitment!' It seems to me that it should be clear, which is precisely what I have said at a press conference and advised colleagues to speak in a similar vein: the 29 November Resolution is an arrangement comprising several components, which together constitute one whole. When there was a chance for this 'package

deal' to be implemented—we accepted it. And if it is still feasible—we would not renege on our undertaking.

There are four such components [in the 'package deal']: a) A Jewish State in a certain part of Palestine within specific borders; b) A separate Arab State, unattached to Transjordan, let alone Syria, but rather a separate Arab-Palestinian State in a specific territory of Palestine and within specific borders; c) An international Jerusalem having an efficient international regime based on certain elements, such as ensuring equality and free access to holy sites etc; d) An economic alliance *unifying* these three elements—the Jewish State, the Arab State, and International Jerusalem—into a single economic entity, thus *preserving* the country's unity and the interrelationship between those parts. This is what we have agreed to.

'I assume, therefore, that it is our unanimous view that an Arab Palestine is here to stay', Sharett added, reflecting the general reluctance within the Israeli cabinet to condone Transjordan's annexation of the Arab areas of Mandatory Palestine,

And there is a more concrete question of Arab Palestine, namely the question of Abdullah. I do not think that on this issue we can determine the course of events in one way or the other, but we should have a prepared position for all possible contingencies.

If Arab Palestine goes to Abdullah, this means unification with Transjordan; and a possible linkage with Iraq. And if this Palestine is a separate state, standing on its own—it is a wholly different issue. In the former case [i.e., unification with Transjordan]—an economic alliance is impossible. This is not to say that no economic alliance would be feasible—but not the economic alliance [envisaged by the UN Partition Resolution] in which we would pay tax [to the Palestinian State], and which would comprise joint customs, an international regime, as well as shared use of the railway system and the port of Haifa. All this will be inconceivable. We undertook to associate ourselves with a specific partner, and we are prepared to negotiate with it. But not with another partner.¹⁴

Two months later, in a telegram to Bechor Shalom Shitrit, Minister of Police and Minorities in the Israeli government, Sharett was equally opposed to Transjordan's annexation of the Arab areas of Mandatory Palestine:

We should strive for contact and mutual understanding with people and groups among our opponents who carry weight in Arab public life and who are today prepared for cooperation with us, whether on the basis of recognizing the State of Israel within its borders or in order to establish independent rule in the Arab part of Western Palestine.

Without being able to totally remove from the agenda the possibility of the annexation of the Arab part of Western Palestine to Transjordan, we must prefer the establishment of an independent Arab state within Western Palestine. In any event we must endeavour to explore this possibility and to underscore its desirability in our eyes over the annexation proposal.¹⁵

Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion was similarly wary of Transjordan's possible annexation of the Arab parts of Palestine. 'Our main objective now is peace... hich is why I support talking to Abdullah', he told his advisors on 18 December 1948,

but we should clarify [to him] from the start that apart from a truce, there is not yet any agreement between us, and that the discussion is on the basis of *tabula rasa*. We will not be able to agree lightly to the annexation of [the Arab] parts of Palestine to Transjordan, because of 1) Israel's security: an Arab State in Western Palestine is less dangerous than a state that is tied to Transjordan, and tomorrow—probably to Iraq; 2) Why should we vainly antagonize the Russians? 3) Why should we do this [i.e., agree to Transjordan's annexation of Western Palestine] against the [wishes of the] rest of the Arab states? This does not mean that we might not agree under any circumstances—but only in the context of a general arrangement.¹⁶

This is of course water under the bridge. As the Palestinians disappeared from the political scene following their defeat and dispersal in the 1948 war, Israel acquiesced in the annexation of the territory that would henceforth come to be known as the West Bank (of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan), especially since Abdullah's grandson, Hussein Ibn Talal, who ruled Jordan from 1953 until his premature death some 50 years later, unequivocally discarded his grandfather's imperial ambitions without dissociating himself from the covert interaction with Israel.

This, to be sure, did not prevent Hussein from betraying his secret Israeli interlocutor at the moment of truth. In June 1967, when a frenzied Arab world, intoxicated with its own rhetoric on Israel's imminent demise, was gearing itself for the 'final round' with the Jewish state, the Jordanian monarch, eager to share the war spoils, ignored secret Israeli pleas to stay out of the impending conflict and on 5 June attacked the Jewish state. Yet, as with Abdullah, the Israelis seemed to regard Hussein's act of aggression more leniently than that of the other Arab states, perhaps because of his willingness to parallel his overt hostility with covert interaction. Consequently, from the late 1960s onwards, the secret Jordanian-Israeli relationship grew closer and more multifaceted as the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the surge of Palestinian nationalism, under the militant leadership of the PLO, created a strong convergence of interests between Israel and the Hashemites. Given the PLO's implacable commitment to Israel's destruction, Jordan was widely viewed as the foremost partner to any potential

deal over the West Bank's future, though Hussein proved himself no more disposed than his grandfather to make the leap from a secret relationship to a public commitment to peace (in 1951 Abdullah reneged on a secretly agreed non-belligerence treaty with Israel), especially in view of the PLO's growing influence in the West Bank and Gaza.

Surprisingly enough, notwithstanding its unquestioned preference of the 'Jordanian option', Israel did surprisingly little to stunt the growth of the PLO's political influence in the territories. The publication of pro-PLO editorials in the local press was permitted, and anti-Israel political activities by its local supporters were tolerated so long as they did not involve overt and direct incitement to violence. Israel also allowed the free flow of PLO-controlled funds into the territories ('It does not matter that they get money from the PLO, as long as they don't build arms factories with it', said Minister of Defence Ezer Weizmann in 1978), and, with very few exceptions, did not attempt to encourage the formation of alternative political force as a counterweight to the PLO. As a result, the PLO gradually established itself as the predominant force in the territories, relegating the traditional pro-Jordan leadership to the fringes of the political system.

And yet, even the Likud party, which views the West Bank as an integral part of the historic land of Israel, and which at the time of its rise to power in May 1977 included influential members who believed that the Hashemite Kingdom, east of the Jordan River, with its substantial Palestinian population, should become a Palestinian state, sustained the close tacit relationship with Jordan. Indeed, shortly after coming to power, Menachem Begin sent his foreign minister, Moshe Dayan, to explore the possibility of a peace agreement with Jordan based on a territorial compromise in the West Bank. In two secret meetings with Hussein in London on 22–3 August 1977, Dayan failed to entice the king into action. The pan-Arab Rabat Summit of 1974 had appointed the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinians, Hussein said, and he had no intention of imposing himself on them. Were the Palestinians to turn to him, he would naturally respond, given his deep sense of obligation towards them. However, he was no longer their representative and was not going to seek this role either.

Would the king accept a territorial compromise that would divide the West Bank between Jordan and Israel? Dayan asked. The answer was an unequivocal 'No'. The Israelis had to understand, Hussein said,

that he, as an Arab monarch, could not propose to the people of even a single Arab village that they cut themselves off from their brother Arabs and become Israelis. His agreement to such a plan would be regarded as treachery. He would be charged with 'selling' Arab land to Jews so that he could enlarge his own kingdom.

What then was the King's preferred solution for the West Bank? Didn't he fear that the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the territories, under PLO leadership, would endanger his throne? Hussein was evasive. He did not dispute Dayan's presumption regarding a Palestinian state, but did not endorse it either. 'Let the Palestinians do what they want,' he said. 'I could do without them.'¹⁷

Hussein's evasiveness must not have been that disheartening for Begin. Had the king picked up the gauntlet and agreed to enter into a dialogue, the prime minister would have been boxed into a corner given his relentless commitment to the ideal of 'Greater Israel'. As it was, a relieved Begin could argue that there was no real partner for negotiations over the West Bank, and that the key to Arab-Israeli peace lay in Egypt, in its capacity as the largest and most powerful Arab state. He must have been similarly relieved when a couple of years later the PLO rejected the invitation by US President Jimmy Carter to join the peace process, on the basis of a framework agreed by the Egyptian president, Anwar Sadat, and Begin himself, during their Camp David summit of September 1978.

It was only after the signing of the Oslo Accords between the PLO and Israel in September 1993, virtually modelled on the Camp David formula of 15 years earlier, that Hussein felt confident enough to make his public peace with Israel, thus renouncing once and for all potential Jordanian claims to the West Bank. This, however, has not eliminated the fundamental convergence of Israeli-Jordanian interests created in the wake of the 1967 war. So long as the PLO has not truly renounced its commitment to the destruction of the Jewish state, despite its formal commitment to do so in the Oslo Accords, Israel is bound to continue to consider Jordan a strategic ally, if only on account of their being partners in adversity. So long as the PLO fails to transcend its terrorist origins and to eschew the use of violence as its foremost political instrument, the Jordanians cannot relent in their (tacit) opposition to the creation of a Palestinian state, for fear that they will be the next victim of PLO irredentism. It is only when all these three nations—Israelis, Jordanians and Palestinians—accept the legitimacy of the others' right to peaceful and uninterrupted existence, within secure and recognized borders, that their long and tortuous journey will come to a satisfactory conclusion.

NOTES

1. Hussein to McMahon (Cairo), July 1915-March 1916, presented to the British Parliament, Cmd. 5957, London, 1939, p.3 (hereinafter—Hussein to McMahon).
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4. Abu Khaldun Sati al-Husri, *Yawm Maisalun: Safha min Tarikh al-Arab al-Hadith*, rev. ed. Beirut, 1964, p.261.

5. 'First Conversation on Trans-Jordania, Held at Government House, Jerusalem, 28 March 1921', FO 371/6343, fols. 99–101.
6. Clayton to Foreign Office, 12 December 1947, telegram 67, FO 371/62226/E11928.
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8. See, for example, B. Joseph, 'Note of Talk with Salim Ayoub, 20 May 1936', and 'Note of Talk with "S.A.", M. al-Unsi and "Fr. N."', 5 June 1936, CZA, S25\10093; Lourie to Shertok (Sharett), 25 May 1936, S25/6325; Shertok to Abdullah, 30 April 1936 and Abdullah to Shertok, 6 May 1936, S25/3243; Yehoshua Porath, *Mimhumot li-mrida: Ha-tnu'a Ha-arvit-Ha-Palestinit 1929–1939*, Tel-Aviv, 1978, pp. 97–8.
9. See, for example, 'Text of the Proposal for the Solution of the Palestine Problem Sent to the British Government' (i.e., to the Woodhead Commission, May 1938), in King Abdullah of Jordan, *My Memoirs Completed: 'al-Takmilah'*, London, 1951, pp.89–90.
10. See, for example, Sasson's reports on his two meetings in August 1946 with Abdullah: CZA, S25/9036; idem, *Ba-derekh el Ha-shalom: Igrot Ve-shihot*, Tel Aviv, 1978, pp.367–72.
11. Ezra Danin, 'Siha Im Abdullah, 17.11.47', Central Zionist Archives, S25/4004.
12. Haza al-Majali, *Mudhakkirati*, Beirut, 1960, p.63.
13. Meir's verbal report to the Provisional State Council on 12 May 1948.
14. Israel's State Archives, 'Protocol of the Provisional Government Meeting of 16 June 1948', pp. 12–13, 23–4 (emphasis in the original).
15. Sharett to Shitrit, 8 August 1948, in Yehoshua Freindlich (ed.), *Teudot Mediniot Ve-diplomatit, May-September 1948*, Jerusalem, 1981, p.498.
16. David Ben-Gurion, *Yoman Ha-milhama*, Tel Aviv, 1984, 18 December 1948, Vol.III, p.885.
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The Imperialist Ties that Bind; Transjordan and the Yishuv

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Imperialism is typically described as a system of alien domination locked in perpetual conflict with its opposite—nationalism—presented, generally, as a set of principles representing the authentic collective impulse for independence. The notion that imperialism provokes nationalism exercises such a powerful influence in international relations theory that few scholars even look for creative linkages between the two forces, let alone posit the possibility of interdependence. According to conventional wisdom, imperialism boomerangs because governing a country rightfully belongs to those connected to it by language, culture and residence. Imperialists cross oceans and trek through distant continents hungry for land, treasure and trade, certain of the superiority of their way of life but presumably to no permanent avail. Opposing invasions of their homes and territories, people organize into nationalist movements to fight against imperialism in order to control their own resources, create their own structures of authority, and preserve their own cultures. So the difficulties inherent in imperialism can never really be resolved; they are either buried in forced compliance or ignited into sparks of collective insurrection and revolution.

But imperialism not only generates a series of endless crises; as a matrix of ideas, injunctions and affirmations, it serves also as a constituent element in building a state and demarcating a national identity. Literary theorists, through textual studies, have been among the first to recognize the deep legacy of imperialism and to explain how nationalist revolutionaries may expel the foreigner but not the traces of foreign rule. And if nations bear the imprint of imperialism long after they achieve independence, then it is reasonable to assume that they are deeply stamped by foreign rule during the actual years of their subjugation. Because social scientific analyses have generally been slow to recognize the linkages, they, consequently, pay more attention to the conflicts and incompatibilities that are present across the imperialist/ nationalist divide than to the manufactured commonalities. When common denominators are

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identified, they are often dismissed as a byproduct of coercion and viewed either as subversive camouflage or craven accommodation.

Palestine during the years 1922 to 1948 contained within its boundaries two political creations of Great Britain's imperialist ventures: Transjordan and the Jewish National Home. Divided by nationalist identities and loyalties, Transjordan's ruler, the Emir Abdullah, and Palestine's Zionist leaders were also bound together by a common framework of dependence on Great Britain and periodically by a convergence of political objectives. Shared interests evolved in the midst of counter-pressures, the latter producing mutual antagonisms, distrust, and ultimately, violence. Operating within the context of rules and policies not of their own making, both Abdullah and the leaders of the Yishuv (Jewish community in Palestine) had to contend with the very real possibility of losing their foreign lifeline of support. Such uncertainty could not help but engender tensions between these two dependent subalterns and threaten the stability of any joint endeavour.

Policy vacillations also brought the two sides together. While Great Britain defined the guidelines for governing both units in its own image to serve, above all, its own strategic interests, it sometimes prescribed contradictory regulations, which were often indifferently enforced. Because both Abdullah and the Zionists were determined to breathe life into their positions and communities despite their dependency and the official restrictions which limited their options and narrowed the ambit of their authority, they turned, periodically, to one another for resources and support. Although Great Britain's imperialist policies officially segregated these two parts of the Palestine Mandate along nationalist lines, legal barriers could only inhibit, not close off, contacts based on shared interests which helped lay the bedrock for independence for both Transjordan and the Yishuv.

This viewpoint is different from those put forward by most studies of the relations between Yishuv leaders and the Emir Abdullah of Transjordan which, although detailed and authoritative,¹ do not explain how these contacts loosened the hold of the imperialist order. Multiple contacts both symbolized and granted both regimes the opportunity to exercise power while simultaneously imprinting imperialist norms on the local nationalist political cultures. The interactions between Abdullah and Yishuv politicians may have been emblematic of the international political realities, but they also became the central components of a newly evolving regional balance of power. For Jews and Arabs in Palestine, imperialism operated as a grisly but important point of cultural contact and while it intensified misunderstandings, it also interacted so intensively with local elite culture that a common grammar of political development was formed and incorporated by rulers on both sides of the River Jordan. Imperialism thus has a dual impact precisely because nationalist developments achieved their initial and highest degree of definition within the framework of this foreign political order.

The design of this essay, then, is interpretative: to show how political and cultural studies can be fruitfully joined to one another and to the larger theoretical issues associated with an analysis of imperialism and nationalism. Because this

perspective requires a shift in the meaning assigned to familiar events, it is, perhaps, useful to begin with a quick historical summary. First, an outline of several of the external factors that affected the scope, as well as the outcome, of the periodic discussions between Abdullah and representatives of the Yishuv. Great Britain's mandatory policies shaped Palestine's political framework and defined the place of local rulers within it. By officially foreclosing the option of Jewish land purchases and settlement in the area ruled by Abdullah, these policies left little room for large-scale cooperative initiatives. In addition, imperial assumptions that colonies should yield dividends instead of incur losses did little to alleviate severe economic distress whenever it erupted, prompting contacts between representatives from Palestine's two administrative units for the purposes of exploring the prospect of raising investment capital for mutually profitable ventures.

The emerging structure of regional politics led Abdullah to move his policy initiatives in surprising directions. Abdullah both contributed to and operated within an orbit of bitter rivalry and had to devise defensive and offensive strategies to ensure that regional disputes were not turned against his own regime in Transjordan. Arab leaders, even those joined by family ties, were so often compelled to bend their foreign policies to the service of domestic tranquillity that the ordinary population could hardly discern a difference between internal and external issues. Malik Mufti correctly posits pan-Arabism as 'primarily a response to regime instability',² and nowhere did the borders of the post-Ottoman Arab world arouse more passion and fury than in Palestine. Into this maelstrom of rage and discontent, first and foremost Abdullah and then, subsequently, other Arab heads of state stepped.

Although Palestinian Arab opposition to the mandatory policies backing Zionist projects was total, the experience of political opposition did not produce unity. Palestinian Arabs were fragmented by social structure, political loyalties and factional disputes. The range of political and social fragmentation remained too great to forge a meaningful consensus. No one had more reason or more opportunity than Abdullah, from his base in Transjordan, to take advantage of the high level of wrangling that characterized Palestinian Arab public affairs. Abdullah responded to the factional disputes by lending support to opponents of Hajj Amin al-Husseini, the pre-eminent leader of the Palestinian Arabs. But the social dynamics that generated incentives for Abdullah's interference in Palestinian Arab politics also triggered the possibility for similar sorts of actions initiated by Palestinian Arabs within the Emir's own realm.

The exploration of the multiplicity of external factors only draws attention back to local issues confronting these regimes, for Abdullah's contacts with Yishuv leaders owed as much to internal pressures as to external constraints. Periodic outbursts of violence against Jewish immigration and colonization had ominous echoes for Abdullah and the security of his regime. Abdullah consolidated power in Transjordan partly but significantly by confronting tribal uprisings and securing military ascendancy for the troops in his service and

under British command. Tribal antagonisms to the emerging demands of a more centralizing state than ever before experienced provided Palestinian nationalist leaders with potential assets for their own struggles against Zionism. Searching for allies to supply weapons or to provide safe havens, Palestine's Arab political activists attempted to conscript into their cause tribal groupings willing to transport military supplies and to establish staging grounds for attacks east of the Jordan. But Abdullah understood that his power could not be sustained by forfeiting enclaves to groups possessing their own autonomous structures of authority, allegiances and objectives. The Emir also knew that he could not extend his domain against tribal uprisings on one day and expect to hold it against autonomous tribal initiatives on another.

For many years, scholars have had great difficulty finding labels to describe Abdullah's relations with Zionist leaders during Great Britain's rule as mandatory authority in Palestine. To some, the ties seemed so strong, they paved the way for dividing the land and denying independence to the Palestinians.³ To others, the years of discussions and limited joint endeavours primarily reflected, on the one hand, Abdullah's dynastic ambitions which led him to imagine that acquiring power in Palestine would pave the way for a call to govern in Damascus, and on the other, the desperation of Zionist leaders to find Arab support for their political project.⁴ These earlier works now enable a shift in focus away from analysing the views of leaders to probing the conditions in which these leaders operated and to the values and concepts at their disposal for making sense of their newly designed political conditions. While these interactions produced no formal and full agreement, they did shape perceptions and format political tactics, which ultimately coalesced into a regional balance of power.

THE FIRST WORLD WAR: DEFINING THE ISSUES

When the First World War destroyed the Ottoman Empire, it not only permanently altered the landscape of the Middle East, it also exposed and widened the political fault lines that had lain just beneath the surface. On the battlefields and in the diplomatic halls of Versailles, agreements transformed Arab society no less fully than Jewish, as longstanding conflicts acquired altered meanings and new groups emerged into political consciousness. Zionists embraced the changes and saw in them the opportunity for realizing their political objectives. By contrast, Arabs—even those endorsing the principle of a new political order—viewed the actual changes imposed as deeply problematic. While Zionists could see in the British Mandate the promise of far-reaching emancipation, Arabs, particularly those living in the newly demarcated territory of Palestine, could envision only the prospect of loss and subordination.

Even had there been no opposition to the building of a Jewish National Home in Palestine, the years following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire were unsettling times to live in. Among the changes introduced too rapidly for the

local Arab population to assimilate were the radically new definitions of space— borders mapped to separate people formerly united in a single imperial framework, joined together in continuous economic exchanges, and bound by a common religious culture. The postwar territorial divisions made no sense to most Arab men and women and created deeply felt disruptions. As Ottoman subjects, even as Arabs organized themselves into households and local communities, they were tied to the Empire through provincial councils and religious institutions. Under the mandatory system, political allegiance and identity were supposed to stop at borders drawn by outsiders with sufficient power to institute an organization of political space intended to serve European, not Arab, interests.

The interaction of changing British politics with changing former Ottoman provinces generated severe strains throughout the Middle East. The war's very duration had stimulated new thinking about politics at the local level, and there were signs of a new political consciousness in many Arab cities and towns. For Great Britain, the need to wage war, defeat a large Muslim empire, and retain the allegiance of the vast numbers of Muslims living within its own imperial framework prompted a political strategy based on cultivating local Arab clients. By encouraging and working through dissident Arabs now embracing the new political rhetoric and consciousness, Great Britain expected to intensify military pressure from within the Ottoman Empire, and more importantly, to obtain leverage for its policies after the war ended.

During the war, Great Britain forged its central Arab alliance with the family of Sharif Hussein, Abdullah's father and the Ottoman official in charge of the sacred cities of Mecca and Medina. Sharif Hussein and his sons expected Great Britain to bring them to power over a vast expanse of Arab lands, which, if divided into separate states, would be joined by dynastic authority. British overtures to Sharif Hussein and his family promised as much and inspired in a number of Arab nationalist societies the millennial sense of living at the dawn of a new era of power and freedom. But military successes diminished the significance of past wartime alliances in what was expected to be an epoch of peace. For that reason, postwar diplomatic decisions reflected a newly calibrated balance of international power and led the victorious powers to oppose the formation of a single Arab state. The Empire's former Arab provinces were, instead, divided into several separate states in deference to European interests and spheres of influence. To Sharif Hussein, his sons and their supporters, postwar political decisions made a farce of wartime promises and structured, instead, new forms of subordination.

In countries not of their own making, the first generation of Arab heads of state faced unprecedented challenges. Bequeathed nearly empty treasuries, many confronted the devastation of war and the task of consolidating an entirely new political system with less than broad-based popular support. All encountered a crisis of legitimacy as a result of their willingness to cooperate with the British or the French, the very powers responsible for intruding their alien political

values into the region. War may have fundamentally altered the nature of political life in the Arab world, but it had not yet instilled in the region's population a new political culture. The challenge confronting each Arab leader was nothing less than to make a state acceptable to the body politic while that state differed profoundly from anything the antebellum region had known or was led to expect. Although the mandatory system, with its tutelary authorities dedicated to preparing local populations for self-government, clothed imperial authority with a moral purpose, its implementation in the Middle East destabilized economies and ruptured longstanding political associations.

External Factors

The burden of a new and alien order weighed more heavily on Abdullah than on his counterparts in other Arab lands. Sensing defeat for himself and his family as the British allowed France to occupy Syria and drive his brother and his troops out of the country, Abdullah marched with 400 fighters from Arabia to put up a show of resistance to what seemed like a massive betrayal of promises. Encamped first at Maan and then later at Amman, Abdullah's presence in an area which had been included in Palestine in several treaties but actually ruled as part of Syria in the aftermath of the war demonstrated the need for demarcating the frontiers and acknowledging the fact that order had not yet been brought to the region.⁵

Aware that their plans for the region contained contradictory objectives, British policymakers were subjected to increasing domestic criticism for projected costs and blatant inefficiencies. At all levels of English society,' Aharon Klieman observes, 'the cry in 1920 was for economy and an end to domestic problems.'⁶ The deficit of 473 million pounds seemed staggering. Attempting to fulfil wartime obligations to the French without threatening their own interests, British officials determined that regional stability would only be forged by consolidating their own authority over this rather ambiguously defined area east of the Jordan. For Faisal's expulsion from Syria carried the risk that French influence would be pushed unimpeded up to the very borders of Arabia and Iraq, corridors vital to Great Britain's oil resources and its imperial lifelines. Instability in this area seemed a ready-made pretext for France to invade and possibly expand its regional power.⁷ Additionally, Efraim and Inari Karsh underscore Churchill's conviction that the 'British needed to harmonize their policy in Transjordan and Mesopotamia'.⁸

Because the region around Abdullah's encampment had already been included in the Palestine Mandate, Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill reconfirmed its status as defined by earlier treaty. However, in an effort to live up to the country's wartime pledges, Churchill offered Abdullah, temporarily at first, the position of Emir or governor over the lands east of the Jordan. By indulging Abdullah's dynastic dream of one day ruling over a united Arab nation with its capital in Damascus, Churchill hinted that if the Emir agreed to serve as the

governor of a region with a small population and no significant resources, he might one day find himself ruling over a vast territory and a large Arab nation. Without detaching the area from the Mandate, Churchill sought to distinguish its administration by closing off the possibility of Jewish land purchases and settlement and by honouring the country's wartime promises to Sharif Hussein's family with Abdullah's appointment. These policies, forged at the Cairo Conference of 1921 and reconfirmed by international agreement, promised to stabilize a region where the British were still pouring in millions of pounds to suppress insurgents in Iraq and quell riots in Palestine, and where the French were spreading hatred with each discharge of their cannons against the nationalist supporters of Abdullah's brother. Pacifying and controlling this region, which in Mary Wilson's words more than proved its 'political and strategic worth', protected access to Great Britain's oil reserves and ultimately functioned as a core axiom for local rulers in their own strategic calculations of regional political stability.⁹

In terms of their immediate reaction, Zionists regarded the British restrictions imposed on their activities in Transjordan as inconsistent if not subversive of the terms of the Mandate and to the commitments some read into its stipulations. In practice, Transjordan's role in Yishuv politics was less messianic than Zionist rhetoric implied. But the Zionist vision of revitalizing Jewish life through political action drew heavily for inspiration and historical validation on Biblical references. And as Zionists scrutinized the Bible for names of ancient Jewish settlements, they found a trail of identifiable sites in the area demarcated as Transjordan. The bulk of the Jewish population in the ancient world had lived in Palestine's interior and not along the Mediterranean Sea coast, which only in recent years had become the centre of modern Jewish settlement. In the Zionist imagination, Transjordan could not be relinquished without at least an emotional struggle. But although all Zionists opposed the new strictures, they were deeply divided about how to respond. Whether or not to turn anxiety into political confrontation and rupture ties to Great Britain was hotly debated by Zionist leaders, an elite already polarized by sharp ideological and policy disagreements. Recognizing that the new mandate system produced new kinds of dependencies—and despite the strident principled opposition expressed by some Zionist leaders—most mainstream Zionists registered their objections in mild protests and expressed them in guarded language. Transjordan's status, initially an issue pertinent to Jewish national identity, eventually became a matter of state security and viability.

Still, Zionists never lost hope that they might one day be able to move beyond boundaries and restrictions when political calculations worked in their favour. While the new British policy cast a dark cloud over the most expansive of Zionist visions, it also had a more concrete impact on Zionism's material base by cutting off access to what were perceived as significant economic resources. Economic interest had already directed Zionist attention east of the River Jordan. For decades, Zionists had attempted to develop agricultural settlements on these

lands but without success. Despite past failures, Zionist leaders, with full confidence in their rights, continued to be lured to cross the Jordan by what they conceived as market incentives and a favourable political climate. Prices were lower, and the Arab population much smaller, which according to Zionist calculations meant more attractive options for Jewish land purchases. Moreover, notwithstanding the mandatory restrictions on access of Jews to land, Yishuv leaders still hoped to find loopholes that would permit Jews to move to Abdullah's province for the jobs so desperately needed by the immigrants unable to find employment in Palestine's Jewish economy.

The net effect of Great Britain's restrictive covenant for this area, then, had broad implications for Zionist prospects west of the Jordan because it complicated core Zionist activities—immigration and land settlement. Sealing off Transjordan from Jewish development automatically diminished Palestine's economic absorptive capacity, now proclaimed as the official standard for determining the number of immigration certificates to be issued to the Zionist Organization for distribution. Knowing that achieving their goals depended on population growth and economic development, Zionists were eager to purchase as much of Palestine's land as possible. But land acquisition required high levels of capital not only at the time of sale but also during subsequent periods when the necessary preparations for viable agricultural settlement were undertaken. With these concerns in mind, Zionists steadily reworked their material environment to increase its productivity and expand its capacity to sustain life. Constantly higher prices for land and increasing opposition to Jewish land purchases west of the Jordan made salient how deeply Zionist economic interests could be affected by British restrictions imposed on any part of Palestine.

Measured by their dreams, the first decade of British rule in Palestine was judged by Zionist leaders to be a disappointment. Fewer immigrants than expected arrived in Palestine and much less capital than anticipated was raised, severely retarding the development of a robust economy and of the demographic growth necessary for the establishment of an independent state. Immigrants often had to rely on public works projects for employment, at best a temporary palliative. Although a relatively large number of immigrants possessing capital produced a short-term boom in 1924, the depression that followed lasted longer than the run of prosperity. After 18 months of full employment and the introduction of many new businesses, the intoxicating economic expansion ended abruptly in 1925 and produced such a steep downturn that it threatened those at the very top of the society with a radically altered balance of power, and those living at the margins with starvation.

In 1927 Solel Boneh, a pillar of the Yishuv's economy, collapsed after being unable to pay its creditors. Solel Boneh's open-ended expansion, financed by speculative credit drawn from a heavily over-valued Polish currency, erected a financial house of cards doomed to eventual collapse. Within a short period, a financial panic engulfed the credit system, particularly affecting those associated with the labour movement. Histadrut enterprises began laying off workers, and

the ensuing depression raised questions about some of the fundamental premises of Zionist ideology and the coherence of its programmes. In the face of dire economic conditions, with many thousands of workers unemployed, Yishuv leaders searched for pathways to development not only in every corner of Palestine, but also, once again, in Transjordan, despite its formal closure to Zionist economic activities.¹⁰

Zionist leaders renewed their overtures to the Emir Abdullah for purposes of both investment and employment opportunities. Given Great Britain's oppositional stance to such ventures, Zionists could devise no coherent policy and chose, instead, to rely on informal channels which brought tangible, but very marginal, results. Scattering down innumerable byways to strengthen the Yishuv's economy, Zionists found Abdullah also searching for resources and thus willing to engage in small-scale joint endeavours, though not initially through formal channels. Zionist entrepreneur and venture capitalist, Pinhas Rutenberg, received permission to buy land in Transjordan and build a plant to produce electricity. A joint Jewish-Transjordanian company extracted potash from the Dead Sea. Zionists hoped that such enterprises might open the door to additional economic opportunities including the establishment of agricultural colonies. Aware that the Emir's well-publicized meetings with Zionist officials sometimes triggered antagonism, Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann hoped that Jews might be able to build on the notable successes achieved by private entrepreneurs.¹¹

For Abdullah, however, circumscribed economic cooperation with some of Palestine's leading Zionist entrepreneurs represented one of the few ways available for attracting capital investment, mitigating underdevelopment and of not posing too direct a challenge to Great Britain. Because Abdullah believed that Zionists had access to unlimited resources, he was anxious to tap into them for desperately needed capital. Zionists, too, held exalted expectations of what negotiations with Abdullah might yield. The kind of economic opportunities Zionists actually sought lay well beyond the Emir's straightened circumstances to offer.

Great Britain's policies pushed Abdullah toward both dependence and freedom and toward channelling the limited resources at this disposal primarily to Transjordan's political development and secondarily into expanding his regional status. Abdullah could not acquire freedom without power, but he could not wield power without British backing, which was extended on terms aimed primarily at serving imperial interests.¹² Despite having been deprived of the throne he expected in Iraq, Abdullah believed that he could leverage his position in Transjordan to regional dominance in Syria. But first, Abdullah had to prove that he could maintain his position and invest his office with significant power. While Abdullah did not hide his political ambitions, the British left him ill-equipped to galvanize the forces necessary to fulfil what he saw as his family's dynastic destiny. Careful monitoring of the budget controlled Abdullah's access to the state's treasury and constrained his freedom to channel funds to secure

allies. Funds sufficient to shore up his own political base in Transjordan could not instantly produce the capital necessary to forge stable regional alliances.¹³

Wary of Abdullah's connections to nationalist activists driven from Syria by the French in the early 1920s, the British eventually pressed the Emir in 1924 to expel them from Amman. By forcing the Emir to end his association with a proven group of nationalists, Great Britain weakened the link between the crusade for Arab unity and populist nationalist sentiments. Particularly after he was compelled to stand silently and passively on the sidelines during Syria's bloody revolt against the French in 1925, Abdullah appeared unaffected and unmoved by the nationalist argument and cause.¹⁴

But the nationalist struggle was a many-sided dynamic and it, as much as subjugation to imperialist domination, structured Abdullah's foreign policy stances. Nationalist unity to Abdullah meant not so much freedom as power. Abdullah contended that the unity of the separate Arab states would not only fulfil his family's heritage but would also bring independence from imperialism. Recognizing the impossibility of openly challenging British policies, Abdullah discerned how British support for strategic security and stability in the region might be harnessed to strengthen his own regime, advance Transjordan's political development, and, simultaneously, promote closer cooperation among Arab regimes. As much as the polemics of the day, Abdullah's actions defined the meaning of Arab nationalism.¹⁵ While attempts to unify the separate Arab states stemmed partly from Abdullah's personal ambitions and from his conscious efforts to subvert the power of rivals, Arab unity was not simply a metaphor for the power of state and for regime antagonisms and competition. For not only did unification of divided states represent a proposal for the region's future, it also harkened back to an older Ottoman political tradition which had become incorporated into the consciousness of many postwar Arab rulers, such as Abdullah, from their formative political instruction and earliest experiences. When the Ottoman defeat in war deprived Arab elites of their common framework of authority, it did not denude them of the norms and values that had for so long organized their culture.

Indeed, to many Arabs and to British officials, Abdullah seemed something of a political anachronism, a proponent of views trapped in an earlier era. Raised in Istanbul and Arabia, Abdullah may have shifted his political loyalty from the Ottoman to the British Empire, but he did not so easily or quickly displace his values or his way of understanding politics. Less a matter of ideology than of power, politics unfolded for Abdullah in the building of coalitions as the central agents of governance and in the distribution of funds to solidly entrenched elites as the essential instrument of establishing a stable base of support. Abdullah's idea of governance fostered a sense of loyalty to rulers before policies and to a structure of power rather than to a set of clear principles.

Abdullah retained the belief in the steady hand of a monarch and elite to govern, and in a united Arab political structure to link regimes as the best and perhaps only way to withstand the pressures of foreign powers. But wherever

Abdullah turned for alliances, he found either rivalries to his own claims for hegemony or opposition to his conception of who should rightfully exercise authority. As a remedy for weakness and subordination, the language of Arab unity also became the rationale linking independence with the hopes for a better life that populations dispersed well beyond the borders of any single state embraced fully and enthusiastically. But popular sentiments in support of Arab unity posed complications for rulers like Abdullah who understood that such impulses carried with them democratic corollaries that simply divided and threatened too many established interests and powers.

Arab nationalism, which resonated deeply in the culture, thus became a vortex pulling leaders and followers in very different directions. Populist organizations adopted the discourse of Arab unity and tried to use it to advance their own aims. Railing against unwarranted foreign intervention, Abdullah and other Arab rulers could not avoid arousing passions, but their rhetoric of power and hope was not intended to activate a participatory politics or create a momentum too strong for the staying hand of a deferential order. It is no wonder, then, that the idea of Arab unity Abdullah put forward as a means to achieving independence from foreign control also pushed the Emir to deepen his dependence on foreign power as the only way to preserve his regime and insure stability. Imperialism was not just a system of alien rule; it became the rule itself, endowing local regimes with the necessary resources to maintain power and build state institutions.

During the second decade of British rule, Abdullah made considerable progress in consolidating his administration in Transjordan. A British trained and led Arab Legion deterred and/or put down a number of tribal revolts. In deploying the Arab Legion to quell uprisings and by extension to curb the capacity of tribes to control certain lands, Abdullah and his British advisors may have intended to service imperialist interests, but they also ended up forging a vital instrument of state-building.¹⁶ Military prowess made possible the creation of a distinctive political culture whose structures of government may have been designed by a foreign power but whose mode of operations was distinctly reflective of local values. By deflecting some tribal challenges and confronting others militarily, Abdullah enlarged the scope of his local authority on the one hand, and expanded Transjordan's role in sustaining a particular regional balance of power on the other.

The development of state institutions strengthened Abdullah's position and laid the groundwork for increasingly autonomous political practices. Ironically, the introduction of a legislative council by Great Britain provided a major impetus for localist resistance to the demands of the imperialist order. Transjordan's Legislative Council functioned not only as a policy advisor to the Emir but also as a judicial body and as a negotiating instrument particularly in matters of taxation. Established for the sake of legitimizing Abdullah's authority, and by extension that of Great Britain, the Council ended up achieving much more for the Emir and his regime. By transmogrifying tribal practices into legal rulings and judgments, the Council accorded the Emir manoeuvrability with regard

to his British overlords and allowed Transjordan to incorporate a formidable body of local customs into policy and law.¹⁷ Although power and policy in Transjordan still had to meet local and foreign demands, there were fewer conflicts between the two sources of pressure as Abdullah found satisfactory ways of accommodating both and forcing each into patterns of behaviour that recalled the legitimacy of the past, even if it still did not fully project an absolute institutional viability for the future.

Internal Factors

The shift in priorities from regional to internal developments allowed Abdullah to find within his own borders a valid form of political authority, but it also drew him into an increasing involvement in Palestine's general internal controversies. Not surprisingly, then, the outbreak of violence in Palestine in 1929, which destabilized British rule and Jewish settlement, intensified Abdullah's interactions with Zionist leaders. Arabs and Jews in Palestine emerged from the devastation shaken by how easily ordinary everyday tensions could descend into violence and how uncertain the future seemed in the context of disorder. In his masterful study of Jewish-Transjordanian relations, Yoav Gelber calls these disturbances a 'turning point' and describes in detail some of the profound changes.

Late in 1929 the British Residency in Amman learned about attempts to raise armed bands to overrun Jewish settlements west of the river ... Similar reports reached the Jewish Agency and the Jewish National Council...They described the recruitment of bandits in Transjordan and warned of an impending attack on the Naharayim electricity plan and Jewish settlements in the Jordan Valley. Shortly after the riots, the Jewish national institutions established a 'Joint Bureau' to take charge of Arab affairs. In February 1930 the Bureau's Council discussed the situation across the river and several deputies suggested placating the Bedouins by bribing their chieftains. For the time being, however, no funds were available for that purpose.¹⁸

The pace of the contacts often underscored the urgency of the need, although they were conducted in times when other political powers in the region, including Great Britain, faced something close to political paralysis. In the aftermath of what were until then the largest disturbances in the country, financial transactions between Zionist leaders and Abdullah increased. They were, however, impelled more by the unsettled conditions of the day than by the prospects of material reward.

The 1929 riots took everyone by surprise, and the relatively high number of casualties in communities widely dispersed over the country provoked the British government into ordering a serious reappraisal of its Palestine policy. And

because British policy statements appeared as a welter of contradictions, reflective of different perspectives and of the specific interests of disparate government ministries, Abdullah saw in this violence another opportunity to make real the promise of his own political ambitions. For their part, Zionists hoped to find a basis for cooperation with Abdullah to demonstrate to Great Britain that Palestinian Arab opposition was unusually intransigent and rigid. For both Abdullah and Zionist leaders, ongoing contacts showed how two dependent powers could mitigate the terms of their colonial dependencies by widening, however tentatively, the roles assigned them. Ironically, Abdullah's discussions with Yishuv leaders strongly influenced the process of political consolidation in Palestine and gave the structures of both regimes a legitimacy neither had possessed before.

Abdullah offered the Zionists options for land purchases in Transjordan in violation of official restrictions.¹⁹ With one offer, he aimed at securing funds and at demonstrating to his British advisors that his actions could not be fully controlled. Although Great Britain's commitment to the Jewish National Home remained largely intact, events in Palestine and at Whitehall in 1929 and 1930 convinced Abdullah that he was confronting a new set of circumstances and the distinct possibility of reconfiguring his own authority.

Sharing neither Abdullah's expansive conception of his claims nor his determination to unite the separate Arab lands of the Fertile Crescent, Yishuv leaders came to view engagement but not full cooperation with Abdullah as indispensable to their own search for regional legitimacy and security. Zionists were anxious to find an Arab leader who would be willing to recognize Jewish independence in the Middle East but who would not necessarily compromise Arab rights and interests, especially important in view of the shadow of fear draped over the movement by the latest and most serious eruption of fury in Palestine. The sporadic contacts between Abdullah and Yishuv leaders did not fulfil the hopes of either side, but neither was there a feeling of deep betrayal or disappointment. Even those representing the Yishuv who questioned the value of continuing discussions and payments generally admitted the utility of exchanging information and perspectives. For Yishuv representatives, Abdullah's demands captured and interpreted the views of the larger Arab world and suggested that there were common pragmatic grounds for agreement even if they had not yet been discovered. For if their shared dependency on Great Britain for political survival propelled Abdullah and Yishuv leaders to engage in discussions, it did not erase their differences and contradictory objectives. Although Abdullah welcomed Jewish investment in Transjordan and did not oppose immigration to lands he controlled, he stopped well short of supporting the idea of Jewish independence. These discussions always remained both a source of contention and a crucial point of self-definition for two developing political systems.

THE SECOND WORLD WAR: CHANGING THE SCOPE OF RELATIONS AND CONFRONTATIONS

Simple chronology tells us that the frequency of Transjordan's contacts with Yishuv leaders also coincided with major world political and economic developments, but it has always been difficult to bring these themes together. For the Zionist movement, the rise of Nazism triggered its most profound crisis but eventually paved the way for the Yishuv's most sustained and significant period of growth. Even as the racist policies of Nazism cast a long and dark shadow over Palestine's Jewish community, the imaginative diplomacy of the 1933 Transfer Agreement and the continued flow of skilled immigrants to the shores of Eretz Israel created the basis for sound investment and consolidated economic development. Fearing that such impressive expansion jeopardized their own interests and futures, Palestine's Arabs determined to take an absolute stand against the ongoing building of the Jewish National Home and touched off a massive uprising in 1936 against British policies that permitted Jewish immigration and land settlement. Proclaiming a general strike and a boycott as well as a revolt, Palestinian Arabs gave vent to their anger and fears to attack Jews in their homes and on the roads.

In the rapid economic expansion and demographic growth, one can see how visible changes in the landscape controlled by the Jews predisposed Palestinian Arabs to conceive of thoughts of violence. Although Palestinian Arab leaders initially urged restraint, based on their own calculations of available resources, military supplies and organizational readiness, most became swept up in the passions to endorse the revolt and mobilize the population to provide material support.²⁰ The practical obstacles to persisting in armed resistance were immense. Weapons had not been sufficiently stockpiled; no mechanisms for coordinating attacks were established, and above all, because Great Britain was absolutely prepared to suppress the violence, in any large confrontation, Arabs stood at a fatal disadvantage. For what Palestinian Arabs saw as an opportunity to destroy the Jewish National Home struck British mandatory officials as a criminal assault against political order.²¹

Joining together with Zionist militias, British mandatory authorities met violence with violence, and soon enough the sequence of developments in the Revolt produced more turmoil in Arab than in Jewish society. In villages and towns all across Palestine, initial enthusiasm for the Revolt was soon succeeded by disillusionment as the spreading violence and work stoppages plunged much of the population more deeply into poverty. The end of the Revolt came not because Palestinian Arabs had achieved their goals but rather because they fell victim to internal violence and to the massive military might unleashed by Great Britain.

Nonetheless, the violence of the Arab Revolt of 1936–39 raised in its starkest form the question of the firmness of Great Britain's commitment to the Zionist project. Worried that the strikes and attacks in Palestine might convince the

British to close the door to Jewish immigration, Zionists also contended with the possibility that new political policies would foreclose the prospect of independence. Seeking an Arab ally that might afford their project the semblance of legitimacy, Zionists once again sought out Abdullah for his willingness to consider, under highly specific circumstances, the possibility of Jewish immigration and land purchases even in contradiction to official British policy. Although these meetings underscored the fundamental differences dividing the sides, Yishuv leaders thought that discussions might eventually produce a set of overlapping interests. They did. Geography helps explain Transjordan's vulnerabilities as well as its solidity. Zionists concentrated their discussions with Abdullah or his aides on making certain that Transjordan did not become a staging ground for rebel attacks against Jewish settlements and that the region did not become a conduit for weapons supplies.

For his part, Abdullah hoped that he could convince Yishuv leaders to endorse the idea of a temporary halt to immigration and carry out a task that had eluded his British overseers. In return for a gesture of compromise, Abdullah held out the possibility of settling Jewish immigrants, without political claims, in Transjordan and promised to call on Palestinian Arabs to end their uprising.

The role of Abdullah's contacts with Zionist representatives has usually been treated as tangential to the main themes of the Revolt. But these contacts, in the context of an increasingly fragmented Palestinian Arab society and the expanding regional Arab involvement in the Palestine issue, had a profound impact on the political development of Transjordan and of the Yishuv. Interactions strengthened both regimes by enlarging their autonomously driven initiatives. If the Revolt illustrated the nationalist aspirations galvanized by ordinary Palestinian Arab men and women, its crushing defeat marked the beginning of an era of retreat for autonomous Palestinian Arab political action and for the idea that they might be able to organize, on their own, for independence. Both Abdullah and Yishuv leaders moulded the conflict according to their own state-building purposes. In the midst of the disruptive struggles against British policies in Palestine, that Abdullah could maintain stability east of the Jordan was no small triumph.

In order to persuade Palestinian Arabs to end their armed struggle, Great Britain promised, at several junctures, to create a commission to investigate conditions and reconsider fundamental mandatory policies. During the three years of the Revolt, the range of changes ran from the Peel Commission's partition proposal to the 1939 White Paper policy, which backed away from the idea of dividing Palestine and promised policies to ensure that Jews would forever remain a minority in the country. If the Peel Commission's report represented an attempt to reconcile two contradictory nationalist objectives in a design perpetuating Great Britain's strategic interests, the 1939 White Paper marked an acknowledgement of British Balfour policy failures and a sign that allegiances were about to shift.

The recommendation put forward by Lord Peel for partitioning Palestine into two states contained a somewhat incongruous mixture of idealism and political expediency. The Commission suggested the division of Palestine along national lines but failed to place Palestinians in immediate control of their own territory. Instead, the Arab parts of Palestine were to be annexed to Transjordan and governed by Abdullah, who became, in Gelber's words, 'the principal Arab partner for any conceivable Jewish-Arab political arrangement'.²² For Palestinians, the idea of partition seemed less a fulfilment of their nationalist creed than the culmination of Abdullah's dynastic ambitions.

By contrast, although the stipulations of the 1939 White Paper favoured the long-term nationalist cause of the Arabs, they did not go far enough to guarantee Palestinian Arabs their independence immediately, nor were they effective enough to halt the growth and development of the Jewish National Home. Because the Revolt had such a devastating impact on all political organizations, Palestinian Arab society could not quickly or easily recover from its effects. This prolonged violence deprived many Palestinian Arab leaders of their lives, fortunes and homes. In short, the disruptions of Palestinian Arab society heralded the beginning of a new regional intervention in Palestine that would be institutionalized into a pattern of interactions and an evolving balance of power. Abdullah's intense involvement in Palestine, which initially had primary consequences for his own regime interests, now became central to the new regional dynamic. No event revealed this trend more clearly than the moves toward war in the aftermath of the United Nations Partition Resolution of 29 November 1947.

PARTITION AND SOVEREIGNTY: 1947–48

The United Nations Resolution which proposed the establishment of Jewish and Arab states in Palestine, was condemned by Palestinian Arabs and praised by the Zionists. Within days, frightening incidents of violence seemed to confirm that the Yishuv would have to withstand a massive assault in order to ensure implementation of the United Nations recommendation. But enthusiasm for a crusade against the Zionists did not immediately engulf Arab rulers: for many months, it was unclear how much they were willing to risk or to stake in the coming conflict. Yishuv leaders were thus unsure what kind of war to expect—an ambitious series of local attacks or a sustained military campaign by the armies of the several independent Arab states.²³

The steps by which seven Arab states moved from an initial policy devoted to supporting a war by proxy against the Yishuv to ordering their own troops to march in a full-scale invasion of Palestine have often been chronicled and shown to reflect the diversity of interests dividing Arab states and their rulers. For Abdullah, international political and regional currents worked at cross-purposes. No longer a British-appointed governor of an administrative unit of Palestine, Abdullah had won formal independence for Transjordan in 1946 but had not yet

secured its full emancipation in policymaking. The prospect of a war he would not be able to control was unappealing and first convinced Abdullah of the need for some contact with representatives of the Yishuv. The discussions retained some elements of their past bargaining pattern but also registered a new level of intensity accompanied by markedly different characteristics given the dangers confronting the region. They repeated earlier encounters insofar as Abdullah requested Yishuv leaders to delay their proclamation of independence in deference to Arab opposition and the likelihood of horrific bloodshed. In return, Abdullah promised security. But the fears of a terrifying attack, which led Yishuv diplomats to Abdullah's palace to see if he might refuse to join in an Arab war, did not dispose them to postpone their decision to proclaim an independent Jewish state.

While Abdullah resisted Zionist pleas for neutrality, he did not rush to join the battles planned by the Arab League. Unwilling to devolve military control of the Legion on military commanders appointed by the Arab League, the Emir was also aware that wartime alliances and even a common objective did not necessarily produce a harmony of political interests. Nor would a war erase the regional rivalries, which could undermine his regime. Finally, for reasons of his own state interests, Abdullah was reluctant to engage the Legion in prolonged and destructive battles with increasingly powerful Jewish forces.

The violence, which erupted in December 1947, wreaked havoc with the lives of Palestinian Arabs and destroyed many of their communities. The massive dislocations and looming disaster brought streams of refugees into Transjordan, transporting the Palestine problem directly into Abdullah's domain. The Emir could not remain indifferent to their plight without endangering the stability of his own region. Meanwhile, by the spring of 1948, there had been sufficient Arab defeats to expose the initial assumptions of the Arab League as misguided: this war could not be fought by untrained volunteers nor without incurring substantial cost. Having failed to create a united military command, the League now bowed to the reality of the aggressive spirit of autonomy characterizing the member states by naming Emir Abdullah Supreme Commander. But formal hierarchy fell far short of military effectiveness and unity.

The terms of Transjordan's engagement in this war reflect the country's state interests and the increasing power of Abdullah's regime. Presumably responding to cries for help, the Arab Legion's conduct during the war was not guided simply by popular pressure but rather by Great Britain's demands that Abdullah's troops not attack areas designated by the United Nations Partition Resolution as the proposed Jewish state, and by a consciousness that its former patron's strategic needs served as well the interests of the newly independent Transjordan. Legion strategy was also moulded by the ever-changing battle conditions and the awareness that it only made sense to attack in areas where there was the possibility of making significant political and territorial gains for Transjordan. Aware that the Legion lacked the power to destroy the enemy, Abdullah chose his military engagements carefully and only risked major

bloodshed—such as in the Jerusalem area—when the gains favoured the country's interests. The Legion remained in its fortified camps sometimes when masses of Palestinians were being driven from their homes in nearby towns.

Looking at the outcome of the 1948 War has persuaded some scholars of a convergence of interests between Abdullah and Yishuv leaders, but as Avraham Sela concludes in his masterful study of the tactics deployed by both sides, reality was much more complicated.

What may appear to be a strategy of limited war intentionally adopted was... a cycle of actions dictated by strategic necessities, political constraints, limitations of strength and military setbacks, rather than by deliberate and voluntary self-restraint...hen the country was finally divided de facto between Transjordan and Israel, it was not because the sides had upheld the elements of that prior accord; it derived from a military and political reality which Israel was compelled to accept despite the collapse of the unwritten understanding with Abdullah, and Israel's marked military advantage.²⁴

CONCLUSION

Imperialism in the Middle East took many forms: it created diverse governing structures and several political subcultures even within a single empire. As colonial possessions matured, the balance of power shifted partly because imperialist resources had imbued their colonies with their own strategic norms and assumptions and had endowed local institutions with new capacities for governance. The extent to which local nationalist leaders accepted these imports varied, but they were all participants in these exchanges. It is important to remember that while the absorption into empire dramatically alters a political culture, it does not do so uniformly or absolutely. The so-called titanic struggles between imperialist and nationalist forces which spark violence also set in motion sustained cultural and political transactions producing, as in this case, surprising compatibilities and alliances.

NOTES

1. Uriel Dann, *Studies in the History of Transjordan, 1920–1949: The Making of a State*, Boulder and London, 1984; Yoav Gelber, *Jewish-Transjordanian Relations, 1921–1948*, London, 1997; Zvi Ilan, *ha-Kemihah le-Hityashvut Yehudit be-Ever ha-Yarden 1871–1947* (The Longing for Jewish Settlement in Transjordan, 1875–1947) Jerusalem, 1984; Mary C. Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain, and The Making of Jordan*, Cambridge, 1984; Avraham Sela, 'Transjordan, Israel and the 1948 War: Myth, Historiography and Reality', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.8, No.4 (October 1992), pp.623–88.

2. Malik Mufti, *Sovereign Creations Pan-Arabism and Political Order in Syria and Iraq*, London, 1996, p.14.
3. Avi Shlaim, *Collusion Across The Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement, and the Partition of Palestine*, Oxford, 1988.
4. Gelber, *Jewish-Transjordanian Relations*; Yehoshua Porath, *In Search of Arab Unity 1930–1945*, London, 1986.
5. Efraim Karsh and Inari Karsh, *Empires of the Sand: The Struggle For Mastery in the Middle East 1789–1923*, Cambridge, 1999, p.316.
6. Aharon S. Klieman, *Foundations of British Policy in the Arab World: The Cairo Conference of, 1921*, Baltimore, 1970, p.83.
7. *Ibid*, p.69.
8. Efraim and Inari Karsh, *Empires of the Sand*, p.319.
9. Mary C. Wilson, *King Abdullah*, p.60.
10. Ilan, *ha-Kemihah le-Hityashvut Yehudit be-Ever ha-Yarden*, pp.368–84.
11. Gelber, *Jewish-Transjordanian Relations*, p.41.
12. Vartan M. Amadouny, 'Infrastructural Development Under the British Mandate', in Eugene L. Rogan and Tariq Tell (eds), *Village, Steppe and State: The Social Origins of Modern Jordan*, London, 1994, pp. 128–61. See especially page 129 where Amadouny writes, 'Until recently, the standard view of the Mandate period emphasized the political agenda, with the creation of the Hashemite amirate and the Arab Legion as the outstanding legacy. P.J. Vatikiotis, for example, argued that not only did the creation of the Arab Legion precede that of "a sovereign, independent state", but that "the army created the state". The primacy of the political agenda, and the need for an effective military service in Transjordan, is not in doubt. But the Arab Legion did not spring fully formed in 1921; it grew and matured throughout the Mandate period, as did the state apparatus. This involved the formal establishment of departments of government. Though small and poorly funded, they contributed to the long-term development of a state apparatus, in addition to expanding governmental obligations in the towns and villages.'
13. Uriel Dann, *Studies in the History of Transjordan, 1920–1949: The Making of a State*, Boulder, 1984, pp.6–7.
14. *Ibid*, chapter six.
15. Wilson, *King Abdullah*, chapter six.
16. Riccardo Bocco and Tariq M.M. Tell, 'Pax Britannica in the Steppe: British Policy and the Transjordan Bedouin', in *Village, Steppe and the State*, pp. 108–27.
17. Wilson, *King Abdullah*, pp. 96ff.
18. Gelber, *Jewish-Transjordanian Relations*, p.24.
19. Wilson, *King Abdullah*, pp.108–9.
20. Perhaps the most accessible sources in English are Yehoshua Porath, *The Palestinian Arab Nationalist Movement From Riots to Rebellion*, London, 1977 and Baruch Kimmerling and Joel Migdal, *The Palestinians: The Making of a People*, New York, 1993, chapter four.
21. For an understanding of Great Britain's approach to violence in Palestine see Martin Kolinsky, *Law, Order and Riots in Mandatory Palestine, 1928–1935*, London, 1993.
22. Gelber, *Jewish-Transjordanian Relations*, p.111.

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Jordan's Alliance with Israel and its Effects on Jordanian-Arab Relations

WILLIAM W.HADDAD and MARY M.HARDY

One of the interesting *leitmotifs* surrounding the formation of Israel was the secret political alliance between the Yishuv and King Abdullah of Transjordan. This alliance undercuts the common assumption that the Arab nations provided a united front against the establishment of the Jewish state and explains how the mutual interests shared by Transjordan's Hashemite leadership and the Zionists came to dictate the destiny of the Palestinians. The clandestine dealings between the two seemingly unlikely partners resulted in the abandonment of a Palestinian state and the subsequent division of the British mandate between Israel and Transjordan. The annexation of the West Bank by King Abdullah and the continuing friendly relations between the Hashemite dynasty and the Zionists enraged other Arab leaders who vehemently condemned the King's actions and launched a campaign to subvert any effort to create a 'Greater Syria' under his crown. Despite their tactics, the Arab world was unable to collaborate and proved incapable of halting the perceived traitorous activities of the Hashemites. When the extent of Abdullah's perfidy became widely known, he was assassinated (in 1951), but his death did not end the courtship between Jordan and Israel. After a one-year hiatus under Talal, Hussein ascended the Hashemite throne and essentially continued the alliance until his death in 1999. This relationship cost Jordan dearly in the Arab world, but endeared Hussein to the Israelis and their shared *patrone*, the United States.

In November 1947, the United Nations voted to separate the mandate of Palestine into two countries, one Arab and one Jewish. Bitterly opposing the division of their land, the Palestinian Arabs launched a civil war in which they sought to block the UN resolution. In April 1948, the Palestinian Jews counterattacked, delivering a crippling blow to the Palestinian Arabs. In response, the neighbouring Arab countries sent forces into Palestine. Jordan's army, the Arab Legion, fought a limited war against the Jewish troops and

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occupied land on the West Bank of the River Jordan as well as areas in and around Jerusalem. When the war ended, King Abdullah made public his intention to annex those portions of historic Palestine that he occupied to his kingdom. Seeking to legitimize his holdings after the 1948 war, the Arab Legion assisted in transporting 2,000 pro-Hashemite Palestinians to the West Bank, who then invited the King of Transjordan to rule over them. Suspicious of Abdullah's tactics, various Arab countries launched a verbal campaign against the Hashemites in order to challenge the annexation and weaken the legitimacy of Transjordan's claim. Despite intense objection from the other Arab countries, King Abdullah established the 'Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan' on both banks of the Jordan. This act, seen as traitorous by the surrounding Arab states, resulted in the condemnation of Abdullah and his newly renamed monarchy.

That the Arabs and Israelis were bitter antagonists is well known. Less acknowledged is the special connection that developed between the Zionists and the Hashemite dynasty before and after the war of 1948. Thus the collusion between Israelis and the Hashemites that helped the creation of a Jewish state and the annexation of the West Bank and Jerusalem to Transjordan has been traditionally omitted or downplayed in the historic narrative of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Although Jordan had seemingly joined the other Arab countries which waged war on Israel in their effort to impede the creation of a Jewish state, a secret understanding between the two improbable partners had already predetermined one factor of this war: the prevention of the birth of a Palestinian state. This alliance evolved from early contacts and cooperative efforts between the Hashemites and the Zionist leadership, and reached its zenith in the period between November 1947, when the Partition Plan passed the General Assembly, and the truce agreement signed with Transjordan in April 1949. At the height of their relations the two worked together to preserve their common interests: the partitioning of Palestine between themselves and preventing the emergence of an Arab Palestinian state.

MOTIVATIONS

The unique alliance that evolved between the Yishuv and Transjordan developed as they found cooperation with one another to be mutually beneficial. The Zionists, wanting to secure the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, found bitter opposition from the Palestinian Arabs as well as a majority of the surrounding Arab states. The announced Arab policy was that of total war against Zionism, which allowed no compromise with the Yishuv. Because of their weak political and military position, the Zionists attempted to break out of the encircling hostility by finding common ground with the Arabs, exploiting the inconsistencies of British policy to spark a dialogue. However, after exhausting their attempts to initiate talks with other Arab states in the 1920s, the Zionists found their sole partner in Transjordan.¹

Transjordan's willingness to talk with the Zionists was a welcome alternative to the anti-Zionist stance of the other Arabs in the region. The Zionists saw relations with Transjordan as bringing them a step closer to recognition by the Arabs.² Further, as the likelihood of war with the Arab world increased, it was vital to Zionist survival to seek some kind of cooperation with the Hashemites, as they possessed the greatest military threat to Israel's physical survival. It was generally accepted that Transjordan's British-trained Arab Legion was the most powerful of the several Arab armies and posed a real threat to Israel if war broke out.

The Zionists and the Hashemite dynasty shared similar interests and thus found a platform for cooperation. While the Zionist's primary objective was securing and safeguarding the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, Abdullah's interests hinged on preserving and legitimizing his kingdom, a recent creation by the British. Both the Zionists and Abdullah perceived the establishment of a Palestinian Arab nationalist state in their midst as a threat to their survival. Thus they viewed the Palestinian nationalist leader, Amin al-Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, as a common enemy and found cooperation in rallying against their mutual distrust of his motives and sought to undermine his plan to create a hostile state at their borders.³ Israel anticipated the threat posed by a Palestinian state vehemently opposed to the creation of a Jewish homeland. Therefore, it preferred the much less confrontational state of Transjordan to occupy the area that remained in Arab hands after partition. Similarly, Abdullah believed that if the Palestinian Arabs secured their own state on his border it was likely they would expand eastward into Transjordan. Moreover, he saw the creation of a Palestinian state as challenging his greater ambitions to expand his empire. Thus, in cooperating with the Jews, Abdullah thought that perhaps the Israelis could defeat the Palestinian Arabs and save him the trouble of removing this threat.⁴

Besides their common fear of the Palestinians, and in contrast to other Arab states, there were additional areas in which the Hashemite kingdom shared a mutuality with Israel as both had a long common connection with the British. It was also this continuing tie to the British that made Transjordan an aberration in the Arab world. The establishment of Transjordan lacked legitimacy in the Arab world as it was carved out of the newly created Palestine Mandate in 1921 when Britain's Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill acknowledged Abdullah as 'Emir of Transjordan' in return for his family's assistance in Britain's struggle against the Ottomans. Further, just as Israel would after its creation, Transjordan received monetary subsidies from Britain and later the United States. Finally, in much the same way the Arab states opposed the authenticity of Israel, they also questioned the legitimacy of Transjordan as they suspected the Hashemite dynasty was a tool of British imperialism in the Middle East and doubted that the regime would survive without monetary support from the Western powers.

Typical of the sentiment opposing both Israel and Transjordan was that expressed by journalists in the Syrian press. Especially virulent were those

journals, for example the Damascene daily *Barada*, hostile to the Hashemites, the notion of geographic Syrian unity under the sceptre of the Hashemites, and the British who supported both. In numerous editorials in 1948 and 1949, that newspaper asserted that the announced intention of Transjordan to annex Palestine was really the annexation of Palestine by John Glubb Pasha, the British commander of the Arab Legion. The fact that Transjordan was tied both through treaty and by having its army officered and paid for by the British did not escape the Syrian editorialists. Another Damascene paper called the Jordanian plans an 'occupation of slaves' because Jordan was so tied to the British.⁵

Rivalry for leadership in the Arab world also played out in the Arab states' characterization of Abdullah and his relationship with the Zionists. Abdullah's sour relations with his main rival, Egypt, were marked with suspicion and rivalry and contributed to his willingness to cooperate with the Zionists. Keenly aware of his regime's lack of legitimacy in the region, Abdullah saw Israeli recognition as granting a degree of authenticity since his rule over Transjordan was questionable.⁶ Furthermore, because the Arab world saw the creation of both Transjordan and a Jewish state as artificial entities inspired by Britain's desire to maintain a sphere of influence in the Arab world, the defeat of a newly created Jewish state would also threaten King Abdullah's power in the region since it could dismantle the artificial foundation on which the king's authority rested.⁷

THE ABDULLAH-ZIONIST CONNECTION

Zionist-Hashemite contacts first began in 1918 when Faisal, Abdullah's brother and the son of Sharif Hussein, under the guidance of the British, attempted to negotiate a Jewish-Arab agreement to work toward cooperation. Although the Weizmann-Faisal agreement had no concrete results, the very attempt at cooperation is perhaps evidence of the Hashemite willingness to find common ground with the Zionists.⁸ Abdullah, after he was installed as the Hashemite leader of Transjordan, again initiated contacts with the Zionists in the hope that cooperation with them could help him achieve his goal of expanding into Palestine. From the very first negotiations with the British to set up a Hashemite kingdom in Transjordan, Abdullah had expressed interest in amassing a large kingdom in the Middle East. He was motivated by a personal desire to expand his kingdom in order bring the Hashemite dynasty back to its previous glory, lost after the family's reign in the Arabian Peninsula came to a humiliating end in the 1920s. Abdullah also took great pride in his heritage and justified his scheme to expand his power and territorial holdings in the Arab world as a possible successor to the Caliph of the Ottoman Empire.⁹ Abdullah first expressed an interest in the territory of Palestine upon meeting with Churchill, when they discussed the establishment of the emirate of Transjordan.¹⁰ Rejecting his requests for a larger territory, the British nonetheless established the 'Emirate of Transjordan' in 1921 and the following year Abdullah attempted to gain support from the Zionists to increase his landholdings. Wanting to expand his territory

and gain access to the Mediterranean Sea, Abdullah asked the Zionists to rally behind his proposal to have Britain name him King of Palestine and Jordan, but the British rejected the proposal.¹¹

Although Abdullah never abandoned his territorial ambitions, in the 1930s his interest in cooperating with the Zionists diversified. For example, there were economic benefits to be found in cooperation. Mired in an economic crisis after 1932, Jordan sought renewed talks with the Zionists. During these secret negotiations, Abdullah offered the future Israelis the right to purchase land in the East Bank in return for investment and in March 1933 vowed that: 'The Jews in all the world will find in me a new Lord Balfour; and even more than this, Balfour gave the Jews a land which was not his to give, and I pledge my own land.'¹² However, due to British and Arab opposition, a law was passed that made it illegal for foreigners to purchase land.

Though Abdullah's efforts to forge ever-larger economic ties with the Zionists were blocked, the relationship between them grew closer as he shifted his efforts from economic to political cooperation. He provided 'a window into the Arab world' by relaying the inner secrets of Arab activities in return for gifts and monetary incentives; he shed so much light on the Arab world that the Zionist's code name for him was Meir, which skilfully scrambled the word 'emir' into a Hebrew word meaning 'illuminator'.¹³

In 1934, Abdullah asked the Zionists for their support in his attempt to create a Jewish-Arab kingdom under his crown, promising to guarantee the rights of Jews within his kingdom. In the 1940s Abdullah continued to look to the Zionists for support in his attempt to persuade the British to support his 'Greater Syria Plan'. Abdullah imagined a powerful Arab kingdom united under his crown and was willing to negotiate with the Zionists to make this a reality.¹⁴ He argued that Transjordan was only the southern part of Syria and envisioned Hashemite control over all of geographic Syria, including Lebanon and Palestine, with its capital in Damascus, and offered the Zionists autonomy in this larger Arab kingdom. Although the Zionists appreciated Abdullah's willingness to cooperate with them, they were not interested in becoming a twentieth century *millet* and so would settle for nothing less than the establishment of a Jewish state.

As Britain washed its hands of the problems of the Palestinian mandate by turning over the issue to the UN and withdrawing from the region, the Zionist-Hashemite connection grew closer. Between the years 1947 and 1951, cooperation between Abdullah and the Zionists peaked when the two coordinated their efforts during the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict. Abdullah recognized that with Britain removed from the region, he was freer to attempt to expand his empire into Palestine without having to ask the British first. Doing so would not only help to build his empire but would also eliminate the possibility of Transjordan being completely surrounded by hostile neighbours. Abdullah was aware that his position in the Arab world was volatile as suspicion and distrust marked the politics of the region. In 1946, the king attempted to initiate discussion over the Palestine issue when he told a senior Jewish diplomat of his desire to take over

Arab Palestine in order to prevent the creation of an unwanted Palestinian state. In 1947, he wrote a letter to a friend stating, The Mufti [Amin al-Husseini] and [Syrian President] Kuwatly want to set up an independent Arab state in Palestine with the Mufti at its head. If that were to happen, I would be encircled by enemies.¹⁵ Abdullah sought dialogue with the Zionists since war with them would only weaken the Arab Legion and his ability to protect his kingdom in the face of ambitious rivals. The British now secretly supported Abdullah's hopes to take over those portions of partitioned Palestine designated as Arab, believing another state in the region would threaten its interests more than the heavily fettered Jordanian government.

In November 1947 an historic meeting between King Abdullah and Golda Meir took place during which he told Meir of his plans to annex Arab Palestine and asked how the Zionists would view this. Meir answered that such a move would be considered 'favourably' if there were no clash between the two armies. The two went on to discuss the question of violating the UN Partition Resolution, British attitudes should this occur, and how to subvert preparations by the Arab world to intervene in Palestine.¹⁶

Two weeks after the meeting, the UN General Assembly approved the Partition Plan. Amin al-Husseini's political arm, the Arab Higher Committee, called the UN plan 'absurd, impractical and unjust' and warned the UN that 'not a single Jew would be allowed to migrate to Palestine...the Arabs will fight to the last man to defend their country, to defend its integrity and to preserve it as an Arab country.'¹⁷ As hostilities in the region escalated and war seemed imminent, Golda Meir visited Abdullah in May 1948 to obtain a pledge to abstain from war. Abdullah told the Zionists to avoid the provocative step of proclaiming independence, as it would surely ignite a war with the Arabs. He said that he was sincere when he had promised not to declare war on the Jews, but now the situation was impossible. 'I am one among five. I have no alternative [but to declare war], and I cannot act otherwise.' Meir reminded Abdullah that the Zionists were his only true friends in the region. Abdullah responded, 'I know it, and I have no illusions on that. I know [the other Arabs] and their "good intentions". I firmly believe that Allah has restored you, a Semitic people who were banished to Europe and have benefited by its progress, to the Semitic East which needs your knowledge and initiative.'¹⁸

Despite the circumstances surrounding the visit, the message was clear. Abdullah did not want to attack the newly established Jewish state but had to for lack of alternatives. Further complicating the Arab position in early 1948 was that, officially, Abdullah had been named by the Arab League as the commander of all Arab forces facing Israel. This Jordanian ambivalence and hesitation was clearly perceived in the neighbouring Arab states. One Lebanese journalist wrote:

Within forty-eight hours the Palestinian bill must be paid and the
Lebanese are held in almost total ignorance or Arab preparation...
Where are we?

And where will we be tomorrow?

Has agreement been reached between Amman and Riyadh?

Has King Abdullah received *carte blanche* to intervene in the Holy Land?

The Arab Legion currently stationed in Palestine, will it alone operate against the Haganah?

Will the governmental and administrative authority be exercised, after 15 May, in the name of King Abdullah or the Arab League?

All of these questions which are pre-occupying the Lebanese to a great extent have not, up to now, received any response...

Will our soldiers enter into Palestine? Will they be engaged in fighting the Haganah?

We are ignorant of all this.¹⁹

Days after the meeting between Abdullah and Meir, Israel declared its statehood and shortly thereafter the Arab states, Transjordan included, entered Palestine—the Arab states to save the Palestinians, the Arab Legion to carve out territory for Abdullah. What could be seen during the conflict was that the last meeting between Abdullah and Meir had established a tactical understanding between the Hashemites and the Zionists. This compromise guided the progress on the Israel-Transjordan front as the Arab Legion pursued its military tactics according to Abdullah's understanding of his agreement with Meir. Although Jordan entered Palestine, its forces did not push for land allocated to the Jewish state under the Partition Plan, while the armies of the other Arab states did. The Israelis transferred troops, trusting Abdullah not to attack their most vulnerable positions. Furthermore, Transjordan was restrained in battle, directing the powerful Arab Legion to pursue only small tactical goals in order to keep violence to a minimum. That Abdullah clearly did not seek a confrontation with the Israelis is best shown by remembering the most famous quote to emerge from the 1948 fighting. When asked by a reporter why the Arab Legion was not cutting Israel in half by advancing West from outside Amman toward the Mediterranean, an Iraqi officer responded, '*Ma qu awamar*' (We have no orders). Abdullah, motivated by his desire to carry out the agreement between himself and his 'enemies', committed the Arab Legion only in the areas west of the River Jordan contiguous to Transjordan which had been allocated to the Arabs in the partition resolution.

Thus, by the end of 1947 and into the next year's warfare, the king aligned himself with a policy that directly challenged the Arab world. In negotiating with the Zionists he acquiesced to dividing historic Palestine, helped prevent the creation of an independent Arab state of Palestine, and pursued restrained tactics during the 1948 war. In so doing, Abdullah probably betrayed the Arab world but eliminated the perceived threat of a hostile, Amin al-Husseini-led Arab state on his border, helped secure the preservation of Israel, and partially fulfilled his expansionistic desire.

REACTIONS FROM THE ARAB WORLD

When the 1948 war began, many Arab leaders were suspicious of Abdullah's motives, believing that he would sacrifice the Palestinians for his own ambition to create a Greater Syria. In particular there was criticism of his demand, as early as 1947, that no government be formed in Palestine since the king wanted to annex Arab Palestine to Transjordan:

If there had been a government in Palestine in mid-May, the least that could be said is that the unhappiness of the refugees would have been less great and that other miseries would have been avoided. In refusing a government for Palestine at that moment, there was tragically, in the place of a country which could defend itself, a country occupied...All this has happened because intentions were not innocent. Palestine was coveted, at least in part, by the very ones who claimed to save it.²⁰

Additionally, Arab leaders saw Abdullah as a tool of British imperialism in the Middle East and thus sought to stifle his plans to expand further. Because of these inter-Arab contradictions, the 1948 war against Israel was marked by a lack of cooperation between Arab troops and exposed the internal politics and competing forces within the Arab world. In southern Palestine, the armies of Egypt and Transjordan sought to impede each other's advances.²¹ For example, Abdullah purposely tried to weaken the Egyptian forces by refusing to send reinforcements to the Negev, leading to high Egyptian casualties and the eventual Israeli occupation of that territory. Similarly, Egyptians boarded an ammunition ship in the Suez Canal bound for Transjordan, and offloaded its contents. Adding to this sordid behaviour was Transjordan's posture after the 1948 fighting had stopped. While Egypt, Lebanon and Syria negotiated truces that were largely based on their current military positions, Transjordan relinquished additional land to Israel. Further, Abdullah's contact with the Zionists, as well as his willingness to come to a peaceful solution over the Palestinian issue while abandoning the national aspirations of the Palestinians, intensified Arab suspicion of the king.

Opposing Abdullah's scheme to annex Palestinian territory in the West Bank, the Arab world launched a political campaign against him. On 20 September 1948, Egypt gathered Arab leaders to support the formation of the Government of All-Palestine (GAP) in the Gaza Strip and granted it legitimacy to speak for the Palestinians. Ahmad Hilmi Abd al-Baqi was selected as its Prime Minister. The GAP's National Assembly then elected the Mufti of Jerusalem, Amin al-Husseini, as its President.²² At the end of September, the Mufti arrived in Gaza with the blessing of his Egyptian supporters—his first appearance in Palestine in eleven years. He and Abd al-Baqi were charged with a dual agenda: to prevent the annexation to Transjordan of Palestinian territories and to challenge Abdullah's authority in the Palestinian territories occupied by the Arab Legion.

King Abdullah termed the whole process 'strange', vowed to keep the new Palestinian government out of his 'security area', and began the process of retaliation by preparing for the overt annexation of the West Bank. The tenor of the ensuing confrontation between the contending sides was signalled when the king appointed a scion of a prominent Palestinian family long in opposition to the Husseinis, Raghib al-Nashashibi, as the military governor of the West Bank. More ominous, perhaps, was the gathering on the same day as the formation of the Palestinian government in Gaza of several thousand Palestinian notables in Amman. It called for King Abdullah to act as protector of the Palestinian people. This was followed two months later, on 1 December, by a meeting of Palestinian leaders, headed by the Mayor of Hebron, Muhammad 'Ali al-Ja'bari, in the city of Jericho. The Jericho Congress passed seven resolutions, the most important of which called for the union of Palestine and Transjordan into one kingdom and for King Abdullah to accept the title of King of Palestine. The acceptance in Transjordan of this point of view was a foregone conclusion and within the week the Amman government agreed to allow Abdullah to accept the title.

The reaction in the remainder of the Arab world was quick and unanimous. Lebanon, Syria and Egypt all denounced the Jericho Congress and the actions of the Transjordanian government and King Farooq of Egypt sent a telegram to all of the Arab governments, except Transjordan, denouncing the Jericho resolutions. The Syrian press thought the actions of Abdullah had sown discord in the League of Arab States and resulted in the destruction of the Arab cause against the Zionists in Palestine. The Arab League as well as the GAP also denounced the events occurring in the West Bank and in Amman. Even the religious leaders of the Arab world were called in to give their opinions and the Grand 'Ulama' of al-Azhar University denounced the Transjordanian king for his 'nefarious interference' in the affairs of Palestine and said that his actions were a threat to Palestine, Arabism, and a violation of previous pledges to God.

Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and even Iraq quickly recognized the Palestinian government in Gaza and warned the Transjordanian leader not to attempt to annex the West Bank. The governments' demands were strongly echoed in the press of the respective countries. The Lebanese press was the most restrained in its condemnation of the actions of Abdullah, a result of the imposition in July 1948 of a law forbidding the publication of inter-Arab squabbles.

However, Egyptian and Syrian editorials lashed out at the policies of the Hashemite king. The Egyptian papers warned that the attempt to annex Palestine would 'serve as a means of division and conflict' between the heretofore-solid Arabs facing the Zionists in Palestine.²³ To this extent, the Egyptian editorialists were correct in their assessment. Prior to the annexation of portions of historic Palestine to Transjordan, the Arabs, at least on the surface, were united in their opposition to the Zionists. But with the aggrandizement of Transjordan, a new chapter was opened in the Palestinian question. This was the question of inter-Arab rivalries for supremacy within the Middle East. Henceforth, where there had been restraint on the part of the editorial writers in attacking leaders of the

various Arab nations (perhaps enforced by their respective governments), there was no such restraint following the announced intentions of King Abdullah. If one may judge from the amount of editorial opinion devoted to both, the role of the Arab leaders in the 1948 Palestine war did not upset the writers as much as Abdullah's actions in annexation. One might then draw the conclusion that for Syria, Egypt and Lebanon, the loss of Palestine to Israel was less bitter than the loss of Palestine to Abdullah. One could rationally explain the former but was hard-pressed to understand the latter.

Jordan's action initiated a period in which papers of one nation denounced the leaders of other nations. The Damascus journal *Al-Manar* summed it up well when it wrote that Abdullah's annexation of Palestine to Transjordan had sown discord in the Arab League and in the Arab cause for the sole benefit of individuals, not peoples.²⁴

Within a month of the GAP's establishment all member states of the Arab League had formally recognized it, except for Transjordan. Abdullah refused to do so, arguing that the GAP did not represent the Palestinian population since it was not elected. He further charged that the very existence of the GAP implied the acceptance of the UN partition as well as the legitimacy of the state of Israel. Further, Abdullah's informers supplied evidence which suggested that the Mufti of Jerusalem had obtained support from Syria and Saudi Arabia to 'cause fright, sabotage, and harassment in Jordan and to distribute propaganda amongst the refugees stressing the British-Jordanian connection'.²⁵ As Abdullah's role in the 1948 Arab defeat became known, especially his secret meetings with the Zionists, and as his intention to annex the West Bank became more apparent, the Arab world rose in opposition to him. Put in more crass terms, the Arabs had lost the war and they were blaming Abdullah.

It should be noted that Amman's actions in the West Bank were in sharp contrast to Cairo's position regarding the Gaza Strip. There, Egypt governed but argued it held the territory as a temporarily occupied region, thus refusing Egyptian citizenship to the Gazan Palestinians. In contrast, Abdullah almost immediately granted citizenship to those Palestinians who lived in the West Bank. One may hypothesize that there was genuine worry on the part of the Arab countries that Transjordan was subordinating the interests of the Palestinians to dynastic considerations. A more accurate analysis is that there was an Arab fear of Transjordanian growth, especially by Egypt, which viewed itself as the leader of the Arab world. But it was not Egypt alone that opposed Transjordan. The curious recognition of the All-Palestine government by the Hashemites of Iraq can only be explained in terms of Iraqi trepidation of Abdullah's ambitions. The Saudis were anxious over a too-strong Hashemite ruler who might decide to try to recapture his family's old hegemony in the Arabian Peninsula. Syria often feared that Abdullah might try to take Damascus (as his brother Faisal had done) as part of a Greater Syria plan. The opposition of a Christian-dominated Lebanon to any movement by Muslims which might lead to a Greater Syria needs no explanation.

The Arab League, often little more than a complement to Egyptian policy, did not remain idle in its campaign against Abdullah and sought to impede his actions however it might. For example in October 1949, the Arab states had a change of heart regarding the section of the 1947 UN resolution that called for the internationalization of Jerusalem. Initially, the Arab states objected to all the provisions that outlined the partitioning of Palestine. However, the League came to enthusiastically support UN control of the city because its implementation would thwart the efforts of both Israel and Jordan to make any claim to the historic city. Without Jerusalem, Abdullah's control over Palestine would be seriously threatened. In addition to the efforts of Egypt and the Arab League, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq also voiced objections to Abdullah's territory expansion.

It is in the light of Transjordanian-Arab rivalry that the question of Palestine should be seen. And the best lens that permitted an observer to view this rivalry was the Arab press. The writings of Arab journalists of the time were dictated by nationality and the relative ability to write freely. Thus newspaper columnists should correctly be viewed as extensions of their respective governments. The intense squabble between contending governments was often written about in coded terms. Journalists generally did not touch on military issues, too sensitive for all of the impotent Arab governments to permit, and rather, they tended to use neutral topics to castigate their rivals. The most popular way to attack one's enemies was to write about the condition of the Palestinian refugees. The motivation was in part humanitarian, but it also provided an opportunity to advance narrow, nationalistically based political ideas. Consequently, when the negotiations over the return of the refugees failed because of Israel's refusal to allow return, attention refocused on their plight. For reasons largely attached to politics, Transjordan, now renamed Jordan after its annexation of the West Bank, and the other Arab countries, respectively, came up with two diverging opinions on how the refugee question could be solved.

Egypt, in opposing the union of Arab-held Palestine with Transjordan, naturally opposed any plan for the refugees which would help to make that union final. Therefore it opposed the settlement of the refugees in the East Bank and the granting to them of Jordanian citizenship. Thus, when one reads Egyptian editorials in 1949 and after, one cannot find opinions that state Egypt feared Jordanian aggrandizement. Rather, Egyptian writers wrote that they were only being just in demanding that the refugees return to that portion of Palestine the United Nations had originally designated as an Arab state. Thus, when the UN sought to attack the refugee problem through an economic settlement, Jordan alone was willing. This attitude first appeared in the autumn of 1949 when the United Nations dispatched an economic commission to study the possibility of providing jobs for the refugees. Egypt viewed this as a step toward an economic settlement of a problem that it saw as being military and political.

It is obvious from the [United Nations] Committee's assignment that it is trying to make a connection between the refugees' destiny and the economic plans which help their settlement, as if it is already decided that the [Arab] countries of the Middle East should settle the refugees. But it is known that the Arab countries adhere to the principle that the refugees must go back to the country from which they were evicted and any other solution is unjust.²⁶

The Jordanians, however, viewed the problem differently. King Abdullah was, in 1949 and 1950, still anxious to find common ground on which to base a settlement with the Israelis and was more prone, therefore, to accept a settlement that did not require the return of the Palestinians to their former homes. *Filastin*, which had become after 1948 the outspoken leader of the pro-Abdullah newspapers, felt that 'the inevitable, practical solution is that the refugees settle in Jordan alone, as Jordan can make available for them work and shelter'.²⁷ Thus *Filastin* asked the United Nations to provide for a just economic settlement by beginning development projects in Jordan. In this way the refugees might begin once again to depend on themselves to earn a living, thus regaining their lost dignity.

Where the refugees were to be settled was not the only topic on which the growing Arab-Jordan dispute could focus. There was extensive friction over Transjordan's annexation plans. When on 27 December 1949 King Abdullah announced that the Transjordanian parliament had been dissolved and that new elections were to be held the following April on both sides of the River Jordan, it was obvious that Abdullah was finally going to finish what he had begun in 1948 with the call for the unification of the two banks of the Jordan.

The pro-Abdullah papers in Transjordan busied themselves with editorials describing the reasons for the necessity of the annexation of Arab-held Palestine. They stated that all the Arab countries, except Transjordan, had sold out the Palestinians and that the only country capable of preserving a measure of dignity for them was the Hashemite Kingdom. Not only were the other Arab countries not capable of regaining the rights of the Palestinian Arabs, they had washed their hand of the Palestine question and 'followed the motto that the annihilation of the Arabs of Palestine is a solution for the Palestine question'.²⁸

On the other side, the anti-Abdullah forces viewed the impending annexation of Arab Palestine as a betrayal of the Arab cause. Some newspapers called Israel and Transjordan 'allies' because the two had split the Holy Land between themselves like old friends. These papers declared that as a result of this insidious behaviour, 'Palestine has disappeared'.²⁹ The anti-Abdullah campaign increased in tempo until it reached its zenith on 4 March 1950 with the publication in the Egyptian newspaper *Akhbar al-Yawm* of an expose of the secret meetings between Abdullah and the Zionists.³⁰ This attack was continued two weeks later when on 18 March 1950 *Akhbar al-Yawm* produced photocopies of letters said to have been written by Abdullah. The letters graphically pointed

out the attempts by the King to make peace with the Israelis. One letter was singled out for special scorn because it addressed Moshe Shertok (Sharett) as 'My Dear Moshe'.

This Egyptian-led campaign against the Transjordanian monarch had wide repercussions throughout the Arab world. Many newspapers reprinted the damning evidence against Abdullah and broadened the charges. Interviews were given by those opposed to the king, thus furthering anti-Abdullah feeling. Newspaper readers were reminded that British circles, as early as 1947, had stated they would not oppose absorption of parts of Palestine to Transjordan.³¹ Some papers even assured their subscribers that a peace treaty had already been concluded between Jordan and Israel and would be announced at an opportune time.³² There ensued a call to drive Transjordan from the Arab League for having 'betrayed Islam, Arab unity, and the Arab cause'. The next sentence in the same editorial, often quoted, reads, 'The time has come to sever this decayed member from the body of the Arab world and to bury it and heap dung on it'.³³ *Filastin* was not long in responding and an editorial of 9 May 1950 accused a former Egyptian Foreign Minister, Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid, of calling for peace between Arabs and Zionists.³⁴ In an effort to quiet the damaging publicity and lower the rhetoric on both sides, Abdullah announced that his choice of delegates for an upcoming session of the Arab League would include three Palestinians.

The pro-Abdullah press also stated in no uncertain terms that the other Arab countries had forfeited their right to speak for the Palestinian Arabs as a result of their pitiful showing in the recent war. It was now up to the Palestinians to speak for themselves and they said they desired union with Transjordan. 'If the Arab League does not want to understand that the Palestinian Arabs themselves asked for unity with their brothers, the Jordanians, it is because the League has bad intentions against this portion of the Arab World and it wants to make it a prey for Israel.'³⁵ The Egyptian-led campaign against Transjordan was unsuccessful. A parliament composed of Palestinians and Transjordanians met in Amman in April 1950 and there ratified the unification of the two banks of the Jordan. The name of the unified state had earlier become the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Despite periodic threats, Jordan was not expelled from the Arab League and its new borders were de facto accepted by the Arab states.

Despite the Arab world's unanimous opposition to Jordan's wrongdoing, the Arab League was too weak to impose anything that could halt Abdullah's annexation of Palestine. Although the League signed an agreement that stated Jordan's actions were illegal and challenged the League's resolutions, members could not agree to expel Jordan. While Egypt and Saudi Arabia sought to oust Jordan for its annexation of Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq voted against such a drastic measure. The best the conclave could agree to was a declaration that it would treat 'the Arab part of Palestine annexed by Jordan as a trust in its hands until the Palestinian case is fully solved in the interests of its inhabitants'.³⁶ Due to the weakness of the Arab League and the lack of a strong Arab regime to back any Palestinian opposition in the West Bank, Jordan was

confident that it could manage the risky operation of annexing the new territory. Although Abdullah was able to expand his territory and subvert the efforts of his enemies, it would cost him dearly. In July 1951, a Palestinian nationalist assassinated him.

AFTER ABDULLAH

For a decade after his grandfather's death, Hussein Ibn Talal ended contacts with Israel and attempted to draw closer to the Arab leaders and pull away from Britain and Israel. This period was highlighted by the dismissal of John Glubb Pasha in 1956 (who had served Jordan for over 30 years). Hussein further aggravated relations with Israel and the West in 1956 by terminating the Anglo-Jordan treaty because of his objections to Britain, France and Israel's attack on Egypt. The same year, Hussein initiated talks with China and the USSR. Hussein secured an Arab alliance by signing an Arab Solidarity Agreement in 1957 with Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia, which allegedly was to coordinate their common defence.

Despite Jordan's attempt to cooperate with other Arab nations, the latter continued to aggravate the regime's volatile circumstances. Gamal Abdal-Nasser, especially, saw Hussein as a convenient whipping boy and sought to force Hussein to accept Egyptian hegemony in his movement for pan-Arab unity. The Palestinians, a refugee majority in Jordan, supported Nasser's pan-Arabism as a means of extricating themselves from their predicament. Nasser was fond of pointing out that on the one hand Jordan claimed to be the leader of the Palestinians, yet in actuality it had abandoned the creation of a Palestinian state in order to secure its own interests. A pro-Nasser journal wrote:

it is time the Arab nation rid herself of the Hashemite Kingdom...It was because of the Hashemites' participation in the Palestine War [of 1948] that we lost that war. It was they who handed over to the Jews the lands on which Israel emerged; these lands which the Arabs of Palestine had put as a trust in their hands.³⁷

Finally, Egypt directly challenged Jordan's existence, thus forcing Hussein to begin cooperating once again with the British and Israelis. In early February 1958, when Nasser formed the United Arab Republic (UAR), the merger of Egypt and Syria, Hussein and his cousin, King Faisal II of Iraq, responded two weeks later with their own union—the Arab Federated State. However, the plan was halted by a pro-Nasser coup that killed both Faisal and his prime minister. Seeing plots all around, fearing for his own safety and the continuation of Hashemite rule over Jordan, Hussein turned to Britain for protection and in the midst of the Cold War in which John Foster Dulles deemed neutrality to be immoral, London was willing to reinsert itself. This fear of Nasser-as-communist

also led American marines to land in Beirut to protect the pro-Western (read, Christian) Kamil Chamoun government.

The following four decades reinforced Hussein's decision to back away from the Arabs and cooperate with the West and Israel. Like his grandfather, Hussein thought the Israelis could help him defeat the Palestinian threat to his regime. This decision was especially helpful in 1970 when the Israelis came to his aid by warning that Syrian intervention in the Palestinian-Jordanian civil war would lead to their intervention. In 1967 Jordan was a reluctant entrant into the war; Hussein entered it because of pressure from his citizens, of whom a majority were now Palestinian, and from a wounded sense of Arab nationalism. There were also numerous assassination attempts on the king instigated by the UAR, including bribing his cook to poison him.³⁸ There was also a Syrian attempt to shoot down a plane Hussein was flying, and an effort to put acid in his nose drops. Hussein concluded that although he did not care for the Israelis, they were not trying to kill him and thus the two sought mutual cooperation in the region.

CONCLUSION

Motivated by similar interests, Abdullah and the Zionists cooperated to prevent the creation of a Palestinian state. Jordan cooperated with the Israelis even while at war, ultimately annexing the West Bank and the Arab sections of Jerusalem. In reaction, the Arab states bitterly condemned these deeds and sought various measures to aggravate Jordan's politically unstable situation as the newly established 'Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan'. Hussein Ibn Talal, fearful of his own Palestinian population and the intentions of his Arab neighbours, continued this policy of foreign support to prop up the monarchy. Although there were various attempts to dismantle the Hashemite kingdom, the monarchy has been able to survive, bloodied but unbowed.

NOTES

1. Yossi Melman and Dan Raviv, *Behind the Uprising: Israelis, Jordanians and Palestinians*, New York, 1989, pp.28, 31; Avi Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement and the Partition of Palestine*, New York, 1988, p.92.
2. Melman and Raviv, *Behind the Uprising*, p.32.
3. Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, pp.71, 83; Melman and Raviv, *Behind the Uprising*, p.35; and Uri Bar-Joseph, *The Best of Enemies: Israel and Transjordan in the War of 1948*, London, 1987, p.3.
4. Melman and Raviv, *Behind the Uprising*, p.32.
5. *Al-Manar*, Damascus, 9 April 1948.
6. Melman and Raviv, *Behind the Uprising*, p.32.
7. Bar-Joseph, *The Best of Enemies*; Melman and Raviv, *Behind the Uprising*, p.32.

8. Yehuda Lukacs, *Israel, Jordan and the Peace Process*, New York, 1997, p.3; Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p.43; and Melman and Raviv, *Behind the Uprising*, p.29.
9. Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p.42.
10. *Ibid.*, pp.27–32.
11. Melman and Raviv, *Behind the Uprising*, p.32.
12. *Ibid.*, p.33; and Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, pp.50–51.
13. Melman and Raviv, *Behind the Uprising*, p.33.
14. Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p.53.
15. Melman and Raviv, *Behind the Uprising*, p.35.
16. Details of this meeting and others to follow are found in Volume One of Abdullah al-Tall's *Karithat Filastin*, Cairo, 1959. A detailed analysis of the meetings may also be seen in A.H.H. Abidi, *Jordan, A Political Study, 1948–1957*, London, 1984, pp.25–38. See also Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, pp. 114–15.
17. Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p.119.
18. Melman and Raviv, *Behind the Uprising*, pp.36–7.
19. Kesrouan Labaki, *L'Orient*, Beirut, 13 May 1948.
20. Michel Chiha, *Le Jour*, Beirut, 27 October 1948.
21. Melman and Raviv, *Behind the Uprising*, pp.37–9, and Bar-Joseph, *The Best of Enemies*, pp.55–97.
22. For a complete listing of the cabinet members in the GAP and their portfolios see Arif al-Arif, *Al-Nakbah*, 3, Sidon, 1956, pp.704–5.
23. *Al-Ahram*, Cairo; 9, 10 and 12 December 1948.
24. 9 December 1948. See also *Alif Ba*, Damascus, 29 September 1948; and *al-Balad*, Damascus, 9 October 1948.
25. Avi Plascov, *The Palestinian Refugees in Jordan 1948–1957*, London, 1981, p.9.
26. *Al-Ahram*, 14 September 1949.
27. *Filastin*, Jaffa and Jerusalem, 12 January 1950.
28. *Filastin*, 15 January 1950. Also see the same paper on 11 January 1950.
29. *Al-Suri al-Jadid*, Damascus, 21 December 1949. See the same newspaper of 25 December 1949 as well as *Al-Nasr*, Damascus, 21 October 1949.
30. The meetings between Abdullah and the Zionists were first revealed to the West by Walter Eytan, *The First Ten Years*, London and New York, 1958, pp.42–3; John Glubb, *A Soldier with the Arabs*, New York, 1958, pp.258, 340–41; James G. McDonald, *My Mission in Israel*, London and New York, 1951, p.194; and in *Karithat Filastin*, Volume I.
31. *Al-Ahram*, 9 May 1950. This editorial was undoubtedly based on a statement by British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin. See *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, Vol.451, columns 999–1000, 4 June 1948.
32. *Barada*, Damascus, 19 March 1950. See also *Al-Ahram*, 11 May 1950.
33. *Al-Misri*, Cairo, 19 March 1950.
34. For evidence that there may be some truth to the accusation that the first call for peace came from Egypt, see Benjamin Shwadran, *Jordan: A State Of Tension*, New York, 1959, p.272.
35. *Filastin*, 17 May 1950. Also see the same newspaper of 3 June 1950.
36. Shwadran, *Jordan*, p.298.
37. *Al-Nasr*, Damascus, 14 March 1958.

38. In 1958, accounts of two separate attempts were reported in *The New York Times*, 13 July and 11 November 1958. King Hussein describes various early attempts in Chapter 17 of his autobiography, *Uneasy Lies the Head*, New York, 1962.

Is Jordan Palestine?

RAPHAEL ISRAELI

Posing the question, is Jordan Palestine? obviously shifts the prospects for a comprehensive and permanent settlement of the Palestinian issue from the West Bank and Gaza to Transjordan, which was part of historical Palestine until the British severed it and turned it into an independent Emirate, and then Kingdom, in 1922. This assumption is borne out by the legitimate claim that while the fate of Israel and the Palestinians is being negotiated, one cannot exclude three-fourths of the historical Palestinian territory and one-half of the Palestinian people from the equation. For the problem is not only of historical right to territory, but also the demographic reality of today. Therefore, a triangular approach involving Jordan, Israel and the Palestinians is imperative if a comprehensive and permanent solution to this burning issue is to be found. In fact, all three partners have come to regard the Hashemite Kingdom, to a greater or lesser extent, as coterminous with Palestine or as part of it, though none of them has officially considered it as part of the solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conundrum.

JORDAN AND THE PALESTINIANS¹

All three parties concerned have been ambiguous regarding the Palestinian-Jordanian duality. Jordan has been caught in a series of contradictions: the Jordanian Crown has ruled part of historical Palestine since its inception, yet it has insisted on its 'Jordanian' identity. Most of the population of Jordan is Palestinian (more than 80 per cent prior to 1967, some 65 per cent thereafter, and perhaps 75 per cent after the exodus of Palestinians from Kuwait during the second Gulf War), yet they carry Jordanian passports. The country has been Palestinian, not only as far as its population is concerned, but also with regard to its culture, language, society and tradition. Yet, all these domains are claimed to derive from and pertain to a Jordanian entity. As part of the Oslo process, Palestinians have their own political culture, institutions, leadership, armed forces, and now even the paraphernalia of a state, and yet half of them (more than three million out of seven million today) submit to the rule of the Hashemites.

This situation, which began crystallizing in the early days of the Transjordanian entity, was accentuated after the 1948 war, when the West Bank was annexed by Jordan, but did not fundamentally change after 1967 when the West Bank was lost to Israel, especially as a second wave of refugees from those territories joined their brethren in the East Bank as a consequence of the war. On the surface, the King of Jordan had altered his position after the Rabat Summit of 1974, when the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was recognized by all Arabs as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians and the decision was adopted to turn over to the PLO any part of 'liberated' Palestine. But practically, as evidenced by the King's behind-the-scenes meetings with Israeli leaders in the 1970s and 1980s, and his peace proposals and negotiations with the Americans during those years, he still hoped to regain the territory—one way or another. In any case, the crowning of the PLO as the sole representative left open the possibility that the Palestinians in Jordan (and Israel for that matter) might potentially revert to Palestinian jurisdiction in the future when circumstances allowed.

After the September 1970 direct confrontation between the Hashemites and the PLO (Black September), which ended in the latter's exile to Lebanon, relations between the King and the Palestinians were never the same. Although the King did not formally relinquish his hopes of regaining the West Bank, he viewed the prospects of achieving such a goal as increasingly dim. Nevertheless, he continued to pursue his double-pronged and double-voiced policy: lip service to the 1974 Rabat Summit, but no foothold of any sort for the PLO in Jordan; neither political nor military. He voiced his support for the 'legitimate rights of the Palestinians' but continued to invest efforts, funds and diplomacy in maintaining whatever support he still had in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Throughout, he was heartened by Israel's support for him during the 1970 uprising and by the courtship of Israeli leaders who continued to regard him as the partner for peace on their eastern front.

During the Baghdad Conference of 1978, at which Egypt was condemned and expelled from the Arab League for signing the Camp David Accords, another resolution was adopted that attracted little attention. It established a joint Palestinian-Jordanian committee to 'strengthen the steadfastness of the population in the Territories against the autonomy plot'. This resolution applied the stamp of approval to a reality in which Jordan, no less than the PLO, was deemed as representing the Palestinians of the territories under Israeli rule and, more than the PLO, controlled their life in Transjordan. In a way, the PLO needed Jordan as a channel to continue its own link with the Territories, although on the ideological and rhetorical level, the PLO commanded the minds of the Palestinians under Israeli rule. Jordan had become so accustomed to the

belief that it was her responsibility to reclaim the West Bank, that she appointed a member of her government as 'Minister for the Occupied Territories Affairs', implying that the strength of the Jordanian claim to those territories was not diminished in the least by the Camp David Accords. Quite the contrary, after the defeat of the PLO in Lebanon in 1982 and its evacuation from Beirut, King Hussein was emboldened, with American encouragement, to revive his federation plan of 1972, which in effect had called for Palestinian autonomy under the Hashemite crown. Such a solution, while giving validity to a state of affairs in which the PLO had lost much of its prestige and power, was certainly far from a renewed recognition of the monopoly of the PLO over the Palestinian issue.

This was so much the case that when the Abu Musa faction rebelled against Yasser Arafat in 1983, Hussein threatened that the PLO might lose its legitimacy as the sole representative of the Palestinians. Fearing that the Abu Musa faction, under Syrian instigation, had overtaken Arafat on the left, Hussein backed his own PLO faction headed by Abu Za'im, a senior officer of the PLO who now took the Hashemite side, thus overtaking Arafat on the right. The February 1985 Amman Agreement, in which Hussein and Arafat agreed to revive a joint PLO-Jordan delegation to the peace talks with Israel, meant in effect that Arafat had accepted the fact that without the Hashemite crown no progress could be made toward the recovery of Palestinian territory from Israel. This assumption was to hold throughout the Madrid Conference of late 1991 and the ensuing Washington peace talks, until Israel and the Palestinians established a backdoor channel of direct negotiations, which led to the Oslo Accords of September 1993.

But in the meantime, after the failure of the Shultz peace initiative of March-April 1988 in which he had attempted, in vain, to get Palestinians to join the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation under Hussein's aegis, the King retreated to an isolationist state of mind that sought to strengthen his hold on Jordan by cultivating its 'Jordanian' nature and relying on his Bedouin army and tribes of supporters, while de-emphasizing the Palestinian character of his kingdom. But anyone who had followed Hussein's 35-year exercise in survival knew that this was not his last word. He was bound by his oft-stated slogan: 'Jordan is Palestine and Palestine is Jordan', and he was not about to let go. When the Intifada broke out in the West Bank and Gaza in December 1987, and there was a real danger that it might spread to the East Bank, thus posing once again a mortal threat to his hold on Jordan, he was forced to reassess the situation. Indeed, in July 1988 he announced that he was withdrawing his claim to the West Bank, in a desperate attempt to divorce the Palestinian trouble from his 'Jordanian' subjects.

THE PLO AND JORDAN²

If the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as acknowledged by most Arabs and by the world at large, it is of the utmost

importance to examine the attitudes of this organization towards the other half of Palestine- Jordan. This examination ought to be undertaken on both the doctrinal and practical levels. Understandably, the PLO position has been dynamic, stressing the Palestinian character of Jordan when a crisis struck the relations between the PLO and the Hashemites; de-emphasizing that aspect and giving prominence to the 'Palestinian-Jordanian kinship' when the two parties chose to collaborate rather than to compete. All Arabs were aware of their own ambivalence, inherent in their public support to the PLO as sole representative on the one hand, but on the other hand, most Arab countries with a Palestinian population were furtively suppressing that approach for fear of its subversive ramifications. Any Arab who read this 1975 article in the PLO organ had every reason to shiver:

North Vietnam, which was used as the base for the success of the revolution in the South, must be our model.... Since we cannot use all Arab countries to that end, for fear of collision between the strategy of our resolution and that of those countries, we must change the regime in Transjordan or topple it, in order to turn that territory into the firm base of our Revolution.... We must then strive to abrogate the Jordanian entity and substitute for it the revolutionary entity... We ought not, however, fall into the trap of the Israelis who claim that Jordan is the homeland of the Palestinians where they can establish their state.... But Palestinian Transjordan can only be the first step towards Greater Palestine, insofar that it will be a base for our expansion west of the River [Jordan].³

This maximalist point of view, which certainly represented a major trend within the PLO, exemplified in a skewed fashion the 'Strategy of Stages' which the PLO had embraced and which it never explicitly disavowed. PLO strategy, in fact, had meant to accept a mini-Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza as a first stage, and this had been interpreted as 'moderation' on their part. In the context of the time it meant that since the West Bank and Gaza could hardly constitute the launching pad of the Palestinian Revolution due to Israel's solid grip on those territories, Jordan, which is part of Palestine, could well provide that base. This blunt utterance of Palestinian aspirations did not, however, reflect a clear-cut and unambiguous position of the PLO. For example, the PLO emblem carries a map showing the west of the Jordan only, possibly out of the consideration that Jordan is Palestinian in every way except name, in any case, and therefore it would be more advisable to struggle for what is not Palestinian yet, that is the territories under Israel, than stake their bid on a country which enjoys international recognition.

It would perhaps be useful to investigate the PLO Charter and its particular references to the question of territory.⁴ The key passage is Article 2 of the Charter, adopted in 1964 and not amended in 1968, which states: 'Palestine in its mandatory borders is an indivisible territorial unit'. As might be recalled, the San

Remo Conference of 1920, which gave Palestine as a mandate to Britain, applied on both sides of the River Jordan. Although Britain later severed Transjordan from the West Bank, the two banks remained legally tied under the British High Commissioner until 1946, when the Emirate of Transjordan became a kingdom under King Abdullah.

Constitutionally then, the PLO can lay claim to Jordan as being part of Mandatory Palestine. And although the mandate itself and its derivations, such as the national home for the Jews, are expressly refuted in Article 20 of the Charter, the mandatory definition of the Palestinian territory remained valid. Such an interpretation was articulated in the course of the 8th Palestinian National Council in Cairo in March 1971, six months after the carnage of Black September. Indeed, one of the resolutions adopted by that session of the PNC refuted the distinction between East Jordan and Palestine, re-emphasized the territorial unity of the two banks, and implied the need to overthrow the Hashemite regime and substitute for it a national Palestinian one. Another aspect of the PLO's attitude towards Jordan is found in Articles 3 and 5 of the Charter, which determine that all Arabs and their descendants who had lived in Palestine until 1947, and certainly those who are there today, are to be considered Palestinians. The implication is, of course, that since most of the population of Jordan is Palestinian, the Palestinian claim to Jordan is all the more reinforced.

On the level of policy, the fact that since its inception the PLO had demanded the right to establish its headquarters in Amman, to set up training camps for the Palestinian in Jordan, and even to levy taxes, meant that they entertained irredentist claims on the Hashemite Kingdom. In fact, the PLO followed King Hussein's logic and rhetoric when it claimed that the banks were integrated, that Palestine was Jordan and Jordan was Palestine. They also accepted the unity of the two banks; they, more than Hussein, had a strong interest in sustaining his view that the Palestinian population of Jordan had become Jordanian, for that would mean that they, like the inhabitants of the West Bank, were as much Jordanian as they were Palestinian. If the two peoples were indeed integrated and the two banks united, then, regardless of who ruled the union, the ruler would rule *both*. Thus, it became a matter of choosing, appointing, or struggling for an acceptable regime. The Palestinians could then contend that since they represented the majority of the Kingdom's population, they must have their say, especially since they pledged in 1971 in Cairo, to establish 'a democratic state' in Palestine after its liberation. Democracy implies, by necessity, the toppling of an absolute King who lacks legitimacy because he was elected by no one, and who lacks authority because he does not represent the majority's will.

The PLO irredentist claims of Jordanian territory are also inherent in its professing the right to self-determination and to statehood. Self-determination, since it is not limited to any particular territory, includes the right of secession which for the PLO means that any Palestinian community can demand the annexation of the territory within which it dwells, as long as it is contiguous to the Palestinian heartland, to the Palestinian state when it is formally established

in the West Bank and Gaza. This implies, of course, that the Palestinian Arabs of both Israel and Jordan might exercise that right, thus subverting the very foundations of those two states. Similarly, subversive PNC resolutions have determined the right of the Palestinians to establish their state on their national territory, meaning all Palestine. While even after Oslo the PLO remains committed to that proposition, the strategy of stages adopted after the 1973 war explicitly outlines the need to achieve a mini-state in the West Bank and Gaza first, followed by the rest of Palestine and Jordan.⁵

ISRAEL AND JORDAN

Until the 1994 agreement between Israel and Jordan was signed, Israel too was caught up in contradictions regarding the Hashemite Kingdom. Transjordan had been severed by Britain from Palestine over Zionist protest, but the fledgling state of Israel then, and then throughout its existence, has remained adamant about settling the problems of the Palestinians in agreement with the Hashemites. When the Jordanians annexed the West Bank to their kingdom, an annexation sanctified by King Hussein's policy of integrating the Palestinians under his rule, the entire world, including Israel, became accustomed to dealing with the West Bank via Jordanian authority. But when Israel took over the West Bank in 1967, it saw it not as Jordanian territory now under its occupation, but as part of Palestine which Jordan had illegally occupied in the preceding 19 years. Yet, most Israelis continued to regard the King as the partner for the permanent disposition of the territory.

Underlying the debate regarding Transjordan as a possible home for the Palestinians has been the question of its legality as an independent Arab state in the first place. We have seen that the British had tried to make the Balfour Declaration inapplicable to Transjordan, although that territory continued to be administered by the Colonial Office and subject to the supervision of the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations. But that attempt could only be temporary because Article 25, added to the provisions of the mandate, spoke only of 'postponing or withholding' the application of the Jewish National Home provisions, not of excluding them. That meant that the Jewish National Home could be extended to Transjordan when conditions became favourable. The protests lodged with the British government by Zionists and pro-Zionist groups made clear Jewish reservations about the British step which was calculated to give Emir Abdullah a domain of his own on three-fourths of the original area allotted to the Jewish National Home. Colonel Meinerzhagen, Chief Political Officer in Palestine and later an aide to Winston Churchill at the Colonial Office, was one of the bitter critics of the British when they reduced the area of the Jewish Home to one-third of biblical Palestine. He resented the handing over of Transjordan to the 'mere figurehead' of the Emir who was imported from Arabia; instead, he was in favour of settling Jews in Transjordan.⁶

In 1928 the British representative to the League of Nations, Lord Cushenden, reconfirmed, in response to a query by the League regarding a treaty between Britain and Transjordan, the commitment of his government to the proper 'application in Transjordan of all provisions of the Palestine mandate, except those which have been excluded under Article 25'. This meant that, despite the wording in Article 25 regarding postponing and withholding application of the mandate in the territories of Palestine lying east of the Jordan, there was still a recognition of Transjordan as part of Palestine. As a result of this treaty, however, the Jews were forbidden to settle in Transjordan, in violation of articles 15 and 18 of the mandate, which had provided for equality of rights and prohibited discrimination on grounds of race, religion or language. In fact, William Rappart, the Vice Chairman of the Permanent Mandates Commission, declared that the terms of the mandate had been violated with the general exclusion of the Jews from Transjordan. Furthermore, an independent agreement in the 1930s between the Zionists and Emir Abdullah to lease 17,000 acres in the Jordan Valley to the Jews in order to contribute to its agricultural development was vetoed by the British.

In 1946 the British announced to the United Nations that it was their intention to establish Transjordan as a sovereign independent state. That act, encompassed in the 22 March 1946 Treaty, was the final severance of Transjordan from Palestine. But it is still regarded as illegal by some parties because it was never sanctioned by the League of Nations,⁷ which allotted the mandate to Britain. Article 5 of the mandate states that 'the Mandatory shall be responsible for seeing that no Palestinian territory shall be ceded or leased to, or in any way placed under the control of, the government of any foreign power'; and Article 27 provided that the consent of the League was required for the modification of the terms of the mandate. The United Nations established a trusteeship system to replace the mandates of the League of Nations, and Articles 79 and 80 of the Charter of the UN cover the disposition of mandatory territories. Britain did not comply with any of these divisions, and disposed of a territory that was not its own, contrary to the terms of the mandate entrusted to it.

British members of Parliament and American Zionist organizations bitterly protested the illegal severance of Transjordan from Palestine, and sharp criticism was also voiced in the US Senate and House, to the point that Secretary of State James Byrnes declared that his country was not prepared to recognize Transjordan's independence. According to this view, since Transjordan, later Jordan, is undoubtedly part of Palestine, it also must be part of the solution to the Palestinian problem. In one sense one could say that if Jordan is part of Palestine, any Jordanian is by definition also Palestinian. But even according to Jordanian definitions, it is evident that Palestinians predominate in Jordan numerically, if not politically. The fact that their country is called Jordan, not Palestine, and that they are ruled by an autocratic foreign king instead of a democratically elected Palestinian who represents the majority, is something that can and ought to be rectified.

Proponents of this thought in Israel suggest that if Greater Palestine is in fact destined to accommodate two peoples, then let Israel exist in West Palestine and Palestine in Transjordan, that is the eastern part of Palestine. This, they would argue, is a tremendous sacrifice from the Jewish viewpoint, as they will have yielded 75 per cent of the territory of historical Palestine for the sake of an accommodation with the Palestinian-Jordanians. All the Palestinians (a nation) have to do on their land (Palestine) is to replace the Hashemites, who are neither a country nor a people, just an illegitimate regime. The implicit as well as explicit Palestinian claim to Jordan, and the attempt they made in 1970 to overthrow the King, show how feasible this proposition might be. Moreover, once Palestinian statehood is attained in the territory now called Jordan, any remaining problem between that state and Israel would be confined to negotiable quantitative issues of territory, assets and real estate, not qualitative ones of self-determination, nationhood, statehood and refugee status.

The counter-arguments to this rosy conviction are several:

1. The world community has accepted Jordan and its Hashemite royal house. Unless Jordan agrees to merge into a Palestinian state based in Transjordan, which would reflect the dominant weight of the Palestinian population, there is little prospect that Jordan's government would agree to eliminate itself out of its own volition.
2. A Palestinian state in Jordan, although an appealing concept, would resolve the plight of only one-half of the Palestinian people residing there. What will happen with the rest, who will continue to harbour irredentist claims against their host countries?
3. If a Palestinian state is founded in the East Bank alone, about half the Palestinian people would remain outside of it, mostly under Israeli rule (two million in the Territories, one million in Israel proper), and close to another million refugees elsewhere. That would pose a serious demographic problem to Israel, for with half its population Palestinian Israel would be subverted and overwhelmed from within in the not-too-distant future. This was one of the major reasons why the negotiators of the Oslo Accords envisioned the handover of the Palestinian population centres to the Palestinian authority soon after its inception.
4. In light of the above, a Palestinian state in the East Bank alone would consider the solution temporary. Due to its territorial proximity to the rest of Palestine and to its ongoing links with the rest of the Palestinians, such a state would seek by necessity to expand into other areas populated by the Palestinians. Following the Oslo Accords, and the transfer of most Palestinian populations to the Palestinian Authority, this process is already under way inasmuch as the Palestinian entity has been speeding up the process of the Palestinization of Jordan now that the reverse process of the Jordanization of Palestine has been muted by the Accords. In view of these developments, the East Bank would be welcomed, then, not as a substitute

for the Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, but as an addition to it. This is the reason why Jordan is so interested in boosting the peace process, i.e. pushing for more Israeli withdrawals from the territories and the establishment of a Palestinian state, hoping that such a development would arrest the Palestinian ambitions eastwards.

HUSSEIN AND THE ISRAEL-PALESTINIAN PEACE ACCORDS

Both King Hussein and Israel were aware and wary of all the above, and therefore they assiduously skirted the 'Jordan is Palestine' issue, the one party because he was understandably unwilling to abdicate in their favour, the other because it was opposed to a Palestinian state and regarded Jordanization of the Arabs in West Palestine as a far preferable option to the Palestinization of Jordan. But this short-sighted approach of both parties had to be reviewed when events caught up with them. The only thing that did not change was the less than understandable attitude of awe, admiration, respect and sometimes even love, towards the Hashemite monarch shown by Israel and to some extent by the West in general.

In Israel, regardless of which government was in power, Hussein was conceived of, not as an absolute monarch of a neighbouring state whose legitimacy to rule was questionable, but as the personification of Jordan and its mostly Palestinian people. He was depicted as a wise, moderate, reliable, popular, humane and sensitive ruler, beloved by his people and a committed friend of Israel and the West, an accomplished gentleman and a lover of peace. In reality, none of these almost mystical virtues attributed to him stands the test of scrutiny, unless it was worth his while to appear as such. Little and seldom was the public apprised of the other side of his personality when he had bouts of anger and cruelty, or he behaved in an extremely ungentlemanly fashion, for example when Israel was bargaining with him over the water rights that he demanded in return for signing the peace treaty in 1994.

The historical record shows that Israel's dealings with the Hashemites have always ended in frustration and double-crossing. Hussein's grandfather, the founder of the Kingdom, had promised fledgling Israel in 1948 that he would not join combat against it if he were awarded the Arab part of Palestine according to the Partition Plan, but that ambitious and 'peace loving' monarch launched the attack against the western part of Jerusalem during the 1948 war, and only the heroic stand of its bare-handed and starved defendants assured the inclusion of that part of the city in Israel after the war.⁸ When Hussein took over the reins in 1952, he immediately embarked on a virulent anti-Israeli course: despite the armistice between the two countries, he sponsored almost daily acts of terror inside Israel, and ignored Jordan's obligations under the armistice (the famous Article VIII) to allow Israel's free access to its humanitarian, religious and cultural institutions that were taken over by the Jordanian army during the war.

Instead, he allowed a hotel to be constructed on the Mount of Olives Jewish cemetery and permitted a road to be built there, which desecrated the site, despite the insistent and repeated protests of Israel.

At the beginning of the 1960s, when the USA refused to sell Jordan anti-aircraft Hawk missiles, Hussein threatened to purchase Soviet SAM missiles. On the eve of the 1967 war, when conflict between Nasser's Egypt and Israel was imminent, not only did Hussein jump on the Egyptian bandwagon, hoping for quick and easy gains, but also he even rejected Israel's supplications that he should keep out of the conflict, and opened a vicious attack against West Jerusalem. It is difficult to see the wise, peace loving, far-sighted and courageous behaviour in this step, which cost him the entire West Bank during the Israeli counter-attack. And immediately after the Arab defeat in that war, Hussein joined the Arab 'three-No' resolution in Khartoum: no peace, no recognition and no negotiation with Israel. There were numerous under-the-table practical arrangements between him and Israel during that period, but only when Israel passed him intelligence about threats to his regime or otherwise benefited him. In the public arena, he remained as virulent against Israel as all the rest, but Israel was always asked to 'understand' that 'he had no choice'.

After the war, the King gave shelter to Palestinian units that pestered Israel mercilessly during the long months of the War of Attrition in the Jordan Valley, which took its toll in human lives and destruction of resources. Those were the years when the King relentlessly repeated his declarations of support for the Palestinians and the slogan: 'Jordan is Palestine and Palestine is Jordan'. At the same time, there was no other slogan, thought, or declaration which he dreaded as intensely until the end of his life. It was not until Israel began bombing the irrigation system of the Ghor, which he had painstakingly built along the Jordan Valley, during the War of Attrition (1968–70), that he discovered that he did have a choice. He moved resolutely to restrain the Palestinian squads, a move which led this wise, far-sighted and peace-loving monarch to quell the Palestinian uprising and to launch the terrible massacres his army perpetrated against the Palestinians in Black September. He acted against them, and with a vengeance, not when they threatened Israel but when they challenged his rule. Ironically, many Palestinians who escaped the slaughter sought shelter in Israel.

True, on the eve of the 1973 war Hussein warned Israel of the coming attack, but not out of loyalty to her or out of his eagerness to avert war and bloodshed, but out of calculation that if war should break out and he were to be 'forced' to participate in it, he could lose the remainder of his kingdom. When the war started, he did send his dear 'sons' to spill their blood on the hills of the Golan. So, he fought on a front that was not his, without exposing his kingdom to yet another round that he could not sustain, assuming that his token participation in the war would be met, once again, with 'understanding' on the part of Israel.

Prior to Camp David and subsequent to it, while he joined the Front of Rejection of all Arabs against Egypt, Hussein sought to return to the West Bank, by continuing to disburse large sums of money to pay the salaries of teachers and

other former Jordanian functionaries, hoping that by commanding their loyalty and keeping them economically dependent on him, he might strengthen his foothold over the lost territory. But when the Intifada broke out in December 1987, he realized that the unrest might spread to his kingdom and undermine his rule, so he declared he was renouncing his claim to the West Bank according to the Rabat resolution of 1974 and for the benefit of his 'Palestinian brothers'. However, everyone knew that those same arguments had not obtained during the previous two decades when he still thought he might regain the territories. The same Hussein signed the quadripartite *entente* with Saddam Hussein (which also included Egypt and the Yemen), after the Iraqi tyrant declared that he was stockpiling unconventional weapons to 'burn half of Israel'. This came about because of either one of two possibilities: King Hussein (and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak for that matter) were manipulated by Saddam, in which case one wonders what had happened to Hussein's famous political wisdom; or, worse, they understood Saddam's designs, in which case one wonders where their peace-loving propensities went.

Then came the Gulf War, and Hussein, the wise, moderate peace lover, Israel's friend and America's ally, went to Baghdad (with another moderate peace lover—Arafat) and embraced Saddam, while his 'ally' desperately attempted to build an international coalition, including such Arab states as Syria, to resist the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and his 'friend' was exposed to a shower of missiles from the ruler of Mesopotamia. But, of course, one had to 'understand', because the King once again 'had no choice'. And when the war was over, it was the King who led the systematic violation of the UN embargo against Iraq, until he was coerced and lured by the US to embark on the Madrid road.

When the Israeli-Palestinian Oslo Accords dawned on the surprised world (September 1993), the King was the first to grasp the imminent danger to his rule posed by the prospective rise of a Palestinian state, in agreement with Israel, and therefore he rushed to rescue what he could by beating the Palestinians to it before commitments were made to them by Israel that might prejudice his interests. Indeed, his high-speed negotiations won him the 1994 Peace Accords, by virtue of which he gained some territories, was assured of water for his thirsty kingdom, a special status in Jerusalem, and a moratorium by the US on his debts. Most important of all, he finally gained legitimacy from Israel as the Hashemite King of Jordan, which meant that the entire Palestinian problem would now be tossed back, wholly and squarely, into Israel's court. He reaped the benefits (for once a tribute to his manipulative power) and left the perennially insoluble issue of the Palestinian state to Israel to deal with. For Hussein, the peace with Israel meant the final death of the 'Jordan is Palestine' option.

But Hussein also understood the lingering danger of the snags in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, which seemed to lead nowhere. As soon as Benjamin Netanyahu was elected in 1996 to head the Israeli government, the King stepped up his criticism against the new policy of Israel towards the Palestinians, which

was more circumspect than before and made any progress conditional on 'reciprocity', namely that Israel would yield no more territory unless Arafat fulfilled his part of the deal: to collect illegal weapons, fight terrorism, extradite fugitive terrorists and criminals, restrain incitement against Jews and Israel, cut to size the internal security forces, etc. Israel's wariness raised the ire of Hussein, who incessantly accused the Israeli Prime Minister of 'murdering the peace', and he threatened renewed violence unless his expectations for stepped-up Israeli concessions were met. The King was not so much concerned about Palestinian welfare as he was eager to calm their wrath lest it be channelled against him and his kingdom.

His tragic illness and premature death highlighted and brought into focus the inexplicable sympathy that he continued to draw from all quarters, especially in Israel, as the process with the Palestinians ground to a standstill. Hussein's gentle words about peace and love, his bouts of compassion and generosity, his humane demeanour and his apparent sensitivity to human suffering, all obscured the fact that he was and remained an absolute ruler who suffered no opposition, a temperamental man who was at times ruthless. Hussein posed as the model family man, but one should not forget that he married four times, built palaces and acquired from public funds a private jet and a yacht, and often flew abroad for sojourns in his lavish apartments or for medical treatment, despite ruling over a poor country which lived on handouts from the US and Saudi Arabia. He dissolved Parliament at will (at one time for 20 years in a row), yet liked to call his monarchy 'constitutional' as if he were the equivalent of the Queens of England or Holland. In fact, he was the supreme arbiter in his country, appointed Prime Ministers and dismissed them at will, quelled with brutality any opposition to his rule, imprisoned his rivals without due process (there was simply none), and yet he was dubbed 'liberal', 'noble', 'warm', and any number of such epithets which he certainly did not deserve. He pretended to be the champion of the Palestinian cause, yet he liquidated more of them than anyone else; he waged wars, but called himself the man of peace; he proved to be cold-blooded and calculating, holding rancour, grudge and a sense of vengeance, while enjoying the image of a loving and forgiving ruler.

The way he handled his succession when he realized that his days were numbered summed up the contradictions in his personality. For decades he groomed his talented, popular, well-educated and good-mannered younger brother, Prince Hassan, who personified much more than Hussein himself all the qualities that were wrongly imputed to the King, as the heir-apparent. But on his deathbed, without any apparent reason, he carelessly and cruelly stripped him of all his duties, in spite of the fact that the entire world had expected a smooth transition that would have ensured the continuity of his rule. When he returned to Jordan to die, he did not seek to consult with the royal family, senior politicians, or the state institutions; everybody awaited the sole decision of the King, thus epitomizing his death as an absolute monarch, exactly the way he had lived throughout his reign. Even Queen Noor, the last of the four wives, who stood at

his side and promoted his image in the world during his lifetime, and at his bedside when he died, was, together with her children, tactlessly, heartlessly and coarsely cast aside and deprived of the status of queen mother that she would have enjoyed if her son Hamza had eventually ascended to the throne.

This recapitulation of Hussein's policies is essential for the understanding of the policy of continuity that the new King Abdullah II has vowed to follow, that is to rush to Israel when danger hovers over him in the form of Syria, Iraq or the Palestinians, and to take anti-Israeli stands when he perceives the danger to his rule as necessitating alignment with the Arabs, especially the Palestinians. He realizes that the restive Palestinians aspire for much more as a minimal base for a settlement with Israel than the maximal concessions that any Israeli government could yield to the Palestinians. As a consequence, he fears that, as in the past, unsatisfied Palestinians could turn to violence once again, in which case his country might be set ablaze. Hence his insistence that the peace process must advance, namely that Israel must concede more, in order to placate the Palestinians and assure them of his support, so as to channel their anger away from Jordan.

CONCLUSIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

When King Hussein signed the peace accords with Israel in 1994, he also put on the agenda the Palestinians living in Jordan as candidates for repatriation into West Palestine. The fact that Jordan was made a member of the quadripartite committee slated to deal with the refugee problem (the other members were Israel, the Palestinians and Egypt), meant that the King would have a say in the final status of about 1.5 million Palestinians (half the total in Jordan) in the framework of the permanent settlement between Israel and Palestine. In other words, he was hoping to rid himself of the heavy burden of the Palestinians, which adversely affected his grip on the country. In fact the 60 per cent Palestinian majority had increased to 70 per cent following the escape during the Gulf War of some 350,000 Palestinians from Kuwait to Jordan. The rise of their ratio, with the attendant socio-economic problems of unemployment, crime, political unrest and Islamic inroads into the social fabric meant that the regime had to do anything it could to negotiate them away to anyone ready to take them. About half of them (some 800,000), dubbed by Jordan and the PLO as the '1967 refugees', were forced onto the agenda and were considered for immediate repatriation to the West Bank and Gaza, while hundreds of thousands more were to be discussed in the context of a permanent settlement between Israel and the Palestinians. In other words, as long as this repatriation is not effected, and it does not seem to be in the offing in the near future, the issue of 'Jordan is Palestine' cannot be laid to rest.

The Islamic holy places in Jerusalem were recognized, according to the Washington Statement of 25 July 1994, as pertaining to Jordan's 'unique historic role' in the city. This meant in effect that, subsequent to Jordan's illegal

occupation of East Jerusalem in 1948 and its removal by force from there in 1967, and after Hussein had waived his claim to the West Bank, including Jerusalem, in 1988, the Hashemites were now introduced once again through the backdoor and given a role in the city, to the detriment of the Palestinians who succeeded in forcing the issue onto the Oslo agenda. By playing Jordanians against Palestinians in the city, Israel not only runs the danger of losing to both by seeing its authority eroded there, but also keeps alive the notion that Jerusalem can be cared for from Amman, another way of reviving the 'Jordan is Palestine' option.

The calculus of the Israeli Labour governments has been to shift the centre of gravity from unreliable and unpredictable Arafat to the 'moderate' and 'pro-Western' Hussein, and then to his successor, in order to dwarf the Palestinian issue; the right wing in Israel has sustained that assumption in order to eliminate Arafat. Both were wrong and the King has, for once, outsmarted both. He understood his problem of legitimacy in the eyes of his Palestinian majority, which remembers him as the descendant of the Hashemite House, whose roots are in the Hijaz. The Jordanian King, like his predecessors, has been taking great pains to cultivate the new Jordanian identity in Eastern Palestine, whose population consists of either veteran Palestinian Bedouins or newcomers from the West Bank and elsewhere either before 1948, or during the wars that ensued, or as a result thereof.

But when the Israeli government lent to Hussein the legitimacy he needed for his rule, it fell into the trap of recognizing it as 'Jordan', as if Hussein and his House were a country or a people and not merely a disposable regime, an autocratic one at that, probably against the will of his people, who are basically Palestinian and identify themselves as such. Had Israel insisted on the Palestinian nature of Jordan, a proposition repeatedly hailed by the King himself (as in 'Jordan is Palestine and Palestine is Jordan'), a proposition supported by history, geography and demography, and demanded that the right of self-determination be accorded to the entire Palestinian people, including those in Jordan and in Israel proper, then Jordan, being part of Palestine and home to half the Palestinian people, should have become part of the solution of the Palestinian problem.

Under such circumstances, a 'Hashemite Kingdom of Palestine' could have been declared, with the royal house at its helm as a constitutional monarch as long as the people there wanted it, but with effective power in the hands of the Palestinian majority. But since this did not happen, the entire Palestinian burden now rests squarely on Israel's shoulders out of her own choice; since Israel cannot alone resolve this problem, it becomes insoluble for the following reasons:

1. If the PLO continues to claim that it represents the entire Palestinian people, including the three million in Jordan and one million in Israel, the dream of self-determination cannot be fulfilled as long as the Palestinians are divided

- between Jordan, the West Bank, Gaza, Israel (the group erroneously called the 'Israeli Arabs'), and the Diaspora (refugee camps in Syria and Lebanon, and Palestinian communities in the West).
2. The 'Right of Return' which is hailed by the Palestinians as one of their basic demands for a settlement with Israel, cannot be achieved in the territory west of the Jordan, which is relatively overpopulated and whose permanent status is still disputed.
 3. Even if Israel and the Palestinians were to come to a full agreement on the extent of the Palestinian state within the present parameters of the negotiations, this would encompass only one-third of the Palestinian people, while the other two-thirds would continue to vie for independence and to knock on Israel's door, violently or otherwise, in search of a solution. An open and festering wound has never been a recipe for peace and tranquillity.
 4. A Palestinian entity west of the Jordan would insist on all the trappings of statehood such as a full-fledged army, which Israel cannot allow. This in itself would give rise to unrest and friction due to the difficulty of policing and monitoring the imperceptible transition from police to military.
 5. A state of irredentism would subsist in the Palestinian entity both toward Israel and Jordan, due to the continuum of Palestinian population in all three areas.
 6. This no-win situation would further deteriorate due to the mounting activity of the Muslim Brothers in Jordan and west of the river (Hamas), who are committed to reject partial agreements between the Palestinians and Israel, and demand the application of the Shari'a Law over the entire territory of historical Palestine as a first step toward the recreation of the universal Islamic Caliphate. The problematic legitimacy of the Jordanian as well as of PLO rule in East and West Palestine, respectively, while the Brothers are waiting in the aisles in both places and accumulating popularity, leaves open the question of whether Israel can conclude any permanent settlement with the governments in place on both sides of the River Jordan.

The Palestinians would not care to raise these concerns in public because they are mindful of the fact that if their problem were to be settled in such a way as to include Jordan too, and their official rule were recognized there, the pressure would be taken off Israel to accord them self-determination and statehood. Jordan is theirs, as a matter of course, and it is only a matter of time before their overwhelming majority will displace the Hashemites at worst, or co-opt them in Hashemite Palestine at best. Therefore, they focus all their effort, military and diplomatic, on obtaining their independence from Israel so as to ensure its retreat from the West Bank, as a first step to demanding more and cashing in the rest, which will fall into their lap like a ripe fig.

Had the Palestinians made clear at this point their claim over all the territories where they constitute a majority or a sizable minority, which would have meant, in fact, laying claim to Jordan and Israel as well, they would have defeated their

purpose and forfeited the support they now enjoy as a stateless people. For they would then be demanding two states and a half: one in the West Bank and Gaza, one in Jordan that they already have in many respects but not in title, and half of Israel which they refuse to recognize as a Jewish state, and insist on its bi-national (Jewish—Palestinian) character. Only the implementation of this dream is likely to alleviate the despair of the refugees who have been rotting in the camps for three generations, and will settle for nothing less than returning to an aggrandized Palestine. Such talk, coupled with accusations against Arafat that he has left them on the sidelines in Oslo, are already heard in the camps in Lebanon and elsewhere.

Following the monumental strategic error Israel committed in signing the peace accords with Jordan, she must be concerned and grieved, not by the passing of King Hussein and his wrongly adored 'legacy', but by her myopic policy which chose a short-term settlement with an absolute ruler who was primarily and constantly busy with surviving in his rule, rather than seeking a long-term settlement with the Palestinians who are the masters and owners of that land. For whatever happens to the Hashemites, the Palestinians will remain Israel's neighbours in the long run. Had Israel early on insisted on the establishment of the Hashemite Kingdom of Palestine, with a true constitutional monarch at its head and power in the hands of the Palestinian majority, it would today have been negotiating with such a government on the disposition of the territories, and its situation would probably have been much better. For then, the debate would not have been concerned with the founding of a second Palestinian state whose scope and survivability will remain uncertain, but with the permanent borders of a large Palestinian state able to absorb, accommodate and satisfy most Palestinians.

NOTES

1. The following discussion is based on R.Israeli, *Palestinians Between Israel and Jordan*, New York, 1991, pp.71–8.
2. *Ibid.*, pp.78–81.
3. *Shu'un Filastiniyya*, September, 1975, cited in Israeli, *Palestinians Between Israel and Jordan*, p.79.
4. Apart from the question of whether that Charter was amended or abrogated at the insistence of Israel, something that remains controversial, those amendments, if they occurred, were supposed to touch upon the peace arrangements between Israel and the Palestinians, which derived from the Oslo Accords. Thus, in any case, other matters in the Charter must be considered as valid as long as they were not specifically altered.
5. The second Al-Aqsa Intifada, backed by Israeli Arabs, in which both stated in their demonstrations the need to liberate the Galilee, Haifa etc., and the Palestinian textbooks which continue to refer to Haifa, Ashdod, Beer Sheba etc. as Palestinian cities, are ample testimony to that effect.

6. This passage is based on Israeli, *Palestinians Between Israel and Jordan*, pp.81–4.
7. For example the Israelis and the Palestinians, the owners of the place, were never consulted when the British severed the East Bank to constitute their Emirate. This is a legal argument that can be raised by either side, because none of them had ever recognized Hashemite rule over Jordan until the post-Oslo Israeli legitimization of the Hashemites.
8. Dan Shueftan, *The Jordanian Option* (Hebrew), Yad Tabenkin, 1987, pp.57–8.

Comparing Palestinian Perspectives in the Palestinian Authority, Israel and Jordan on Jordanian-Israeli Relations

HILLEL FRISCH

The Palestinian Authority (PA) possesses potentially two major political advantages over both Jordan and Israel. First, its population alone is highly homogeneous, with Sunni Muslim Palestinians accounting for at least 98 per cent of its population. Its state neighbours, by contrast, are to various degrees, bi-national. The Palestinian Israelis account for nearly 20 per cent of the Israeli population and in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan they constitute the majority of the population. Second, the ethnonational community that makes these states bi-national is part of the Palestinian people that form the majority in the Palestinian Authority. Whether the future Palestinian entity will be able to mobilize these Palestinians in order to weaken the two neighbouring states, or to pursue, even more ambitiously, a 'Greater Palestine' at their expense, depends on the inherent compatibility over political goals between the Palestinians in Jordan and Israel and the Palestinian entity. An analysis of Palestinian perceptions on both sides of the River Jordan towards the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signed in Wadi Arava on 26 October 1994, and Jordanian-Israeli relations since then, may shed some light on the issue of ethno-nationalism and sub-ethnicity as well as clarify an important policy issue whose importance to future regional stability stands on its own. The greater the differences in perceptions towards these relations stemming from different loyalties and agendas, the more difficult it will be to mobilize Palestinians on behalf of the Palestinian entity in the attainment of potentially irredentist goals.

This article is divided into five parts. In the first, the empirical analysis is placed within the broader theoretical framework that informs the academic debate on ethno-nationalism. The second part comprises an analysis of the positions of the PLO/Palestinian Authority, local political forces and popular perceptions towards the peace treaty and unfolding relations between Jordan and Israel since the peace treaty. An analysis of the Palestinians residing in Jordan towards these issues immediately follows. The fourth section includes an analysis of the position of Israeli Palestinians regarding Jordanian-Israeli

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relations. An overall comparison between these three groups and its implications on future relations between Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian entity, as well as their relevance on theory, is addressed in the concluding section.

A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

Both studies and polls have shown that Palestinian identity is salient amongst Palestinians in all the three political entities under discussion. The relevant question is whether Palestinians, despite a mutual identity, have different interests and thus different goals even when focusing on issues related to their identity. These divergences could appear as the result of different incentive structures proffered by the political entity in question. Whether the same level of salience of identity leads to the pursuit of different interests and results in differences in political behaviour is a deeply debated issue in the theoretical literature on nationalism.¹ Most scholars of nationalism belonging to the cultural or primordial school not only assume uniform salience of national identity within groups in conflict with others, but uniformity of interest and political behaviour as well. By contrast, scholars belonging to the competing instrumentalist or constructivist paradigm focus on the role of the entrepreneur and the importance of individual preferences and, thereby, acknowledge the possibility of divergent commitment in the attainment of national goals.

Michael Hechter, for example, claims that middle class bureaucrats will usually be most committed to the national struggle that usually offers the promise of patronage or government positions.² Business elites anxious for expanding markets will only support the national struggle if it leads to access to an expanded market. But even many instrumentalists believe that group interests are so powerful that consensus over goals and behaviour is achieved nevertheless.³ In doing so, it seems that they violate one of the great insights of rational choice theory made by Mancur Olson. He proposed, contrary to all existing cultural and mobilizing theories, that the greater the consensus over common goals, the greater the likelihood of defection and free riding. To avoid defection, the national group imposes sanctions, usually in the form of violence. This is perhaps why any interethnic struggle is also characterized by violence within the national group itself.

Analysis of the positions of Palestinians across political borders with regard to Israeli-Jordanian relations enables us to test the validity of these two paradigms. The test would be the following: if Palestinian identity is found to be equally salient in all three Palestinian sub-groups but their perceptions and political behaviour would be variable, that would suggest that instrumental factors indeed mediate between identity, on the one hand, and attitudes and behaviour, on the other. Compatibility between identity and political attitudes and behaviour amongst these sub-groups, however, would suggest that political behaviour is indeed identity-driven and in some sense primordial and cultural. If variation were to be found it would be necessary to analyse the different interests and

incentive structures that are yielding the variation in attitudes and political behaviour.

THE PALESTINIAN RESPONSE IN GAZA AND THE WEST BANK

Though it might be an exaggeration to describe the Jordanian-Israeli relationship regarding the Palestinians as 'collusion', one can hardly deny that both the Hashemites and the Israelis perceived the Palestinian Arabs as their prime adversaries more than they did each other.⁴ Their shared interest in obstructing Palestinian nationalism in the attainment of its objectives stemmed from a very basic fact created in 1948: both states partitioned Mandate Palestine at the expense and amid the destruction of the Arab Palestinian community. Their triumph was the Palestinians' disaster. The bitter legacy of the PLO presence in Jordan, culminating in Black September, the final ouster of the PLO from Jordan in July 1971 and the subsequent assassination of Prime Minister Wasfi al-Tall in November 1971 in Cairo by the PLO's Black September group colours Jordanian-PLO relations to this day.⁵

Even after the loss of the West Bank after 1967, Jordan aspired if not to restore it to the Kingdom, at least to make sure that it had the upper hand in any integrative scheme with the Palestinians. As late as the October 1991 Madrid talks, Jordan was more than happy to attend the conference in a joint delegation with Palestinian representatives from the territories instead of insisting, as the PLO wished, upon a joint Jordanian-PLO delegation.⁶ To recall, Yitzhak Shamir's government refused to sit either with the Palestinians separately, or with the PLO. The Palestinians, with the full support of the PLO, which they tacitly represented in the subsequent Washington rounds of talks, undermined the Jordanians by conducting talks with Israel as a separate delegation. By doing so they were proving loyal to a cardinal tenet of Fatah, the faction that dominated the PLO, that the Palestinians must act independently of any Arab state guardianship (*wisaya*). A popular Fatah slogan expressed it well: 'The Palestinian card is neither in the pocket of the big [state] or the small [state]'. The small state was obviously Jordan and the big state could refer to Egypt, Syria or Iraq depending on the specific time-period during which the slogan was voiced.

It was not surprising, given the basic suspiciousness governing PLO-Jordanian relations that the PLO, which was formally committed to unifying Arab positions in the peace process with Israel, took the bilateral secret track at Oslo that surprised and undercut the Jordanians. The Jordanians, by contrast, had come to an agreement over most issues with Israel as early as October 1992, but had refused to proceed to a formal treaty as long as no progress was made on the Palestinian and Syrian tracks.⁷ The latter could take some comfort that the slap in the face also struck the official Palestinian delegation in the Washington talks, who were completely unaware of the secret Oslo track between Israel and PLO

officials.⁸ For the first time in the long and tortuous history between the triangle of forces, the Palestinians struck a diplomatic deal with Israel and did so without any Jordanian involvement or input. Even more disconcerting to the Jordanians, the Declaration of Principles (DoP), in which Israel committed itself to the creation of a Palestinian territorial autonomy, was signed on the White House lawn under the aegis of an American president early in his first administration. Jordanian officials were concerned that the empowerment of the Palestinians would come at the expense of Jordan's traditionally strong involvement in the peace process. Such marginalization was likely to have a deleterious impact on foreign aid to Jordan, upon which the state in the past had greatly relied, in favour of aid flows to the Palestinians.⁹ In short, the DoP reinforced Jordanian feelings, evident since 1974 when the Arab states pronounced the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people, that the Palestinians were increasingly enjoying the upper hand after years in which Jordan had enjoyed the upper hand at the Palestinians' expense.

One potential indicator of the turning of the historical tide was the establishment in June-July 1994 of the Palestinian Authority. Jordan was eager to formalize an Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty as quickly as possible in order to cope with the new Palestinian entity that in the words of one observer might 'swallow up Jordan'.¹⁰ Predictably, Jordan acted in kind during its negotiations with Israel by keeping the PLO and Palestinian interests out of the picture. Likewise in the subsequent interim agreement in May 1994 and in the PLO-Israeli economic agreement two weeks previously, the PLO continued to disregard Jordan.¹¹ The only significant consideration of Palestinian interests took place when Jordan refused to formalize borders and border crossings along the River Jordan in the West Bank. Instead, the two border crossings were situated in the Beitshean area in the north and in the Wadi Arava area in the south of the country. However, this consideration hardly stemmed from friendly sentiments towards the PLO but out of consideration for basic Arab positions that Jordan as a weak state in the system felt it could not transgress. On water, the treaty disregarded Palestinian claims to flows stemming from the Yarmuk and Jordan rivers, while on the refugee issue the treaty foresaw Jordan's interests being met within the framework of the multi-lateral talks. The PLO was particularly miffed by the ceremony at Wadi Arava to which at least 25 dignitaries were invited, but not Yasser Arafat.¹² They were also put out by the doubts expressed by the King and Jordanian senior officials over the PLO's competence in self-government on the basis of the PLO's Lebanese experiences.¹³

Much more disconcerting to the PLO, however, was the recognition Israel accorded to Jordan's special relationship to Jerusalem and the Holy Mount in the Washington Memorandum of 25 July 1994 that preceded the official peace treaty.¹⁴ This memorandum acknowledged 'the present special role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Muslim holy shrines in Jerusalem' and pledged to 'give high priority to the Jordanian historic role in these shrines'.¹⁵ Not only did Israeli assurances to Jordan undermine one of the PLO's basic negotiating

goals—complete sovereignty over Arab Jerusalem—but emphasized, at least from the PLO's perspective, that the historic collusion between the two states to contain Palestinian nationalism remained unchanged.

To fend off Jordanian encroachment on Jerusalem, the PLO reacted by banning the distribution of *Al-Nahar* and the weeklies *Akhbar al-Balad* and *Al-Bayan* in Gaza three days later. A far more lasting impact was achieved when the PLO established the Ministry of the Endowments and Religious Affairs in August to take control of all religious institutions in the territories. Throughout Israeli rule, these institutions, primarily the sharia courts, acted as informal Jerusalem consulates by issuing Jordanian birth certificates and passports. Another blow to Jordanian influence occurred in October when the PA, after the death of the mufti of Jerusalem, Sheikh Sulayman al-Jaabari, appointed Sheikh Akrama Sabri, a well-known PLO supporter, to the position as a counter-measure to Jordan's appointee.¹⁶ The placement of PA security men around the Jordanian appointee was sufficient to discourage local Palestinians from acknowledging his authority. Three years later, however, King Hussein was still reminding his people and the world of Jordan's special relationship to Jerusalem in a public letter addressing the issue, and the Jordanian authorities were still mediating disputes between the local *waqf* (endowment) and local churches.¹⁷

Even Arafat's presumably conciliatory measures during this tense period were problematic. While he was reported to have continued throughout this period to suggest confederation with Jordan, with Hussein at its head, Jordanians noted that it was only 'for life' under Hussein's rule, not under his successors. Arafat's statement prompted a semi-official Jordanian newspaper to note that the Jordanians wished for 'full unity with the fraternal Palestinian people, provided that this unity is under Hashemite leadership'.¹⁸

To both sides then, it was clear that the treaty, and indeed the Israeli-Jordanian relationship in general, was one facet of the larger struggle between Jordan and the PLO. The fact that the PLO has since the signing of the treaty repeatedly offered confederation to an increasingly reluctant Jordan shows that the formal treaty could not stem the tide of Palestinian empowerment. When Jordan had the upper hand in the 1970s and early 1980s the offer came from Jordan and was rejected by the weaker potential partner. The weakness of the Jordanian position was also reflected in the numerous Jordanian statements regarding the Israeli-PLO peace process, especially final status issues. By contrast, the PLO subsequently had little to say about the Israeli-Jordanian relationship. For the PLO it was by now a foreign policy issue and for the Jordanians, final status issues were directly related to Jordan's domestic national security. Many of the Jordanian elite continued to feel that the dreaded 'Jordan is Palestine' option (*al-watan al-badil*) remained alive as long as the right of return was not accorded to Jordan's Palestinian refugees.¹⁹ Their fear crystallizes in the heated debate on present and future relations between Palestinians and Transjordanians within Jordan, which is strikingly similar to the debates on the relationship between Israel's Jewish majority and its Palestinian citizens and the identity of the state.²⁰

As a foreign policy issue relating to another sovereign state, the PLO/ PA did not specifically address the 'normalization' of relations between Jordan and Israel. Instead it held a general position that the quality of the peace between any Arab state and Israel should be commensurate with the achievement of Palestinian and other Arab goals. Nor was there any need to risk arousing fears of future Palestinian irredentism by doing so. Political forces, both in the PA and in Jordan, could be counted upon to fight normalization at no cost to the PLO/PA.

This is of course not to deny that there were no issues relating to Israel affecting the PLO's relations to both after the signing of the treaty beyond the controversy over Jerusalem. Clearly the multi-faceted refugee problem was of greater significance in the triangular relationship than the issue of Jerusalem. Though both Jordan and the PLO believed that United Nations Assembly resolution 194 formed the basis for the right of return to be exercised either by actual personal return or compensation, they disagreed over many points as well. Jordan, for example, wished to give priority in exercising that right to 1967 refugee residing in Jordan, the PLO to the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.²¹ Friction arose over the issue of future compensation to the Palestinian entity and Jordan, with each side hoping for the lion's share for integrating refugees either presently residing in Jordan or seeking a future under Palestinian rule. Obviously, these issues are dependent in part on the Israeli position. The refugee issue, however, is not specifically related to the Jordanian-Israeli relationship but to a cluster of issues that are being dealt with primarily in the final status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

Much the same can be said over the issue of the Jordan River border. The issue made the headlines in late January and early February, 2001, after Ariel Sharon claimed during the election campaign that the PLO was aiming at the downfall of the Hashemites, and that Jordan was equally, or even more, concerned than Israel that the border area separating the two banks remain in Israeli hands.²² The claim was strenuously denied by Ali Abu al-Raghib, the Jordanian prime minister, who dismissed Sharon's remarks as 'idle prattle whose goal is to incite conflict and harm Jordanian-Palestinian relations'.²³ According to al-Raghib 'his country is pining for the day when there will be a joint Jordanian-Palestinian border controlled by the Palestinians by themselves on the Palestinian side of the border'.²⁴ Palestinian official reaction was even harsher. Under a front-page headline in the PA's daily, entitled 'Palestine and Jordan in one Trench', Yasser Abd al-Rabu, the minister of information in the PA, stated that 'these are the words of a madman'.²⁵ The reactions on both sides reflected the great sensitivity of the Jordanian-PLO relationship and the ability of the Israeli side to place the relationship in jeopardy. Neither was this incident novel or politically partisan. Three years previously, Labour Knesset member Haim Ramon elicited similar reactions when he stated that Jordan would become Palestine in a few years time.²⁶

Political forces in the territories, including Fatah, the faction over which Arafat still presides, reacted far more harshly to the peace treaty than the official

leadership of the PLO. Taking the lead, however, was the local Fatah leadership under Marwan al-Barghuthi, who had dominated Palestinian resistance to Israeli rule in the 1980s and in the Intifada. During that period Fatah's political wing, the Shabiba (Youth) movement, had, along with the Popular and Democratic Fronts for the Liberation of Palestine, fought Jordanian influence in a variety of contexts.²⁷ The most notable occurred in February 1986, when Jordan severed negotiations with the PLO after a year of efforts to arrive at a political framework that would enable dialogue with the United States. Despite the PLO's weak position in both regional and international areas the Shabiba was able, through the use of threats, intimidation and persuasion, to effectively counter Jordanian efforts to amass public support for its moves in the territories. Thus, it demonstrated that the PLO was in control where it mattered most, in the territories, despite its weakness outside it.

Fatah's call for a general strike along with the Popular and Democratic Fronts for the Liberation of Palestine as well as Hamas, to protest the Jerusalem clause, may be seen as one in a long list of moves to rid the territories of Jordanian influence and enhance Palestinian control. It is important to note that it was broadcast on the official PA radio station.²⁸ The gap between official, more conciliatory, PLO positions towards Jordan and harsher action by the local leadership of Fatah and rank and file against it reflected a model that in the future was to characterize Palestinian behaviour in the Al-Aqsa Intifada towards Israel. PLO and Fatah efforts to delegitimize the treaty because of the Jerusalem clause seemed to bear fruit, at least temporarily. The Organization of the Islamic Conference, composed of 51 states with an Islamic majority, voted in its summit in December 1994 held in Casablanca to reject Jordan's claims over Jerusalem's Muslim sites.²⁹

In Hamas, the differences seemed to reflect confusion rather than a model of action. On the one hand, the rank and file joined forces with Fatah in calling for a general strike,³⁰ but on the other hand, some Hamas figures noted that the Hamas did not necessarily oppose Jordanian claims to Jerusalem.³¹ What was important was that Jerusalem be under Arab rule. The rank and file probably felt the pressure by Fatah counterparts, who often were former fellow inmates in Israeli prisons. By contrast, many in the political leadership bowed to pressure by the outside leadership of Hamas that operated out of Jordan who did not want to upset its relations with the authorities. An indication of such pressure may be found in the London-based monthly *Filastin al-Muslima*, which is traditionally close to the Hamas leadership 'outside'. It carried no articles regarding the treaty in its November 1994 issue. By contrast, it devoted almost the whole previous issue to articles criticizing the interim accords between the PLO and Israel and the passing of one year since the signing of the Declaration of Principles. Instead it made do with the publication of Hamas communiqué no. 117, which devoted three lines to the treaty in a thousand-word condemnation of normalization of relations with Israel by Arab states generally. Even then, the reprimand was surprisingly mild for a radical movement: 'The movement considers the signing

of the Zionist-Jordanian agreement a new violation of the Arab stance that supports the rights of our people and nation as well as serving to bolster the legitimacy of the Zionist occupation on Palestinian land.'³² Elsewhere Hamas censured the PLO for signing an agreement with Israel that paved the way for Jordan to do the same.³³

Discrepancies between Jihad al-Islami's perceptions of the PLO-Israeli treaty compared to the Israeli-Jordanian treaty were even greater. The much smaller Jihad al-Islami, whose leadership in the past secured refuge in Jordan, refrained from attacking the treaty directly. The only reference to the treaty in its newspaper published in Gaza was a highly critical communiqué issued at a conference of radical forces that took place in Tripoli, Libya.³⁴

Neither the critical stance of the Palestinian organizations nor even the more moderate positions of the Palestinian leadership reflected more popular perceptions of the peace treaty. A poll run simultaneously in October 1995 by the Centre for Palestine Research and Studies in Nablus and the Centre for Strategic Studies in Amman³⁵ relating to Jordan's performance in the peace negotiations with Israel and the future relationship with the Kingdom, indicated a generally positive attitude towards it. For example, when respondents were asked to rate the success of the Palestinian Authority, Syrian and Jordanian governments' negotiations with Israel to date, the Jordanian government scored by far the highest. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (63.9 per cent) of the West Bank and Gaza rated it as 'successful' with a further 14.8 per cent rating it 'relatively successful'. The percentages were 39.9 and 41.3 per cent regarding Palestinian negotiating performance and a low 29.8 per cent and 11.3 per cent for the Syrian government. When asked about concrete issues the response rate was predictably less favourable, with the majority 51.8 per cent claiming that Jordan's security rights were achieved in full, compared to majorities who felt that Jordan *did not* receive its full rights regarding water and territory.³⁶ Nevertheless, the fact that most respondents judged Jordan's negotiations to be successful suggests that they also accepted the legitimacy of the peace treaty.

Responses regarding the nature of the relationship between the Jordanian government and the Palestinian Authority further confirm these impressions. 69.1 per cent felt that relations between the two sides were either very close (16.7 per cent) or close (52.6).³⁷ One can assume that had the respondents thought the treaty to be inimical to basic Palestinian interests that they would regard the relationship in a much more unfavourable light. This is how indeed they perceived (for good reason) the Syrian relationship with the PA, with 77 per cent of the respondents feeling that Syrian-PA relations ranged from 'not close' to 'bad'. Thus, one can assume that the general public in the territories did not perceive either the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty or the tenor of the relationship between the PLO and the Jordanian government in the same light.

THE PALESTINIANS IN JORDAN AND THE JORDANIAN-ISRAELI RELATIONSHIP

It is almost impossible to divorce attitudes towards the peace process with Israel in general and attitudes towards the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty in particular. How one relates to Israel and Israelis is an issue of immense psychological, political, spiritual and ideological importance to most Palestinians and Jordanians, as indeed to many Arabs; an issue that defies compartmentalization into specific areas. Deeply rooted myths and views—the discourse on Palestinian expulsion, the canonical status of Jews as a protected religious minority rather than as an equal and sovereign people, the analogy drawn between the struggle against the Crusades and the Holy Land's deliverance by Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi and the present struggle against Israel and the West—colour almost any perception of Israel and Israelis. They are instilled in schools in Gaza, the West Bank and in Jordan within a religious tradition that, in public at least, is rarely questioned.³⁸ In short, the typical Palestinian or Jordanian finds the idea of a Jewish state hard to swallow.

Little wonder then that amongst Jordanian elites the peace with Israel was considered almost from the beginning 'the King's peace'—a peace justified perhaps for instrumental reasons but hardly by anything to do with the values, beliefs and convictions that make up the Arab soul. This difficulty of accepting Israel on any deeper level was reflected in the first Independence Day reception in the Israeli embassy. As Asher Susser cogently puts it: 'Few Jordanians attended. Government officials had been ordered to attend but the order was ignored, both by those who received it and by those who gave it.'³⁹

By and large, the more one's vocation involved the inculcation and reproduction of these myths and values, the greater the opposition at least in public, to the peace treaty and to normalization. Taking the lead in the campaign against normalization amongst Jordan's dozen or so professional associations in which Jordan Palestinians predominate, were the Jordanian Writers' Association and the Jordanian Bar Association. One of the first issues of contention was abolition of the laws boycotting Israel. The protests were typically imbued with an Arab pan-nationalism, particularly strong amongst the professional and educated class. Thus, according to Kamal Nasir, head of the Bar Association, peace with Israel was a reflection of 'submission and coercion' imposed by the Israelis and the United States 'on a weak and divided Arab world'.⁴⁰ A particularly vociferous opponent was Layth Shubaylat, a highly popular Islamist and former member of Parliament who headed the Engineering Union at the time of the signing of the Arava peace treaty.⁴¹ Even the deputy prime minister and minister of education Abd al-Ra'uf al-Rawabida felt compelled to reassure the public that the government had no intention of cooperating with Israel in educational projects.⁴² It is important to note that in Jordan, the minister of education has often been a prominent Islamist. Opposition was not only vocal but involved measures against members who defied the boycott these unions imposed on their

members against Israel. The influential leader of the small Jordanian Liberal Party was suspended from the bar for visiting Israel in June 1995. In September, a veterinarian in Irbid, Jordan's second largest city, had to call off the reception he was to hold in honour of Shimon Shamir, Israel's first ambassador to Jordan.⁴³

Jordan's opposition parties reacted against potential normalization long before either the Washington Memorandum or the peace treaty, when they joined forces to establish in May the Popular Arab Jordanian Committee for Resisting Submission and Normalization. Politically, the Islamic Action Front (IAF), the political arm of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood and the largest and most organized political party, took the lead in the struggle against normalization when the entire 16-member bloc protested the peace treaty by boycotting President Clinton's speech before the parliament.⁴⁴ One should recall that it was the first time that a US president had addressed parliament. An equally dramatic move was taken just before that when six members even dared to boycott the King's speech at the opening session of parliament, an almost unprecedented affront to the King in Jordan's parliamentary history. The subsequent beating of a prominent cleric and IAF deputy of Palestinian origin, Abd al-Munim Abu Zant, by security forces outside a mosque in which he delivered a sermon against the peace treaty, was widely regarded as a retaliatory move by the authorities against the IAF.⁴⁵

The anti-normalization campaign continued in 1995 and two events in particular roused the ire of the regime. First, in the end of July 1995 on a visit to Syria, six authorized opposition parties Syria condemned the peace treaty.⁴⁶ The delegation did not include the IAF because of the latter's opposition to Hafiz al-Assad's rule. Second, they joined forces with the other parties, to convene a conference, originally scheduled for late April, to denounce the peace treaty and normalization. It was later postponed to 29 May and 600 participants were expected to attend. The government noted fearfully that Ahmad Ubaydat, former prime minister and director of general intelligence and member of a leading Transjordanian family, was to be the keynote speaker. Any alliance between a Transjordanian from the King's inner circle with a predominantly Palestinian opposition has typically been considered a red line the monarchy has rarely allowed the political elite to cross. The proposed conference was no exception and the government subsequently banned it. So widespread was the campaign against the peace treaty and normalization that almost no political issue of significance in Jordan has been unaffected by the repercussions. The government's proposal to amend the press law was motivated primarily by a desire to curb the campaigns against normalization that appeared in weeklies published by the opposition parties.⁴⁷

It should be noted that though most of the opposition to normalization amongst elites has been Palestinian, both the sources and ranks of the opposition cross ethno-national lines to include Transjordanians. They include secular and religious, left and right (usually with pan-Arab inclinations), and members of the

official elite (albeit in small numbers). The heterogeneity was reflected in the opposition to the treaty in the Jordanian senate, all members of which are appointed, and to the boycott laws against Israel. The abolition was approved by a majority of 30 with three opposing. The opposition included a prominent Palestinian banker, a prominent member of the IAF and former chief of the Royal Court, and the latter two were Transjordanian.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, though the IAF, for example, has been successful in securing seats in southern Jordan populated almost exclusively by local non-Palestinian inhabitants, most of the deputies and their electoral strongholds are located in urban districts in Amman, Zarqa and Irbid that are inhabited overwhelmingly by Palestinians.⁴⁹

Even the most casual observer of Israeli politics and public affairs is aware of the strong, even bitter, campaign against normalization with Israel waged in Jordan principally by the organized political parties and the professional unions. However, the few opinion polls that have gauged the opinion of wider publics have revealed, at least in the recent past, surprisingly more moderate and more textured positions that seem to suggest that the campaign against normalization does not necessarily reflect the majority opinion. Evidence of this possible gap first appears from the widely publicized opinion poll taken in the latter half of 1994 conducted by Centre for Strategic Studies of the University of Jordan in Amman.⁵⁰ The sample comprised three groups—1,167 families drawn from all the provinces of the Hashemite Kingdom according to their proportion of the population, level of income and education, representing what they called the ‘national’ sample; 279 families distributed randomly amongst Jordan’s nine large refugee camps, and 500 ‘opinion makers’ who were sampled individually. Even though the questionnaire was distributed partially after the peace treaty, it addressed, for reasons of uniformity, the Israeli-Palestinian peace accords only.

Nevertheless the responses to questions relating to the Israeli-Palestinian interim agreements are probably linked to the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty. One can assume that a person who opposed in principle any kind of normalization between Jordan and Israel did so on the grounds that he or she was opposed to any peace accords with Israel and if so would oppose the Israeli-Palestinian interim agreements as well. This wall-to-wall rejection indeed reflects the official position of both the radical Palestinian factions centred in Syria and the official oppositions of the Islamic organizations and parties both in the territories and in Jordan. Whatever the differences between Hamas in Gaza and the West Bank and the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan may be, they both completely and adamantly reject any peace with Israel and hence any normalization between Israel and the Arab states. It is widely assumed that these positions reflect the general views of the Palestinian Diaspora, including Jordan’s Palestinian citizens.

This view was not corroborated by the above poll. When asked ‘whether it were possible that the agreements signed between the PLO and the Israeli government could have potentially positive effects on Jordan’, 46.9 per cent of the Palestinians in the national sample, 46.6 per cent of the Palestinian opinion-makers, and 44.8 per cent of the refugee camp respondents, answered

affirmatively compared to 28.2 per cent, 25.6 and 28.5 per cent respectively who felt that this was not the case. In fact, the positive responses were consistently higher than amongst Jordanians of local origin. Respondents demonstrated a high level of consistency in response to a follow-up question in which respondents were asked to respond to nine potentially negative effects on Jordan emanating from the interim treaties; 82.5 per cent of the Palestinians in the national sample, 62.3 per cent of the opinion-makers and a surprising 86 per cent of the refugee camp residents claimed that there were no negative effects to the treaty. Once again, Palestinians were more positive than the Jordanians, with the greatest differences registered between Palestinian and Jordanian-origin opinion makers. The response indicates an overall positive assessment of the interim agreements and conforms with the general positive identification amongst Palestinian residents and citizens with the Kingdom of Jordan reflected in the remainder of the study. This was hardly the position of the institutional forces which rejected any agreement with Israel whatsoever, either in the Jordanian or Palestinian context. The discrepancy, however, is hardly surprising. Another poll conducted by the same research institute to gauge party affiliation found that only 1.5 per cent of those sampled were formal members of political parties. Of course, the very low rate could be linked to fears that identification with parties might compromise one's security, but it does not explain the low membership even for establishment parties.

Further evidence for popular support of the treaty may be found in an assessment by a prominent Jordanian journalist, who concluded that 20 per cent of the Jordanian population supported the peace treaty out of blind loyalty to the government, 20 per cent opposed it outright and 60 per cent were willing to give it a chance provided that it achieved economic dividends and a willingness on the part of Israel 'to live in the region as a Middle East state, after abandoning [its] expansionist Zionist ideology'.⁵¹ Another poll specifically addressing the Israeli-Jordanian treaty made in parallel with the above-mentioned Palestinian poll indicated an even more favourable assessment of the treaty; 94 per cent regarded the conducting of negotiations by the Jordanian government as being successful or very successful. The perceptions of Jordanians of both Palestinian and local origins regarding securing land, water rights and security were also more positive than among respondents in the territories; 60 per cent of these respondents felt that Jordan had secured all its rights to land, 68 per cent felt it enhanced Jordanian security, and 48 per cent felt that Jordan achieved all its rights to water.⁵²

THE AL-AQSA INTIFADA, JORDAN AND THE PEACE PROCESS

Though the 'peace dividend' failed to live up to expectations, with Jordan exhibiting low and even negative GDP growth rates in the late 1990s, there is little evidence that any substantial segment of the Palestinian population joined

the opposition and took to the streets to protest. It was only in the Al-Aqsa Intifada that Palestinians from beyond the ranks of the rather small but organized opposition were galvanized into action in any perceptible way on issues related to the peace process. The wave of protests began almost immediately, culminating in the death of an 18-year-old in the Baqaa refugee camp and the banning of protests on 10 October 2000.⁵³ The protests captured world attention when, on 24 October, at the end of a legal rally of tens of thousands of protestors in the memorial to the fallen in the battle of Karameh, anti-riot police charged a crowd injuring 50 and arresting 48 participants.⁵⁴ The authorities claimed that demonstrators planned a return march via the Allenby bridge connecting the east and west banks of the Jordan. By the end of December, according to the authorities, 260 marches and more than 165 demonstrations were staged in Jordan in support of the Intifada in various parts of the country.⁵⁵

Official circles, including the King himself, did not hide their concern over the impact on Jordanian security. In a speech to security personnel on 24 December 2000, he warned:

My message to those whether they are inside or outside the country is this: We are the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The future belongs to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and we will not permit anyone whoever to stand in our way or place obstacles in front of Jordan. If there are people who want something other than 'the kingdom', I have the Arab army of which we are proud and I am longing to wear the 'army uniform' and the 'atmosphere of the battlefield'.⁵⁶

Just to make sure that the army was on his side, he announced in the same speech a pay raise to security personnel during 2001 from proceeds of a sale of his personal property. The authorities, on the basis of evidence they themselves presented, had indeed something over which to worry. By blaming the death of the 18-year-old in the Baqaa refugee camp on 'anti-Peace Palestinian factions' Jordanian authorities were acknowledging the existence of an armed Palestinian presence in Jordan.⁵⁷

The numerous demonstrations that took place despite their official banning also demonstrated the ineffectiveness of the decision. According to Fahd al-Fanik, a prominent journalist known for his hardline east Jordanian nationalist sentiments, the danger was aggravated by Marwan Al-Barghuthi's claim that 'the current Palestinian uprising is borderless'.⁵⁸ Al-Barghuthi's statement might be connected to what former Minister of Information Salih al-Qallab referred to as 'intangible evidence that some were trying to infiltrate the ranks of these demonstrators and export the intifada into Jordan'.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, even after a week of especially intensive protest at the end of October 2000, only thirteen members of Jordan's 80-member parliament demanded the abrogation of the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty. Evidently most of the elite, whether of Jordanian

or Palestinian origin, were not ready to risk a confrontation with the King over the continuation of the peace treaty.⁶⁰

PALESTINIAN CITIZENS OF ISRAEL AND THE ISRAELI-JORDANIAN PEACE TREATY

To recall, the peace ceremony with Jordan was concluded with great fanfare, particularly on the Israeli side, and for good reason. Unlike agreements with other Arab actors to date or in the future, the peace treaty with Jordan did not involve substantial territorial concessions, the dismantling of settlements or the relocation of their inhabitants. However, Israel's Arab citizens did not share the genuine happiness over the treaty expressed by Israel's Jewish population, particularly, amongst its political elites. Least enthusiastic, even critical, was the local Arab press. The headline addressing the upcoming signing of the peace agreement in *Al-Ittihad* on 19 October 1994 set the tone. It read 'The Palestinian Authority: The Agreement an attempt to maintain the state of occupation of Jerusalem (*al-ittifaq tafrudu waqi al-Ihtilal al-Isralili ala al-Quds*).' In subsequent pages it reported that the PLO representative had lodged an official complaint to the Arab League concerning the clause regarding Jerusalem, asked for its intervention in annulling it, and warned of the dire consequences (*inikasad khatira*) of not doing so. It also reported that the PLO considered the clause a violation of the DoP signed with the PLO and that President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, widely regarded as the Palestinians' major ally, was opposed to the leasing of land and would not attend the signing of the peace treaty. *Al-Ittihad*, the only Arab daily catering to Israel's Palestinian citizens, is the official organ of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, the largest Arab party in the Knesset at the time. The party itself had expressed its satisfaction with the agreement a day previously, evidently as yet not fully aware of the surge of anger from PLO quarters regarding the agreement.⁶¹ The headline and coverage in the following day's issue was intended to correct impressions.

The daily's more moderate initial stance might have been influenced by an article it published on 18 October by Bashir al-Barghuthi, the veteran leader of the Palestinian Communist Party, renamed the Popular People's Party, who frequently contributed to the newspaper. Al-Barghuthi pointed out that now peace was to be signed with Jordan, the threat of an 'eastern front' endangering Israel would become a thing of the past and that Israel could not possibly oppose a Palestinian state with the River Jordan as its border. He acknowledged, however, that had different regional or international conditions prevailed, namely had the Soviet Union continued to exist, and had Arab unity not become total disunity in the aftermath of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, any bilateral agreement was a poor substitute for a total comprehensive peace settlement.

For *As-Sennara*, the independent popular bi-weekly published in Nazareth, the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty was another bit of bad news for Israel's Palestinians, as were the Oslo Accords. Every peace treaty with Israel, according

to Lutfi Mashur, the newspaper's editor, reduced pressure on Israel in dealing with the real issues such as the right of return, including the internal refugees. Mashur was upset at the PLO for making an issue of Arafat's invitation. Why, he asked, would he want to go to a ceremony that harmed the Palestinian cause?⁶² The same edition reported that the five major political forces in the territories, namely Fatah, the Democratic and Popular Fronts, Hamas and the Jihad al-Islami, had announced a general strike on the day of the signing, principally due to the Jerusalem clause. It also publicized the warning to King Hussein from the Movement's Higher Council of Fatah in the territories to refrain from visiting Jerusalem until a final peace agreement was concluded between the PLO and Israel. By contrast, neither news item appeared in the Jerusalem *Al-Quds*, which serves the West Bank population and traditionally maintains cordial ties with the monarchy.

Even when Arab Knesset members expressed happiness with the agreement, among them Talib al-Sanaa, the representative of the Arab Democratic Party, they did so with reservations.⁶³ Nevertheless, the newspaper reported more varied views amongst common citizens, some of whom thought that peace was beneficial at almost any price, and others who welcomed the peace treaty because it would enable the re-establishment of ties with relatives living in Jordan and facilitate travel to the Arab world. But even those most positive towards the treaty viewed it as formalizing a relationship between Israel and Jordan that had existed long beforehand and therefore had reservations regarding the fanfare surrounding the actual signing.

CONCLUSION

Researchers of national conflicts, as a recent article in *World Politics* noted, tend to think that ethno-national conflicts pivot groups characterized by a high degree of consensus against others.⁶⁴ They tend not only to forget Mancur Olson's seminal insight that the more people assume a collective good is truly collective and desirable the greater will be the tendency to take a free ride rather than mobilize on behalf of achieving it (attendance at university faculty meetings to plan the next strike in a collective bargaining environment is a good example), but that not all segments of the national group necessarily hold the same positions.

An analysis of Palestinian positions in the territories, in Jordan and in Israel regarding the Israeli-Jordanian treaty demonstrates major differences. The most salient fault line is not geographical or institutionally embedded but rather class-based and functional. How the political class perceived the treaty was totally different from how the general public did so in all three different political environments. The differences were especially striking in the territories, but existed in Jordan as well. The general public's attitudes are strongly influenced by different, mainly, economic interests and freedom of movement that would facilitate contact in a community characterized by cross-border kinship

networks. The elites, by contrast, are motivated primarily by a state-building calculus that also has tremendous bearing on their material interests in the long run. The Palestinian political elite, especially in the territories, is fearful that Jordanian-Israeli relations will perpetuate collusion and containment of the future Palestinian entity. They were angered especially by the Jerusalem clause harming Palestinian efforts at achieving complete sovereignty over (Arab) Jerusalem. While the political elites in all three areas, at least for the time being, want to institutionalize borders, the wider public wants to minimize them. The political elite's state-building calculus thus runs counter to the regional integration calculus characterizing the Palestinian general public.

These findings have both theoretical and practical ramifications. Interests clearly influence attitudes and behaviour as predicted by the instrumentalist/constructivist paradigm. The elites are strongly nationalist because it is in their interest to be so. Nationalism is indeed, as the instrumentalists perceive it, an entrepreneurial effort. The political class develops means to coerce others to conform to their positions, as indicated by the calling of the general strike against the treaty. The influence of this political class also has future practical implications. This study has noted the similarities in the positions held by the political elites in all three milieus. It suggests that the PA will be able to mobilize the elites in Jordan and Israel in the future. If the future Palestinian entity will seek to be irredentist, it might find Palestinian elites on both sides of the future border willing to cooperate on its behalf.

NOTES

1. One of the most recent articles to present the contours of this debate is Dmitry Gorenburg's 'Not with One Voice: An Explanation of Intragroup Variation in Nationalist Sentiment', *World Politics*, Vol.53 (October 2000), pp.116–21.
2. Michael Hechter, 'Dynamics of Secession', *Acta Sociologica*, Vol.35 (1992), p.275. Cited in Gorenberg, p.119.
3. See, for example, Russell Hardin, *One for All: The Logic of Group Conflict*, Princeton, 1995, p.70, fn. 10. Cited and discussed in Gorenberg, p.119.
4. See Avi Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement and the Partition of Palestine*, Oxford, 1988.
5. For a brilliant analysis of Palestinian-Jordanian relations see Adnan Abu-Odeh, *Jordanians, Palestinians and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process*, Washington DC, 1999, especially chapter 10. Abu-Odeh, a former minister and head of the royal court who is of Palestinian origin, was a target himself when fortunately Jordanian security forces intercepted a letter bomb addressed to him. Though the author is loyal to the King, the book is highly critical of what he perceives to be government discrimination against Jordan's Palestinian citizens and the abandonment of the integration paradigm that informed Jordanian policy in the 1950s and 1960s.
6. Joshua Teitelbaum, 'The Palestinian Liberation Organization', in *Middle East Contemporary Survey 1991*, Vol.XV, Boulder, 1995, p.238.

7. Asher Susser, 'Jordan', in *Middle East Contemporary Survey 1993*, Boulder, 1995, pp.468–9.
8. Danny Rubinstein describes sitting around a breakfast table in the Washington hotel a day before the beginning of another round of talks, when Hanan Ashrawi and her colleagues glumly conceded that they had not read the agreement of principle that had been reached through the secret Oslo peace track. Rubinstein politely handed them an English version of the text that had appeared in an Israeli daily the previous day. *Ha-aretz*, 2 September 1993.
9. Asher Susser, *Jordan: Case Study of a Pivotal State*, Washington, 1999, p.79.
10. Asher Susser, 'Jordan', in *Middle East Contemporary Survey -1993*, p.475.
11. *Ibid.*, p.421.
12. Asher Susser, 'The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan', in *Middle East Contemporary Survey 1994*, p.422.
13. *Ibid.*, p.423.
14. Eli Rekhess and Meir Litvak, 'Palestinian Affairs', in *Middle East Contemporary Survey 1994*, p.165.
15. Susser, 'The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan', p.412.
16. Rekhess and Litvak, 'Palestinian Affairs', p.166.
17. Susser, 'The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan', p.424.
18. Asher Susser, 'Jordan', p.427.
19. On the dynamics and ramifications of what is conceived an Israeli option of *al-watan al-badil*, see Abu-Odeh, *Jordanians, Palestinians and the Hashemite Kingdom*, chapter 9.
20. For a wider discussion on the issue, see Abu-Odeh, *Jordanians, Palestinians and the Hashemite Kingdom*, chapter 10. For a reaction on Abu-Odeh's conclusions by a Transjordanian member of the official elite, see former Prime Minister Ahmad Obeidat's remarks in Saad Hattar and Riham Fakhoury's 'Socio-economic and political impact of peace process are greatest challenge for Jordan', *The Jordan Times* (internet edition), 17 February 2000.
21. Daniel Sobelman, '*Ha-yardenim Hosheshim Mepmatan Adifut Le-Plitim Me-Levanon*', *Haaretz*, 2 February 2001.
22. *Yediot Aharonot*, 31 January 2001.
23. *Al-Hayat al-Jadida*, 1 February 2001.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*
26. Asher Susser, 'The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan', in *Middle East Contemporary Survey 1997*, p.485.
27. For a more detailed discussion, see my 'From Armed Struggle Over State Borders to Political Mobilization and Intifada Within It: The Transformation of PLO Strategy in the Territories', *Plural Societies*, Vol.19, Nos.2 and 3 (March 1990), p. 111.
28. 'Comprehensive Strike Staged in Protest of Treaty', *Voice of Palestine Radio*, 24 October 1994 FBIS–NES 94–207, 26 October 1994, p.12.
29. Rekhess and Litvak, 'Palestinian Affairs' (1994), p.167.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Ibid.*, p.165.

32. ' Hamas fi Bayaniha Ruqm (117) *Shabna Yarfudu al-Muahadat al-Istislamiyya waYatamasaku fiKhiyar al-Jihad wal-Muqawama'* *Filastin al-Muslima* (December 1994), p.7.
33. Rekhees and Litvak, 'Palestinian Affairs', p.166.
34. *Al-Istiqlal*, 11 November 1994.
35. Nata'ij Istitla lil-Ra'i al-Am Hawla al-Alaqa al-Filastiniyya-al-Urduniyya, 13–15 October 1995, Nablus, n.d.
36. *Ibid.*, p.5
37. *Ibid.*, p.4.
38. The Centre for Monitoring the Impact of Peace has found that the Palestinian Authority has reintroduced textbooks originating from Jordan and Egypt from which the Israeli Authorities expunged anti-Semitic material without making any other revisions in the text. 'The Jews are represented as evil, as a danger to the Arabs and to Islam, as a nuisance to humanity who have brought persecution and anti-Semitism upon themselves. Judaism is defined as racism, and Zionism is compared to Nazism.' The same themes were found incidentally in Syrian textbooks. See report on Palestinian textbooks on www.edume.org/syrial-intro.html.
39. Asher Susser, 'The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan', in *Middle East Contemporary Survey 1995*, p.389.
40. *Ibid.*, p.391.
41. *Ibid.*, p.392.
42. *Ibid.*, p.390.
43. *Ibid.*, p.392.
44. Susser, 'The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan', in *Middle East Contemporary Survey 1994*, p.435.
45. *Ibid.*
46. Susser, 'The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan,' in *Middle East Contemporary Survey 1995*, p. 395.
47. *Ibid.*, p.393.
48. *Ibid.*, p.396
49. 'Al-Taswit al-Filastini fi Intikhabat al-Urdunn', *Al-Bilad*, 6 November 1997.
50. Istitla li-l-Ra'i Hawla al-Alaqa al-Urdunniyya-al-Filastiniyya, February 1995, Amman, n.d. For an extensive discussion of this survey, see H.Frisch, 'Ethnicity, Territorial Integrity, and Regional Order: Palestinian Identity in Jordan and Israel', *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol.34, No.3 (August 1997), pp.257–69.
51. George Hawatmeh, Quoted in Susser (1995; see note 46), p.390.
52. Nata'ij Istitla lil-Ra'i al-Am Hawla al-Alaqa al-Filastiniyya-al-Urduniyya, 13–15 October 1995, p.2.
53. *The Jordan Times*, 27 October 2000 in FBIS-NES-2000–1027.
54. *The Jordan Times*, 25 October 2000 (internet version).
55. FBIS-NES-2000–1225 25 December 2000 Amman al-Ra'i in Arabic, 25 December 2000, p.15.
56. *The Jordan Times*, 25 December 2000.
57. *Ibid.*, 27 October 2000 in FBIS-NES-2000–1027.
58. 'Columnist Assesses Intifada's Impact on Jordan', *Al-Ra'i*, 2 January 2001, FBSIS-NES 20001–0102.

59. 'Writer says Jordan's Ban on Pro-Palestinian Marches Due to Security Imperatives', *al-Sharq al-Awsat* (London), 16 October 2000, FBIS-NES-2000-1016.
60. Tareq Ayyoub, *The Jordan Times*, 1 November 2000 in FBIS-NES-2000-1101
61. *Al-Itihad*, 19 October 1994.
62. *As-Semara*, 21 October 1994.
63. *Ibid.*, 24 October 1994.
64. See note 1.

The Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty: Patterns of Negotiation, Problems of Implementation

LAURA ZITTRAIN EISENBERG and NEIL CAPLAN

The Peace Treaty of 26 October 1994 between the State of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was one of the most promising negotiated settlements to emerge following the 1991 Arab-Israeli Peace Conference in Madrid, Spain.¹ Strong leadership imbued with a genuine desire for peace, a willingness to prioritize demands and accept compromises, and constructive third-party support all contributed to the achievement of a formal Israeli-Jordanian accord.

The treaty has enjoyed overwhelming Israeli support, albeit accompanied by some disappointment that the cross-border traffic is disproportionately west to east and that Jordanian professionals, businessmen and artists have been reluctant to engage in joint ventures. Nevertheless, Israelis are generally satisfied that the long border with Jordan has remained quiet, and that King Abdullah II has been no less outspoken in his support for Israeli-Jordanian peace than was his late father, King Hussein. Strategists appreciate that the treaty with Jordan cuts off Iraq's only invasion route into Israel, and gives Israel a partner with shared interests in stabilizing the area as a Palestinian state between them is supposed to take form.

A positive Jordanian appreciation of treaty relations with Israel is limited to a small circle around the king. Elsewhere there is considerable unhappiness with the way the treaty has played out since its signing in 1994. While Jordan has been able to reap strategic and economic benefits in its relations with the United States, there is widespread dissatisfaction with the treaty (especially when measured against the expectations it had generated) in terms of bilateral relations with Israel, Jordan's 'pivotal' position in the region, and improvements to the average Jordanian's standard of living.² The anti-normalization movement, spearheaded by Jordan's professional and cultural elite, is a significant counterbalance to the Palace's efforts to make the peace work. In the absence of a tangible pay-off and amid post-Oslo Arab-Israeli tensions, pro-Palestinian

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sentiment in Jordan remains strong and has made the peace with Israel an awkward one, particularly in times of severe Israeli-Palestinian unrest.

In fact, the history of Jordanian-Israeli contacts and peacemaking efforts has always reflected a tension between Jordan's desire to satisfy its genuine shared interests with Israel and its disinclination to challenge both pro-Palestinian sentiment and general Arab resistance to the legitimization of Israel or normalization of relations with it. In earlier decades, this tension displayed itself in back-channel Israeli-Jordanian coordination. However, the 1991 Gulf War and Madrid conference transformed these connections into a formal and open relationship. The continued relevance of anti-Israeli sentiment in Jordan and the pervasive disillusionment with the course of Jordanian-Israeli relations since 1994 bespeak the fragility and limitations of a treaty whose well-intentioned drafters were, on the Jordanian side, way out ahead of mainstream Jordanian sentiment and, on the Israeli side, not sufficiently sensitive to Jordan's dilemmas. Both sides entertained overly optimistic assumptions about the spread of regional stability and the concomitant flourishing of Jordanian-Israeli economic projects.

Despite the fact that the treaty has yet to achieve its full potential for normal and fruitful Jordanian-Israeli relations, the process and products of 1994 reflect in many respects a positive divergence from traditionally negative patterns of Arab-Israeli bargaining behaviour. Israel and other would-be Arab peace partners have no choice but to tread this still imperfect path, hopefully guided by some lessons from the Jordanian-Israeli experience.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, 1921-91

How does the Israel-Jordan Treaty of 1994 fit into the cycle of advances and setbacks that have characterized Zionist-Transjordanian and Israeli-Jordanian diplomatic relations since the early 1920s?³ By any standard, the scope and depth of Zionist-Transjordanian and Israeli-Jordanian contacts since 1921 have been remarkable. Israel and Jordan are the Solomonic baby who survived Winston Churchill's mid-1921 division of the territory of the Palestine Mandate: the territory west of the River Jordan remained 'Palestine,' and the lands east of the River Jordan became the Hashemite Emirate of Transjordan. The British appointed, as new ruler of Transjordan, Abdullah, son of Sharif Hussein of Mecca who had led the Arab Revolt against the Turks.

But Abdullah was not content to govern only his assigned desert principality. Hegemonic ambitions to rule over 'Greater Syria' made the ultimate disposition of western Palestine a matter of continuing interest to him. In the 1930s, he solidified a budding political relationship with the Jewish Agency Executive in Palestine through a land-sale option.⁴ For the Emir, an alliance with the Jews offered a common front against the Palestinian Arabs, who were demanding Palestinian-Arab sovereignty over the land Abdullah coveted, and who totally rejected any formula for sharing Palestine with the Zionists. In his desire to

outflank the Palestinians and extend his kingdom to the Mediterranean coast, he was prepared to accept a Jewish autonomous unit within western Palestine under his sovereignty, but this scenario had little appeal to Zionists.

Still, the Zionists and the Emir did have reason to find one another appealing partners. There is evidence that Abdullah shared in the period's stereotypical and exaggerated beliefs about the wealth and influence the Jews could put at his disposal, a sentiment perhaps reinforced by the gifts he was offered and accepted. For the Zionists, Abdullah was the pan-Arab, non-Palestinian leader who might eventually accommodate a Jewish National Home in Palestine in the classic 'exchange of services' mode.⁵ Abdullah and members of his inner circle met often with Jewish Agency officials, exchanging ideas and proposals for resolving the conflict over Palestine to the satisfaction of both Zionist and Hashemite aspirations.

As the first Arab-Israeli war approached, serious contacts and negotiations took place between Abdullah and officials of the Jewish Agency for Palestine. While some historians, notably Avi Shlaim, believe that there was an understanding between Abdullah and the Zionists amounting to 'collusion' in pursuit of a clear-cut plan to share all of Mandatory Palestine between them, other scholars, such as Avraham Sela, argue that this understanding was neither so firm nor so clear. While the Abdullah-Zionist channel—which saw an eleventh-hour, May 1948, visit to Amman by future Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir, disguised as an Arab peasant woman—did not deter the king from joining in the panArab war against the new Jewish state, the Arab Legion was deployed selectively to avoid conquering territory accorded to Israel under the UN partition plan.⁶

The war on Israel's eastern front ended with a Jordanian-Israeli armistice, ostensibly negotiated with UN mediation at Rhodes in the spring of 1949; in reality, Lieutenant-Colonel Moshe Dayan and Colonel Abdullah al-Tal negotiated the armistice agreement directly, with personal input from the King during occasional visits to his winter palace at Shuneh. The Rhodes agreement established the Jordanian-Israeli Mixed Armistice Commission and a 'Special Committee', both of which met near the Mandelbaum Gate of the Old City of Jerusalem and provided official points of contact between Israeli and Jordanian officials for several years. After concluding the armistice, Abdullah and his old friends in the new Israeli government entered into extensive talks, resulting ultimately in a draft treaty of peace between the two nations.⁷ But Abdullah hesitated to sign the accord due to vehement Arab opposition, both within Transjordan and without, to any deal with Israel. Abdullah's assassination in July 1951 by a Palestinian nationalist ended this chapter in Jordanian-Israeli relations.

Two years later, Abdullah's grandson Hussein assumed the throne. In later years, the Jordanian monarch would quietly resume his late grandfather's predilection for clandestine meetings with Israeli officials. When it launched the June 1967 war on its Syrian and Egyptian fronts, the Israeli government communicated to Hussein that if he kept out of the fray, Israel would not move

against his troops. The pressures for pan-Arab unity were too great, however, and the king committed his army to battle on Israel's eastern front. In the course of the fighting, Jordan lost the precious Old City of Jerusalem and the West Bank to Israel. The loss of the former had a particularly painful resonance for Jordanians, since it includes the al-Aqsa Mosque where King Abdullah I was assassinated, the Dome of the Rock, and the burial site of King Hussein's great grandfather, Hussein ibn-Ali, the former Sharif of Mecca. In the aftermath of the war, the Israeli and Jordanian leaderships reopened their quiet contacts, working together to administer the West Bank which Israel now controlled, but in which Jordan retained much interest and influence.

By all accounts, Hussein met with every Israeli prime minister over the years, creating ongoing relationships which weathered wars and regional crises. Informal Jordanian-Israeli cooperation in fields such as border security and environment created a functional relationship of such depth and breadth that, writing in 1978, Ian Lustick doubted whether any open, negotiated settlement between the two countries could provide as satisfactory an arrangement.⁸ In the absence of a peace treaty, Israel and Jordan shared what Aharon Klieman has described as a durable 'adversarial partnership' built on 'a policy of de facto disengagement and conflict avoidance'. This policy reflected 'a basic affinity of core political interests and concerns,' among them the long shared border; mutual interests in the West Bank; the preponderant Palestinian impact upon their politics and societies; and (more recently) challenges from Islamic fundamentalism.⁹

In 1987, King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres met in London to personally draft a peace accord—one that was intended to look like an American initiative. But 'the London Document' of 11 April 1987 turned out to be a dead letter, overtaken by violent eruptions in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the structural peculiarity of the Israeli government at that time. Deadlocked Israeli elections in 1984 had necessitated the creation of a National Unity Government under whose terms Labour leader Shimon Peres and Likud leader Yitzhak Shamir were to alternate, each for two years, holding the offices of prime minister and foreign minister. Yitzhak Shamir completely opposed the Israeli concessions Peres had agreed to in his accord with Hussein, particularly the Palestinian focus, the international conference framework, and the inclusion of the Soviets. So, although Peres began his Jordanian diplomacy as prime minister, he signed the agreement in the diminished capacity of a foreign minister operating in defiance of the new prime minister. Not wanting to involve itself in this domestic Israeli struggle, the US stayed on the sidelines, withholding the superpower support Peres had hoped to bring to bear on Shamir. Without the approval of the Israeli government, the agreement remained an inoperative piece of paper.¹⁰ Coordinated Jordanian-Israeli activity reverted to its traditionally clandestine mode until 1991, when Jordan's political isolation and dire financial straits after the Gulf War brought it to the public negotiating table set by the United States in Madrid.

FROM LONDON TO MADRID, AND BEYOND

The 1993–94 Jordanian-Israeli peace process is best appreciated against this background of extensive Transjordanian-Zionist and Jordanian-Israeli relations. The history of these interactions provides a useful perspective for understanding the course of more recent Jordanian-Israeli peacemaking. The authors' work in the broad field of Arab-Israeli diplomacy, pre- and post-1948, identified a pattern of negative negotiating behaviours, which have historically stymied those who would search for an Arab-Israeli peace.¹¹ The logical inference is that the more closely current negotiations follow the old patterns, the more likely the chances of failure; any hopes for resolution of this conflict rest upon deviation from those patterns in very specific directions. In many critical respects, this is precisely what occurred with the Jordanian-Israeli Treaty, which happily broke with the earlier patterns of unsuccessful Arab-Israeli negotiations. But reversion to negative habits of the past—for example, doubting the motives of the 'other' and differences in perceptions between the leaders and the led—has thus far precluded the full expression of the rewards promised by the treaty's architects.

The futile diplomacy of the Mandate period followed a pattern that lends itself to examination along the lines of several components which, our research suggests, have been traditionally associated with failed Arab-Israeli negotiations: (1) dubious purposes and ulterior motives, (2) problems of timing, (3) the asymmetrical or weak status of one or more of the negotiating partners, (4) the generally negative impact of third-party involvement, (5) the wide gulf between proposed terms of agreement and (6) psychological factors, mainly the gap between leaders' attitudes towards 'the enemy' and those of their constituencies. Consideration of Jordanian-Israeli relations within this six-point framework illuminates the unique constellation of circumstances which allowed the parties to break the historical pattern of failures and to reach an agreement in 1994, and highlights those forces that still threaten that agreement seven years later.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

Although the 1987 Peres-Hussein attempt at formal peacemaking failed, it did not deplete the reservoir of goodwill that had developed among the elites from years of tacit alliance, clandestine cooperation, and informal agreements reached and kept. Intermittent contact between Jordanians and Israelis at the highest levels, particularly between the king and a small number of top Israeli leaders, lent a sense of continuity and stability to the relationship and an element of trust completely lacking between Israel and any other Arab partner. Meeting at the White House, Yitzhak Rabin and King Hussein admitted to a curious President Clinton that they enjoyed a friendship of some 20 years' duration.¹²

Although our research suggests that a history of frequent encounters does not necessarily enhance the prospects for a successfully negotiated settlement—sometimes familiarity only reveals incompatibility—it is likely that the trust

created by the unique nature of long-term Jordanian-Israeli relations did contribute to the achievement of a formal peace treaty, once the two parties decided to go public. The question, then, becomes: if Jordan and Israel were enjoying a quiet, mutually satisfying relationship, what motivated them to come out of the shadows and into the light?

PURPOSES AND MOTIVES

Israel was born a pariah in the Middle East, and it has always been Israeli policy to try to normalize Arab-Israeli relations through bilateral peace accords with its neighbours. Since the Mandate period, Zionist leaders had fantasized about the economic potential of an open Middle East market. With regard to Jordan, Israeli economists had more recently speculated about the potential financial rewards of jointly developing commercial and tourist facilities at the Dead Sea and at the twin cities of Eilat and Aqaba. A formal accord with Jordan was a necessary stepping-stone along the path of mutual fiscal gain. Beyond the economics of peace, however, security-conscious Israel clearly appreciated that peace with Jordan would constitute significant closure along its long eastern front, and a buffer between it and Iraqi troops who could only march on to Israel via Jordan.

A deal with Hussein was acceptable policy across Israel's highly fractionalized political spectrum. Peace with Jordan was a long-cherished goal, dating from the interrupted agreement with King Hussein's grandfather, Abdullah. After capturing the West Bank from Jordan in the 1967 war, many Israelis touted the 'Jordanian option' as a way to trade that territory for a separate peace, without the trauma of having to deal with the Palestinians or the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The popularity of the accord with Hussein reflected the traditional Israeli preference for dealing with non-Palestinian Arab state leaders, and the longstanding predominance of 'Jordan-firsters' over 'Palestine-firsters' within the Israeli foreign-policy establishment.¹³ This was true despite the 1993 breakthrough to direct Israeli-PLO dealings embodied in the Oslo Accords, and even more so in light of subsequent crises in Israeli-Palestinian relations. Enthusiasm for the treaty with Jordan was also an expression of relief at having found a counterweight to, or insurance policy against, Yasser Arafat's and the PLO's unproven ability to 'deliver the goods'.

The King shared many of Israel's motivations in finally concluding a formal peace, and his thinking had similarly evolved to the point where the question was not 'whether' peace was possible, but 'when' and on what specific terms. Concerned that successive Israeli-PLO agreements would leave him sidelined, Hussein was anxious to maintain Jordanian influence in the West Bank. His own declaration of 31 July 1988¹⁴ had reduced Jordanian responsibility for West-Bank Palestinian affairs; any new PLO-Israeli security or economic measures established there would obviously have a huge impact on Jordan, however, and Hussein wanted to position Jordan to best shape developments to its advantage.

In making peace with Israel and removing the risk, however small, of war, Hussein extricated Jordan from its military dependence upon Iraq. This served two interrelated Jordanian goals: renewal of the friendship with America, and economic recovery. Pressured by his vast Palestinian population to side with Iraq in the 1991 Gulf War, the King found himself estranged from his traditional US and Gulf Arab benefactors. During that war, Palestinian refugees from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia had poured into Jordan, further straining its already meagre resources. The fledgling Palestinian autonomy envisaged in the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian 'Declaration of Principles' (DOP)¹⁵ also threatened the steadily falling Jordanian dinar.

Although the US rewarded Jordan's participation in the 1991 Madrid Conference with a resumption of military assistance, Amman's worsening economy required massive foreign intervention, including US forgiveness of Jordan's \$700 million foreign debt. Nothing short of an historic, open declaration of peace with Israel could have brought such a handsome reward, and Secretary of State Warren Christopher acknowledged that, in this situation, 'the economics of it may be driving the politics of it'.¹⁶ Peace with Israel served the Jordanian goal of political rehabilitation in the eyes of the US, and promised an economic boon in terms of US aid and debt-forgiveness, as well as in terms of a new economic relationship with Israel itself.

TIMING

Timing elements that precipitated a formal Jordanian-Israeli Treaty were both internal and external. As previously mentioned, the Gulf War struck a devastating blow to the Jordanian economy. The loss of foreign aid from the US and the Gulf States; the abrupt influx of some 350,000 Jordanian nationals, many but not all of Palestinian origin, expelled by the states in which they had been working; and the sudden cessation of the remittances which these workers had been sending home prompted Hussein to consider drastic action.

Another catalyst for diplomatic boldness was the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Arab states' Soviet sponsor, which necessitated some degree of Arab accommodation with the sole remaining superpower. The Gulf States, Egypt, and even Syria had sided with the US against Iraq during Operation Desert Storm; further advances in relations with the US would require Arab reconciliation with Israel. With the PLO and Syria now talking to the United States, Jordan could not afford any strains in its relationship with the US. Peace with Israel would help vault Hussein back into the comfort of a US partnership.¹⁷

The Oslo and Cairo agreements of 1993 and 1994 also served to force the King's hand. Jordan's on-again, off-again relationship with the PLO and the state of conflict between Israel and the PLO both constrained and motivated Jordanian interaction with Israel. Mindful of the sensibilities of the huge Palestinian component of his constituency, King Hussein had always been hesitant to effect a formal peace with Israel without the PLO's acquiescence or endorsement. The

suddenly very real prospect of an Israeli withdrawal from parts of the West Bank, the establishment of a Palestinian self-governing authority there, and Israeli-PLO negotiations about Jerusalem in the not-too-distant future persuaded Hussein that he had better move quickly to protect Jordan's interests and influence in those areas. For example, once the PLO and Israel began negotiating openly in the autumn of 1993, the PLO goal to make Jerusalem the capital of an independent Palestine challenged Jordan's self-proclaimed responsibility for the Islamic holy sites in the city. Article 9 of the Israeli-Jordanian treaty recognizes Jordan's special role there, potentially allowing the king to outflank Arafat on Jerusalem. Reflecting again the Israeli preference for Hussein over Arafat, Prime Minister Rabin was only too happy to facilitate this manoeuvre.

Even more important was the fact that the PLO's agreements with Israel removed the almost sacrosanct taboo against breaking pan-Arab ranks and dealing openly with Israel. Anwar Sadat had tried to break that taboo himself 16 years earlier with his trip to Jerusalem and the subsequent Camp David Accords. But, with no Arab state following his lead, Egypt endured a long period of estrangement from the Arab world as the price of this initiative. According to scholar and former Palace advisor Adnan Abu-Odeh, the Palestinian issue had 'historically placed two decision-making restraints on King Hussein, one Arab (removed by the Gulf War and Madrid) and one Palestinian (removed by Oslo)'.¹⁸ Once Arafat began negotiations with Israel, he freed Hussein from any responsibility for the Palestinian cause. Under no obligation to be more Catholic than the Pope (or more Palestinian than Arafat), King Hussein finally signed a year-old draft peace agenda with Israel on 14 September 1993, the very day after the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli DOP.

Domestic considerations provided yet another timing factor which encouraged the King in his diplomacy with Israel. In the months leading up to the 8 November 1993 Jordanian elections (the first multiparty general elections since 1957), the Islamic Action Front campaigned on a platform of no peace with Israel. But the electoral results favoured the conservative, tribal and independent blocs loyal to the King, confirming Hussein's estimation that the time was ripe for an open Jordanian-Israeli peace and reinforcing his determination to make the process succeed. Hussein thus faced a rare moment when a settlement with Israel was simultaneously 'mutually beneficial on the Israeli-Jordanian bilateral level, acceptable on the Jordanian-Palestinian level, and possible on the inter-Arab level'.¹⁹

In responding to external events and economic pressures with overtures to one another, Jordan and Israel were repeating some of the traditional Arab-Israeli negotiating patterns. But, unlike the historical paradigm in which ulterior motives were usually limited to maintaining the status quo or subverting the other party's position, this time the two parties concluded independently that their multiple purposes could best be served by actually seeing the negotiations through to a successful end. Both Jordan and Israel responded to timing considerations in the 1990s in a proactive sense, seeing an open window of

opportunity and reaching through it towards one another with the positive goal of ending their dispute through peaceful accommodation.

STATUS OF THE NEGOTIATORS

Post-Madrid Israeli-Jordanian negotiations benefited from sustained, symmetrical, high-level interaction between the two sides. Like Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin after making peace at Camp David in 1978, and in sharp contrast to the precedents set at the turn of the century, both King Hussein and Prime Minister Rabin commanded sufficient popularity and power at home to be able to make good on their promises. Rabin enjoyed a particularly strong position domestically. Even the right-wing opponents of his dealings with the PLO endorsed peace with Jordan, dubbed by one observer a 'risk-free' policy, 'a local equivalent to mom and apple pie'.²⁰ Fondness for the king and the strong historical preference for dealing with him, as opposed to Arafat, meant that Israeli negotiators went into the Jordanian meetings with an unprecedented degree of public trust and support for an accord.

King Hussein's peace operation faced opposition from both Islamists and leftists, not insignificant elements in the Jordanian parliament. But the 1993 electoral defeat of the Islamic Action Front by Hussein loyalists suggested that the King was correct in his estimation that he could expect parliamentary support for his treaty with Israel. In gauging the likelihood of support from the Jordanian population, Adnan Abu-Odeh distinguishes between Transjordanians (Jordanian nationals of Transjordanian origin) and Palestinian-Jordanians (Palestinians who became Jordanian nationals after the unity of the West and East Banks in 1950).²¹ Occasional Israeli pronouncements, particularly by the Likud, that 'Jordan is Palestine', had long tormented Transjordanians with visions of a Palestinian or Israeli overthrow of the Hashemite monarchy and the declaration of Arab Palestine under the leadership of the PLO in Jordan's place. According to Abu-Odeh, himself a Palestinian-Jordanian, since the Jordan-Israel peace agreement constituted explicit Israeli recognition of the territorial and national integrity of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Transjordanians were largely 'happy because the treaty, as Prime Minister Majali said, "had buried *al-Watan al-Badil*" the notion that Jordan could become a "substitute homeland" for the Palestinians'.²² Reaching out to Palestinian-Jordanians as well, the regime promoted peace with Israel as the panacea for all of Jordan's people and problems. In fact, the strength of the king's personality and the overwhelming respect that he enjoyed among all his subjects allowed Hussein to pursue peacemaking with Israel.

Again departing from the historical pattern in which errant, unofficial or unpopular representatives undermined negotiations, Hussein and Rabin kept their negotiations restricted to the very highest leaders and a small coterie of their most trusted advisors. Former Foreign Minister Shimon Peres' role in the

1993–94 agreements with Jordan, acting with Prime Minister Rabin's full authority, stands in sharp contrast to his abortive negotiations with the King around the London Document of 1987 that was vetoed by then-Prime Minister Shamir. Despite a bitter, decades-long rivalry between themselves, Rabin and Peres joined forces after 1993 to present Hussein with as solid a political partner as he presented to them. At the treaty signing ceremony in the Arava desert on 26 October 1994, the two Labour Party rivals went out of their way to praise each other for their diplomatic contributions; it was not clear whether the sharper hatchet being buried there was the one between Jordan and Israel or between Rabin and Peres.

Overcoming the obstacles that had doomed the London document of 1987, the 1993–94 Jordanian-Israeli accords thus benefited from direct and well-focused attention by strong leaders in control of their governments and well served by loyal aides. Success was also facilitated by the fact that the high-level officials entrusted with the ongoing negotiations between the periodic meetings by their political bosses developed smooth and pleasant interpersonal relations. After their first encounters under the Madrid and Washington formats, the delegations became effective in hammering out details and developing the substance of the principles enunciated by Israeli leaders and by King Hussein, who were recalled by their legal and military advisors and draftsmen only when the time was ripe to narrow the remaining gaps and finalize the agreed texts.

THE THIRD-PARTY ROLE

In the 1993–94 Israeli-Jordanian talks, the US assumed its habitual role of an external power whom both sides, particularly the Jordanians, were eager to impress. US support, money and arms were, after all, an important motivating factor for the king in declaring an open peace with Israel. Klieman cautions, however, against blindly accepting the conventional wisdom that full US participation is 'absolutely essential; or, alternatively, that this involvement is both necessary and decisive at every single stage'.²³ He reminds us that the 'Israel-Jordan breakthrough achieved in the first half of 1994...testifies to the ability of the protagonists to pursue direct channels on their own', with the definitive negotiations taking place in Amman and London between the king and Peres (November 1993) and the King and Rabin (May 1994), before direct US involvement began. Indeed, individual peace initiatives have often begun independently of the US (for example, Hussein-Peres in 1986–87 and the 1993 PLO-Israeli talks in Oslo), and sometimes even in opposition to US policy preferences (for example, Sadat's 1977 overture to Israel and journey to Jerusalem). Klieman notes that the critical American contribution has often been in the later stages of the diplomatic process, when the US acted as facilitator and guarantor, keeping the negotiators on track and enticing them to persevere until they reached an accord.²⁴

The importance of the US ‘bandwagoning’²⁵ an indigenous Middle East initiative—that is, endorsing, facilitating and underwriting a process that has already begun—is evident in the different fates of the Jordanian-Israeli initiative of the late 1980s and that of the early 1990s. In contrast to the American hesitancy, which helped undermine the prospects of the 1987 accord, the US energetically supported the later attempts at a separate Jordanian-Israeli peace. When Jordanian-Israeli negotiations at the State Department under the Madrid formula stalled, the administration applied its best diplomatic resources to the problem. Secretary of State Christopher shuttled repeatedly to the Middle East and President Bill Clinton received the King, his brother Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Rabin and Foreign Minister Peres in Washington.

In another happy departure from the historical pattern, in which each party tried to win an outside power over to its side exclusively, the US in this instance enjoyed the trust and friendship of both parties in nearly equal measure after Madrid. Neither side expected the Americans to impose a lopsided settlement on the other. Israelis and Jordanians regularly included American negotiators in their meetings, principally Martin Indyk (then chief Middle East specialist at the White House) and Dennis Ross (chief American negotiator for the Middle East). In the month immediately preceding the Washington Declaration, ‘triangular talks’ among senior diplomats from the three countries occurred on an almost daily basis in Washington. In moves that recalled efforts of the early 1960s, Israelis sought to persuade the Americans to grant the Jordanians the financial incentives that would reward the King and reinforce his position as a pro-Western element of regional stability and an advocate of Arab-Israeli reconciliation in an area open to radicalism and destabilization.²⁶

The July 1994 Washington Declaration, like its unsuccessful 1987 predecessor, epitomized Jordanian and Israeli desires for an American stamp of approval for their bilateral agreements. Although Hussein and Rabin drafted the bulk of the document in London, both men jumped at Clinton’s invitation to unveil their accord at the White House. The language of the Declaration specifically, but disingenuously, identifies it as the ‘initiative of President William J. Clinton’, and pays tribute to the American president in four of the five introductory sentences and again in all three of the concluding sentences.²⁷ The word ‘initiative’ misrepresents the US contribution to this negotiating process, but clearly reflects both parties’ need to cloak themselves in American armour in revealing and defending their accord. The October 1994 Peace Treaty incorporates and elaborates upon the Washington Document, which is cited twice in the preamble.

There is no doubt that Jordanian-Israeli efforts benefited from serious and sustained US attention throughout 1993 and 1994. Although the peace treaty was signed at a site on the Israeli-Jordanian border, President Clinton sat with the leaders on the dais and put his signature on the document as the primary witness. Perhaps most indicative of the importance both parties attached to a US endorsement of their accord was the decision to schedule the desert ceremony for

1:00 pm, when the sun was most punishing. It may have been siesta time in the Middle East, but on the American east coast, the morning news programmes were just beginning their broadcasts.

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

As the parties moved through the successive stages of their peace process, the terms of agreement expanded in both breadth and depth. The culmination of a four-part process which evolved over 24 months, the Jordanian-Israeli Treaty terminated the state of war between the two countries, established a full and formal peace, and went on to outline quite specific and concrete steps in many areas. The treaty's 30 articles and five annexes cover an extensive array of cooperative measures in fields including border demarcations and crossings, water sharing, cultural and scientific exchanges, tourism, transportation, crime, economics and trade, aviation, environment, post and telecommunications, energy, health, and agriculture.²⁸

An interesting aspect of the treaty is its rather cursory security clauses and the absence of any third-party or UN presence or guarantees in this domain.²⁹ The fact that 'conventional security arrangements, such as demilitarization, early warning stations, and so on [are] nonexistent' in the Jordanian-Israeli treaty is a 'reflection of their shared geopolitical and strategic concerns relating to a series of third parties, such as Iraq, Syria, the Palestinians and the United States'.³⁰ Neither Jordan nor Israel anticipated a security threat from the other.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

The psychological element in successful negotiations is two-fold. First, the leaders themselves must come to believe that they can best achieve national interests via negotiation, not war. Secondly, they must persuade their constituents to give diplomacy a chance. With myriad public actions and declarations, King Hussein and Rabin clearly demonstrated their own metamorphoses from warriors to statesmen-peacemakers. But it is not enough for the leaders to embrace peace and sign agreements. They must sell peace to their people as the optimal way of achieving the security and material wellbeing to which the ordinary citizen aspires.

Rabin had the easier task, since Israeli public opinion had long thought highly of King Hussein and looked to Jordan as the preferred negotiating partner in any deal over the West Bank. Especially when compared to Arafat and the PLO—names which many Israelis utter in a tone usually reserved for Hitler and the Nazis—King Hussein was not feared as a vicious enemy but rather seen as a gallant opponent. In fact, Rabin used the momentum with Jordan to justify his more controversial dealings with the PLO, arguing that the former could not have come about without the latter. Rabin attempted to persuade the Israeli public that his was truly a broad policy aimed at winning peace for Israel with *all* its Arab

neighbours—a process in which the distasteful partnership with the PLO was a necessary evil and the peace with Jordan a justifying reward.

King Hussein had a considerably harder task before him. In 1992, Adam Garfinkle observed that ‘while the Hashemite hierarchy operates in a normal, civilized and pragmatic manner toward its neighbours, including Israel, the attitudes of the population of Jordan do not exactly follow suit. Rather, there is a kind of inverse proportionality at work’.

He attributed this phenomenon to such factors as: (a) East Bankers’ resentment that Israel had foisted a huge West Bank Palestinian population upon them; (b) the Palestinians, who comprise more than 50 per cent of the Jordanian population, evincing a high level of anger at Israel for their families’ displacement and for the treatment of their brothers and sisters under Israeli occupation; and (c) the government’s toleration of widespread Israel-bashing in the media, perhaps as a counterbalance to general public knowledge of its extensive contacts with Israel.³¹

Against this backdrop of unfriendly images of Jews, Israelis and Zionism,³² Jordanians had been exposed to decades of news coverage of harsh Israeli actions in the occupied territories and shared in the general Arab perception of Israeli aggressiveness and aspirations to regional economic hegemony. While Israelis had little to lose in making peace with Jordan and embraced the idea almost instantly, many Jordanians were sceptical that the benefits of peace with Israel would outweigh any damage to their interests at home, in the Arab world, and vis-à-vis the Palestinian cause.³³

King Hussein worked tirelessly to persuade his subjects that accommodation with Israel was possible and would enhance their personal wellbeing as well as Jordanian national interests. Hoping to teach by example, he spoke openly and often of Jordanian-Israeli rapprochement. A July 1994 border meeting between Israeli and Jordanian diplomatic teams, the signing of the Washington Declaration, the joint address to Congress by Hussein and Rabin later that month, and the Treaty signing ceremony on 26 October 1994 were all broadcast live by Jordanian state television, clearly signalling the end of the era of *sub rosa* Israeli-Jordanian contacts and the regime’s new policy of open relations and normalization.

Indeed, a wave of optimism swept through Jordan and Israel in the months immediately following the conclusion of the treaty. Prime Minister Rabin and King Hussein proved themselves to be genuine leaders who had the courage to step outside of the traditional pattern, by which Israeli and Arab leaders achieved and maintained power by fanning the flames of fear and trumpeting their own steadfastness against the enemy. Convinced of the feasibility and desirability of peace between their countries, Rabin and Hussein signed the treaty, each confident that he had instilled in the majority of his people hope for a new diplomatic dawn. In fact, negotiating the treaty would be the easy part; the hard part would be making it operational and sustaining popular enthusiasm for it.

THE POST-TREATY ERA, 1994–2001

Events in the turbulent Middle East, particularly in the Palestinian-Israeli arena to which Jordan is so sensitive, quickly put the Jordanian-Israeli Treaty to the test. Israelis were sent reeling by Yitzhak Rabin's assassination in November of 1995, a series of Hamas suicide bus bombings in the spring of 1996, the election of rightwing Benjamin Netanyahu as Israeli prime minister that May, and the rapid deterioration of relations between Arafat's Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Netanyahu government. This same sequence of disturbing events also contributed to growing feelings of concern and unhappiness among Jordanians about their government's treaty with Israel.

Ironically, Rabin's murder at the hands of an Israeli Jewish opponent of the peace process demonstrated how far Arab-Israeli rapprochement had come. Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak spoke at the funeral in Jerusalem, and Morocco, Oman, Qatar and the Palestinian Authority sent official delegations. But it was King Hussein who delivered the most heartfelt eulogy for Rabin, in which he unmistakably declared his personal affection for Rabin, Jordan's newfound openness in its diplomatic relations with Israel, and his own commitment to pursue the peace process with Rabin's successor.³⁴ But acting Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres did not enjoy the trust Rabin had commanded among Israelis (or Jordanians), and his defeat by Benjamin Netanyahu in the elections of 1996 added a new and untried personality to the Jordanian-Israeli equation.

King Hussein's personal frustration with what he perceived as Netanyahu's lacklustre, even damaging, contributions to the peace effort was revealed in a letter dated 9 March 1997 from the King to the Israeli Prime Minister, which surfaced in the Israeli press. In the letter, Hussein sharply berated Netanyahu for undertaking projects which provoked Palestinian anger, such as the Har Homa settlement in East Jerusalem, and criticized him for what Hussein felt was his failure to provide the King with a strong partner for peace, as had Netanyahu's predecessor and Hussein's fallen friend, Rabin.³⁵ Hussein's disappointment in Netanyahu and the Prime Minister's own divisive impact within the Israeli body politic suggested an erosion of the mutually high status and command of power enjoyed by the leaders since the negotiation of the treaty.

Only four days after Hussein's written reprimand to Netanyahu, a Jordanian soldier on a shooting spree killed seven Israeli schoolgirls on a field trip along the Jordanian-Israeli border. The atrocity swept attention away from the King's letter and its concomitant pressure on Netanyahu to make a clear gesture on behalf of peace. Appalled at the destruction wrought by one of his soldiers, King Hussein travelled to northern Israel to pay his respects directly to the girls' bereaved families. The King's immediate assumption of responsibility and the example he tried to set for a Jordanian response briefly highlighted the fact that Jordanians were not yet as embracing of Israelis as was their King. Most Jordanians condemned the attack on the Israeli children, although some did

celebrate the gunman as a hero. Many, however, felt that he was a lunatic for whose actions Hussein should not have accepted national responsibility, and felt a profound discomfiture with the image of the King kneeling on the floor to console the girls' parents.

But it was an incident in Jordan—a bungled Mossad attempt to assassinate Hamas official Khalid Masha'al on the streets of Amman—that sent Israeli-Jordanian relations plummeting in September of 1997. Feeling personally betrayed and politically at risk, King Hussein threatened to close the Israeli Embassy, put the captured Mossad agents on public trial, or sever the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty. Netanyahu was forced to travel to Amman to take responsibility for the operation and to apologize to Crown Prince Hassan—King Hussein refused to receive him—as well as provide the antidote to the poison used in the attack on Masha'al. Israeli-Jordanian relations teetered on the brink until it became clear that the man would recover, reflecting the King's belief that 'if Masha'al dies, the treaty is over'.³⁶ The crisis was finally defused when Israel acceded to Hussein's demand that it release tens of Hamas operatives from Israeli jails, including the charismatic Hamas leader, Sheikh Ahmad Yasin.

Although the King's regard for Netanyahu never improved, the two men worked together in the context of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations at the Wye Plantation in Virginia in October of 1998. At President Clinton's request, Hussein literally rose from his hospital sickbed to travel to Virginia to lend his diplomatic skill and moral authority to the talks that were faltering there. At the announcement of the resultant Wye Accords, the image of President Clinton, King Hussein, Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat standing shoulder to shoulder demonstrated that, regardless of their uneasy interpersonal relationships, contact and negotiation were taking place at the very highest levels.

Ehud Barak's victory in the Israeli elections of 1999 renewed hope that the Israeli-Jordanian agreement would finally yield the rich payoffs promised, particularly among those who held Netanyahu responsible for the difficulties the two nations had experienced since signing the treaty in 1994. But the obstacles to genuine Jordanian-Israeli normalization were not as one-sided or as simple as Netanyahu's detractors believed. Among the explanations for the ongoing chill in Jordanian-Israeli relations are economic obstacles, continuing Palestinian-Israeli strife, the struggle over Jerusalem, and the deep-seated distrust and enmity many Jordanians still bear towards Israel, despite the best efforts of King Hussein, King Abdullah II, and Israeli officials from the prime minister down to persuade them that peace with Israel is both honourable and beneficial.

The economic payoff that peace was supposed to produce has simply not materialized. This is partly due to unrealistic expectations encouraged by the Jordanian regime as part of the campaign to convince ordinary citizens that their own economic wellbeing would improve after the treaty. In fact, the standard of living in Jordan actually deteriorated as real growth rates dropped from an average of 10 per cent in 1992–94, to 5.6 per cent in 1995, and then to a mere 1.5 per cent in 1996–98, a rate well below the natural population growth rate.³⁷ The

reality of Jordan's struggling economy and its people's ongoing hardship is a critical factor in the rapid erosion of Jordanian support for the treaty. Peace was supposed to 'invigorate the Jordanian economy through enhanced exports to Israel, heightened tourist activity, increased international investment, reduced military spending, and technology transfer'.³⁸ Of these, only tourism increased significantly, although not to the extent anticipated, suppressed by the threat of terrorism and regional insecurity.

In a throwback to the traditional pattern of Arab-Israeli interactions, each side explains the economic bust by questioning the purposes and motives of the other. Israel decries the fact that Jordan's professional unions and business community blackball those members who undertake joint ventures with Israel or travel there.³⁹ Many Israeli proposals for cooperative projects cannot find Jordanian partners. Together, Jordan's thirteen professional associations, Islamist-dominated, are 'the most vocal and active component of Jordan's anti-peace movement, which rejects any normalization of ties with Israel'.⁴⁰ Israelis also point out that continued political instability throughout the Middle East, even in the distant Gulf region, inhibits international investment in prospective Israeli-Jordanian projects.

Jordanians argue that along with standard Israeli bureaucratic complications, deliberate Israeli impediments—in the form of non-tariff barriers, protectionism under a security pretext, and a desire to retain the West Bank as a captive market—are responsible for the negligible increase in Jordanian exports to Israel and to the West Bank and Gaza.⁴¹ The delay in some of the more visible projects, designed for both economic and symbolic purposes, itself seems symbolic: plans for the Aqaba Peace airport have been repeatedly renegotiated, and are now held up by Israeli environmentalists who charge that the air traffic will endanger local birds. Zeid al-Rifa'i, Speaker of the Upper House of the Jordanian Parliament, sees the airport imbroglio as further evidence that Israel simply 'doesn't appreciate Jordan's need to produce positive, tangible results'.⁴²

The link between Jordanian-Israeli relations and the state of Palestinian-Israeli relations was brought into sharp relief by the outbreak of the 'al-Aqsa Intifada' in September 2000. What began as widespread Palestinian demonstrations protesting a visit by Israeli hawk Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, turned into an unending cycle of bloody clashes throughout Gaza, the West Bank and parts of Jerusalem. This new Intifada developed into a violent referendum on the direction of the peace process, and surpassed the original Intifada of 1987–93 by the Palestinians' use of firearms and explosives and the Israeli response with tanks and missiles. Running gun battles between uniformed Palestinian police and Israeli soldiers seemed to confirm the nightmare scenarios of Oslo gone wrong. Against the backdrop of protests, shootings and funerals, Palestinian and Israeli leaders declared, with decreasing credibility, their continuing commitment to a fast-faltering 'peace process'.

The response to the new Intifada in the Arab and Muslim worlds was acute. In Jordan, support for the Palestinians brought tens of thousands of protesters into

the streets of the capital. Jordanian troops forcibly held back crowds, some trying to march on the Israeli Embassy and others intending to cross the border into Israel, demanding that they be allowed to join in the Palestinian uprising. In two separate incidents, Israeli diplomats were shot and lightly wounded in Amman. The editors of the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Ahronot* rightly recognized the symbiotic connection between Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Jordanian relations when they wrote that, while conflict with the Palestinians would inhibit Israel's ability to maintain good relations with the Jordanian royal house, '[a]ny agreement between Israel and the Palestinians will almost certainly calm things down in Jordan and will give renewed impetus to bilateral relations...Whether we like it or not, ...our relations with Jordan depend—for good or ill—on the will of Yasser Arafat.'⁴³

THE JORDANIAN-ISRAELI TREATY: AN INTERIM ASSESSMENT

Was it worth it? Many ranking Jordanians say 'yes', that geostrategic and economic imperatives make peace with Israel a necessity for Jordan and an obvious choice, especially within the context of the regional and international flux wrought by the 1991 Gulf War and the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles in 1993.⁴⁴ Not having to keep the military on a war footing along the lengthy western border eases the fiscal burden of the state, which benefits as well from generous American assistance, which increased after the treaty was signed. Supporters are also at pains to point out that the King made minimal concessions but retrieved every centimetre and drop of the country's land and water.

The average Jordanian in the street, however, persists in the belief that Israel is not well-intentioned in its dealings with Jordan; that Israel seeks regional economic hegemony; that Israel wants to neutralize the Arab states via bilateral peace treaties so it can continue its aggression against the Palestinians; that Israel wants to have its cake (peace) and eat it, too (retaining territorial buffers and military superiority).⁴⁵ Picking up on this disparity between the pro-peace sentiments clearly expressed by Kings Hussein and Abdullah II and the more negative attitude of the Jordanian street, former Chief of the Jordanian Royal Court, Marwan Kasim, observes that what Jordan and Israel achieved in 1994 was 'a peace of the Palace, not of the people', or perhaps not even peace, but only a political 'settlement'.⁴⁶

The perspective from the Israeli side is more sanguine. While admitting that 'the peace has been less warm than [had been] hoped', Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein considers the Israel-Jordan Treaty a definite achievement in terms of the 'important progress' in several areas of mutual cooperation and its survival in the face of a number of crises, including the untimely passing of its two signatories. Rubinstein, one of the treaty's architects, believes that there are people on *both* sides striving for cooperation, and that the 'price paid for peace in national

terms' has been for both parties 'reasonable and fair. ...While "environmental" developments do have influence on the quality and temperature of peace,' he writes, 'I believe that the interest of both parties is in keeping it.'⁴⁷

For Israeli scholar Asher Susser as well, the treaty was 'definitely worth it'—as are all peace treaties with the neighbouring states from Israel's point of view. What Susser, a Jordan specialist at Tel Aviv University's Dayan Centre for Middle Eastern Studies, finds especially relevant in the Jordanian case is 'the importance of the treaty in reference to third parties, because of Jordan's geopolitical importance as a stable and peaceful neighbour between Israel and Iraq, and as a partner to both Palestine and Israel in the forging of a stable triangle of all three in the future'.⁴⁸

Popular Israeli opinion agrees, albeit with some disappointment. After an initial rush across the border to take in the sights in Amman, Petra and Jerash, Israelis' enthusiasm for travel to Jordan has been dampened by fears for their personal safety and of a Jordanian cold shoulder. They wonder, was Jordan's motive in making peace primarily to cement its relations with a powerful third party, the US, as per the historical pattern? And coming as it did after Arafat's rejection of unprecedented generous offers regarding Palestinian sovereignty and Jerusalem made by Barak at Camp David in July 2000 and his reluctant and highly conditional acceptance of President Clinton's ideas the following January, many in Israel see the new Intifada as proof that the Palestinians do not desire compromise at all, but still cling to the goal of replacing Israel in its entirety. Popular Jordanian support for the Palestinians and their uprising calls into question, for Israelis, Jordan's commitment to the terms of a genuine coexistence with Israel. Disappointed as they are by the cold peace with Egypt, Israelis are resigning themselves to a chilly peace to the east for the foreseeable future.

In their work together, the late Jordanian King, the late Israeli Prime Minister, and their immediate entourages did overcome most of the negative patterns of Arab-Israeli negotiating. An outstanding obstacle, however, remains the disparity between the vision of the original peacemakers, Hussein and Rabin, and that of the Jordanian and Israeli people. Jordanians maintain a high degree of hostility towards Israel and do not recognize the depths of Israel's insecurity, born of Jewish persecution, nurtured by multiple Arab-Israeli wars, and confirmed for many Israelis by Arab support for Palestinian violence and far-reaching claims. Israelis remain largely oblivious to Jordanian fears of economic domination, and do not appreciate that the bond between Jordanians and Palestinians is such that Palestinian suffering at Israeli hands necessarily inhibits Jordanian-Israeli relations.

Within our six-point framework for analysis, Jordanian-Israeli relations have largely avoided the oft-repeated Arab-Israeli negotiation pitfalls of the past. Contact is maintained at the highest levels between the two sides' recognized leaderships, each of which enjoys full third-party support from the United States. Well-defined areas of common interest and prospective cooperation are accepted by both sides, who also share a desire to resolve the outstanding Palestinian-

Israeli issues and thereby remove that obstacle to warmer Jordanian-Israeli relations.

Trouble lies in the realms of purpose and psychology. The treaty's architects intended for the strong Israeli economic engine to lend power to the weaker Jordanian one. Jordan was to look forward to robust trade relations with both Israel and the PA territories, and Israel was to understand that Jordan's economic recovery was in Israel's own best interest. Israeli policies which hinder Jordan from realizing the full economic boon envisioned in the treaty are counterproductive to the cause of peace, and only serve as ammunition for those who claim that Israel's real purpose in making peace was to neutralize Jordan, not revitalize it.

In the psychological realm, the main obstacle is the gap between leaders who are genuinely committed to peace as a strategy and as an objective in its own right, and the people, who are still suspicious of the purposes and motives of the other and reluctant to let go of their familiar negative images of the erstwhile enemy. It is a process which will likely take generations to complete. This fault line is particularly severe in Jordan. While King Hussein truly believed that peace with Israel would benefit his country and, indeed, the entire region, he was unable to persuade his people to come to the same conclusion. The gap between the King's convictions and those of the people was simply too large for the treaty to unfold on the ground as positively as the well-drafted words unfolded on paper. His charisma was such, however, that even at their most disillusioned moments Jordanians held Israel responsible for the shortcomings of the peace, not the King.

For their part, Israelis largely believe that after their having embraced the peace with Jordan so wholeheartedly and having expressed great respect for Kings Hussein and Abdullah II, responsibility for peace's failure to flourish lies largely with the Jordanians. Each party sits on its respective side of the River Jordan, waiting for a gesture of goodwill from the other.

Despite the limitations in making it operational, the Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty of 1994 is alive and functioning at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Security cooperation between Jordan and Israel is close and effective. The long border between them is quiet; it is both good news and bad news that Jordanian forces foil attempts to infiltrate Israel from Jordan on a weekly basis. The border crossings remain open and people and goods move in an orderly manner in both directions, if not in equal measure. There is direct phone, mail and transportation service between the two countries, and their leaderships maintain open lines of communication and consultation. The pressures of the al-Aqsa Intifada have been great, but so far there is no indication that the treaty will fail under the stress. The outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Intifada caught the Jordanian Embassy in Tel Aviv in between ambassadors, and Jordan has repeatedly postponed posting its new representative. While unfortunate, this is nevertheless a sign that the treaty is working, in that it is a normal diplomatic way by which one country signals its displeasure with the policies of the other.

Although the opponents of peace point out that regional economic problems in general and Jordan's recent economic difficulties in particular seem to date from the signing of the treaty, other analysts argue that the convergence of events was coincidental, and that 'it is obvious that [these economic woes have] actually resulted from the lack of a *qualitative* peace, rather than from [the] onset [of peace itself]'.⁴⁹ Six years after the historic peace agreement, it was obvious that 'the dividends of peace are not self-activated; [the protagonists] must be proactive if they are to secure them'.⁵⁰

Moreover, Jordanian-Israeli relations cannot be insulated from ugly realities in the immediate neighbourhood. The spillover effect of Israeli-Palestinian violence is such that one can simply not expect a full and fruitful normalization of relations between Jordan and Israel barring a settlement of the Palestinian problem. Jordanians are likely to accept whatever arrangements the Palestinians accept, including Palestinian sovereignty over parts of Jerusalem, despite historic Hashemite attachments to the city and Article 9.2 of the Jordan-Israel Treaty. Achievement of a comprehensive settlement will thus remove a tremendous obstacle to Jordanian-Israeli normalization.

But that process needs active tending if it is to survive until a comprehensive settlement is achieved. Those Israelis and Jordanians genuinely committed to normal state-to-state relations must work diligently to infuse their civil societies and their populations with the belief that peace is possible, an admittedly more difficult challenge in Jordan, where normalization is unpopular; every new outbreak of Israeli-Palestinian violence only makes it more so. Each party must understand that that the other side is watching and must make broad and unmistakable gestures that signal peaceful intentions. And, most importantly, they must act quickly to produce the kinds of tangible rewards which make peace a real and positive alternative for the general population.

It won't be easy. Asher Susser points out that, with Rabin's assassination in 1995 and King Hussein's death in 1999, 'both of the statesmen whose personal rapport had given the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty its unique sense of intimacy had passed from the scene. The web of mutual state interests between Israel and Jordan remains intact...[b]ut the added value of the personal chemistry and the strategic rapport at the highest political level...might prove elusive'—and critical—in the future.⁵¹ After almost four years on the throne, King Abdullah II has gone far towards consolidating his power at home and earning respect abroad. But the quick turnover between prime ministers in Israel since 1995 and the polar leaps in political orientation from one to the other have made it difficult for a partnership such as that enjoyed by Hussein and Rabin to even begin developing between Abdullah II and current Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. And even should the King and Sharon strike up a positive working relationship, there is still the problem that Jordanian public sentiment regarding peace with Israel does not yet accord with the official policy of the Palace.

But the geostrategic and economic rationale for Jordanian-Israeli peace remains constant, and the 1994 treaty is working well enough to sustain the

commitment of the two governments. In a perfect world, the rapid conclusion of a comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict would allow today's functional Jordanian-Israeli relationship to become something more substantial and deep-seated. In the meanwhile, however, the imperfect peace between them is still a precious commodity to be treated with care. In spite of the uniquely prepared groundwork laid by decades of quiet Jordanian-Israeli cooperation, and despite the success of the leaders in avoiding almost all of the historic pitfalls in Arab-Israeli negotiations, the Jordanian-Israeli experience demonstrates that it is easier to negotiate peace on paper than it is to implant it in the minds and lives of ordinary men and women on the ground.

NOTES

1. The treaty is actually the fourth in a series of Jordanian-Israeli agreements which grew out of the bilateral talks set in motion at Madrid. The other three are a 'Draft Agenda for Peace' (October 1992), the 'Common Agenda' (14 September 1993), and the 'Washington Declaration' (25 July 1994). For the sources of these texts, see Laura Zittrain Eisenberg and Neil Caplan, *Negotiating Arab-Israeli Peace: Patterns, Problems, Possibilities*, Bloomington, 1998, p.100, n.1.
2. Asher Susser, *Jordan: Case Study of a Pivotal State*, Washington DC, 2000, pp.93–100.
3. Eisenberg and Caplan, *Negotiating*, pp.12–14, 60–74, 90–102.
4. Anita Shapira, 'The Option on Ghaour al-Kibd: Contacts between Emir Abdullah and the Zionist Executive, 1932–1935', *Studies in Zionism*, Vol.2 (Autumn 1980), pp.239–83. N. Caplan, *Palestine Jewry and the Arab Question, 1917–1925*, London, 1978, pp.171–82; N. Caplan, *Futile Diplomacy, Vol. I—Early Arab-Zionist Negotiation Attempts, 1913–1931*, London, 1983, pp.51–4, 106; N. Caplan, *Futile Diplomacy, Vol. II—Arab-Zionist Negotiations and the End of the Mandate*, London, 1986, pp.11–14, 40–42.
5. Caplan, *Futile Diplomacy*, I, pp.51–4.
6. Avi Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement, and the Partition of Palestine*, Oxford, 1988; Avraham Sela, 'Transjordan, Israel and the 1948 War: Myth, Historiography and Reality', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.28, No.4 (October 1992), pp.623–88.
7. *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel 5* (1950), ed. Yehoshua Freundlich, Jerusalem, 1988, doc.105, p.140; Adam Garfinkle, *Israel and Jordan in the Shadow of War: Functional Ties and Futile Diplomacy in a Small Place*, New York, 1992, pp.197–204.
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9. Aharon Klieman, *Statecraft in the Dark: Israel's Practice of Quiet Diplomacy*, Jerusalem, 1988, pp.103–8; Lustick, chapter 3.
10. For a case study of the negotiation of the London Document, see Eisenberg and Caplan, *Negotiating*, Chapter 3.
11. *Ibid.* See also Neil Caplan, 'Negotiation and the Arab-Israel Conflict', *Jerusalem Quarterly*, Vol.6 (Winter 1978), pp.3–19.

12. Chris Hedges, *The New York Times*, 9 August 1994; Elaine Sciolino with Thomas Friedman, *The New York Times*, 31 July 1994.
13. For discussions of these two orientations, see Shlaim, *Collusion*, chapter 16; Aharon S. Klieman, *Israel and the World After 40 Years*, Washington DC, 1990, pp.213–32.
14. Text in Yehuda Lukacs (ed.), *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: A Documentary Record, 1967–1990*, Cambridge, 1992, pp.520–25.
15. Text in Eisenberg and Caplan, *Negotiating*, pp.212–16.
16. Quoted in Douglas Jehl, *The New York Times*, 26 July 1994.
17. See Stephen Zunes, ‘The Israeli-Jordanian Agreement: Peace or Pax Americana?’, *Middle East Policy*, Vol.3, No.4 (April 1995), p.57.
18. Eisenberg interview with Adnan Abu-Odeh, former political advisor to Kings Hussein and Abdullah II, Amman, 29 June 2000.
19. Dan Schueftan, ‘Jordan’s “Israeli Option”’, in Joseph Nevo and Ilan Pappé (eds), *Jordan in the Middle East: The Making of a Pivotal State*, London, 1994, p.265.
20. Clyde Haberman, *The New York Times*, 16 July 1994.
21. Adnan Abu-Odeh, *Jordanians, Palestinians and the Hashemite Kingdom*, Washington DC, 1999, p.xv.
22. *Ibid.*, pp.213, 234, 257–8.
23. Aharon Klieman, ‘Approaching the Finish Line: The United States in Post-Oslo Peace Making’, Ramat Gan, 1995, p.18.
24. *Ibid.*, pp.16–18.
25. *Ibid.*, p.17.
26. Elaine Sciolino with Thomas Friedman, *The New York Times*, 31 July 1994; Susser, *Jordan: Case Study of a Pivotal State*, p.21.
27. Jordanian-Israeli Washington Declaration, 25 July 1994, in Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin (eds), *The Israel-Arab Reader*, 5th edn, New York, 1995, pp.655–7.
28. The text of the Treaty is in Eisenberg and Caplan, *Negotiating*, pp.217–28.
29. Elyakim Rubinstein, ‘The Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty’, lecture to Middle East course (in Hebrew), Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 26 February 1995, p.11.
30. Asher Susser, ‘The Jordanian-Israeli Peace Negotiations: The Geopolitical Rationale of a Bilateral Relationship’, *Davis Occasional Papers*, No.73, Jerusalem, 1999, pp.1, 21.
31. Garfinkle, *Israel and Jordan in the Shadow of War*, pp.83–9.
32. For an expose of disturbing anti-Semitic themes in Jordanian publications, see Victor Nahmias, ‘Israel in Jordanian eyes’, *Jerusalem Post* international edn., w/e 25 January 1986, **p.15**.
33. Marwan Muasher, ‘Jordanian Attitudes to the Peace Process’, lecture by the Ambassador of Jordan to Israel, Tel Aviv University: Moshe Dayan Centre for Middle Eastern and African Studies, 12 June 1995.
34. Text in Eisenberg and Caplan, *Negotiating*, pp.229–30.
35. Text of the King’s letter to Netanyahu of 9 March 1997 and Netanyahu’s response of 10 March 1997 are in the *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol.XXVI, No.4 (Summer 1997), pp.154–6 and 158–9.
36. Eisenberg interview with Natheer Rashid, Member of the Upper House of Parliament, former Minister of the Interior and former Director of Intelligence, Amman, 28 June 2000.

37. Maen Nsour, 'Economic Aspects of the Peace Treaty Between Jordan and Israel', paper presented at the annual conference of the Association of Israel Studies, Washington DC, 1999.
38. Ibid.
39. Sarah Schaffer, 'No Peace Now: Jordan's young and fragile pro-peace camp is on the verge of extinction', *The Jerusalem Report*, 4 December 2000, pp.24–5.
40. Ibid.
41. Nsour, 'Economic Aspects of the Peace Treaty'; Eisenberg interview with Zeid al-Rifa'i, Amman, 30 June 2000.
42. Eisenberg interview with Zeid al-Rifa'i.
43. Summary of editorials from the Hebrew Press, 7 December 2000, provided by the Information Division of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, online at www.mfa.gov.il.
44. Eisenberg interview with Bassam Asfour, Chief of International Press at the Jordanian Royal Court, Amman, 27 June 2000; Eisenberg interview with Natheer Rashid.
45. Eisenberg interview with Adnan Abu-Odeh.
46. Eisenberg interview with Marwan Kasim, Amman, 29 June 2000.
47. Elyakim Rubinstein, communication with Caplan, 9 January 2001.
48. Asher Susser, communication with Eisenberg, 1 January 2001.
49. Nsour, 'Economic Aspects of the Peace Treaty'.
50. Ibid.
51. Susser, 'The Jordanian-Israeli Peace Negotiations', pp.37–8.

Israel, Jordan and the Masha'al Affair

P.R. KUMARASWAMY

If we had not received a treatment for Khalid Masha'al which, thank God, enabled us to bring him back to normal health, we would have taken many actions.

King Hussein, October 1997¹

Hamas, which your late father knew, is the same Hamas in Jordan today ...So why this change of heart towards us?

Khalid Masha'al's public appeal over *Al-Jazeera*, September 1999²

The decision of King Abdullah II in November 1999 to deport Hamas political bureau chief Khalid Masha'al, along with three other officials, to Qatar opened a new and unpredictable twist to the drama over Masha'al that first began to unfold years ago. In September 1997, Abdullah's late father King Hussein was instrumental in saving the life of Masha'al when Israeli agents made an unsuccessful attempt to murder him. Condemned both inside and outside Israel, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's attempt helped consolidate the influence of Hamas and brought Israeli-Jordanian relations to their lowest point since the June 1967 war. In 1999, however, Hussein's successor Abdullah realized that Masha'al was a threat not only to Israel but also to the Hashemite Kingdom. In short, the unsuccessful assassination attempt in September 1997 and the deportation in November 1999 mark two sides of the same problem: the presence of Hamas in Jordan.

Despite long-term relations dating back to the Mandate days when the Yishuv leadership forged close ties with the Emir, later King Abdullah I, secrecy and fragility have governed Israeli-Jordanian relations.³ Both shared an antagonism towards the emergence of an independent Palestinian entity and were vehemently opposed by the vast majority of Arabs. As a result, the bilateral relationship had to be conceived and nurtured in secrecy. Following the Hashemite annexation of the West Bank, their shared interest became a strong irritant for the Palestinian component of Jordan, a feeling that led to the assassination of King Abdullah in 1951. Henceforth Israel-Jordan relations were characterized by fragility, and the prolonged reluctance of King Hussein to meet Israeli leaders in public or to

conclude a formal agreement until after the Oslo Accords underscores the Jordanian vulnerability to regional, especially Palestinian pressures. Even President Anwar Sadat's decision to break away from Arab ranks and seek a separate peace with Israel did not induce King Hussein to come out of the closet.

At the same time, since its annexation of the West Bank, the Palestinian issue has been central to Jordan's domestic political scene. Jordanian claims to represent the Palestinians have been challenged repeatedly by the Palestinians and Arabs alike, especially after the formation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964. The loss of the West Bank to Israel in 1967 and the emergence of the PLO as the official and recognized representative of the Palestinians severely undermined the Jordanian claims. Despite its external unpopularity, even after its crackdown on the fedayeen in September 1970, Amman did not abandon its desire to regain the West Bank. At the same time, however, a host of regional developments began to threaten the stability and survival of Jordan. In the past, such threats took the form of anti-Hashemite rhetoric from revolutionary regimes such as Egypt, as well as from Israel's reprisal raids. Since the 1980s, especially after the first Intifada, threats to Jordanian stability have stemmed primarily from Palestinian quarters. The Oslo Accord and the possibility of an independent Palestinian entity west of the River Jordan posed a serious threat to the survival of the Hashemite Kingdom, whose population is predominantly of Palestinian origin. Instead of regaining its erstwhile control over the West Bank, the Hashemite monarchy has now been faced with the stark challenge of consolidating its position on the East Bank.

It is in this context of Jordanian stability that one should examine the Masha'al affair. If the first part of the Masha'al affair provided a reminder of the fragility of the Israel-Jordan relationship, the second part highlighted the threats posed to the Hashemite Kingdom by internal discord over the Palestinian question.

ACT ONE: THE ASSASSINATION BID

Political assassinations are not alien to the Middle East, especially in the Arab-Israeli context. If the Labour and Likud governments adopt an identical position vis-à-vis the suspected perpetrators of terrorism, inter-Palestinian violence and collaborator killings have plagued the Palestinians. While violence and terrorism continue to be prime instruments of the Palestinian struggle against Israel, the latter has often resorted to physical elimination of prominent figures that have perpetuated violent actions against the Jewish state and its interests. Ever since Prime Minister Golda Meir authorized the assassination of the individuals

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responsible for the 1972 Munich massacre, Israel has eliminated a number of Palestinian leaders believed to be involved in terrorist acts. Initially mainstream Fatah and radical Palestinian groups were the prime targets but since the late 1980s Islamic militants belonging to the Amal, Hamas, Hizbullah and Islamic Jihad have been the target of Israel's reprisal attacks. Lebanon has been the prime target for such attacks as it houses a host of international militant groups, but other countries have often found themselves the targets of Israeli wrath. Fatah leader Abu Jihad was eliminated in Tunis in April 1988, and the head of the Islamic Jihad, Fathi Shikaki, was killed in Malta in October 1995. Likewise, even the Oslo agreement and the installation of the Palestinian Authority has not inhibited Israel from pursuing terrorists belonging to groups such as Hamas, which were opposed to the peace process. One such target was Yahya Ayyash (popularly known as the 'Engineer') of Izz al-Din al-Qassam, the military wing of Hamas, whose spate of suicide bombings rocked Israel before he was killed in January 1996 in Gaza after it reverted to Palestinian control.⁴

Why Masha'al?

After having rejected the Oslo Accord and any negotiated settlement with Israel, since 1993 Hamas has carried out a terror campaign against Israel. While the militant wing Izz al-Din al-Qassam operates from the occupied territories, the political leadership has flourished outside. Such a duality not only kept the leadership out of the reach of Israel, but also enabled the movement to conduct its training and fundraising programmes. In 1995 Masha'al, a founding member of Hamas,⁵ took over as the political bureau chief in Amman following the deportation of Musa Abu-Marzuq to the US. Israel accused Masha'al of being behind the bombing of the Israeli Embassy and Jewish Federation buildings in Buenos Aires in the early 1990s that killed more than 120.⁶ It alleged that besides political functions, he 'activates various groups in Europe and Israel which initiate, encourage and commit acts of terror and sabotage. Funds to finance these activities are channelled through his office.'⁷ He was thus presented as a legitimate target for Israel.

The Foiled Assassination

On the morning of 25 September 1997, two Mossad agents carrying false Canadian passports pounced on Masha'al as he walked towards his office in central Amman. Attacking their target from behind, they injected a lethal poison into his left ear but after a short chase, the agents were caught and overpowered by Masha'al's driver and passers-by. The third agent escaped in a getaway vehicle and other members of the hit-team sought refuge in the Israeli Embassy in Amman. Hamas sources immediately alleged that Israel had made an assassination attempt using a 'mysterious device'.⁸ Initially Jordanian officials described the incident as a 'quarrel' between two Canadian tourists and

Masha'al's driver. On 27 September the Jordanian government admitted that an attempt had been made on Masha'al's life and that those responsible were in detention.

Meanwhile Masha'al was hospitalized at the King Hussein Medical Centre in a serious condition. When the two agents declined the assistance of the Canadian Embassy, Jordanian officials became suspicious of Israeli involvement. At that point, deeply angered by the action, King Hussein reportedly offered two possible choices to Israel. One, if Masha'al died because of the attack, Jordan would reveal the identity of the two agents and they would be tried and if sentenced to death, would be hanged in public.⁹ Alternatively, the King suggested that Israel should admit its guilt, offer an apology and supply the antidote that could save Masha'al from the fatal effects of the chemical substance used in the attack. Israel naturally opted for the latter course of action and Mossad chief Danny Yatom was sent to Amman with the necessary antidote.¹⁰

Aware of the damages caused, right in the middle of the Rosh Ha-shana holidays, Prime Minister Netanyahu, along with Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon and senior intelligence officials, went to Amman for an audience with the King. Besides damage control, the team sought the early release of the captured agents. Still seething, the King refused to meet with them and the delegation had to settle for an audience with Crown Prince Hassan. Israel promised to refrain from such actions on Jordanian soil in future as Amman saw the attack not only as a violation of Jordanian sovereignty but as also a violation of the 1994 Israel-Jordan peace treaty.

The attack came against the backdrop of two significant developments. Following the peace agreement, Jordan had increased security cooperation with Israel and allowed Mossad to set up an 'intelligence gathering station' in Amman.¹¹ Jordan provided monitoring facilities, as there were growing apprehensions in Israel over the eastern front, especially Iraq. Conducting an assassination attempt under such circumstances undermined the trust and confidence of the King in his Israeli interlocutors. Second, lack of progress on the Israeli-Palestinian track had exerted considerable pressure on Jordan and both in public and in private King Hussein had expressed his displeasure at Netanyahu's peace policies.

Furthermore, the attack was seen as a violation of the security clause of the Israel-Jordan treaty, which prohibited hostile acts against one another.¹² As the crisis continued, Hussein portrayed it as 'a reckless act carried out by a party that does not want the peace process to continue and wants to poison the atmosphere when negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians have resumed'.¹³ Castigating the Israeli leadership for its irresponsible act, he even accused Netanyahu of sabotaging an offer from Hamas for a temporary truce, a suggestion later denied by Hamas.¹⁴

Israeli assurances of future non-interference were not sufficient for King Hussein, especially in the domestic arena. Normalization of relations with Israel was not very popular among the Palestinians who were active in the anti-

normalization struggle. Having allowed Hamas to function in Jordan, he would have to take measures to safeguard his position; hence Hussein called for the release of Hamas leader Sheikh Yasin, who was incarcerated in Israel.

Quid Pro Quo: Sheikh Yasin

Sheikh Ahmed Yasin had a roller-coaster relationship with the Israeli authorities. In 1973 when fedayeen activities and armed resistance were popular among the Palestinian masses, Yasin was granted a licence to set up the Islamic Centre in Gaza as a charity institution to run social, religious and welfare institutions. The Islamic activities of Yasin were an effective counter to Fatah and the PLO, and the growth of political Islam was seen as a healthy trend and a promising alternative to Palestinian resistance and radicalism.¹⁵ In April 1984, Yasin was arrested for possession of firearms and was given a thirteen-year sentence, but the following year he was released during a prisoner exchange between Israel and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC). It was only after the outbreak of the Intifada in December 1987 that Sheikh Yasin became a serious threat as his welfare organization transformed into a radical Islamic organization, Hamas.¹⁶ To distance itself from perceived collaboration with the Israeli authorities in the past, Hamas conducted an organized militant campaign against the Israeli occupation through its military wing, Izz al-Din al-Qassam. When Hamas was proscribed in May 1989, Sheikh Yasin was arrested and was given a 15-year sentence.

His incarceration had not dampened the activities of the organization and the terror campaign continued. On numerous occasions its campaigns of suicide bombings were conducted in the name of the blind Sheikh. On a few occasions Israeli security personnel were kidnapped as a bargaining chip and the release of Yasin was demanded as a trade-off.¹⁷ For his part, following the Oslo Accord Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat had also demanded the Sheikh's release as a means of shoring up his support among the Islamists. Israel was aware of the deteriorating health of the Sheikh, who had suffered a paralytic stroke in prison and was in need of constant physical help. Israeli security agencies had been warning that his death in Israeli prison would only escalate violence. At the same time, there were apprehensions that his release, especially after Oslo, would strengthen the Islamic circles opposed to Arafat and create a rival power centre in Gaza.

In a way, the Masha'al affair resolved this Israeli dilemma. For want of better alternatives, Israel complied with Hussein's request. In the early hours of 1 October, the 61-year-old founder and spiritual leader of Hamas was released from the prison hospital and flown to Amman in a Royal Jordanian medical helicopter. Receiving Yasin in Amman, King Hussein vehemently rejected suggestions that the Sheikh had been 'deported' to Jordan and Yasin's return to Gaza on 6 October dispelled any remaining doubts about his freedom. As Yasin left for Gaza, the two agents returned to Israel. Only then did Jordan formally

admit that the crisis had resulted from an Israeli operation against Masha'al. Besides Yasin, the King secured the release of 23 Jordanian citizens, mainly Palestinians, who had been imprisoned by Israel for security or criminal offences.

Apprehensive of the political fallout of the swap, the Hamas leadership vehemently denied any deal between Yasin's release and the return of two agents to Israel. According to Abu-Marzuq, 'Sheikh Yasin's release had no connection with any deal, up to the moment of his return to Palestinian territory'.¹⁸ Denying any direct involvement in the deal, Hamas leader in Gaza Abdal Aziz Al-Rantisi gave a different spin: 'I can confirm that that we are not involved in anything of the kind. We must, however, think and ask ourselves whether the two Mossad agents (who carried out the assassination attempt and who are in jail in Jordan) can be released for nothing of value in return? *Jordan is trying to do something to please everybody.*'¹⁹

Sheikh Yasin's release was not without its own problems for the Palestinians, as it became a pawn in the inter-Palestinian struggle. The release and the Sheikh's return to the Gaza Strip were interpreted as a serious setback for Arafat.²⁰ Since the formation of the PLO, especially following the June war, King Hussein was exploiting every opportunity to shore up his support among the Palestinians in the occupied territories. His formal disengagement from the West Bank in 1988 did not dampen his rivalry vis-à-vis Arafat.²¹ Furthermore, by securing the release of all the Jordanian prisoners held in Israel, the King exposed Arafat to criticisms for *his* failure to secure the release of Palestinian security prisoners.²² In obtaining the release, the King 'had not only made a gesture to Hamas and to the Islamist movement in Jordan in general, but he had simultaneously upstaged Arafat who had been unable to obtain such a concession from Israel'.²³

Despite his health, Yasin did not disappear into oblivion following his release but rather used his medical treatment as an excellent excuse to travel and meet various Middle Eastern leaders. By meeting various Arab heads of state, he managed to secure political as well as financial support for Hamas.²⁴

Fallouts

In the Israeli domestic arena Yasin's release evoked strong criticism and condemnation,²⁵ but much of the criticism of the Masha'al affair was confined to questioning the 'wisdom' of conducting an assassination in a 'friendly' country like Jordan.²⁶ The uproar was due to its failure rather than by the act itself. The three-member commission headed by former El Al Chairman Joseph Ciechanover²⁷ confined itself to the technical aspect of the operation rather than the political wisdom behind it. Calling the operations 'negligent' and 'amateurish', it concluded that what was supposed to be a 'silent operation' turned into a 'noisy' one because the Mossad 'planners and their superiors' did not take into account the 'possibility of failure'. While Shimon Shamir, Israel's first ambassador to Amman, felt that the report reflected 'astonishing

insensitivity' to Jordan, others justified Israel's right to conduct such operations even in a friendly country.²⁸

Even though the majority of members of Knesset did not call for his removal, in February 1998, days after the publication of the Ciechanover commission report, Yatom resigned as Mossad chief. This was interpreted in Israel largely as a damage-limitation exercise and a move to pacify and placate King Hussein.²⁹ Yatom was replaced by Ephraim Halevy, a central player in the Israel-Jordan peace treaty, and the move was welcomed in Amman.³⁰

One of the curious outcomes of the Masha'al affair was the emergence of Ariel Sharon as a new but important player in Israeli-Jordan relations. While the Palestinians remember him for the Shabra and Shatilla massacres in 1982, for the Jordanians Sharon evokes a twin image; the memories of the Qibya raid in 1953 and for his oft-repeated argument: 'Jordan is Palestine.'³¹ In the Masha'al affair, however, he emerged a real winner, playing a pivotal role in the amicable resolution of the tension and securing the release of the two agents.³² The use of false Canadian passports led to a minor diplomatic fallout with Canada, which briefly withdrew its ambassador to Israel. David Burger returned to his position a couple of weeks later after Israel apologized for its act and promised not to make similar use of Canadian documents in future.³³

However, the overall damage to Israeli-Jordanian relations was not severe and was skilfully contained. King Hussein continued to meet Israeli officials as well as opposition politicians and even intelligence cooperation was not affected by the Masha'al affair. The Jordan-Israeli peace treaty stipulates cooperation in different spheres,' Minister Samir Mutawi admitted, 'as long as this treaty [is in force], cooperation will continue.'³⁴ However, the Jordanian position vis-à-vis the Israeli government, especially its Prime Minister, remained cool and somewhat unfriendly and opinion of a Jordanian commentator aptly summed up the mood:

What we, both Arabs and Israelis, risk today is another explosion of violence in the region as a result of seething Palestinian frustration. That could explain why thousands of young university Palestinians joined Hamas last Tuesday echoing the same commitment as Masha'al, vowing to fight. Along with Hizbullah, the Israeli occupation forever ... This anti-peace Netanyahu policy came as a God-sent gift to Hamas, Saddam, al-Assad and Hizbullah.³⁵

Disgraced Mossad chief Yatom did not remain in the wilderness for long and in May 1999 he returned to the limelight as the head of the Political-Security branch under Ehud Barak. This did not go down well with Jordan, as some of the key figures had neither forgotten nor forgiven Yatom for his involvement in the Masha'al affair.³⁶ His subsequent appointment as the coordinator of Israel-Jordan relations raised eyebrows in Amman and some of the opposition MPs, especially

those belonging to the Islamist groups, were critical of the move.³⁷ Nevertheless, at the official level the relationship had progressed beyond the Masha'al phase.

Indeed, the Masha'al affair was not the only setback for Israel's struggle against Hamas militancy. Since his July 1995 arrest in the US, Israel has been demanding the extradition of Musa Abu Marzuq, former head of the political bureau of Hamas in Amman.³⁸ When his extradition became a possibility in January 1997, Israel developed second thoughts over the wisdom of trying the Hamas leader in Israel and thereby increasing the atmosphere of tension there. Hussein, who expelled Abu in 1995, entered the picture. Under a tripartite deal, the Hamas leader gave up his permanent resident status in the US and was deported to Jordan in May 1997. Israel's refusal, despite its self-declared policy of fighting terrorism with all its might, to pursue extradition and try him, was interpreted as a political victory for Hamas. Abu-Marzuq's return to the region and his taking up residency in Amman considerably strengthened the movement.³⁹

ACT TWO: DEPORTATION

When Masha'al and three of colleagues were deported to Qatar on 22 November 1999, the Masha'al affair took a curious and murkier turn. Even though the Jordanians saw the movement as an effective counter-weight against Arafat and the Palestinian Authority, Jordanian relations with Hamas had been anything but cordial. Going against the regional currents, at regular intervals Hussein had been hoping to regain some influence if not a foothold in the West Bank. Despite the 1988 disengagement and the Oslo Accord, for example, he sought and secured a special position for himself vis-à-vis Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem.⁴⁰ King Hussein's tolerance towards, if not support for, Hamas was born out of animosity towards Arafat; an animosity shared by the Hashemite monarchy and Hamas.

At the same time, this tactical alliance was not without its drawbacks. Since the formation of the Palestinian Authority, Israel and the US had been pressuring Amman to act against Hamas and there were suggestions that King Hussein's move in this direction was shelved in the wake of the Masha'al affair. Hamas leaders in Jordan were making inflammatory and militant speeches against Israel. The movement's popularity among the Palestinians, especially those living in the refugee camps, had long been a source of irritation for the Hashemite Kingdom. At regular intervals, Jordanian officials warned the Jordanian public against those 'tampering' with the unity of country. The Hamas leadership in Jordan had been warned against making attacks against the Palestinian Authority and its leadership. Sometimes these warnings were gentle but sometimes they were accompanied by strongarm tactics, including incarcerations. Indeed, days before the unsuccessful assassination attempt, Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah was briefly detained for making statements considered harmful to Jordan.⁴¹ Hamas leaders had been making inflammatory speeches against Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the peace process.⁴²

Even while King Hussein was alive, there was speculation that Jordan was planning to crack down on Hamas, and in an interview to Beirut-based *Al-Nahar* in November 1998 Abu-Marzuq attributed this to periodic pressures from the Palestinian Authority:

Since its arrival in occupied Palestinian areas the PA has been inciting everybody, including the Jordanian Government, to muzzle Hamas leaders in Amman and other Arab and Islamic countries. This attitude by Arafat is neither new nor surprising. Perhaps he is trying the same thing now with Fayiz al-Tarawinah's government. What is certain and beyond doubt is that Hamas' members in Jordan are committed to respecting the Jordanian laws in full as well as all decisions made by the Jordanian Government related to protecting people's rights, dignity, and freedom. The members, leaders, and representatives of Hamas abide by the laws and respect the sovereignty of any country in which they live.⁴³

Indeed King Hussein, who had been instrumental in securing his release, was less than eager to host Sheikh Yasin when he travelled the region in 1998.⁴⁴

Crackdown and Deportation

On 31 August 1999, in a swift and surprise move, the Jordanian Prosecutor-General ordered the closure of five commercial offices in Amman that were registered under the names of Hamas leaders. On the same day, arrest warrants were issued against five Hamas leaders, including Masha'al, Abu-Marzuq and Ghawshah, who were on a visit to Tehran. The authorities also rounded up 15 suspected Hamas members including Muhammad Abu Sayf, Masha'al's driver, who had foiled the assassination plot less than two years earlier. Two other politburo members, Hamas representative in Amman Mohammad Nazzal and Ezzat Resheq, went into hiding. Initially the Hamas leaders were charged with misdemeanours such as 'affiliation to an illegal organization and possession of light arms'. Subsequently a host of charges were levelled against the detainees, including maintaining a military training camp, illegal fundraising, weapons storage, armed activities against Israel and use of forged official stamps, and some of the charges were punishable with the death penalty.⁴⁵ The authorities were unmoved by the explanation that the handguns had been obtained with the knowledge of the authorities following the Israeli attempt on Masha'al. As to the timing, the Palestinians attributed the crackdown to the two suicide bombings in Tiberias and Haifa.⁴⁶

The interview published in the Beirut-based *Al-Nahar*, ironically a day after the crackdown, highlighted the suddenness of the decision. Responding to a question about Jordan having asked Hamas to tone down its activities, its spokesman Ghawshah remarked:

Some time ago reports were circulated by the Palestinian Authority and the Israelis, through the newspapers *Yedi'ot Aharonot* and *Ma'ariv*, that Hamas Political Bureau members had been asked to leave Jordan. Actually, the Jordanian Government did not ask any of Hamas leaders to leave the country. I can confirm that nobody left, particularly since we have not interfered in Jordan's domestic affairs. We express our opinion regarding the Palestinian affairs on the political and media levels only.⁴⁷

On 22 September Masha'al and colleagues were arrested at Amman airport when they returned from Tehran.

The problem of former politburo chief Abu-Marzuq was easy to solve; because he holds Yemeni nationality he was immediately expelled from Jordan.⁴⁸ The four Hamas activists, namely Politburo chief Khalid Masha'al, Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah and politburo members Sami Khater and Izzat Resheq are however Jordanian citizens of Palestinian origin. Their situation posed a challenge both to the authorities and to Hamas. In an unprecedented measure, the four were given the option of remaining incarcerated and being tried for membership of an illegal organization or leaving the country. According to Usamah Abu-Hamdan, the movement's representative in Lebanon, Hamas had received from Jordan 'one offer but with two formulas. The first stipulates that Jordan is willing to release brothers Masha'al and Ghawshah on the condition that they leave the Jordanian territory. The second formula is similar to the first but suggests that Jordan would be willing to discuss their return to Jordan at a later date.' Neither alternative was acceptable to Hamas.⁴⁹

When Emir Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al-Thani of Qatar offered to take the men in, on 21 November, they were deported to Doha and on the same day all other Hamas detainees were released.⁵⁰ Qatar was chosen as the destination because, it 'is a friendly country to Jordan, to the US, and to Israel. Would you have sent them to Iran, where it would be more difficult to control their activities, or to Syria, which is not yet considered a friendly country by the US and Israel?'⁵¹

Initially the move was described as a decision of Prime Minister Rawabda that lacked the backing of the palace.⁵² This proved to be a hasty conclusion as King Abdullah put his weight behind the move and even Rawabda's successor was not willing to back down from the confrontation with Hamas. Speaking to reporters before leaving for the US but after the arrest of Masha'al and his colleagues, King Abdullah II expressed his support for the action and added: 'Jordan has made itself quite clear: Hamas offices will be shut down and this is what will happen.'⁵³ He attributed the crackdown to Hamas having 'gone a step too far as regards what is expected of these sort of organizations' and said that the 'problem has become a criminal issue'.⁵⁴

Since the issuance of arrest warrants, both Hamas and Muslim Brotherhood leaders have been indicating an impending resolution of the problem. At regular intervals political and legal challenges have been made on behalf of Masha'al

and his colleagues.⁵⁵ Despite intense mediation by the Brotherhood and political pressures from Hamas, the Jordanian government seems to have hardened its stand vis-à-vis Hamas. In a direct reference to the opposition of the Hamas towards the Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Rawabda declared: Anyone on Jordanian territory who wants to organize opposition against another Arab country, should go to that country and do it there.⁵⁶ Days before the men's deportation an unnamed Arab official was quoted as saying:

There will be no Hamas in Jordan any more. The past stage is over and will not be revived. ...Jordan wants Hamas to support the Palestine National Authority at this stage when final-stage negotiations have been initiated, and Jordan will not accept to have its territory used against the Palestinian Authority at this stage in particular.⁵⁷

Days after the deportation, deputy prime minister Ayman Majali told the Qatari media that Jordan would not allow the reopening of the Hamas offices, nor would it permit its territory to be used for Hamas activities.⁵⁸

Jordanian officials vehemently opposed the continuation of Hamas because 'Jordan could no longer afford that the main opposition to the Palestine National Authority was coming from its capital, where Hamas leaders were becoming the real movers of the movement'.⁵⁹ Jordan recognizes the Palestinian Authority as the 'sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as well as the legitimate Palestinian Authority, which now exists on the ground'.⁶⁰ So where did that leave Hamas? 'Representation of Hamas in Jordan does not go beyond the fact that some Jordanian nationals with certain political and ideological inclinations are making statements within the existing democracy and freedom of expression in Jordan. There is no Hamas leadership in Jordan. I hope we are clear on this point.'⁶¹ As one Jordanian commentator warned:

Here in Jordan, we live in perpetual tension that Palestinian fury against their occupiers will lead to more violence and bloodshed which could spill over the border and upset the delicate balance we have precariously managed to create for ourselves, with the clear realization that the state of affairs here can be consolidated only if the Israelis and Palestinians make real peace.⁶²

Speaking to Jordanian daily *al-Ra'i* following his meeting with Masha'al in Qatar during the OIC summit, Prime Minister Ali Abu al-Raghib was categorical about the non-negotiable nature of the Jordanian position:

I offered Masha'al only two options. He is a Jordanian citizen and enjoys all the rights that are guaranteed by the constitution and this applies to his three colleagues. They could return to Jordan at any time they wish and join any Jordanian political party regardless of its name or program but

their capacity and positions in the non-Jordanian HAMAS Movement would not be accepted. This is the first option. But if they wanted to maintain their positions in the movement, this is the second option, they would have to relinquish their Jordanian citizenship and we would treat them like any other Arab organization or faction. They could visit Amman and meet with their family and relatives within the framework of legal procedures that define such a relationship, as is the case in our relationship with these organizations and factions.⁶³

In other words, Masha'al and his ilk would have to choose between their loyalty to the Palestinians and the Hashemite Kingdom. The Jordanian government views Hamas as a foreign and non-Jordanian organization, a position unacceptable to the Hamas leadership.

The position of the movement's official representative in Amman, Mohammad Nazzal, took a precarious turn when he went underground soon after arrest warrants were issued against him. Even while eluding the authorities, he managed to air his views in the pro-Palestinian media in Jordan.⁶⁴ Following intense behind-the-scenes negotiations he reappeared in public in December 2000.⁶⁵ Days later the government reiterated its position; Jordan 'does not allow Jordanian citizens to work for a non-Jordanian organization from Jordanian territory'.⁶⁶

There were veiled suggestions that the threat posed by Hamas before the crackdown was reminiscent of the fedayeen threat to the Hashemite monarchy in September 1970.⁶⁷ The move against Hamas could strengthen the position of Transjordanian nationalists who view the Palestinians as undermining Jordanian interests and hence demand complete disengagement from the West Bank.⁶⁸

Much of the domestic criticism of the deportation revolved around the legal and political implications of the move. Because the deportees were Jordanian citizens, the move raises the question of the possible deportation of opposition figures whose views were unacceptable and unpalatable to the authorities. Because the Jordanian constitution explicitly prohibits the expulsion of its citizens,⁶⁹ the move has established a dangerous precedent 'for expelling Jordanians of Palestinian origin who are somehow affiliated with other Palestinian opposition factions'.⁷⁰ The move was seen as a negative development with regard to Abdullah's commitment to the democratization process and the credibility of the constitution.⁷¹

The Muslim Brotherhood, which enjoys a smoother relationship with the authorities, tried unsuccessfully to mediate between Hamas and the government. At the same time there was evidence of an internal schism in the Muslim Brotherhood, with rival factions adopting opposite positions on the issue.⁷² The crackdown was seen as part of a Jordanian attempt to get involved in the final status negotiations over the Palestinian question, especially on sensitive issues such as refugees, borders and water rights. The presence of Hamas, its active opposition

towards the Palestinian Authority and its influence among the anti-normalization groups, pose serious threats to the interests and stability of Jordan.

For its part, Hamas was willing neither to accept the deportation of its leadership nor to cease political activities in Amman. In a bid to pacify its hosts, Hamas has regularly denied suggestions of its non-political presence in other countries. Shortly after the attempt on his life, Masha'al maintained that the movement's actions and battles are limited to the occupied territories only and that it has no armed forces or military outfits outside Palestine.⁷³ In an interview with *The Jordan Times*, he observed:

Hamas presence in Jordan is not a burden on the country or on any other party. Our work is limited to political and media work. We do not interfere in the internal affairs (of Jordan) nor do we infringe on its security. We consider Jordanian and Arab security as being our security as well. Our presence therefore is not a burden on anybody, but rather an asset to the Arab and Muslim position. Also, our relations with Jordan are not meant to be at the expense of anybody else, especially not at the expense of the PNA.⁷⁴

In short, the Palestinian Authority rather than Israel has been the target of their ire.

Thus, following the Jordanian crackdown, initially its leadership sought to differentiate between its political and military wings. While 'political and media presence exists outside the occupied territories, but the military and jihad actions are inside the territories and will remain so'.⁷⁵ They even argued that a formal agreement over the Hamas presence in Jordan had been reached with Prime Minister Zayd Bin-Shakir in the presence of the head of the intelligence and his deputy Samih al-Battikhi (the current head of intelligence).⁷⁶ In the light of the Jordanian move, some even advised against establishing Hamas political bureaus in Arab countries and 'relocating' existing ones to the Palestinian areas.⁷⁷

Deportation had not damped Masha'al's spirits and in July 2000 he made an address over the phone to an anti-Israeli rally organized by the Islamic Action Front. Some of the Hamas leaders resorted to veiled threats and suggested that since Jordan had gone back on its understanding, 'there can no longer be any restrictions on our military activities because we will no longer be bound by the accord'.⁷⁸ Writing in *Al-Majd* while still remaining underground, Nazzal accused the Rawabda government of destroying the formula that the organization had forged with the late King Hussein in 1993. In his view, 'repeating the phrases "Jordanian sovereignty," "not allowing non-Jordanian parties to practice political activity in the Jordanian arena," and "not allowing Jordanian citizens to work for non-Jordanian parties," means that the new government has adopted the same weak logic, which was adopted by the former government'.⁷⁹ Justifying the activities of the movement, he added that the movement's 'political and media confrontation was not confined to Palestine only; rather, its arena was the whole world as much as possible'. He carried on to say that it was natural that Hamas

should maintain its presence in Jordan and other Arab countries and such presence was achieved through understanding and coordination with the host countries. Accusing the government of violating its own agreement with the movement, he attributed the decision to pressures from Israel as well as the Palestinian Authority.

As one Palestinian commentator observed: 'The time span between the late King Hussein's reception of Sheikh Ahmad Yasin [Hamas founder] two years ago when he was released from an Israeli jail and the arrest of Khalid Masha'al and Ibrahim Ghawshah at the Amman airport is relatively short. However, it is quite significant in signals and indications as well as in transformations.'⁸⁰ For those Palestinians opposed to Hamas, the end of the Jordanian-Hamas honeymoon was inevitable because the relationship was conceived 'during an estrangement between Jordan and the Palestinian leadership'. And in the wake of the crackdown Hamas had to choose between two options: the Ramallah option whereby it joins the nation dialogue and transform itself into an opposition from within to the Palestinian Authority, or the Tehran option whereby it keeps itself away from the zone of influence and becomes marginalized.⁸¹

CONCLUSION

The opposition of Hamas to the Oslo process placed the Islamic movement at odds with Israel and Jordan as well as the Palestinian Authority. Each of these players adopted different means to contain its influence. While the Palestinian authority sought to achieve this through dialogue and accommodation, Israel made an unsuccessful bid on the life of a key Hamas figure in Jordan. The botched assassination attempt sent Israel's relations with Jordan plummeting to their lowest point. Skilful diplomacy, tough bargaining and significant compromises brought the crisis to a fruitful conclusion. All principal parties, including Hamas, were satisfied with the Yasin-for-agents deal struck between Israel and Jordan.

At the same time, Hamas does pose a threat to the Hashemite Kingdom and while its threat to Israel is primarily security-based, it is seen a threat to the stability of the Hashemite regime. The decision to treat Hamas as a foreign, Palestinian and non-Jordanian organization places the movement at odds with the Kingdom. Home to the largest number of Palestinians refugees, Jordan provides a substantial support base for Hamas and gives it breathing space from the pressure tactics of Israel as well as the Palestinian Authority. As Jordan realized the inevitability of Palestinian statehood, it began formalizing and consolidating its disengagement from the West Bank. While Jordan is committed to the 'unity' of the Jordanians, including East Bankers and West Bankers, the presence of Hamas undermines its interests in the peace process. Besides its opposition to the Palestinian Authority, Hamas has been virulent in opposing the peace process and could be an obstacle in Jordanian efforts to secure a favourable agreement over the fate of the Palestinian refugees in Jordan. It is too early to foresee

whether the Jordanian-Hamas estrangement is a temporary squabble or a final divorce. Jordanian desire to seek an accommodation with Israel and the future Palestinian entity west of the Jordan, however, has ended the shared interest that facilitated the presence of Hamas in Jordan. Thus having identified Hamas as foreign organization threatening the unity and stability of the country, King Abdullah II would be unable to bring back Masha'al without seriously undermining his authority and stability of the Hashemite Kingdom.

NOTES

1. Quoted in *The Jerusalem Post*, 5 October 1997.
2. Quoted in *Middle East International*, 1 October 1999, p.13.
3. Avi Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement, and the Partition of Palestine*, New York, 1988.
4. For a detailed background see, Samuel M Katz, *The Hunt for the Engineer: How Israeli Agents Tracked the Hamas Master Bomber*, New York, 1999.
5. *Al-Dustur* (Beirut), 28 September 1997. Unlike otherwise mentioned, all Arabic, Jordanian and Hebrew materials are taken from the electronic versions of the *Foreign Broadcast Information Service-Near East and South Asia (FBIS-NES)*.
6. *The Jerusalem Post*, 15 October 1997. Such accusations were made *after and not before* the assassination plot.
7. *Summary of the Report of the Commission concerning the events in Jordan, September 1997*, 17 February 1998, Government Press Office, Jerusalem.
8. Fatah Central Committee member Sakhr Habash went on to proclaim that the attack was a dry run for a similar move against Arafat. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat* (London), 15 January 1998.
9. *The Jerusalem Post*, 7 October 1997. Indeed Israeli spy Eli Cohen was hanged in public in Damascus on 18 May 1965.
10. Leslie Susser and Elie Rekhess, 'Israel', *Middle East Contemporary Survey 1997*, Boulder, 2000, p.433. Other reports however suggest that former deputy chief of Mossad and a key player in the Israel-Jordan peace agreement Ephraim Halevy was sent with the antidote. *The Jerusalem Post*, 10 October 1997.
11. Susser and Rekhess, 'Israel', p.433. Shortly after the resolution of the crisis, Jordanian minister Samir Mutawi told the media: 'There is no Mossad office in Amman and there are no Israeli intelligence officers as such...All over the world, there is a diplomatic representation, where you have lists of diplomats accepted [by the host countries]. They also include administrative employees who have their own work...What is happening inside the Israeli embassy is their own business, but [to say that] there is an office for the Mossad in Jordan is not true, such an office does not exist.' *The Jordan Times*, 12 October 1997.
12. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 4 October 1997.
13. *Middle East International*, 10 October 1997 and *The Jerusalem Post*, 5 October 1997. There were suggestions that the King was planning to expel ambassador-designate Oded Eran even before he could present his credentials.
14. Hamas spokesman in Gaza 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi was quick and categorical. 'Hamas did not send a message to Israel proposing a truce either before or after the

- assassination attempt... Hamas did not ask King Hussein to deliver any message to Israel.' *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 9 October 1997. See also Masha'al's statements in *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 12 October 1997 and in *The Jordan Times*, 13 October 1997.
15. Dilip Hero, 'The Rise of Hamas: Israel's Nemesis', *Middle East International*, 7 November 1997, pp.17–18; and 'The Rise of Hamas: In the Driving Seat', *Ibid.*, 21 November 1997, pp.19–20.
 16. For a detailed discussion on Hamas see Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence and Coexistence*, New York, 2000.
 17. Yasin's release was demanded following the kidnapping of border policemen Nissim Toledano in December 1992 and Nachson Waxman in October 1994. Both were subsequently killed when Israel refused to yield and launched a search and rescue mission.
 18. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 9 October 1997.
 19. *Ibid.*, 6 October 1997. Emphasis added.
 20. Even though he went to Amman to meet Sheikh Yasin, Arafat was absent when Yasin was given a rousing reception upon his return to Gaza.
 21. Arafat reportedly told a closed-door session of the Palestinian Legislative Council that Jordan was 'trying to create a basis for itself in the West Bank via the Hamas movement' and that such a situation would be 'unacceptable to the Palestinians'. Graham Usher, 'Arafat Suspicious of Hamas-Jordan Links', *Middle East International*, 24 October 1997, p.3.
 22. Since the signing of the Oslo Accord Israel has been very reluctant to release prisoners who have been convicted for terrorist activities, and most such prisoners are Hamas activists, supporters or sympathizers.
 23. Asher Susser, 'Jordan', *Middle East Contemporary Survey 1997*, Boulder, 2000, p. 479.
 24. Khalid Amayreh, 'Yasin's Middle East Tour', *Middle East International*, 5 June 1998, pp.6–7. Yasin was not immune from the strongarm tactics of the Palestinian Authority. Just over a year after his release from the Israeli jail he was held briefly under house arrest in October 1998 when Arafat cracked down on Hamas activists.
 25. Paraphrasing Netanyahu's 1996 election campaign, Barak charged, 'For Sheikh Ahmed Yasin, this government is good'.
 26. Israel Shahak, 'The real significance of the attempted Israeli assassination of Khalid Masha'al in Jordan', *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, Vol. 16, No.5, January-February 1998, p.8.
 27. The other two members were former Israel Electric Corp. managing director Rafi Peled and former OC Air Force Dan Tolkovsky.
 28. Yigal Pressler, former counter-terrorism adviser to the Israeli Prime Minister, went as far as saying that King Hussein 'is the head of a country with which we have a peace accord, but he has no right to decide who should be the head of our Mossad. Any country which has terrorist headquarters and does nothing against them—and these are terrorists who are also against the king because he made peace with us—should know that we will eliminate them.' *The Jerusalem Post*, 17 February 1998.
 29. Responding the move, Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Jawad al- Anani observed: 'Jordan welcomes the resignation if Israel perceives it as a step towards achieving better ties with the Kingdom.' *The Jordan Times*, 25 February 1998.
 30. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 8 March 1998.

31. For example see, Adnan Abu-Odeh, *Jordanians, Palestinians and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process*, Washington DC, 1999, pp.70 and 213.
32. Sharon's remark in March 1998 that Israel would pursue and kill Masha'al outside Jordan evoked sharp rebukes from Jordan. Sana Kamal, 'Sharon Threatens', *Middle East International*, 27 March 1998, p.10; and *The Jerusalem Post*, 22 March 1998.
33. For discussions on the Canadian angle see Faisal Kutty, 'Canadian press calls for inquiry into allegations regarding Mossad use of passports', *The Washington Report on Middle East Report*, Vol.16, No.5, January-February 1998, pp.26-7; and John Dirlik, 'Mossad's use of Canadian passports quickly forgotten', *Ibid.*, p.27 and *The Jerusalem Post*, 12 November 1997. The controversy resurfaced a few months later when media reports in Canada suggested continued Israeli use of Canadian passports for Mossad operations. *The Jerusalem Post*, 5 November 1998.
34. *The Jordan Times*, 12 October 1997.
35. Musa al-Kilani: 'A Panorama of Tragedy Killing Peace', *The Jordan Times*, 19 September 1998.
36. *Ma'ariv* (Tel Aviv), 22 August 2000.
37. For example, see a report from Amman in *Al-Quds* (Jerusalem), 24 August 1999.
38. In 1995 Abu-Marzuq was expelled from Amman due to American and Israeli pressures. For a discussion see Esther Webman, 'Islamic Politics—Between Dialogue and Conflict', *Middle East Contemporary Survey*, 1995., pp. 120-22.
39. Despite initial speculation, Abu-Marzuq's return to Amman did not change the position of Masha'al, who in the interim had taken over as the head of the political bureau. *Al-Dustur*, 3 July 1997.
40. This did not mean much as, owing to Palestinian pressures, none of the Islamic countries was willing to recognize Jordan's 'special status' and hence Amman had to back down from its position and settle for a temporary role until the restoration of Jerusalem under Arab and Islamic sovereignty.
41. *The Jordan Times*, 15 September 1997. The move came four days after the triple suicide bombings in Jerusalem in which seven people were killed and more than 170 Israelis injured. Likewise, he was briefly held in May 1996, days before the Israeli elections, for making provocative statement in support of suicide bombings against Israel. *Al-Quds*, 21 May 1996.
42. Musa al-Kilani, 'A Panorama of Tragedy Killing Peace', *The Jordan Times*, 19 September 1998.
43. *Al-Nahar* (Beirut), 4 November 1998.
44. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 26 May 1998.
45. *The Jordan Times*, 21 October 1999.
46. Talal Awkal, 'The Relationship Between Hamas and Jordan: The Fall of Autumn Leaves', *Al-Ayyam*, (Ramallah), 27 September 1999. See also Abu-Marzuq's interview with *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 27 September 1999. However, while the crackdown began on 30 August, the suicide bombings took place on 5 September.
47. *Al-Nahar*, 1 September 1999.
48. In an interview with a London-based Arabic daily he declared: 'I obtained my residence in Jordan on the basis of a Palestinian travel document.' *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 27 September 1999.
49. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 16 October 1999. Upon reaching Doha, Masha'al told news agencies of their Hobson's choice: 'We were given two choices. Either to pledge to

- never to practice any political activity in Jordan or face the prospect of expulsion. We refused both.' *The Jordan Times*, 23 November 1999.
50. *Al-Dustur*, 22 November 1999. Indeed, a couple of days later West Bank Palestinian Preventive Security chief Jibril Rajoub told *The Jerusalem Post* that the PA would be happy to host the deportees. *The Jerusalem Post*, 24 November 1999. This would, however, require permission from Israel and in view of the fact that it had failed to assassinate Masha'al in Amman, it was too naive to expect Israel to accept his presence in Ramallah.
 51. *The Jordan Times*, 23 November 1999.
 52. Sana Kamal, 'Palace Versus Premier?' *Middle East International*, 3 September 1999, pp.9–10.
 53. *The Jordan Times*, 7 October 1999.
 54. King Abdullah's interview with the Madrid ABC, 22 October 1999 in *FBIS-WEU-1999-1022*, 22 October 1999.
 55. On technical grounds, on 27 June 2000 the Jordanian High Court of Justice dismissed their appeals against expulsion.
 56. Quoted in *Middle East International*, 17 September 1999, p.7.
 57. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 23 October 1999.
 58. *The Jordan Times*, 23 November 1999.
 59. *Ibid.*, 5 October 1999.
 60. *Al-Dustur*, 7 November 1998.
 61. *Al-Nahar*, 4 November 1998.
 62. Musa al-Kilani: 'A Panorama of Tragedy Killing Peace', *The Jordan Times*, 19 September 1998.
 63. For the text of the interview see, *Al-Ra'i*, (Amman), 30 November 2000. Interestingly, a few days earlier in an interview to the London-based *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, Masha'al was not even willing to confirm his meeting with the Jordanian Prime Minister. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 16 November 2000. See also *Al-Quds* (Jerusalem), 15 November 2000.
 64. For example see, Mohammad Nazzal, 'One year on the crisis, Hamas maintains its presence in Jordan', *Al-Majd* (Amman), 4 September 2000.
 65. *Al-Dustur*, 1 January 2001.
 66. *The Jordan Times*, 3 January 2001.
 67. *Ibid.*, 5 October 1999 and *The Jerusalem Post*, 26 September 1999.
 68. For a detailed discussion on the Transjordanian-Palestinian tension in Jordan see, Abu-Odeh, *Jordanians, Palestinians and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process*, pp.237–63.
 69. Israel's expulsion of Palestinians from the occupied territories evoked vehement criticism from the Palestinians and Arabs alike.
 70. Sana Kamal, ' Hamas: Has Jordan Gone Too Far?' *Middle East International*, 26 November 1999, p.4.
 71. *Ibid.*, and Lamis Andoni, 'Jordan—Danger Ahead', *Middle East International*, 25 February 2000, pp.22–3.
 72. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 6 November 1999.
 73. *Al-Dustur*, 25 October 1997.
 74. Masha'al's interview in *The Jordan Times*, 13 October 1997.
 75. Statement by Abu-Marzuq in *Al-Nahar*, 4 November 1998.
 76. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 20 September 1999. The report did not identify the date, however.

77. For example see *Al-Quds*, 29 November 1999.
78. Abu-Marzuq's interview with AFP, quoted in *The Jordan Times*, 16 November 1999.
79. Nazzal, 'One Year On'.
80. Tall Awkal, 'The relationship between Hamas and Jordan: The fall of autumn leaves', *Al-Ayyam*, 27 September 1999. He went on to add: 'Had he been alive today, the late King Hussein might have taken the same measures taken by the new regime'.
81. *Al-Ayyam*, 1 September 1999.

Political Liberalization and Monarchical Succession in Jordan

CURTIS R.RYAN

The period 1989–99 was one of the most pivotal in the history of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and during that ten-year span Jordanian politics went through no fewer than four major transitions. These included the initiation of a campaign for political liberalization and democratization (since 1989), the implementation of repeated IMF-directed economic adjustment programmes (also since 1989), the conclusion of a full peace treaty with Israel (1994), and finally, the transition within the monarchy itself from King Hussein to King Abdullah II (1999). This article will examine in particular two of these key transitions within Jordanian domestic politics, namely the political liberalization process and the monarchical transition. It begins with an overview of the liberalization process itself, then examines the royal succession from Hussein to Abdullah, and finally, provides an analysis of the 1999 municipal elections - the first under King Abdullah—in an effort to assess the state of political liberalization in Jordan in the early twenty-first century.

These elections in particular may provide a measure of the status and depth of liberalization within the Kingdom under its new King, for in July 1999 Jordanians again went to the polls to vote in nationwide municipal elections as part of what the Hashemite regime heralds as the most successful political liberalization programme in the entire Arab world. Many in the Jordanian opposition, however, have tended to see the liberalization programme as largely cosmetic—as a screen, perhaps, to shield the regime from its own society and to satisfy the ‘democratic’ leanings of Jordan’s many international creditors. Yet both regime-loyalists and their opponents agreed on why these elections were so important, and why they amounted to a test of the state of liberalization in Jordan: (1) they were the first elections since the accession of the new King, Abdullah II; (2) they were the first elections since the opposition had boycotted the national polls in 1997 (casting doubt on both the electoral process and the parliamentary outcome); and (3) they essentially marked the ten-year anniversary of the start of the liberalization process itself.

POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION 1989–99

Full national parliamentary elections in Jordan only re-emerged in 1989, following a more than two-decade hiatus in the wake of the 1967 war. The trigger event was the imposition of an IMF-sponsored economic austerity plan in April 1989, which led to the outbreak of rioting across the country. The riots, against both economic hardship and political corruption, prompted a shaken regime to respond with promises of electoral and political reforms to begin that same year. The first of these elections took place in November 1989, and yielded a lower house of parliament in which Islamists and other opposition candidates were well represented.¹

By the time of the next round of elections in November 1993, the regime had lifted martial law and its longstanding ban on political parties. More than a dozen newly legalized parties contested the elections, with the Islamists faring more poorly on their second attempt at national parliamentary power. This was due, in part, to a public backlash against unpopular Islamist legislation in the previous parliament, but mostly to adjustments in the electoral law that limited each voter to one vote, with unevenly representative districts. The previous electoral law had allowed voters to vote up to the number of representatives allotted for their district. Thus voters in Irbid in 1989 could vote for up to nine representatives from their city to the national parliament. In that election the Muslim Brotherhood, as the only organized group at the time, had run lists of candidates up to the exact number of seats for a district. In this way, the Islamists were able to exploit the plurality-based electoral system to gain representation well above their proportion of the overall vote. But in the 1993 elections, almost the reverse happened, with the government closing that 'loophole' and replacing it with the one-person-one-vote system. It also adjusted new districts that disproportionately favoured traditionally pro-Hashemite areas (such as rural rather than urban districts).²

By August 1996, rioting again erupted in the south of Jordan as the regime implemented its second IMF-sponsored austerity programme. As in 1989, riots broke out in Karak, Ma'an, Tafila and elsewhere. The 1996 riots, however, were not quite as widespread or violent as those of seven years earlier. They did, nonetheless, demonstrate clearly the level of public dissatisfaction over key issues of state policy—from economic reform, to the pace of political liberalization, to foreign policy issues such as Jordan's relations with Israel.³

In response to mounting criticism, the regime back-pedalled the process of political liberalization by issuing a new set of restrictive guidelines for the press. Jordan's print and television media had opened up considerably since the reform

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process began in 1989, yielding one of the most open societies in the Arab world. For that reason, however, many Jordanian journalists viewed the regime's new media restrictions as draconian.⁴ Domestic disaffection over the electoral and press laws continued to increase within Jordan and ultimately eleven opposition parties, led by the Islamic Action Front, organized a boycott of the November 1997 parliamentary elections.⁵

The opposition demanded that the electoral law be changed, press freedoms be restored, and that normalization with Israel cease. None of these demands was met by election day, and so Jordan's 1998–2001 parliament included few members of either the Islamist or leftist opposition. Instead, with most of Jordan's parties sitting out the electoral process, the new parliament was tilted heavily toward conservative proregime figures. Thus although the regime could then expect to deal with a far more pliant parliament, it did so at the cost of setting back the minimal gains that had been made in Jordan's programme of political liberalization.

But as this standoff between regime and opposition parties continued, King Hussein's long-term battle with cancer took a severe turn for the worse. In February 1999 the King passed away, but not before abruptly returning to Jordan to change the path of succession from his long-serving brother, Hassan, to his son Abdullah (now King Abdullah II). Opposition parties wasted no time in lobbying the new King to open up the political system, to resume the pace of political liberalization and, of course, to reform the electoral laws. King Abdullah, for his part, made a point of meeting not only with many opposition party officials but also with the leaders of Jordan's professional associations in what he called a 'national dialogue'.⁶ Given the relative weakness of the Jordanian party system, the professional associations had collectively become a potent alternative force and an institutional base for opposition within Jordanian politics.

THE MONARCHICAL SUCCESSION

King Hussein first began receiving treatment for cancer in 1991. In late 1992, he had returned triumphantly to Jordan accompanied by a massive outpouring of public support, having apparently conquered his cancer. But the disease returned in the years that followed, prompting the King to resume more rigorous cancer treatments in the USA. During his six-month absence from Jordan in late 1998 Hussein had, as usual, appointed his brother Crown Prince Hassan regent of the Kingdom. This was a routine role for Hassan, although the medical treatments made this one of the longest periods when the Crown Prince would manage Jordan's affairs in the absence of the King. Naturally, then, most observers were shocked when the King returned to Jordan in January 1999 to change the succession (as it turned out merely weeks before his death).

Hussein shifted the line of succession for the first time in 34 years, issuing a long and somewhat rambling letter to his brother (published soon afterwards in

its entirety in the Jordanian press) justifying his abrupt decision. By shifting the succession from his brother Hassan to his first-born son Abdullah, Hussein argued that he was returning to the provisions of the Jordanian constitution, which does indeed call for succession from father to eldest son. Abdullah had been appointed Crown Prince before, shortly after his birth in 1962 and had then remained officially in line for the throne until 1965, when domestic and regional political unrest prompted the King to shift to an adult successor. Various failed assassination attempts against Hussein had in particular led the King to choose his brother Hassan, rather than his son, as his most capable successor.

After 34 years of service, and having been groomed as successor and King throughout that period, Hassan was abruptly and none-too-politely forced aside in January 1999. The King's justification for this rested not only on the constitutional provisions (which could have been satisfied by a shift many years earlier), but also on alleged 'meddling' on the part of the Crown Prince, and perhaps more importantly, on the part of members of his entourage and staff. In his lengthy missive to his brother, Hussein accused Hassan of interfering in key military and civilian appointments and of apparently politically motivated manoeuvring in pushing aside and replacing key military officers, ambassadors and other government officials.

'I interfered from my hospital bed,' Hussein wrote to Hassan, 'to prevent any interference in the affairs of the Arab Army through the changes that appeared to me to be a settling of accounts and the pensioning off of efficient men with uncontested loyalty.' He continued, 'I used my powers as supreme commander to the Armed Forces to prevent any arbitrary measures in the Army that might lead to fragmenting and politicizing it.'⁷ According to some palace sources, the King had become particularly angry not only at changes in military and civilian personnel, but also at more subtle perceived affronts to Queen Noor and other members of Hussein's family. Sources closer to Hassan, in contrast, argued that these shifts were routine and would have occurred under any circumstances. Some suggested that the rambling and accusatory tone of the King's letter might even be due to his deteriorating medical condition and misinformation about what was actually happening in the palace.⁸

But King Hussein's letter also indicates that the differences over the succession had emerged much earlier, and had continued unresolved throughout the 1990s. 'We differed later and are still differing,' Hussein wrote, 'on the matter of succession to the throne and to whom it would be transferred after you. You adamantly rejected any discussion of this issue until you took over and you yourself decided who would succeed you.'⁹ This indicates a stronger clue to the central motivation in changing the succession. Hussein may have been concerned mainly with preserving the monarchy in his immediate family line and had envisioned that the throne would pass first to Hassan, and then to Hussein's son Hamza (Queen Noor's eldest son) when he was older. Some sources argued that Hassan insisted on the second succession remaining in his own line, while Queen Noor actively lobbied for Hamza's interests.¹⁰ All of this, of course, is immersed

in factional rifts within Jordanian palace politics, and hence sounds similar to what Cold War analysts used to refer to as ‘Kremlinology’ in trying to comprehend complex political manoeuvring within the Soviet state. As such, it remains a fuzzy picture at best, and one cannot presume to draw any firm conclusions here. But the more important point is the result: the succession to the throne not of Hassan, nor of Hamza, but of Abdullah.

Abdullah was indeed a surprise choice. As noted above, he had previously been designated successor, he was Hussein’s first-born son, and he was generally highly regarded by many in Jordanian society. Hence, surprise aside, many Jordanians welcomed the announcement, even if they were puzzled and troubled over the timing and circumstances surrounding the shift. Abdullah had little political experience, but had made a career as a military officer. Following the 1996 ‘Bread Riots’ (in response to the IMF austerity measures), Abdullah had been named commander of Jordan’s newly formed special forces, and was put in charge of the security of the monarchy itself. In 1999, when the King appointed Abdullah Crown Prince, Hussein also named him to be regent and then flew back to the United States for the last time. Some supporters of the former Crown Prince viewed the loss of even the regency as a final insult to Hassan.¹¹ Just weeks later, in February 1999, Hussein died and Abdullah ascended the throne. In his first official act, King Abdullah II appointed his half-brother Hamza Crown Prince and heir to the throne, in accordance with his father’s last wishes.

THE 1999 ELECTIONS

Given these many trials and transitions—from the emergence of the liberalization process, to the electoral boycott, to the accession of a new King - both regime and opposition came to view the July 1999 municipal elections as a critical marker of the state of liberalization in the Kingdom. Regime loyalists hoped that the opposition parties would return to active participation, thereby helping to legitimize the local elections. Prime Minister Abd al-Ra’uf al-Rawabda and other regime officials, in fact, referred continually to what they termed Jordan’s ‘national democratic wedding’.¹² Opposition parties, in turn, argued that if the elections were free and fair, then they should yield significant opposition representation and would hence represent a return to the path of liberalization. Having boycotted the 1997 national elections, in short, most opposition parties viewed the more local 1999 elections as a test of strength—of specific parties, of the party system, and of the possibilities for democratic opposition in Jordan.

The Islamists’ Urban Struggle

Activists in many opposition parties hoped that the 1999 elections would witness a shift in power from candidacies based on family or clan affiliation to political parties. Both the secular left and religious right called for a ‘post-tribal’ approach

to political participation and governance. Yet the majority of municipal seats went, once again, to independent candidates -often sponsored by their family or clan but independent of any specific party. In many respects, this outcome reflects the continuing distrust of parties in much of the Jordanian electorate, especially in rural areas. But it also reflects the weakness of the parties and the party system itself. Most Jordanian political parties can be correctly criticized for having unclear platforms and limited organization. Indeed, most of the myriad political banners that appeared during the campaign touted either a name with no platform, innocuous slogans, or even foreign policy initiatives for what were local municipal elections. Many banners, for example, urged closer relations with Arab states and an end to normalization with Israel—not the kind of topics to be addressed in any town council in the Kingdom.

Initially, the assorted opposition parties from the secular left to the Islamist right had attempted to form a united front to present a common list for the local elections. But negotiations ultimately failed to iron out the many difference between the parties and ultimately a slate of leftist and Arab nationalist parties did join forces while the largest party organization, the Islamic Action Front or IAF (Jabha al-Amal al-Islami) contested the elections on its own. In the end, the IAF emerged as the clear victor among the opposition parties, while the left continued to languish. IAF candidates swept the elections in their traditional strongholds of Zarqa and Rusayfa, while winning both the mayorship and four of the eleven council seats in Irbid, another traditional stronghold. They won five of the 20 available seats in the Amman city council and even took a majority of seats (six out of 11) in the city of Madaba—a town with a strong Christian heritage.¹³ The IAF had from the beginning eschewed campaigning in rural areas, regarding these as bastions of ‘tribalism’, and instead pursued a cities-only strategy that appeared to have paid off.

Still, these victories must also be compared to the rather unimpressive statistics on voter turnout. Each of the major Islamist victories occurred in districts with among the lowest turnout in the country. On election day none of the major Islamist strongholds had achieved even a 50 per cent turnout despite the national holiday. These areas included Jordan’s three largest urban centres: Amman (26 per cent turnout), Zarqa (33 per cent) and Irbid (45 per cent).¹⁴ These are also areas with particularly large Palestinian populations. The Islamist victories, therefore, were due largely to superior organization and high levels of participation from party loyalists. But the low level of turnout in these and other urban areas throughout the Kingdom cannot be read as mandates for the IAF or, for that matter, for the electoral process itself. Many urban Palestinians in particular seem to have forgone these elections, while rural ‘East Bank’ Jordanians were more likely to vote. This can be traced in part to low feelings of efficacy, especially among Palestinians who view the state as largely the bastion of Transjordanians.¹⁵ This may have been the case especially in the low turnout in largely Palestinian districts within the capital Amman itself. But the lack of enthusiasm was not confined to one ethnic community. The overall

low turnout had in fact led government officials to keep the polls open for a second day. Even with two days of holidays and open polls, however, most Jordanians 'elected' to stay home.

Women's Continuing Struggle

The voting franchise in Jordan was extended to include women in 1973, but since no new elections were held until 1989, women were unable to exercise their right to vote or run for office until that time.¹⁶ In 1993, Tujan al-Faisal made global headlines as the first woman elected to Jordan's lower house of parliament, but four years later Faisal lost her seat and indeed not a single woman was elected to parliament. One might be tempted to argue that women's electoral empowerment might logically start at the more local level and gradually work its way up to the higher levels of the national political system. Similar arguments have, of course, been made in regard to women candidates in the US and indeed, women have been more successful in state-level and gubernatorial elections than in congressional (and especially Senate) elections. Yet this process has been painfully slow in the US, with Congress and certainly the White House remaining bastions of male power.

But in the Jordanian case, there appears to be little reason for optimism on either the local or national front. While women's political representation and electoral success have been dismal at the national level, the trends are barely more promising at the local level. In the 1995 municipal elections, for example, nine women were elected to town councils with Iman Futaymat becoming the first woman mayor in Jordan (in Khirbat al-Wahadna in north-west Jordan). But in 1999, Futaymat lost her position to a male challenger. Elsewhere in Jordan, women candidates won only eight town council seats and no mayorships. The odds were stacked against many of these candidates from the beginning, as only 44 women contested against almost 5,000 men.¹⁷ In some places, such as Zarqa, Jordan's second-largest city, each party bloc refused to allow any women candidates on their ballots.¹⁸ In the end, the tally of all national seats showed that women held eight council seats, while men held 2,038.¹⁹

Demands for Change

Immediately following the elections, Islamists were quick to claim victory, praise the elections as generally free and fair (albeit with complaints about irregularities in specific polling areas), and to announce their demands for further reform. Having done so well in the municipal elections, the IAF quickly staked out its position regarding participation in the national parliamentary elections scheduled for November 2001. The IAF first urged that the Amman city council vote be restructured so that most or all of its 40 seats would be directly elected, replacing the current system in which 20 seats are elected, while 20 more, plus the Amman mayor, are royal appointees. Perhaps even more importantly, the

IAF, like the other opposition parties, reiterated its demand that the electoral law be reformed—with the one-person-one-vote provision abandoned, and electoral districts redrawn so that populations matched representation.²⁰

In a move that suggested reform of still greater scope, the Jordan National Committee for Women met with the speaker of the parliament and other officials urging a quota of seats for women in the next Jordanian parliament. The bleak gendered results of several rounds of parliamentary and municipal elections had led many supporters of women's candidacies to the conclusion that only a legal quota would provide the needed breakthrough for women in the Kingdom. Such a provision is not without precedent in Jordan. In the current system, the 80 members of the lower house of parliament are divided among 21 multi-member constituencies. Of that total number, the regime reserves a number of seats for specific minority constituencies, all of which have traditionally been strong supporters of the Hashemite monarchy. These include six seats for the rural Bedouin, nine seats for the Christian community, and three seats for the Circassian and Chechen communities collectively. When Tujan al-Faysal became the first woman in the lower house of parliament in 1993, she won in a Circassian seat. The initial response to the quota proposal was, however, not promising and Abd al-Hadi al-Majali, speaker of the parliament and a leader of the conservative and pro-regime National Constitutional Party (Hizb al-Dusturi al-Watani), suggested that the time was not yet right and that women had to 'work harder'.²¹

A NEGATIVE SPIN: LIMITED PERESTROIKA WITH EVEN MORE LIMITED GLASNOST?

Given the above discussion of the 1999 municipal elections in Jordan, what then can we say about the state of liberalization overall? One can easily enough come up with a negative spin on the whole process, as the reasons for pessimism are indeed ample. Among these reasons is the continuing weakness of the party system and of viable opposition messages or organizations. This leaves Jordanians with limited alternatives, and as the turnout figures show, many Jordanians continue to have little faith in the electoral process at any level. In a tragic caricature of Jordan's alleged 'tribalism' (which amounts simply to the continuing emphasis on family and clan ties, rather than identification with national political parties), the election in the town of Yarqa was marred—and indeed halted—by shooting between rival clans. Some reports suggested that the incumbent mayor had himself started the shooting, and in the exchange of fire that followed, a member of each clan was killed while many more were wounded.²²

Aside from the Yarqa violence, however, the rest of the country appeared to have maintained order and safety during the polling. But for some democracy activists, other acts of violence seemed more ominous. On the day before the election, a journalist for the independent daily *Al-Arab al-Yawm* was dragged

from his car and beaten by unknown assailants. Days after the election, the event appeared to repeat itself. This time the victim was a political cartoonist for the daily *Al-Dustur*.²³ While the events may have been isolated, they led to speculation and fear that this amounted to a growing campaign of intimidation. Given the paucity of cases, however, it remains too early to draw any real conclusions but such fears must also be understood in the context of the changing conditions for the press in the Kingdom.

The initial political liberalization programme had indeed led to a loosening of government restrictions on the media. But since the restrictive press and publications law was passed in 1997, the state has attempted to curb the 'recklessness' of weekly tabloids and rein in the mainstream press. Some Jordanian journalists have even argued that the Mukhabarat (intelligence service) has infiltrated the popular and sensationalist tabloid *Shihan*, transforming it into a tame imitation of its former self.²⁴ English-language papers such as *The Jordan Times* and *The Star* had to reintroduce a certain amount of caution or self-censorship, while the leading Arabic dailies *Al-Ra'i* and *Al-Dustur* remained far more pliant to the government line. Independent papers, however, such as the increasingly popular daily *Al-Arab al-Yawm* have been able to exercise a greater degree of freedom. But as many Jordanian journalists point out, once a story appears in *Al-Arab al-Yawm*, it becomes in effect fair game for even the most cautious papers to take up from there.²⁵

If the press had begun to experience the limits of the regime's tolerance towards criticism, the scholarly community was not far behind. The most telling marker here occurred on the second day of national elections. Just as the newspaper headlines reported the victories of Islamist and independent candidates, so too did they report the resignation of Mustafa Hamarnah, Director of Jordan's Centre for Strategic Studies (CSS) at the University of Jordan.²⁶ Hamarnah had taken the Centre from a small three-room operation to become a major centre for scholarly research. The CSS had, in fact, become one of the few centres for independent public opinion polling in the entire Arab world. But that may have proven too much for hard-line regime conservatives and pressure had been brought to bear on the Centre. The CSS, while serving a critical role in Jordan's developing civil society, had angered some government officials with its published polls and research findings. When the government claimed that unemployment remained as low as 17 or even 10 per cent, for example, the Centre's copious labour studies suggested a figure considerably higher.²⁷ In addition, the Centre's published polls on government popularity, Jordanian-Palestinian relations, and attitudes toward the political liberalization process, may have taken their toll and tested the patience of more conservative government elites.²⁸ It is also important to note, however, that Hamarnah was later reinstated in his post, although it remains unclear whether that in turn signalled that liberal elements in the regime had won a victory, or whether regime conservatives had simply made their point.

In sum, the negative signs regarding the overall liberalization process are perhaps too numerous: public disaffection, low voter turnout, restrictions on the press, and weak opposition parties (except for the Islamists).²⁹ The question, in short, is whether the Hashemite regime is pursuing only cosmetic liberalization to release the steam of opposition and to please international creditors by holding regular elections—but without allowing real dissent or the mobilization of a stronger democratic opposition.

A POSITIVE SPIN: THE PROCESS IS STILL NEW AND CHANGE TAKES TIME

While reasons for pessimism are many, there are at least some reasons for optimism. As most Jordanian newspapers themselves noted in their election-analysis editorials, the most promising aspect of the elections may simply have been the return of the opposition. Unlike the national parliamentary elections in 1997, the 1999 municipal polls witnessed no electoral boycott. While electoral participation remained low in most urban areas (particularly those that are predominantly Palestinian), rural voters did come out in force—notably blocking traffic in many areas as they crowded around the polling stations. An observer in Zarqa (33 per cent turnout) might therefore have left the polls seeing them as something of a sham; but in places such as Jerash (61 per cent), Mafraq (53 per cent), and Wadi Musa (with the highest turnout at 76 per cent), voters were clearly energized by the campaign.³⁰

Despite the continuing restrictions on the print media and the even more stale television news in Jordan, journalists individually continue to push the limits of the liberalization process. The English-language *Jordan Times*, for example, has repeatedly printed stories critical of the practice of ‘honour killings’ in Jordan and has also decried the feminization of poverty in the Kingdom.³¹ Other critical pieces continue to appear occasionally in French-language publications, such as the *Le Jour* section of the *Weekly Star*.³²

Furthermore, it is worth questioning the long-term viability of government restrictions on the media in a country where the number of satellite dish owners is expanding at a rapid pace. Increasing numbers of middle and upper class Jordanians, for example, own satellite dishes that allow them to tune into programming more compelling than that offered on Jordan TV. Unlike some countries, Jordan has placed no restrictions on the internet and thus many well-to-do Jordanians are tapping into e-mail and cyberspace on a daily basis. There is clearly a class gap here, as there is in Western countries, since most Jordanians do not have such access to alternative sources of news and information. Still, there is something strikingly odd about a government that tries to rein in one television station while the numbers of satellite dishes and internet cafes continue to increase in Amman, Irbid, Madaba, Aqaba and elsewhere, and even Jordan’s Mukhabarat (the General Intelligence Directorate) has its own website.

In electoral politics, the opposition certainly has a long way to go (especially the secular left); but opposition candidates in Jordan do run for office and sometimes they actually win seats (especially the religious right). The question, then, is whether the reluctance of some of the regime's ruling elite to allow any real depth to the liberalization process will outlast the demands of opposition organizations and the society at large for greater reform. For Jordanian women, for many Palestinians, for many Christians, and indeed for democracy activists of all backgrounds, much still needs to be done. Thus the answers ultimately lie in the future as Jordan's political transition continues to unfold. But one key barometer of that change is certainly the 1999 municipal election results discussed earlier. Two other key barometers include the November 2001 national parliamentary elections and the role in the overall liberalization process of King Abdullah himself. It is too early to know, however, what King Abdullah's stance will ultimately be. In his rhetoric at least, the King has sounded far more progressive than the status quo-oriented old guard he inherited from his father. Can a monarch, indeed, be 'progressive', or is that an oxymoron? In Jordan, and now in Morocco, some democracy activists hope that the answer may lie in the model of King Juan Carlos of Spain, who oversaw Spain's transition from dictatorship to democratic system. If Abdullah were to opt for such a role, then Jordan might indeed look forward to more meaningful political liberalization in the early twenty-first century. But with so many signs that Jordan's liberalization is in stasis at best, such an expectation seems far too optimistic.

NOTES

1. On the origins and development of the liberalization or democratization process in Jordan, see Glenn E. Robinson, 'Defensive Democratization in Jordan', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol.30, No.3 (1998), pp.387-410; Rex Brynen, 'Economic Crisis and Post-Rentier Democratization in the Arab World', *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol.25, No. 1 (1992), pp.69-97; and Laurie A. Brand, 'Economic and Political Liberalization in a Rentier Economy: The Case of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan', in Iliya Harik and Denis J. Sullivan (eds.), *Privatization and Liberalization in the Middle East*, Bloomington, 1992, pp. 167-88.
2. For assessments of all three parliamentary elections (1989, 1993, 1997) see Curtis R. Ryan, 'Elections and Parliamentary Democratization in Jordan', *Democratization*, Vol.5, No.4 (1998), pp.176-96; and for brief profiles of Jordan's many political parties, see also Ryan, 'The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan', in George E. Delury and Deborah A. Kaple (eds), *World Encyclopaedia of Political Systems and Parties*, New York, 1999, pp.599-604.
3. For a comparative analysis of the unrest in 1989 and 1996, see Curtis R. Ryan, 'Peace, Bread, and Riots: Jordan and the International Monetary Fund', *Middle East Policy*, Vol.6, No.2 (1998), pp.54-66.
4. Author's interviews with Jordanian journalists. Amman, May 1997 and July 1999.

5. For an analysis of the Islamist movement in Jordan, see Quintan Wiktorowicz, *The Management of Islamic Activism: Salafis, The Muslim Brotherhood, and State Power in Jordan*, Albany, 2001.
6. *Al-Ra'i*, 25 March 1999.
7. King Hussein's letter to Prince Hassan was printed in the various Jordanian newspapers and broadcast on national television (25 January 1999). Online text available at: www.Kinghussein.gov.jo/speeches_letters.html.
8. Author's interviews. Amman, Jordan, June 1999.
9. See note 7 and also the discussion in Sana Kamal, 'Jordan: the King Strikes Back', *Middle East International*, 29 January 1999, pp.4–5.
10. Author's interviews. Amman, Jordan, June 1999.
11. Kamal, 'Jordan: the King Strikes Back'.
12. See for example the coverage in *Al-Arab al-Yawm*, 15 July 1999.
13. *Al-Ra'i*, 17 July 1999; *Al-Arab al-Yawm*, 15 July 1999.
14. *The Jordan Times*, 15–16 July 1999; *The Star* (Amman news weekly), 21 July 1999.
15. Author's interviews. Amman, Jordan, June 1999.
16. On movements and organizations for women's empowerment, see the chapters on Jordan in Laurie A.Brand, *Women, the State, and Political Liberalization: Middle Eastern and North African Experiences*, New York, 1998.
17. Rana Husseini, 'Blazing the Trail', *The Jordan Times*, 14 July 1999.
18. *The Jordan Times*, 17 July 1999.
19. *Ibid.*, 18 July 1999.
20. *Al-Dustur*, 26 July 1999.
21. *The Jordan Times*, 26 July 1999.
22. *The Star*, 21 July 1999; *The Jordan Times*, 15–16 July 1999.
23. *The Jordan Times*, 24 July 1999.
24. Author's interviews with Jordanian journalists. Amman, July 1999.
25. Author's interviews. Amman, July 1999.
26. *The Jordan Times*, 15–16 July 1999.
27. The CSS study found the figure closer to 27 per cent. See *Unemployment in Jordan —1996: Preliminary Results & Basic Data* (Amman, 1997).
28. Some of the results of the CSS polls have been assembled and analysed by Maher J.Massis, 'Jordan: A Study of Attitudes Toward Democratic Changes', *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol.20, No.3 (Summer 1998), pp.37–63. The CSS studies of Jordanian-Palestinian relations led to the publication of the monograph: Mustafa Hamarneh, Rosemary Hollis, and Khalil Shikaki, *Jordanian-Palestinian Relations: Where to? Four Scenarios for the Future*, London, 1997.
29. For a critical assessment of Jordanian liberalization, see Quintan Wiktorowicz, 'The Limits of Democracy in the Middle East: The Case of Jordan', *Middle East Journal*, Vol.53, No.4 (1999), pp.606–20.
30. *The Jordan Times*, 17 July 1999; *The Star*, 21 July 1999.
31. See, for example, the recent stories: Rana Husseini, 'Courts sentence man to one year after killing sister with car, three men to five months after shooting woman', *The Jordan Times*, 31 July 1999; and Hind-Lara Mango, 'The face of poverty: growing more feminine by the day', *The Jordan Times*, 29 July 1999.
32. See the critical analysis of democratization in Jordan by Suleiman Sweiss, 'Quel Bilan? Dix Ans de "Process Democratique".' For a defence of press freedom and a

highly critical analysis of the ambiguities of the current press law, see the discussion by veteran Jordanian journalist Sa'eda Kilani, 'L'eternel dilemme: presse, publications'. Both articles appeared in the French *Le Jour* section of the *Weekly Star*, 15 July 1999.

‘Normalization’ and ‘Anti-Normalization’ in Jordan; The Public Debate

PAUL L.SCHAM and RUSSELL E.LUCAS

From the 1970s until the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty of 1994, Israel and Jordan maintained quasi-normal, albeit secret, relations. Jordan’s King Hussein reportedly met numerous times with Israeli leaders, and even visited the country. Armed clashes along the lengthy border were virtually non-existent. During the 1991 Gulf War, despite Jordan’s neutrality, Israel even officially announced that Jordan’s eastern frontier (with Iraq) constituted its security border. During all of this period, informed Israelis were aware of the meetings between leaders and realized that secret understandings existed, and thus considered that Israel had achieved peace with Jordan in all but name. When the Declaration of Principles with the PLO was signed in 1993, most expected that a treaty of peace with Jordan would soon be forthcoming. When the treaty was signed the following year, Israelis were almost uniformly pleased, and the treaty represented one of the very few breakthroughs with the Arab world in the 1990s that received support from virtually the entire Israeli political spectrum. Partly, this was because Israelis regarded the treaty as the public legitimation of an existing status quo, and, with a Palestinian-Israeli peace process underway, they saw no reason for continuing enmity between the two countries.

It took some time for Israelis to realize that Jordanian perceptions were significantly at variance with their own. Jordanians had known nothing about secret meetings and understandings between their King and Israeli leaders. Less than four years earlier Jordanians had loudly cheered Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War. Israel was still demonized in Jordan’s press and certainly in its textbooks. As one Jordanian academic rather plaintively remarked in 1996: ‘We had no warning that this was going to happen. We cannot adjust as quickly as His Majesty.’¹

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What very quickly developed in Jordan was a three-tier relationship with Israel. At the first tier, military, intelligence, and diplomatic connections warmed quickly, now with the full awareness of the Jordanian population. By 1996, most Jordanians already referred to it as 'an alliance'. The second tier was (and is) the Jordanian opposition, mainly from Islamist and leftist circles, which steadfastly opposed any opening to Israel under current conditions or, indeed, virtually any circumstances other than the dismantling of the Jewish state. Their views had, of course, been the loose consensus, basically since before 1948, in common with the entire Arab world excepting Egypt. To the true believers in the Palestinian cause, the Hashemites had always been suspect, since King Abdullah I's various flirtations with Zionists in the 1930s and 1940s, which eventually resulted in his assassination in 1951. However, the formalization of relations with Israel swung them into opposition to state policy, and created the greatest rift in the Jordanian domestic consensus. Those absolutely opposed to relations were understood to be in a clear, if highly determined, minority.

The third tier constitutes the general public opinion in Jordan. Until the opening of the Western Wall tunnel in September 1996, Jordanian popular attitudes were somewhat up in the air, and perhaps susceptible to a sea change. For example, during the spate of bus bombings in Israel in the spring of 1996, considerable sympathy for Israelis was expressed on a personal level. This sympathy began to end with Israel's Grapes of Wrath campaign. Later, after King Hussein's brief honeymoon with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu ended with the violence sparked by the opening of the Western Wall Tunnel in Jerusalem and ensuing incidents, Jordanian public opinion turned against Israel, only intensifying over the next few years. Events since then, such as commercial fairs to which Israelis were invited but boycotted, the Jordanian reaction to the King's sharing the grief of bereaved Israeli parents and the attempted assassination of Hamas leader Khalid Masha'al, all showed that the vast majority of Jordanians could not share their King's acceptance of Israel.

The buzzword for such contacts quickly became 'normalization'. During the two-year period after the treaty, the concept was discussed fairly openly in the press, and some Jordanians, though always a minority, actually advocated, even publicly, closer ties with Israel. However, by late 1996, such discussions disappeared from the press. Instead, 'normalization' (*'tatbi'ah*² in Arabic) and 'normalizer' became solely words of opprobrium. The spearhead of the anti-normalization process was the Jordanian professional associations, which had, three months before the signing of the treaty, already threatened disciplinary action against members who dealt with Israelis.³ Not long after, the professional associations were the driving force behind an 'anti-normalization committee', employed in researching incidents of contacts with Israel, which they threatened to, and eventually did, 'expose'. The names of normalizers, called the 'List of Shame' is available on the internet,⁴ boycotts are publicly urged against all those who work with Israel or Israelis in any context, while legislators are demanding renunciation of the peace treaty with Israel. That the regime has been publicly

moving against the 'anti-normalization' forces, which it formerly usually dismissed as marginal, is an indication of its concern and the impact the anti-normalizers have achieved in Jordanian society. This article will examine the process by which Jordanian public opinion has moved from a state of some openness vis-à-vis Israel to the hostility towards normalization which is now apparent.⁵

JORDAN ON THE EVE OF THE OSLO AGREEMENTS

The reality of Jordanian politics and public attitudes is partly, though by no means wholly, defined by the fact that over half of the population is identified as 'Palestinian' or of Palestinian origin.⁶ Thus, a very large number of Jordanian citizens (all Palestinians living in Jordan have been eligible to receive Jordanian citizenship, in marked contrast to other Arab countries hosting Palestinian refugees) have extended family on the West Bank and in Israel. That, plus the geographic proximity (most Jordanians can, and many do, receive Israeli TV broadcasts), makes Jordanians acutely aware of their powerful western neighbour. Moreover, the influx of an estimated half million Palestinian Jordanians from the Gulf in the early 1990s helped increase the sense of resentment and rootlessness, for which Israel is ultimately blamed.

Research on this sensitive point is discouraged by the government out of fear that more attention given to it would exacerbate Palestinian-Jordanian tensions in the country. However, there is a very strong empathy with the plight of the Palestinians, and a feeling that Jordan, with a larger Palestinian population than any other country, has a duty to remain faithful to the cause of Palestine. While, if a comprehensive peace treaty were signed between Israel and the Palestinian Authority it is probable that most Jordanians would accept it, some, in Jordan as elsewhere in the Arab world, would likely consider such a treaty as just another betrayal.

The interplay between the strong feelings of support for Palestinians and Jordanian domestic politics must also be considered in understanding Jordanian politics. From 1957 until 1992, political parties in the Kingdom were officially banned, reflecting the instability that marked Jordan's political life from the 1950s until the 1970s. The only non-tribal and non-governmental political organizations allowed during this period were the professional associations, which functioned as guilds in the sense that membership was compulsory in most professions; and the Muslim Brotherhood, which was officially regarded as a social, religious and cultural organization.

Neither of them were anti-Hashemite, and their relations with the government were generally good. However, both the associations and the Brotherhood to some degree served as nodes of opposition, the former more from a leftist and pan-Arab point of view, and the latter from an Islamist point of view. After parties were officially legalized in 1992, the political nature of both the Associations and the Brotherhood increased. The Brotherhood formed the largest

single political party in the country, under the name 'Islamic Action Front' (IAF), while the professional associations developed into an amalgam of Islamist and leftist sentiment (the former on the increase, and the latter on the decline), united most strongly by a vehement anti-Israel attitude and a desire to see more of the power in the country wielded by the professional classes, instead of by the monarchy.

Following the Gulf War, the Madrid Conference brought together Israeli and PLO delegates for the first time, though the latter were officially part of the Jordanian delegation. In June 1992, Israel voted in the Labour Party for the first time in 15 years, led by Yitzhak Rabin. Despite the change, the Madrid framework continued with regular meetings in Washington DC, but little progress was apparent. However, in August 1993, leaks of secret meetings between the PLO and the Israeli government emerged. By that time the Jordanian delegation to the Washington talks had reached a general level of understanding with their Israeli counterparts. This understanding could very easily have taken on the form of a framework for talks leading to a peace treaty well before 1993, but the Jordanian-Israeli track of the peace process had been waiting for progress on the other tracks. The Jordanians had been unwilling to move too far ahead of Syria or the Palestinians. However, in response to their stalled talks with the Israelis in Washington, the PLO had turned to secret negotiations in Oslo to break the deadlock.

The official Jordanian reaction to the surprise announcement of the Oslo Accords was shaped by two main reservations. First, Jordanian officials felt 'duped' by the PLO's secret negotiations. While the PLO was negotiating secretly in Oslo, it had also been working with Jordan on coordinating committees for the Washington talks. Jordan had felt that it was the natural partner to link the Israelis and the PLO during peace negotiations. However, no mention of the direct contacts between the PLO and the Israeli government under the aegis of Norway had been made to the Jordanians.⁷ Second, the Jordanians had reservations about the nature of the 'interim' agreement. Jordanian leaders feared that Jericho might become a dumping ground for Palestinians who would eventually be evicted to Jordan.⁸ King Hussein also wanted more information on what direction such an interim agreement was intended to head.⁹ However, once Yasser Arafat briefed the King on 3 September 1993, he gave his full support to the PLO and the Oslo agreement.

Jordan was not displeased that the Oslo agreement broke the logjam in the Washington talks.¹⁰ Since the PLO, not just the Palestinian delegation, had agreed in principle to peace with Israel, Jordan could now move forward with its own agenda. The day after the signing of the Oslo Accords in Washington, Jordanian and Israeli officials signed an agreement on an agenda for peace talks.¹¹ Where this agenda would lead, however, was not yet clear. For example, on 6 November the government announced it would only sign a treaty with Israel along with Syria and Lebanon,¹² a position that quickly became non-operative.

Like the regime, the Jordanian opposition was caught very much by surprise by the Oslo Accords. Most non-PLO groups in Jordan immediately criticized the agreement and the IAF 'categorically rejected' the accord, labelling it a sell-out to Israel.¹³ Other opposition figures joined the Islamists in criticizing the PLO's concessions in the agreement. Arab Nationalist writers, such as Muna Shuqir and Salih al-Qallab, questioned the postponement of an agreement on settlements, Jerusalem, and especially refugees. As Israel was the stronger partner in the agreement, Shuqir saw the Israeli interpretation of the vague agreement as the more 'likely to stick'.¹⁴ However, both felt that the Oslo Accords' main damage was to Arab unity and political coordination.¹⁵ Nevertheless, in the end, Qallab found the risky agreement better than the status quo at the time.¹⁶

The press reported that public opinion was divided in its support of the PLO's agreement.¹⁷ The Balqa' refugee camp—known as a barometer of Palestinian opinion in Jordan—witnessed demonstrations against the accord. However, pro-Fatah activists countered the Hamas-sponsored demonstration with their own.¹⁸ When questioned, however, most Palestinian refugees feared the outcome of the 'Gaza and Jericho First' plan would be to abandon them.¹⁹ On the other hand, some Jordanians of East Bank origin saw the Oslo Accords as the hopeful first step towards removing the Palestinians from being a concern of Jordan.²⁰

PREPARING FOR A TREATY

Even before the reports of the secret negotiations in Oslo emerged, however, King Hussein had been preparing the domestic arena for the eventuality of peacemaking with Israel. Jordanian elections had already been scheduled for November 1993. Over the summer of 1993, a debate over changing the election law had been simmering. With the early reports of the Oslo talks, the Jordanian regime quickly moved to amend the law and on 17 August the King decreed amendments. The previous 'open-list' system, which had significantly benefited the Muslim Brotherhood, was changed to a 'one-man, one-vote' system, which tended to benefit tribal leaders. The opposition was enraged by the decree, yet eventually acquiesced to the change.²¹

The announcement of the Oslo Accords put the holding of the election briefly into doubt, but it eventually proceeded as scheduled. The change in the election law demonstrated its desired effect and tribal leaders and pro-government candidates won a majority of the seats. The Islamists and other opposition groups saw their representation in parliament nearly halved and some new members, such as Toujan Faisal, even praised the peace process in general terms but eventually became bitter opponents of normalization.²² In larger terms, however, with the election, King Hussein arranged the removal of most obstacles—internal and external—to an eventual peace agreement with Israel.²³

By July 1994, negotiations with Israel had reached the point where the two sides were willing to formally end the state of war between them. King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin announced the 'Washington Declaration' on 25

July 1994, in the presence of US President Clinton. The Declaration opened the way for final negotiations towards a peace treaty between Jordan and Israel. Through August and September of 1994, negotiators quickly resolved issues of border, water and economic cooperation. The treaty was signed on 26 October 1994 in a ceremony at the Wadi 'Arava border point, to the accompaniment of considerable international acclaim, and most Jordanians were pleased to bask in Western approval.

THE DEBATE OVER THE TREATY

As early as July 1994, the government of Jordan began a media campaign to sway public opinion to support the impending agreement.²⁴ The regime knew that it would be difficult to garner public support for ending nearly 50 years of hostilities with Israel, especially in the absence of a comprehensive accord for Middle East peace. For this reason, King Hussein personally took the lead in promoting the treaty and in contrast to most Jordanian government campaigns, in which the prime minister appeared as the main policy actor, King Hussein made it clear that the peace treaty was 'his'. Thus, any opposition to the treaty would be interpreted by the regime as opposition to the monarchy itself—with the resultant consequences.²⁵ The campaign attempted to sway Jordanians to support the peace treaty with four major arguments:

First, the regime and its supporters presented the treaty as a strategic option for Jordan—one in which the country had little choice. In order to escape its post-Gulf War isolation, the government urged that Jordan needed to join the peace camp and King Hussein argued that in the past many opportunities for peace with Israel had been missed.²⁶ Government supporters in the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Deputies recommended that the House endorse the treaty as the 'best' accord the regime could have reached given what was 'possible and realistic'.²⁷ Economic commentator Fahd Fanek, for example, argued that 'those who reject peace must offer an alternative, which can only be war'.²⁸ Government supporters argued that the treaty would end Jordan's international 'isolation'.²⁹ Without the treaty, Tarek Massarweh of *Al-Ra'i* newspaper argued, the 'noose' that surrounded Jordan since 1991—and especially after the 1993 Oslo accords—would 'dry up' the country.³⁰

The second argument pointed out that in the peace treaty, Jordan—as an independent state—got all that it claimed back from Israel. The government, in a statement to the lower house of parliament, said that the treaty should quickly be ratified in order 'to regain the Jordanian rights in land and water, to protect the county from threats and conspiracy and to ascertain the Kingdom's borders'.³¹ Prime Minister Abdul Salaam al-Majali emphasized that Jordan had settled all its outstanding issues with Israel.³²

The Jordanian territory that Israel held was to return to full Jordanian sovereignty and in addition Jordan would gain access to additional water resources from the River Jordan and Lake Tiberias. More important than these,

however, was the government's claim that in the treaty Israel explicitly and conclusively recognized that Jordan was not Palestine.³³ Cecil Hourani, in the opinion pages of *The Jordan Times*, emphasized that the treaty 'puts an end, once and for all, to the possibility that a future Israeli government might revive' such a claim.³⁴ Making the same point, Abd al-Hafiz al-Shakhanibah asked rhetorically in his speech to the House, 'Weren't you frightened by the concept of the substitute homeland? Weren't you frightened that solving the Palestinian problem would only be done in Jordan through the establishment of a Palestinian state in this country?' For Shakhanibah, the treaty ended his fears.³⁵

A third argument presented by the regime pointed to the provisions in the treaty for future multilateral negotiations. Issues such as refugees and economic cooperation were scheduled for negotiations not just between Israel and Jordan, but would include Egypt and the Palestinians as well. Prime Minister Majali argued in his rebuttal to the House debate that such problems could not just be resolved bilaterally between Jordan and Israel.³⁶

Finally, and perhaps most effectively in the short run, the regime endeavoured to sell the treaty based on its expected economic benefits to the whole country and its potential to create significant for new investment in Jordan. This message targeted Jordanians of both Palestinian and East Bank origin. The government argued that the US had promised Jordan a large package of debt relief and aid. Such a peace dividend would jump-start Jordan's sluggish economy and provide new jobs—especially in the tourism industry.³⁷ The government reminded citizens of the example of Egypt, and the rewards it received for signing the Camp David accords in 1978. In the popular imagination, there appeared the possibility of a new era for Jordan based on American and Israeli aid and investment. As late as 1996, Jordanians would (seemingly seriously) argue to private Israelis and Americans the need for Jordan to receive a billion dollars of aid to stabilize the country and its economy, based on what Egypt had been receiving since Camp David.³⁸

The opposition generally rejected the peace treaty that had been signed with Israel. At least in public, most of the opposition rejected the actual treaty but not necessarily the notion of peace itself. Reasons for opposition can be broken down into four general points. The first reason given was based on its abandonment of Arab coordination. Arab nationalists and leftists faulted the treaty for violating the principles of UN Security Council resolutions 194, 237, 242, and 338. Thus, the treaty failed 'to comply with the requirements of international legitimacy'.³⁹ The Islamists also criticized the government for signing a treaty that 'would end Jordan's ties with other Arab and Muslim countries'.⁴⁰

Second, the opposition criticized the treaty for only dealing with the issue of Palestinian refugees in later multilateral talks. Many in the opposition saw the treaty as 'depriving the refugees of the right to return to their homeland'.⁴¹ Other Islamists reiterated this point by charging that the treaty only dealt with the issue of refugees as a humanitarian problem and not as a political one. Muhammad

Uwaydah saw this delay an issue of great concern for many Jordanians—and not just those of Palestinian origin.⁴²

Other deputies criticized the treaty on a third point. They rejected the government's claim that Jordan had reclaimed its rights to land and water from Israel.⁴³ They especially objected to the provision of leasing land returned to Jordanian sovereignty to Israeli farmers as a denigration of that sovereignty.⁴⁴

Finally, opponents of the peace treaty also criticized the government for cracking down on political liberties. Since the beginning of the peace process with the Madrid Conference in 1991, the opposition charged, the government had been reversing the process of political liberalization.⁴⁵ It argued that since the regime could not refute their arguments, the government was now attempting to silence them. According to Labib Qamhawi, for the government, 'this period requires absolute obedience, and this is why democracy is a luxury that the government will not tolerate or accept'.⁴⁶ After the signing of the treaty, permits for marches protesting it were virtually denied by the government. Nevertheless, demonstrations took place anyway, of which some were broken up by force. On 28 November 1994, Deputy Abd al-Aziz Abu-Zant was injured after clashes broke out in response to a Friday sermon by the Muslim Brotherhood. The IAF blamed government agents for the attack.⁴⁷

Opposition politicians criticized the restrictions on dissent to the treaty in the press and in their speeches during the ratification of the treaty. IAF spokesman Hamzah Mansour stated that the 'government is active with unjustified oversensitivity'.⁴⁸ Bassam Haddadin, in his speech to the House of Deputies, charged the government with restricting public liberties. 'Whenever progress was made in the negotiation process, the government had tightened its grip on the opposition and limited participation in the decision making process to the smallest circles and sometimes to a few individuals.'⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the opposition generally reiterated its commitment to express dissent through 'peaceful and democratic forms of protest'.⁵⁰

In the end, the treaty was ratified by the parliament by a vote of 55 to 23. IAF Deputy Abdullah al-Akayilah summed up his movement's reaction to the passing of the treaty by saying that he 'was not surprised by the result. We cannot but accept the decision of the majority in compliance with the democracy in which we live.' He then said that the opposition's focus would shift to preparing a programme to resist normalization with Israel and the 'coming Zionist invasion of our culture'.⁵¹

This last point was perhaps broadly the most effective. It played on the Arab fear of Western/Zionist influence overwhelming the Arab world. Islamists frequently spoke of an Israeli plot to invade the Arab world culturally and economically through Jordan. This theme has been reiterated by many anti-normalization spokespersons.⁵²

It is important to note that at this point, except for the hard-line opposition, most Jordanians were not actively opposed to the treaty. Many ordinary people were clearly impressed by the expected economic benefits. Some saw Amman as

the new Beirut, and Jordan serving as the bridge between Israel and the Arab world (precisely the fear of the Islamists). Tourism was expected to benefit quickly and massively. The month before the treaty was signed, the admission fee to Jordan's primary tourist site, the ancient city of Petra, was quadrupled overnight in expectation of tourists who would divide their time between Israel and Jordan.

The perception of Jordanians at this time, during the two years following the treaty, gathered from numerous conversations, was that it was Israel which avidly, almost desperately, wanted peace. Many Jordanians who fully accepted the idea of peace between the two countries would have preferred that Jordan take its time over signing a treaty in order to obtain maximum concessions. The King was frequently portrayed as succumbing to American and Israeli pressure, and not obtaining the best deal for his country.

From the other side, Israelis were indeed supportive of peace, but most saw Jordan primarily as a stepping-stone to the Arab world. Few were interested in or knowledgeable about Jordan in itself. Though a section of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs was kept busy drawing up ideas for grandiose peace projects, the actions of the government gave no indication that Jordan was, or would become, a centrepiece of Israeli policy. This gradually became apparent to Jordanians.

Even those without ideological baggage were suspicious, if also somewhat hopeful. 'We need time to see if Israel keeps its word' or 'Let us see if Israel has really changed', were refrains heard from many academics who were interviewed during this period. This expresses a fundamental difference between the perceptions of the two sides. Israelis saw the peace treaty as ratifying the fact that there were no state-to-state issues between Jordan and Israel, and as a long-overdue formal acceptance of Israel's right to exist. Jordanians, who had been taught for many years that Zionism was inherently expansionistic and violent, needed to be assured that Israel's attitudes had changed. Since Israelis had never remotely seen themselves in those terms—indeed, their expression would have been considered *prima facie* anti-Semitism—they could not imagine why assurance was needed. Israelis, as well as the Israeli government, were ready to treat Jordanians and Jordan with a brusque, non-hostile, impersonality. Jordanians, who looked for more on a personal as well as diplomatic basis, were soon disappointed.

THE AFTERMATH OF THE TREATY

The basic support for the treaty lasted for about a year and a half. The mood of those days is captured by *Link Magazine*. Israel is portrayed as damaging its own reputation through over-excitement at the prospect of regional cooperation at the Casablanca Middle East Economic Summit in October 1994. Jordanians are cautiously interested in establishing ties but wary of being identified as having Israeli partners. The article includes a prescient quote from Jordanian economist

Riad al-Khouri: 'The ice has been broken but the temperature is still below zero. It could easily freeze over again.'⁵³

The next Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit was held in Amman, from 29–31 October 1995. Jordanian observers were extremely pleased with its results, and even more so that it was seen as recognizing Jordan as an economic force in the region, undeniably a direct result of the treaty with Israel. It was recognized by all that the US had been the driving force behind the summits and was particularly interested in new Arab-Israeli economic projects. The positive outcomes of the summit included loan agreements for over \$300 million from Japan and the World Bank.⁵⁴

However, as the first year of the treaty progressed, it appeared that, while no disasters had occurred, most promised benefits, other than the MENA conference itself, were slow in making an appearance. Trade grew only slowly.⁵⁵ While tourism from Israel did appear, it barely registered on the economic barometer, as most Israeli tourists came either for day trips, to see only Petra and one or two other major sites, or stayed only a short time. Moreover, all Jordanians seemed to know that Israeli tourists brought their lunches with them and bought no souvenirs. Even worse, while the number of tourists from third countries increased after the treaty was signed, it became apparent that many tourists or pilgrims simply added a day or two in Jordan while spending a week or more in Israel. Many Jordanians regarded this as no less than an Israeli plot and an attempt to damage the Jordanian economy.

The hard core of the anti-normalization forces did not, of course, accept the treaty without a fight. After failing to have any effect on its ratification, the IAF, leftist parties and professional associations tried to hold a conference on the subject in Amman. After the government twice refused permission, it was held in September 1995 on the premises of a political party, thus obviating the need for permission, and was attended by 300 people.⁵⁶

The anti-normalization forces appeared to suffer a setback in the aftermath of the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on 4 November 1995. Jordanians mourned the assassination, but appeared confident that the new government, led by Shimon Peres, would carry the process forward.⁵⁷ King Hussein's moving eulogy was featured around the world and the period from Rabin's assassination until the end of February 1996 was, in retrospect, the high water mark of support for peace and normalization.

During that period, the government felt confident enough to propose amending the law on professional associations, to weaken their power.⁵⁸

The week before the government proposed amending the law on professional associations saw the arrest of Engineers' Association Head Layth Shubaylat, the most prominent of the anti-normalization leaders, on charges of 'sedition and slighting His Majesty', based on a speech which was critical of government policies and predicted economic austerity, as opposed to the peace dividend expected by the government.⁵⁹

During that time, Israeli Prime Minister Peres and Foreign Minister Ehud Barak visited Jordan, and King Hussein visited Israel. In January five new bilateral agreements were signed, thus completing the thirteen envisioned by the peace treaty of 1994. After their festive signing, the Monitoring Committee set up by the treaty was disbanded, having completed its mission.⁶⁰ At the banquet in Eilat given for Crown Prince Hassan to celebrate the signing, the Prince noted, 'today normal life between Jordan and Israel can begin at last'. Similarly, columnist Musa Keilani wrote in an opinion piece, 'We have little reason to doubt the Israeli seriousness and interest to develop close economic relations with Jordan'.⁶¹ In February, Peres announced new elections for 29 May, and polls showed him 15 points ahead, a figure that had been fairly steady since the assassination two months earlier.

This period of warmth and high expectations (which was shared on the Israeli side) ended explosively on 25 February 1996, with two bus bombs in Jerusalem. Twenty-six were killed and 77 wounded. The Jordanian government, and some of the press, were outraged at the bombers. *The Jordan Times* opined on 4 March that 'The bombs are aimed at peace'. In private conversations, some Jordanians expressed their sympathy with Israelis. However, Israel's response to the ongoing bombing campaign, which involved a comprehensive closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and significant hardship to Palestinians, quickly transformed the sympathy into anger. Soon the press and then the government focused much more on the ongoing closure and the Palestinian suffering it entailed, in the process drawing negative conclusions for the possibilities of Israeli-Jordanian normalization.

On 9 April a new front was opened, when rockets from Lebanon rained down on the Galilee. Peres, whose popularity among the Israeli public had plummeted following the bombing campaign, felt he had to demonstrate strength and resolve. Israel began a bombing campaign, whose intensity was quickly ratcheted up and given the name 'Grapes of Wrath'. Jordanian anger, which had been building at the closure, was demonstrated in a drumbeat of daily attacks on Israel. *The Jordan Times*, which had been the most pro-normalization of the daily newspapers, editorialized that the Israeli response to the Katyusha rockets from Lebanon 'lacks even the resemblance of credibility' in its disproportion.⁶² The next day it warned, 'Peace is being shattered in Lebanon'. The lower house of the parliament condemned the bombing in a resolution, which proclaimed that it 'expresses to the world the true face of the Jewish state'.

On 18 April, an Israeli shell killed at least 100 refugees in a UN compound in Qana. Jordanian fury at Israel's action reached a crescendo. Few Jordanians could believe that the vaunted and technically advanced Israeli military had hit the compound accidentally, and detailed post-mortems poked holes in Israel's insistence that it had been unintentional. Virtually no Israeli could imagine any reason that Israel would deliberately kill civilians in that fashion, while Jordanians were seemingly unanimously convinced that Israel, utterly callous about Arab life, was simply trying to teach a lesson. Columnist Musa Keilani,

who only a few months before was secure in his expectations of normalization, wrote 'Israel should not wonder anymore why its efforts at normalization of relations at the popular level are sagging. If anything, its bloodbath in Lebanon has already moved many Jordanians from the centre of the road to openly opposing ties with the Jewish State.'⁶³ On the same day, *The Jordan Times* editorialized, 'Israeli bullets have rendered the peace agreements in the region nothing more than ink on paper'.⁶⁴ As usual, the Arabic language press was even harsher. Sultan al Hattab wrote in *Al-Ra'i* that the campaign 'destroyed any lingering hope for coexistence with the Jewish State...The Arabs have no doubt that Israel does not contemplate a genuine peace with its neighbours.'⁶⁵

Even on the economic front, in a development seemingly unrelated to the political disillusionment with Israel, expectations for normalization were receding. A *Jordan Times* headline read 'Israeli market seen unable to plug Jordan's trade gap with Iraq'. Businessmen were quoted as saying 'I don't think that any of the Jordanian businessmen will rely on the Israeli market—this is by far unlikely and we are not enthusiastic for this market.' Much of the article contained warnings against expecting too much from trade with Israel.⁶⁶

Jordanian hope for and belief in normalization never again reached the point that it had achieved in the first two months of 1996. Having been taught all their lives that Zionism was inherently expansionistic and racist, the moderate forces in Jordan had nevertheless largely suspended their disbelief and chosen to see a change. When Israel reacted to terror attacks swiftly and forcefully, Jordanians felt betrayed. Though much else was to happen, the spring of 1996 marked a loss of innocence on the Jordanian side that was never regained.

Obviously, Israelis viewed the situation completely differently. The change, from their point of view, had come from the Arabs, who had finally agreed to recognize the fact of Israel's existence. When it transpired that the Palestinian Authority could not do as it had undertaken and prevent terror, Israel had little doubt that it had to react forcefully in a justifiable defence of its citizen's lives. Likewise, if the Lebanese government was unable or unwilling to control Hizbullah, Israel must make it painful enough for Lebanon that the government would do so, or at least so Israel hoped. From discussions at this time with Israelis who wholeheartedly supported the peace process, it was clear that nothing that had happened since Oslo had caused them to reassess these fundamental assumptions. Many felt that Arab complaints regarding Israel's reactions were, basically, to be ignored as they always had been.

Given this dynamic, which was based on the absolute certainty of each side that it was the victim in the conflict, it is clear that even if the bus bombings and rocket attacks on the Galilee had not taken place, normalization of relations would have been difficult. Each side believed that it had made fundamental concessions unmatched by the other. The Arabs had recognized Israel, despite their belief in the fundamental injustice of its creation. Israelis saw that as a simple recognition of reality. On the other side, Israelis had agreed to recognize the enemies they saw as sworn to their destruction and accept a process which would

presumably lead to a Palestinian state, the prevention of which had been the linchpin of Israeli policy since 1948. Arabs saw this as a minimal, grudging and belated recognition of part of the enormous injustice Israel had wrought.

This mood in Jordan was well expressed by *Jordan Times* columnist Walid Sadi, an attorney and human rights advocate with moderate views. He wrote, four days after the Qana incident, 'What worries me is the inevitable conclusion that even many moderate Arabs are beginning to share the idea that peace between Israel and the Arab peoples is unnatural and what is natural is the continuation of a state of war notwithstanding all the peace treaties that have been concluded'.⁶⁷

Arabs cried foul when Israel responded to attacks. Why should the entire Palestinian or Lebanese population suffer for the acts of a few fanatics? To them, this showed the perennial Israeli disdain for Arab life. Israel, however, saw it as a people-to-people confrontation, as always. The Palestinians had failed in their promise to fight terrorism, and thus Israel would have to do it in the only way it could. Lebanon had refused to control its own borders, and thus Israel would likewise have to persuade it to do so.

In Jordan, and in Israel as well, many felt that the primary reason for the launching of Grapes of Wrath was the need by Shimon Peres to make himself appear a more aggressive and hard-line figure to win the election. Whether connected to Grapes of Wrath or not, toward the end of the election campaign, rumours appeared that King Hussein's preferred candidate was not Peres the dove, but rather Netanyahu the hawk. Interviews with well-connected Jordanian academics during and soon after the campaign confirmed the impression that the King, though perhaps not his subjects, was hoping for a Netanyahu win. Reasons given for this varied. Some asserted that the King was seriously concerned about Shimon Peres's reputed pro-Palestinian and pro-Syrian orientation. The King, according to this analysis, was determined that Jordan be Israel's primary Arab partner, and was concerned that Peres might not share this orientation. Others talked of a lack of chemistry between Peres and Hussein, in contrast to the relationship between the King and Rabin, Peres's long-time political adversary. In any case, it was believed in Jordan that no tears were shed in the Palace when Benjamin Netanyahu squeaked to victory on 29 May 1996. The King expressed his 'high hopes for (Netanyahu's) success in reaching a just, comprehensive and lasting peace for generations to come'. According to *The Jordan Times*, however, based on interviews with Jordanians from various backgrounds, Netanyahu's election was viewed as a blow to the Middle East peace process.⁶⁸

Whether or not they had a preference before the elections, many Jordanians were not overly concerned about the victory of the Israeli right. For example, at a workshop at the Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace of Hebrew University, inaugurating a programme of Israeli-Jordanian academic cooperation which, coincidentally, began the day after the election, the Jordanian participants assured their Israeli hosts that the peace process was irreversible, and that the peace was between countries, not individuals or parties. Their major concern was

whether Likud had abandoned its 'Jordan is Palestine' orientation of the late 1980s.

This mood of optimism on the part of Jordanians turned out to be short-lived. During the summer of 1996, the Arab moderates sought to find common ground with the Netanyahu government. For most the attempt ended in the explosion of violence following Israel's opening of the Western Wall Tunnel in September 1996. King Hussein was particularly incensed since, shortly before the opening, Prime Minister Netanyahu's foreign policy advisor, Dore Gold, had visited him and mentioned nothing of the plans. The tunnel riots energized the anti-normalization forces in Jordan, where reportedly 37 groups representing a variety of divergent views joined the IAF in a declaration calling for resistance to 'all forms of normalization with the Zionist enemy'.⁶⁹ Before the tunnel incident, normalization was a neutral word for many and could be supported or opposed. After the tunnel incident, many turned against normalization, a blow from which it never really recovered.

The year following the tunnel riots was the crucial one. Five separate incidents, which made the news, some around the world, illustrate the downward progression of the Israeli-Jordanian relationship. The Jordanian opposition could not have asked for a better series of events, which helped its campaign to discredit the treaty and the legitimacy of a Jordanian relationship with Israel.

In January 1997, an Israeli trade fair was held in Amman, sponsored by Israeli government institutions and organized by a Jordanian businessman. It was realized on all sides that, while economics could not make the relationship succeed, the lack of an economic relationship could certainly result in failure of the treaty. From all accounts, the success of the boycott against the trade fair pleased and even surprised the organizers. Supported by 20 of Jordan's 23 recognized political parties, the demonstration mobilized a reported 4,000 people and only a few Jordanians braved the protests to visit the trade fair. The opposition had shown its ability to mobilize the population, in clear contrast to the government's goal of greatly increasing economic ties. The government was embarrassed, Israelis were confused, and the anti-normalizers had achieved their first clear success.

The agreement on the Hebron deployment between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in January 1997 was hailed by the Jordanian government and the press as a new departure and was seen as a defeat for the Israeli right wing. Peace—and eventual normalization—seemed again within the realms of possibility.⁷⁰ However, precisely because this was the case, the Netanyahu government had to now make a gesture to its supporters on the right and thus the next issue was virtually a gift to the Arab peace process opposition by the Israeli government.

Israel had long been interested in building a housing development on a wooded hill facing the Palestinian city of Bethlehem, but inside the expanded borders of Jerusalem. Known in Hebrew as Har Homa and in Arabic as Jebel Abu Ghneim, the hill occupied a strategic position, as, if built on, it would effectively prevent any Palestinian linkup of the northern and southern areas of

the West Bank near Jerusalem. In February 1997, the Likud government announced that it would build a new neighbourhood there and Har Homa was viewed as a new settlement by Arabs (and most of the rest of the world), who warned it would endanger the entire peace process.⁷¹

The reaction from the Palestinian Authority was immediate. It also became a major rallying cry in Jordan and through most of the Arab world. This was precisely the sort of action that Arabs had understood that the Oslo process was intended to prevent, namely, the change of status of parts of Jerusalem. For many Israelis, the issue was equally black and white. They said that Har Homa/Jebel Abu Ghneim was within the Israeli borders of Jerusalem, and therefore a purely domestic issue. The Israeli peace camp adamantly opposed Har Homa, though, and staged a series of demonstrations there, with no perceptible effect on the government's intentions.

If the trade fair had symbolized Israeli economic penetration of Jordan to the opposition, Har Homa/Jebel Abu Ghneim was a clear example of what Arabs had always seen in Zionism, namely, expropriation of Arab land under transparent (or without) pretext. As the relationship between Israel and the Palestinian Authority deteriorated, Jordanians who had pointed out that there was no reason for Jordan to be 'purer' than the Palestinians themselves regarding dealing with Israel were abashed and another leg of the pro-normalization forces was cut off.

The cause of the next incident was lost sight of in subsequent developments. Apparently, King Hussein had requested permission from the Israeli government to fly Arafat to Gaza in his own plane and, in what appeared to be monumental insensitivity, permission was refused. The King responded with a furious three-page letter sent on 9 March 1997 to Prime Minister Netanyahu, and very quickly leaked to the press. The King, whose language was usually extremely circumspect, accused the Prime Minister, with whom his public relations had been cordial until then, of allowing a situation to develop in which the lives of all Arabs and Israelis were 'sliding towards an abyss of bloodshed and disaster, brought about by fear and despair'.⁷² In his letter the King alluded to a number of issues, including Har Homa/Jebel Abu Ghneim, a US veto in the Security Council of a condemnation of Israel, delays on Israeli withdrawal, holding up work on a port and airport for Gaza and, most dramatically, having almost tested the Israeli refusal to allow Arafat to travel on his jet, he asked whether the Air Force would have shot him down. Such an unbridled personal attack was out of character for the King, and expressed eloquently the frustration that he, Israel's best friend in the Arab world, was experiencing in trying to influence the Israeli government. Netanyahu's bland response did nothing to soothe matters.

However, the letter incident was almost immediately overtaken by another, more tragic event. On 13 March a Jordanian soldier, Ahmed Daqamseh, opened fire on a group of Israeli schoolgirls from a religious school in Beit Shemesh, killing seven. They were picnicking on the 'Island of Peace' in the Jordan River, called Naharayim in Hebrew and Bequra in Arabic. The soldier later claimed that they had ridiculed him while he was praying. Jordanian reaction illustrated

the varied attitudes towards normalization. The regime and its supporters denounced the crime in the strongest terms. 'It was the most heinous crime ever committed in Jordan', wrote Musa Keilani.⁷³ However, Keilani went on to state explicitly that the only gainer was Netanyahu and his anti-peace policies, and even to imply, with no shred of evidence, that the perpetrator may have intended that result. From all appearances, the majority of Jordanians disapproved of the attack and expressed sympathy for the victims.⁷⁴ However, very soon Daqamseh became a hero to anti-normalization Jordanians. Police prevented a pilgrimage to his house and, led by the Jordanian Bar Association, 200 Jordanian lawyers competed to represent him.⁷⁵

The King, meanwhile, in a moment etched indelibly in virtually every Israeli memory, came to Israel to visit the homes of the dead children, during the seven-day Jewish mourning ceremony known as the *shiva*. According to tradition, mourners sit on the floors or on low stools to express their grief. Accompanied by television cameras, the King visited each home that would have him, sitting on the floor with the mourners and Israelis were touched by human gesture of sharing their grief, which they had never before seen from an Arab leader. Jordanians were also impressed, but very differently. As they were unfamiliar with Jewish customs, it appeared to them that the King was kneeling to the Jews, abasing and humiliating himself, and denigrating the dignity of his office and his country. A storm of condemnation broke out, and the King found himself on the defensive domestically, though he had made a multitude of friends across the river. Eventually, despite his legions of legal representatives, Daqamseh was convicted and sentenced to life in prison (angering many Israelis, who felt that was almost an acquittal under the circumstances), and remains a martyr for the anti-normalization cause. Israelis were perplexed by the spectacle, and were beginning to understand that peace with Jordan was not as simple as it had once appeared.

The worst incident with regard to Jordanian pride, however, was still to come. The anti-normalization forces could not have come up with a better scenario than the Khalid Masha'al affair to discredit normal relations with Israel. The attempted daytime assassination of the Hamas spokesman in the streets of Amman is the subject of another article in this volume, and the details will therefore not be related here, except with regard to Jordanian reaction. Jordanians were outraged by the intended assassination. Not even the closures of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the Grapes of Wrath campaign in 1996 had aroused such passions. While the earlier actions were against the Palestinians and Lebanese, who had perpetrated the attacks against Israel, this attack was exactly what the signed peace treaty was intended to prevent.

The Jordanian public response was predictable, but not, apparently, to Israelis. Even many liberal, peace-oriented Israelis seemed to believe that the only thing wrong with the operation was its failure. After almost 50 years of overt and covert retaliation against Israel's enemies all over the world, one more hit was barely an issue, except for the incompetence it exposed. The fact that the Israeli-

Jordanian treaty explicitly and unambiguously prohibited this behaviour seemed a non-issue. The arguably more important fact that it exposed King Hussein to ridicule from his own people and the rest of the Arab world, and dealt a virtual death blow to any lingering Jordanian feelings of trust towards Israel, also seemed irrelevant to some Israelis. They were apparently unable to understand Jordanian sensitivities, and the conflicting reactions made clear the extreme difficulties facing Jordanian-Israeli popular relations. The King's mild public reaction to the incident confirmed for many Jordanians that he was in the pocket of the Israelis, though, of course, such sentiments could not be expressed publicly.

King Hussein had by no means given up the fight for peace and for normalization of Israel's relationship with the Arab world. However, by the end of 1997, it appeared that the battle for the Jordanian public's acceptance of Israel in the framework set up by Oslo seemed lost. The peace process itself was caught in a seemingly endless series of crises, only occasionally relieved by news of cooperation or a new agreement. The stability and progress implied by the term normalization had never had a chance to take root, and the Jordanian public had seemingly lost its faith in the possibility of achieving it.

What the Israeli public found difficult to understand, as did many who were unfamiliar with the dynamics of Jordanian political life, was that this had virtually no effect on the stability of King Hussein's reign which, in any case, was drawing to a close, but also on the viability of the Hashemite dynasty. In a sense, the King and most of the public agreed to disagree on this matter, with the rhetoric generally muted, as is normal in Jordanian public discourse. On the one hand, attacks on the King and the Hashemite monarchy are taboo but attacks on the government are acceptable, as one of the roles the prime minister serves is to be a punching bag for public disapproval. If he gets too battered, he is dismissed (the average length of King Hussein's governments was under a year). On the other hand, the government does not, except under extreme provocation, prosecute or generally act against the anti-normalizers, nor did it 'force' any Jordanian to participate in normalization activities. These were the rules of the game that developed.

Much of the year 1998 was taken up with the King's illness, which was only revealed to be terminal in the weeks before he died in February 1999. He was undergoing intensive therapy in the Mayo Clinic for the last half of 1998 and Crown Prince Hassan was, as always, the Regent. Jordanian public life was muted. However, the King did make a dramatic appearance, literally from his sickbed, at the Wye River Plantation negotiations between Prime Minister Netanyahu and Arafat, intensively moderated by President Clinton. His appearance was clearly part of the reason for the formal success of the summit, although Netanyahu suspended the agreements shortly thereafter, based on claims of Palestinian violations. Jordanian reaction to the King's role at Wye Plantation was muted. No one could criticize it, since it was a personal intervention by the monarch, and certainly the King's decisive part was a cause

of national pride. *The Star* solved the problem by quoting foreign support for the King's role, and in a separate article, indicating the scepticism of the Palestinian inhabitants of Jordanian refugee camps towards the agreement itself, with no word mentioned of the King's role.⁷⁶

About 25 January 1999, rumours began to circulate that the King was about to replace his brother, Crown Prince Hassan, who had been heir apparent to the throne since 1965, with his son, Prince Abdullah. Within days, this became official. Israelis and Americans scrambled to decode the relationship between the unexpected change, the peace process, and the relationship with Israel, as well as to the stability of the dynasty. Within two weeks, this speculation became that much more intense, when the King returned to Jordan for the second time and his death came on 7 February 1999.

EPILOGUE—AFTER THE DEATH OF KING HUSSEIN

In fact, the change in the succession had nothing to do with Israel. While speculation and various theories preoccupied the Jordanian public for months, most agreed that, as his death approached, the King wanted his son rather than his brother to carry on the dynastic line. As expected, Prince Hassan, though bitterly disappointed, accepted the succession without a murmur of public protest.

King Hussein's funeral was the most inclusive diplomatic event in years, and some of Hussein's bitterest enemies, most notably President Hafez al-Assad of Syria, took the opportunity to extend a hand of friendship to Jordan and its new King. Most observers predicted that there was every reason to shore up relations with Jordan's Arab neighbours and concentrate on domestic reform. King Hussein had devoted his last five years to reinstating his country in the good graces of the West, led by the United States, and creating the relationship with Israel that he and the United States had sought. Now, with the peace process seemingly stalled, there was every reason to turn inward, which is what he has done.

King Abdullah II, again as expected, continued King Hussein's policy with regard to Israel and the peace process. While his youth and dynamism were celebrated publicly, in private the grizzled veterans of Jordan's political wars decried his American accent and his inexperience. The new, Western-educated and -oriented King made it clear that his first priority was Jordan, and that he wanted to see a less corrupt, more prosperous country. King Hussein's attachment to Jerusalem soon disappeared from Jordanian priorities, seemingly not missed by Jordanians.

In September 2000, the Al-Aqsa Intifada broke out and like the Arab and Muslim world, Jordanians, in public at least, regarded it as a fight against an Israeli attempt to destroy the logic of the Oslo process, which they understood as leading inexorably to a Palestinian state in all of the West Bank with its capital in Jerusalem. Perhaps if King Hussein had been alive to make some contribution as

to the disposition of the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, the explosion could have been avoided. However, Jordan and its King were not consulted at the Camp David negotiations, nor were they involved in the outbreak of the second Intifada, any more than in the first.

However, all Jordanians publicly adopted the cause of the Palestinians, and attitudes towards Israel, already cool, became icy. Jordan and Egypt fought back an attempt at the Arab Summit to demand that all states break relations with Israel, but their victory had a price. Israeli diplomats were attacked on the streets of Amman, leading to a withdrawal of diplomats' families, and after the Jordanian Ambassador to Israel resigned, no successor was sent. Israel warned its citizens not to travel to Jordan.

Jordanian attitudes seemed, for the most part, to have reached the point that prescient observers feared even during the (retrospectively) halcyon days of 1994–96. The anti-normalizers had routed the normalizers from the field and though their leftist and Islamist baggage by no means represented the views of a majority of Jordanians, working with Israel and consorting with Israelis was now seen as an anti-Arab and anti-Islamic act. The blacklist that had been in the process of compilation for years was finally released and generally available. Many of those who appeared on it were solid and well-known citizens. These were precisely the people opposed by the Islamists and leftists and are Western-oriented, many Christians, often strong supporters of the monarchy.

It is reasonable to ask, is this so important? With the Hashemite monarchy still seeing Israel and, with it, the American connection as a strategic requirement, is public opinion really essential? Jordan is not, after all, a democracy, especially not in the realm of foreign affairs, and positive Jordanian public opinion, which would have been difficult to acquire and easy to lose, was perhaps not much of a prize for Israel. From a *realpolitik* point of view this perception has some merit. Israel still benefits from intelligence and other security cooperation, even if Jordan is more attuned to the United States than to Israel. The border is quiet, and the Hamas presence is low-key. At least at this point, there appears to be no question of Jordan breaking relations with Israel, much less joining the anti-Israel camp in the Arab and Muslim worlds. Jordan still has Israeli factories and the borders are (usually) open. What is the problem?

The fact that many Israelis probably think in those terms is what helped to lose Jordanian opinion. The fact is that on two major occasions, namely, the Six-Day War of 1967 and the Gulf War of 1990–91, Jordanian public opinion was probably the major factor in causing Jordan to take the stands it did. Now, with a more liberalized political system, the system is that much more responsive.⁷⁷ Jordan is still Israel's only likely gateway to the Arab world. If Jordanians are anti-Israel, it is unlikely that any other country will develop significant business or diplomatic ties. Moreover, Israel now feels surrounded by a wall of hostility, not that different from the situation before 1994.

In retrospect, the only way an Israeli-Jordanian peace could have succeeded was if an Israeli-Palestinian peace had done so. This was obvious to the

Jordanians, but much less so to the Israeli government, and certainly not to the Israeli public. The East Bank Jordanian leadership, and especially the more nationalistic among the East Bank elite (dubbed by many the 'Jordanian Likud') for its negative attitude towards Palestinians, also had hopes that Jordan's particularistic national interest could make the treaty work. And it has, on a security level, but not on a popular level, since the majority of the population that is of Palestinian origin will not countenance 'abandonment' of their Palestinian brethren.

The fight over normalization in Jordan is in some real respects a *Kulturkampf*, that is, a conflict that goes beyond the merits of dealing with Israel. On the side of the anti-normalizers are Islamists, ultimately seeking a Jordan, or even pan-Islamic state, governed by *shari'a*, plus assorted leftists and pan-Arabists. The other side is more complex. Much of the educated, Westernized elite, especially of East Jordanian background, would prefer to have good economic, political and even cultural relations with Israel, but recognize it is impossible without resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli dispute. However, the anti-normalizers oppose much of the entire world-view of those whom they dub normalizers and the Islamists especially do not want to see Jordan Westernized, whether or not Israel is involved. Thus, publication of the 'List of Shame' is a blow aimed at their cultural enemies, not just at normalizing with Israel.

The question now is whether the popular feeling against Israel will become so strong that the government will have to acquiesce with overt support by breaking relations with Israel. Even then, security cooperation could very possibly continue, because the fact is that the two regimes share important geostrategic interests. However, if there is a settlement of some sort of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, there is little reason to believe that Jordan's popular perception of Israeli will not improve to some degree, most especially if Israel's policy priorities include economic measures that are supportive of the weak Jordanian economy. Export of industries that are no longer profitable in Israel, plus joint ventures in high tech, could benefit the Jordanian economy enormously. This is what Jordan has been urging since 1994 and whether these measures can or will be undertaken by Israel remains to be seen.

Nevertheless, it is hard to believe that the anger and disillusionment now expressed will disappear in the near future. Thus, it is possible that the current Jordanian perception of the 'real face of Zionism' will become the reigning orthodoxy, which would constitute the 'Egyptianization' of Israel-Jordanian relations. This would be a consummation devoutly to be regretted by those who still hope for a Jordanian-Israeli popular rapprochement.

NOTES

1. Interview by Paul Scham, March 1996.

2. Ahmad Majdoubeh, *The Jordan Times*, 7 December 1995. Majdoubeh discusses the etymology of the word, but also points out that (already) it had acquired connotations and assumptions of Israel politically, culturally, and economically overwhelming Jordan.
3. Lori Plotkin, 'Jordanian-Israeli Peace: Taking Stock, 1994-1997', *Washington Institute Policy Focus, Research Memorandum* 32 (May 1997), p.27.
4. The Free Arab Voice: <http://www.fav.net/normalizersTheListOfShame.htm>.
5. While it is beyond the scope of the current article, it would be instructive to compare it to a roughly parallel situation in Egypt. In the early 1980s, concurrently with Israel's incursion into Lebanon, Egyptian public opinion, led by the intellectual class, solidified into solid opposition to Egypt's diplomatic relationship with Israel. Over the next 20 years, such opposition became a hallmark of that class, uniting political factions otherwise at odds. Those who support the idea of people-to-people relations between Jordanians and Israelis must bear that generation-long development in mind as a warning.
6. Adnan Abu-Odeh, *Jordanians, Palestinians and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process*, Washington DC, 1999.
7. *Middle East Mirror*, 2 September 1993.
8. *Ibid.*, 2 September 1993.
9. *BBC-Summary of World Broadcasts* (BBC-SWB), 4 September 1993.
10. Curtis R.Ryan, 'Jordan in the Middle East Peace Process: From War to Peace with Israel', in Ilan Peleg (ed.), *The Middle East Peace Process: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Albany, 1998, p.161.
11. *Financial Post*, 15 September 1993.
12. *The Jordan Times*, 6 November 1993.
13. BBC-SWB, 31 August 1993.
14. *Middle East Mirror*, 13 September 1993.
15. *Ibid.*, 2 September 1993, 13 September 1993, and 14 September 1993.
16. *Ibid.*, 14 September 1993.
17. *The Jordan Times*, 14 September 1993.
18. *Middle East Mirror*, 14 September 1993.
19. *Associated Press*, 1 September 1993.
20. *The Guardian*, 24 September 1993.
21. Russell E. Lucas, 'Institutions and Regime Survival Strategies: Collective Action and Path Dependence in Jordan', Ph.D. dissertation, Georgetown University, 2000, pp. 126-36.
22. *The Jordan Times*, 10 November 1993, p.1.
23. Mark Power Stevens (ed.), *Post-Election Seminar: A Discussion of Jordan's 1993 Parliamentary Elections*, Amman, 1994.
24. *United Press International*, 17 July 1994.
25. *Christian Science Monitor*, 5 August 1994.
26. FBIS-NES, 2 November 1994, 42.
27. *The Jordan Times*, 6 November 1994.
28. *International Herald-Tribune*, 25 July 1994.
29. Fawaz al-Zu'bi, *The Jordan Times*, 6 November 1994.
30. *Middle East Mirror*, 26 October 1994.
31. *The Jordan Times*, 31 October 1994.
32. *Ibid.*, 2 November 1994.

33. Marc Lynch, *State Interests and Public Spheres: The International Politics of Jordan's Identity*, New York, 1999, pp.166–97.
34. *The Jordan Times*, 2 November 1994.
35. *Ibid.*, 7 November 1994.
36. FBIS-NES, 7 November 1994.
37. *Al-Dustur*, 3 November 1994.
38. Discussions with Paul Scham.
39. Mustapha al-Shunaykat, *The Jordan Times*, 31 October 1994.
40. Ahmad al-Kassibah, *The Jordan Times*, 6 November 1994.
41. Ibrahim Zeid al-Kilani, *The Jordan Times*, 6 November 1994.
42. *The Jordan Times*, 7 November 1994.
43. Abd al-Rahim al-Akor, *The Jordan Times*, 7 November 1994.
44. Hamzah Mansour, *The Jordan Times*, 6 November 1994; Toujan Faisal, *The Jordan Times*, 7 November 1994.
45. *Al-Majd*, 14 November 94; Laurie Brand, 'The Effects of the Peace Process on Political Liberalization in Jordan', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol.28 No.2 (Winter1999), pp.52–67.
46. *The Star*, 3 November 1994.
47. *The Jordan Times*, 29 October 1994.
48. *Ibid.*, 29 October 1994.
49. *Ibid.*, 7 November 1994.
50. *Middle East Mirror*, 24 October 1994.
51. *The Jordan Times*, 7 November 1994.
52. See also the opinion article by Ahmed Majdoubeh, *The Jordan Times*, 7 December 1995.
53. *Link Magazine*, (November-December 1995), p.3.
54. *The Jordan Times*, 4 November 1994.
55. *Link Magazine*, (November-December 1995), p.2.
56. Plotkin, 'Jordanian-Israeli Peace', p.28.
57. *The Jordan Times*, 5 November 1994.
58. *Ibid.*, 16 November 1994.
59. *Ibid.*, 10 November 1994
60. *Ibid.*, 10 January 1995, 17 January 1995, 20 January 1995.
61. *Ibid.*, 20 January 1995.
62. *Ibid.*, 17 April 1996.
63. *Ibid.*, 20 April 1996.
64. *Ibid.*, 20 April 1996.
65. *Ibid.*, 20 April 1996.
66. *Ibid.*, 21 April 1996. On the other hand, an unpublished study indicated that while Jordanian businesspeople understated their actual willingness to deal with Israel, Israelis, on the contrary, were upbeat in their conversations regarding joint trade, but actually overstated their willingness in practice. Avi Kluger, Muhsen Makhamreh and Hisham Gharaibeh, 'Prospects of Business Cooperation Between Jordan and Israel: The Attitudes of Business Leaders in Both Countries', unpublished manuscript.
67. *The Jordan Times*, 22 April 1996.
68. *Ibid.*, 1 June 1996.
69. Rami Khouri, *The Jordan Times*, 15 October 1996.

70. Ibid., 18 January 1997.
71. Ibid., 23 February 1997.
72. Ibid., 12 March 1997.
73. Ibid., 15 March 1997.
74. Ibid., 15 March 1997.
75. Ibid., 18 March 1997.
76. *The Star*, October 29, 1998.
77. See Lynch.

Water in Israeli-Jordanian Relations: From Conflict to the Danger of Ecological Disaster

BRUCE BORTHWICK

In the summer of 1999 both Israel and Jordan faced a water crisis of unprecedented dimensions. What had been described for a decade or more as a crisis now loomed as a catastrophe. In the winter months of November 1998 through March of 1999 rainfall in the Jordan Valley was less than 250 mm,¹ a drop of 60 per cent; the water in the Yarmuk River, which supplies Syria, Jordan and Israel, was at its lowest level in 90 years.² The level of the Sea of Galilee (Lake Kinneret or Lake Tiberias) dropped to 10 centimetres below the 'red line' of 213 metres below sea level, the depth which hydrologists had established as the lowest point to which this reservoir of fresh water could fall without irreparable damage being done to its quality. Yet pumping continued as an emergency measure,³ and the Israeli Water Commission lowered the 'red line' by 30 centimetres.⁴ The situation in Israel's other main water sources was no better. The level in the mountain aquifer at the three observation wells was either slightly above, or about 70 cm below, the 'red line'.⁵ In the coastal aquifer, on average, it was about 50 cm below the 'red line'.⁶

However, Meir Ben-Meir, head of the Water Commission, said: 'I am not denying there is a crisis. But we have enough water now and we always will. The water in the Sea of Galilee is not saline and its quality is not in decline.'⁷ He also said that Israeli citizens would not abide by water-saving measures, such as putting a brick in the tank of their toilets, or a ban on washing cars with garden hoses.⁸ And the Water Commission was having difficulties getting a media campaign started to educate and encourage the public to save water.⁹

Water to agriculture had to be cut back by 40 per cent, and economists started to question whether Israel should be growing cotton (a water-intensive crop) for export, when there are many parts of the world that can produce it more cheaply, or whether the country should be exporting oranges to the European Union, when the EU has ample supplies of this fruit from Portugal, Spain and Italy. In fact one economist argued that considering how highly subsidized Israeli water is, it would be cheaper to import oranges from Europe than to grow them locally.¹⁰

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Across the Ghor, the great rift that separates Israel and Jordan, the latter country faced the same problems and the same issues. Farmers in the Jordan Valley did not plant, and those who did saw their crops wither. Irrigation water to agriculture was cut by half. During the summer months citizens in Amman received water, on a rotating basis, one day per week, and many people weren't drinking the water that came through their pipes, in response to an outbreak of disease the previous summer. In 1999 the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Programme declared that Jordan needed 380,000 tons of emergency food,¹¹ and the United States pledged to donate 200,000 tons.¹² Questions were raised whether farmers should continue to pay low prices for water, whether thousands of private wells, mainly used for agriculture, should continue to be unregulated, and whether Jordan should be growing bananas, a water-intensive crop, when it could import them from countries in Africa and elsewhere.

The new water minister, Kamel Mahadeen, pledged to alleviate the country's water problems by exploiting the Disi Aquifer in southern Jordan, by building the Unity Dam on the Yarmuk River, and by changing many of the regulations for the use of water in irrigation.¹³ However, the first project had consistently been opposed by European and American technical assistance and funding agencies, because it involved the pumping of non-renewable 'fossil' water, something contrary to the principles of 'sustainable development' and 'intergenerational equity'. Therefore, Jordan turned to Libya, which agreed to fund 70 per cent of the project.¹⁴

The Unity Dam, which had been talked about for decades and had been delayed because of Israeli opposition, could now go forward because of the Peace Treaty of 1994. Announcements were made that funding would come from the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (based in Kuwait), the Islamic Development Bank and the Abu Dhabi Fund. Officials said that construction would begin in September 2000.¹⁵ However, some pointed out that building the dam now would not have the benefits that had been expected decades earlier. Due to Syrian diversion projects upstream, the flow of the river has been reduced by about half at its outlet into the Jordan River, and because of overuse and misuse, the waters now have high concentrations of bacteria, phosphate, algae and other substances.¹⁶

Dureid Mahasneh, former director of the Jordan Valley Authority, said:

It is surely the duty of all Jordanians to support this government or any other government in the quest to secure water. Nevertheless, one has the right to argue about the methods and ways. Consider the Disi project; this is a very expensive project not attracting donors or investors.... One cannot blame the government for seeking Arab or foreign aid to ease the cost of water, but one can easily argue about the credibility of such aid. First it was the Iranians, now the Libyans and God knows who is next!¹⁷

A National Water Conference in September 1999, organized by the Jordan Engineers Association, an interest group that has for a long time taken positions in opposition to government policies, argued that the amount of water going to agriculture should be reduced, water pollution should be stopped, and the laws and regulations of the Water Authority and the Jordan Valley Authority should be revised.¹⁸

Unnamed experts warned that the absence of comprehensive and long-term policies would 'lead the country to a catastrophe'. They said that the government had 'tunnel vision' and that 'unsustainable projects [were] depleting the country's resources...for good.'¹⁹ They criticized the lack of control over privately owned wells, mainly used for agriculture, because the government didn't want to tangle with their influential owners. Salameh Hiari, a member of the Majlis al-Ummah, the lower house of Parliament, called the government's 'so-called achievements in the water field' a 'continuous sinning against the citizens'.²⁰

WATER RESOURCES

Surface Water

The Jordan Basin is the main source of surface water for Israel and an important source for Jordan. Because Israel controls the territory around the Sea of Galilee and the three sources for the Upper Jordan (the Baniyas, Hasbani and Dan), it is able to use the Sea and the Upper Jordan to fulfil its own needs. Jordan is left with the Lower Jordan (south of the Sea of Galilee), which is now useless, because only saline springs and irrigation run-off go into it, and with the Yarmuk, from which both Syria and Israel also take waters.

All riparians are now overexploiting the basin; they are using it to its limit, and beyond. In the future there may be less than in today's already critical situation. Statistics as to the natural flow into the basin and the human extraction out of it vary enormously, because accurate data is not kept, or it is kept secret, but the broad outline of the division of the basin's water is clear (see [Table 1](#)).

Groundwater

The second major source, groundwater, is found in aquifers. Because of the Ghor, these lie mostly on opposite sides of the border and are not a major subject of dispute between Israel and Jordan. Israel has its mountain aquifer, which extends along the central ridge of mountains from Nazareth in the north to Beer Sheba in the south, mostly territory inside the 'green line', and its coastal aquifer, which extends from Haifa in the north along the Mediterranean to Gaza in the south. Control over the first, in particular, is a major subject of negotiation between the Palestine Authority and the state of Israel. Jordan has thirteen aquifers, two of which (the Northern Wadi Araba and Southern Wadi Araba) lie along the border with Israel to the south of the Dead Sea.²¹ Division of the waters of these

TABLE 1 THE JORDAN BASIN (surface water)

Natural Resource Inflow	MCM* per year	Human Extraction Outflow	MCM per year
Hasbani, Dan, Banias	500	Israeli National Water Carrier from Lake Tiberias	620
Local runoff above Lake Tiberias	150	Israeli Direct Extractions from Upper Jordan and Lake Tiberias	100
Local runoff near Lake Tiberias	200		
Evaporation from the Lake	-300		
Water available from the Upper Jordan and Lake Tiberias	550	Total Israeli Extractions from Upper Jordan and Lake Tiberias	720
Yarmuk	400	Israeli Extraction from the Yarmuk**	100
Zarqa	65	Jordanian King Abdullah Canal from Yarmuk	130
		Syrian Extraction from the Yarmuk	200
Wadis east of the Jordan	87	Jordanian Extraction from Lake Tiberias***	20
Wadis west of the Jordan	145	Jordanian Extraction from Zarqa****	95
Total	1,247	Total	1,265

* Million cubic metres.

** In the 1994 Israeli-Jordanian Peace Treaty the amount was set at 25 MCM.

*** This is the result of the swap worked out in the peace treaty. Israel takes 20 MCM out of the Yarmuk in winter, stores it in Lake Tiberias, and returns it to Jordan in the summer.

**** However, this water is now polluted and unusable.

Sources: Libiszewski, pp.4–9; Lowi, *Water and Power*, pp.25–8; Rouyer, pp.19–20, Salameh and Bannayan, pp. 11–28, Committee on Sustainable Water Supplies for the Middle East, p.42.

two was resolved in the 1994 Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty, but the quantities of water in them are small.

On both sides of the border the danger is overexploitation and pollution. In Israel the level of water has reached the 'red line' in the mountain aquifer and is below it in the coastal aquifer, and the situation is particularly dangerous in Gaza. In Jordan the situation is bleak. Elias Salameh, the country's leading hydrologist, a professor at the University of Jordan, says that Jordan is overusing its renewable reserves by 200 million cubic metres (MCM) per year and 'is using its groundwater resources in a way which can be described as ruinous exploitation to both the stored water quantity and quality'.²² He is particularly critical of the pumping of the aquifers in the northern part of the country for the purposes of irrigation.

Non-conventional Sources

Treated wastewater can be put to productive use in agriculture. In Israel 220 MCM are used per year, and the amount is expected to go up significantly. The Tel Aviv-Jaffa region has one of the largest systems in the country, involving biological and chemical treatment followed by underground storage, before the water is sent to the Negev to be used in irrigation. Given the current limits on freshwater sources, treated wastewater will have to be the source of the future for both Israelis and Palestinians.²³

In Jordan this technology is now in its early stages. According to the Ministry of Water and Irrigation 87 MCM per year were being used in the year 2000,²⁴ and it estimates that by the year 2020 the volume of treated wastewater will be 200 MCM per year. The Ministry pledges that it will ensure that 'all treatment is to a quality appropriate for use in agricultural activities and other non-domestic purposes, including ground water discharge'.²⁵

Israel has experimented with desalination on a small-scale basis, with mixed results. Without a cheap source of energy, as is the case in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, where natural gas can be acquired virtually free, the costs are simply too high. However, Israeli engineers and planners continue to experiment in expectation that the costs can be brought down.²⁶ In Jordan desalination is still in the planning stage. Projects are planned to desalinate 5 MCM per year of brackish water in the Jordan Valley, to build a plant in Aqaba to process 5 MCM of water per year for the use of industry and tourism, and to build a conveyor system to transfer desalinated water from brackish springs in the Jordan Valley to the upland urban areas.²⁷

The Gap Between Supply and Demand

When one considers that the annual requirements of Israel are 1.6–1.75 billion cubic metres and that in the drought year of 1998–99 only 400 MCM accumulated in the country's main reservoirs, and that seven times in the past 20 years the total amount accumulated was less than 1.75 billion, one can see that the situation is serious.²⁸ One cannot continue to take more than is replenished by nature. And in Jordan there is a gap between supply and demand. The country has only 750 MCM in renewable surface and groundwater, 415 MCM short of the total demand in 2000, a gap which must be filled from 'fossil water', treated wastewater, desalinated water, and the 50 MCM coming to Jordan from the peace treaty with Israel.

EXPANDING POPULATION

While both countries are overexploiting their water resources now, they also are having to deal with an expanding population. Under the Law of the Return Israel welcomes Jews from all over the world, and from 1989 through 1998 absorbed

more than 750,000 immigrants, Jewish and non-Jewish, from the former Soviet Union.²⁹ The 'Ingathering of the Exiles' is a foundation stone of the country's purpose and structure. In addition, the *Haredim* have a very high birth rate.

Palestinians have one of the highest birth rates in the world, and negotiators for the Palestine Authority in the Final Status Talks are arguing that the new independent political entity should be permitted to welcome back refugees from the Palestinian Diaspora. They argue that in the same manner as Jews are permitted to return to their 'homeland', Palestinians should be permitted to return to theirs. Together, the two peoples could have by 2010 a combined population of 11–13 million.³⁰

Jordanians are proud of the fact that their country has been a haven for refugees for a long time. In the nineteenth century Chechens and Circassians settled in the Amman area, when the armies of the Tsar overran their country. Ever since, they have been a small, but prominent, minority with special seats in the Parliament and a special unit in the Royal Guard. The brutal Russian attacks on the Chechen homeland in 1998 have strengthened popular sympathy for these people. Since Israel was established in 1948, Palestinians have fled to Jordan in several waves, and now more than half of the population is Palestinian or of Palestinian origin. The most recent group to arrive was the Palestinians who had been living in Kuwait since 1948, and were expelled by that country in 1991. About 300,000 arrived in Jordan within a matter of months, and almost all settled in Amman and the adjacent city of Zarqa. Jordanians point out that this influx was proportionally about the same as the arrival of the Russian émigrés in Israel. Also, the Civil War in Lebanon from 1975 to 1991 pushed many persons out of that country, and some now reside in Jordan. And the police state tactics of the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq have caused some citizens of that country to seek asylum in Jordan. Whether these refugees receive citizenship or not, whether they consider their residency in Jordan permanent or temporary, they still use its water resources, and in the words of Munther Haddadin, former minister of water and irrigation, 'When they came here, they did not bring bags of water with them'.³¹

DEMAND FOR WATER

Both Israel and Jordan have expanding populations, increased urbanization, and rising standards of living. When people live in cities and live better, they use more water. Water consumption for Israel and the Palestinian territories is normally about 2.2 billion cubic metres per year, but this water is not distributed equitably between the two peoples.³² The average Israeli uses about 100 cubic metres per year, or 280 litres per day, about the same as the typical European who consumes 250–350 litres per person per day, but the average Palestinian living under Israeli control uses only 35 cubic metres per year, or 90 litres per day, significantly below the world minimum standard of 250 litres. Israelis rarely experience cut-offs of water supply, but this is very common for Palestinians.³³

TABLE 2 ALLOCATION OF WATER BY SECTORS IN ISRAEL, PALESTINE, AND JORDAN (all figures for mid-1990s)

	Israel % of total	Palestine % of total	Jordan % of total
Agriculture	64	65	69
Municipal	29	33	27
Industrial	7	2	4

Sources: Alwyn R. Rouyer, *Turning Water into Politics: The Water Issue in the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*, New York, 2000, p.26; Bruce Borthwick, 'Jordan Confronts Its Water Crisis', *Orient*, Vol.40, No. 1 (1999), p.79.

Total demand in Jordan is 1.165 billion cubic metres per year.³⁴ The average Jordanian consumes 56 cubic metres per year, or 153 litres per day, but when losses in delivery are deducted the figure goes down to 80.³⁵ Also, in the summer months Jordanians frequently experience water cut-offs, as in the summer of 1999. Demand in Jordan is expected to grow to 1.320 billion cubic metres per year in 2010.³⁶

Allocation of Water

The water that citizens receive for personal use is only one part of the equation. Much goes to agriculture. In Israel, Palestine, and Jordan about two-thirds of the total water resources are used to grow food. The respective allocations of water for agricultural, municipal and industrial use are shown in [Table 2](#).

In all three entities the question is asked: 'Why should agriculture receive two-thirds of the country's water, when it contributes much less to the country's GDP'? In Israel it accounts for only 4 per cent of the GDP and 3.5 per cent of those employed; in the Palestinian territories 25 per cent of the GDP and 30 per cent of employment; and in Jordan 6 per cent of the GDP and 4.9 per cent of the workforce.³⁷

For each government this is a very, very sensitive political issue. The founders of the state of Israel, the men and women of the Second aliyah (1905–14), came to the land of Israel with the goal of changing themselves and 'redeeming the land'. In Europe they were the children of rabbis, merchants or teachers, but in their new homeland they wanted to become farmers, who touched the soil, got their hands dirty and worked under the hot sun. The heroic image was of a Jewish farmer, gun on one shoulder, hoe on the other, going off to farm the fields. These Zionist heroes knew that Jews could not control the land of Israel if they followed the traditional Jewish occupations and lived in towns and cities. They had to live on the land and farm it, and if they lived on the land and farmed it, Arabs could not. However, water was critical to this whole enterprise. Therefore, from the beginning Zionists made sure that Jews gained possession of many of the water resources of Palestine.

But this myth of the resilient and brave Jewish farmer has not been lost on the Palestinians. They put into song and verse stories about the Palestinian farmer, hard working and frugal, practical and resourceful, tending his olive groves, and ploughing his fields. And they emphasize that he is not a newcomer from Europe, but has been living with his ancestors on this soil for centuries, farming the same fields, living in the same villages. And for the Palestinians there is probably nothing as symbolic as the olive tree. It is particularly adaptable to the soil of their homeland, produces an oil and a fruit that is used on a daily basis, and is wrapped up in religious tradition. Care of the trees and the harvesting of their fruit is a national passion. Therefore, the removal of olive trees on the West Bank by Israeli military authorities is considered by them to be a deliberate effort to destroy their national existence and to make it impossible for them to sustain human life on the soil that they and their ancestors have worked for centuries.

In Jordan the Bedouin, not the farmer, has been the person who is romanticized and idolized. However, in the 1960s through the 1980s in the Jordan Valley a 'green revolution'³⁸ took place because water was brought to it through the King Abdullah Canal, drip irrigation and greenhouses were introduced, and markets were found for fruits and vegetables in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, Syria and Iraq. The irony is that this 'green revolution' was encouraged and financed by the United States government, as a part of its worldwide policy of the time to promote land reform and agricultural development in order to produce stability and prosperity, thereby preventing communist revolution. In the Ghor the programme also had the political objective of 'settling the refugees' from Palestine and creating a zone of prosperity, free from warfare and strife, close to, or on the border with, Israel.

A productive agricultural area was created, and the Jordanian government has ensured since 1971 that this region is free from military movements and attacks on Israel. It is now a 'zone of peace', but the Palestinians have not settled in it; 87 per cent of the agricultural workers are Egyptians,³⁹ and much of the land is owned by commuters whose primary place of residence is up the ridge in Amman, as-Salt, or Irbid.

Therefore, to suggest to Israelis, Palestinians or Jordanians that they move water from the agricultural sector to the municipal or industrial sector is to touch many tender nerves. It means regions of the 'homeland' reverting to desert, not being controlled and inhabited by the nationals, and being subject to occupation by the enemy, because they are empty. It means importing some food from the United States and thereby putting your government in the position where it can be pressured for political reasons. And it means for the top political leaders in both Israel and Jordan fighting powerful individuals and pressure groups, the 'agriculture lobby'. Therefore, it is not surprising that in Israel farmers have been compensated with state subsidies when they have been deprived of water because of shortages, and that in Jordan the government has given the farmers a guarantee that if potable water is taken away for municipal purposes, it will be replaced with treated wastewater suitable for agriculture.

THE JORDAN AND THE YARMUK

From the 1950s till the Six-Day War

In the 1950s the United States promoted a plan to develop the waters of the Jordan Basin, reasoning that cooperation among hostile parties on fundamental, life-giving water projects would lead to broader, and more basic, political cooperation. Copied from the American experience with the Tennessee Valley Authority, expressing the optimism and naiveté of the time that the American experience was a model for the rest of the world, believing that American 'know-how' combined with American money could materially improve people's lives, leading to a more peaceful world, one allied with the United States and not with the Soviet Union, the United States government pushed this project from 1953 till 1956. President Eisenhower appointed Eric Johnston, American businessman and articulate spokesman for free enterprise, to be a special ambassador to work with the governments of Israel, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. He made four trips to the Middle East, worked tirelessly, and engaged in very difficult negotiations, ultimately to see the project come to naught, because the Arab states felt that working and cooperating with Israel on this project, which would benefit all parties, would amount to de facto recognition of the Jewish state. The plan did not receive the approval of the League of Arab States, meeting in Cairo in October 1955, and it died because of increasing tensions in the region. Politics came first, water cooperation second.

While never implemented, the Johnston allocation of the waters of the Jordan Basin became a point of reference till today. The division of the waters in the Revised Unified Plan of 1955 was as outlined in [Table 3](#).

While the Revised Unified Plan was never carried out, whenever the United States gave technical and financial assistance to one of the parties, it insisted that the Johnson 'quotas' be followed. Jordan in 1958 began construction of the King Abdullah Canal with American financial assistance, and in October 1959 Israel announced that it would begin construction of the National Water Carrier, also with American assistance. Feeling that it had a lot to lose from any Israeli extraction of water from Lake Tiberias, Jordan urged united Arab action to stop this project. In 1960 the Arab League approved a plan to divert the headwaters of the Upper Jordan to Lebanon and to Jordan, so that they would not flow into the Lake, where they could be extracted by Israel. However, intense rivalries in the Arab world hampered the plan's implementation, and it was started only fitfully. Israel regarded it as a threat to its security, and it was one of the reasons the country decided to go to war in June 1967 against the Arab states.⁴⁰

The Six-Day War ended in victory for Israel and a humiliating defeat for the Arab states; Jordan was the big loser. It lost control of East Jerusalem and the West Bank, and it suffered with respect to water. During the war Israel destroyed a dam under construction on the Yarmuk, and by occupying the Golan Heights Israel gained complete control over Lake Tiberias and the Upper Jordan. Any

TABLE 3 JOHNSTON REVISED UNIFIED PLAN (million cubic metres per year)

	Upper Jordan	Lower Jordan*	Yarmuk	Total
Israel	375	0	25	400
Jordan	100	243	377	720
Syria	42	0	90	132
Lebanon	35	0	0	35

* At the time Jordan controlled both the West and the East Bank. Therefore, this number was the aggregate of all of the waters flowing into the Jordan Valley from east and west between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea.

Sources: Stephan Libiszewski, 'Water Disputes in the Jordan Basin Region and their Role in the Resolution of the Arab-Israeli Conflict', ENCOF Occasional Paper No. 13, Zurich, 1995, p.37; Miriam R. Lowi, *Water and Power: The Politics of a Scarce Resource in the Jordan River Basin*, Cambridge, 1995, pp.100–105.

Arab diversion was now impossible. Also, Israel came to control a longer portion of the shoreline of the Yarmuk, including the area facing the intake to the King Abdullah Canal.

From the Six-Day War till the Late 1980s

Jordan was now in a very unenviable situation. It could not tap the waters of Lake Tiberias and the Upper Jordan, because Israel controlled them, and it could not utilize the water in the Lower Jordan, because it was polluted by saline water diverted into it by Israel.⁴¹ On the Yarmuk Israel controlled the shoreline opposite the intake to the King Abdullah Canal. Rocks and silt accumulated near it, and there were many disputes regarding their removal, which had to be resolved in the 'Picnic Table' talks between representatives of the two sides (see below). In 1969 Israel bombed some Jordanian water facilities on the Yarmuk, and it prevented Jordan from getting loans from the World Bank to build the Maqarin Dam, later called the Unity Dam.⁴²

In the 1970s Israel began to divert greater quantities of water from the Yarmuk into Lake Tiberias, in the estimated amount of 70–100 MCM per year. Jordan argued that Israel was far exceeding its allocations in the Johnston Plan, but Israel replied that Jordan and the other Arab states had rejected this plan and that there was a new political reality on the ground. In addition Syria was now diverting more water upstream. The actions of the two parties left Jordan with only 120 MCM per year, which it could with some difficulty channel into the King Abdullah Canal. Because Jordan could not build a dam across the Yarmuk, it did not have the ability to store winter water for summer use. Jordan was clearly the down-river riparian subject to the manipulations of the two upriver riparians.

THE PATH TO THE PEACE TREATY OF 1994

Following the outbreak of the Intifada, at its Algiers meeting in June 1988 the Arab League reasserted that the Palestine Liberation Organization was the 'sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people'. In a televised speech on 31 July 1988, King Hussein announced that he was severing all legal and administrative links with the West Bank, and he recognized the right of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to 'secede from us in an independent Palestinian state' to be 'established on the occupied Palestinian land after its liberation, God willing'. He also said that 'Jordan was not Palestine'.⁴³

At the Madrid Conference, held from 30 October to 1 November 1991 under the glare of the worldwide media, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir met publicly for the first time with representatives of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the Palestinians. While the conference was a symbolic first step towards overcoming the hostilities in the region, it produced no breakthroughs. But it did establish committees to discuss important issues, one of which was water; the delegates met over the next several years in various locations, exchanging information and viewpoints but getting little publicity.

In January 1993 secret talks began in Oslo between representatives of the PLO and two Israeli academics, who had contacts with their government. News of the negotiations, brokered by the Norwegian government, reached the world media in August. On the 20th of that month, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres of Israel and PLO representatives in Oslo initialled a declaration of principles. With this signature Israel recognized that the PLO was the official representative of the Palestinian people. The talks had been carried out in the outmost secrecy, and Jordan was not in any way involved, but did King Hussein know about them? According to Samuel Segev: '[He] was not totally surprised by the Oslo Accords. Was he briefed by the CIA or by a friendly neighbour? This is still not known.'⁴⁴

Since the PLO and the government of Israel were reaching agreement on negotiating principles, it was now time for Jordan to move its many secret contacts with Israeli leaders from the private to the public sphere, and to conclude a peace treaty with the Jewish state. On 14 September 1993, the day after Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin made their historic handshake on the White House lawn, a common agenda was signed in Washington between representatives of Israel and Jordan. The document outlined issues for discussion, such as border disputes, refugees, economic cooperation, and water, and it began a new period in which a formal, legal and durable peace was the goal.⁴⁵

Soon after his handshake with Yasser Arafat on the White House lawn on 13 September 1993, Yitzhak Rabin flew to Amman and met with King Hussein. He explained to the King the complexities of the Oslo Accords and the fundamental principles of Israel's relation with Jordan. Hussein responded positively to the idea of improved Israeli-Jordanian relations, formalized in a peace treaty, but he established three conditions:

1. Jordan should have a 'preferred status' in the Haram al-Sharif, containing the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest site in Islam, located in the old city of Jerusalem;
2. Israel should withdraw from Wadi Araba (Arava), 381 square kilometres of land between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba, which it had occupied in the wars of 1948 and 1967; and
3. Jordan should receive more water from the Yarmuk River.⁴⁶

Several negotiating committees were established, but the water committee was undoubtedly one of the most important. Dr Munther Haddadin, noted international expert on water, known to many as 'Jordan's Mr Water', head of the Jordan Valley Authority from 1982 to 1987, and the representative of Jordan in many international negotiations, headed the Jordanian delegation. He and the other Jordanian representatives wanted their country's share of Yarmuk water to be increased and extraction of water from the Lower Jordan to become possible by cleaning up the river. They sought permission from Israel to build a diversion weir on the Yarmuk, so that water could go unimpeded into the King Abdullah Canal, and to build a dam on the same river to capture winter floodwater, generate electricity, and supply water for irrigation and municipal use. Also, they felt Jordan was entitled to water from Lake Tiberias. Essentially, they wanted to improve the disadvantageous situation Jordan had been put in by the Six-Day War.

These were difficult issues, because if Jordan were to get more, then Israel would get less, and neither country had excess water that could be tapped. However, Jordanian negotiators pointed to the Johnston Plan, which had allocated to Jordan 100 MCM from the Upper Jordan (including Lake Tiberias), 243 from the Lower Jordan, and 377 from the Yarmuk, for a total of 720 MCM per year. In the mid-1990s it was getting nothing from the Upper Jordan, no usable water from the Lower Jordan, and only 120 MCM from the Yarmuk. In contrast, Israel in the Johnston Plan was allocated 375 MCM from the Upper Jordan, nothing from the Lower Jordan, and 25 MCM from the Yarmuk. However, now it was extracting from the Upper Jordan 650–720 MCM, all of the system's renewable water, and 70–100 MCM from the Yarmuk.

Drafts of the peace treaty were drawn up and discussed, but two issues, both involving water, proved to be major stumbling blocks. The first was the land in Wadi Araba, seized by Israel in the 1948 and 1967 wars; the second was the water in the Upper and Lower Jordan, and in the Yarmuk. With regard to the first, complications were that the land was close to the main Israeli highway going to Eilat, and that it was now being farmed by members of an Israeli kibbutz, using water from aquifers in Jordan.

Negotiations took place at many levels, but most importantly between Prime Minister Rabin and King Hussein. In October 1994 the prime minister gave the king a deal he couldn't refuse: Rabin offered to return the land in Wadi Araba to Jordanian sovereignty, if Hussein agreed that part of this Jordanian land would

be leased to the Israeli kibbutz for 25 years and if the kibbutz would be able to use water from wells on the Jordanian side of the border. Also Rabin promised to give Jordan an additional quantity of 50 MCM from the Yarmuk, and Jordan could build a diversion weir at Adasiyah and a dam at Maqarin. He also agreed to take Jordan's needs into consideration when releasing water from the Sea of Galilee into the Lower Jordan.⁴⁷

This offer broke the deadlock. On 16 October Rabin flew to Amman once again, Jordanian and Israeli negotiators worked through the night, and the morning of the 17th the Prime Minister of Israel and the King of Jordan came to agreement on the full text of the peace treaty. The two called President Clinton in Washington to tell him of their success and to invite him to the signing ceremony at Wadi Araba on 26 October 1994.⁴⁸

WATER ISSUES IN THE PEACE TREATY

Allocation of Surface Water

Broadly, the two parties agreed in Article 6 to 'mutually to recognize the rightful allocations of both of them in Jordan River and Yarmuk River waters and Araba/Arava groundwater in accordance with the agreed acceptable principles, quantities and quality...'.

Annex II went into the details. In regard to the Yarmuk River it stated that in the summer months (15 May-15 October) Israel could pump 12 MCM from the river into Lake Tiberias, Jordan being entitled to the rest, and in the winter months (16 October-14 May) Israel could pump 13 MCM, with Jordan getting the rest. Thus, the total for Israel was 25 MCM, the amount it had been allocated in the Johnston Plan. Since Israel had been taking out 70–100 MCM in the 1970s and 1980s, this was a reduction.

Till 1994 Jordan had no way to store Yarmuk waters, so Israel agreed to let it use Lake Tiberias for this purpose. A swap was worked out. In the winter months Israel agreed to pump an additional 20 MCM from the Yarmuk into Lake Tiberias, and in the summer months send the same amount back to Jordan.

The treaty did not mention the Unity Dam on the Yarmuk, because the proposed site at Maqarin lies on the Syrian-Jordanian border. However, in the negotiations leading up to the signing ceremony Israel agreed to no longer oppose its construction.

In the Jordan Valley both sides desired to leave to the negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis the matter of water in the area, which prior to 1967 had been under Jordanian rule. Therefore, they only discussed the resources of the Lower Jordan from its confluence with the Yarmuk to Tirat Zvi on the Israeli side and Wadi Yabis on the Jordanian side. These two sites are opposite each other and demarcate the old border between Jordan and Israel prior to 1967. The two parties agreed that in the winter period the state of Jordan was entitled to

store for its use a minimum of 20 MCM of floodwater, dependent upon the building of a system of water storage.

However, storage is not the only problem. Because of the extensive pollution and high salinity in the water of the Lower Jordan, it is now useless. Therefore, Israel and Jordan pledged to clean up the mess and to use their own financial resources and those of outside donors to build the necessary projects. The treaty states that Jordan is entitled to 10 MCM of water from the desalination of about 20 MCM of saline springs on the Israeli side of the river. Until the desalination facilities are operational, Israel will supply Jordan with 10 MCM of water from the Sea of Galilee 'outside the summer period and during the dates that Jordan selects, subject to maximum capacity of transmission'.

They also agreed to build a diversion/storage dam at Adassiya, the purpose of which was 'to improve the diversion efficiency into the King Abdullah Canal of the water allocation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and possibly for the diversion of Israel's allocation of the river water'.

Most importantly, in an innocuous statement in Section 1 of Article V, the two countries agreed to end four decades of threats, hostile actions, and reprisals over the Jordan and Yarmuk Rivers. With a simple declaration they announced that both sides had an interest in both rivers and that any development of them had to be done only in agreement with both parties. The exact words were: 'Artificial changes in or of the course of the Jordan and Yarmuk Rivers can only be made by mutual agreement'. With this statement the war between Jordan and Israel over the Yarmuk and the Jordan ended.

Shortage and the Need to Find Additional Water

However, the resolution of disputes over existing water was not sufficient, and the representatives of both sides recognized that while they were solving one problem, both were facing together a new one, a water shortage, which they could only solve together and with international assistance. In Article 6 of the treaty they said that 'their water resources are not sufficient to meet their needs' and that 'more water should be supplied for their use through various methods, including projects of regional and international cooperation'. They pledged to search for ways to alleviate the shortage, to cooperate on a regional basis to develop existing and new resources, and to minimize wastage.

In Section 3 of Article I of the Annex the framers of the treaty became more specific: 'Israel and Jordan shall cooperate in finding sources for the supply to Jordan of an additional quantity of 50 MCM per year of water of drinkable standards'. They charged the Joint Water Committee with coming up with a plan and presenting it to the two governments.

Pollution

Finally, there was recognition of the problem of pollution. The signatories promised to prevent the contamination of water resources, not to harm the water of the other party, and to exchange information and research to the benefit of both. To implement and monitor the water agreement a Joint Water Committee was established. Comprising three members from each side, it can 'with the approval of the respective governments, specify its work procedures, the frequency of its meetings, and the details of its scope of work'.

Peace Projects

In Jordan many of the provisions of the Peace Treaty could only be implemented through major construction projects. In its 'Investment Program for 1997–2011' the Jordanian Ministry of Water and Irrigation lists these as its 'Peace Projects'.⁴⁹

First is the long-delayed dam on the Syrian-Jordanian border at Maqarin, called the Unity Dam. Designed to store 225 MCM, with an average annual incremental yield of 85 MCM, the dam is intended to make it possible to irrigate 35,500 previously fallow dunums in the Jordan Valley, supply 50 MCM of water to the greater Amman area for domestic and industrial use, and generate 3.6 megawatts of electricity.⁵⁰ Second is the diversion weir at Adassiya. Designed to improve the diversion efficiency into the King Abdullah Canal of the waters allocated to Jordan in the treaty, and possibly for the diversion of Israel's allocation, the weir is to be located 10 kilometres upstream from the confluence of the Yarmuk and Jordan Rivers and have a capacity of 8.1 MCM. It will have a maximum height above the natural riverbed of 35 metres.⁵¹ The other projects were less well developed at the time of the publication of the Water Sector Investment Program, but they involved a conveyor to bring water desalinated from springs in Israel in the Ghor to the urban areas of Jordan, wastewater treatment plants, and a system to store flood waters on the Jordan River and its side wadis.⁵²

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF THE PEACE TREATY

On 26 October 1994 Jordan and Israel resolved their decades-old disputes over the water in the Yarmuk and the Jordan and pledged to work together to alleviate their common water shortage. Jordan gained a token amount of water from the Sea of Galilee, and it received from Israel permission to build on the Yarmuk a diversion weir and a dam, both long sought after. It also got access to water in the Jordan Valley, which after being desalinated, could be used for municipal purposes. Israel did not lose much, and it retained access to excess floodwater in the Yarmuk. Both sides ended their water conflict, and pledged to work together, with the assistance of international, European, Arab and American donors, to

solve the urgent problems of exhaustion of ground and surface water resources, their pollution, and their degradation.

Water and the 'Unspoken Alliance'

The signing ceremony at Wadi Araba on 26 October 1994 was the culmination of decades of contacts and cooperation between officials of Jordan and Israel, in which security concerns, water problems, and the possible outlines of a peace treaty were discussed. Always the understanding was that the security and stability of the two countries were interwoven, that they formed an alliance, never publicly declared, but always understood—an 'unspoken alliance'. Israel regarded Jordan as a strategic asset, a buffer between it and Iraq. King Hussein received tips and secret information that enabled him to foil assassination attempts and attempted coups. The hope was that the treaty between the two states would lead to increasing cooperation between the two governments, multiplying contacts between the two peoples, expanding economic ties, and generally broadening and deepening relations.

Abdullah, the grandfather of Hussein, had many secret contacts with Zionist leaders, and it was undoubtedly the reason why he was assassinated, on 20 July 1951, in front of Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque with his grandson by his side. After a short interlude with King Talal, Hussein was crowned king on 11 August 1952 and continued the contacts. Meetings with Israeli foreign ministers, prime ministers and other interlocutors took place in London and Paris and locations in the USA and Israel, supposedly clandestine, but known to so many persons that they became a 'widely known secret'.⁵³

One series of meetings took place on the banks of the Yarmuk and became known as the 'Picnic Table Talks'. Representatives of the two water administrations sat down at a picnic table in the open air and discussed technical issues and matters of mutual concern, such as the silting of the river, the removal of rocks, and construction that might hamper one side or the other's removal of water from the river.

According to Samuel Segev, in the early 1950s David Ben-Gurion did not regard Jordan as a viable state and thought that it would succumb to the contemporary revolutionary movements promoting socialism and Arab unity. However, this viewpoint changed when Faisal II, King of Iraq, was overthrown and killed in July 1958. Israel did not want King Hussein of Jordan to meet the same fate as his Hashemite cousin and for an Iraqi-Jordanian bloc to develop, hostile to the Jewish state. Of course, the King also wanted to preserve his life, his throne, and his country.

Ben-Gurion came to think that the interests of the state of Israel would be promoted by preserving the independence and integrity of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan,⁵⁴ provided the government of this kingdom did not ally itself with Iraq, Syria, or Egypt in an anti-Israel alliance and did not permit its territory to be used by guerrilla and terrorist organizations to attack Israel. The

King of Jordan deviated from this 'unspoken alliance' only once, in the Six-Day War, and he and his kingdom suffered enormously. However, in September 1970, when the PLO under the leadership of Yasser Arafat attempted to overthrow the Jordanian monarchy and was supported by Syria, Israel came to the defence of Jordan, sent air patrols over the country and moved troops to the Syrian and Jordanian borders. With this support the King was able to evict the PLO, and Syria backed down.

It is estimated that the King faced twelve assassination attempts and seven attempts to overthrow him, some of which were foiled through tips from Israeli intelligence. No wonder that on 12 February 1995, in the royal palace in the centre of Amman, Hussein honoured all of the men, with their spouses, who had headed Mossad since Israel's independence in May 1948.⁵⁵ It was the King's way of saying thank you to Israel for having saved his life and his throne, and it was evidence of the decades-long security relation between the two countries.

According to Segev, 'of all the Arab confrontation states, Israel's relations with Jordan were the most enduring and the most trustful'.⁵⁶ They involved exchange of greetings on birthdays, national holidays, and religious festivals, and they evolved from police cooperation along the border, to joint efforts to fight subversion and terrorism, to finally 'agreement on a fair sharing of the Yarmuk and Jordan water resources'.⁵⁷

Scholars, such as Yehuda Lukas,⁵⁸ argue that this functional cooperation, based on interdependence and shared interests, has led to a 'durable peace', one that is 'warm', in contrast to the one between Egypt and Israel which is 'cold'. These functionalist scholars assert that crossnational ties are developed, common interests are promoted and stereotypes are broken down, when top leaders meet and work out deals at secret sites, military officers host each other at their respective bases, and security officials share super-secret vital information. What they ignore is that many persons are doing this simply because 'it is a part of their job' and that it is only top officials in government who are involved. Prior to the exit of Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi from Iran in 1979, American officials had extensive 'functional cooperation' with Iranian government administrators, all of which evaporated when political forces changed.

When King Hussein signed the peace treaty with Israel, he 'stepped out in front of his people'.⁵⁹ Freed from the necessity of defending the Palestinian cause, he changed the de facto peace between Israel and Jordan into a de jure one. Thinking of the interests of his state and of his dynasty, he cemented the ties between Israel and Jordan, but not everyone in Jordan was in agreement with this move.⁶⁰

Realizing that the monarchy is 'ahead of the people', American policy is to attempt to move the people to support their King through financial and technical assistance, one being the construction of water supply systems, wastewater treatment plants, and desalination works. The hope is that Jordanian citizens will give credit to their government for the improved situation and that the 'man in the street will see some benefits'.⁶¹ The United States Agency for International

Development (USAID), the German government Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), the European Investment Bank, the World Bank, and the foreign assistance agencies of the governments of Japan, Canada and Italy, form the largest and most important part of the community of 'foreign donors' in Amman. All support the peace process, desire that it succeed, and want citizens to receive benefits from peace.

CONCLUSION

For Israelis, Jordanians and Palestinians, water is a strategic resource, necessary not only for survival, but also for a healthy economy and a modern lifestyle. It is in short supply everywhere, but Israelis use far more per capita than Palestinians or Jordanians. An 'unspoken alliance' has existed between Israel and Jordan since the 1950s, and a formal treaty of peace has been signed, but to bring this peace out of the high councils of government down to citizens in their homes, it will be necessary to protect existing water resources, expand them where possible, and distribute them equitably.

The 'water wars' between Jordan and Israel are ended, but a new 'water struggle' is now taking place, mostly in the domain of domestic politics, where political forces and tensions are great, important interests are at stake, long-held ideologies are affected, and national pride is threatened. This internal 'water struggle' involves national water policies, which in both Israel and Jordan need to be reformed. It concerns the Palestinians who are intermeshed in the politics and society of both countries and are the persons who are the most water-deprived. Whether in Jordan or Israel, it deals with nitty-gritty issues that are hard to resolve. What crops are we going to grow? How can we channel potable water from farming to direct human use and give farmers something else? How can we improve the efficiency of water use? What can we do to make the public aware that there is a crisis and that everyone must save? What can we do about the water supply system, which may be antiquated and leaky? How should we adjust prices so that farmers, industrialists and citizens in their homes come to recognize that water is a limited natural resource and cannot be wasted? What can we do about the treatment of wastewater and brackish water? How can we stop the pollution of streams, rivers and aquifers?

Now, the struggle to prevent ecological disaster has begun. In Jordan, Israel, and among the Palestinians, it will be necessary to bring demand in line with supply, squeeze more usable water out of existing resources, distribute them more equitably, alter the daily habits of everyone, and change long-established government policies. This is a common problem, a regional one, which all three governments face; reaching across the borders of the region, and in cooperation with foreign governments and funding agencies, it will be necessary to use modern technology and industry, innovative methods of transportation, and courageous government decisions to avoid the looming catastrophe.

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59. I heard this comment from a very high source in the American Embassy. April 1998.
60. During my research stay in Jordan from January till June 1998, I looked for evidence of rapprochement between Israelis and Jordanians, and I did not find it. I could not find for sale, even in the most expensive hotels, a copy of the *Jerusalem Post*, even though all the usual European and American newspapers and news weeklies were offered for sale. Also, I could not find it in the library of the University of Jordan. I heard complaints that when the Israeli tourists came to Jordan, they did not stay overnight and did not spend much money. I felt a general reluctance, a lack of interest, a lack of desire, on the part of Jordanian academics to establish contacts with their Israeli counterparts. The daily press had lurid and defamatory cartoons of Jews and Israelis. *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* was for sale, and people believed its contents. Persons who established business relations with Israelis paid a price through social stigmatization. Members of Parliament were critical of other members going on official visits to Israel, and members of the professional organizations, particularly the engineers, felt that in the peace treaty Jordan gave too much. Criticism was muted, because open and sharp criticism was taboo, and when it was expressed—in this top-down society -the person who said it paid a price.
61. Comment of another official in the American Embassy, 7 May 1998.

Changing Identities in Jordan¹

JOSEPH NEVO

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a unique phenomenon, in the manner of the establishment of the state and construction of its identity, even in such a region as the Middle East. Its somewhat artificial creation as a political entity (in 1921) was followed by several changes of boundaries.² The complex territorial and demographic history gave rise to a singular socio-political process: instead of a gradual development of one coherent countrywide national identity, several collective identities evolved, sometimes in succession, sometimes simultaneously.³ This article aims to study and analyse this rather unusual process, to explain its causes and to evaluate its impact on society and regime in Jordan.

The founding of the Emirate of Transjordan in the wake of the First World War, in a territory that had not hitherto constituted a political entity or even an integral administrative unit, was designed to solve Great Britain's political and strategic problems as well as to satisfy Abdullah Ibn Hussein's personal ambitions. Transjordan was created neither to provide a Mandatory endorsement of the former Ottoman administrative division, nor to meet the national aspirations of a given community in a common territory. The artificially drawn boundaries demarcated an entirely new 'state'. They were imposed on different, absolutely unrelated, population groups: from the relatively sedentary and relatively developed north, which was historically and even 'mentally' affiliated to Syria, to the basically nomadic and semi-nomadic, somewhat backward south whose population was demographically rooted in the Arabian Peninsula. The various regions were, moreover, known for their extreme local patriotism and separatism from their neighbours, a factor that gave rise to persistent bickering.⁴ As a newly arrived outsider, Abdullah had not only to win legitimacy from the indigenous population for his imposed rule, but also to gain their support, or acquiescence at least, for the idea of their being in company with their sworn foes, as inhabitants of the new, unified entity.

The very establishment of a central administration and the demarcation of borderlines in the 1920s sowed the first seeds of the emergence of a sense of Transjordanian distinctiveness that had never previously existed, as a precursor to the emergence of a collective national identity.⁵ In the course of the years, Emir Abdullah managed to turn the disadvantage of being a foreigner into an asset. As

an outsider he owed no commitment to any specific region or to any particular tribe or community and, on the face of it at least, he had no reason to prefer a certain group or sector. In the end he was accepted (with varying degrees of enthusiasm, as well as with some reservations too) by all sections of the population, out of persuasion, coaxing, political expediency or of lack of choice. It is also worth noting that *all* prime ministers of Jordan throughout the first 30 years of its existence as a political entity were non-natives (born in Syria, Palestine or Hijaz). This probably had much to do with the absence of suitable local candidates and with Abdullah's quest for personal loyalty. Yet, he also preferred foreign prime ministers to avoid opposition and criticism likely to be stirred by sectors that might feel discriminated against by the installation of a local nominee from a rival district. It took a whole generation and more to develop a Jordanian identity to match the regional local patriotism.⁶

The Jordanian army (popularly known as 'the Arab Legion') also served as a unifying instrument and a source of identification. Being one of the few nationwide Jordanian institutions (of which the state's education system is another), its units absorbed all segments of population, Bedouin alongside sedentary and southerners together with people of the north. The army's duties were not confined to the defence of the borders against external aggression. It also (indeed mainly) served as an internal base of support for the regime and for the idea of a state.

Its most important national role was the integration of the Bedouin into the crystallizing Jordanian society. Since their incorporation in the army (from the early 1930s) tied them to a wage economy, the Bedouin had become economically dependent on the state. More and more of them developed a sense of belonging, were brought into the establishment and became an important pillar of loyalty to the regime—quite the opposite of the position usually taken by their counterparts in most other Arab countries. A Jordanian soldier of nomadic origin once confided: 'I never knew Jordan existed before I joined the army'.⁷ Simultaneously, the concept of tribalism as a part of the Jordanian identity had also begun to take shape in this period.

Local leaders (prominent tribal chiefs, heads of the Circassian community, notables of traditional elite families, members of the emerging middle class and urban intelligentsia) gradually became amenable to adopting the label of 'Jordanians' or 'Transjordanians'. They came to realize the advantages for themselves if people's sense of identification with their immediate locale could be converted into national patriotism. Yet, even though Abdullah's arrival had contributed to its emergence, the nascent Jordanian identity was not self-evidently pro-Hashemite. While for the Bedouin the concept of Jordan has been linked to the King (and, later on, to Hussein no less than to Abdullah), some of

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the harbingers of the early Jordanian nationalism did not hesitate to criticize Abdullah for what may be construed as 'non-patriotic' steps, such as his role within the designs of the British, and his preference for foreigners in his governments. They also viewed with disfavour Abdullah's expansionist ambitions, suspecting that he regarded their own land as a mere springboard for the takeover of other territories, namely Greater Syria. Nevertheless, both Abdullah's opponents and supporters within this group perceived Transjordan as a distinct political entity, the homeland of the Jordanian people.⁸ They also adopted a local version of a borrowed slogan from Iraq and Egypt: 'Transjordan to the Transjordanians'.

When the British Mandate ended in 1946 and Transjordan became an independent kingdom, Jordanian identity was adopted by most of its population. It was based on a common territory (which was separated from the neighbouring countries by modern borders), a central administration and the army. Elements of Arab and Islamic identities were interwoven. For a considerable number Jordanian identity was also synonymous with loyalty to King Abdullah and to the Hashemite dynasty.

During the 1948 war Abdullah realized at least some of his territorial ambitions. His army took over parts of Arab Palestine (the West Bank), which were practically annexed to and later formally incorporated into his realm, which thereafter was titled the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. While this added less than 7 per cent in territory, it tripled the kingdom's population with about half of the newcomers being refugees.

The incorporation of the West Bank into Jordan brought together two kinds of nationalism, which led inevitably to a clash of identities. The Jordanian identity, as noted, had evolved gradually around positive and common issues and reflected a kind of acceptance of the prevailing reality. The Palestinian identity had crystallized negatively, against the Jewish National Home and against the British Mandate. It was more dynamic and militant, struggling to change the existing reality.⁹ Moreover, many more Palestinians than Transjordanians were aware of their national identity. Even those Transjordanians who were identity-conscious usually took their identity for granted and were less preoccupied with this issue than were the Palestinians.

Abdullah neither tried nor intended to form a new common identity. The official policy encouraged the complete integration of the Palestinians in the kingdom, giving them the option of full civil and political rights in the expectation of their 'Jordanization'. At the same time, the regime insisted on maintaining the hegemony of the original Jordanians, usually of tribal origin (and addressed as 'Transjordanians', 'East Jordanians', 'true Jordanians', 'indigenous Jordanians' or 'Jordo-Jordanians'¹⁰) over the Palestinians. However, if in numbers the population of the West Bank was double than that of the East, in quality it was many times its superior. There was no way of preserving the dominance of the East Bank if genuine integration were allowed. To achieve the Jordanization of the Palestinians, King Abdullah adopted a policy (which King

Hussein duly followed) of 'controlled integration'. It involved deliberate discrimination against the collective Palestinian body in the West Bank, as far as representation and participation were concerned (but not against the Palestinians as individuals, who enjoyed the same constitutional rights as the Transjordanians). This was done to prevent the Palestinians from taking advantage of their demographic majority by challenging the political supremacy of the Hashemite establishment and its supporters on the East Bank.

An example of the aforementioned policy is the new Chamber of Deputies that was elected in 1950 by both East and West Bank constituencies, each being allotted 20 seats. This seems to be representation, but considering that the West Bank had double the population of the East, one Transjordanian vote was in essence worth two Palestinian votes. Similar discrepancies were apparent in the composition of the Cabinet. About one-half of Cabinet members, in every government until 1967, were Palestinians, yet they were usually denied key posts such as prime minister or minister of the interior.¹¹

The same pattern of 'collective' practical discrimination also applied to the army, the Arab Legion ('the Jordanian Arab Army', as from the 1950s) which, as mentioned, played a leading role in protecting the regime and preserving public order. It was a professional standing army whose officers and soldiers enjoyed the image, prestige and benefits of a chosen elite. In the absence of conscription, the Jordanian authorities selectively recruited Palestinians who were willing to serve. The West Bankers' percentage in the army was much smaller than their proportion in the total population and those admitted were usually assigned to technical rather than to combat units. Hence, the Palestinians were heavily underrepresented in one of the most important power centres of the state. The frequent requests of Palestinian and left-wing politicians to open the ranks of the army to all citizens under a national service were repeatedly turned down.¹²

Economic constraints and the government policy of narrowing the gap between the overpopulated and rather developed West Bank and the underpopulated and relatively underdeveloped East Bank encouraged internal migration eastward. The hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, most of them educated, who arrived in Amman and other East Bank cities between 1949 and 1967, soon became the backbone of the urban middle class, salaried and professional. Most doctors, lawyers, engineers, accountants, journalists and small businesspeople, as well as teachers, civil servants and other public employees, were of Palestinian origin. Together with the 1948 refugees there, the Palestinians constituted, on the eve of the Six-Day War, about 40 per cent of the population of the East Bank.

This process transpired mainly under King Hussein (under his grandfather most Palestinians still lived in the West Bank, save for the refugees). To meet the new challenges, official ideology portrayed the kingdom as a Jordanian-Palestinian entity (one of King Hussein's favourite phrases was that all people on both banks were equal members of the 'greater Jordanian family'¹³). In practice, however this 'Jordanian-Palestinian entity' was problematic. The government's

policy of equal representation for the two banks, enforced power sharing (albeit on very modest scale) with the Palestinians, and the influx of the latter into the East Bank, catalyzed the enhancement and strengthening of the Jordanian identity. Suspicion of the Palestinians, fear of their economic and political competition, and the perceived threat they constituted to indigenous norms, values and conduct—all fortified the common denominators of the Transjordanians. The Palestinians provided them with both the image and the reality of the ‘Other’ which, according to Stuart Hall for example, helps one feel and understand one’s own identity (‘only when there is an Other can you know who you are’).¹⁴ It is arguable that the annexation/incorporation of the West Bank contributed to the consummation of a Jordanian identity more than a generation-long effort.

Nevertheless, if the term ‘Jordanian-Palestinian entity’ could be applied, in theory at least, to the East Bank, in which, after all, both communities lived and to some extent mingled, the West Bank remained exclusively Palestinian and practically no Transjordanians migrated from east to west. Hussein tried, through cooperation and control, to accommodate there a separate Palestinian identity within a larger Jordanian framework. Hence, the sought-for common entity was distinctively asymmetrical, confined to the eastern section of the kingdom where Jordanians and Palestinians both lived, even if side-by-side rather than in an integrated fashion. The Jordanian-Palestinian community there had something of a dual identity.¹⁵ The explicit notion of Palestinian-Jordanian *identity*, however, was outwardly adopted mainly by Palestinians, on both banks, particularly those who recognized the economic and political opportunities that identification with Hashemite establishment (in its wider sense) offered them. Being a function more of a personal location than of a territory or a collective, this identity was quite popular among East Bank Palestinians (or ‘Palestinian Jordanians’) of the abovementioned urban middle class as well as members of the political establishment (cabinet ministers, members of parliament, civil and military senior officials). The West Bank Palestinians of similar background also adopted it, but to a lesser extent. Most West Bankers, however, like the Palestinian refugees in the East Bank, adhered to their Palestinian identity while most non-Palestinians in the East Bank continued to regard themselves as Jordanians.

The Palestinians’ quest for identity was somewhat exacerbated by the double message and the inherent contradiction carried by the government’s attempt to define its Palestinian policy. On the ideological-declarative level Jordan adhered to the collective Arab stance; that is, a strong (verbal) commitment to the ‘Palestine Problem’ and to the Palestinians, and an undertaking to provide them with whatever assistance necessary to liberate their lands. Yet in the practical, day-to-day sphere that position raised some problems: the Jordanians regarded at least part of the usurped lands they had vowed to help liberate as an integral part of their own kingdom. According to their logic, towns like Jaffa, Ramle, Haifa and Beisan were in Palestine, while Nablus, Jenin, Ramallah and Hebron were in Jordan. That concept implied that contemporary Palestine should be confined

only to the state of Israel (within the 1949 armistice lines), as the rest of mandatory Palestine constituted an inseparable part of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.¹⁶

The fact that the majority of the West Bankers identified themselves as Palestinians, or disagreed with the aforementioned analysis, did not necessarily call in question their loyalty to the Hashemite crown. Time had done its work and reality was stronger than memories and sentiments. Many of them tended to accept the fact that their homeland had been taken and divided by outsiders (Israel and Jordan) and that their life under Jordanian rule was the lesser of two evils. They tried to make the best of it, realizing that their position (even that of West Bank refugees) was far better than that of their fellow Palestinians in other Arab countries.

In 1959 Egypt's president Gamal Abdal-Nasser came up with the idea of a Palestinian Entity (al-Kiyan al-Falastini). This notion—which was designed to embarrass King Hussein—was therefore promptly adopted also by another Hashemite foe, Iraq's ruler Abdal-Karim Qassim. They called for the establishment of such an entity in the West Bank to constitute a territorial and political bridgehead for the liberation of all Palestine. Despite an intensive Iraqi and Egyptian propaganda campaign the idea did not fall on fertile soil in the West Bank. Most inhabitants (including these with strong Palestinian leanings and anti-Jordanian reservations) were reluctant to transform their personal identity as Palestinians in Jordan, which provided them with a passport, freedom of movement and other benefits, into a political national option of anti-Jordanian nature. A few years later, however, the wheel came full circle with the foundation, in 1964, of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). As the organization was formed following a unanimous resolution of an Arab summit, King Hussein could officially oppose neither the PLO nor its activities in the West Bank. The conflicting interests of Jordan and the PLO marked as early as 1964 the beginning of almost a generation-long struggle over Palestinian representation. The vigorous activities of the PLO's chairman, the vibrant Ahmad Shuqairi, among the West Bank inhabitants not only challenged Jordan's authority there but also threatened the precarious Jordanian-Palestinian entity. Jordan was forced to confront those activities even at the price of antagonizing Arab regimes and public opinion.¹⁷ The June 1967 war turned the tables and put a temporary end to this encounter.

Speculation as to what shape the Jordanian-Palestinian entity would have taken had there been no Six-Day War suggested conflicting scenarios. One argument suggested that time was the most decisive factor in enhancing the Palestinians' acceptance. Real coexistence and integration of the two communities would eventually have transpired. Another argument was that the PLO activities had already aroused dormant nationalistic feelings that were soon about to erupt. The outbreak of the war actually delayed the surfacing of militant Palestinian radicalism.

It is impossible to tell what would have happened if the June 1967 war had not broken out. However, what we do know is that 19 years of Jordan's rule in the West

Bank had created a deep and profound impact. In the aftermath of the June 1967 war, most political public opinion there regarded the government in Amman as their representative, at least concerning any discourse with Israel over the future of the West Bank. This attitude reflected the West Bankers' total dependence on the East Bank in almost every aspect of daily life, but also indicated that an independent Palestinian entity (with or without the PLO) was not yet a viable political option. The most telling evidence in this respect was the results of the municipal elections held by Israel in the West Bank in 1972. Even though almost five years had elapsed since they had been cut off from Jordan and even though the memory of the bloody encounter of September 1970 between the Jordanian army and the armed Palestinian organizations (Black September) was still fresh, most of the new mayors and councillors elected were pro-Jordanian candidates. Supporters of the PLO or of the idea of a Palestinian entity were much less popular. Only in the second municipal elections in 1976, after the PLO had scored Arab and international recognition as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians, did its candidates gain the upper hand.

The Six-Day War, nevertheless, created a new reality. Jordan was deprived of the West Bank but was at pains to retrieve it and to maintain its influence there for the next 20-odd years. Eventually however, the West Bank (under Israel's control) was bound to become a *de facto* Palestinian entity. The PLO's claim to be the legitimate representative of the Palestinians, hence the rightful owner of the West Bank, was, as noted, gradually coming to enjoy international recognition. The practical meaning of this consensus was that the PLO, not Jordan, would rule the West Bank if and when Israel withdrew.

In the long run, the major impact of the Six-Day War on the collective identity was to be found in the East Bank. Since 1967, this territory *de facto* corresponded to the pre-1948 Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (and *de jure* since 1988). Yet unlike the case in 1948, about half of its population were Palestinians. For this reason the emergence of a Palestinian entity in the West Bank was not promptly reciprocated by the crystallization of a parallel comprehensive Jordanian entity in the East Bank. The existence of a unique Palestinian-Jordanian entity there, distinct from the entities of each of its two components, was manifested in the first years after the 1967 war, throughout the encounter between the regime and the Palestinian *fedayeen*. The division between the supporters of each side in the clash crossed the traditional lines of Jordanians as against Palestinians.

On the one hand, the presence and activity of the Palestinian armed organizations in Jordan won the sympathy and active support even of some non-Palestinian politicians. One explanation for this is that the outcome of the 1967 war created a deep sense of guilt among the Jordanians, who felt that their army had not put enough effort into defending the Palestinians. This was not just a popular feeling but was shared by members of the intellectual and political elite.¹⁸ Moreover, public support for the *fedayeen* was politically expedient, given their popularity in the Arab world as a factor that had not been tarnished by

humiliating defeat in 1967 and their being the only Arab military element that continued to resist Israel.

On the other hand, many middle-class Palestinians in Amman not only sided with but also even encouraged the extreme measures the regime resorted to in September 1970 against the fedayeen. This was because Palestinian armed activity in Jordan destroyed law and order and deprived them of the stability and security required for conducting their everyday business. Hence, the division between those siding with the regime and those siding with the Palestinian organizations in 1969–70, was not exclusively along communal-national lines, but consisted also of social and political attributes such as economic interests, class and ideology.

Concurrently with the confrontation between the regime and the Palestinian organizations, the idea of enhancing a Jordanian entity in the East Bank gained increasing popularity among members of the Transjordanian political and military elite, whose Jordanian identity was unquestioned. The 1950s impact of the, imaginary or real, Palestinian threat on their collective identity, had then increased many times. As a group, they were offended and humiliated by the fedayeen activities in Jordan and by the King's 'appeasement' policy towards them. Some of them even had to pay a personal price, when, at the demand of the Palestinian organizations, the King was obliged to dismiss them or relieve them of their duties.¹⁹

Most proponents of the Jordanian entity did not intend to concede the West Bank,²⁰ or to disregard the Palestinians who constituted 50 per cent of the East Bank population. They mainly wished to strengthen the Jordanian component of the de facto Jordanian-Palestinian entity in the East Bank and to minimize the power and influence of the Palestinians there. They believed that the showdown with the Palestinian organizations in September 1970 had saved this Jordanian segment from the severest challenge it had ever faced.

The most eloquent advocate of these ideas, who also sought to turn them into government policy, was Wasfi al-Tall, Jordan's prime minister in 1970–71. Tall not only succeeded in ousting the Palestinian organizations from Jordan, following the September 1970 clashes, and destroying their political and military power bases, but also in drastically diminishing the Palestinians' influence in the government, in public administration, and in the press. Besides this policy, which can be depicted as 'negative Jordanization', Tall also fashioned a 'positive Jordanization', namely constructive activities, new ideas and new frameworks (such as newspapers and political and public bodies), in which the contribution of the Jordanian element was salient.²¹

In March 1972, four months after Tall's assassination by the Palestinian Black September group, King Hussein announced his plan for a federal Jordanian kingdom. Even though this scheme was designed to elicit the support of the West Bank Palestinians against Israel and against the PLO, in view of the forthcoming municipal elections in the West Bank it reflected an indirect acknowledgement of Tall's ideas and political concept. According to the plan,

the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was to be renamed the 'United Arab Kingdom'. It would consist of two regions united by federal ties: the Palestinian (the West Bank and any other part of Palestine that might be liberated and whose inhabitants wished to be part of the state) with Jerusalem as its capital, and the Jordanian one (the East Bank) whose capital Amman would be the federal capital as well. Each region would be autonomous, with local executive, legislative and judicial bodies and would run its own internal affairs, while the federal government would be responsible for foreign affairs, defence and the unity of the Kingdom.

The federal plan marked a retreat from Jordan's traditional concept, emanating from the 1950 unification, that the two banks together with the Jordanian Palestinian people constituted a unified entity. The new rationale was the recognition that the two parts were distinct. As noted, the proposed redefinition of Jordanian-Palestinian relations bore some resemblance to Tall's approach, which perceived the West Bank as the homeland of the Palestinian entity and of the East Bank as the homeland of the Jordanian entity.

The plan was never put to the test, being rejected by practically all parties concerned (other than Jordan). Furthermore, at the Arab summit conference in Rabat in late 1974, the PLO was unanimously recognized as the 'sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people'. Its right to establish a 'national authority' on whatever available parts of Palestine was also endorsed. The significance of this resolution was that thenceforward Jordan could have no legal claim to the West Bank. Moreover, the declaration of the PLO as the *sole* legitimate representative implied that its authority could be exercised not only over territory but over persons as well. It could therefore, theoretically at least, be construed that the PLO's authority also included the Palestinians in the East Bank.

Even though Jordan officially accepted the Rabat resolutions, King Hussein insisted that his government would continue to maintain its administration of the West Bank and its 'material commitment' to the population there. The regime's relationship with the Palestinians, however would be redefined: those who chose to remain citizens of the state could do so and those opting for Palestinian identity would be treated like citizens of any other Arab state in Jordan. This somewhat contradictory reaction stemmed from the King's desire to sustain his ties with the West Bank (he was also encouraged to do so by some of the Arab leaders who attended the Rabat meeting). It reflected as well the political debate within the Jordanian elite over the relations between the two entities. The government regarded the Palestinians in Jordan as a part of the Jordanian people and consequently assumed the responsibility of representing them. Yet, the Rabat resolutions had also provided the moral rationale for a clear separation between Jordanian and Palestinian identities.

The Palestinians in Jordan were challenged to decide between their Palestinian identity and Jordanian nationality. Jordanian citizenship came to mean complete integration and renouncement of (separated) political activities.²² The Palestinians however, at least those belonging to the leftist bloc, believed that the

East Bank Palestinians (Palestinian-Jordanians) were part of the Palestinian people who were living in Jordan and had full rights and duties of citizenship there. They also believed that they had the equal right to keep their Palestinian identity (hence they should have dual citizenship) and that they must be represented by the PLO. On the other hand, the Rabat resolutions gave new impetus to the adherents of the Jordanian entity, who had advocated more explicit political separation from the West Bank. Following Rabat, the chauvinistic trend among them, also known as the 'Jordanian Likud' highlighted the 50-year-old slogan 'Jordan for the Transjordanians'. They asserted that the regime should abandon its claims in the West Bank and focus exclusively on strengthening and developing the East Bank. They also advocated 'to remove Jordanian citizenship from the Palestinians and to call new elections in the East Bank alone'.²³ They had to continue this lobbying for a further fourteen years, until 1988, when the King decided to comply. Nevertheless, in 1974 Hussein eventually adopted a line, which, on the face of it, was another reminder of Wasfi al-Tall's policy. Among other things, the number of Palestinians in the Cabinet and in the ministries was slashed and the 'Ministry for the Affairs of the Occupied Lands' was abolished. Preparations were made for the promulgation of a new citizenship law, which meant that the Palestinians would be shorn of their Jordanian nationality, and there was talk of imminent elections in which the inhabitants of the East Bank alone would participate.²⁴

These moves did not imply dissociation from the Palestinian question but were designed to prove to the Arab world that the Rabat resolutions were unrealistic: the PLO was not capable of shouldering the burden it had been assigned. The organization would not be able to successfully assume Jordan's administrative function in the West Bank, nor would it be able to handle the return of the West Bank to Arab hands. This attitude of the King, advocating active Jordanian involvement in the West Bank in coordination with the PLO, was shared by some prominent East Bank Palestinians.²⁵

Hussein's policy was vindicated and his perseverance eventually bore fruit. More and more Arab leaders came to agree that even if a Palestinian state under the PLO were founded in the West Bank it would be better if it were connected with Jordan.²⁶ Hussein and his government continued to favour a settlement that would reinstate Jordan's control over the West Bank. Yet, despite the acknowledgement of Jordan's right to remain a partner to the solution to the Palestine question and despite its frequent coordination efforts and agreements with the PLO, its prospects of regaining a foothold in the West Bank seemed constantly to fade. The Rabat resolutions were still in force, the PLO claim to the West Bank was internationally recognized and the possibility of an Israeli withdrawal from this territory appeared remote.

All these factors had an inevitable impact on the other entity in the East Bank. The original Jordanians were unanimous in their desire to continue the consolidation of the Jordanian entity there. They were only divided over the role of the Palestinians (who already exceeded 50 per cent of the population) in this

entity. A minority of them continued to maintain a negative, xenophobic, anti-Palestinian attitude. In the first half of 1980s, the views of these diehard nationalists on the distinctiveness of the Jordanian entity were used to refute the claims of some right-wing Israeli politicians that 'Jordan is Palestine'.²⁷ However, the majority of the original Jordanians probably believed that the Palestinians who had undergone political and social 'Jordanization' were contributing to the internal strength of the kingdom. Hussein's decision of July 1988 to discontinue the legal and administrative links with the West Bank indicated, *inter alia*, that the King too was a partner to this approach. The disengagement from the Palestinian issue was not only an ideological shift and the abandonment of a 40-year-old policy. The control of—and after 1967 the claim to—the West Bank, the protection of its population, and their integration into both the Jordanian state and society had been an essential component of Hashemite ideology and legitimacy. The forfeiture of these tenets in July 1988 indicated that the ideologically and politically Hashemite-controlled entity that had emerged in the East Bank, and consisted of Jordanians as well as Palestinians, was sturdy. Not only was its legitimacy uncontested, so was its ability to survive and function as a sovereign state.

The disengagement was a decisive shift in Jordan's policy. For the first time the regime felt sufficiently mature to take crucial decisions on its future position in the Middle East with total disregard for the Palestinian factor outside the East Bank. For the inhabitants of the East Bank, however, it was mainly a *de jure* sanction of a *de facto* situation. Political and social issues no longer necessarily divided Jordan society along the traditional Jordanian-Palestinian lines but along different ones such as south vs. north or Islamic fundamentalists vs. moderates. Jordanians and Palestinians could be found on both sides of any given divide. This underlying change in Jordanian-Palestinian relations surfaced only in the early 1990s, with the beginning of the current Arab-Israeli peace process. Jordan's disengagement from the West Bank contributed, as Linda Layne put it, along with the Gulf War, to a shift in Jordanian collective identity-making from issues of tribalism to the discussion of the place that Jordan should hold in a divided Arab nation. Moreover, Jordan's tribal heritage had been expropriated by the state as a symbol of Jordan's distinctive national identity as it highlighted this distinctiveness *vis-à-vis* its most significant other, Palestine.²⁸

Following the disengagement decision, Jordanian historians tended to focus on 1921–46 period (the era of the Emirate of Transjordan). Their writing idealizes this period, praises the East Bank society, both tribal and sedentary, and portrays it sympathetically, if not somewhat nostalgically. Hence, it implies that influx of Palestinians after the incorporation of the West Bank had, in a way, spoiled the harmonious life of the original Transjordanians.²⁹

In this period, the Palestinian majority in Jordan was an accepted fact (estimates varied from 55 to 70 per cent). It did not seem to threaten the Jordanian nature of this entity as this majority was merely a statistic, with no political consequences. The Palestinians in Jordan constituted at least four

groups, distinct in their collective identity, political leaning, aspirations, ideology, identification with the state and attitude to the peace process.

The oldest group is that of the *1948 refugees (lajiyun)*, mainly the camp dwellers who preserved their Palestinian identity and were reluctant to integrate within Jordanian society. They constitute the hard core of the Palestinian opposition to the regime as well as to the rapprochement with Israel. They recognize that even if a Palestinian state were founded in the West Bank they would still not be able to return to their homes as most of them came from those parts of Palestine that became the state of Israel. Nor did the *1967 refugees (nazihun)* integrate into East Bank society; rather they adhered to their Palestinian identity. Yet, they are less decisive in their opposition to the peace process as they would probably be allowed, at the end of the process, to return to the expected Palestinian state.³⁰ The *urban middle class* consists of those Palestinians who, as noted, migrated from the West Bank to the East to improve their own or their descendants' economic and social status. They willingly integrated within Jordanian society (whenever it accepted them), threw in their lot with the Hashemite establishment and carried the banner of Jordanian Palestinian entity and identity. The last and newest group are the *1990/91 Gulf returnees*: 300,000 Jordanian citizens (85 per cent of them Palestinians) who were repatriated from Kuwait and Iraq following the Gulf crisis. From social point of view, they bore a certain resemblance to the aforementioned middle class, but having been out of the country for some time, they had reservation regarding the regime's general conduct even though they basically supported it against any manifestation of radicalism, religious or otherwise.

Palestinians, nevertheless, had blamed the Jordanians for not being aware of this stratification and for regarding the Palestinians in Jordan as a monolithic entity. They admitted, however, that the Palestinians too have made the same mistake when viewing the Jordanians.³¹

The mutual Israel-PLO recognition in 1993, the subsequent talks and the parallel Jordanian-Israeli negotiations and peace treaty were construed in Jordan as if the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was quite close at hand. The timing of these developments was also meaningful, as they coincided with a process of a political democratization that had been going on in Jordan since the late 1980s.³² A forthright and vigorous public debate naturally ensued on the future identity of Jordan and on the place of the Palestinians there. Jordanians and Palestinians were re-examining their collective identities and questions such as whether the Palestinians should remain equal citizens in Jordan or be transferred to the future Palestinian state, were publicly discussed.

The official view was that the entity that had developed in Jordan was a homogeneous society in which Jordanians and Palestinians constituted a united family that shared a common religion, language and (Arab) origin. Past conflicts, in the words of Crown Prince Hassan, 'of the 1960s, 1970s and the early 1980s' between the two communities were gone and 'now' all were equal. The fact that

most of its inhabitants were of Palestinian origin was irrelevant.³³ This concept was reflected in Jordan's National Charter (*al-mithaq al-watani*), worked out by a special committee nominated by the King and ratified by the parliament in 1991. The Charter underlined the principle of national unity and full equality of citizenship for all Jordanians, and was seen as helping to enhance Jordan's national identity.³⁴ King Hussein, one of whose informal titles in the press was 'Amid al-Usra al-Urduniyya (head of the Jordanian family), had also taken pains to settle the Jordanian-Palestinian rift. He used early Islamic terms to define the characteristics of the two communities and the nature of their relationship: the Palestinians were the modern version of the Muhajirun and the Jordanians were the equivalent of the Ansar.³⁵ The former were the first Meccans who accepted Muhammad's preaching, became Muslims as well as his loyal disciples, and migrated with him to Medina in 622. The latter were those inhabitants of Medina who became converts to the new religion and followers of the prophet. They provided him with a territorial base and material support. The two factions are considered of equal importance and the contribution of both is regarded as essential to the consolidation and growth of the Islamic Umma. The contemporary analogy is obvious.

The public debate highlighted the various myths that had evolved around shared historical experiences, but assumed contradicting interpretations. The battle of Karama on 21 March 1968, for example, in which Jordanian and Palestinian forces fought an Israeli invading column (which destroyed Palestinian fedayeen strongholds in the eastern Jordan valley) and inflicted on the IDF many casualties and heavy damage, is still depicted in the Jordanian press on every anniversary as a Jordanian victory. It is one of the symbols of Jordan's modern nationalism and its *first* war of independence, repelling an invasion against Transjordan's territory. This battle is also construed, in the Jordanian public discourse as yet another link in the chain of battles in which the Jordanian army intervened in order to rescue the Palestinians, as was the case in Latrun and Bab al-Wad [in 1948] and in Qalqilya [in 1956].³⁶ The Palestinians, on the other hand, insist that Karama was their own, exclusive, victory. Another example is the confrontation between the Jordanian army and the fedayeen in September 1970. For the Palestinian collective memory it is still the massacre of Black September, while Jordanian nationalists view the event as their *second* war of independence, sometimes calling it White September.³⁷

A survey conducted in early 1995 by the Centre for Strategic Studies in Amman, designed to identify the type of relationship existing between Jordanians and Palestinians in Jordan, revealed basic mutual fears and suspicion. The Jordanians were mainly afraid of becoming a minority in their own country and of the consequences of what many perceived as dominance of the Palestinians in the private sector (it is a conventional wisdom in Jordan that the private sector is predominately Palestinian while Transjordanians enjoy ascendancy the public sector). They felt that Palestinians held dual loyalties and generally failed to appreciate what they had been able to achieve in Jordan. The

Palestinians, for their part, saw obstacles to their integration in the predominance of Transjordanians in the public sector, their presence in sensitive senior positions of the state and the fact that Palestinian representation in both government and parliament fell short of reflecting their numbers in society.³⁸

Those bilateral feelings had been publicly corroborated in early 1997 when Abd al-Hadi al-Majali, a cabinet minister and a scion of the Transjordanian elite,³⁹ delivered a public speech on Jordanian identity and on the question of dual loyalty. He expressed doubts as to whether all Palestinians in Jordan identified themselves with the state. According to his perception, all those who lived in Jordan were considered Jordanians as long as they were content with the political state of affairs in the country, with the constitution and with Jordanian-Palestinian unity. Al-Majali also implied that it might be better if Jordanians of Palestinian origin (especially those who complained about discrimination) realized their political rights in Palestine.⁴⁰ Such views were shared by not a few Jordanians who would rather have seen the Palestinians of Jordan (mainly the refugees) 'repatriated' to Palestine. They described Jordanian-Palestinian relations as an internal social 'rupture' and a source of instability, indirectly accusing Palestinians of dual loyalty.⁴¹

Palestinians responded promptly to Al-Majali's accusations. Their most eloquent spokesperson was a former prime minister from Nablus, Tahir al-Masri. He maintained that even the existence of two different political entities on the two banks of the Jordan should not impair the Palestinians' own status and identity in Jordan. They therefore adhered to the concept of *qawmiyya* (pan-Arab nationalism) as their desired framework of national identity, while the Jordanians insisted that their *wataniyya* (patriotism) was superior to *qawmiyya*.⁴² To press home this argument they even resorted to King Hussein's favourite phrase that the people of Jordan constituted one family that stood together. Nowadays however, this maxim refers more to the original East Bankers, Bedouin vs. sedentary, rather than to Jordanians vs. Palestinians.⁴³

It seems, nevertheless, that even some of those Palestinians who for years had been part of the Hashemite establishment and symbolized the success story of the Jordanian-Palestinian entity, also feel disappointed, if not threatened, by the recent manifestations of patriotic Jordanian nationalism, and by the implications of their alleged double loyalty.⁴⁴ Tahir al-Masri himself constitutes a telling instance. He told Schirin Fathi in 1991: 'I am a Jordanian, I am the Prime Minister of Jordan, and yet a good portion of the Jordanian street or public opinion will not consider me to be a Jordanian.'⁴⁵ These concerns and apprehensions were not entirely unfounded, as far as one can judge from the composition of Jordanian parliaments and cabinets since 1989. The Palestinians, the majority of the population, are conspicuously underrepresented in both bodies.⁴⁶ One of the more vivid illustrations of the internal tension was manifested in July 1997, when the Jordanian team won the Arab world football championship. Obviously, the outburst of enthusiasm that followed was a demonstration of Jordanian patriotism and King Hussein greeted the team: 'You

are in the heart and soul of every Jordanian...The sons of Jordan gave a distinguished performance'.⁴⁷ Some Palestinians, however, maintained that most of the players were of Palestinian origin and thus the Palestinians too and not only the Jordanians should be given credit for the victory. Skirmishes and fistfights soon ensued.

The strain between the two elements of the Jordanian entity again abated somewhat between 1997 and 1999. This was mainly due to the very slow pace of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, which made the prospects of a Palestinian state rather remote. Another cause was the Jordanian Press Law of May 1997. The limits that were imposed on the discussion of certain issues and the severe penalties which threatened offenders practically stifled, *inter alia*, the public debate on Jordanian-Palestinian relations. The demise of King Hussein in February 1999 and the coming to the throne of his eldest son Abdullah had also a certain psychological soothing impact on the tension between the two groups, as the new Queen, Rania, is of Palestinian origin.

Another indication of the explosive nature of this highly sensitive issue loomed in December 1999, once again in the sports arena. Following a football game between Al-Wahdat' (an exclusively Palestinian team) and the 'Al-Faysali' club (an overwhelmingly Jordanian team), the players of the former team were viciously attacked by fans of the latter. About dozen were injured, some of them severely.⁴⁸ King Abdullah was quick to appreciate the potential implications of the incident and he and government officials went out of their way to condemn the assault as a crime and as an attack against the homeland, the national fabric, and the efforts to build a just and tolerant society. Official spokespeople reiterated time and again the internal unity and the equality of all citizens in the unified Jordanian family. They called for a complete integration between 'the different ethnic groups' and rejected any attempt to differentiate between the (Jordanian and Palestinian) citizens.⁴⁹

The resumption of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, following the 1999 general elections in Israel, and particularly the beginning of the so-called Final Status Talks, had also brought the topic of the 'Jordanians of Palestinian origin' back on the public agenda. Prominent public figures both of Transjordanian and Palestinian origin depicted relations between their indigenous communities as an internal social 'rupture'.⁵⁰ A Jordanian columnist summed in late September 1999 his compatriots' views on the subject:

The fact that socially the old and new Jordanians have intertwined deeply over the past five decades does not seem to leave an impact on the broader political issue. Their [the Palestinians] status keeps surfacing now and then in different forms and shapes with no end in sight. Some of us question the loyalty of these 'new' Jordanians to the Kingdom. Many also question their national commitment to the country. A few view such Jordanians as a threat to the country and the original Jordanians. An even smaller minority regards them as some sort of a Trojan horse for Palestinian nationalists

who are bent on transforming Jordan into a Palestinian state...No matter what our views are on this subject, it needs to be settled one way or another.⁵¹

The author called for 'a definitive resolution' of the situation by either the King, the parliament or the government. He insisted, however, that the issue should be settled first by the people themselves. 'As long as Jordanians continue to feel threatened and Jordanians of Palestinian origin continue to complain of being alienated, the good of the country as a whole stands to suffer.'⁵²

It is reasonable to speculate, however, that even if a future Palestinian state enjoys special ties with Jordan, the Jordanian identity will continue to be the dominant one. The Palestinians in Jordan, despite being a numerical majority, will have to accept this identity (albeit in its official, unconvincing, fig-leaf 'Jordanian-Palestinian' version). They are even likely to be reminded, in certain uncomplimentary contexts, as the previously cited article indicates, of their Palestinian origin. The only possible remedy for this (assuming that the Palestinians will wish to remain in Jordan) is the realization that any alternative is worse, for both parties, than peaceful coexistence.

Some Jordanian nationalists are inclined to believe that generally speaking de facto Jordanian-Palestinian division along private/public sector lines might serve as a basis for a possible acceptance of the new reality through a tacit mutual understanding between the two communities. They have toyed with the idea that the Palestinians will settle for their dominance in economic affairs in return for the Jordanian control of the military and political spheres.⁵³ Many Palestinians, nevertheless, do not accept this division. They feel that their representation in the public sector is too low. Former Prime Minister (of Palestinian origin) Tahir al-Masri had severely criticized the policy of appointing employees in the public sector 'on selfish and personal considerations', a policy that had 'sowed the seeds of dissent harming the very fabric of society'. Public calls have frequently been made for a greater participation by Palestinians in the political process.⁵⁴

The Palestinian refugees, mainly those of 1948, are also a hindering factor in the scenario of a practical Jordanian-Palestinian rapprochement. Jordan would like to see some of them repatriated, if not to Israel then at least to the designated Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. Those who cannot or will not emigrate should, in the end, integrate within the Jordanian-Palestinian entity in the East Bank. On this account, Jordan has shown great interest in a permanent Israeli-Palestinian settlement (particularly after the resumption of the peace negotiations following the installation of a Labour government in Israel in the summer of 1999), in the hope that this settlement would yield the desired repatriation of the refugees.

At the same time, in 1997 (when the peace process was more or less at a standstill) the Jordanian government initiated a project, which is still ongoing, of redevelopment and refurbishment of the thirteen refugee camps in the kingdom, as well as bettering their inhabitants' quality of life. To prevent external and

internal opposition by those who did not wish to see the refugee problem solved in such a manner, the government called it a 'social productivity plan' to improve the living condition of the residents. It gave assurances that the project 'is not meant to be a way to resettle the Palestinian refugees in Jordan'. King Abdullah pledged to improve the living standards of refugees while at the same time backing their 'right to return'.⁵⁵

Fear of the Palestinian refugees and of their impact on the future stability of Jordan and of the Jordanian-Palestinian entity was one of foremost reasons why Jordan rejected Yasser Arafat's proposal for a confederation between Jordan and the future Palestinian state. Former Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh warned that even talks about this idea 'could affect the demographic equation' in Jordan. Such a confederation, according to Tarawneh, 'would stir an influx of Palestinian refugees from Lebanon'. He insisted: 'Solving the cause of the Palestinian refugees will not be at the expense of Jordan'.⁵⁶ On the other hand, a well-known critic of the Palestinians, the aforementioned Abd al-Hadi al-Majali, advocated, in his current capacity as Speaker of the Lower House, a Jordanian-Palestinian federation (where the authority of the central governing bodies is stronger than in a confederation) or even a form of union between the two sides.⁵⁷ He probably hoped that such a federation/union would precipitate the desired transfer of Palestinians from the East to the West Bank.

Jordan nevertheless has taken pains to prevent any increase in the number of its Palestinian citizens. The government was reluctant to grant a Jordanian passport and citizenship to Palestinians who lived in the West Bank prior to July 1988 (the declaration of disengagement from the West Bank). Palestinian professionals who held temporary Jordanian passports but did not have Jordanian nationality were not allowed to practise in Jordan, save for a few exceptional cases.⁵⁸ The outbreak of the so-called 'Al-Aqsa Intifada' in late September 2000 exacerbated once again Jordan's fear of a Palestinian exodus from the West to the East Bank (to be encouraged either by the populations' plight or by Yasser Arafat's design to destabilize the kingdom). In June 2001, its government issued new regulations that put severe limits on the traffic of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza to Jordan, thereby highlighting the conflict over the Jordanian-Palestinian identity.⁵⁹

The territorial and demographic trials and tribulations of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, since its inception in 1921 as a loose framework under the title of Emirate, have shaped the nature of the various collective identities that emerged there. The most decisive factor appears to have been territorial rather than demographic. The Jordanian *wataniyya* has managed to prevail as the dominant *Weltansicht*, even though the majority of the population are of Palestinian origin. It is likely to remain this way, with a certain level of acceptance among the Palestinians of the political dominance of the Jordanians and with the latter's realization that they must respect the Palestinian majority and share with it not only power and authority but also the historical heritage and national values. Previous efforts to 'Jordanize' Palestinians or 'Palestinize'

Jordanians have failed. In recent years, the concept of a Jordanian entity as an amalgamation of the Transjordanian and Palestinian elements has been progressively stabilized. There have been definite developments, among both parties, towards positive identification with the state entity.⁶⁰ As Laurie Brand has pointed out, the answers to questions ‘Who is a Jordanian?’ or ‘Who is a Palestinian?’ would be different today from what they would have been five or ten years ago.⁶¹ This time factor is probably applicable to the future as well. The fact that the great majority of the Palestinians in Jordan were born there and not in Palestine (many of them with Jordanian-born parents and grandparents too),⁶² might help to precipitate such a process of integration. Given the internal as well as the regional political developments, the next decade may further blur differences (as constant intermarriages are doing) and decrease the inter-communal tensions. This might eventually give rise to a collective Jordanian identity, but with not a few Palestinian components and attributes.

NOTES

1. This article is an extended and updated version of a paper delivered at the Fourth Nordic Middle Eastern Conference in Oslo in August 1998. I am in debt to my graduate student, Ms Iris Fruchter-Ronen, for providing me with her notes from the international symposium on Jordan held in Paris in June 1997 and for additional invaluable assistance.
2. In 1925 the region of Ma’an and Aqaba, hitherto part of Hijaz, was added to Transjordan by the British, providing the small Emirate with a maritime outlet. In 1950, the West Bank was formally incorporated in Jordan following its de facto annexation in the 1948 war. In 1965 The Jordanian-Saudi border was modified, expanding the small Jordanian coastline on the Red Sea to a 40-km stretch. In 1967, Jordan lost the West Bank to Israel in the June war.
3. See Linda L.Layne, *Home and Homeland: The Dialogics of Tribes and National Identities in Jordan*, Princeton, 1994, p.20; and Schirin H.Fathi, *Jordan —An Invented Nation?* Hamburg, 1994, pp.10, 201.
4. See Munib al-Madi and Sulayman Musa, *Ta’arikh al-Urdun fi al-Qurn al-Ishrin*, Amman, 1959, pp.99–127; and Alec S. Kirkbride, *A Crackle of Thorns*, London, 1956, pp.23–5.
5. One school of contemporary Jordanian nationalism insists that such a sense of distinctiveness had existed since the mid-nineteenth century, that is, ages before the arrival of Abdullah and with no connection to his regime whatsoever. Adnan Abu-Odeh, *Jordanians, Palestinians and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process*, Washington DC, 1999, pp.246–7.
6. Even the first Jordan-born Prime Minister was not a ‘typical’ representative of a certain region or sector, but a member of the Circassian Muslim minority, whom Abdullah protected and promoted in return for unreserved loyalty.
7. James Lunt, *Glubb Pasha: A Biography*, London, 1984, p.92.
8. Madi and Musa, *Ta’arikh al-Urdun fi al-Qurn al-Ishrin*, pp.287–307, 320 ff.

9. On this subject see Rashid Khalidi's excellent work *Palestinian Identity*, New York, 1997.
10. Layne, *Home and Homeland*, p.18; Fathi, *Jordan*, pp.214, 243 (note 38).
11. In the 34 Jordanian cabinets formed between 1949 and 1967 only one Palestinian served as a Prime Minister (for ten days only) and four Palestinians were Minister of the Interior. Joseph Nevo, 'The Jordanian-Palestinian Pendulum', *Middle East Focus*, Vol.9, No.5 (Summer 1987), pp.5, 8.
12. P.J.Vatikiotis, *Politics and the Military in Jordan: A Study of the Arab Legion 1921-1957*, London, 1967, p.115.
13. Radio Amman, 11 April 1964, *The Middle East Record*, Vol.III (1967), Jerusalem, 1971, p.392.
14. Stuart Hall, 'Ethnicity: Identity and Difference', *Radical America*, Vol.23, No.4 (October/December 1989), p.16.
15. Sami al-Khazendar, *Jordan and the Palestine Question*, Reading, 1997, p.5 (quoting Aaron Miller); see also p.51.
16. For the different references to the Palestine question in different contexts see The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Al-Urdun w-al-Qadiya al-Falastiniya wa-al-Alaqaq al-Arabiya*, Amman, nd [c.1962], pp.29-37; al-Mamlaka al-Urduniya al-Hashimiya, al-Urdun 1962, Amman, 1963, pp.26-8 (see also map at the end of the book); and Asher Susser, *On Both Banks of the Jordan: A Political Biography of Wasfi al-Tall*, London, 1994, pp.48, 51-2.
17. For details on the nature of this struggle between 1964 and 1967 see: Susser, *On Both Banks of the Jordan*, pp.78-122; and al-Malik Hussein, *Harbana Ma Isra'il, Acre*, nd, pp. 12-26.
18. Adnan Abu-Odeh (former Jordanian Minister of Information), *Jordan: Politics and State*, International Symposium, Paris, 25 June 1997.
19. Senior army officers Sharif Nasser bin Jamil and Zaid bin Shakir, and Interior Minister (former Director of General Intelligence) Muhammad Rasul al-Kaylani, were the most prominent examples.
20. Only a handful went to such an extreme, but among them were the Queen Mother, Zein, Crown Prince Hassan and senior army officers.
21. Joseph Nevo 'The Era of Wasti al-Tall in Jordan 1960-1971: Attempts to Build a Jordanian Entity', *Occasional Papers*, No.18, [Hebrew], University of Haifa, February 1979, pp.3-7.
22. Fathi, *Jordan*, pp.213-14.
23. Raad Alkadiri, 'The Strategy and Tactics in Jordanian Foreign Policy 1967-1988', D. Phil Thesis, Oxford, 1995, p.94; al-Khazendar, *Jordan and the Palestine Question*, pp. 108-9; Fathi, *Jordan*, pp.213-14. On the various schools of Transjordanian nationalism, consult also Abu-Odeh, *Jordanians, Palestinians and the Hashemite Kingdom*, pp.237-61.
24. Joseph Nevo, 'Is There a Jordanian Entity?', *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, Vol.16 (Spring 1980), pp.108-9.
25. Al-Khazendar, *Jordan and the Palestine Question*, p.64.
26. *Middle East Contemporary Survey* (MECS), Vol.1, 1976-77, pp.478-9.
27. Layne, p.103; Fathi, pp.10, 215. See also Abu-Odeh, *Jordanians, Palestinians and the Hashemite Kingdom*, pp.213-16.
28. Layne, *Home and Homeland*, pp.XV, 103.

29. See for example Suleiman Musa, *Imarat Sharqi al-urdun, Nishaatuha wa-Tatwuruha fi Rub' al-Qarn 1921–1946*, Amman, 1990; Sa'ad Abu Diya, *Ta'arikh al-Jaysh al-Arabi fi Ahd al-Imara 1921–1946*, Amman, 1990.
30. Official Jordanian statistics estimate the total number of refugees of both groups at 1.3 million, living in 13 refugee camps.
31. Lamis Andoni, (a Jordanian journalist of Palestinian origin), *Jordan: Politics and State*, international symposium, Paris, 25 June 1997.
32. The democratization process began after the decision on disengagement from the West Bank and following food riots that erupted in the south of Jordan in April 1989. King Hussein's commitment to economic liberalization led to demands for political reforms as well. Eventually it took shape in the resumption of parliamentary life with free general elections, the re-establishment of political parties and greater freedom of expression.
33. Crown Prince Hassan's message to the international symposium in Paris, 24 June 1997; A lecture by Salman al-Khatib, a senior columnist in the Jordanian daily *Al-Ra'i*, in Giv'at Haviva, Israel, 19 May 1997.
34. Fathi, Jordan, p.235.
35. Adnan Abu-Odeh, *Jordan: Politics and State*, international symposium, Paris, 25 June, 1997; *The Jordan Times* 11 May 1999.
36. *Al-Ra'i*, 25 March 2000.
37. Abu-Odeh, *Jordan Politics and State*. See also interview with Leila Sharaf, in Fathi, *Jordan*, pp.258–9; Jeffrey Goldberg 'Learning How to be King', *New York Times Magazine*, 6 February 2000.
38. Mustafa Hamarneh, Rosemary Hollis and Khalil Shikaki, *Jordanian-Palestinian Relations: Where To? Four Scenarios for the Future*, London, 1997, pp.31, 110.
39. Abd al-Hadi al-Majali, of the famous Karaki family, was a former director-general of Jordan's Department of Public Security. In 1997, he was the secretary-general of the centrist National Constitutional Party. He was a member and later Speaker of the Jordanian Chamber of Deputies. His brother, Abd al-Salam al-Majali, is a former prime minister.
40. *Al-Ra'i*, 20 January 1997. See also *The Jordan Times* 15 August 1999, where he was again referred to as an advocate of depriving the Palestinians in Jordan of their rights.
41. *The Jordan Times*, 22 November 1998 and 11 May 1999.
42. Tahir al-Masri's letter, *Al-Ra'i*, 27 January 1997.
43. Dr Musa Keilani 'Jordan is One Family Which Stands Together', *The Jordan Times*, 14 August 1999.
44. An interview with a former senior cabinet minister (of Palestinian origin), Washington DC, December 1995; Nahed al-Khatir, editor of *Al-Mithaq, Jordan Politics and State*, international symposium Paris, 25 June, 1997; Dr Fahed Fanek 'How Stable is Jordan?', *The Jordan Times*, 22 November 1998.
45. Fathi, Jordan, p.219.
46. *Jordanies*, Vol.1, June 1996, pp.80–81. The 1993 election law that rearranged the voting districts and stipulated that that each voter can elect only one candidate in his district, was designed to weaken the power of both the Islamist and Palestinian electorates.
47. *Al-Ra'i*, 29 July 1997.

48. This attack was not a spontaneous outburst by disappointed fans at the end of the game, but a premeditated ambush on the team's vehicle on the road to Amman a few hours later.
49. *Al-Ra'i*, 8, 9, 10 December 1999; *The Jordan Times*, 14 December 1999, 30 January, 8 February, 14 March 2000.
50. *The Jordan Times*, 11 May and 6 October 1999.
51. Waleed M.Sadi, 'Identity', *The Jordan Times*, 20 September 1999.
52. *Ibid.*
53. An interview with a Jordanian journalist, Haifa, May 1998; see also Al-Khazendar, *Jordan and the Palestine Question*, p.55.
54. *The Jordan Times*, 31 March 2000; see also *The Jordan Times*, 14 March 2000.
55. *Ibid.*, 18 August and 6 and 30 October 1999.
56. *The Jordan Times*, 17 June 1999.
57. See for example Abd al-Hadi al-Majali in *The Jordan Times*, 15 August 1999.
58. *The Jordan Times*, 28 July 1998; 21 August 1999; *Al-Ra'i* 19 August 1999.
59. *Al-Ra'i*, 12 June 2001; *The Jordan Times*, 12, 15–16 June, 2001. This new policy was depicted as a move against Israel's alleged policy to 'empty' the West Bank of its Arab population. The Jordanians also claimed that the new decrees were 'coordinated' with the Palestinian authority.
60. Fathi, Jordan, pp.10 and 218.
61. Laurie A.Brand, 'Palestinians and Jordanians: A Crisis of Identity', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol.XXIV, No.4 (Summer 1995), p.47.
62. It is estimated that no fewer than 80 per cent of Jordanians of Palestinian origin are thirdgeneration Jordanians. Walid M.Sadi 'Identity', *The Jordan Times*, 20 September 1999.

Abstracts

The Imperialist Ties that Bind: Transjordan and the Yishuv

Donna Robinson Divine

Palestine during the years 1922 to 1948 contained within its boundaries two political creations of Great Britain's imperialist ventures: the Jewish National Home and Transjordan. Divided by nationalist identities and loyalties, Transjordan's ruler, the Emir Abdullah, and Palestine's Zionist leaders were also bound together by a common framework of dependence on Great Britain and periodically by a convergence of political objectives. But shared interests evolved in the midst of counter-pressures, the latter producing antagonisms, distrust, and ultimately, violence. This essay explores the interactions between the Emir Abdullah and Yishuv politicians as both a by-product of international and regional political realities and as a central component of their own separate state-building ambitions and objectives.

Jordan's Alliance with Israel and its Effects on Jordanian-Arab Relations

William W.Haddad and Mary M.Hardy

Abdullah Ibn Hussein became the first ruler of Jordan as a 'gift' from Great Britain as compensation for the failed unified Arab state under his brother, Faisal. Jordan was an artificial creation, was largely uninhabited and mostly Bedouin. The fledgling Jordanian army, the Arab Legion, spent its early years trying to forcibly settle the nomadic population. That the creation of Jordan lacked legitimacy was recognized by the new 'king' who himself viewed his territory as part of Greater Syria. This was a feeling shared by other Arab rulers and certainly the populations of mandated Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, and in Palestine. It was in this setting - that the state was illegitimate, was only part of Syria, and it engendered hostility from other Arabs—that Abdullah sought links with the Zionists. He perceived this alliance as lending authenticity to his monarchy and believed it would also allow him to begin the process of recreating

the Greater Syrian state destroyed by the French and British in 1920. This secret alliance, which included a failure to use the Arab Legion effectively in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, engendered enmity from the Palestinians and opprobrium in the rest of the Arab world. As a result he was assassinated in 1951 for his perceived perfidy. Despite the death of Abdullah, Jordan's political circumstances had not changed when Hussein Ibn Talal ascended the throne: Jordan continued to lack legitimacy, was home to a restless Palestinian refugee population, and seemingly surrounded by hostile Arab nations. Thus, despite the threats that the policy posed to his personal safety and his regime, Hussein chose to continue his grandfather's tactic of covert relations with Israel.

Is Jordan Palestine?

Raphael Israeli

Following the June 1967 war two contenders stood on the international scene competing over rights in West Bank: Jordan, which continued to claim it by virtue of its having constituted part of the Kingdom until 1967, and Israel, which occupied it and was now its master. Following intifada, King Hussein was eager to gain legitimacy from Israel over the East Bank of the Jordan, which remained under his rule and which his grandfather had dubbed Jordan. Fearing that Israel's grip on the West Bank would push the Palestinians to fulfil their independence in his own Kingdom, as they had attempted in 1970, he approached the eager Israelis for a settlement by which his rule was recognized and confirmed by Israel, and leaving it to contend with the Palestinians by itself. Unfortunately the West Bank could provide at the most a solution to the one-third of the Palestinian people dwelling there, leaving the rest untouched. Thus Jordan, the home of half the Palestinian people, became once again part of the solution, and not only part of the problem. Can a solution be found to the Palestinian problem, presumably in the Hashemite Kingdom of Palestine, which can satisfy both Palestinian aspirations for statehood and the Hashemite craving for a throne?

Comparing Palestinian Perspectives in the Palestinian Authority, Israel and Jordan on Jordanian-Israeli Relations

Hillel Frisch

The Palestinian Authority possesses potentially two political advantages over both Israel and Jordan. First, its population is homogeneous and its state neighbours by contrast are bi-national. Second, the ethno-national community that makes these states bi-national is part of the Palestinian people that form the majority of the Palestinian Authority. Whether the future Palestinian entity will be able to mobilize these Palestinians to weaken the two neighbouring states, or to pursue, even more ambitiously, a 'Greater Palestine' at their expense, depends on the inherent compatibility over political goals between the

Palestinians in Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian entity. This study address this issue by analysing Palestinian perceptions on both sides of the River Jordan regarding the Israeli-Jordanian Peace Treaty of 1994 and Israeli-Jordanian relations in general. It concludes that the similarities in the positions held by the political elite in all these milieus suggest that the Palestinian Authority will be able to mobilize the elites in Israel and Jordan in future in pursuit of irredentist goals.

**The Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty: Patterns of Negotiation,
Problems of Implementation**

Laura Zittrain Eisenberg and Neil Caplan

This study considers the achievement of the 1994 Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty within an historical continuum of Arab-Israeli negotiations. Applying a framework for analysis developed in their previous collaborative work, the authors explain why so many Arab-Israeli negotiations have failed and why so few have succeeded. Their position is that this agreement came about when it did due to the confluence of strong leaders firmly in place on both sides, the Palestinian-Israeli Oslo breakthrough immediately preceding it, and financial and diplomatic strains which drove King Hussein to re-consecrate his country's relations with the United States with a Jordanian-Israeli peace very much to the Americans' liking. The authors also discuss the evolution of Israeli-Jordanian relations since the treaty, the difficulties in creating the warm peace envisioned by its original signatories, and the circumstances that must change if the treaty is to live up to its original promise.

Israel, Jordan and the Masha'al Affair

P.R.Kumaraswamy

The unsuccessful Israeli assassination attempt on Khalid Masha'al in September 1997 and his deportation from Jordan in November 1999 mark two sides of the same problem: the presence of Hamas in Jordan. The opposition of Hamas to the Oslo process placed the Islamic movement at odds with Israel and Jordan as well as the Palestinian Authority. Each of these players adopted different means to contain its influence. The decision to treat Hamas as a foreign, Palestinian and non-Jordanian organization places the movement at odds with the Kingdom. Having identified Hamas as a threat to the unity and stability of Jordan, King Abdullah would be unable to bring back Masha'al without seriously undermining his authority and the stability of the Hashemite Kingdom.

Political Liberalization and Monarchical Succession in Jordan

Curtis R. Ryan

This study examines two key transitions in modern Jordanian politics: the political liberalization process and the transition in the monarchy from King Hussein to King Abdullah II. In addition to examining the surprise last-minute shift in the succession, it also focuses in particular on the 1999 municipal elections as a key measure of the state of liberalization within the Kingdom. The 1999 elections are especially important because they were the first under King Abdullah, the first since the opposition boycotted the 1997 national polls, and finally, they marked the tenth anniversary of the start of the liberalization programme itself. As such, they serve as a kind of barometer of the status and depth of democratization within Jordan. While the 1999 elections witnessed the return of the opposition to Jordanian electoral politics, Jordan's overall political liberalization remains limited and problematic. The future of political reform may therefore depend not only on the electoral laws, the party system, and the ability of the opposition to organize, but also on the role of *King Abdullah himself*.

'Normalization' and 'Anti-Normalization' in Jordan: The Public Debate

Paul L. Scham and Russell E. Lucas

The Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty, signed in October 1994, was accompanied on both sides by high hopes of warm relations between the peoples of the two countries. Despite the fluctuations of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and lack of the hoped-for significant economic dividends, the Jordanians reserved judgment and remained moderately favourable to Israel. However, a number of incidents from the spring of 1996, when Israel launched its 'Grapes of Wrath' operation, culminating in the attempted assassination of Hamas leader Khalid Masha'al in September 1997, led to a withdrawal of support of the relationship by much of the population. The 'anti-normalization' movement, led by the Islamic Action Front and the country's professional associations, seems to have won the battle for public opinion.

Water in Israeli-Jordanian Relations: From Conflict to the Danger of Ecological Disaster

Bruce Borthwick

Since the Peace Treaty of 1994 between Jordan and Israel the danger of a 'water war' has subsided, to be replaced by the problem of a water shortage. Israelis, Palestinians and Jordanians are now over-exploiting surface and groundwater to

the point where these life-giving resources are sometimes being irreversibly damaged. Because water is a strategic asset for all three and because the three peoples are linked in many ways, the equitable distribution of water to all is necessary for the stability of relations. Currently, there is a race against time to avoid ecological catastrophe. The new 'water conflict' does not involve armies in combat and governments threatening each other; rather it involves political factions and interests inside each state, struggling over the limited water resources and trying to influence government policies.

Changing Identities in Jordan

Joseph Nevo

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a unique phenomenon in the manner of state-building and construction of its identity. The complex territorial and demographic history of the Jordanian entity gave rise to a particular socio-political process. Instead of the gradual evolvement of one coherent countrywide national identity, several collective identities emerged, sometimes in succession, sometimes simultaneously. This essay studies and analyses that process and endeavours to explain its causes and to evaluate its impact on state and society in Jordan.

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