

The Factors Affecting the Foreign Political Behaviors in Jordan on its Strategic Position in the Middle East, and Especially its Conflict and Peace Process with Israel during the 1990s.

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Abstract

On October 26, 1994, Jordan signed the peace treaty with Israel. Since then, the two sides have made some progress toward implementing their accord. Official relations between the two sides have advanced. But the emerging bilateral relationship is not, however, without difficulties. Significant differences concerning both political and economic interests led to arduous negotiations in several areas, particularly trade and transport.

Research Purpose: *The purpose of this article is to show how various elements in Jordanian society create domestic obstacles and internal opposition that weaken Jordan's bargaining position toward other Arab countries and Israel. Treating domestic parameters in this country as a given, the researcher argues that Jordanian governments and leaders can hardly use this weakness to manipulate information in the bargaining process, because regional countries can observe Jordan's internal processes. This study explores several key issues concerning the process' dimensions, limitations, and future relations between Jordan.*

Design/methodology/approach: *- The paper explores the theoretical and historical link to the structure and functioning of the elements affecting the Jordanian policy towards peace with Israel.*

Research limitation / implications: *- The present study provides a starting point for further research in the development of the peace process in the Middle East.*

Findings: *The paper concludes that the peace process in the Middle East remained a neglected area. From the conclusions of the study it can be derived also that, although in previous few years some progress has been made, there is still a series of issues that can only be resolved, in the author's opinion, with practical application on the part of firms over time. These issues, both on a regional level and in Jordan, are: how to overcome the internal obstacles; what efforts should include overcoming these obstacles.*

Originality/value: *- The study provides an insight into perceptions about reasons effecting Jordan's peace policy towards Israel, in the conflicting region, which needed more researches. It provides also, an evaluation of what is presently being done, and proposes ways through which the peace contribution could be enhanced in order to help more people in need.*

1. Introduction

On June 24th, 1994, Abdul Salam Al-Majali, prime minister of Jordan and head of Jordan's delegation to the Madrid peace conference and bilateral talks, addressed an off-the-record session of the Washington Institute's Policy Forum. He argued that: "*comprehensive peace between Jordan, Israel and other Arab countries is Jordan's ultimate goal*" (1).

Since the signing of the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel in October 1994, both sides have made some progress toward implementing their agreement. Official relations between two states have advanced quite well as Jordanian leader and Israel's prime minister -at that time- Yitzhak Rabin expanded on their warm personal ties and pushed the two states into a cooperative relationship. The most remarkable aspect of this treaty is its emphasis on collaboration and other cooperation projects, such as tourism, agriculture, and civil aviation. On the other hand, this treaty is not, however, without difficulties as well as obstacles. The bilateral relationship had significant differences concerning political, social and economic interests led to cut cooperation and negotiations in trade, transportation and others.

This research is analyzing the causes and effects of Jordan's Peace Policy towards Israel. This is due to the information available for the research and what it needs from analyzing the information, evaluating the case as being a powerful and supportive factor for the decision makes in Jordan's nationals attitudes.

This paper analyzes the impact of internal socio-political and economic processes in Jordan on its strategic position in the Middle East, and especially its peace policy and strategy during the past twelve years. We assume that Jordan is facing a bloc of hostile countries composed of players such as Israel, some other Arab country's policies and parts of Palestinian society. The interests of these players may differ in certain aspects, and they do not necessarily coordinate their strategy towards Israel. We assume, however, that their basic calculations concerning Israel are similar, and therefore concentrate on domestic variables that influence Israel's strategic choices while treating domestic parameters in the hostile bloc as a given.

1:1- Research Objectives

The general objective of the paper is to investigate the impact of regional, international, and internal problems which have had significant influence on the Jordanian involvement and strategy in the peace towards Israel.

1:2-Research Contents: It is in light of the goals of this study and its hypothesis, the paper is organized as follows:

The following section uses literature review / methodology/ and hypothesis. The next section discusses domestic conditions that influence Jordan's strategic choices, as well as its peace policy. Subsequently, we model and explain the possible impact of those domestic conditions on Jordan's strategy toward the peace process with the Israeli. Section three will deal with Jordanian-Israeli relations. And finally, the paper will offer some conclusions.

2. Literature review /Methodology & Hypothesis

This paper analyzes the impact of internal socio-political and economic processes in Jordan on its strategic position in the Middle East, and especially its peace policy and strategy during the 1990s.

-Research Hypothesis .The assumption of this research is:

"Jordan is facing internal and external obstacles such as socio-economic and political one. The effects of these elements may differ in certain aspects toward Jordan's policy of peace. The researcher assume, however, that their basic calculation concerning Jordan are similar, and therefore concentrate on domestic variables that influence Jordan's policy choices towards peace with Israel".

The paper uses the general concept of "nested games," where players' interests and actions in one game are influenced by their involvement in others **2**. Specifically, the paper applies the idea of a two-level game, as developed for analyzing international relations and foreign policy **3**. Two-level game literature has introduced solid micro foundations to the theory of international bargaining. Most importantly, this research tradition has shown that the amount of uncertainty in the international system is not a given but can be manipulated both for the better and for the worse. This ambiguous potential is the essence of a two-level dilemma in world politics in which domestic politics affects international behavior both positively and negatively, and *vice versa* – clearly, international conditions also affect domestic politics, which again affects foreign policy. To avoid a cyclical argument, we concentrate on explaining foreign policy based on internal conditions. The opposite direction of this mutual dependency between foreign and domestic policy will be discussed only when necessary.

A major debate in the literature is whether domestic obstacles weaken or strengthen the state's bargaining position in international negotiations. Some writers have shown how negotiators might claim successfully that domestic opposition prevents them from concurring in an international agreement **4**. Others question this argument and rely on sequential bargaining to analyze how domestic constraints impact the negotiations between two states, given various assumptions regarding information **5**. One basic result is that a country's bargaining leverage does not necessarily increase when its domestic constraints become more severe. When there is complete information about domestic constraints, the constrained negotiator has a bargaining advantage only if the constraints are severe. When there is asymmetric international information, the constrained negotiator will benefit only if the foreign negotiator strongly believes that the home negotiator is severely constrained.

In this paper, we argue that the Schultz model is more accurate than the Lida model for analyzing the interaction between Jordan and the Israeli **6**. Given Jordan's democratic regime, writers can easily obtain information about Jordan's internal elements and process. With regard to Jordan's policy choices and foreign policy in the Middle East during the 1990s, this paper shows how domestic obstacles and internal opposition weaken Jordan's bargaining position towards the Israeli ambitious it faces. We also argue that using this weakness to manipulate information is unlikely to be advantageous, because of the characteristics of two-level interaction, as mentioned above.

3. The Status of Jordan

Jordan has had a separate existence from the Arab World for more than eighty years, since the time of its creation in 1921 from the Emirate of Trans-Jordan under King Abdullah of the Hashemite family. King Abdullah Bin Al-Hussein Al Hashemite, who had been the leader of the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire during World War one, became Jordan's first king.**7** Direct British administration was established in Palestine, where British colonialism in the Balfour Declaration of 1917 had pledged to implement the founding of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.**8** Jordan is a relatively small Arab country. It is situated between the Levantine and Arabian Peninsula. Jordan shares its northern border with Syria, its eastern border with Iraq; Saudi Arabia shares its border on the East and South; and the occupied West Bank, Palestine and Israel lie to the West. Jordan's creation reflected in large part a compromise settlement by the Allied powers after World War One that attempted to reconcile Zionist and Arab aspirations in the area. Britain assumed a mandate over Jordan, Palestine, and Iraq; France became the mandatory power for Syria and Lebanon.

The 1948 war added hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arab refugees as well as the Palestinians of the West Bank to the Jordanian people in the East Bank. Moreover, after a military and political struggle to defend as much of mandated Palestine as possible from the Zionist forces, King Abdullah managed to unite Jordan and the West Bank in 1950. Afterwards, he changed the country's name to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The following year, King Abdullah was assassinated in Jerusalem in July, and Abdullah's son Talal briefly succeeded to the throne. Because of his illness, his son Hussein became the King of Jordan in 1952.**9** Jordan has long suffered from a severe imbalance between resources and population. Before the peace treaty with Israel, Jordan was forced to shoulder the burdens of a front-line state and the resultant military expenditures that the country's defense requirements entailed. Jordan's small economic base was also strained by large waves of Palestinian refugees seeking assistance during the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948 and 1967, as well as the Jordanians forced to return from the Gulf States during the Gulf Crisis.

In terms of national wealth, Jordan has comparatively little in the way of natural resources. Lacking the oil riches of the Arabian Gulf states and facing a serious water shortage, Jordan has built the foundation of its economy on a well-educated and healthy labor force. However, due to the large gap between the country's scant natural resources and the need for economic and social programs to support its burgeoning population, Jordan has been forced to rely heavily on funds from external sources.**10** Therefore, in order to maintain a reasonable defense capability as well as viable socio-economic programs, the Jordanian government has relied on the assistance of external powers, i.e., both Arab and non-Arab countries.**11**

4. Decsion Making & Jordan Foreign Policy Dimensions

In Jordan, like many Middle Eastern countries, the personality of the leader is of overriding importance. There are many reasons for the dominant role played by one individual, including the absence of a popular consensus on the nature of political processes in the Middle East.

The most important of these reasons are the absence of a historical tradition of popular participation in political life as well as the lack of a close relationship between the ruler and the means of coercion.**12**

Accordingly, Jordanian society, like other traditional Arab societies, has always reserved a place for a single dominating figure in political affairs. So, this is a country where there was and still is a monarch as the supreme arbiter and chief executive. For example, King Hussein ruled Jordan from 1953 till he passed away in 1999. Thus, in a sense all King Hussein's values and perceptions can be seen to be rooted in his Hashemite heritage. The Hashemite have stood for Arab unity and co-operation, commitment to the needs of the Palestinian people, and a commitment to the West.**13**

Despite his Hashemite heritage, King Hussein had not automatically received legitimacy as a ruler, particularly in his relations with other Arab regimes. He was also not guaranteed the survival of his regime. On the contrary, his leadership has been the cause of considerable criticism and suspicion by radical Arab regimes and was a major factor behind the political instability Jordan suffered from the 1950s to the mid-1970s.**14**

This was because King Hussein came to power at a time when Arab nationalist feeling and antagonism to Western imperialism were an increasingly potent force. He found himself in a position of dependency on the West, yet vociferous elements of his population demanded an end to that dependency. It was an age of revolution in which the Jordanian regime stood in opposition to the mood of the time. Therefore, Hussein's survival entailed a keen sense of what was politically possible; moving cautiously and seeking to build consensus, he exercised skillful diplomacy, domestically, regionally, and internationally.**15**

Accordingly, King Hussein was involved in and dominated both domestic and foreign policy formation at every level in Jordan. Internally, it is well known that King Hussein was very sensitive to the demands of the prevailing socio-political climate in Jordan. Also, his desire to keep in touch with the prevailing popular mood had been particularly important. For example, the King's willingness to respond to popular feeling was evident in his decision to dismiss the British Ambassador Glob Basha Arabize from the Jordanian Army in 1956, his recognition of the Palestinian Liberation Organization in 1964, and his decision to form a military alliance in 1967 with Jamal Abed Al-Nasser, the former president of Egypt.**16** Other factors also helped King Hussein achieve a prominent position.

He strived to make his rule appear as an expression of popular will by seeking to minimize the gap between himself and his people. For that reason he used public speaking as a means of communicating with his society. At the other end of the spectrum is Jordan's ongoing promotion of democratic government and human rights.**17** Although no one can claim that Jordan is yet a full democracy – if, in fact, any “full democracies” exist anywhere – the country's success in its democratic path has encouraged its leadership to present Jordan as a model for other states in the region to emulate.

Within the regional Arab system, there are two primary strategic outlooks regarding the type of political order that should ultimately prevail in the Arab world. The primary difference between the two orientations concerns how Arab states should relate to one another. Since the creation of Israel in Palestine till the 1980s, the idea of unity was a powerful and emotive political imperative within the Arab world, as Arabs share a common language, culture and much of the same historical background. In respect to the promotion of Arab unity, Jordan represents what can be termed the “federal” school of thought, long espoused by the Hashemite. The main viewpoint of this school is that the Arab countries, especially in Asia, should organize politically along federal lines. While virtually all Arab countries have employed slogans of Arab unity for domestic consumption, and some have attempted a revolutionary approach, Hashemite Jordan has pursued a course based on realism. History has shown that the unrest fostered by “revolutionary” regimes has done far more to set back the cause of Arab unity than to promote it.

Consequently, Jordan and other members of the “federal” school have pursued a moderate approach aimed at creating and strengthening true bonds of cooperation between Arab states. For the longest time Jordan has been embroiled in the center of Middle Eastern conflicts. The reason for this is the fact that Jordan's geographic position, wedged between Israel, Syria, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia has made it vulnerable to the strategic designs of its more powerful neighbors. Its geographic position is both an advantage and a disadvantage at the same time.

The claim that Jordan was unviable as a state was used by radical Arab regimes in Egypt, Syria and Iraq in their propaganda campaigns against the King Hussein regime. Also, Jordan has been considered a modernizing country that has adopted moderate policies, in comparison to other Arab countries. Certain Arab leaders even went so far as to regard the overthrow of King Hussein as a necessary preliminary step before the liberation of Palestine could be contemplated.**18**

Another important issue that mired Jordanians in conflict was the fact that Palestinians immigrating to Jordan caused much instability. Research shows that the number of Palestinians in Jordan today exceeds the number of Palestinians in the West Bank.**19** Lastly, Jordan's economy is relatively weak and Jordan must be supported by some Arab countries and by more powerful foreign states. There are many reasons for Jordan's weak economy and one of the most important is that Jordan lacks natural resources. Jordan imports many more products than it exports. This obviously negatively affects the economy and impedes expansion and development. In spite of having had a history of tense relations with some Arab radical regimes, King Hussein tried to cooperate with Arab states. In other words, during his reign the King maintained relatively cordial relations with most other Arab nations. King Hussein made frequent trips to Arab countries to confer with their leaders on regional and international political strategies. Jordan's closest ties were with Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the rest of the states in the Arabian Gulf.

Indeed, the King was invariably involved in both the formulation and implementation of policy decisions in each of these areas. But the extent of his involvement in the pre-decisional or post-decisional stage varied in each of the spheres. The extent to which King Hussein participated in the first two dimensions depended on several factors. On one hand, it depended on the nature of the issue with which he was dealing, while on the other hand it depended on the particular prime minister in power and the nature of his relationship with the King.

In contrast, foreign policy decision-making was almost entirely dominated by the King. One of the most important reasons for the emphasis King Hussein gave to the formation of foreign policy is that as the head of state his foremost concern was its survival.**20** Since Jordan has always been heavily dependent on other countries; the survival of the country is closely tied to foreign affairs. Accordingly, throughout his reign King Hussein strived to maintain a dialogue with both Western and Arab leaders and to establish good relations with them. To achieve this goal he developed his role as a diplomat.

It seems that his position since 1953 had allowed him to establish direct contact with leaders throughout the world. His long rule honed his expertise in foreign affairs and he was, therefore, in a better position to pursue Jordan's foreign policy aims and strategy.**21**

One may say that the final and ultimate authority during the period 1953-1999 resided in the central and dominant figure of King Hussein. This authority was given to the King in Chapter 3, Article 26 of the Jordanian Constitution, which states that: "The Executive Power shall be vested in the King." King Hussein had initiated all of Jordan's major policies. Demands on the political system had been made directly to him and in general he had also fulfilled them. Nevertheless, the ruling elite also remained important because of their control of information when advising the King and their influence in decision implementation.

However, in view of the dominant role played by King Hussein in the formulation of Jordan's foreign policy throughout the period leading up to the 1990 peace agreement with Israel, it is useful to understand the factors which influenced him. Some scholars and politicians have classified these factors as his aim to ensure Jordanian survival and his commitment to the West.**22** Under the above mentioned circumstances it seems that the Jordanian leader had no choice but to turn to the West and America for support.

5. Jordan's Vision & Policy of Peace

One might say that Jordan's vision of peace was linked with economic and security concerns. Jordan's longing for peace was expressed in terms of the need for internal stability and development, educational initiatives and job creation leading to prosperity and social progress. Jordan's urgent need for economic restructuring, its unenviable geographic position, and King Hussein's strong sense of personal destiny and history prompted the King to urge for peace at a time when it was dangerous and risky for him and the country to do so. King Hussein stressed to the US that Jordan and other Arab countries needed more support to counter the Israeli threat in the region. The problems that Arabs faced increased divisions in the area and stunted growth and development.**23**

The King associated peace with economic growth and concentrated on confidence-building and developing relationships. Due to Jordan's efforts and concerns to achieve peace, the US' pessimistic view on the future of the Arab-Israeli conflict changed. As Jordan worked to encourage peace, the US felt pressured to push Israel toward peace in order to maintain its even-handed approach to the region. They received support and positive reactions from Israel.

During the 1960s, the Jordanian leadership adopted policies that accepted that the US was the sole and most important protector of Jordanian territory. Jordan had made clear its interest in having the US play the role of territorial guarantor as early as 1958.³² The US, in its efforts at evenhandedness, explained to King Hussein that America would not extinguish Israel but at the same time would not allow Israeli aggression against Arabs.²⁴ While Jordanians welcomed Washington's support, they also felt it was unwise to rely exclusively on America for its own national and regional security and they began to develop deeper ties with other Arab states. This led to problems with Washington when in January, 1965 Jordan approached the US with a request for a large increase in military arms in order to fulfill its obligations as a part of a new defensive agreement with the Unified Arab Command (UAC). A State Department memorandum summarized that the UAC required Jordan to modernize and expand its army and air force as a part of an Arab program to achieve parity with Israel. If the US refused to sell arms to Jordan, King Hussein stressed that he would be forced to acquire Soviet equipment.²⁵

However, the US did not welcome this idea and considered offering Jordan a more specific assurance of American support over Jordan. Washington could only say simply that it would not permit Jordan to be overrun by Israel.²⁶ The US did not give a final answer and delayed making a decision until the issue was more thoroughly investigated.

Furthermore, during the 1960s, Israel announced its intention to divert part of the Jordan River to irrigate the Naqab Desert. Arab leaders convened a summit in Cairo in 1964 and decided to reduce the flow of water into Lake Tiberius by diverting some tributaries in Lebanon and Syria. In case of Israeli military retaliation regarding this decision, a joint Arab force was established, jointly commanded by Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon. The summit in Cairo also blessed the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization.²⁷

These developments occurred at the summit as Jordan had agreed to the establishment of the PLO but advised that such a force should work under the joint leadership of the United Arab Command to prevent Israel from dragging the Arabs into a war they were unprepared for. Moreover, the 1960s had witnessed the emergence of Palestinian militia or guerilla (Fedaeyeen) groups, the most important of which was the Fattah movement. Some Arab regimes such as Syria encouraged these groups to conduct raids against Israel, not across the Syrian-Israeli border, but rather through Jordan and Lebanon. Israel retaliated harshly and Jordan was forced to reign in the guerrillas, subjecting it to media criticisms in Cairo, Damascus and Baghdad.

As border raids and threats continued through the end of 1965 and into 1966, the strategic depth of the campaigns aggravated tensions in the region. Following the most dramatic of Israeli raids of Jordanian territory during the nights of April 29 and 30, 1966, the US met with King Hussein to deter him from using military force. During the meeting, Hussein once again assured them that he was doing everything possible to prevent unnecessary problems from occurring and, although he was under heavy domestic pressure, there would be no military retaliation against Israel.²⁸

However, the King added that the next time the US asked this of him he could not continue to retreat and would be forced to use military might, which he argued was the only language Israelis understood.

Israel was unresponsive and continued to foment conflict in the region. King Hussein expressed concern over the dilemmas he was faced with and hoped that the US could halt Israel's provocations. However, tensions increased between Jordan and Israel, and by the spring of 1967 the situation had worsened. Egypt asked the UN to withdraw its forces from Sinai on May 16 and closed the Straits of Tiran on May 22, 1967. King Hussein sensed that war was imminent; he immediately aligned Jordan with Egypt, and put Jordanian armed forces under the command of the Egyptian General Abdul Moneim Riad.²⁹

Subsequently, Israel launched a surprise attack on June 5, 1967, and Jordan paid the heftiest price of all the Arab states involved in the war. More than 300,000 Palestinian Arabs became refugees and fled to Jordan. The West Bank, which produced 60% to 65% of its fruits and vegetables, and where about 70% of Jordan's agricultural land was located, was lost.

Moreover, half of the Kingdom's industries were located in the West Bank. Needless to say, the loss of Jerusalem and other religious sites adversely affected the tourism industry in Jordan. The Israeli occupation of Jordanian territory resulted in the loss of approximately 38% of Jordan's GNP.³⁰

America grew more concerned about the fate of the Arab-Israeli conflict and made this issue Washington's highest priority. King Hussein worked repeatedly to improve the situation between

Jordan and Israel and took Israel's raids personally. He had taken actions such as preventing Arab saboteurs from crossing from Jordan into Israel and keeping his armed forces east of the Jordan River.³¹ By obeying America's requests, Jordan was criticized by other Arab countries. As a result, King Hussein felt betrayed. He felt any peace agreements were ruined and the only solution was military action. Jordan's next step was to ask for military assistance from Washington, with the King stating that if the US did not comply Jordan would be forced to think of alternatives. The King stated that, "I will not try to mislead you, not to blackmail you, by telling you I will turn to the East."

Then he added that, "I cannot and will not do so; my reign has been devoted towards building Jordan to be a self-sufficient, moderate and evolutionary state."³² King Hussein was brave and courageous when he said that, "[T]he right answer from the USA would enable me to justify my past policy to my army, to my people, to the PLO, and to everyone else." Then adding: "If I do not get the right answer, even I must conclude my past policy has been a failure."³³ Washington understood from this that Jordan questioned American intentions and efforts in the region. King Hussein waited for the US' response for his request of military assistance.

6. The Jordanian role in the peace process

Some of the matters Jordan regards as positive effects of the peace process with Israel are keeping its regional condition and keeping its borders and existence, retaining its one lands occupied by Israel in 1967 in addition to aspiring/hoping to cross out part of its debts ³⁴. On the other hand the negative effects Jordan faced due to having/making peace with Israel are expensed in being out of the Arab-Israeli conflict equation and granting Israel the international legality before putting the Security Council decisions regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict in to action. In addition Jordan gave Israel the security and borders safety from its side on 650 km borders. King Hussein had an important role through his long years of leadership in welcoming the obstacles facing Jordan, within 46 years ruling a strong relationship between the king and his people was formed, through which and through his other relations he could play an important/a significant part in the peace process in Arab region, but with king Hussein's absence from the conflict peace with Israel field and the rise of numerous obstacles against the peace irritate questions about Jordan's present political attitude³⁵.

King Abdullah, when getting his legislative authority in Jordan, announced following the same steps of the previous Jordanian political way both internally (nationally) and externally (internationally), he also announced his support for the peace process and not intending to withdraw from it. But at the same time he expressed his interest in overcoming Jordan's security difficulties and internal challenges, therefore since being a leader he wasn't very interested in developing the Jordanian-Israeli relations, but the circle of his priority interests was in developing the Jordanian-Arab relation consequently, the young king had various visits to Arab countries and new beginnings forgetting past political disagreements with them³⁶.

The change of Jordan's political behavior on the Arab regional level is one to Jordan's vision and perception of the nature of the relation with the Zionist existence and the consequences of that, and to its imagining of an Arab – Arab relation and its advantages on the Arab interests. On the first bath it appears that Jordan didn't get any financial gains of the peace process with Israel. Israel is the attacking country is not real to make any compromises to the Arabs not even to who paid and lost a lot because of having political or economic relationship with it. Jordan the one interested in fulfilling its national interests didn't find any financial benefits of its relations with the Hebrew country at present, so the relations between both countries have become cold. Jordan paid a price and suffered because of the Arab-Israeli conflict as well as of the security challenge due to the peace with Israel.

On the other hand many Jordan thought that constructive Arab-Arab relationship might serve the Arab interests in general and its national interests especially in economics security and development³⁷.

The new Jordanian movement forms a benefit for Jordan and the Arab sides interested in the new Jordanian attitude in the fields of economics security and common national interests and maybe the factors of trust be grow between the sides and lead to positive constructive relations especially if the will and response are for developing Arab-Arab constructive relations from all Arab sides.

It's true that a researcher finds it difficult to evaluate the external Jordanian political behavior in king Abdullah's are since ruling but his special policy with his Arab brothers and consistent activeness and Jordan's attitudes with the Arab circle from the strategic depth and financial economic gain for this country.

7. Jordan – Israeli Relations

Before the 1991 Madrid International Peace Conference, Jordan refrained from establishing diplomatic relations with Israel. The absence of formal relations notwithstanding, the two states cooperated directly or indirectly after the 1967 war in a multiplicity of matters pertaining to the West Bank, the Israeli-occupied territory whose Palestinian population retained Jordanian citizenship until 1988.

King Hussein's aim at that time was to regain control of the West Bank, a goal that had not been realized by 1988, when he renounced Jordan's claims to the area. Jordan's ambitions were frustrated by Israel's unwillingness to seriously negotiate any withdrawal from the West Bank and by the increasing popularity of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. In the latter half of the 1970s, however, when Egypt had initiated direct negotiations with Israel leading to a separate peace agreement, Jordan was unwilling to follow Egypt's lead without prior pan-Arab acquiescence.³⁸

Moreover, Jordan apparently believed that in the absence of broad Arab support to legitimize any political talks with Israel, its own rule in the East Bank could be threatened. Consequently, the Jordanian leadership refused at that time to participate in the Camp David process and was skeptical of Washington's 1982 proposal for a West Bank entity in association with Jordan.³⁹

Israel's rejection of the US plan had provided Jordan the boon of not needing to respond to an initiative that the Palestinians claimed would deny them genuine self-determination. Regardless, Jordan called for an international peace conference that would include a joint Jordan-PLO delegation. Jordan had received an international forum that brought together the superpowers (the US and the Soviet Union) as well as the Arab States and Israel as a protective umbrella under which Jordan could enter into negotiations with Israelis.⁴⁰

Through his years of experience, King Hussein was aware of the difficulties involved in achieving the necessary changes and internal structural strength needed for peace. He, therefore, concluded that Arabs would have to accept the existence of Israel in the region. If this acceptance was not forthcoming, then it would be hard for each side, especially the weaker Jordan, to pursue their interests and goals.⁴¹

All the above mentioned circumstances led King Hussein to enter into peace negotiations led by the US. He was an important figure in the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991, as he introduced the idea that Palestinians should negotiate to become a cooperative Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Finally, King Hussein took a pivotal step when he signed the 1994 Peace Treaty between Jordan and Israel. When Jordan signed the treaty it did not gain any land from Israel and any hopes of the West Bank being returned to Jordan in the near future were dashed. Jordan accepted the idea that Palestinians were to commit to Palestine and were no longer nationals of Jordan. Jordan was isolated from Palestine and was free to break all legal and administrative ties with Palestine.

After the death of King Hussein in February 1999, King Abdullah II was crowned King of Jordan. King Abdullah was also western-educated but not to the extent of King Hussein. Although he claimed that the Arab- Israeli conflict was his main priority, many people criticized him for not taking much action in this regard.⁴² He focused on maintaining peace with Israel and US-Jordanian ties. Although peace was his goal, Abdullah was preoccupied with the idea that he had to first solve problems between Israel and Palestine before taking any other steps.⁴³

Nevertheless, King Abdullah was able to strengthen US-Jordanian relations. An excellent example of his success on this front was the US -Jordan Free Trade Agreement he signed with President Bill Clinton on October 24, 2000.

Also, he was able to maintain financial support from the US. Total US aid to Jordan totaled approximately \$3.9 billion, including \$2.1 billion in economic aid and \$1.8 billion in military aid⁴⁴. Although this funding was significant, a problem was that the Jordanian military forces, though well trained and disciplined, were still outnumbered and outgunned by each of Jordan's neighboring forces⁴⁵. Israel was also supported by foreign countries to a greater extent and by a larger moving population than Jordan. Yet King Abdullah worked hard at maintaining his father's views on peace; for example, in a speech to the Jordanian Parliament he said: "My government will continue its efforts in advancing the peace process and allowing it to achieve the sought advancement on all tracks"⁴⁶. One might say that, despite his willingness to follow his father's views on peace, he was still somewhat less effective as a leader than King Hussein.

To summarize the reader can learn that the national interest had and still have a great effect in shaping the Jordanian Policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict or peace process. It's also possible to say that maybe Jordan thought that the way out of possible threat to its interests in the region represent in taking part in the peace process in the Middle East, which is a policy that gained the support of some controlling political sectors in Jordan as well as Arab and international support (worth mentioning that some Arab brothers as Egypt and P.L.O. managed to head Jordan in this field). The common and stated belief of Jordan is that if peace between the Arabs and Israel is fulfilled, it might lead to regional stability security and could improve both Jordanian-Israeli relations (as well as) the Jordanian-international relations which would be of great benefit to Jordan's interests, but the statement of this belief will be clarified through studying the Israel obstacles.

Therefore we will explain the Israel obstacles.

8-The Obstacles

Since the Jordanian had signed its peace treaty with Israel in the mid 1990s, the two sides had made some progress towards implementing their agreement. This bilateral relationship is not, however, without difficulties and obstacles. Significant differences concerning ideological, political and economical factors led to arduous negotiations in several areas ⁴⁷, such as the Israeli ideological situation, the economical situation, and the political and international factors ⁴⁸. The Israeli beliefs (Ideologies) includes a group of images, ideas, values and attitudes in which the Israel leadership and people believe regarding the Jewish identity/ego and the outer surrounding regional and international, and these beliefs control and rule the Israeli leaders' behavior and controls their political speeches, as it controls the majority of their people, authorities and political practices. The Israeli belief are based on basic components of this belief and includes the two ideas of immigration and settlement and the need of coming back to the Promised Land and settling in it. It can be clarified as follows:

The idea of the Jews historical rights in Palestine is based on considering of part of David's Kingdom "the land of ancestors" linked with the idea of Israel's security, and those beliefs made the Jews to occupy the land of Palestine and replace the Arab citizens. According to the Zionist belief the occupied Arab lands are considered "freed", part of the land of Israel which Israelis cannot give up. This idea was announced in Israel in several occasions and the extremist religious and right parties in Israel really on it in setting their political/plans – e.g. the Likud Party.

The peace movement in the Middle East is accompanied by the difficult economic situation of Israel, the increase in the unemployment percentage in the Arab countries (more than 14%) and the inflation reaching over 25% in Israel. In addition the difficult economic condition in Israel with the increase of the Jewish immigration to Israel, the lack of water and the active Palestinian forces, all made Israel keep hold and control over the occupied Arab land. And this is another complication against facing the peace ⁴⁹.

The Israeli peace come in various regional and international conditions, which all support the Zionist existence. Some of these factors are the second Gulf war which led to tearing the Arab union with weakening the Arab attitude backing the Palestinian issue, the withdrawal of the Soviet Union and its breakdown, the constant American support to Israel which all increased the Israeli attitude against the peace in the Middle East. The Gulf crisis and war in 1990-1991 was followed by an unbalanced or unbalanced in the Arab- Israel power. This situation enforced the Israeli strictness in the peace process especially after Egypt and Iraq left, were out of the Arab-Israel conflict, furthermore, the Arab weakness after the Gulf war made them propose compromises to Israel in the peace process, but in the same time it was regarded as an important factor for the Israeli strictness in the peace negotiations with the Arabs also based on the supporting American attitude and the breakdown of the Soviet union. All these factors combined together had a negative effect on the peace process in general and on Jordan's condition in part.

Despite the positive effects of the Jordan-Israel peace process in Jordan, Jordan is still facing some obstacles and challenges.

The end of the Cold War between the superpowers prompted the Arab-Israeli crisis to be treated as a regional problem. Also, the Gulf Wars redefined the balance of power in the Middle East, reshuffled inter-Arab relations, and demonstrated once again the need to work toward a just and comprehensive regional peace. For once, a real effort was put into the prospect of establishing peace between Arabs and Israel at Madrid in 1991. After that year, one may say that some significant developments were achieved including the Oslo agreements, the Jordanian-Israel Treaty of Peace, the establishment of a Palestinian National Authority in Gaza and Jericho, as well as the redeployment of Israel from parts of the West Bank **50**.

Jordan and Israel signed the actual Peace Treaty on October 26, 1994. When their government opted for peace, Jordanians thought that it did so based on a strategic decision to rid the region of policies giving rise to conflicts. Many also hoped for a new environment of cooperation and interdependence with all parties in the region, including Israel. The Jordanian government sought a truly sincere peace with Israel, going beyond the mere signing of agreements between governments to the normal interaction among peoples of neighboring countries. This meant that the Jordanian government was committed to full implementation of the peace treaty, as well as to a proactive approach in seeking future areas of cooperation. This was apparent from the framework of the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel. The framework referred to cooperation and mutuality, with 15 sub-agreements covering all areas of cooperation. The agreement provided real opportunities for development for all parties involved and for the region as a whole.**51**

The Jordanian government actively participated in the multilateral track of the peace process and also signed a number of bilateral agreements with Israel which covered almost every aspect of cooperation – be they economic, social or cultural – and also in security matters. Yet despite these achievements, serious challenges remained ahead for Jordan. The Jordanian government was aware that its policy of peace could be negatively affected by a number of variables beyond its control. Specifically, Jordan realized early on that it would have to make great efforts if development in the country and regional cooperation were to materialize. Israel would have to see the benefits of the treaty and make every effort to make it bear fruit. Also, the peace process on other tracks – i.e., with the Palestinians, Syrians and with the Lebanese – would have to be expedited to reach an early comprehensive settlement to the conflict. Finally, the international community, particularly the US, would have to realize the importance of supporting the peace process in the Middle East. America would need to make every effort to support new developments in the region.**52**

In spite of the above problems, the Jordanian government pursued peace with Israel while attempting to ensure that conditions for its success remained in place. However, the events that unfolded throughout the 1990s revealed that Jordanian peace efforts alone were insufficient. Risks remained in the form of domestic opposition, disparities in level of economic development between Jordan and Israel, and the fragility of the transitional period.

The first obstacle Jordan faced was that it was a small Arab country whose economic performance was easily affected by regional developments. Moreover, domestic consensus was essential for Jordan's success and it required vision and perseverance to attain.

Thus, Israeli attacks on Palestinian targets and vice versa, Israeli military strikes against South Lebanon and targets in Syrian Lands, renewed settlement activities, and most importantly, the erosion of confidence in the peace process that resulted from all this, took a heavy toll on the Jordanian economy. Foreign investment – known to shy away from unstable regions – failed to materialize as expected or planned.**53**

A further problem was that when the Jordanian government had signed the peace treaty with Israel it was seen as a document that would return Jordanian land and water sources. Jordanians also thought they would enjoy prosperity and a better life through regional cooperation. Some Jordanians thought expanded trade opportunities would result with the forgiveness of its debt burden. But the expected benefits of the peace treaty with Israel were slow to materialize and some actually never did. For example, an agreement with Israel to identify water sources to be provided to Jordan was never brought to fruition.

Also, Israeli barriers to trade triggered by security concerns or protectionist tendencies substantially impeded exports to Israel and to the Palestinian territories. The job creation and economic activity that were expected to accrue from the peace agreement with Israel did not transpire, and no trickle down effects were felt. No major creditor other than America wrote off Jordan's debt, while Germany and Japan were the only other countries to step up their assistance to Jordan. Jordanians' expectations after the signing of the peace treaty with Israel were elevated by statements of strong support by world leaders, but those statements promised much more than what was actually delivered.

Various groups in the Middle East have sought resolutions to crises in the Middle East, but their methods have not always been peaceful. One such group is Hamas. Formed in 1987, Hamas is now one of Palestine's largest and most influential militant groups. It has gained popularity with the Palestinian population since defeating the PLO in the 2006 elections. Hamas operates in two ways. On the one hand, it offers social programs to its constituents; on the other hand, it engages in militant operations.⁵⁴

Hezbollah – or Party of God – emerged in Lebanon in the early 1980s and became the region's leading radical Islamic movement determined to drive Israeli troops from Lebanon. In May 2000 – due partly to the success of the party's military arm – one of its main aims was achieved. Israel's battered and bruised army was forced to end its two-decade occupation of the South. Hezbollah now serves as an inspiration to Palestinian factions fighting to liberate occupied territory.⁵⁵

The invasion of Iraq by the US in 2003 further sparked much controversy. The claim that Iraq was making weapons of mass destruction was made by the US to justify the invasion. Later it was discovered that there was no truth behind this allegation. After Saddam Hussein was removed from power, chaos spread in Iraq. Until now, the United States military has strived to gain control over insurgents throughout Iraq. But a civil war like state has emerged in the Middle Eastern country, breaking Iraq into two sides, the Shiites and the Sunnis. The *LA Times* reports that about 3,800 Iraqis were killed by sectarian violence in Baghdad alone during the first six months of 2006.⁵⁶

9. Conclusion and Future Vision

In this paper the researcher tried to check the hypothesis seeing that going after making the national interest is the ultimate and essential goal that Jordan reached. To prove this and fulfill the research goals he studied the factors affecting the foreign political behaviors towards the conflict and peace process with the Zionist country. The research also tried to check and study its hypothesis analytically with the information available for the research and what it needs from analyzing the information, evaluating the case as being a powerful and supportive factor for the decision makes in Jordan's nationals attitudes.

On the other hand, in this article we had shown the impact of domestic processes on Jordan's policy toward peace during the past fifteen years. Such processes intensify the polarization between different segments in Jordanian society and limit the possibility that its leader can create a consensus for any policy towards the peace with Israel. So the researcher presents interesting information on this subject and found that the Jordanian's peace policy toward Israel has two choices or Scenarios: **57**

In the **First Scenario:** It sees the continuation of Jordan's resistance to the surrounding pressure on it and keeping the search for Arab support. But this possibility requires from Jordan and the Arabs doing and caring for: **A-Need** / necessity of precise planning to know how to deal with regional and international changes/factors and knowing how to overcome the effects and reflections of such factors on the security and stability of Jordan, in addition to getting possible shocks resulting from the effects of present and frequent data and factors in the Arab region. **B-** The success of this possibility need a radical change in the political Arab attitude as a whole towards finding one, strict Arab attitude/form to right the regional and international factors especially Jordan and on the Arab are in general.

Second Scenario: The second scenario is sees the necessity of Jordan responding to the surrounding pressure and dealing with the international and regional factors and going to the peace battle with Israel.

As Jordan realized that the first choice is useless especially when some Arab countries flow after desires and interests of countries out of the Arab interests circle, so it choose the second choice and went to Madrid in 1991. As it known, some Arab countries chose fulfilling some private present interests over common national interests for the whole Arab nation and went to individual peace with Israel, and here Jordan found itself with the second choice.

Jordan got into the peace prose with Israel in Madrid 1991 due to/in response of the internal and external surrounding pressure as mentioned before, but going into the peace process with Israel got Jordan into a complicated situation. It's true that Jordan gained some benefits by/from participating in the peace process such as: drawing the borders, keeping away the idea of an alternative home for the Palestinians in Jordan as Israel used to keep mentioning it desired/expected from the peace with Israel: it didn't accomplish economical development, it didn't get rid of the Palestinian refugees problem due to Israel strictness accompanied by international factor for the benefit of Israel, in addition to the weakness of Jordanian abilities and the Arab attitude.

Based on this, it is possible to say that any chance or possibility for Jordan or the Arabs to get the minimum of its or their demands in dealing with the Zionist existence depends on the compete awareness and commitment from their side of some of the following facts: **58**

First: the need for active serious political coordination between the Arab countries and Jordan, the Arabs have to have a clear common image/picture about the minimum and, maximum of their demands when dealing with the Zionist existence. This suggestion requires preparing common Arab plans and setting a alternatives based on previous studies with the necessity of coordinating their work methods and ways of pressure on Israel and on the powers supporting it, and that is within the available possibilities as the economical powers.

Second: The necessity of working to support the self-power of the Arab nation and trying to overcome the Arab-Arab disagreements and accomplish Arab solidarity and assuring its continuation. The Arab interests are possible to achieve in active Arab solidarity, and not in conditions of contrasting policies.

The facts mentioned above may help Jordan in dealing with the choice of peace in the Middle East, especially the Zionist existence doesn't deal with Jordan or relate to it separately, but as part in the regional look/picture to the Arab Area which is based on enemy and expansion. Therefore we say again that having constructive Arab-Arab relations based on the serious cooperation may serve the Jordanian and Arab interests in paces and war together.

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