

TENSIONS BETWEEN STATE BOUNDARIES
AND NATIONS:
THE CASE OF JORDAN

by

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The nation-state system has been widely criticized in the field of political geography for its generalizations and inaccuracy. It has already been established by various authors that state borders rarely reflect the territory of nations within them. This tendency has been blamed by many for unrest in areas like the Middle East, but while most Middle Eastern countries encounter this issue, some remain stable. Jordan is largely lauded for its stability by citizens and outsiders alike, but what does it mean to be Jordanian in a country with more refugees than original Jordanians? Jordan faces a number of challenges internally as a result of its current demography and lack of natural resources. Adding to these difficulties is the fact that Jordan is surrounded by the Islamic State, civil war, unrest in Egypt, and the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict. Despite all of these factors, Jordan—unlike many of its neighbors— has remained fairly stable. I believe part of this tendency is due to Jordan’s Hashemite monarchy’s response to dealing with and incorporating huge refugee populations, primarily from Palestine, but most recently from Iraq and Syria as well. In this thesis, I will detail many of the challenges that Jordan and its Hashemite rulers have faced in trying to unite the people within their borders.

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Introduction

The nation-state system has been widely criticized in the field of political geography for its generalizations and inaccuracy. It has already been established by various authors that state borders rarely reflect the territory of nations within them. This tendency has been blamed by many for unrest in areas like the Middle East, but while most Middle Eastern countries encounter this issue, some remain stable. Jordan is largely lauded for its stability by citizens and outsiders alike, but what does it mean to be Jordanian in a country with more refugees than original Jordanians? Jordan faces a number of challenges internally as a result of its current demography and lack of natural resources. Adding to these difficulties is the fact that Jordan is surrounded by the Islamic State, civil war, unrest in Egypt, and the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict. Despite all of these factors, Jordan—unlike many of its neighbors—has remained fairly stable. I believe part of this tendency is due to Jordan's Hashemite monarchy's response to dealing with and incorporating huge refugee populations, primarily from Palestine, but most recently from Iraq and Syria as well. In this thesis, I will detail many of the challenges that Jordan—and its Hashemite rulers—has faced in trying to unite the people within its borders.

Research Questions

- How does our modern state system help form identities?
- What and who has formed the national narrative in Jordan?
- How is life in Jordan different for different groups?

- How have the foreign Hashemite rulers maintained their hegemony over Jordan's diverse demography?

Relevance to the Field of Geography

The study of geography is often characterized as explaining “the why of where.” Geographers, whatever their specialty, examine the significance of place. The topic of national identities is an important area in both cultural and political geography. Jordan's relatively short history as a state makes it a good case study for examining the significance of place in relation to national identities. The country of Jordan did not exist in any real way before the French and British formed the country of Transjordan under the Sykes-Picot Agreement less than a century ago. Today, there are individuals who proudly proclaim themselves to be Jordanian. Place and borders obviously had a significant effect in creating the existence of a Jordanian nation, but the challenges that the nation-building process entails are long and unresolved.

Jordan is an excellent example of territory creating identity, and a new state creating a new nationality. In day-to-day conversation the word ‘state’ and ‘nation’ are often used interchangeably. In reality, these are two completely different terms. Walker Connor expands on the importance of understanding the real meaning of these words in 1994 book, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding*. The word ‘state’ refers to a set of demarcated borders on the Earth tied to a governing system that has been recognized as sovereign from any other country. Defining the term ‘nation’ requires more nuance. Connor uses *The International Relations Dictionary's* definition, which says that a nation is

a social group which shares a common ideology, common institutions and customs, and a sense of homogeneity. “Nation” is difficult to define so precisely as to differentiate the term from such other groups as religious sects, which exhibit some of the same characteristics. In the nation, however, there is also present a strong group *sense* of belonging associated with a particular territory considered to be peculiarly its own (as cited in Connor 1994, 92-93).

The differences between nation and state are best clarified using examples. For instance, though there is a Kurdish nation, there is no Kurdish state. The Kurdish nation obviously precedes the Kurdish state, but a Jordanian nation did not exist before the British and French decided to draw lines in the sand and create the territory known as Transjordan.

This link between identity and territory is one that political geographers such as Alexander Murphy and Marvin Mikesell have been exploring for years. I use both of their writings and the concepts therein for my examination of Jordanian identity. In his 2010 article, “Identity and Territory,” Murphy states, “the relationship between territorial structures and territorial ideas remains underexamined and undertheorised” (769). My thesis will examine both the structure of Jordan and its conceptions, focusing on the idea of creating a united Jordan in a diverse and destabilized area. Murphy emphasizes the importance of this practice when he goes on to say that “nowhere is this [underexamination] more evident than in the literature on identity” (769). I hope to learn from the field of cultural and political geography and contribute to its literature on the topic of nation-state tensions in my thesis.

In addition to Jordan’s interesting position as a state-first nation—wherein the state preceded the nation—Jordan’s demography also raises questions of identity and

structure. Jordan's population is primarily comprised of Palestinian refugees, and has more refugees and immigrants arriving everyday, mostly from Syria. The fact that these refugees and immigrants constitute a majority of Jordan's population makes for a fairly unique social structure. This configuration becomes even more interesting when one considers that Jordan's Hashemite monarchy is made up of a fairly recent immigrant family from what is now Saudi Arabia. Mikesell, in "The Myth of the Nation State," asserts "that cultural complexity may encourage conflict and, hence, be a threat to the stability of states" (Mikesell 1983, 257-58). With these facts in mind, Jordan's relative stability seems rather remarkable, which is why I have chosen to examine how it has been maintained. I will also analyze the power different groups have—focusing on Hashemites, Palestinians in Jordan, and Transjordanians—while also exploring which, if any, of these groups are considered to belong to a Jordanian nation.

Research Methods

As a foreigner studying the Middle East, I have attempted to bring in as many local voices as possible. The Middle East is plagued by enough stereotypes in American and Western media and the last thing I want to do is add to the noise and fear surrounding the region. In order to bring in the local voice, I conducted interviews with Jordanians while living in Amman, Jordan in the summer of 2014. In these interviews, I focused my questions on what it means to be Jordanian, and what characterizes a Jordanian. Where are they from, originally? Since Jordan is made up primarily of Palestinians formerly from the West Bank, I often asked whether these individuals—after having been here for decades, and often having Jordanian citizenship—would now be considered Jordanian. Answers varied. Some, using the legal definition, alleged that

anyone who has Jordanian citizenship is Jordanian. Others said that even if people coming into the country now got citizenship, stayed, raised children, and the generations stayed in Jordan for 120 years, they would never be Jordanian. I will examine the opinions from these interviews primarily in the last chapter of my thesis.

In addition to more formal interviews, I use what I observed and photographed in Jordan to supplement my research. One interviewee saw the royal family as a uniting factor among Jordanians. I witnessed this firsthand as I saw pictures of the King and his family displayed throughout the country. Amongst the public evidence of promoting a united Jordan were various murals and ad campaigns that I saw along roadways. These were especially prevalent in Jordan's capitol: Amman. It was clear from displays (such as the one pictured below) and flyers around the city that Jordan's leaders want to promote a united state and a united nation.



Figure 1: Photo taken near 7th circle in Amman, Jordan.

Text reads: "We are all one. We are all Jordan."

I also analyzed a 4th grade Jordanian social studies textbook that goes over the history of Jordan and how the state was formed. Just as American history books promote a certain narrative of what it means to be American, and how America came to be, I found the same to be true with this text. The narrative promoted in the textbook aligns the country of Jordan and being Jordanian with its monarchy. This story is significant given that the monarchy is foreign and has a relatively short history in the area. I will address the accuracy of the text in a later chapter, but the narrative it portrays makes it clear that the Hashemites want to closely align the Jordanian nation with their rule of the state.

My research will also include journal articles and books about Jordan and the Middle East, along with the concepts of state, identity, and power relationships more broadly. Some of the most important thinkers in this vein are Murphy and Mikesell, whom I mentioned in the previous section. Along with the field of geography, I will be

pulling from cultural anthropology and political science sources in examining Jordanian population. Through these varied texts, I hope to provide a picture of the Jordanian nation and its origins.

Literature Review

There is an abundance of research on nationalism and nations, or on the Middle East generally, but relatively little on Jordan, and almost nothing has been written on its nation/s. Most of the literature available on the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan addresses the country in relation to other states or conflicts. Given its long history—and border—with Israel-Palestine, it comes as little surprise that Jordan is often addressed in reference to its western neighbor. While the Palestinian-Jordanian identity is relevant to my research, it is only one part of the dynamics occurring within Jordan. By pulling together sources with different focuses, I was able to get a substantial amount of information to analyze the history of the three major groups in Jordan: Hashemites, Palestinians, and Transjordanians.

The writing of Murphy and Mikesell were useful in understanding the theories of political and cultural geography in regards to nations and group identities. In particular, Murphy and Mikesell's joint piece, "A Framework for Comparative Study of Minority-Group Aspirations" provided a useful foundation for understanding the actions and motivations of Palestinians in Jordan. Mikesell's article, "The Myth of the Nation State," also gave a summary of why viewing international relations solely through the state system gives an incomplete understanding of identity.

No work was more helpful in comprehending how the modern Middle East came to be than David Fromkin's *Peace to End All Peace*. His book focuses on the fall

of the Ottoman Empire and the beginning of Western intervention in the region in the years 1914 to 1922. In addition to providing an overview of politics in the region as a whole, Fromkin uses the writings of key British colonialists and locals to show the personalities that formed the Middle East. While his work does not focus on the area of Transjordan—it only merits four out of 567 pages—it does lay out the conditions under which it came to exist.

One of the few pieces that focused on the establishment of nationalism in Jordan itself was Adnan Abu Odeh's *Jordanians, Palestinians, and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process*. Abu Odeh is Palestinian-Jordanian and brings a local perspective to the idea of the Jordanian nation and Transjordanian nationalism in Jordan. Abu Odeh's work is invaluable for examining the process of a state-first identity, but also focuses on Jordan in relation to an outside force, rather than examining the country alone. The tendency of these works to focus on Jordan in relation to other places made my research more difficult but it also showed that there are gaps in the academic literature available on Jordan and its national identity. I hope to begin addressing these holes by adding my own voice to the discussion on Jordan's nation and state.

Research Significance

Jordan's stability is uncommon and vital to the region. King Abdullah II has described Jordan multiple times as being "between Iraq and a hard place" (*The Daily Show*, 2010). Generally, the King is referring to Israel-Palestine as that "hard place" in the Middle East, but in recent years, he has a plethora of hard places to choose from for his analogy. Even before the rise of the Arab Spring, Jordan has been an eye in the

storm of unrest in the Middle East. Just because it remains relatively stable now does not mean that Jordan is immune from conflict. Current events and a sizable refugee population are undermining its stability, but its problems are not unique. Migration is increasing worldwide and looking at how Jordan integrates—or does not integrate—its immigrants into its nation is a lesson that states everywhere could learn from.

It should also be noted that, because of its terrain, a vast majority of Jordan's population resides in the northwestern and western part of the country. Because of this population distribution, there are far more links with countries to the North and West than to the South with Saudi Arabia, this layout can be viewed in the map below:



Figure 2: Source: Google Maps, accessed Oct. 24, 2014

Ongoing conflicts in Israel-Palestine, Egypt, Syria, and Iraq have greatly impacted Jordan. Egyptians have come to Jordan seeking work and stability in the wake of their country's revolutionary turmoil. Palestinians constitute more than half of Jordan's population. Hundreds of thousands of displaced Syrians and Iraqis have fled conflict and sought safety in Jordan; Queen Rania recently estimated 1.3 million Syrians alone have entered the country. Jordan's population is only 6.5 million. The

third largest city in Jordan is now Zaatari, a Syrian refugee camp. Jordan's population is not merely bordering these conflicts; it is being remade by them.

Jordan is getting new immigrants and refugees at an incredible rate, especially in relation to its small population and lack of resources. Though these changes are massive, they are not unique. In our modern, globalized world, people are moving from state to state every day and in huge numbers. Those fleeing conflict in the Middle East are not only going to Jordan. Many have made it as far as the United States. But what happens to them once they arrive? Can they every become part of the national identity whose space they have joined? Jordan, a relatively new state, offers a valuable perspective on this question. Since its borders are fairly new, it should be relatively easy to become "Jordanian." This, however, is not the case. What does it take to be considered Jordanian? Is it simply a matter of time, or are other factors involved? Lines in the sand created the Jordanian national identity. I would like to find out what power structures and ideals have helped it survive.

Roadmap

This thesis is broken down into four chapters. The first chapter, on the Hashemite monarchy, acts as a background for the rest of the thesis. Regardless of whether the Hashemites are Jordanian, they were involved in every step of its development as a state, and have exercised control over its people and nation building. This history of what would become Jordan is important to understand the Transjordanian and Palestinian experience in the chapters following. The second chapter focuses on the Palestinian history and experience in Jordan. It is impossible to separate the modern Palestinian identity from the Israel-Palestine conflict, but this

chapter focuses on the Palestinian experience in Jordan. The third chapter will focus on Transjordanians, the native inhabitants of the state. Transjordanians have a unique story in Jordan, especially because of their reputation for staunch loyalty to the Hashemite monarchy. The fourth chapter brings all of these identities together to examine their place in Jordan today. This is also the chapter in which most of my on-the-ground observations and interviews will be discussed, along with the narrative enforced by the Hashemite monarchy. Finally, the conclusion will discuss the significance of what was addressed and examine any themes or trends that came to light between different groups.

Chapter 1: Hashemites

Given the combination of Jordan's diverse populace and surrounding conflicts, the stability of Hashemite rule has been rather remarkable. Though an important family and tribe in the region, the Hashemites have a relatively short history in Jordan. The history of the Hashemite family is often traced back to the Prophet Muhammad, from whom the Hashemites are believed to be descendants. This heritage gives them legitimacy amongst other Arab and Transjordanian tribes, but does not tie them to power in Jordan. The narrative of their time in Jordan begins with the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire during World War One. Though their rule has not been without its challenges, there seems to be no end in sight for Hashemite control of Jordan. After Qaddafi's fall, and while Assad fights for any semblance of control in Syria, the Hashemite monarchy continues on. Now in the hands of King Abdullah II, Jordan faces new challenges both at home and abroad from both internal calls for democratization and regional instability. In this piece, I will focus on the modern place of the Hashemite family in Jordan and how they have gained and maintained their local hegemony.

In order to understand modern Jordan, one must go back to the time of the Ottoman Empire to see where it began. The Ottomans ruled the Fertile Crescent and Egypt from 1516 to the end of World War One, but they did not impose direct-rule in the area of Transjordan until 1851. In that year, the Empire established a new governorate in what would become northern Transjordan, just south of their long-held Syrian post in Damascus. At the time, various sheikhs and their tribes ruled the area. Local 'borders' and 'territories' were in flux from one battle to the next. As sheikhs tried to obtain the most valuable land, the Ottoman Empire expanded and began setting

up an army, building bureaucracy, and demanding taxes. By 1893, Ottoman rule had extended south through the southern town of Karak, largely administering the territory using local sheikhs to collect taxes from the areas they controlled (Fischbach 2000, 7-18). The practice of using ties with a few powerful locals to control the land would be carried out by Emir Abdullah just a few decades later.

The beginning of World War One saw the decline of the Ottoman Empire. As the custodian of Islam's holy sites in Mecca, Sherif Hussein was faced with a decision. His position was largely due to being related to Muhammad, who had also been a member of the House of Hashem. His leadership in Mecca was powerful in that it was not under either the British or the Ottoman powers in the region. By the beginning of World War One however, rumors were circulating that his position was being threatened by the Young Turks, who had taken over the Ottoman Empire (Fromkin 1989, 112-14). After seeing the Ottomans ally with the Germans, Britain tried to bring Hussein onto their side, hoping that he could use his influence to rally other Arab tribes. Hussein had spent most of his tenure as an Ottoman loyalist, but after seeing his position come under threat, he reached out to High Commissioner Henry McMahon of the British. Hussein demanded that, were the British and he to overthrow the Turks, he would have control over a new independent Arab Kingdom on their land. McMahon did not say no and caused Hussein to believe that they had come to an agreement (Fromkin 1989, 174). Gilbert Clayton—another colonial administrator—summarized McMahon's actions by saying, “luckily we have been very careful indeed to commit ourselves to nothing whatsoever” (as quoted in Fromkin 1989, 185). Reflecting their disregard for an Arab state, the British secretly signed on to the Sykes-Picot Agreement with France in

1916 (Fromkin 1989, 196). The map for the agreement below shows the arranged borders and spheres of influence for Britain and France, with A for France and B for Britain.



Figure 3: Sykes-Picot Agreement Map, courtesy of the National Archives

The same issues that would face nation-builders in the region for decades to come plagued the beginnings of the Arab Revolt in June 1916. Hussein believed that if he started the revolt, other Arabs would follow. That hope proved to be unfounded, and with low numbers, little to no formal training, and inadequate weaponry, Hussein was soon fighting an uphill battle (Fromkin 1989, 221). In October of 1916, with the revolt falling apart, Hussein proclaimed himself King of the Arabs. With a great deal of

British assistance, Hussein's revolt helped to fight back the power of the Ottoman Empire. Much to Hussein's dismay though, the Arab lands he helped to win were taken over by the British and French based on the map from the Sykes-Picot Agreement (Karsh and Karsh 1997, 297-305). The British saw Transjordan as a buffer between French Syria to the north and the Hijaz—what is now Saudi Arabia—to the south. Originally, they attempted to rule the area under small, localized regimes that divided the area east of the Jordan River into districts. Each district was given a small, local government with British advisers. This strategy proved ineffective. Indeed, British officials in Transjordan had little hope for any sort of local leadership in the fledgling colony. C. D. Brunton, a British official serving in Transjordan reported to his superiors bluntly that “the idea of controlling a country partially inhabited by predatory savages by giving it Home Rule and a few British advisers may sound attractive as an experiment” but was not working in reality (Fromkin 1989, 443).

Emir/King Abdullah I

Abdullah ibn Hussein—one of Sherif Hussein's sons—set out from Mecca in October 1920, looking to push the French out of Syria and bring it under Hashemite control. He got to Maan—which was then considered part of the Hijaz—in November and proclaimed jihad against the French. While there he met with British officials, and then went to Amman four months later. Finally, he reached an agreement with Winston Churchill—Colonial Secretary of the United Kingdom at the time—who gave Abdullah British support for a trial period of his rule over Transjordan (Jureidini and McLaurin 1984, 12). Churchill agreed to recognize Abdullah as Transjordan's ruler, given a few conditions:

the emir recognized the British mandate over Transjordan as part of the Palestine mandate, renounced his claim to the throne of Iraq in favor of his brother Faisal and prevented any hostile acts against the French in Syria (Abu Odeh 1999, 15).

Though its borders were not yet established, Abdullah saw the territory assigned to him as only the beginning and aspired to bring other Arab states under his control (Moaddel 2002, 28). Despite the fact that Emir Abdullah agreed to submit to Churchill's demands for his place as emir, Abdullah was an Arab nationalist at heart. He believed in an overall Arab identity over state identities, which were soon to be formed. Before he even came to lead Jordan, he made a speech in Ma'an saying, "I do not wish to see any among you identify yourselves by geographic regions. All the Arab countries are the countries of every Arab." (Abu Odeh 1999, 16). This sentiment is made clearly throughout Abdullah's rule. While he understood and was an expert at negotiating between different tribes, he ultimately believed that they should identify with the larger Arab nation. That identity had only formed years ago under the Arab Revolt and his leadership.

After a successful six-month trial period with Abdullah as Emir with significant British backing, they chose to give him supervised authority over Transjordan. This system, which saw Emir Abdullah govern with British aid and "supervision," would last for the next thirty years. These decades were important, as they were the first in which Jordan—as we see it today—was treated as a single unit. While Abdullah bided his time before trying to take control of Syria, he began to establish "his rule by securing the support of the tribes, in a chieftaincy-like coalition that was an extension of the tribal alliance that existed during the Arab Revolt" (Alon 2007, 37). Abdullah and his

legacies' power stems primarily from their ability to make these tribal connections that the British could not. He established a precedent wherein tribes were included in the Jordanian experiment by consenting to Abdullah's hegemony but still maintaining a certain degree of autonomy. The support of tribal leaders has been the backbone of Hashemite hegemony in Jordan since Abdullah's initial rule and continues today (Alon 2007, 37-40).

On April 11th, 1921, Abdullah formed his first government, with a council of Syrians, a Palestinian, a Hijazi, and a single native Transjordanian. Most of these council members were Arab nationalist exiles, reflecting Abdullah's larger plan to rule an Arab state based in Damascus. The British supported Abdullah and his government council financially, administratively, and militarily. Abdullah left the daily bureaucracy to his council and the British, while he focused on forging personal relationships with the Transjordanian tribes. He especially worked to build unity with strong nomadic tribes, who tended to be more resistant to any form of government. In this way, Transjordan became separated into two groups early on: nomadic or semi-nomadic tribes and settled citizens. While his council focused on the settled citizens of Transjordan, Abdullah used his personal relationships to govern the tribes. This division was only one of the many that the country of Jordan would have to endure when trying to control and unite its diverse population (Alon 2007, 40-41).

The British were initially displeased with Abdullah's style of state management. Abramson, a British official reporting on Abdullah, felt that his loose style with the nomads and disregard for administrative duties would lead to the failure of the Transjordanian colony, saying:

it will be almost impossible to bring the Bedu to respect and obey the Government, pay taxes and tithes and keep the peace if an Emir is in the head of affairs. Being a Bedu himself, his inclination is to settle all Government and other matters in Bedu fashion, and this would be fatal in Trans-Jordan (quoted in Alon 2007, 48).

The above quote makes it clear that goals for Transjordan were different for the British and Abdullah. While the British wanted a profitable and organized colony that would not cause trouble and dutifully pay taxes, Abdullah wanted a network of relationships on which to expand upon in the long term. Even British officials in Palestine were displeased with what they saw as Abdullah's laziness, or rather his "temperamental disinclination to great exertion of any kind" (Alon 2007, 48). The British became so frustrated that they nearly wrote Abdullah off, but a second evaluation by T.E.

Lawrence blamed any issues on Jordan's lack of a military and not simply on Abdullah, giving the Emir another chance. "A variety of sources – British, Arab (both pro and anti-Hashemite) and Zionist – seem to agree that Abdullah was gifted with the ability to gain the affection of the people he met" (Alon 2007, 43). Abdullah was so skilled that he was able not only to convince sheikhs to support him, but managed to get them to participate in strengthening and building his rule. Given time and more military control, Abdullah was able to establish power over the remaining ungoverned areas in the North and South and gained the approval of his British superiors (Alon 2007, 48). Despite the division Abdullah's governing style created, it was considerably more successful than the local delegations that the British had previously attempted. Given his lack of military force, the strategy of consent and personal relationships allowed Abdullah to have considerable power and has been emulated by his descendants on the throne (Alon 2007, 41).

In addition to their bureaucratic and financial support, one of Britain's biggest contributions to Transjordan was its military. Transjordan, as has been discussed previously, was new in being considered a cohesive piece of land. To help defend and unite the area, Britain allowed for and assisted in training "a small (1,300 all ranks) military force which came formally into being in 1923 as the Arab Legion" (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 22). This force was in addition to the TJFF (Transjordanian Frontier Force), which was also under British command. The first commander of the Arab Legion was General Frederick Peake, followed in 1939 by General John Glubb, who remained in power until 1956. Though the title of the military alluded to its Arab ties and helped to unite the country both symbolically and by actively putting down local revolts, British senior officers ran the force using British equipment. Abdullah did not even have the ability to command the military. That power stayed with General Peake during his time, and the British government above him. For Abdullah this was a largely beneficial relationship, as the force was generally there to maintain stability and his place in power (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 22). In addition to securing Transjordan, the Arab Legion acted as a symbol of Abdullah's Arab Nationalist goals. Notably, the force itself is referred to as the *Arab Legion*—or *Al-Jaish Al-Arabi* in Arabic—and not the Transjordanian Legion. The force was also made up of Syrians, Hijazis, Transjordanians, Palestinians, and Iraqis, and acted to unite both Arabs and Transjordan itself (Abu Odeh 1999, 17). For Britain, which had final control, the Arab Legion assured that Abdullah could never usurp British authority over Transjordan (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 22).

On May 15, 1923 Britain proclaimed that Transjordan was a “national state being prepared for independence” (Nyrop 1980 as cited in Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 24). Both the wording here and the results of this statement make it clear that Transjordan was not actually independent from Britain. Despite this, Abdullah celebrated the moment as endorsing Transjordan as an independent entity. Transjordan remained under the British Palestinian mandate and continued to rely on Britain for everything from bureaucratic and financial assistance to military order (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 24). With Abdullah now officially in charge of Transjordan, the country began to resemble its modern dispositions. After a large immigration of Syrians, Amman, once a small village, had a population of around 20,000. Emir Abdullah constructed a palace for his family and government offices and a British residency soon followed. Transjordan now had political institutions, more solidified borders, and began to receive large numbers of immigrants from neighboring areas. This trend of local immigration began around 1925, and has come to characterize modern Jordan today, both demographically and culturally (Wilson 1987, 94).

As a follow up to the 1923 declaration, Britain and Transjordan worked to create the Anglo-Transjordanian Treaty in 1928. Under the treaty, the British kept control over Transjordanian finances, foreign affairs, military, and communications, but promoted Transjordan from a district to an Emirate. In the long term, the British promised to grant Transjordan full independence upon proving that the country had become constitutional. This piece allowed for the British to force Abdullah to make constitutional reforms he had resisted prior. Abdullah had been reluctant to surrender any of the few powers he had to any type of legislative group as the British desired (Milton-Edwards and

Hinchcliffe 2001, 24-5). While many in Transjordan thought the document would bring official independence, what came about was entirely different. In return for the British forcing Abdullah to make reforms and keeping all of their current power, Abdullah continued to receive Britain's yearly subsidy (Wilson 1987, 96).

In the years following, Abdullah continued to secure his political standing in Transjordan. Though the British controlled his purse strings, he often had freedom to choose how best to position himself domestically. For instance, despite the relationships he had built with various Transjordanian tribal leaders, Abdullah did not let them hold the highest positions within his government. He preferred to give those positions to Syrians and Palestinians. This bias was partly due to the fact that Transjordan had only one secondary school, which did not produce enough local educated elite. But largely, Abdullah knew that outsiders would rely on him for the power he had given them. If he gave them a position, they had to remain loyal to him in order to keep it since they had few or no other contacts locally, while Transjordanian elites, on the other hand, would have had a chance at usurping Abdullah's still tenuous position. In instances like these, Abdullah's hegemony was largely due to his ability to negotiate relationships to his benefit. While many could say that Jordan owes its foundation to its British benefactors, its stability and structure is owed in a large part to its first leader; Emir Abdullah (Satloff 1994, 6-7).

Abdullah had always intended to build on his position in Transjordan and create a state of Greater Syria—including Transjordan—but based in Damascus. As time went on though, Abdullah became more connected to Palestine to the west and lost connections to Syria in the north. Partly this connection was logistical. Transjordan and

Palestine were both under the Palestine Mandate and were supervised by the same British official in Jerusalem. Indeed, Transjordan nearly shared Palestine's fate as the homeland for a Jewish nation. There were many talks, with Abdullah present, that involved the sale or rental of Transjordanian lands to the Jewish Agency for Jewish colonists (Wilson 1987, 104). This discussion, and his general openness to dealing with Zionists, made Abdullah very unpopular with Palestinians. After an insinuation by the Palestinian Istiqlal political party that Transjordan and Iraq should unify under Abdullah's brother Faysal, Abdullah became enraged. He worried that Faysal had started this idea and retaliated against his Transjordanian opponents. One was even thrashed publicly in Amman. However, when Faysal died in September of 1933, Abdullah used the opportunity to turn Istiqlal leaders back to his favor. They did lessen their work against him, but because of his previous deals, did not trust him. In fact, when Abdullah visited London in June 1934, he attempted to get Palestinian leaders to give him a mandate to speak for them with the British, but he was vehemently rebuffed. In fact, they even considered sending their own man to watch for any further deceit on Abdullah's part (Wilson 1987, 111-12).

In 1936, the nature of the Middle East shifted, as strikes and demonstrations swept across Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and Palestine. These protests led to treaty negotiations between the West and Egypt and Syria separately, and killings of Jews and Arabs in Palestine by the other. Despite the general distrust toward him, Abdullah was in a relatively strong position to negotiate on the behalf of his Arab brethren because Transjordan was fairly stable both internally and with the West. Abdullah attempted to alleviate the strike in Palestine by first going to its Arab leaders. These leaders refused

to give in unless the Jewish Agency suspended Jewish immigration to Palestine. Abdullah was so desperate for success in his mediation that he offered to let the Jewish Agency bring settlers to Transjordan instead of Palestine. The compromise was rejected, but it managed to show the lengths Abdullah was willing to go in order to assert himself in Arab politics. Abdullah never wanted to settle for Transjordan. He was willing to sacrifice the land and people he had in order to gain influence in the rest of the Arab world (Wilson 1987, 117-18). Indeed, soon thereafter Abdullah became the only Arab leader to approve of the British Peel Commission partition plan, likely because it brought what would become Arab Palestine under his control in Transjordan. He regained some favor from this and other actions when he was credited with convincing the British to try to curb Jewish immigration after Peel was rejected. His progress in Palestine was stalled thereafter by the outbreak of World War Two (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 28).

Because his approval both at home and abroad suffered from his obsession with gaining more land, Abdullah began to focus on complete independence by the end of World War Two. In March of 1946, the British and Transjordan signed a treaty of “perpetual peace and friendship” and Transjordan traded in its status as emirate for kingdom (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 30-31). Despite its new independence, Transjordan and the Arab Legion continued to be subsidized by the British, and many countries did not recognize its sovereignty until years later. Now king, Abdullah used his power within the new parliament to call for unity between Transjordan and Syria. (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 30-31).

After surviving World War Two, the British decided to let the United Nations decide what to do with Transjordan's western neighbor: Palestine. This decision led to the 1947 plan for partition involving separate Arab and Jewish states. Abdullah had lost respect both at home and abroad with Arabs by backing the last partition plan, so he was less public with his opinions this time. Abdullah had been in discussions with American, Jewish, British, and Arab parties, and neither he nor the British had planned on involving the Arab Legion in any Arab-Jewish conflict. That did not end up being the case however. On May 14th, 1948, the Arab Legion, along with Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, invaded Palestine. By the end of most hostilities in July 1948, the Arab Legion, unlike its Arab counterparts, had managed to occupy and defend the Old City of Jerusalem and the region that would come to be known as the West Bank. After the cease-fire and Armistices, these military boundaries became the status quo for almost two decades. Transjordan's military effectiveness allowed for Abdullah to present himself as the only successful defender of Palestinians and broadened his respect throughout the region. He even went as far as proclaiming himself King of All Palestine at a conference in Jericho in 1949 (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 31-34). While Palestinians largely refer to the 1948 war as Al-Nakba—meaning the catastrophe—for Abdullah, it was, by and large, a success. He was able to expand his borders as he had been unable to do in nearly three decades, and gained respect after various international failings in the Arab world. In a way, an Arab and Palestinian defeat became a Hashemite and Transjordanian victory.

Unfortunately, occupying Palestine was not the diplomatic victory Abdullah could have hoped for. After refusing to call his annexation of the West Bank temporary,

Transjordan was nearly expelled from the Arab League. Because he refused to let the West Bank stand on its own as a Palestinian state, Abdullah lessened the ability of Palestinians to stand on their own and assert their independence as a nation deserving of its own state. And to a certain degree, Abdullah could only maintain his annexation as long as the Israelis agreed. Because of this dilemma, many Arab leaders saw Abdullah as colluding with the enemy, rather than fighting for the Arab cause. Unfortunately, because of his long held expansionist dreams and his actions after the 1948 war, Abdullah had numerous enemies. On July 25, 1951, Abdullah was shot and killed at the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem while attending prayers with his grandson, the soon-to-be-king Hussein (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 33).

Though the crown passed—surprisingly smoothly—to Abdullah’s son Talal, the succession was tense because Talal was widely seen as mentally unstable. In less than a year Jordan’s parliament ruled him incapable of governing. Talal abdicated the throne and his eldest son Hussein soon took his place (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001,35-36).

King Hussein

Hussein came to rule Jordan just as confidence in the Hashemite family was being shaken. Talal had just abdicated his rule and Abdullah had been murdered in what should have been a secure and sacred place. Hussein saw his grandfather shot down in front of him. These legitimate insecurities came to follow and influence Hussein’s rule throughout his time as king. They likely pushed him toward his hard positions on various security issues thereafter. His hard line made him unpopular both at home and abroad at times, but he became one of the longest ruling monarchs in the Middle East.

When Hussein took the throne in May of 1953 at the age of 17, he came into a government that was being run almost single-handedly by the prime minister, Abul-Huda. Talal's lack of ability to rule had left a power vacuum that Abul-Huda had been more than happy to fill and his heavy hand had strengthened the political opposition. Because of this governing style, King Hussein came into his rule with more opposition than his father or grandfather had ever faced (Abu Odeh 1999, 69-70). Indeed, Hussein had been reluctant to return to Jordan after his grandfather's death. He writes in *Uneasy Lies the Head* that he had wanted to get

away from the power lust and avarice that followed my grandfather's death as rapacious politicians fought for the crumbs of office, sullen, determined, hating each other, like the money-hungry relatives who gather at the reading of the will (Hussein 1962 as quoted in Satloff 1994, 74).

With this attitude coming in to office, Hussein immediately sought to change the leadership that had followed his grandfather's death.

Hussein was not well known in Jordan. With a controversial grandfather and popular father, he was determined to make his own mark on the state and nation. Hussein decided to focus on revitalizing the country by furthering its independence from the British and pushing out many of the seasoned politicians that had marked his father and grandfather's reign. He replaced powerful Prime Minister Abul-Huda with Fawzi al-Mulqi, whom Hussein knew well. Al-Mulqi sold the new king on his ideas of a fresh government that focused on popular participation. Meanwhile, General Glubb—the British officer in charge of the Arab Legion—began pushing to liberalize the constitution and release political prisoners, which was initially popular. Unfortunately, it soon became clear that al-Mulqi's ideas of 'popular participation' actually translated

to trying to please everyone around him. This tactic proved ineffective. After there was no Jordanian retaliation to an Israeli attack against Qibya—a village in the West Bank—that had left over 50 people dead, popular opinion turned against al-Mulqi. Hussein turned to the autocratic Abul-Huda once again. Hussein's about face turn from liberal democratizer to autocrat angered Jordanians and politicians. For better or worse, this flow back and forth from liberal to conservative and consent to coercion would characterize his long reign (Abu Odeh 1999, 69-71).

One of Hussein's principle ideals upon taking the throne was to solidify Jordanian independence from Britain. Abdullah had proclaimed and celebrated Jordan's independence on several occasions, notably in 1923 and 1928 following new treaties with Britain. His version of "independence" had included sustained British funding, British influence over foreign and domestic politics, and British control of the armed forces. This version of independence did not match the traditional definition of the word. Hussein sought to make independence a reality by finally pushing out British control. This goal was important for him to be a true leader with the respect of his citizens. The Arab Legion, though less powerful after 1948, was still one of the prides of Jordan. After the attack on Qibya, an officer in the Arab Legion was quoted in *The Observer*—a London newspaper—as saying:

We hate our government for not allowing us to take a gun and go into Israel to shoot Jews. We know that the Government only acts because it is paid money by Britain and America. The money Britain pays might just as well be paid to the Jews because it bribes the Legion not to attack. (quoted in Satloff 1994, 83).

Looking beyond the clear anti-Semitism, the quote above displays the frustration that many Jordanians felt with their king. They had been angry when King Abdullah worked

with the Jewish Agency and were angry now that the British and King Hussein would not allow them to fight Israel. His first years as King were marked by a series of riots and protests by both the opposition and general populace (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 38-39). To gain legitimacy—or maintain any that he had—Hussein needed to rid himself of his Western puppet masters.

General John Glubb had been the British officer in charge of the Arab Legion since 1939. Because of his vast influence and power in the country, he was widely viewed as “the uncrowned King of Jordan” (Ashton 2008, 50). For practical and personal reasons, Hussein resented General Glubb and dismissed him on March 1st, 1956. Glubb, after spending the last 26 years of his life in Jordan, was asked to leave the country forever at two hours notice. After pushing back his dismissal until 7am the next day, Glubb was never allowed to enter Jordan again. By dismissing Glubb, Hussein was able to proclaim his power both at home and abroad. This event is widely seen as Hussein finally asserting himself as the preeminent political and power force in Jordan. While the dismissal of British power over the Arab Legion was a powerful symbol, Hussein maintained the British subsidy for his military. In Glubb’s wake, Britain also built up a separate secret service for the military and Jordan broadly (Ashton 2008, 52-55).

While dismissing Glubb was a significant step in Hussein’s ascension to building a more independent Jordanian state, it did not solidify his power in the minds of all Jordanians. In 1957, the King had to deal with a left-leaning—pro- democracy—government and a coup. The King decided to sacrifice democracy for stability. Rather than do this in the shadows, he publicly banned all political parties. The lower elected

house of parliament instead acted as a rubber stamp for the King's decisions. (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 39). He did this by declaring martial law and mobilizing Bedouin troops on April 25, 1957. Hundreds of people were arrested and then imprisoned under a system of military justice. Elected councils in Palestinian areas of the East Bank such as Amman and Zarqa were shut down, along with throughout the West Bank. Hussein was immediately rewarded by a \$10 million aid disbursement from the US. Saudi Arabia responded by giving him control of a military force. With virtually no legitimate opposition at home or abroad, it was not until 1989 that Hussein began to thaw his stance against democratic politics and institutions in Jordan. Until that time he had final say on anything that happened in his Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. (Robins 2004, 100-102). At this point, Hussein retained his hegemony by pure force. There was no free press or political structure to allow for even the mirage of consent.

Unfortunately, Hussein's power at home did not translate into power regionally. In 1964, Hussein supported the creation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization—widely known as the PLO—at the first Arab summit conference. Hussein was pressured into this decision based on other political needs at the conference and the belief that the PLO would not threaten his power at home. That did not prove to be the case. Both this event and the PLO more generally are covered in more detail in chapter three.

In the late '60s, events began to unfold that would change the shape of the Middle East and Jordan forever. On May 30, 1967 Hussein was pressured by anti-Israeli feelings at home and throughout the Middle East to sign the Joint Defence Agreement with Egypt against Israel, which led to the June 1967 war. Days later, Hussein had lost the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and national pride. Historians and political scientists

alike are still confused by Hussein's decision to join such an agreement. Hussein had been largely moving away from Egypt's positions, and had recently gained closer ties to Saudi Arabia. There are several theories regarding his disastrous decision. Some argue that there would have been an uprising in Jordan if Hussein had refused to join his Arab partners in the fight against Israel. Though Hussein had a fairly tight hold over his population, they were still a large majority Palestinian, which meant that the appearance of Hussein siding with the enemy—Israel—would have been disastrous. Others believe that Hussein may have misjudged Israel's willingness to go to war or the strength of the united Arab militaries. Still others argue that Hussein thought that Western powers would step in with diplomatic solutions before a war could ever take place. Many believed that war was inevitable and that Hussein was fearful of Israel possibly initiating an attack and gaining his land. Finally, Philip Robins writes in his 2004 *A History of Jordan* that Hussein's own personality must also be taken into account. Hussein was "mercurial" and though his heavy-handed leadership had led to enforced stability in his country, it meant that big decisions were left on his shoulders alone. Regardless of the reasons for his decision, Hussein led Jordan to a quick and devastating defeat (Robins 2004, 120-121).

With the West Bank under Israeli control, Hussein lost nearly half of Jordan's GDP, a quarter of its arable land, and 90% of the country's fledgling tourism industry. These factors, in addition to the 300,000 new and second-time Palestinian refugees flooding into the East Bank, left Jordan and Hussein weaker on multiple fronts. In the eyes of his citizens, he had failed. The Arab Legion—which acted as a source of pride and unity for the fractured nation—was decimated. Despite these defeats, Hussein

learned from his failure. One main lesson emerged: Israel was stronger than its Arab neighbors, so he would need to use diplomacy to prevent war and make any future gains he sought out. Though the 1967 war was crushing for Hussein, in many ways the experience made him wiser than his grandfather King Abdullah—with his hubris and expansionist ideals—had ever been. The push for diplomacy over military action characterized the rest of Hussein's time on the throne. While most of his populace still pushed for a fight against their Zionist neighbors, Hussein began to reach across the Jordan River in an attempt to find peace (Robins 2004, 124-126).

While Hussein pushed for peace with Jordan's neighbors, he maintained his strict military rule at home. The PLO relocated to Jordan following the 1967 war. Initially, Hussein did little to hinder their anti-Israel raids from his territory. After repeated raids from the PLO in early 1968, Israel planned to retaliate on the Jordanian town of Karameh. Knowing this was coming, the Jordanian army and PLO met to discuss defensive strategy prior to the confrontation. On March 21st, Jordanian and PLO soldiers stood side by side in what could have been a unifying fight against Israel, which quickly withdrew with severe casualties. Though the victory was largely owed to Israeli over-confidence following the 1967 war, the media sold the battle as a victory by the PLO.

Astute manipulation of the media by the guerrillas left many Jordanian officers and soldiers with the feeling that their hard-earned victory had been stolen by upstarts, and inserted a sour note into relations that was to grow into deep bitterness over the next two years (Sayigh 1997, as quoted in Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 44).

The battle of Karameh could have united the Palestinian and Jordanian causes and populations, but created an even greater divide instead. The perception of PLO success

also gave the movement legitimacy with Arabs both at home and abroad (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 43-44).

This divide and the increasing publicity of the PLO militarization and establishment in Jordan left Hussein—who had tied his legitimacy to the Jordanian army’s preeminence and internal power—in a difficult position. He initially tried to emphasize the unity of the Transjordanian-Palestinian issue. He, as his grandfather before him, attempted to convey that the desires of Palestinians and Transjordanians were one and the same. Still, Palestinians wanted a state and Transjordan neither wanted to give them power in Transjordan nor fight alongside them against Israel. Out of desperation, Hussein agreed publicly in 1968 to renounce Jordan’s sovereignty over the West Bank “if that is what the people want” (Abu Odeh 1999, 173). This statement did not mean much given that Hussein did not have control over the West Bank at this time, Israel did. A month later, Hussein even took back his previous statement—which he could not enact—by promising greater self-determination, but not outside of the Jordanian state (Abu Odeh 1999, 173-74).

After realizing that diplomatic negotiations and kind words would not stop the PLO’s demonstrations and actions in Jordan, Hussein implemented harsh restrictions on all of the Palestinian demonstrators and militias. Rather than bending to his demands, the organizations led huge demonstrations where thousands of people took to the streets of Amman, some firing their weapons into the air. Instead of forcefully backing up his new rules, Hussein rescinded them, which many saw as a sign of weakness. Meanwhile, many well-to-do Jordanians and middle-class Palestinians were growing disenchanted with the PLO’s actions (Abu Odeh 1999, 174-75). Events reached a boiling point in

September of 1970, when the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—commonly known as the PFLP—hijacked planes and brought them to Amman where a hostage crisis ensued. The event showed the world that King Hussein did not have control of his populace. The last straw was reached when Palestinian guerrillas took control of Irbid—a city in northern Jordan—and Hussein retaliated by declaring military rule. The Jordanian civil war had officially begun. Hussein’s Jordanian army was primarily comprised of Transjordanians and Bedouins. Though Hussein originally thought fighting would be swift and decisive, the civil war extended to mid-July. The brunt of the fighting took place in the first month, with 3,400 reported dead in only the first 11 days. Eventually Hussein emerged victorious and drove all Palestinian militias from Jordan to where they eventually settled in Lebanon. The Jordanian civil war would later be widely known as Black September and seen as the climax and crux of national divide in Jordan (Robins 2004, 131). The divide is even black and white in this conflict when one considers the fact that many Transjordanians refer to the civil war as White September in order to show their support of the Palestinian defeat (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 45).

Black September showed that the growth of Palestinian nationalism posed a threat to Hussein’s political power at home. That threat did not evaporate with the expulsion of the PLO and Palestinian guerrillas, instead the king made claims of a single nation while continuing to discriminate against his Palestinian population. Martial law was maintained through the late 1980s and arrests of Palestinians without trial were common. Along with the crackdown on Palestinians, the King promoted the single Jordanian nation under the Hashemite identity by using state-controlled media.

His image was spread throughout the public sphere and his photo could be found everywhere from street corners to cafes and hotels. This practice has continued to modern times, with Abdullah II appearing in everything from military garb to traditional Bedouin clothing to western suits. His face smiles down from road signs and office walls in Amman, though in more “troublesome cities” like Maan, he can be seen glaring sternly in combat uniforms.

Though Hussein kept strict control over ‘worrisome’ populations like the Palestinian majority, Jordan’s political structure changed greatly in the late 1980s. After the Palestinian Intifada began in 1987, Hussein reconsidered his claim on the West Bank. Taking into account its huge financial burden on Jordan and the fact that Palestinians were calling for local leadership, he formally relinquished the West Bank in 1988. Though Jordan continued to manage the Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem, administer secondary school exams, and provide educational curriculum, almost all other administrative ties to Palestine ended. The move was unpopular with Palestinian-Jordanians but had various economic benefits for Jordan and showed that Hussein was more confident in the loyalty of his Palestinian subjects following Black September. After another 20 years in Jordan, even the post-1967 Palestinians were becoming more integrated into society through inter-marriage and community building (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 52-55). It should be noted that though Hussein renounced Jordan’s claim to the West Bank, Jordanian identity is still often tied to the land west of the River Jordan. For instance the figure below is from a museum at the citadel in Amman.



Figure 4: Photo by author, taken on 15 June 2014.

What is now Israel-Palestine is clearly shown to be a part of Jordan, all centered below the image of Hussein, and his son King Abdullah II. Images like these are common in Jordan, showing that though Hussein may have formally relinquished Jordanian control of the West Bank, its legacy as part of the Jordanian state and nation continue.

Hussein's renunciation of the West Bank was not the only event to change the shape of the country in the late '80s. The Jordanian government had prioritized industrial growth over fiscal realities and by 1988 the Kingdom was forced to look to the IMF for help. While the IMF offered a way out of debt that had reached 26.8 percent of GDP, the deal included making cuts to subsidies and high price increases.

The new prices and lessened assistance led to riots in Maan on April 18, 1988 that soon spread to Kerak, Shubak, and Tafila. While the capital remained calm, Hussein was worried by the growing unrest in his customary strongholds in the south. Hussein replaced his prime minister and—after having been wrapped up in international issues the last few years—decided to make himself more available to his people. In June of that year he began a trip throughout Jordan. He rode in an open-top car and sought to make himself as accessible as possible to his people, both visually and by sitting down to listen to their concerns. He followed up his trip with the first open election since 1957, which he later said was vital for releasing some of the political tension that had built up. Given that the King still retained final control over whatever government was elected, elections were relatively low risk for Hussein. Regardless of their true power, elections were soon followed by a new National Charter—which became law in 1992—that finally allowed legal political parties. These changes and Hussein’s formal end to martial law brought in a more democratic political age to Jordan (Ashton 2008, 254-256).

Soon after Hussein’s political changes came a major upheaval in his personal life: a cancer diagnosis. In 1992 it was publicly announced that the King underwent a cancer operation in the United States. Upon his return to Jordan, Hussein was greeted by a spontaneous demonstration from hundreds of thousands of his citizens. His diagnosis forced Hussein to realize that he had less time than he may have thought to achieve peace in his region and his reception showed that he was popular and loved by at least some of his people. With Arafat and the PLO negotiating their own peace deal with the Israelis, Hussein decided it was time for Jordan to do the same (Robins 2004,

186). The Jordan-Israel peace process is a remarkable episode in the history of the Middle East, but not one that I can adequately address in this work. For further reading on the topic, *Peacemaking; The Inside Story of the 1994 Jordanian-Israeli Treaty* by Majali, Amani, and Haddadih. The Jordan-Israel peace treaty was signed between Hussein and Yitzhak Rabin on October 26, 1994 in Wadi Araba. For King Hussein, it was a day of celebration, saying

it will not simply be a piece of paper ratified by those responsible, blessed by the world. It will be real as we open our hearts and minds to each other, for all of us have suffered for far too long (Ashton 2008, 314).

For Hussein's people, it was a day of mourning. The population of Jordan is still majority Palestinian, and the peace treaty was seen by many as an act of betrayal and defeat. Thousands of protestors took to the streets in Amman and black flags hung from office buildings. While democratic trends had been on the rise in Jordan, they had not stopped Hussein from doing what he thought was best, regardless of what his citizens thought. Unfortunately for Hussein, Israel, Jordan, and the Middle East more broadly, his plans for a more peaceful region were soon torn apart by the assassination of his partner in peace, Yitzhak Rabin (Ashton 2008, 314-17).

The rest of Hussein's reign was characterized by an attempt to bring normalcy to the country's new stance on relations with Israel. Jordan was, and still is, a long shot from a democracy, and Hussein made it clear that he still had control of the press by giving the state punitive control over the press in 1997. He also continued to assert himself in continuing negotiations between Israel and Palestine in the late '90s (Robins

2004, 192). His acceptance of Israel and fight for peace made him almost more popular there than at home, as evidenced by his wife's—Queen Noor's—writing that

it was impossible to ignore the fact that my husband was very popular in Israel; many Israelis told us that they would gladly exchange Hussein for Bibi [Prime Minister Netanyahu's nickname] (Ashton 2008, 363).

As his health continued to worsen though, his primary concern was who should succeed him upon his death. His younger brother Hasan had been crown prince since 1962, when Hussein proclaimed him as such after Jordan's instability in the late '50s. The latter half of 1998 was filled with palace drama over whom Hussein should hand the crown to. He seemed to favor his younger son—Prince Hamzeh, who was only 18—because of their close bond, but ended up choosing his eldest son, Prince Abdullah as a sort of compromise. Hussein named Abdullah Crown Prince on January 25th, 1999 (Robins 2004, 192-98).

Less than two weeks later, on February 7th, 1999 Hussein passed away in his hospital bed in Jordan. The wide impact of Hussein's time as King was reflected by the multitude of world leaders that flew in to his funeral the next day, along with the dense crowds that lined Amman's streets. He was mourned as a leader, but also as a paternal figure in Jordan, where he had reigned for nearly half a century (Ashton 2008, 365-65). Despite the many controversies he oversaw—notably the June 1967 War and Black September—Hussein is still generally viewed positively and warmly by his people. He left behind big shoes for his son to fill, both locally and regionally.

King Abdullah II

Abdullah had grown up under the assumption that he would rise to a leading role in the Jordanian military, but never become King. Abdullah; the former Crown Prince Hasan, and the rest of the country were surprised when King Hussein changed the line of succession and placed Abdullah as his heir. Despite this change of heart, the transition from Hussein to Abdullah went smoothly. As Abdullah entered office right before the turn of the century, Jordan's citizens hoped he would mark the beginning of a more democratic, less autocratic regime (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe 2001, 117-19). In 2003, just four years after Abdullah took the throne, Mustafa Hamameh—a professor at the University of Jordan—was quoted as saying “Jordan has been going through a transition since 1989” and “in the Arab world, transitions go on forever” (as quoted in Al-Arian 2003) Though his statement is cynical, it shows that there was at least a measure of hope that Abdullah would continue the political transition that his father had promised in the late ‘80s and early ‘90s.

Other than the unpopular American war in Iraq, this hope for political liberalization has largely framed Abdullah's time in office over the the last fifteen years. As was shown in King Hussein's reign, democratic liberalization primarily manifested itself in talk rather than action. The Hashemites used it as a tool to curb the demands of a growing population and largely avoided having to use military force to control civilians. A good example of this was Hussein's insistence upon making peace with Israel despite his population's opposition to the idea. Abdullah did not want to be seen as taking away any democratic power though, and has managed to maintain this appearance while exerting outright authority over his people. This practice is referred to

as “contained pluralism” by Sean Yom in his 2009 piece: “Jordan: Ten More Years of Autocracy.” Part of this façade occurs through Abdullah fostering a visible civil society that allows for a multitude of regulated voluntary groups and clubs. He also has worked to reform and bolster the Jordanian economy. His strategy mainly includes surrounding himself with younger technocrats rather than the older tribal leaders that his father had relied upon. Abdullah has made these political “reforms” while simultaneously curbing any actual threat to his power (Yom 2009, 151-156).

With the onset of the Arab Spring in 2011, it looked as if Abdullah—and the Hashemite monarchy he represents—would finally have to cede power to his people. Protests, though not as large nor as loud as those in other countries, were present throughout Jordan, especially its capital, Amman. Yet after passing various constitutional amendments and calling for political reform, the political scene looks much the same as it did in Abdullah’s earlier years, or his father’s later ones. Indeed, Abdullah took a page from his father’s playbook by never failing to appear democratic, but constantly shoring up power behind the scenes. After increased protests, he finally called for Parliamentary elections in 2013, and though they were largely viewed favorably, the Parliament still remains relatively powerless under the reign of the King. While the Arab Spring may not have changed Jordan’s government visibly, its society has shifted. Not since the Israel-Jordan peace treaty or perhaps Black September before it had Jordanians so openly spoken out against their King (Yom 2013, 127-129). While the Hashemite Kingdom has retained its monarchy as others have fallen, nothing is certain. Only time will tell how the story of Hashemite leadership unfolds in Jordan’s future.

Chapter 2: Palestinians in Jordan

Palestinians have a long history in Jordan but many—both Palestinians and outsiders alike—do not consider them to be Jordanian. On a broad level, one could easily attribute this opinion to the complex nature of identity and the fact that there is no sense of resolution of the Palestinian identity given their ongoing conflict with Israel. However, I argue that the Hashemites and Transjordanians have played an important role in the status of Palestinian identity in Jordan. In many contexts Palestinians have become an integral part of Jordanian society. Many Jordanian Prime Ministers have been Palestinian, and Queen Rania—the current Queen of Jordan—is herself Palestinian. It would seem that Palestinians have become integrated into local society, but there is still a sharp distinction between those who identify as Transjordanian—or native to the state—and those who identify as Palestinian. In the following pages I will explore the history of Palestinians in Jordan and their current status, both legally and in reference to Jordanian identity.

Palestine and Jordan have been interconnected both geographically and administratively since the territory of Transjordan was established in 1921. Of course, one cannot mention the current state of Palestine—or lack thereof—without acknowledging Israel as well. Relations with Israel, have certainly affected both the Palestinian and Jordanian identity, but there is not room in this paper to address that relationship fully. Rather, this thesis will provide only a basic understanding of how Jordan's borders were made in order to understand how Jordan exists today. With that said, let us proceed with the goal of understanding a bit of what it means to be a Palestinian Jordanian.

As was discussed in the preceding section on the history of Jordan, depending on who you ask, the history of the current borders of Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian territories began anytime from the second millennium B.C., “when the twelve tribes of Israel settled in ancient Palestine” (Israeli 1991, 2) to 1948 with the war that gave the state of Israel its first actual borders. Understandings of the borders of what would become Israel, Palestine, and Jordan are even blurred in the 1910 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*:

Palestine . . . conventionally used as a name for the territory which, in the Old Testament, is claimed as the inheritance of the Pre-exilic Hebrews . . . we may describe Palestine as the strip of land extending along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. . . . Eastward there is no such definite border. The River Jordan, it is true, marks a line of delimitation between western and eastern Palestine; but it is practically impossible to say where the latter ends and the Arabian desert begins (as cited in Israeli, 1991, 2).

The line between what would become Palestine and Jordan became more solidified in 1923 with the British declaration of Transjordan as an independent entity, but the Palestinian mandate—which the British oversaw—still had control over the Transjordanian government (Abu-Odeh 1999, 15). With the border between the Transjordan-Palestine territory set at the Jordan River, Transjordan existed only because the British said it did, while the issue of the modern Jewish homeland in Mandatory Palestine was—and is—still being sorted out on the Western side.

The 1948 war between Israel and its Arab neighbors—including Transjordan—prompted a huge influx of Palestinians to Transjordan. This migration occurred because Transjordan’s army took control of the West Bank during the war, where about 450,000 Palestinians lived. An additional 450,000 Palestinians fled Israeli-occupied areas to

either the West Bank or Transjordan. Transjordan only consisted of about 400,000 people at this time, so the influx of Palestinians to Transjordan and its annexation of the West Bank more than tripled its population. In 1950, Transjordan changed its name to the “Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan” and formally annexed the West Bank, thus giving birth to a Palestinian majority in the new country (Mishal 1978, 1-2).

From the confusing and rather recent political border-making referred to above, it may seem surprising that a Palestinian-Jordanian divide would exist so quickly when actual borders are so recent. Indeed, Jordan’s King Abdullah issued a royal decree banning the word “Palestine” in official documents, instead preferring the terms “West Bank” and “East Bank” to show that the land was a single state. Despite their close proximity though, the populations of Palestine and Transjordan were actually quite different. As of 1943, Palestinian Arabs tended to be slightly more urban than Transjordanians. This urbanization helped modernize the labor force in Palestine, creating trade unions and organization that did not exist in Transjordan. In 1944, more than half of Palestinian Arab children attended school, while only 20% of Transjordanian children did. Increased education led to a more informed and literate populace. While all of Transjordan only had one local paper, “Palestinian Arabs had three daily newspapers, ten weeklies, and five quarterlies” (Mishal 1978, 4-5). All of this meant that, despite the lack of official borders, West Bankers and East Bankers largely came from different backgrounds (Mishal 1978, 1-5).

Palestinians began to be integrated into Jordanian government and politics in 1950 and this acted as an important year for the merging of the two identities. In the 1950 general parliamentary elections, which included the East Bank and the West Bank,

all Palestinians were given citizenship and the right to vote, even refugees. The Lower House of Deputies had a total of forty seats, twenty of which were elected from the West Bank, most of whom supported King Abdullah. The upper house was appointed by the King and consisted of eight West Bankers and twelve East Bankers, while the cabinet had five of each, and the prime minister was an East Banker. The King gave almost half of his government's representation to West Bankers, but in this is not what the Palestinians would have received in a more democratic system. Given the fact that West Bankers made up over two-thirds of Jordan's population at this point, and were a more literate, organized, and urban populace, they likely would have swept a gigantic majority in a system where seats were not assigned. Additionally, given that King Abdullah had absolute power in the government, the seats and authority given to the West Banker majority were more symbolic than actual concessions of power. Finally, the seat of power for this East and West Bank state remained in Amman, away from the center of the population in the West Bank (Abu-Odeh 1999, 49-51). This power discrepancy, along with the King's attempt at peace negotiations with Israel following the 1949 armistice, led to Palestinian discontent and King Abdullah's assassination by a Palestinian in Jerusalem in 1951 (Israeli 1991, 7).

Murphy's and Mikesell's formula put forth in "A Framework for Comparative Study of Minority-Group Aspirations," is helpful in examining Palestinian actions in Jordan from 1948 on. Though Palestinians in Jordan are not a traditional minority group—given that they make up a majority of the population—they are a minority in the share of the power and are viewed as a separate identity, especially immediately after the 1948 war. Murphy and Mikesell set forth a formula for understanding minority

strategies in situations like this. They argue that minorities that are discontented with their status in the state system have a combination of six goals to achieve more power depending on the conditions they live in. The first three of these aspirations are recognition, access, and participation, and the second three are separation, autonomy, and independence. Any of these may be pursued alone or together depending on the goals of the minority. The first three goals are pursued by groups who want to opt into their state system and the latter three by minorities that want to opt out. After the 1948 war, most Palestinians pursued a combination of the top three strategies, especially focusing on increasing their access to and participation in the Jordanian political system (Mikesell and Murphy 1991).

Despite King Abdullah's assassination, many Palestinians saw it to be in their best interests to join and influence the political life in Jordan. The first slogan for Palestinians in the parliamentary elections was "Yes to the union [with the East Bank], no to the peace with Israel," which complicated Jordanian plans for peace, but helped to unify the country as a whole between its two nations. Indeed, West Bankers influenced much of the political workings that came out of Jordan during that time. Both houses of Jordanian Parliament adopted a resolution toward the more official unification of Jordan and Palestine. The text of the resolution clearly shows that Palestinians hoped to further their own national cause using their political power in Jordan:

Second, its [Parliament's] reaffirmation of its intent to preserve the full Arab rights in Palestine, to defend those rights by all lawful means in the exercise of its natural rights but without prejudicing the final settlement of Palestine's just case within the sphere of national aspiration, inter-Arab cooperation, and international justice (*Official Gazette* as cited in Abu-Odeh 1999, 50).

The above clearly shows that while Palestinians were eager to participate in political life and power in Jordan, they were also aware that they had separate goals from the rest of Jordan's citizens. The most obvious difference being that they still had the desire for their own separate nation (Abu-Odeh 1999, 50-1). Indeed, many Palestinian refugees rejected Jordanian and UN resettlement policies in Jordan because they believed that they would weaken their demand for their right of return to Palestine if they fully settled in to life in Jordan (Mishal 1978, 28). At this point, most Palestinians did not see themselves as Jordanian, but instead saw the state of Jordan as a tool that they could use to harness political power, protect them from further Israeli encroachment, and eventually meet their own national goals.

Jordan and its government, in turn, were pleased by the economic and cultural boost that Palestinians provided the country. However, Transjordanians and the Hashemites were wary of Palestinians gaining too much power or trying to usurp the King's authority. It was with this mindset that King Hussein entered the first Arab Summit in Cairo in 1964, Jordan rejected the phrase "Palestinian entity" as it was put forward by Iraq and Egypt, but King Hussein supported a motion to establish a "Palestine Liberation Organization," or PLO. The PLO's purpose was to let Palestinians, along with all Arabs, work toward the liberation of their homeland and self-determination. This motion recognized Palestinians as a separate national identity and cause. For Jordan to have this position is surprising given that it had regularly tried to integrate Palestinians into Jordanian society and decrease any chance that they would rise up against the monarchy. However, the PLO was formed with the understanding that its sole purpose was to liberate occupied parts of Palestine. So—theoretically—

while it represented the nation of Palestine, it would make no claims to statehood nor usurp any powers of current Arab states (Mishal 1978, 66-8). This reasoning, in addition to King Hussein's other political needs at the Arab summit, led to his support of the PLO. What followed changed the course of history and nationhood in both the Middle East and Jordan (Abu-Odeh 1999, 113-4).

Even more of a shock to Jordan's course than the beginning of the PLO was the June 1967 war. The war was abrupt in its beginning and end. Hours after its military engagement with Israel, King Hussein had addressed his people, saying "We hope that [the war] will soon end up in the victory that we have always cherished and lived for" (Abu-Odeh 1999, 134). The day after Jordan announced its military engagement with Israel in Jerusalem, "the king received a cable from Nasser himself supporting the withdrawal of Jordanian troops from the West Bank" (Abu-Odeh 1999, 133). Only a day after Nasser's message, Jordan had been stripped of the West Bank and Jerusalem. For Jordan and its Palestinian majority, this was a shocking blow for many reasons. For one, it was a humiliating loss to Israel, which both Jordan and Palestinians had hoped to defeat on the battlefield. It also meant that the Jordanian and Hashemite claim as a homeland to the Palestinian people no longer had the legitimacy stemming from their control of controlling the West Bank and Jerusalem. It was also a crushing defeat that the Jordanian military—a source of pride for Jordanians and the King—had been mostly destroyed. Finally, tens of thousands of Palestinians who had been living in the West Bank then became refugees in Jordan, many of them for the second time in their lives. In the end, Jordan lost power and face as an independent state and as a legitimate home for its Palestinian majority. (Abu-Odeh 1999, 134).

Jordan still wanted to be seen as the homeland for its Palestinian refugees, both old and new, but had trouble accepting such a huge influx of refugees for the second time. By June 1968, the second round of Palestinian refugees—which the UN referred to as “the displaced”—numbered 354,248 in Jordan. These new Palestinian Jordanians required assistance and the Jordanian government set up camps that have become permanent housing for the displaced to this day. The UN also set up the UNRWA to provide for the displaced, partially by giving them a monthly ration. Poor Transjordanians saw this rationing as the Jordanian government favoring Palestinians and grew resentful of the new population. Jordan also set up an open-door policy with the West Bank. This policy allowed people to move in both directions—which maintained the East Bank-West Bank link—but did not foster the same level of connection as before (Abu-Odeh 1999, 138-9).

After Palestinians saw the loss of the West Bank to Israel, many moved away from their former strategies of access and participation. Instead, they began to seek more autonomy and independence from a Jordan that they saw as failing them in their goals of a Palestinian nation. The PLO in Jordan became more and more entrenched in fighting for autonomy for Palestinians. Their strategy became greatly influenced by the majority Fatah party, which pushed for armed struggle against Israel. Yasser Arafat, a Palestinian student who had studied engineering at Cairo University, became the leader of Fatah and went to the refugee camps calling for Palestinians “to take their destiny into their own hands” (Israeli 1991, 45). After Fatah’s 1968 victory in the battle of Karameh against Israeli troops—who had been trying to clear terrorist bases in Jordan—Arafat gained legitimacy and power. His new status ensured that Fatah—and

therefore Arafat—would lead the PLO. Fatah was soon joined in its struggle by more extremist groups such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. They all began to launch attacks on Israel, primarily from Jordan. As these groups gained power and joined the PLO, the PLO became a state-within-a-state in Jordan and threatened the Hashemite hold on the country (Israeli 1991, 45).

King Hussein was in a precarious position with the PLO, as he did not want to give up his claim on Palestine and Palestinians, but he also was suffering because of the PLO's actions. The PLO had military and political bases in the refugee camps in Jordan and, by the end of 1960s, was using them to conduct terrorist acts against Israel and its worldwide institutions and interests. It was also gaining control in the West Bank because of Jordan's open-door policy. The last straw was reached after the second attempt on King Hussein's life in 1970. In September 1970, the king sent his armies to massacre PLO fighters in Jordan. This event became known as Black September, and marks a sharp change in the peaceful relationship between Jordan and its Palestinian citizens. With Black September, Jordan lost any foothold it had as the voice of the Palestinian people. After losing the West Bank and Jerusalem in the Six Day War, Jordan had now sent its remaining armies against its own citizens and made it clear that Jordan's aspirations are not the same as Palestinians', despite what earlier referendums had indicated (Israeli 1991, 46).

This separation of Palestinian and Jordanian identity has characterized Jordan's policies through the modern day. After the expulsion of the PLO and Arafat from Jordan, Hussein and his government's focus shifted from uniting the East and West

Bankers. Rather than uniting his nations, he made sure that his authority remained unchallenged, especially from the majority Palestinians. This trend was obvious during Black September and the conflict with the PLO and has only been solidified since. The East Bank-West Bank divide became official when King Hussein announced in 1988 that Jordan would formally disengage from the West Bank. The Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty reaffirmed the King's stance on the West Bank and separated Jordan even further from its Palestinian majority. These two acts together moved King Hussein from King Abdullah's attempts at uniting his country by arguing that Palestinians and Jordanians were one and the same. Instead, King Hussein had said quite clearly that "Jordan is Jordan and Palestine is Palestine." Palestinians, who had once brought wealth and education to Jordan, were now seen as a threat to the King's authority, Jordan's stability, and its national identity. Instead of celebrating Palestinians, the King pushed for their alienation and separation in Jordanian society (Abu-Odeh 1999, 193-4).

After the Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty and King Hussein's disengagement with the West Bank, Palestinian identity in Jordan came into question again, both legally and personally. In 1995, the Jordanian press took up the question of whether Palestinians should receive Jordanian passports given that Jordan was pushing to separate itself from Palestine and Palestinians. This discussion was partly prompted by discrimination in issuing Jordan passports—or not—to Palestinian Jordanians by the government after the Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty and the Oslo agreements. There tended to be two schools of thought on Palestinian citizenship in Jordan in the mid-90s. Transjordanian nationalists asserted that Jordan should no longer act as a substitute home for Palestinians. Believing instead that their otherness should be recognized and respected by rescinding

their Jordanian citizenship—both for citizens born in Palestine and in Jordan—and telling them to get Palestinian citizenship. Others believed that Palestinians should fight for their right to be in Jordan by becoming involved in politics. Unfortunately, it is widely known and accepted that there is Palestinian discrimination against senior positions in the public sector. (Abu-Odeh 1999, 194-5). Though the public debate has died down in recent years, Palestinian-Jordanians are not just losing passports, but have recently had their government IDs revoked. As many as 2,700 Jordanians lost their citizenship between 2004 and 2008 when they were trying to do something as simple as renew a drivers license (Slackman 2010). The official number of Palestinians that still possess Jordanian citizenship is unknown because of the secretive nature of the Jordanian census.

In an interview this summer, a Jordanian political science professor discussed this pull between state and nation. He was very clear about the fact that he believed “ultimately Jordanian identity is an open ended kind of a notion.” Indeed, he asserted “the whole idea of identity is problematic.” In asking him about his perception of Palestinians in Jordan, he believed that the first wave of immigrants after 1948, “became for all practical purposes Jordanians.” He likely meant ‘practical’ in a legal sense. Legally, Palestinians were granted citizenship with passports and the ability—at least theoretically—to participate in Jordanian politics. He had previously discussed the two different ways of understanding the concept of identity. The first being a legal understanding, wherein someone is Jordanian if they have the citizenship and ID cards to prove it. After that legal status, he argued that everyone should be perceived as an equal member of both the nation and the state. He said that this understanding “is a

more positive notion of identity. It's based on equality. It's based on common rights.” He was clear that he understood that notion to be an ideal, and that it did not account for possibilities of continued discrimination, but asserted that this is the understanding of identity that Jordanians should strive for. But if Palestinians are being systematically stripped of their IDs and rights, even that definition does not seem possible (Personal interview, 28 July, 2014).

Prejudice by Jordan's government against Palestinians is now occurring both internally and externally. As stated earlier, the Jordanian census is not public, meaning that the exact number of Palestinians residing in Jordan is unknown. In King Abdullah II's 2011 book, *Our Last Best Chance*, he states that Palestinians make up only 43 percent of Jordan's population. His is the lowest estimate, likely for political reasons. The U.S. State Department believes that over half of Jordan's population is Palestinian, while Oxford Business Group estimates that the number is at least two thirds. Though the exact numbers are debated, it seems obvious that Palestinians make up the majority of Jordan's population. Despite their majority status, Palestinians are kept out of influential positions in Jordan's government (Zahran 2012). In explaining Jordan's Transjordanian-controlled Parliament's politics, one Jordanian economist explained that “deputies are elected according to the tribe they belong to. They are called ‘service deputies,’ because they make promises to their local communities” (interview cited in Loewe et. al 2008, 270). This favoritism effectively keeps the Palestinian majority out of Jordan's political system.

In addition to keeping Palestinians out of government positions, the Hashemites and their administrations have tried to keep Palestinians out of the country whenever

possible. For instance, Jordan has welcomed hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees since its crisis began in 2011. By April 2012, however, authorities had begun to deny entry to Palestinian Syrians and had declared an official non-admittance policy by January 2013. Jordan's Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour justified the procedure by saying that "Jordan is not a place to solve Israel's problems . . . They should stay in Syria until the end of the crisis" (Human Rights Watch report 2014). The head of the Royal Hashemite Court in Jordan explained that "the influx of Palestinians would alter Jordan's demographic balance and potentially lead to instability" (Human Rights Watch report 2014). Despite the fact that Black September occurred more than four decades ago, the Hashemites and Jordan's government continue to live in fear of Palestinian political power in their state.

Whether or not they have the same goals of separation or nationalism that existed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Palestinians are still present in Jordan today. They continue to make up a majority of the population and are impacting Jordanian culture and daily life. Estimates of the current numbers of Palestinians or Palestinian-Jordanians vary, but the CIA lists the current number of Palestinian refugees at 2,070,973 (2014). This number likely does not include Palestinian-Jordanians who were born to Palestinian parents in Jordan. They may have Jordanian citizenship but live in a blurred nationality as is evidenced by a conversation I had with a Palestinian-Jordanian woman in Amman:

Q: "Where are you from?"

A: "Ramallah"

Q: "When did you come to Jordan?"

A: “Oh, I’ve never been to Ramallah. My father moved to Jordan from Ramallah when he was 16. I was born here. We have Jordanian citizenship.”

When asked if she considered herself to be Palestinian or Jordanian, she quickly answered Palestinian, but then clarified that she was “technically Jordanian.” Identities and nationalities are complex even in the simplest of circumstances. With a history of cooperation, integration, and conflict like Palestinians have found in Jordan, it is no wonder that the line between the East Bankers and the West Bankers remains blurred. Despite Palestinians’ persistent presence in Jordan, East and West Bank identities have largely become more divided since 1948. With Palestinian legal status in Jordan becoming more precarious year to year, it is yet to be determined whether or not Palestinians can truly become Jordanian either socially or legally.

Transjordanians

Transjordanians are generally defined as those citizens of Jordan who have had ancestors in the state's territory prior to the establishment of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. It should be noted that this "right time, right place" status is really the only thing that unites Transjordanians at the most basic level. Before the British and French decided to draw lines in the sand around the area that was to become Transjordan, these tribes had no great link other than their spatial proximity. When hearing the term Transjordanian, or "East Banker", it is important to remember that this group is not a unified group. In truth, they are a composite of various smaller tribes that then make up the East Banker/Transjordanian identity. Despite this, and largely due to the wise political plays of the Hashemites, the tribes have become the group that most steadily supports the state and its monarchy. This support is largely due to the preferential position that comes with being an "original Jordanian." There is a great sense of pride displayed by Transjordanians for their tribes, but also for their state, and despite their internal divisions, they are the best example of a united Jordanian nation.

It should be clarified that though there was not unity among the tribes in a geographic sense related to Transjordan, the area was not without organization. This organization simply took place in reference to inter- and intra-tribal interactions.

Society was organised according to real or mythical kinship lines, and daily life adhered to tribal notions and customs. Among these cherished notions, personal as well as group autonomy was one of the most sought-after ideals (Alon 2007, 3).

There was an effective tribal system east of the Jordan River, but these areas were rarely written about outside of the context of the Ottoman Empire. On her travels through the

area east of the Jordan River in the early 1900s, Gertrude Bell described the tribal politics in what was then known as the Syrian desert, explaining,

the men of Salt [a town in northern Jordan] are classed among the tribes of the Belka, with the Abadeh and the Da'ja and the Hassaniyyeh and several more that for the great troupe of the 'Adwan. Two powerful rulers dispute mastership here of the Syrian desert, the Beni Sakhr and the 'Anazeh (Bell 1907, 23-24).

Bell gives a vivid account of her impressions of the people, scenery, and social structure of the time throughout her work, but much of what she saw was on the brink of change due to the advent of state boundaries in the region.

While the Hashemites and Palestinians in Jordan have clearer starting points for their influence in the country, Transjordanians by their very nature existed long before the state itself. Though they were present in the area, as noted above, they were not united, so the idea of Transjordanian—rather than individual tribal—identity is a relatively new concept. For the sake of focusing on original occupants of Jordan though, this chapter will begin in 1921 when the beginning of the Transjordanian state gave rise to the potential for uniting the people living there. However, when the British and Abdullah first arrived, people living in what would become Transjordan found solidarity in their tribes. After decades of Hashemite rule and state building, the tribe remains a vital part of the social structure in Jordan, both for individuals and the state (Alon 2005, 213)

When Abdullah ibn Hussein arrived in Transjordan after World War One, he came upon a land primarily run by the tribal leaders. After the Ottomans had been forced out of the area, powerful sheikhs had filled the vacuum by allying with smaller

tribes. In many instances, they had a symbiotic rather than domineering relationship with local towns. For example, southern Jordan—which did not come under Abdullah’s rule until 1925—was ruled by two parts of the Huwaytat confederacy. They used the town of Maan as their main trade center and established partnerships with date farmers in Aqaba (Alon 2005, 216-217). These partnerships would soon be changed and subject to the new British and Hashemite territory: Transjordan.

Though Abdullah had already been to parts of his new territory during the Arab Revolt, he did not have relationships with the local tribes like those he had built with the tribes of the Hijaz. The Huwaytat and Bani Sakhr tribes were the first to build any sort of relationship with Abdullah. This bond was largely due to their collaboration in fighting off encroaching Wahhabism from the Hijaz to the south of Transjordan. Without a common enemy to unite him with the other tribes, Abdullah was forced to use the only resources the British had given him: money and territory. To this end, he gave large pieces of land to the Bani Sakhr, and taxed one of their villages at only ten pounds per year. Abdullah’s perceived preference toward the Bani Sakhr ended up causing jealousy from other tribes soon after his initial steps in relationship building. (Wilson 1987, 72-78).

The greatest threat that Abdullah—and possibly Transjordan—ever weathered from local Transjordanians occurred in the form of the Adwan rebellion. The Adwan and Bani Sakhr tribes had been rivals long before Abdullah arrived, but finally tensions reached a boiling point under Abdullah’s reign in the summer of 1923. A rumor had been spreading that the taxes collected from the Adwan and other tribes were being given to the leaders of Bani Sakhr. Given the Bani Sakhr tribe’s geopolitically valuable

southern position, Abdullah had relied on them to help stave off Wahhabist invaders. Partially because of this, he did express clear favoritism toward the Bani Sakhr, both personally and monetarily. Along with their cries for equal treatment, the Adwan called for more Transjordanian representation on the King's council, which was largely comprised of foreign nationalists. As things escalated, Sultan Al-Adwan marched his tribal forces toward Amman. The British-led Arab Legion was sent to dispel the Adwan tribe, who ended up suffering eighty-six casualties, causing the tribal leaders to flee to Syria (Wilson 1987, 77-78).

The incident, though short-lived, exposed the reality of the power structure in Transjordan at the time. Abdullah, already seen as a foreigner among 'his' people, had needed the British to quell an internal dispute. Additionally, the rebellion was led by tribal leaders who saw that they were being mistreated by the new regional authority and did not respect Abdullah's right to power. Finally, the Adwan rebellion exemplified the multi-level power structure that existed between Abdullah, the British, and his new citizens. At the "state" level, Abdullah was in charge, but he only had legitimacy because of the power that had been bestowed upon him by the British. Immediately below Abdullah existed the local sheikhs. In order to exercise authority over most of his citizens, Abdullah needed to build relationships with the powerful sheikhs, so that his power would then extend over their followers. This power structure has existed in the same basic form in Jordan from Abdullah I in 1923, to Abdullah II today.

Even with financial and military support, Abdullah had power that the British did not. While the Arab Legion had been sizable enough to stop a relatively limited rebellion by the Adwan, it could not have stopped a full on uprising. If the Bani Sakhr

and Balqa tribes revolted together, they could have raised at least 10,000 men. The Arab Legion, though better armed, would have been unable to withstand such an unfair match up in numbers. Abdullah's understanding of tribal politics and standing as a member of the Hashemite tribe gave legitimacy to the Transjordanian state that the British could not. That being said, Transjordanians had issues with Abdullah's leadership. His allegiance and preference toward foreign Arab nationalists angered many local Transjordanians. Because of the government's reliance on foreign-educated administrators and officers, "the poor Jordanians had to struggle and compete for the very few minor jobs in the Arab Legion and the civil service of their own country" (Abu Nowar 2006, 8). However, after the establishment of a more proper education sector in Transjordan, educated East Bankers soon received overwhelming preference for government and military positions (Abu Nowar 2006, 8-9).

In addition to the strains Abdullah and the British faced in attempting to unite and govern the tribes of Transjordan came the logistical concerns of the bedouin population. Official borders are an integral part of the state system, but did not align with the needs and desires of the nomadic population in Jordan. The British signed an agreement to create international borders between the Hijaz and Transjordan in 1925. While this arrangement was beneficial to Abdullah and the British in managing the northward spread of Wahhabism from the area, it posed a problem for the nomadic population. This new line in the sand divided the territory of the Bani Sakhr, Bani Khalid, Sirhan, and Isa tribes, who used the land south of the border to graze in winter (Chatty 2006, 313-14). In order to deal with the border issue, Abdullah attempted to incentivize sedentarization rather than using force. In 1929, he began this process by

passing the Bedouin Control Law. At this time, most tribes lived in or near villages and towns and would travel to population centers when Abdullah or his councils wanted their counsel. These meetings happened regularly as Abdullah built up tribal and personal relationships. By 1960, only 10% of Jordan's population remained nomadic (Jureidini and McLaurin 1984, 14-15). Though Jureidini and McLaurin attribute the decrease to sedentarization measures, it is likely also due to the large numbers of Palestinian refugees that came to Jordan beginning in 1948.

Abdullah and the British initially gave tribes both autonomy and responsibility by holding sheikhs accountable for any action committed by a tribesperson. While this system worked for a time, by the 1930s new challenges had emerged. The 1925 borders had already put a strain on the nomadic tribes who had relied on larger grazing lands to assist in years of low rainfall. By 1930, the Great Depression had begun to have an effect in Jordan as well as globally. For instance, the price of camels, which Bedouins sold to Egyptians, had fallen from 16-20 pounds to 3-5 pounds each. In times of economic strain, Bedouin communities often relied on raiding local settlements for money or food. With the advent of the state system's law and order, that was also out of the question. By 1933, nomadic tribes were plagued by extreme poverty and famine. General Glubb, the British military officer in Jordan, had seen the struggles of tribes and decided to adapt laws that would be beneficial to their way of life. In 1936, the Bedouin Control Law and Tribal Courts Law were passed. By 1937, tribal courts—operated by tribal sheikhs—were spread throughout Jordan's vast desert areas. They allowed for "tribal" legal claims, on topics "such as honor, blood money, or the determination of the temporary refuge for the culprit and his family" (Alon 2005, 227).

These new courts allowed the Bedouins to adapt their lifestyle to the new state system. Tribes reported criminals to the state so they could be accounted for while the Bedouin were able to seek justice in a way they were comfortable with. This unique strategy allowed Bedouin to feel more connected to their new state, while also maintaining aspects of their traditional identity (Alon 2005, 225-27). Tribal law has continued to be present in Jordanian legal and civil society. Though the topic was hotly debated and removed in the 1980s, it was quickly reinstated, with many citing its benefits in preserving tribal ties (Antoun 2000, 452).

It would be irresponsible to examine Transjordanian unity without also addressing the military. Transjordan's army, led by the British until 1956, was and is one of the great prides of the country. The army was originally named the Arab Legion, which reflected Abdullah's belief that he was a leader of Arabs, not merely the occupants of Transjordan. For Transjordanians though, the military acted as a unifying force for different tribespeople. Being involved in a force where the ultimate leader was not one's sheikh—but instead King Abdullah—built comradeship amongst the soldiers and loyalty to the King. General Glubb also founded what was referred to as the 'Desert Patrol', which consisted mainly of Bedouins. The Desert Patrol was in charge of protecting an Iraq oil pipeline from raiders. The patrol also offered protection to pilgrims, ironic given that the Bedouins were the main threat to these travelers originally (Abu Odeh 1999, 18-19).

It should also be noted though that Transjordanian unity did not simply come from the top down. As early as 1928, Transjordanian locals asserted themselves by forming the Transjordanian National Congress. It was composed of representatives

from different parts of the state and released a national charter emphasizing its desire for Transjordan to be treated as an independent state. The Congress' chairman, Hussein al-Tarawneh, went as far as sending a letter to the British resident—in charge of the Palestine Mandate and Transjordan—explaining that Transjordan should be viewed less like the British colonies in Africa, and more like the independent Egypt or Iraq. In addition to asserting their voice in their own state, Transjordanians had repeated meetings throughout the 30s in which they expressed their opinion on everything from loyalty to Abdullah to supporting Palestinians. It should be noted that while Transjordanians wanted only local—Transjordanian—representation in the King's council, they voted at all six conferences to support the Palestinian cause. While the identities and territories of Palestine and Transjordan had become separate, support transcended borders (Abu Odeh 1999, 22-24).

Despite the support of Transjordanians for the Palestinian cause, the actual influx of Palestinian after 1948 was shocking for East Bank society. The sheer number of West Bankers—double that of East Banker— were a threat in and of themselves, but add to those numbers the fact that

Palestinians brought with them to Jordan a healthy respect for modernity, knowledge and awareness of the twentieth century. Their frustration and anger [were] also accompanied by . . . hard work [and an orientation to] achievement. Politically mature, they began placing demands on the machinery of the state for services, job opportunities, facilities, and other amenities of life (Abu Jaber as cited in Jureidini and McLaurin 1984, 30).

Transjordanians had reason to be intimidated by their new Palestinian counterparts, but for better or worse, they were largely there to stay. The unification of these two peoples would have always been rocky, but after the assassination of King Abdullah in 1951, it

became especially so. Some Transjordanians began to see Palestinians as troublemakers who needed to be subdued before they brought more harm to the state that Transjordanians felt they had worked so hard to unite (Abu Odeh 1999, 54-56).

Though it was reasonable for Transjordanians to be threatened by their new, more “sophisticated” neighbors, Jordan’s political structure allowed for preferential treatment for East Bankers. In addition to the Tribal Courts and other systems set up for the East Bank culture, the government prejudicially chose East Bankers for almost all high-level positions. In her examination of Palestinian/Transjordanian relations in Jordan, Brand explains that

Transjordanian employment in the bureaucracy both symbolically and concretely embodies East Banker economic and political solidarity against the potential dominance of the Palestinians. In effect they view themselves as protectors of the system (and the public sector in particular) against political change of most any sort . . . Its members [Transjordanians], most of whom are from the middle and lower classes are dependent upon their salaries from the government and generally have no other options for employment (Brand 1994, 72).

So, in a sense, Transjordanians remain loyal to the state because they need to. In order to keep the East Bank Transjordanian, East Bankers must remain in power at the expense of their Palestinian peers. The state provides Transjordanians jobs and, in turn, they provide the state—and most importantly, its King—with their loyalty.

Along with this tradition of maintaining East Bank power and legitimacy has come a reimagining of Transjordanian nationalism in the latter part of the 20th century. Abu Odeh cites one of the most vocal Transjordanian nationalists, Bilal al-Tal, who calls for more research on the history of Jordan and how it was united through time. He

believes that if enough scholars show the unity and true nationhood that Jordan—really just Transjordanians—possess, it would be

A sufficient answer to those who claim that Jordan is a country without history and to those who believe in disregarding geography as a drastic factor in political and economic relations as well as civilizational distinctness (Al-Tal as cited in Abu Odeh 1999, 250).

As the earlier part of this chapter showed, Transjordan was not a distinct geographical entity until the early 1920s. The northern part of the country had been under close Ottoman rule and considered to be part of Greater Syria. Though the southern half of Jordan was also under Ottoman control, it was more culturally linked to the Hijaz. To try to find “Jordanian” linkages before the 1920s would be a misinterpretation of the facts themselves.

Transjordanians occupy a unique place in in the majority refugee state of Jordan. They are a minority in their own country. Despite this numerical status, they have preferential choice in places of power, especially the government and the military. The power structure of Jordan was built around the pre-existing tribal systems. This supratribal state has managed to orient itself around the social structures that were already present, rather than breaking them down to try to create a unified people. Instead, many regard the King as a sort of leader of tribal leaders. In this position, Jordan has been able to play up its unique political structure for unity amongst its “original” citizens, but hurts its Palestinian majority and therefore fails to unite its two banks.

Chapter 4: Putting Together the Pieces of a Nation

As was shown in previous chapters, there are several narratives of Jordanian experience and identity. There is the ruling party: the Hashemites. Next come their more loyal subjects: the Transjordanians. Finally, we have the group stuck between nations and territories: the Palestinians. Both Transjordanians and Palestinians have only been grouped because of the borders placed around their populations. Just as the state created these communities, it seeks to unite—or at least subdue—them beneath its flag, leaders, and nationality. The process of unification has been underway since the end of World War One, but has taken on a new tone as time passes and West Bankers look less likely to return west of the River Jordan. King Abdullah II, has already contributed to the top-down attempt at forming the Jordanian nation-state.

Abdullah is not alone in his desire to create—at least the image of—a unified nation where it may not exist. It has been widely assumed that “cultural complexity may encourage conflict and, hence, be a threat to the stability of states” (Mikesell 1983, 257-58). Therefore it is rational for Abdullah to want to give off the appearance of a unified nation under the power of his state. After all, a perfectly aligned nation and corresponding state is what the nation-state system assumes and encourages. Given his position as king of a powerful monarchy though, Abdullah has been able to manage aspects of his citizens’ daily lives that other leaders cannot. Through his control of the media, education system, and public displays, Abdullah attempts to unify his state from the monarchy down.

One of Jordan’s most popular sources of national news is Ad-Dustour—meaning The Constitution—which bills itself as a “daily independent Arabic newspaper” on its

website (accessed 16 May, 2015). Slightly below that statement is a photo of King Abdullah II and his wife, Queen Rania, standing in front of the Monastery at Petra. Below their smiling faces is a statement indicating that Ad-Dustour is a site of His Majesty King Abdullah II and Her Majesty Queen Rania. This dichotomy is a common one in Jordan. Abdullah, as his father before him, is happy to promise democracy and freedoms, but in reality refuses to give up any powers of the monarchy (Yom 2013,127). For instance, in his response to the Arab Spring, in 2013 Abdullah promised reforms and fair elections. At the same time he—or the Jordanian government, which he controls—blocked local access to around 300 news websites. The policy came about in September of 2013 as Abdullah was weathering loud opposition to his continued autocratic rule. The law came into effect on the same day that state-approved news outlets ran a story about the King’s new moves toward “democratic empowerment and active citizenship” (Sweis and Rudoren 2013).

With the ability to control the news cycle and what reporters say about his country, it is no surprise that Abdullah and his government also control the narrative surrounding Jordan itself. The Ministry of Education writes and provides textbooks to Jordanian schools. After having the chance to read through a Jordanian social studies textbook that discussed Jordan’s nation and leadership, it became clear that the narrative of Jordanian history has been inextricably linked to the Hashemite identity. Immediately following the map on the first page of the book is a full-page color photo of a smiling King Abdullah II. The Hashemite influence continues throughout the book, with the chapter titled “Biography of the Nation and the Leadership” beginning with the Ottoman Empire and quickly going into the Great Arab Revolt. The narratives of the

Arab Revolt and Sherif Hussein printed in the book are much different from those found in scholarly articles today. For instance, it is stated that Sherif Hussein's main goals in leading the Arab Revolt were: Arab unity, freedom, and a better life (Ministry of Education 2005, 30). This narrative runs contrary to Efraim and Inari Karsh's interpretation of events, wherein they say, Hussein

was no champion of national liberation seeking to unshackle the 'Arab Nation' from the chains of Ottoman captivity; he was an imperialist aspirant anxious to exploit a unique window of opportunity for substituting his own empire for that of the Ottomans (Karsh and Karsh 1997, 267).

The story above would be more difficult to bind a disparate nation around than the monarchy's chosen narrative. Abdullah—with his power over the media and education of young minds—has the ability to control which interpretation goes into popular culture.

In addition to writing Jordan's origin story, Abdullah has been able to affect his citizens' interpretation of past monarchs. In the same text that describes Sherif Hussein as a noble Arab nationalist, the Ministry of Education gives a brief overview of all of Jordan's monarchs. Under a photo of each king is a short list detailing the major moments in their reign. The most surprising summary is found under a photo of King Hussein, who was Jordan's longest reigning monarch, ruling from 1952 to 1999. Under Hussein's rule, Jordan saw an Arab led military, independence from Britain, the June 1967 War, Black September, the loss of the West Bank, and finally the Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty. Hussein's time governing Jordan was some of the most significant in the state's history, the events that he oversaw have created the modern state. Instead of acknowledging the breadth of his influence, Hussein has the least written under his

photo, even less than his father King Talal, who ruled for less than two years. Of all the significant events that Hussein oversaw, the textbook lists two things. First, that he “Arabized the Jordanian Army in 1956,” which is likely referring to his removal of General Glubb and other British officers. Second, that he finalized Jordanian independence from Britain (Ministry of Education 2005, 35-36). In giving only these two events, Hussein’s narrative remains positive and glosses over his more controversial acts. The world remembers him as a leader at the forefront of negotiating peace with Israel, but that fact is unpopular in Jordan, so it is simply left out of the larger narrative.

Along with the Hashemite and government influence in education is the constant presence of the Jordanian flag and photos of monarchs throughout Jordan. In 2003, Jordan set a world record for the tallest freestanding flagpole. The pole, placed in central Amman at the Raghadan palace, stands at 416 feet high and is tall enough to be visible even outside the sprawling city of hills (BBC 2003). In addition to setting patriotic/nationalistic records, Abdullah has continued with his father’s tradition of spreading his photo throughout the country. Based on my observations of Jordan in the summer of 2014, his dress often depends on the location. In Amman, he is often seen smiling in a suit and tie, whereas in more troublesome areas like Maan, he can be observed frowning down at his citizens in combat apparel. With his visage is often a nearby flag so that one always equates the nation-state with its leader.

The true role of the Hashemite family in Jordanian identity is disputed, even by Transjordanians, who are typically the regime’s steadiest supporters. East Bankers even debate whether the royal family counts as Jordanian. When asked whether he saw the

royal family as a symbol of unity in the nation, one Transjordanian responded, “the royal family is considered to be one of these unifying forces. So it is a royal family of royal Jordanians.” For example, he explained that “refugees, including Iraqis who are identifying themselves through the royal family [are] in that sense preparing themselves to be Jordanian” (personal interview 28 July, 2015). Other Transjordanians disagree, saying that the royal family should not be interpreted as anything more than government leaders. When asked to describe the role of the Hashemite family in Jordan, one East Banker said:

Of course [the Hashemites] had a big influence looking at the age of when Jordan was formed and created back in the ‘20s...Some might think that the Hashemite family [are] the ones who established and created Jordan but looking at the roots of the people in the country...you find a lot of strong sentiments [without the rulers] (personal interview, 15 Aug, 2015).

She clearly felt that the creation of Jordanian state was related to the Hashemite family, but when asked about their role in the nation and hearing that others had described the royal family as a source of unity for Jordanian identity, she responded quickly and passionately:

If people think this way then it means that basically Jordanians do not exist if the royal family doesn’t exist. Frankly, I don’t put any purview in that. People look up to the King as a symbol, but [the royal family] as Jordanians? No (personal interview, 15 Aug, 2015).

The disagreement between Transjordanians on the role of the Hashemites in Jordanian identity highlights several things. First, Jordanians feel that they have found solidarity and community amongst themselves, which is an affirmative response to the question of whether a national identity exists. Second, though the Hashemites have been able to

control the Jordanian narrative as expressed in schools and via the local media, Jordanians have been able to come to their own conclusions about the true role of the royal family.

Though reminders of the Hashemites and their kingdom are omnipresent, Palestinian identity was more visible informally, especially in Amman. Palestinian pride was everywhere, from black and white Palestinian keffiyehs in taxis, to flags and T-shirts. Handala—the famous Palestinian child cartoon—could be seen painted on walls and for sale in bookstores. Particularly in Amman, people were very vocal about their Palestinian heritage. Upon meeting a foreigner, many would say something along the lines of, “I am from Palestine. What is your opinion on Palestine?”. The word “Israel” or its Arabic equivalent are almost never used. Even on tours through northern Jordanian ruins, guides will point over the border to what most maps would label Israel and tell their tour groups about the beauty of northern Palestine. This worldview has been translated into Jordanian atlases, which often list Jordan and Palestine as one state without a border between. This trend shows that Jordan and Palestine are inextricably linked, no matter what international borders say. Even walking through more modern parts of the capital makes observers aware that they are surrounded by Palestinians. One of the popular T-shirt shops downtown sold shirts with saying everything from “V for Palestine”—in reference to V for Vendetta—to “from Jerusalem, where do you go,” referring to the mass migration out of Jerusalem following the June 1967 war. One of the most popular shirts throughout Jordan and Amman had a simpler message; in large, bold letters it yelled “Right of Fucking Return” for Palestinians back to the West Bank and Israel. These designs can be seen below:



Figure 5: V for Palestine T-shirt



Figure 6: Right of Fucking Return T-shirt, visible throughout Amman

Part of the Palestinian visibility is likely because Palestinians make up a majority of the Jordanian populace, especially in Amman, but the conflict they have endured has also pulled them into a more united nation.

In recent years, Palestinian refugees have not been the only ones to affect Jordan's national stability. With the Syrian Civil War raging to the north, Jordan has once again become a refuge for those fleeing conflict. The United Nations High Commission on Refugees estimates that Jordan has 747,360 refugees from Syria living in its borders. Though this is the official estimate, academics in Jordan have estimated that there may be closer to two million Syrians living in Jordan, most of them unregistered. This population, in addition to the nearly 60,000 Iraqi refugees remaining from the Iraq War, has put an enormous amount of strain on the small, water-poor country (unhcr.org accessed 18 May 2015). Beyond the resource costs this population brings with it, is the question of how they will affect the already complex Transjordanian-Palestinian-Hashemite dynamic that exists in the country. When asked if she thought Syrians would stay in Jordan, one local woman responded that this new Syrian population would never become Jordanian. Her response was interesting given that she herself identified as Syrian, though her ancestors had moved to Jordan at least a century ago. She cited the main reason for the unlikelihood of assimilation being that Syrians she had spoken to simply had no desire to be Jordanian. They merely saw themselves as biding their time in Jordan until Syria had settled down enough to return to (personal interview, 18 Aug, 2014). Unfortunately, with the growth of the Islamic State and Assad's continued determination to hold onto control, the likelihood of their returning home soon seems less and less likely.

Jordanians are not only being affected by the influx of new refugees from these conflicts, they also have a personal stake in regional affairs. On February 3, 2015, the Islamic State—also known as IS or ISIS—killed Moaz al-Kasasbeh, a Jordanian pilot

who they had captured weeks before. The story of his capture and negotiations were covered in detail locally, partly because he was the son of an influential tribal leader. The world had followed the story of his capture, and his death—he was burned alive in a cage—which was described as the most brutal that IS had ever carried out. A Jordanian reporter for the New York Times was with the pilot's family when they found out about his death, and said she witnessed "a nation's pain first hand" (Nordland 2015). Soon after his death, thousands of Jordanians—including Queen Rania—marched through the streets of Amman to both mourn Kasasbeh's death and support Jordan's increased role in bombing IS targets. In this way, the turmoil surrounding Jordan has managed to unite its peoples when government policy and Hashemite leadership could not. As King Abdullah has joked on multiple occasions, "Jordan is stuck between Iraq and a hard place," and perhaps that is the perfect location for finally building a united Jordanian nation.

Conclusion

I began this thesis by asking what it meant to be Jordanian when most of the populace is composed of refugees. In attempting to answer this question, most of my research has come from historical and analytical texts on the three main groups in Jordan: Hashemites, Palestinians, and Transjordanians. Given Jordan's status as a state-first nation, it offers a valuable example of how even a diverse nation can be managed to allow for state stability. As we have seen though, the management of Jordan's population was often more coercive than consensual. Whether or not stability has been worth the sacrifice of a fair and equal political process has yet to be determined. Because of their position in society, Transjordanians may say yes, but the actions of Palestinians around the power balance have fluctuated throughout their time in Jordan. I hope that this thesis has contributed to the discussion of how Jordan's leaders have attempted to unite a disparate nation under relatively new state borders.

Marvin Mikesell's "The Myth of the Nation-State" has influenced much of how I analyzed and conceptualized the Hashemite struggle to rule their country. As I stated in the introduction of this thesis, Jordan is not unique in its lack of a cohesive nation-state dynamic. The Hashemites—in their position as Jordan's rulers—are also not unique in wanting to push their citizens to unite as Jordanians. As Mikesell asserts, it is widely thought "that cultural complexity may encourage conflict and, hence, be a threat to the stability of states" (Mikesell 1983, 257-58). The Hashemite strategy of coercion with the appearance of consent has provided stability where it likely would not have existed naturally. For the Hashemites, that has been positive; they have kept power. For Jordan's people—especially Palestinians—it has meant sacrificing freedoms for a place

to exist. Despite the work of the Hashemites, Jordan's state does not have a united nation, nor does its nation/s unite behind their Hashemite leaders. I have examined the nation-state divide throughout this thesis.

To begin an analysis of Jordanian nationality, one must first look at the state. With this goal in mind, this thesis began with a discussion of the Hashemite family and its part in creating Jordan as it looks today. Though the British were vital in creating the state of Transjordan after overthrowing the Ottoman Empire, their governance would have likely been unsuccessful without the leadership of Abdullah bin Hussein. Abdullah gained respect both because of his family's ancestral roots, linking him to the prophet Muhammad, and because of the role he played in the Arab Revolt. Abdullah was also wise in the ways of the Bedouin and tribal culture, where the British were not. By building personal relationships with the local tribes, he was able to set up a governing system on top of the preexisting tribal structure of the region. Though he needed massive amounts of military and financial aid from the British, Abdullah had succeeded in uniting local Transjordanians under a state system with no prior national basis.

After Abdullah's assassination, Jordan's most famous modern monarch took the throne: King Hussein. Hussein came to the throne at a young age, and just as Jordan was coping with a major change: the massive influx of Palestinian refugees. He continued to foster relationships with the tribes just as his grandfather had, but also resorted to stricter governance in order to control his diversifying population. Most of Hussein's reign was characterized by military rule and strict control of the state's political sphere. He was particularly hard on his Palestinian population who tried to overthrow him in the early 70s, in what came to be known as Black September -

following Jordan's loss in the June 1967 war. Hussein was also forced to control his population because he frequently made decisions that they disagreed with, such as renouncing the West Bank or signing a peace treaty with Israel. These decisions made Hussein popular abroad but were the cause of unrest and assassination attempts on the home front.

After Hussein's death, his son Abdullah came to power and became King Abdullah II. Abdullah has continued many of his father's and grandfather's strategies thus far. In his relatively short time on the throne, he has shown the characteristics of what is becoming a pattern for Hashemite politics in Jordan. The Hashemites occupy a different place in Jordanian society than Palestinians or Transjordanians, and their role has more to do with the state than the nation. While other sections of this thesis examined nation building among Palestinians or Transjordanians, the Hashemites create the foundation on which these nations can be built. Their allowance or restriction of media and political parties has shaped the unity or dysfunction of the major groups within their state.

Palestinians have faced countless restrictions at the hands of their Hashemite leaders. The majority of Palestinians in Jordan entered the country in waves after the 1948 and 1967 Arab-Israeli wars. Palestinian refugees—especially those who came after 1948—were now led by a king who had more of a rapport with their enemy than his new citizens. Palestinian goals of influence in Jordan were examined using Murphy's and Miksell's "A Framework for Comparative Study of Minority-Group Aspirations." Most Palestinians initially attempted to gain recognition, access, and participation in their new state, but have been rebuffed time and again. This tension

reached a boiling point in the mid to late 60s with the advent of the PLO, which was viewed as the true voice of the Palestinian people. The PLO moved away from democratic means of influence and attempted to use the second half of Murphy's and Mikesell's formula by seeking separation, autonomy, and independence from Hashemite control. Palestinians have made up a majority of Jordan's population since they arrived after 1948, but when some of them tried to claim the state as their own, Jordan broke into civil war. The PLO was able to take the capital, but eventually lost the war for Jordan and was banished from the country.

Despite the removal of the PLO, most Palestinians remained in Jordan and became more integrated into society. As time passed, many married non-Palestinians and created more of a home in their new state. Unfortunately, the narrative of Palestinian-Jordanians is largely one of betrayal by leaders and second-class citizenship. King Hussein, despite the wishes of his people, signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1994, just a few years after renouncing Jordan's claim to the West Bank. Beginning in the mid-90s, thousands of Palestinian-Jordanians had their IDs and passports revoked, largely without reason or explanation. This occurrence is in addition to the fact that Palestinians are passed over for government jobs in favor of local Transjordanians. This prejudicial practice is carried out regardless of where Palestinian-Jordanians were born. They are still largely seen as temporary residents of Jordan. With such biased treatment, it is possible that Palestinian-Jordanians will never truly be recognized as members of the Jordanian nation.

The treatment of Palestinians is primarily juxtaposed against the behavior of the government toward its privileged citizens: Transjordanians. Transjordanians—also

referred to as East Bankers—were the original citizens of Transjordan upon its establishment in the early 1920s. These new borders were the first and only factor that unified what had been disparate tribes in the region. Emir Abdullah began to assert his legitimacy as a leader by building relationships with the tribal sheikhs. These sheikhs, in return, received money, land, and preferential treatment in the new state. Preference toward Transjordanians is still visible today in Jordan’s military and government sectors. Transjordanians make up the minority of the population; they overwhelmingly hold bureaucratic jobs in every area of the government. They also have an intense sense of pride in being the original Jordanians, and have built a nationalist movement. While East Bankers have supported their West Bank peers in the past, there is a new movement in Jordan to remove these ‘troublemakers’ and unite for a better Jordan.

Beyond all of the histories for these groups, lie the modern day interactions in Jordan. The Hashemites, under King Abdullah II, have increased their hold over the media and education sectors. They are able to have the final say over the narrative of Jordan, and what it supposedly means to be Jordanian. This control is most obviously seen in the careful writing of Jordan’s history in primary school books. By writing the story, the government binds the history of Jordan to Hashemite rule in the region. Some Jordanians agree with this interpretation and see the ruling family as a unifying force. Other locals laugh at the attempts of what they see as a foreign party trying to tie itself to the Jordanian narrative.

Finally, there are all of the stresses that the Jordanian state and nation face from outside their borders. The Islamic State and the Syrian Civil War have both affected Jordan. Syrians are flooding into the country and there are doubts over when—or

whether—they will be able to return home. Some wonder whether Syrians may soon assume the long-term refugee status that many Palestinians now have in Jordan. Outside conflicts have also acted as unifying forces for Jordan. When Transjordanian pilot, Moaz al-Kasasbeh was killed by the Islamic State, Jordanians—regardless of their geographic origin—took to the streets demanding that their country fight back. They stood up and said that Jordanians would not stand for acts of terror against one of their own. In this way, what is seen as a threat to the state can act as a symbol of unity for the nation as a whole, something that Jordan needs in order to maintain its stability.

Limitations and Possible Further Research

In order to condense this topic down to a size suitable for a senior thesis, I had to make some generalizations about Jordan and its people. I thought it was important to include Hashemites, though many feel that they are not a part of the Jordanian nation, but perhaps leaders of it. For the rest of my analysis, I broke down Jordanian population into two groups: Palestinians and Transjordanians. I fully realize that there are a multitude of other ethnicities and immigrants in Jordan—just a few being: Chechens, Circassians, Egyptians, and Filipinos—but did not have the space to fully address these groups. For further research on Jordanian identity, it would be interesting to see how more minority groups, especially other Arab minorities, function in Jordan's social structure. While Palestinians are viewed as 'troublemakers,' do other non-native groups also receive bias, or have they been able to find success and stability in their new home? And how does the spread of Jordan's population affect the location and welcome of new groups?. Lines in the sand created the state, but the story of Jordan's nation is yet to be fully understood.

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