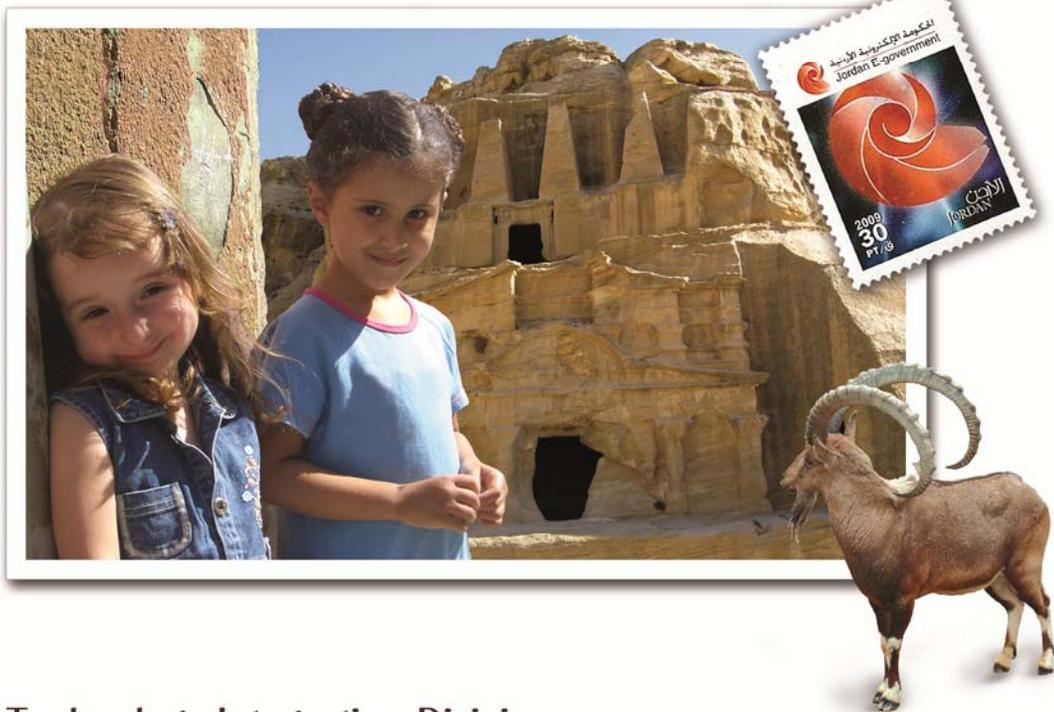


JORDAN in Perspective

An Orientation Guide



Technology Integration Division
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DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CENTER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: GEOGRAPHY.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Geographic Divisions and Topographic Features.....	1
Climate.....	3
Bodies of Water.....	4
Rivers.....	4
The Dead Sea.....	4
Gulf of Aqaba.....	4
Azraq Oasis.....	4
Major Cities.....	5
Amman.....	5
Zarqa.....	6
Irbid.....	6
Aqaba.....	6
Environmental Concerns.....	7
Natural Hazards.....	8
Chapter 1 Assessment.....	9
CHAPTER 2: HISTORY.....	10
Introduction.....	10
Early Jordanian Kingdoms.....	10
Jordan Between Competing Powers.....	11
Muslim Conquest and the Crusades.....	12
Ottoman Rule and World War I.....	13
Creation of Modern Jordan.....	14
Abdullah and Independence.....	15
Hussein and the 1967 War.....	16
Continued Hostilities.....	17
The 1980s and 1990s.....	18
Jordan under Abdullah II.....	19
Chapter 2 Assessment.....	21
CHAPTER 3: ECONOMY.....	22
Introduction.....	22
Agriculture.....	23
Industry and Tourism.....	24
Natural Resources and Energy.....	25
Trade.....	26
Banking & Finance.....	27
Standard of Living and Employment.....	28
Public vs. Private Sector.....	29

Future Outlook.....	29
Chapter 3 Assessment.....	31
CHAPTER 4: SOCIETY	32
Introduction.....	32
Ethnic Groups and Languages.....	32
Religion.....	33
Cuisine	34
Traditional Dress	35
Gender Issues.....	36
Arts	37
Sports & Recreation.....	38
Chapter 4 Assessment.....	39
CHAPTER 5: SECURITY.....	40
Introduction.....	40
Relations with the United States.....	40
Relations with Neighboring Countries	41
Saudi Arabia	41
Iraq.....	42
Syria.....	43
Israel	44
Palestinian Authority	45
Police Force	45
Military	46
Overview	46
Capabilities.....	47
Water Security	48
Outlook	48
Chapter 5 Assessment.....	50
FINAL ASSESSMENT	51
FURTHER READING	53

CHAPTER 1: GEOGRAPHY

Introduction

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, located in the Middle East between Israel and Iraq, is a country that is largely defined by its geography. This geography affects its settlement patterns, its international relations, and its economy. Because the country is primarily desert, the population is heavily concentrated in areas that receive the most rain and have the best climate for agriculture. The country's borders with Israel and the Palestinian West Bank have significantly influenced the creation of modern Jordan and its national character. The Dead Sea and Gulf of Aqaba are popular tourist destinations and provide a vital boon to the Jordanian economy.



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Jordan flag

Jordan is bounded by natural and artificial borders. In the northwest, the Jordan River and its tributary the Yarmuk River form natural borders with Israel and Syria respectively. The southwestern border with Israel follows the valley of Wadi al-Jayb. The remaining borders were defined when Britain had a mandate over Transjordan and by international accords following World War I. As a result, Jordan's borders with Iraq and Saudi Arabia are largely arbitrary.^{1,2} A story popular in the region speaks to Jordan's created borders: According to the tale, Winston Churchill, who was the British colonial secretary after World War I and was responsible for defining the borders of Transjordan, drew the new borders after eating a heavy lunch. While drawing the eastern border with Saudi Arabia, Churchill hiccupped—thereby creating a strange, V-shaped angle in the desert and giving Jordan its panhandle. Although this is more folktale than history, it is a reminder that Jordan's borders today are as much a product of colonialism as of geography.³

Geographic Divisions and Topographic Features

Jordan can be divided into three geographic zones: the Jordan Rift Valley, the highlands of the Jordanian Plateau, and the desert steppe.⁴

The Jordan Rift Valley runs along the entirety of Jordan's western border and is part of the massive continental rift that runs through eastern Africa down to Madagascar. Beginning in the south, the Rift Valley starts with the Red Sea and the coastal city of Aqaba. North of Aqaba lies a valley known as Wadi al-Jayb (also known as Wadi al-Araba) that runs for 180 km (112 mi) up

¹ John A. Shoup, *Cultures and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007), 19–20.

² Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 2: Geography: Boundaries," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989, 66–67, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/25.htm>

³ Matthew Teller, *Rough Guide to Jordan* (London: Rough Guides, 2006), 213.

⁴ Elias Salameh and Munther J. Haddadin, "The Population-Water Resources Equation," in *Water Resources in Jordan: Evolving Policies for Development, the Environment, and Conflict Resolution*, ed. Munther J. Haddadin (Washington, DC: Resources for the Future, 2006), 8.

to the Southern Ghor (depression) and then to the Dead Sea. North of the Dead Sea runs the Jordan River Valley, eventually moving beyond Jordan's northern border and running into Lake Tiberias (the Sea of Galilee).^{5, 6, 7}

The Jordanian Plateau is a narrow strip of highlands that lies between the Jordan Rift Valley to the west and the desert steppe to the east. Jordan's major cities, including Amman, Zarqa, and Irbid, are all located in the highlands.⁸ The highlands run north to south near Jordan's western border and include many valleys and gorges. The highlands have an average elevation of 900 m (2,953 ft) with summits reaching 1,200 m (3,937 ft) in the north and 1,700 m (5,577 ft) in the south.⁹ Jordan's tallest mountain, Jabal Umm al-Dami, lies in the south and is 1,854 m (6,083 ft).¹⁰ The highlands of the Jordanian Plateau were once the home of an ancient civilization known as the Nabateans. The remains of their habitations—magnificent facades carved out of colored sandstone cliffs—are known as Petra, one of Jordan's top tourist attractions.^{11, 12}



© Effi Schweizer
Southern Jordan

The desert steppe is the largest of Jordan's three geographic zones and covers more than 80% of the country. This region is largely an extension of the Syrian Desert. The northern desert is home to a vast territory of volcanic rock. The abundance of craggy black rock and cinder gave rise to a Bedouin name for the desert: "the land of the devil" (*bilad al-shaytan*). The southern desert contains granite and sandstone hills long eroded by the wind. The southeast is home to vast sand dunes. Salt flats are common throughout the desert.^{13, 14}

⁵ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 7.

⁶ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 2: Geography: Topography," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989, 67–69, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/26.htm>

⁷ Elias Salameh and Munther J. Haddadin, "The Population-Water Resources Equation," in *Water Resources in Jordan: Evolving Policies for Development, the Environment, and Conflict Resolution*, ed. Munther J. Haddadin (Washington, DC: Resources for the Future, 2006), 8.

⁸ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 10.

⁹ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 2: Geography: Topography," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989, 67, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/26.htm>

¹⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 21 June 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹¹ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 23.

¹² Bradley Mayhew, *Jordan*, 6th ed. (Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publications, 2006), 175–177.

¹³ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 8.

¹⁴ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, 67, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/26.htm>

Climate

Jordan's climate varies across its different regions, though the country as a whole is noted for its arid, warm climate. Western Jordan has a Mediterranean climate, but the climate becomes more continental in eastern Jordan.¹⁵ Most of the country's rain falls in the northern highlands, leading to the highest population concentrations in these areas.¹⁶ The vast desert steppe zone receives less than 150 mm (5 in) of rainfall a year.¹⁷ Only 3% of Jordan's land receives more than 300 mm (12 in) of rain a year, the minimal amount of water needed to grow rain-fed wheat.¹⁸ Jordan's dry season is during the spring and summer months, between April and October.



© heatkernel / flickr.com
Jordan Valley

Aqaba, lying in the southwest of Jordan along the Red Sea, is known for its year-round warm temperatures. Winters rarely drop below 16°C (60°F), and in the summer, temperatures above 32°C (90°F) are the norm. The Dead Sea Valley can be oppressively hot in the summer with temperatures consistently above 38°C (100°F); the same can be said for the eastern desert. Jordan's northern highlands, including the city of Irbid, are cooler. Snow may fall during the winter.^{19, 20}

Winds known as the *khamsin*, blowing in from the Arabian Peninsula to the southeast in the summer, are usually hot and dusty. They correspond with the country's most uncomfortable weather. Once the winds begin, in just a few hours the temperature can rise as much as 10°C (18°F) to 15°C (27°F). These windstorms are usually brief but even in one day can decimate crops. The winds eventually shift and start blowing to the east, carrying cooler Mediterranean air and bringing relief to Jordan's inhabitants. *Shamal* winds, coming in from the north, are cyclical patterns of continental warm air between June and September.^{21, 22}

¹⁵ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 2: Geography: Climate," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989, 71, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/27.htm>

¹⁶ John A. Shoup, *Cultures and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007), 3.

¹⁷ John A. Shoup, *Cultures and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007), 2.

¹⁸ Elias Salameh and Munther J. Haddadin, "The Population-Water Resources Equation," in *Water Resources in Jordan: Evolving Policies for Development, the Environment, and Conflict Resolution*, ed. Munther J. Haddadin (Washington, DC: Resources for the Future, 2006), 10.

¹⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan," n.d., <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

²⁰ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 13.

²¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan," n.d., <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

²² Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 2: Geography: Climate," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989, 72, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/27.htm>

Bodies of Water

Rivers

The Jordan River is the country's most important river and is crucial for sustaining life in the dry climate.²³ It forms Jordan's northwestern border with Israel and the West Bank. Its tributary, the Yarmuk River, forms part of Jordan's northern border with Syria. The Zarqa River is a short river beginning north of Amman and running west into the Jordan River. Heavy irrigation keeps the Yarmuk and Zarqa largely depleted most of the year.²⁴ Most of the country's rivers and streams are seasonal, some only running immediately following a rainstorm.²⁵



© Rav / Wikimedia.org
Jordan River

The Dead Sea

The Dead Sea lies on Jordan's western border, also bordering Israel and the West Bank. The body of water is noteworthy for its elevation and its high salt content. The Dead Sea is the lowest area on earth's surface at 400 m (1,312 ft) below sea level. It is roughly 80 km (50 mi) long (north to south) and 18 km (11 mi) wide.²⁶ The water of the Dead Sea is seven times saltier than ocean water. This high level of salinity makes plant and animal life impossible, thus giving the sea its name.²⁷ Because of the high salt content, the Dead Sea is so buoyant it is impossible to sink; the area is a major tourist attraction because of this buoyancy and belief in the restorative nature of the sea.²⁸

Gulf of Aqaba

The southwest corner of Jordan has 26 km (16 mi) of coastline along the Gulf of Aqaba. The Gulf of Aqaba is the easternmost of two northern branches of the Red Sea and is bordered by Egypt's Sinai Peninsula on the west, Saudi Arabia on the east, and Israel and Jordan on the north.²⁹ Jordan's port city of Aqaba is a hub for bulk phosphates exports and the import of manufactured goods.³⁰ Snorkeling and diving in the coral-rich gulf are a major source of tourism for Aqaba.³¹

Azraq Oasis

The Azraq Oasis in Jordan's eastern desert is the only permanent water source in 120,000 sq km (46,332 sq mi) of arid wilderness. The area has long been an important refuge for those passing

²³ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan River," n.d., <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306217/Jordan-River>

²⁴ John A. Shoup, *Cultures and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007), 2.

²⁵ John A. Shoup, *Cultures and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007), 2.

²⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Dead Sea," n.d., <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/154254/Dead-Sea>

²⁷ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 15.

²⁸ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 50.

²⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 21 June 2011,

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

³⁰ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Al-'Aqabah," n.d., <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/30976/Al-Aqabah>

³¹ Bradley Mayhew, *Jordan*, 6th ed. (Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publications, 2006), 216–217.

through the desert. It was once home to extensive wetlands that have largely disappeared.^{32, 33} In addition to the Azraq, Jordan has other seasonal springs and oases.³⁴

Major Cities

City	Population (2009 estimates) ³⁵
Amman	1,568,740 ³⁶
Zarqa	524,480
Irbid	430,670
Al-Quwaysimah	306,740
Wadi al-Seer	207,220
Aqaba	108,440

Amman

Amman has a long history: the area served as the capital for the ancient Ammonite civilization, and centuries later fell under Roman rule and was named Philadelphia. A large Roman theater built in the second century C.E. survives today and is a major attraction in the city. By the 19th century, Amman was no more than a village of a few hundred people but it grew substantially as migrating Circassians from the Caucasus settled there. The city's modern history is rooted in the floods of Palestinian refugees that have arrived since 1948. Today the city is home to more than 1 million people and is the governmental and economic center of the country.^{37, 38} Amman is not only Jordan's largest city, but also joins with surrounding cities to form an urban cluster that is the heart of the country. Included in the Amman urban area are the cities of Al-Quwaysimah and Wadi al-Seer.³⁹



© David Bjorgen
Amman, Jordan

³² Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 14.

³³ Bradley Mayhew, *Jordan*, 6th ed. (Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publications, 2006), 130–131.

³⁴ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 13.

³⁵ Department of Statistics, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, “Estimated Kingdom Population Numbers According to Administrative Division in the end of 2009” (Arabic), n.d., http://www.dos.gov.jo/sdb_pop/sdb_pop_a/ehsaat/alsokan/2004/2008/2-4.htm

³⁶ This figure includes the Marka and University districts.

³⁷ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 12.

³⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, “Amman,” n.d., <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/20889/Amman>

³⁹ Department of Statistics, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, “Estimated Kingdom Population Numbers According to Administrative Division in the end of 2009” (Arabic), n.d., http://www.dos.gov.jo/sdb_pop/sdb_pop_a/ehsaat/alsokan/2004/2008/2-4.htm

Zarqa

Zarqa lies just 19 km (12 mi) northeast of Amman. Like its neighbor, Zarqa was only a small village a century ago but it grew rapidly following the Palestinian influx of 1948. Today Zarqa functions as a suburb for the capital and a home to industry. An oil refinery on Zarqa's outskirts, originally constructed in 1962, remains Jordan's only oil refinery. Zarqa is Jordan's second-largest city with a population of approximately 525,000.^{40, 41, 42} The city is most infamously known outside of Jordan for lending its name to Zarqa native Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the al-Qaeda operative killed in Iraq in 2006.⁴³

Irbid

Lying in the northwest corner of Jordan, Irbid is Jordan's third-largest city with a population of around 431,000.⁴⁴ Irbid is in proximity to Jordan's three major rivers: the Jordan River, the Yarmuk, and the Zarqa. As a result, the area surrounding Irbid is one of Jordan's most fertile, making the city an agricultural hub in addition to an industrial one. Irbid is also the home of Yarmuk University and the Jordan University of Science and Technology.^{45, 46}

Aqaba

Lying in southern Jordan on the banks of the Red Sea, Aqaba thrives because of its geographic location. Tourism and trade are the dual pillars of Aqaba's economy and are possible because of the Gulf of Aqaba. Diving and snorkeling are especially popular as are the city's beaches, all of which lead to Aqaba's unique position as the "aquatic playground" of Jordan.⁴⁷ Aqaba's large seaport has been improved since Jordan gained independence and added deepwater facilities in 1961. The port is now the central hub for the country's exports and imports. The city was once a fortified Ottoman post and gained notoriety when British officer T. E. Lawrence led a band of Arab warriors to take the city in 1917. As of 2009, the population of Aqaba was roughly 108,000.^{48, 49}



© Kht01 / Wikimedia.org
City of Aqaba

⁴⁰ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Al-Zarqā' ," n.d., <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/655990/Al-Zarqa>

⁴¹ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 12.

⁴² Department of Statistics, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Estimated Kingdom Population Numbers According to Administrative Division in the end of 2009" (Arabic), n.d., http://www.dos.gov.jo/sdb_pop/sdb_pop_a/ehsaat/alsokan/2004/2008/2-4.htm

⁴³ Bradley Mayhew, *Jordan*, 6th ed. (Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publications, 2006), 127–128.

⁴⁴ Department of Statistics, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Estimated Kingdom Population Numbers According to Administrative Division in the end of 2009" (Arabic), n.d., http://www.dos.gov.jo/sdb_pop/sdb_pop_a/ehsaat/alsokan/2004/2008/2-4.htm

⁴⁵ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 12.

⁴⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Irbid," n.d., <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/293738/Irbid>

⁴⁷ Bradley Mayhew, *Jordan*, 6th ed. (Lonely Planet Publications, 2006), 216–217.

⁴⁸ Department of Statistics, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Estimated Kingdom Population Numbers According to Administrative Division in the end of 2009" (Arabic), n.d., http://www.dos.gov.jo/sdb_pop/sdb_pop_a/ehsaat/alsokan/2004/2008/2-4.htm

⁴⁹ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 12.

Environmental Concerns

Jordan's primary environmental concern is its scarcity of water; it is one of the world's most water-deprived countries. In Jordan, the average person has access to less than 200 cubic m (52,834 gal) of fresh water a year (in the United States the number is more than 9,000 cubic m [2,377,548 gal] a year, 45 times greater).⁵⁰ This amount is only exacerbated by an ever-growing population. When the Emirate of Transjordan was established in 1921, the population of the country was 225,000; today Jordan's population is approximately 6.5 million.^{51, 52} As Jordan faces the challenge of providing water for a population nearly 30 times larger than less than a century ago, it must do so with water sources that have diminished over that same period.



© Bernard Gagnon
Al Mujib Dam

Rivers no longer carry enough water to offset evaporation because water upstream is diverted for drinking and agriculture. Upriver dams and irrigation networks have significantly depleted Jordan's major rivers. The Jordan River once provided 75% of the water flowing into the Dead Sea, delivering 1.3 billion cubic m (343 billion gal) of water annually. Today the Jordan only delivers a fraction of its former load: 100 million cubic m (26.4 billion gal), much of which is sewage. This water stress is affecting daily life and altering Jordan's physical landscape. As a result of the Jordan River's diminished capacity, the Dead Sea has shrunk more than 30% in the last half-century, and the water level has dropped more than 24 m (80 ft).⁵³

Because Jordan's rivers are not entirely its own, water sources and water diversion can be a source of international tension in the region. Turkey, Syria, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, and Jordan are all linked through their river systems. Water is a major consideration for international agreements and some fear water will be the impetus for future conflict.^{54, 55, 56}

According to the Jordanian government, redistribution and water desalination are the only viable solutions to the country's water problems. Both require massive public works projects and necessitate time and money.⁵⁷

⁵⁰ USAID in Jordan, "Water Resources Management," United States Agency for International Development, 12 July 2006, <http://jordan.usaid.gov/sectors.cfm?inSector=16>

⁵¹ Elias Salameh and Munther J. Haddadin, "The Population–Water Resources Equation," in *Water Resources in Jordan: Evolving Policies for Development, the Environment, and Conflict Resolution*, ed. Munther J. Haddadin (Washington, DC: Resources for the Future, 2006), 7.

⁵² Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 21 June 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

⁵³ John Ward Anderson, "For Dead Sea, a Slow and Seemingly Inexorable Death," *Washington Post*, 19 May 2005, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/05/18/AR2005051802400.html>

⁵⁴ Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, U. S. Department of State, "Background Note: Jordan," 25 March 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3464.htm>

⁵⁵ *Economist*, "Water Politics: Jordan Asks for More," 15 May 1997, <http://www.economist.com/node/149518>

⁵⁶ Hussein A. Amery, "Water Wars in the Middle East: A Looming Threat," *The Geographical Journal* 168, no. 4 (December 2002): 313–323, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3451474>

⁵⁷ Natalia Antelava, "Jordan Faces Up to Water Crisis," *BBC News*, 6 October 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8292228.stm

Natural Hazards

Further complicating Jordan's water shortages, the region is subject to crippling droughts.⁵⁸ Such droughts, caused by low rainfall and exacerbated by diminishing rivers and ground water, destroy crops and kill livestock.⁵⁹ Having learned from past drought years, the Jordanian government now carefully monitors rain levels and projected precipitation. When moisture levels are low the government has responded by digging emergency wells.⁶⁰



© Pierre Metvier
Wadi Rum Desert

Jordan is also prone to frequent minor earthquakes near the Jordan Rift Valley along the western border.⁶¹ The valley is the northernmost extension of the East African Rift System that formed as tectonic plates separated. Seismic activity occurs because of this separation.⁶² In Jordan, earthquakes above 4.0 on the Richter scale have been recorded in 2004, 2007, 2008, and 2011. The last destructive earthquake above 6.0 to hit Jordan occurred in 1927.⁶³

⁵⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 21 June 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

⁵⁹ Hala Saleh, "Middle East Drought Hits Jordan and Syria," *BBC News*, 24 September 1999, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/456841.stm

⁶⁰ Hana Namrouqa, "Kingdom Braces for Drought-Like Conditions" *Jordan Times*, 1 February 2009, <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=13939>

⁶¹ U. S. Geological Survey, "Middle East: Seismic Hazard Map," 29 March 2010, http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/world/middle_east/gshap.php

⁶² *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "East African Rift System," n.d., <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/176462/East-African-Rift-System>

⁶³ Armand Vervaeck and James Daniell, "Earthquake in Jordan Causes Some (Minor) Damage," *Earthquake Report*, 15 February 2011, <http://earthquake-report.com/2011/01/03/earthquake-in-jordan-causes-some-minor-damage/>

Chapter 1 Assessment

1. The Jordanian Plateau covers the majority of the country.
FALSE
The Jordanian Plateau is a narrow strip of highlands that lies between the Jordan Rift Valley and the desert steppe. The desert steppe is the largest geographic zone and covers more than 80% of the country.
2. Most of the country's rain falls in the northern highlands.
TRUE
Jordan's major cities are all located in the country's highlands. Most of the country is desert and receives little rainfall.
3. The Dead Sea is the lowest area on earth's surface.
TRUE
At 400 m (1,312 ft) below sea level, the Dead Sea is the lowest area on earth's surface. The Dead Sea is also seven times saltier than the ocean.
4. Amman has been a major city with tens of thousands of residents for centuries.
FALSE
Amman has a long history but is primarily a modern city. In the 19th century, Amman was little more than a village with several hundred people.
5. The Dead Sea is rapidly shrinking because of dams and irrigation upriver on the Jordan River.
TRUE
In the last 50 years, the Dead Sea has shrunk more than 30%. Though the Jordan River used to carry 1.3 billion cubic m of water annually into the Dead Sea, today it delivers only 100 million cubic m a year.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY

Introduction

Jordan is a country at once ancient and modern.⁶⁴ Some of civilization's oldest artifacts have been found there. Jordan was also the home to Biblical civilizations and claims historic sites from both the Old and New Testament. The famed city of Petra, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, lies within Jordan's borders. Despite these deep ancient roots, today's Jordan is a modern political construction. The two world wars greatly influenced the creation and independence of Jordan. Although its ruling family claims descent from the Prophet Muhammad and has been influential for centuries, prior to World War I they had ruled Mecca and the western Arabian Peninsula, not the region known today as Jordan.



© Berthold Werner
Petra

Relations with its neighbors have largely shaped Jordan's modern history. From regional competition with Egypt and Syria, strategic alliances with Saddam Hussein's Iraq, to mutually antagonistic cooperation with Israel, Jordan's modern history in many ways mirrors that of the region. Most fundamentally, its proximity to the Palestinian territories has shaped contemporary Jordan. Throughout the 20th century, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians (often in times of crisis) migrated to Jordan. Today its society reflects Jordan's history: native tribes and Bedouin nomads, large numbers of Palestinian immigrants, Jordanians of Palestinian descent, and a ruling family native to another region all form the modern Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Early Jordanian Kingdoms

Archaeological evidence shows that Jordan has been home to numerous peoples over the years. Flint tools from Stone Age hunters have been found in Jordan's deserts. Other evidence of Jordan's earliest inhabitants includes rock carvings of animals in Wadi Rum and the Jordan River Valley. Later, nomads stayed on the move traveling from one part of the wilderness to another. Other peoples established cities and even kingdoms. Evidence of a city known today as Jawa exists in Jordan's northern Black Desert. Jawa was a stone city replete with dams and canals. During the early Bronze Age, invading nomads wreaked havoc on Jordan's towns and villages.^{65, 66}



© Henri Sivonen
Moabite Inscription

By the time of the early Iron Age (roughly 1300 B.C.E.), separate small tribal kingdoms developed in Jordan. The Ammonites inhabited northern Jordan, and their capital, Rabbath Ammon, is the location of modern

⁶⁴ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 9.

⁶⁵ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁶⁶ Coleman South, *Cultures of the World: Jordan* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 19–21.

Amman. The Kingdom of Moab covered central Jordan east of the Dead Sea, and the Kingdom of Edom lay to the south. Other early kingdoms included Bashan, Gilead, and Midian.^{67, 68} Towns of these kingdoms benefited from trade routes running through the area, helping the small kingdoms to grow.⁶⁹

In the mid-13th century B.C.E., Israelites began clashing with the region's residents. Believed to have arrived from Egypt, the Israelites dwelt primarily on the west bank of the Jordan River. The newly established Israel was settled according to its internal tribal lines, but was later consolidated under King Saul and then King David. Solomon, David's son, controlled the mineral-rich area of Edom and had a port on the Gulf of Aqaba, both of which lie in modern Jordan. Eventually Israel split into northern and southern kingdoms. These kingdoms came into conflict not only with each other but also the kingdoms of the east bank.^{70, 71, 72}

Jordan Between Competing Powers

Competing external imperial powers determined much of Jordan's history in the following centuries. In the eighth century B.C.E. the region fell to the Assyrians of Mesopotamia to the east (modern Iraq). Israelites were deported and Jordan was divided into Assyrian provinces. Eventually the Assyrians fell to the Babylonians (a competing Assyrian neighbor also from modern Iraq), who took Israelites as slaves in 588 B.C.E. Cyrus the Great of Persia (modern Iran) conquered Babylon in 530 B.C.E. and the Persians allowed Israel and Jordan a



© Markv / Wikimedia.org
Roman theatre in Amman

degree of autonomy. In Jordan, Bedouins from the Arabian Peninsula moved into the area and began settling. This Arab migration brought the Nabateans into the area. In 333 B.C.E., Alexander the Great's army of Greeks defeated the Persians. After his death, his generals divided his kingdom among themselves, and Jordan fell between the competing Seleucids of Syria and the Ptolemys of Egypt. In the south of Jordan, the Nabateans gained a significant foothold, while northern Jordan remained under Seleucid control. In 64 B.C.E., the region fell under the control of the Roman Empire.^{73, 74, 75}

⁶⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁶⁸ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 10.

⁶⁹ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: The Jordan Region in Antiquity," in *Jordan: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989), 6, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/4.htm>

⁷⁰ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁷¹ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 10–11.

⁷² Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: The Jordan Region in Antiquity," in *Jordan: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989), 6–7, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/4.htm>

⁷³ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁷⁴ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 10–11.

⁷⁵ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: The Jordan Region in Antiquity," in *Jordan: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989), 6–7, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/4.htm>

Rome took an active interest in Israel but largely left the Nabateans of the east bank alone. The Nabateans gained wealth and influence in the following years; the famed city of Petra, the Nabatean capital, dates to this period. The Nabateans reached their peak between 9 B.C.E. and 40 C.E. when they controlled the trade between Yemen and the Mediterranean. (It was also during this period that Christianity began. John the Baptist lived in the Jordanian wilderness, and the site where he is believed to have baptized Jesus in the Jordan River remains a tourist attraction in Jordan.) The Romans eventually noticed the Nabatean success and in 106 annexed the kingdom. Romans ruled Jordan until 395 when stewardship fell to the Byzantines of Constantinople. By the sixth century, Jordan had regained a great deal of autonomy under Christian Ghassanid Arabs loyal to Constantinople.^{76, 77, 78}

Muslim Conquest and the Crusades

Islam reached the Jordan River Valley and its surrounding region early in the religion's history. Muhammad directed an expedition into southern Jordan in 629–630 in which Jewish and Christian communities submitted to the growing power from the south. During the next few years, Muslim forces penetrated Jordan, coming into conflict with Ghassanids and Byzantines. These forces, under the command of Khalid ibn al-Walid, dealt a serious blow to the Byzantines in 636 at the Battle of Yarmuk. The Byzantines could no longer hold their Syrian provinces and retreated to Anatolia (modern Turkey).^{79, 80} The Arabs divided their new territory into provinces: the area primarily west of the Jordan River was known as *Jund al-Filastin* (the military province of Palestine) and the area to the east was known as *Jund al-Urdunn* (the military province of Jordan).⁸¹



© Bernard Gagnon
Crusader Castle, Shoubak

Islam's political center shifted to Damascus, north of Jordan, with the rise of the Umayyad Caliphate in 661. Closeness to Damascus benefited Jordan, marked by hunting lodges and palaces in the Jordanian wilderness, but when the Umayyad Caliphate fell in 750 to the Abbasids, the Abbasids shifted the imperial capital to Baghdad.^{82, 83} Having lost proximity to the power center, Jordan reverted to Bedouin patterns over the following centuries. Jordan remained

⁷⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁷⁷ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 11–12.

⁷⁸ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: The Jordan Region in Antiquity," in *Jordan: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989), 7–10, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/4.htm>

⁷⁹ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 12–13.

⁸⁰ William Oehsenwald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 39.

⁸¹ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 13.

⁸² *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁸³ Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1991), 27.

a frontier region on the periphery of the Abbasids, then the Fatimids of Egypt, and then the Seljuq Turks.^{84, 85}

In 1099, European crusaders, responding to the call of Pope Urban II to reclaim Christianity's early territory from the Seljuq Turks and Muslims of the region, took Jerusalem and established a kingdom that extended east of the Jordan River. Crusaders built several outposts in Jordan but by the end of the 12th century, the Muslims responded. In 1189, Salah al-Din (Saladin) defeated the last of the crusader strongholds in Jordan. Jordan once again became a frontier region largely untouched by surrounding regional competition.^{86, 87}

Ottoman Rule and World War I

By the 16th century, the region fell to the Ottomans, who controlled the east bank of the Jordan under the provincial authority of Damascus.^{88, 89} Despite a new Ottoman jurisdiction, Jordan remained largely ignored except as a crossroads. Its status as a stop along the way between more influential centers gave the region its new name: Transjordan. Beginning in the 19th century, Ottomans took more interest in Transjordan and settled refugees there, including Circassians.^{90, 91}



Courtesy Wikimedia.org
T.E. Lawrence

The dawning of the 20th century saw growing hostility toward Ottoman Turkish rule among the Arabs of the Middle East, including Transjordan's Bedouins. In 1900, the Ottoman Empire began work on a railroad to link Damascus in the north to Medina in Arabia. Jordan's tribes largely met plans for the Hijaz Railway with disdain, because Turkish soldiers could easily be deployed throughout the region by the railroad. In 1905, and again in 1910, local revolts erupted. The Ottomans crushed the revolts, but in so doing angered an already anxious populace. When World War I erupted in 1914, the Ottomans sided with Germany and Austria, and many of the empire's Arabs saw an opportunity to gain autonomy.^{92, 93}

As tension turned to conflict in Europe, Britain looked to undermine Ottoman war efforts. In hopes of causing the Ottomans to overextend their forces, British officials actively promoted Arab unrest. Britain reached out to Hussein, the steward of Mecca, and cut a deal. Hussein was a

⁸⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁸⁵ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 13–14.

⁸⁶ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 14–15.

⁸⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁸⁸ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: Ottoman Rule," in *Jordan: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989), 13, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/6.htm>

⁸⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁹⁰ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 16–17.

⁹¹ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: Ottoman Rule," in *Jordan: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989), 16, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/6.htm>

⁹² John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 17–19.

⁹³ Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1991), 316.

member of the Hashemi tribe, claiming descent from Muhammad, whose family had ruled Mecca for 900 years. In exchange for the support of Hussein's men in military campaigns against the Ottomans, the British promised the creation of an Arab state at the conclusion of the war. British colonel T.E. Lawrence was sent to help guide Hussein's sons against the Ottomans. While Hussein's sons Ali and Abdullah fought in Arabia, Lawrence and a third son, Faisal, united tribal sheikhs in Transjordan and attacked the Hijaz Railway. They took the port city of Aqaba from the Turks in 1917 and then turned further north, eventually taking Damascus and pushing the Turks into Anatolia.^{94, 95}

Creation of Modern Jordan

Despite agreements between British officials and Sharif Hussein, a number of other agreements, treaties, and declarations muddied the postwar waters. In addition to dealing with Hussein of Mecca, Britain actively courted Hussein's eastern Arabian rival, Ibn Saud. In the years following the war, Ibn Saud formed an alliance that eventually pressured Hussein, and then his son Ali, out of Mecca and created the modern Saudi state.⁹⁶ In 1917, the British government publicly supported (via the Balfour Declaration) the establishment of a Jewish "national home" in Palestine.⁹⁷ Additionally, Britain and France had come together the year before, secretly making the Sykes-Picot Agreement. Under this agreement, the lands of the Ottoman Empire were to be partitioned after the war, promising Palestine, Transjordan, and Iraq to Britain and pledging Syria (including modern Lebanon) to France.^{98, 99}



Courtesy of Wikimedia.org
Sons of Sharif Hussein (seated)

Following World War I, a number of conferences considered the various agreements made in the preceding years and determined the future political make-up of former Ottoman territories. At the Paris Peace Conference, delegates subscribed to the principles of the Balfour Declaration and called for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, an idea that the newly formed League of Nations then accepted.¹⁰⁰ The tenets of the Sykes-Picot Agreement were implemented in the San Remo talks of 1920; the area occupied by modern Jordan and Israel became a British mandate, and to the north, a French mandate covered Syrian territory, including Lebanon.¹⁰¹

⁹⁴ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 19.

⁹⁵ James L. Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 178.

⁹⁶ William Ochsenwald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 376, 696–698.

⁹⁷ James L. Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 179.

⁹⁸ William Ochsenwald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 376.

⁹⁹ Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1991), 318.

¹⁰⁰ William Ochsenwald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 380–381.

¹⁰¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

The French mandate in Syria ousted Sharif Hussein's son Faisal, who had led the country only briefly since the end of the war. Prompted in part by his brother's ouster in Syria, Abdullah moved from Mecca into Jordanian territory in late 1920 and began to consolidate power, both filling a void and asserting Hashemite authority. His move bore fruit when a conference convened in Cairo in March 1921 and the British recognized not only Faisal but Abdullah. Faisal was installed as the king of Iraq, and the Palestinian territory east of the Jordan River was officially turned over to Abdullah.^{102, 103}

Abdullah and Independence

For three decades, Abdullah ruled Jordan, first as Transjordan, then through independence and the formation of the modern Jordanian state. These years saw the creation of governing institutions and the large influx of Palestinian refugees.

Britain continued to play a strong role in Transjordan through its first years. Although Britain solved a short-term political problem by installing Abdullah under a British mandate, it also created new economic problems.¹⁰⁴ Transjordan was a country devoid of resources. From the outset of the mandate, Britain paid Abdullah a yearly stipend. Abdullah's fiscal responsibility proved lacking even as Britain provided two-thirds of Jordan's revenue, prompting Britain to place stronger controls on its aid.^{105, 106} In 1923, Britain fully recognized Transjordan but retained control of financial, military, and foreign affairs. Only after World War II did the country gain full independence.¹⁰⁷



Courtesy Wikimedia.org
King Abdullah I

Transjordan faced a number of challenges while it coalesced as a state and moved toward independence. Political institutions had to be built, and disparate tribal and nomadic elements had to be incorporated. Transjordan also had to deal with its neighbors and the international community. As World War II ended, Britain was economically, politically, and militarily exhausted, and accepted losing its mandate in Jordan.¹⁰⁸ Abdullah proclaimed himself king after a formal treaty granted full independence in 1946. In 1949, the country was renamed the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the name it retains to this day.^{109, 110}

¹⁰² William Ochsenwald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 382–383.

¹⁰³ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 16–21.

¹⁰⁴ James L. Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 183.

¹⁰⁵ William Ochsenwald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 453.

¹⁰⁶ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 29.

¹⁰⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

¹⁰⁸ William Ochsenwald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 474.

¹⁰⁹ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 35–58.

¹¹⁰ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

Abdullah's final years were significantly influential for Jordan's future. In 1948, the British withdrew from Palestine and the independent state of Israel was proclaimed. In the subsequent Arab–Israeli war, Abdullah sent troops across the Jordan River and gained East Jerusalem. After the war ended and Jordan and Israel signed an armistice, Jordan retained control of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Jordan was now responsible for half a million Palestinians (a population roughly equivalent to the whole of Jordan), most of whom were refugees.^{111, 112}

Abdullah's reign in Jordan met a violent end in 1951. While visiting the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, Abdullah was assassinated by a Palestinian who was embittered by the king's antipathy toward Palestinian nationalism.¹¹³

Hussein and the 1967 War

Following Abdullah's assassination, the crown passed to his eldest son, Talal. But he suffered from mental illness and was unfit to rule. In August 1952, parliament deposed Talal (who accepted the decision and lived quietly outside of Istanbul until he died 20 years later) and appointed Talal's 17-year-old son to take his place.^{114, 115} Young Hussein was formally crowned a year later when he came of age, and spent his early years on the throne securing his power. An attempted coup in 1957 convinced Hussein to remove Palestinian nationals from the legislature and to ban political parties. With the growing regional influence of Egypt's Gamal Abdul Nasser and a coup that killed King Faisal II of Iraq (Hussein's cousin), Hussein grew anxious and reached out to Britain and the United States for support; both countries responded with financial and military aid, helping Hussein secure his position.^{116, 117}



Courtesy Wikimedia.org
King Hussein

In the 1960s, regional tension began to escalate. The newly formed Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and the guerrilla group Fatah carried out attacks against Israel, thus acting in opposition to Jordan's long-held policy of avoiding border disputes. Additionally, the PLO frustrated the Jordanian government by collecting taxes and distributing arms in the West Bank. In November 1966, Israel responded to terrorist attacks by assaulting Al-Samu, a West Bank village; this led to riots against Hussein's government. A skirmish in April 1967 between Israel and Syria prompted an Egyptian military build-up in Sinai and, a month later, Egypt closed off Israeli shipping lanes in the Gulf of Aqaba. Hussein signed a military alliance with Egypt,

¹¹¹ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," in *Jordan: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989), 29–30, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/10.htm>

¹¹² *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

¹¹³ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

¹¹⁴ Nigel Ashton, *King Hussein of Jordan: A Political Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 15–31.

¹¹⁵ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," in *Jordan: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989), 30, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/10.htm>

¹¹⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

¹¹⁷ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 103–104.

pulling Jordan into war several days later when Israel preemptively attacked Egyptian forces in Sinai.^{118, 119, 120}

The 1967 war (also known as the Six-Day War) was short-lived and was a resounding success for Israel. By war's end, Israel had claimed all the West Bank and the Old City of Jerusalem, areas formerly under Jordanian purview, as well as the Sinai Peninsula. Jordan lost more than 6,000 troops in the war, 40% of its GDP (because of the loss of the West Bank), and was flooded with 300,000 Palestinian refugees.^{121, 122}

Continued Hostilities

Viewing the Arab defeat in the 1967 war, many Palestinians turned to terrorist tactics.¹²³ Many were openly antagonistic toward Hussein's government, resulting in PLO hostilities in Jordan, not just in Israel. Tensions mounted in September 1970 when the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine hijacked several commercial airplanes.¹²⁴ After transferring the passengers, the terrorists blew up three of the planes at Dawson's Field in Zarqa, Jordan. Hussein responded by declaring martial law. The passengers of the hijacked planes were ultimately secured but the violence of the ensuing conflict, in which thousands were killed, prompted Palestinians to refer to the month as Black September.¹²⁵ Shortly thereafter, Hussein drove PLO guerrillas out of Jordan into Lebanon.^{126, 127}



© Thomas R. Koeniges
Palestinian liberation fighters

When war broke out again between the Arabs and Israelis in 1973, Jordan tacitly supported its Arab neighbors. Despite having agreed in 1967 not to recognize or negotiate with Israel, Hussein conducted secret negotiations with Israel regarding the West Bank and cooperation against PLO terrorists.¹²⁸ When Egypt and Syria coordinated a surprise attack against Israel on 6 October

¹¹⁸ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Development and Disaster," in *Jordan: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989), 36–38, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/13.htm>

¹¹⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

¹²⁰ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 120–124.

¹²¹ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Development and Disaster," in *Jordan: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989), 36–38, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/13.htm>

¹²² Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 124.

¹²³ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: The Guerrilla Crisis," in *Jordan: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989), 40, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/14.htm>

¹²⁴ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 130–131.

¹²⁵ The militant group Black September, responsible for the Munich Olympics massacre of 1972, took its name from this episode.

¹²⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

¹²⁷ William Ochsenwald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 559.

¹²⁸ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 140.

1973, Jordan sent tanks to assist Syrian forces in the Golan Heights but otherwise avoided active conflict. Over the next few weeks, the war shocked the world and drew international interest, including United Nations cease-fire resolutions and the involvement of U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in shuttle diplomacy. Jordan hoped to regain the West Bank but was left disappointed.^{129, 130}

In the wake of Black September and the 1973 war, Hussein's position as a leader of Palestinians was significantly weakened. In 1974, Arab leaders recognized the PLO as the legitimate representative body for the Palestinians, effectively disregarding Hussein's claims on the West Bank.¹³¹ This position was further entrenched by the UN's recognition of the PLO later in the year and by the Camp David Accords of 1978, when Israel agreed to negotiate the future of the occupied territories with Palestinian representatives.^{132, 133} Although the international community no longer recognized Jordan as the rightful steward of the West Bank, Hussein did not formally renounce his claims to the region until 1988.¹³⁴

The 1980s and 1990s

The 1980s brought Jordan economic troubles and volatile relations with the PLO. Jordan had always relied on foreign aid, but by the early 1980s, Jordan was receiving USD 1.179 billion from its Arab neighbors, an amount 16 times larger than at the time of the 1973 war.¹³⁵ This high level of support could not last because regional instability throughout the 1980s reduced the wealth of Jordan's neighbors. Poor economic policies in Jordan only exacerbated the problem. By the end of the decade, the country had the world's largest foreign debt per capita.¹³⁶



© Helene C. Stikkel
King Hussein of Jordan

Additionally, Jordan faced ongoing challenges from a large Palestinian community that continually hoped for statehood. Throughout the decade, Hussein's relations with Yasir Arafat, the PLO chairman, were tepid. Although the two pledged cooperation in 1984, by 1986 Hussein broke off talks with the PLO over his frustration with Arafat. In late 1987, a Palestinian uprising in the West Bank demonstrated frustration with not only Israel but the Jordanian government. The First Intifada (as the uprising was later called) finally prompted Hussein to renounce his claims on the West Bank.¹³⁷

¹²⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

¹³⁰ William Ochsenwald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 559–560.

¹³¹ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 24–25.

¹³² *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

¹³³ William Ochsenwald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 559–560.

¹³⁴ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 163.

¹³⁵ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Jordan in the 1980s: Economic Austerity, 1981," in *Jordan: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989), 58, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/22.htm>

¹³⁶ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 166.

¹³⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

The final decade of Hussein's rule demonstrated that he had learned how to walk a political tightrope. When Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, Hussein was forced to choose between two allies: the United States and Iraq. Both had large roles in the Jordanian economy; the Jordanian people largely supported Iraq. Although Hussein initially supported Saddam by offering to mediate the conflict rather than renouncing the invasion, he later appeased the West with Jordan's strategic importance in talks between the Israelis and Palestinians.¹³⁸ By 1994, Hussein signed a peace treaty with Israel in which Jordan was recognized as the custodian of the Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem. As the decade drew to a close, Hussein acted as mediator in Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.^{139, 140}

Hussein's health began to decline in 1998. Despite aggressive chemotherapy, Hussein died at the age of 63, after ruling Jordan for more than four decades. Shortly before his death, he proclaimed his son Abdullah to be his successor.^{141, 142}

Jordan under Abdullah II

External and internal developments have affected Abdullah's Jordan, but it has remained an ally of the United States while strengthening regional partnerships. Although the U.S. invasion of Iraq was greatly unpopular among Jordanians, the country remains a partner of the United States in combating terrorism. Information sharing has been essential to that relationship.¹⁴³ The war in Iraq has profoundly influenced Jordan, which has given shelter to more than 450,000 Iraqi refugees.¹⁴⁴

Since his ascension to the throne, Abdullah has initiated free-market reforms and has overseen an opening of the political space. The economy has stabilized as a result of increased trade efforts, privatization, and financial liberalization. Yet the country faces long-term economic challenges and remains dependent on foreign aid.¹⁴⁵ Jordan has held parliamentary and local elections under Abdullah, though some doubt their utility.¹⁴⁶



© World Economic Forum
King Abdullah II

Jordan was not exempt from the wave of protests that swept the Middle East and North Africa beginning in January 2011. Thousands rallied in Amman and other cities to protest the economy and a lack of political space. Unlike many of Jordan's neighbors, protests were not aimed

¹³⁸ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 177–179.

¹³⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

¹⁴⁰ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 184–185.

¹⁴¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

¹⁴² Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 193–197.

¹⁴³ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 28.

¹⁴⁴ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "2011 UNHCR Country Operations Profile—Jordan," 2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e486566#>

¹⁴⁵ Sufyan Alissa, "Rethinking Economic Reform in Jordan: Confronting Socioeconomic Realities" (paper, Carnegie Paper series, August 2007), <http://carnegie-mec.org/publications/?fa=19465>

¹⁴⁶ *BBC News*, "Timeline: Jordan," 8 May 2010, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/828993.stm

directly at its ruler.¹⁴⁷ Abdullah placated protestors by dismissing the prime minister and ultimately appointing a new prime minister with a mandate for economic and political reforms.¹⁴⁸ In June 2011 Abdullah made further concessions, vowing that future cabinets would be elected according to a parliamentary majority.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Rober Danin, “Why Jordan is not a Regional Domino,” Council on Foreign Relations, 1 February 2011, <http://www.cfr.org/jordan/why-jordan-not-regional-domino/p23962>

¹⁴⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, “Jordan: History,” 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

¹⁴⁹ Dale Gavlak, “Jordan’s King Abdullah Vows to Allow Elected Cabinets,” *BBC News*, 12 June 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13744640>

Chapter 2 Assessment

1. Rock carvings of animals are among the earliest evidence of Jordan's inhabitants.
TRUE
Early art and flint tools point to Jordan's early inhabitants. Rock carvings of animals have been found in Wadi Rum in southern Jordan and in the Jordan River Valley.
2. After conquering the area in 64 B.C.E., Rome considered the Nabateans an immediate threat.
FALSE
Rome took an active interest in Israel but largely left the Nabateans alone. The Nabateans prospered until well into the first century C.E.
3. Jordan was tightly controlled and heavily developed under both the Abbasids and the Ottomans.
FALSE
Jordan was largely ignored under both the Abbasids and the Ottomans. The region was a frontier region that functioned in relative autonomy until the Ottomans brought greater focus to the region in the 19th century.
4. Abdullah, the son of Hussein of Mecca, became the first king of Transjordan.
TRUE
While Hussein and his son Ali stayed in Mecca initially, Hussein's sons Abdullah and Faisal were awarded other kingdoms. Abdullah was given the kingdom of Transjordan and Faisal was originally given Syria and later Iraq.
5. Jordan finally made peace with Israel after the ascension of Hussein's son, Abdullah II.
FALSE
Jordan made peace with Israel in 1994 under King Hussein. The two states had extensive secret contact for decades prior to the official treaty.

CHAPTER 3: ECONOMY

Introduction

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has one of the Middle East's smallest economies, lacking natural resources such as oil and a climate conducive to productive agriculture.¹⁵⁰ Political geography has also influenced Jordan's economy; instability in the region adversely affects Jordan's economy, which relies greatly on foreign tourism. After the United States' invasion of Iraq in 2003, Jordan and its economy had to absorb more than 450,000 new refugees.¹⁵¹

The service sector, which accounts for two-thirds of the economy, is today the primary component of the Jordanian economy. Industry makes up 30% of the economy, while agriculture accounts for only 3%. Jordan's total gross domestic product (GDP)—the total value of all final goods and services produced in the country—was USD 34.5 billion in 2010.¹⁵² In the Arab world, only Bahrain and the West Bank have smaller economies. (Bahrain's small economy is offset by its small population; its GDP per capita is nearly eight times greater than that of Jordan.)^{153, 154}

Economic reform measures in the first decade of the 21st century made significant progress in privatizing the economy and opening trade markets, but many challenges remain. Unemployment remains high (13.4%), and the overall standard of living is low. Jordan has a significant trade deficit and relies on foreign aid to stay afloat.¹⁵⁵

The United States has a history of providing aid to Jordan since 1951, and aid was especially refocused after Jordan made peace with Israel in 1994. Though initial aid was narrowly focused on economic assistance, within 6 years it included military aid. From that time until 2010, total U.S. aid to Jordan amounted to USD 11.38 billion.¹⁵⁶ As of 2010, the United States was providing USD 360 million in economic aid and USD 300 million in military aid yearly. The economic aid comes as cash and as U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)



¹⁵⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 13 July 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹⁵¹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "2011 UNHCR Country Operations Profile—Jordan," 2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e486566#>

¹⁵² Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 13 July 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹⁵³ Central Intelligence Agency, "Country Comparison: GDP (Purchase Power Parity)," in *The World Factbook*, n.d., <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2001rank.html?countryName=Jordan&countryCode=jo®ionCode=mde&rank=103#jo>

¹⁵⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, "Bahrain," in *The World Factbook*, 28 July 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ba.html>

¹⁵⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 13 July 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹⁵⁶ Jeremy M. Sharp, "U.S. Foreign Assistance to the Middle East: Historical Background, Recent Trends, and the FY2011 Request," Congressional Research Service, 15 June 2010, 7, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL32260.pdf>

programs.^{157, 158} In 2011, the U.S. government announced an additional USD 100 million to focus on Jordan's poor and underprivileged, many of whom are young.¹⁵⁹

Agriculture

Jordan's agricultural sector is small, in accordance with the geography and climate. Only 3.3% of the arid landscape is arable, and the country has just 820 sq km (317 sq mi) of irrigated land.¹⁶⁰ It is largely because of the unproductive landscape that Jordan suffered so greatly from its 1967 loss of the West Bank, which had fertile land and accounted then for 40% of GDP, including 60% of Jordan's fruit and vegetable output and more than one-third of grain production.¹⁶¹ Today Jordan's agricultural sector accounts for just 3.4% of GDP and employs only 2.7% of the labor force.¹⁶²



© Banimustafa / Wikipedia.org
Olive farms in Jerash

Agriculture is confined to the western side of the country, including the Jordan Valley and the western highlands. Central and eastern Jordan are too dry for agriculture. Crops that grow in the Jordan Valley include fruits, potatoes, tomatoes, and olives. These crops largely grow on irrigated land that is temperate year-round. Over 60% of Jordan's agricultural production comes from the Jordan Valley. The highlands are predominantly rain-fed and crops include wheat and barley. This region has more seasonal fluctuation than the valley.^{163, 164}

Jordan's central and eastern deserts form nearly two-thirds of the country. Although these regions are unsuitable for crops, nomadic Bedouins raise livestock, including sheep and goats, thus providing meat for much of the country. Jordan is unable to meet its food needs and must import foodstuffs. Jordan's Ministry of Agriculture monitors market needs and controls imports, and also sets minimum and maximum prices for retail produce.^{165, 166}

¹⁵⁷ Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Washington, DC, "U.S.–Jordan Relation," n.d., <http://www.jordanembassyus.org/new/aboutjordan/uj1.shtml>

¹⁵⁸ Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Assistance to Jordan," 17 May 2011, <http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/163555.htm>

¹⁵⁹ Associated Press, "U.S. Increases Aid to Jordan," *New York Times*, 12 January 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/13/world/africa/13briefs-Jordan.html?_r=2

¹⁶⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 13 July 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹⁶¹ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 124–125.

¹⁶² Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 13 July 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹⁶³ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: Economy," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan/23347/Economy>

¹⁶⁴ Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Washington, DC, "Media and Communications: Agriculture," n.d., <http://www.jordanembassyus.org/new/jib/factsheets/agriculture.shtml>

¹⁶⁵ Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Washington, D.C., "Media and Communications: Agriculture," n.d., <http://www.jordanembassyus.org/new/jib/factsheets/agriculture.shtml>

¹⁶⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: Economy," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan/23347/Economy>

Industry and Tourism

Industry accounts for 30% of GDP and employs 20% of the labor force. Major industries include clothing, pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, phosphate mining, petroleum refining, cement, light manufacturing, and inorganic chemicals.^{167, 168}

Tourism has become one of Jordan's most important industries, providing 14% of GDP.¹⁶⁹ The country has successfully developed the tourist industry from 5.5 million visitors in 2004 to 8.2 million in 2010.¹⁷⁰ Biblical sites are major attractions, including the Jordan River site traditionally thought to be Jesus' baptismal site, and Mount Nebo, from which Moses purportedly surveyed the region. Other popular destinations include the Dead Sea and the ancient city of Petra.

At 400 m (1,300 ft) below sea level, the Dead Sea is the lowest place on earth's surface. Its salinity, seven times greater than ocean water, gives the water a unique buoyancy. The Dead Sea and its mud have long been considered restorative and have attracted visitors for centuries.^{171, 172}

Petra, the ancient caravan city cut into Jordanian mountains, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.¹⁷³ According to Jordan's Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, nearly 1 million visitors came to Petra in 2010, and 90% were foreigners.¹⁷⁴ Most tourists to Jordan come from European countries, especially Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, and Spain. American visitors are also common.¹⁷⁵

Revenues from tourism are subject to market and political instabilities. The global economic downturn that began in 2008 slowed tourism to Jordan in 2009, though other areas of its economy were insulated.¹⁷⁶ Safety and security, which are important issues in a volatile region, are vital to Jordan's tourism sector. The sector has grown significantly since Jordan made peace with Israel in 1994, but the regional unrest of 2011 deterred tourists. According to the



© Downtown Traveler / flickr.com
The treasury in Petra Jordan

¹⁶⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 13 July 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹⁶⁸ Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Jordan," 25 March 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3464.htm#econ>

¹⁶⁹ Mohammad Tayseer, "Jordan Tourism Revenue Drops 12% in First Half on Unrest," Bloomberg, 19 July 2011, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-07-19/jordan-tourism-revenue-drops-12-in-first-half-on-unrest.html>

¹⁷⁰ Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Jordan: National Tourism Strategy," n.d., 11, http://www.tourism.jo/en/portals/0/NTS_2011-2015_English.pdf

¹⁷¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Dead Sea," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/154254/Dead-Sea>

¹⁷² Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 15.

¹⁷³ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Heritage Convention, "Petra," 2011, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/326>

¹⁷⁴ Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Number of Visitors to Tourist Sites by Location, 2009–2010," n.d., <http://www.mota.gov.jo/en/statistics/2010-3rd/1/Main%20Folder/Sites/5.2.XLS>

¹⁷⁵ Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Visitors to the Main Tourist Sites by Nationality, 2009–2010," n.d., <http://www.mota.gov.jo/en/statistics/2010-3rd/1/Main%20Folder/Sites/5.1.xls>

¹⁷⁶ Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Jordan," 25 March 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3464.htm#econ>

government, visitors in the first half of 2011 dropped 14% from the year before and revenue fell 12%.¹⁷⁷

Natural Resources and Energy

Jordan is resource poor and relies on imports to meet its energy needs. Its primary natural resources are minerals, including phosphates and potash. Gypsum helps feed the country's fertilizer industry, and there have been recent discoveries of barite.^{178, 179}

Unlike many of its Arab neighbors, especially those in the Persian Gulf, Jordan does not have oil reserves driving its economy. Jordan is a net importer of oil and has been for decades. In 1980, Jordan imported roughly 40,000 barrels of petroleum a day, but by 2009, that number climbed to almost 100,000 barrels a day. Even at the peak of Jordan's oil production in the mid-1980s, it only produced 1,000 barrels a day. Today its production is virtually nonexistent at roughly 20 barrels a day.¹⁸⁰



© Dennis Jarvis
Precious water storage

Despite lacking oil, Jordan has natural gas reserves, primarily in the eastern desert. But these reserves are modest; the CIA estimates that Jordan's proved gas reserves rank 87th in the world.¹⁸¹ Jordan produced 9 billion cubic feet of natural gas in 2009 (ranking it 72nd in the world), but it consumed 109 billion cubic feet, meaning that Jordan imports more than 90% of its natural gas.¹⁸²

Jordan's electricity consumption today is more than 10 times what it was 30 years ago. Thermal plants, which primarily are oil-fired, generate virtually all of Jordan's electricity.^{183, 184}

Jordan has a limited water supply but ever expanding water needs, making it one of the world's most water-stressed countries.^{185, 186} Jordan is a lower riparian state: its important river flows into

¹⁷⁷ Mohammad Tayseer, "Jordan Tourism Revenue Drops 12% in First Half of Unrest," Bloomberg, 19 July 2011, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-07-19/jordan-tourism-revenue-drops-12-in-first-half-on-unrest.html>

¹⁷⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: Economy," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan/23347/Economy>

¹⁷⁹ The World Bank, "Jordan: Country Brief," July 2010, <http://go.worldbank.org/KQ035DBYA0>

¹⁸⁰ U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Jordan," 14 July 2010, <http://www.eia.gov/countries/country-data.cfm?fips=JO>

¹⁸¹ Central Intelligence Agency, "Country Comparison: Natural Gas—Proved Reserves," in *The World Factbook*, 1 January 2010 estimates, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2179rank.html>

¹⁸² U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Jordan," 14 July 2010, <http://www.eia.gov/countries/country-data.cfm?fips=JO>

¹⁸³ U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Jordan," 14 July 2010, <http://www.eia.gov/countries/country-data.cfm?fips=JO>

¹⁸⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: Economy," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan/23347/Economy>

¹⁸⁵ Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Jordan," 25 March 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3464.htm#econ>

¹⁸⁶ USAID in Jordan, "Water Resources Management," United States Agency for International Development, 12 July 2006, <http://jordan.usaid.gov/sectors.cfm?inSector=16>

Jordan from other countries. These upriver neighbors, including Syria and Israel, draw water from the river and cause a depleted flow into Jordan.¹⁸⁷

Trade

Because of Jordan's lack of natural resources, the country has a negative trade balance: the cost of its imports exceed the revenue from its exports. Primary exports include clothing, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, phosphates, and potash. Major imports include machinery, petroleum, iron, and food. Jordan finances its trade imbalance through foreign grants, loans, and investments. Revenue from tourism also helps offset the trade deficit.^{188, 189}



© Berthold Werner
Aqaba Railway Corporation

Jordan's major trade partners include the United States, Iraq, India, Saudi Arabia, and China. Of Jordan's exports, 17% go to the United States, 17% to Iraq, 13.5% to India, 10.5% to Saudi Arabia, 4% to Syria, and 4% to the United Arab Emirates. Saudi Arabia is Jordan's largest partner for imports, providing 17.5% of all imports (primarily crude oil). China (11%), the United States (7%), Germany (6.3%), and Egypt (6%) are other major partners providing imports.¹⁹⁰

Among King Abdullah's economic reforms since assuming the throne in 1999 have been substantial measures to liberalize the country's trade. Jordan joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2000 and the following year signed a significant trade agreement with the European Union. Also in 2001, Jordan began a free trade agreement with the United States, signed the year before, in which both countries agreed to gradual tariff reductions that would end in duty-free trade by the end of the decade. These measures have greatly influenced trade between the United States and Jordan. In 1997, their trade equaled USD 395 million, but by 2009, after implementing principles of the free-trade agreement, trade had grown to USD 1.77 billion.^{191, 192}

In May 2011, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) invited Jordan (and Morocco) to join that group of oil-rich Gulf states. Although Jordan is economically quite different from other GCC countries, the GCC may be interested in supporting other pro-Western monarchies in response to

¹⁸⁷ John Ward Anderson, "For Dead Sea, a Slow and Seemingly Inexorable Death," *Washington Post*, 19 May 2005, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/05/18/AR2005051802400.html>

¹⁸⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 13 July 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹⁸⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: Economy," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan/23347/Economy>

¹⁹⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 13 July 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹⁹¹ Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Jordan," 25 March 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3464.htm#econ>

¹⁹² *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: Economy," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan/23347/Economy>

exchange began in 1999 and grew steadily, its value peaking in 2007. The total value of the market has since fallen by more than 25%.^{201, 202, 203}

Standard of Living and Employment

The per capita GDP in Jordan was USD 5,400 in 2010, ranking 144th out of 228 countries. (Per capita GDP in the United States was USD 47,200, ranked 11th in the world.)²⁰⁴ Officially, the country has an unemployment rate of 13.4%, although some estimates place the number much higher, and 14% of the population lives in poverty.²⁰⁵ High costs of living cause many to look for jobs outside of Jordan; some Gulf countries, for example, offer salaries that are three to four times higher than those in Jordan. Sources estimate that more than 600,000 Jordanians work abroad, primarily in the Gulf.²⁰⁶



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Jordan University and Hospital

Despite the low per capita GDP, other indicators of the standard of living in Jordan fare better. Access to healthcare in Jordan is high and life expectancy at birth is 80 years for men, and slightly higher for women. Jordan's population is one of the Middle East's most educated, and 90% of the population is literate, though men remain more educated than women.^{207, 208}

Men fill the ranks of most of Jordan's workforce; women constitute just one-seventh of the labor force. Nearly 20% of women who are high school graduates are unable to find jobs, and 18% of those with bachelor's degrees or higher cannot find work. Although labor unions are legal, few have significant power, because the government has its own mechanisms for addressing labor disputes. Less than one-third of the Jordanian work force is unionized.^{209, 210}

²⁰¹ Amman Stock Exchange, "Key Statistics of the ASE," 2011, <http://www.ase.com.jo/en/key-statistics-ase>

²⁰² Amman Stock Exchange, "About ASE," 2011, <http://www.ase.com.jo/en/about-ase>

²⁰³ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: Economy," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan/23347/Economy>

²⁰⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, "Country Comparison: GDP—Per Capita (PPP)," in *The World Factbook*, 1 July 2010, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html?countryName=Jordan&countryCode=jo®ionCode=mde&rank=144#jo>

²⁰⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 13 July 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

²⁰⁶ Mohammad Ghazal, "Rising Cost of Living Might Fuel Brain Drain—Economists," *Jordan Times*, 18 January 2008, <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=5097>

²⁰⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 13 July 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

²⁰⁸ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 51.

²⁰⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: Economy," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan/23347/Economy>

²¹⁰ Global Policy Network, "Labor in Jordan," Center for Strategic Studies—Economic Studies Unit, University of Jordan, 25 July 2005, <http://www.gpn.org/data/jordan/jordan-analysis.pdf>

Public vs. Private Sector

The first decade of the 21st century saw major economic reforms that included shifts toward privatization. King Abdullah II attracted foreign investment by privatizing state-owned companies.²¹¹ Although some privatization began before Abdullah, it has been under his watch that privatization has received the greatest attention. The government's goals in pursuing privatization were to optimize efficiency and attract foreign investments.²¹²



© Producer / Wikimedia.org
Jordan Telecom Group / Orange

The most common method of privatization has been to sell government shares of public companies. The government has divested its holdings in companies including Jordan Telecom, Jordan Cement Factories Company, Aqaba Railway Corporation, and Jordan Investment Corporation. Other companies are in the process of divestiture.²¹³

Despite reforms, the public sector still dominates many areas of the economy, and the government is intentionally retaining its holdings in many companies. Nearly half the country's workforce is employed by the government.^{214, 215} Many young people see a stigma attached to the private sector and so do not actively seek private sector jobs. They prefer to wait for public sector jobs, hoping to one day enjoy the security found in the public sector, even though these jobs may never materialize.²¹⁶

Future Outlook

Jordan's economic future depends on a number of factors. Internal and external stability are vital for continued growth. Jordan will need to continue its economic integration in the region, including its potential membership in the GCC, while finding stability with its immediate neighbors. Additionally, economic reforms of the last decade will need to continue, especially because of a growing youth population.



© World Economic Forum / flickr.com
Former Prime Minister Samir al-Rifai

Jordan borders several countries that could disrupt its economy. As of 2011, tensions between Israel and the Palestinian territories remain high,

²¹¹ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 13 July 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

²¹² Amman Stock Exchange, "Privatization in Jordan," 2011, <http://www.ase.com.jo/en/privatization-jordan>

²¹³ Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Washington, D.C., "Economic Reforms: Privatization," n.d., <http://www.jordanembassyus.org/new/aboutjordan/er5.shtml>

²¹⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: Economy," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan/23347/Economy>

²¹⁵ Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Washington, DC, "Economic Reforms: Privatization," n.d., <http://www.jordanembassyus.org/new/aboutjordan/er5.shtml>

²¹⁶ Navtej Dhillon, "Middle East Youth Bulge: Challenge or Opportunity?" Brookings Institution, 22 May 2008, http://www.brookings.edu/speeches/2008/0522_middle_east_youth_dhillon.aspx

especially in light of renewed Palestinian pushes for statehood. The Arab protests of 2011 destabilized Syria, to the north. The outcomes of this situation are unclear as of this writing. The political situation in Iraq, to Jordan's east, remains tenuous particularly because the outcomes of the gradual U.S. withdrawal from the country are unknowable. Other regional actors—Egypt and Hezbollah in Lebanon—have the potential to affect Jordan's economy.

Jordan was not immune from the wave of protests that swept the Arab world in early 2011. Jordanian protestors cited economic hardships when calling for new government leadership. The government responded in economic terms by increasing pay for civil servants and announcing USD 125 million in subsidies on goods and fuel.²¹⁷ King Abdullah also dismissed the prime minister and appointed a new government with a mandate for economic and political reforms. Whether these overtures will continue to placate economic frustrations remains to be seen.²¹⁸

Jordan, like much of the Middle East, has a significant youth population. As of 2011, 35% of the Jordanian population was aged 14 or younger and another 29% were 15 to 29. Recent data show that birth rates are starting to decline; however, with more than 60% of the population under the age of 30, Jordan's economy will need to find ways for its younger generations to integrate economically.^{219, 220} This youth bulge presents challenges and opportunities. The immediate challenges are employment related. Without significant changes, the country's 13.4% unemployment is likely to only rise as more people come of age.

²¹⁷ Associated Press, "Jordan: Protests Over Economy," *New York Times*, 21 January 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/22/world/middleeast/22briefs-Jordan.html>

²¹⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

²¹⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 13 July 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

²²⁰ *Washington Post*, "Youth Movement: Jordan," 15 February 2011, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/special/world/middle-east-youth-population/>

Chapter 3 Assessment

1. Yearly U.S. aid to Jordan totals more than USD 600 million.

TRUE

The United States provides USD 360 million in economic aid and another USD 300 million in military aid. In 2011, the U.S. government authorized an additional USD 100 million to Jordan.

2. Industry accounts for the majority of Jordan's economy.

FALSE

The majority of the Jordanian economy comes from the services sector. Industry accounts for 30% of the economy and 20% of the labor force. Major industries include clothing, pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, phosphate mining, petroleum refining, cement, and chemicals.

3. Despite its eastern desert, Jordan has plentiful water resources because of the abundant Jordan River.

FALSE

Jordan is one of the world's most water-stressed countries. The flow of the Jordan River has decreased significantly, largely because of water use upriver. Today water is Jordan's most limited resource.

4. Saudi Arabia is Jordan's largest provider of imports.

TRUE

Saudi Arabia provides more than 17% of Jordan's imports, primarily crude petroleum. Other major importers include China, the United States, Germany, and Egypt.

5. Jordan's Minister of Finance regulates the country's credit.

FALSE

The Central Bank of Jordan regulates the country's credit. It also issues the country's national currency, the dinar, and acts as banker for both the government and other banks.

CHAPTER 4: SOCIETY

Introduction

Jordanian society is the product of many different influences. The country is largely a modern creation from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, with a monarchy that prior to World War I did not inhabit any Jordanian territory. Modern Jordan developed while it was surrounded by neighbors with greater regional power and influence. To survive, Jordan was forced to make alliances, largely with the West, and has depended on these alliances for decades. As a result, Jordanian society has a greater degree of openness to the Western world than that found in much of the Middle East. In fact, Jordan's previous queen was American-born, and much of the population speaks English.



© Skoll World Forum / flickr.com
Queen Noor of Jordan

Jordan's population is primarily Arab; however, divisions exist between the majority Palestinian population and the native Jordanians (though an outsider may have difficulty perceiving them). Generally, the country's urban population has been more heavily influenced by Palestinian migration, while pastoral Bedouins remain predominantly Jordanian. Most of the country is Sunni Muslim, but there is a small Christian community with roots in early Christian history.

Many aspects of the country's society, including cuisine and clothing, are typical of the greater Syrian area and represent influences from Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. Although many of these neighbors are better known than Jordan for their contributions to arts and literature, some Jordanian arts and artists are gaining recognition.

Ethnic Groups and Languages

Ethnically, Jordan is a highly homogenous country. The population is overwhelmingly Arab, accounting for 98% of the country's inhabitants. The remaining 2% are primarily Armenians and Circassians, descendants of 19th-century refugees who came to the region under Ottoman auspices.^{221, 222}

Despite Jordan's strong ethnic unity, Jordanian society is divided along nationalist lines. The majority of the country is Palestinian, most of whom (or their parents or grandparents) came to Jordan following conflicts with Israel in 1948 and 1967. Although many Palestinians have been disaffected by the Jordanian government (a disgruntled Palestinian assassinated the first monarch, King Abdullah, in 1951), Jordan is the



© Antoine Taveneaux
Petra man in traditional dress

²²¹ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 21 June 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

²²² Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: Ottoman Rule," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989, 16, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/6.htm>

only Arab country that has granted Palestinian refugees wide-scale citizenship.²²³ Native Jordanians who are descendents of the region's indigenous Bedouin inhabitants tend to be more loyal to the monarchy.²²⁴ Since the American invasion of Iraq, Jordan has also seen a large influx of Iraqi Arabs: by some estimates, more than 450,000.²²⁵

Arabic is the official language of Jordan and is understood throughout the country. Even Circassians or Armenians who have retained their original languages speak Arabic as well. Arabic dialects, including local accents, exist in Jordan but the variability between them is low. For example, Palestinian and Jordanian Arabic are highly similar and are classified as Levantine Arabic. Though Iraqi Arabic differs more, it is intelligible to other Arabic speakers in Jordan. Modern Standard Arabic is used for official purposes and is the primary written language in Jordan and throughout the Arab world. Yet Jordan stands apart in that much of its population speaks English, especially the upper and middle classes.^{226, 227, 228}

Religion

Islam came to Jordan early in the religion's history. Muhammad led an expedition into southern Jordan in 629–630. Only 4 years after Muhammad's death, Muslim forces defeated the Byzantines at the Battle of Yarmuk in 636. Jordan has since remained primarily Muslim.^{229, 230}

As in many Islamic countries, Islam in Jordan is tangible in daily life. Muslims are expected to vocally express their belief in one God and the Prophet Muhammad, to pray five times a day, to fast during daylight hours in the month of Ramadan, to pay alms to the poor, and to go on pilgrimage to Mecca.^{231, 232}

Sunni Muslims constitute 92% of the population.^{233, 234} Less than 2% of the total population is Shi'ite or Druze.²³⁵ Shi'ites set themselves apart from Sunnis by rejecting the early leaders of the Muslim community after Muhammad's death except his cousin and son-in-law, Ali, whom



© Jeanhousen / Wikimedia.org
Rainbow Street, Amman, Jordan

²²³ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

²²⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

²²⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "2011 UNHCR Country Operations Profile—Jordan," 2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e486566#>

²²⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 21 June 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

²²⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: People," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

²²⁸ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 83, 89.

²²⁹ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 12–13.

²³⁰ William Ochsenwald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 39.

²³¹ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 31–33.

²³² Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 79.

²³³ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 21 June 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

²³⁴ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 30–31.

²³⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 21 June 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

they believe was the rightful successor. The Druze are an 11th-century offshoot of Isma'ili Shi'ism and are found primarily in Lebanon and Syria, though some came to Jordan after a 1925 Syrian rebellion against the French. The Druze keep their faith within their community, and many Muslims consider the Druze to be a heretical group.^{236, 237, 238}

Christians constitute 6% of Jordan's population; two-thirds of the Christian population is Greek Orthodox. The remaining third includes Greek Catholics (Melchites), Roman Catholics, and Syrian Jacobites. Some Protestant communities exist in Jordan.^{239, 240, 241} Jordan also has a unique Christian Bedouin group near Karak that claims to be descended from Ghassanid Christians, who had ruled the region for the Byzantines before the Muslim conquest.²⁴²

Although religious extremism remains on the margins of Jordanian society, the country has produced terrorists including Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (the deceased former leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq), and has been the site of terrorist attacks. In 2002, an American diplomat was assassinated outside his home in Amman, and in 2005, al-Qaeda operatives bombed three prominent international hotels. Other smaller attacks have occurred since then.^{243, 244}

Cuisine

Jordanian cuisine represents both the country's long history as a crossroads and the economic integration of the greater Syrian region under Ottoman rule. As a result, Jordanian food is similar to that of Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon. Specific similarities are found among various segments of society. Palestinian food, for example, is more popular in Jordan's cities, where most Palestinians have settled.^{245, 246}



© Nickfraser / Wikimedia.org
Mansif

Jordan's most traditional cuisine is that of the country's Bedouin. Bedouin staples include unleavened bread and milk products from sheep and goats. Coffee is popular among the Bedouin, just as it is in the cities (although there the coffee tends to be Turkish, which uses sugar and no cardamom). A

²³⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Druze," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/172195/Druze>

²³⁷ William Ochsenwald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 93.

²³⁸ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 30–31.

²³⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: People," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

²⁴⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 21 June 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

²⁴¹ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 80.

²⁴² John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 29.

²⁴³ John F. Burns, "U.S. Strike Hits Insurgent at Safehouse," *New York Times*, 8 June 2006,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/08/world/middleeast/08cnd-iraq.html>

²⁴⁴ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan: Country Specific Information: Threats to Safety and Security," 1 August 2011, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1149.html

²⁴⁵ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 71.

²⁴⁶ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 115.

major Bedouin dish, called *mansif*, has become common throughout the country. *Mansif* includes rice, bread, half a sheep or goat (*mansif* means “half”), and yoghurt.^{247, 248, 249}

Palestinians share many dishes with their geographic neighbors but they also brought some unique foods into Jordan. *Maqlubah* (“upside-down”) is a dish that includes meat and onions, vegetables, and rice prepared in a pot. When the cooking is complete, the entire pot is flipped onto a serving platter and the food that was on the bottom of the pot becomes the top of the dish. Popular regional foods, including *falafel*, *kibbeh*, and *kinafa*, were brought to Jordan largely through Palestinian migration.²⁵⁰

Syrian and Lebanese cuisine are especially prevalent among the elite (who share a strong Ottoman cultural influence) in both cities and villages. Although Jordan was not fully Ottoman until the 19th century, it quickly indulged in that empire’s network of fine cuisine. Spices in this cuisine that are absent in other areas of Jordanian cuisine include basil, saffron, cumin, and turmeric. One popular dish is Bukharian rice, which is inspired by Central Asian cuisine and combines chicken, rice, and browned onions.²⁵¹

Other common foods in Jordan include *shishtou*, marinated and barbecued chicken; *hummus*, ground chickpeas (garbanzo beans); and *shawarama*, pita sandwiches with lamb or chicken. These dishes are also common among Jordan’s neighbors. Unlike neighboring peoples, Jordanians do not typically have a taste for fish.^{252, 253, 254}

Traditional Dress

Clothing in Jordan is typically similar to Western trends but excludes immodest styles. Traditional clothing has largely faded away, especially in the cities, or has blended with Western styles.

Among Jordan’s traditional male dress, the *kuffiyah* (or *shimagh*) is the most recognizable article. It is the large, square headcloth that is still common among the country’s Bedouin and seen in villages and cities. The cloth is folded into a triangle and placed on the heads so that the triangle’s peak falls down the backs. Many Bedouin bring the other two sides up over the top of their heads. The *kuffiyah* is typically red- or black-checked and made of cotton or cotton and silk. It is held in place by a braided rope called an ‘*aqal*. The ‘*aqal* may tell a great deal about its wearer, including the wearer’s country of origin and whether he is single (in which case



© Ibrahim Owais
Arab man

²⁴⁷ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 71–73.

²⁴⁸ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 116.

²⁴⁹ Matthew Teller, “Jordan: Food and Wine,” *Telegraph* (UK), 11 January 2011,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sponsored/travel/jordan/8253030/Jordan-food-and-wine.html>

²⁵⁰ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 76–77.

²⁵¹ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 77.

²⁵² John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 74–76.

²⁵³ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 116–119.

²⁵⁴ Matthew Teller, “Jordan: Food and Wine,” *Telegraph* (UK), 11 January 2011,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sponsored/travel/jordan/8253030/Jordan-food-and-wine.html>

he wears the 'aqal at an angle) or married (the 'aqal is worn straight on the head). The *kuffiyah* is common throughout the region but the Jordanian variety is known for its distinctive tassels.^{255, 256}

Beyond the *kuffiyah*, traditional dress for men includes a long shirt called the *dishdashah* and cotton trousers called *sirwal*. A belt usually accompanies the *dishdashah* and may include shoulder straps complete with gun holster and bullet storage. An all-purpose knife is an essential tool for the Bedouin and usually is placed in the belt. In the villages, the trousers were often baggier than among the Bedouin. Today these styles have largely fallen out of fashion.²⁵⁷

Among Bedouin women, an ankle-length black dress used to be common. Heavy embroidery along the front seams and bottom embellished and strengthened the garment. Sleeves were quite large and baggy in the past but today are much smaller. Women often cover their head with a cloth that ties under their chins.²⁵⁸

Gender Issues

Although Jordan is a traditionalist country, with a conservatism driven by the country's Muslim heritage and strong rural past, Jordan is one of the Arab world's more liberal countries regarding gender issues. Jordan was primarily a rural society before the 1950s and retains many of the social norms of the Bedouin. In rural areas, women tend to have more freedom and play a larger role than in cities because of the need for women to participate in family work. Although public space is more limited for women in urban areas, Jordan's cities provide more space for women than many other Arab cities. For example, Jordan was the first Arab country to have women-only coffeehouses.²⁵⁹

Women have gained some space in the government sphere. Beginning in the 1960s, women held appointed government positions. In the 1980s, women began running for elected office, and a woman was first elected to parliament in 1993. In 2003, the government introduced a quota of six seats for women in parliament, and in 2010, the government began to consider increasing the quota.²⁶⁰ As of 2006, Jordan and Morocco were the only countries in the Arab world to have quotas for women in parliament.²⁶¹ Jordan's queens have also prominently advocated public issues, including establishing funds to create income-generating projects for women.²⁶²



© Yves Picq / Wikimedia.org
Traditional woman's dress

²⁵⁵ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 78–80.

²⁵⁶ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 57.

²⁵⁷ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 78–85.

²⁵⁸ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 80–86.

²⁵⁹ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 91.

²⁶⁰ Rana Hussein, "Gov't Seeking to Increase Women's Representation in Parliament," *Jordan Times*, 2 February 2010, <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=23655>

²⁶¹ Regional Bureau for Arab States, United Nations Development Programme, *The Arab Human Development Report 2005: Towards the Rise of Women in the Arab World*, 2006, 9, <http://www.arab-hdr.org/publications/other/ahdr/ahdr2005e.pdf>

²⁶² Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 71.

Across the Arab world, female literacy is as low as 50%, but in Jordan 85% of women are literate.²⁶³ Jordan is one of only four countries in the Arab world where female enrollment in school is higher than 80%.²⁶⁴ Despite high education rates, women in Jordan struggle to find rewarding employment. Among university graduates, women earn 71% of what their counterparts make, while those with basic education earn just 50%, and illiterate women earn only one-third of what similarly educated males earn.²⁶⁵

Some indicators of women's standing in the family are positive while others are negative. In Jordan, the legal age for marriage is the same for men and women (18), and women may obtain a passport without permission from their husbands.²⁶⁶ But there are as many as 20 honor killings a year in Jordan, though the act is considered a crime in Jordan (unlike some other Arab countries).²⁶⁷

Arts

Handicrafts are Jordan's most traditional and prominent form of art, and represent the long history of a society characterized by small villages and nomads. Among the crafts, perhaps none is better known than Bedouin weaving. Bedouin women have become masters of woven goods from small bags to large tent panels. *Ragm* patterns have backs that are characterized by loose threads. *Nagash* patterns, conversely, run both horizontally and vertically and are made so that both sides are considered fronts. Weaving is especially common in late summer as field work winds down.^{268, 269}



© Ldud / Wikipedia.org
Woven goods

While weaving does occur in rural communities, villages are especially known for their pottery. The coil method of pottery is common. Women make pots for practical use and fire them in open fires. Bedouin and village women alike are well versed in basket making. Although baskets serve practical uses, complex geometric patterns are common. Jewelry, predominantly made of silver,

²⁶³ Regional Bureau for Arab States, United Nations Development Programme, *The Arab Human Development Report 2005: Towards the Rise of Women in the Arab World*, 2006, 7, <http://www.arab-hdr.org/publications/other/ahdr/ahdr2005e.pdf>

²⁶⁴ Regional Bureau for Arab States, United Nations Development Programme, *The Arab Human Development Report 2005: Towards the Rise of Women in the Arab World*, 2006, 77, <http://www.arab-hdr.org/publications/other/ahdr/ahdr2005e.pdf>

²⁶⁵ Regional Bureau for Arab States, United Nations Development Programme, *The Arab Human Development Report 2005: Towards the Rise of Women in the Arab World*, 2006, 91, <http://www.arab-hdr.org/publications/other/ahdr/ahdr2005e.pdf>

²⁶⁶ Regional Bureau for Arab States, United Nations Development Programme, *The Arab Human Development Report 2005: Towards the Rise of Women in the Arab World*, 2006, 12, <http://www.arab-hdr.org/publications/other/ahdr/ahdr2005e.pdf>

²⁶⁷ Regional Bureau for Arab States, United Nations Development Programme, *The Arab Human Development Report 2005: Towards the Rise of Women in the Arab World*, 2006, 116, <http://www.arab-hdr.org/publications/other/ahdr/ahdr2005e.pdf>

²⁶⁸ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 64–65.

²⁶⁹ Bradley Mayhew, *Jordan*, 6th ed. (Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publications, 2006), 43.

is common among Bedouins and villagers. Bracelets and necklaces are popular, as are amulets of the “hand of Fatima,” believed to protect against evil spirits.^{270, 271}

During the second half of the 20th century, fine arts such as painting and sculpture began to develop in Jordan. Government patronage has since successfully promoted the arts. Although Jordan is not as well known for literature as Egypt and Lebanon are, contemporary literature and poetry are gaining ground in Jordan. Some Jordanians write about the wider Arab world, while many Jordanian-Palestinians relate tales of Palestinian struggle. Expatriate Jordanians and Jordanian-Americans have found success writing about exile and emigration.^{272, 273, 274}

Sports & Recreation

Above all, Jordanians love to socialize, and they spend the majority of their spare time engaged with others.²⁷⁵ Venues that provide space and time for socialization are therefore popular. Restaurants are common destinations, and meals are often lengthy affairs. Coffeehouses are also important spaces for socialization and discussion. Topics of discussion may range from politics to family, and many patrons engage in games such as backgammon, or simply drink coffee or smoke water pipes while socializing.^{276, 277}

Social clubs are the focal point of many communities and are popular places for Jordanians to spend spare time. Some clubs serve neighborhoods, while others are based on religious or ethnic affiliations. Families often come to the club together; parents may spend time with their children at the club or leave their children in the care of club employees in designated play areas. The club is especially important for women and minorities. It provides a space for camaraderie and shared experience.²⁷⁸



© Ayman Fadel
Soccer match

Football (soccer) is Jordan’s most popular sport. During the autumn and winter months, professional teams from Amman and other major cities and towns compete as part of the Premier League Championship. Games are held primarily on Fridays. As in other parts of the world, Jordanians take their football quite seriously; the 1998 season ended prematurely after fans attacked a game’s referee. Other popular sports include volleyball, table tennis, judo, and horseracing. Amman and Irbid have major sporting venues, and Jordan’s deserts provide a location for sports; car rallies take advantage of the deserts’ long roads.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁰ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 66–68.

²⁷¹ Bradley Mayhew, *Jordan*, 6th ed. (Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publications, 2006), 43.

²⁷² John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 68.

²⁷³ Bradley Mayhew, *Jordan* (London: Lonely Planet, 2006), 45.

²⁷⁴ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 95–98.

²⁷⁵ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 103.

²⁷⁶ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 105.

²⁷⁷ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 105.

²⁷⁸ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 104–105.

²⁷⁹ Bradley Mayhew, *Jordan*, 6th ed. (Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publications, 2006), 47.

Chapter 4 Assessment

1. Jordan's population is primarily descended from early Jordanian Bedouins; a minority of the country is Palestinian.

FALSE

Palestinians account for a majority of today's population. Most are descendents of Palestinians who immigrated in 1948 and 1967.

2. Like Lebanon to the north, Jordan has a sizable Shi'ite population that composes a majority of the population.

FALSE

Sunni Muslims constitute 92% of the total population, with Shi'ites making up less than 2%. Like Lebanon, Jordan has a Druze population, but one that is much smaller than in Lebanon.

3. Jordanian cuisine shares many dishes with its regional neighbors.

TRUE

Jordan's cuisine mirrors that of Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine in many ways. *Falafel*, *kibbeh*, *kinafa*, *shawarama*, and *hummus* are all popular in Jordan and throughout the Levant.

4. The head cloth, known as a *kuffiyah*, may hint at one's national origin.

TRUE

The Jordanian *kuffiyah* is distinctive for its tassels. The braided rope that holds a *kuffiyah* in place, known as an *'aqal*, may also show national origin.

5. Jordanian social clubs are for men only.

FALSE

Although clubs are gender segregated, clubs provide space for women to get together. Families will often go to the club together and then separate for socializing.

CHAPTER 5: SECURITY

Introduction

Jordan is surrounded by countries with superior military capabilities and differing political ideologies, agendas, and allegiances. Syria, to the north, is a longtime client of Iran, while Saudi Arabia, to Jordan's south and southeast, views Iran as a regional competitor and its hegemonic goals as threatening. Iraq once supported Jordan economically, but since Saddam Hussein's fall, privileged economic deals to Jordan have largely disappeared. Jordan has also contended with Iraq's instability as hundreds of thousands of refugees have come to Jordan since the U.S. invasion in 2003. In 1994, Jordan became only the second Arab country to make peace with Israel, its western neighbor, but that peace can be tenuous while Israeli-Palestinian tensions flare.



© Oliver Laumann
Refugee camp at Madaba

Through most of the last 60 years, the United States has supported Jordan. Development and military aid have helped keep Jordan afloat. Jordan has developed a well-trained police force and military, and in recent years has focused on counterterrorism efforts. In addition to threats of terrorism, Jordan faces threats of political instability and water security issues.

Relations with the United States

United States relations with Jordan have been strong for more than 60 years. Only when Jordan failed to condemn Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 did the relationship falter. Jordan regained the United States' favor throughout the 1990s by distancing itself from Iraq and increasing its role in Arab-Israeli peace. Relations have been especially strong since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, because the two countries work together contributing to each other's security.²⁸⁰



© David Bohrer
Abdullah addresses US Congress

U.S. aid to Jordan has been the key element in the relationship. In the last six decades, the United States has given Jordan more than USD 11 billion in aid.²⁸¹ Of this aid, USD 6 billion has focused on development assistance and has benefited a number of areas of Jordanian society, including road and water infrastructure, the healthcare system, the agricultural sector, and

²⁸⁰ Jeremy M. Sharp, "Jordan: Background and U.S. Relations," Congressional Research Service, 21 June 2011, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33546.pdf>

²⁸¹ Jeremy M. Sharp, "U.S. Foreign Assistance to the Middle East: Historical Background, Recent Trends, and the FY2011 Request," Congressional Research Service, 15 June 2010, 7, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL32260.pdf>

schools. Current development projects seek to improve education, energy, governance, and employment numbers. The remaining USD 5 billion has been in military assistance.²⁸²

In exchange for its development and military aid, the United States expects Jordan to remain a pro-Western ally. The Jordanian government cites its moderation and liberalization as essential to continued U.S. support.²⁸³ The United States views Jordan as an important player in future Arab-Israeli peace. When Israeli-Palestinian peace talks temporarily resumed in September 2010, the United States brought together not only Israeli and Palestinian leaders, but also Egypt's president and Jordan's king.²⁸⁴

The Jordan Free Trade Agreement has been the basis of U.S.-Jordan economic relations over the last decade. In 2000, the two countries signed an agreement that began the following year to systematically lower trade tariffs. By 2010, the agreement was fully implemented and trade became duty-free. In 2009, the United States exported USD 1.2 billion of goods to Jordan.²⁸⁵

Relations with Neighboring Countries

Saudi Arabia

Even though the Saud family drove Jordan's Hashemite dynasty out of the Hijaz region (including Mecca and Medina) of modern Saudi Arabia, the two countries were on good terms after World War II. Relations cooled in 1990 when Jordan refused to condemn Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Saudi Arabia responded by stopping all grants to Jordan, restricting Jordanian imports, and terminating low-priced oil sales.²⁸⁶



© Mkay / Wikipedia.org
Gulf Cooperation Council logo

Bilateral relations improved in the first decade of the 21st century as both countries sought to stem growing Iranian and radical influences in the region. Both countries are significant U.S. allies in the region, and Saudi Arabia is once again contributing to Jordan's economy.²⁸⁷

²⁸² Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Jordan: U.S.-Jordanian Relations," 25 March 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3464.htm#relations>

²⁸³ Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Washington, DC, "U.S.-Jordan Relations," n.d., <http://www.jordanembassyus.org/new/aboutjordan/uj.shtml>

²⁸⁴ Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, "Remarks by President Obama, President Mubarak, His Majesty King Abdullah, Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas Before Working Dinner," 1 September 2010, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/09/01/remarks-president-obama-president-mubarak-his-majesty-king-abdullah-prim>

²⁸⁵ Office of the United States Trade Representative, Executive Office of the President, "Jordan Free Trade Agreement," n.d., <http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements/jordan-fta>

²⁸⁶ Eric Hooglund, "Chapter 4: Government and Politics: Foreign Policy: Relations with Jordan," in *Saudi Arabia: A Country Study*, ed. Helen Chapin Metz, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1993, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/satoc.html>

²⁸⁷ Associated Press, "Jordan, Saudi Arabia: Palestinian Infighting May Hamper Creation of State," *Haaretz*, 27 June 2007, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/jordan-saudi-arabia-palestinian-infighting-may-hamper-creation-of-state-1.224229>

In light of the growing protests of the Arab Spring in 2011 and the downfall of several autocratic leaders in the region, Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) extended membership invitations to Jordan and Morocco. The economies of resource-poor Jordan and Morocco are vastly different from the oil-rich Gulf monarchies; earlier integration of the two countries into the GCC made little economic sense. Jordan had applied for membership to the GCC in 1980 and 1996, and was denied both times. But the strategic calculus in the region has shifted because Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries are concerned with the stability of regional monarchies. Jordan's integration into the bloc on political premises is beneficial to the Saudis, bolstering the bloc of Arab monarchies. As a result, relations between Jordan and Saudi Arabia continue to improve.^{288, 289}

Iraq

Prior to the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, Jordan had strong relations with its eastern neighbor. Jordan's King Hussein supported Saddam Hussein for many years, largely because of Jordan's economic dependence on Iraq. When Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, Jordan hesitated to take sides or condemn Iraq, thereby angering not only the United States but also some of Kuwait's Arab allies. After the Gulf War, Jordan and Iraq remained close. Their deals to provide oil for Jordan for less than market prices helped to sustain Jordan's economy throughout the 1990s and during the early 21st century.^{290, 291}



© Tasher Bahoo
Christian Iraqi refugees

After Saddam Hussein's regime fell, Jordan had to renegotiate its position with Iraq's new government. In 2006, Jordan sent an official ambassador to Jordan, the first accredited Arab ambassador to post-Hussein Iraq.²⁹² Two years later, Jordan's King Abdullah became the first Arab leader to visit Iraq since the U.S. invasion.²⁹³ Jordan began buying discounted oil from Iraq again in 2007, but its impact is less than before.²⁹⁴ Jordan's imprint on Iraq's economy is also lighter than other neighbors. In 2009, Iraq imported USD 4 billion worth of goods from Iran and USD 6 billion from Turkey. But imports from Jordan were just USD 1 billion.²⁹⁵

²⁸⁸ *New York Times*, "Saudi Arabia," 9 June 2011,

<http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/saudiarabia/index.html>

²⁸⁹ Sara Hamdan, "Gulf Council Reaches Out to Morocco and Jordan," *New York Times*, 25 May 2011,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/26/world/middleeast/26iht-M26-GCC.html?pagewanted=all>

²⁹⁰ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 177–179.

²⁹¹ Pete Moore, "The Curious Case of Oil-Exporting Jordan," *Middle East Research and Information Project* 35, no. 234 (Spring 2005), <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer234/curious-case-oil-exporting-jordan>

²⁹² Christopher M. Blanchard et al., "Iraq: Regional Perspectives and U.S. Policy," Congressional Research Service, 4 April 2008, 27, <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/104282.pdf>

²⁹³ Stephen Farrell, "King of Jordan in Iraq for Talks," *New York Times*, 12 August 2008,

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9E05EFDC1131F931A2575BC0A96E9C8B63>

²⁹⁴ Hani Hazaimah, "Technicalities Hindering Larger Oil Shipments from Iraq," *Jordan Times*, 13 February 2009, <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=14274>

²⁹⁵ "Jordan-Iraq Trade Relations Not Living Up to Potential," *Iraq-Business News*, 9 August 2010, <http://www.iraq-businessnews.com/2010/08/09/jordan-iraq-trade-relations-not-living-up-to-potential/>

As Jordan and Iraq have renegotiated their relationship, terrorism and the effects of the Iraq war have played a major role. As a result of the war, more than 450,000 Iraqi refugees have come to Jordan, significantly straining the economy.²⁹⁶ In February 2005, a Jordanian suicide bomber in Hilla, Iraq killed more than 120 people. This event led to diplomatic tensions between the two countries as Iraqi officials blamed Jordan for exporting terrorists.²⁹⁷ A month after the attack, both countries recalled their ambassadors.²⁹⁸ Later that year, al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) led an operation in Amman in which 3 suicide bombers killed more than 60 people. By the end of 2006, the two governments signed an intelligence-sharing agreement.²⁹⁹

Syria

Relations between Syria and Jordan were cool prior to King Abdullah's ascent to the throne in 1999. The following year, longtime Syrian President Hafiz al-Assad died, and his son Bashar al-Assad took up the presidency. Since then, the two countries have seen more economic integration than in years past.

Both countries are resource poor and depend greatly on other countries to meet their economic needs. Syria's long dependence on Iran and Jordan's dependence on the United States have soured the possibility for closer political ties. Economic ties are also poor. Syria has some oil reserves, but 99% of its oil exports go to Western European countries and Turkey. Syria also has some natural gas reserves but remains a net importer and, therefore, does not export to Jordan.³⁰⁰ A major tariff cut in 1999 helped to spur trade early in the 21st century, but overall trade between the two countries remains negligible.³⁰¹

Jordan depends on Syria's Mediterranean port, Latakia, especially for the import of European goods. The popular unrest in Syria in 2011 disrupted Jordanian use of this port and halted much of the limited interaction between the two countries. This increased the cost of Jordan's imports, which must reach the country by other means.³⁰²



© High Contrast / Wikimedia.org
Jordanian-Syrian border

²⁹⁶ The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "2011 UNHCR Country Operations Profile—Jordan," 2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e486566#>

²⁹⁷ Scott Lasensky, "Jordan and Iraq: Between Cooperation and Crisis," United States Institute of Peace, December 2006, http://usip.forumone.com/files/resources/SRdec2006_2.pdf

²⁹⁸ Caryle Murphy, "Iraq-Jordan Dispute Deepens," *Washington Post*, 21 March 2005, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A50921-2005Mar20?language=printer>

²⁹⁹ Christopher M. Blanchard et al., "Iraq: Regional Perspectives and U.S. Policy," Congressional Research Service, 4 April 2008, 27, <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/104282.pdf>

³⁰⁰ U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Syria: Background," August 2011, <http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=SY>

³⁰¹ Riad al Khouri, "Better Economic Relations between Jordan and Syria," *Jordan Times*, 30 August 2001, <http://www.jordanembassyus.org/08302001005.htm>

³⁰² Ibrahim Saif, "Syria: Crisis May Hurt Economies of Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq," *Los Angeles Times*, 13 August 2011, <http://carnegie-mec.org/publications/?fa=45355&lang=en>

Jordan's greatest concentration of land mines lies along its border with Syria. The land mines along 104 km (65 mi) of border are a result of a confrontation between the two countries in 1975.³⁰³

Israel

In 1994, Jordan became only the second Arab country (after Egypt) to sign a peace accord with Israel. As of 2011, no other Arab governments have joined them. Jordan's peace with Israel, on the heels of the Oslo Accords, was initially designed to be a "warm peace," going beyond the security arrangements of the Israeli-Egyptian peace to include economic and cultural ties.³⁰⁴



White House photo
Israel-Jordan peace negotiation

The peace between Jordan and Israel is complicated by Jordan's majority Palestinian population. So the state's relationship with Israel is constrained by the realities of Palestinian-Israeli relations. Hopes for a lasting "warm peace" between Jordan and Israel waned as the violence of the Second Intifada raised regional tensions. In 2000, Jordan recalled its ambassador to Israel, a recall that lasted 4 years. The ambassador post was vacant for 6 months in 2006, and vacant in 2009 in the wake of Israel's actions in the Gaza Strip.^{305, 306}

The Jordan-Israel peace treaty did provide some stimulus to Jordan's economy. As part of the agreement, several qualifying investment zones (QIZs) were designated in Jordan. QIZs are industrial parks from which all articles produced could be exported duty-free. As a result of the QIZs, Israeli exports of raw materials to Jordan increased, as did Jordanian exports of textiles and clothing to the United States. Beyond the effects of the QIZs, trade between Israel and Jordan remains relatively modest.³⁰⁷

Movement between Jordan and Israel became possible after the 1994 peace accords. Border crossings are open most of the year except for major Jewish and Muslim holidays (Yom Kippur and Eid al-Adha). Borders are not open 24 hours a day and may close at unexpected times because of security concerns or regional tensions.³⁰⁸

³⁰³ International Campaign to Ban Landmines, "Jordan," *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor*, 2009, <http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/publications/display?url=lm/2008/countries/jordan.html>

³⁰⁴ Robert Satloff, "The Jordan-Israel Peace Treaty: A Remarkable Document," *The Middle East Quarterly*, March 1995, <http://www.meforum.org/240/the-jordan-israel-peace-treaty>

³⁰⁵ *BBC News*, "New Jordan Ambassador to Israel," 22 May 2006, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/5005514.stm

³⁰⁶ Ali Waked, "Jordan Recalls Ambassador to Israel in Protest of Gaza Op," *Ynet News*, 9 January 2009, <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3653588,00.html>

³⁰⁷ May Jane Bolle, Alfred B. Prados, and Jeremy M. Sharp, "Qualifying Industrial Zones in Jordan and Israel," Congressional Research Service, 25 July 2006, http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RS22002_20060705.pdf

³⁰⁸ U.S. Consulate General Jerusalem, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan Border Crossings with the West Bank and Israel," n.d., <http://photos.state.gov/libraries/jerusalem/328666/acs/new-acs-website---crossings-west-bank-israel-jordan.pdf>

Palestinian Authority

Although not a state, the Palestinian Authority governs the West Bank and seeks statehood. Palestinians have historically played a significant role in Jordan's security. Jordan's relations with the Palestinians have forced its leaders to walk a political tightrope and balance the demands of its indigenous population, its large Palestinian population, and its strategic needs. Jordan's first king, Abdullah I, was assassinated by a Palestinian who was embittered by the king's lack of support for Palestinian nationalism.³⁰⁹

The United Nations estimates that 2 million Palestinian refugees live in 10 camps in Jordan. Jordan gives most of these refugees Jordanian citizenship. Additionally, the people descended from those who left Palestine during the 1948 war or the Six-Day War of 1967 brings the total number of Palestinian-Jordanians to roughly 60% of the total population. Therefore, the Jordanian government sees the continuing Israeli-Palestinian conflict as an ongoing threat to the nation's stability.³¹⁰



© Paul Morse
Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas

Police Force

In Jordan's first decades, the military maintained internal security because of its organization and capabilities. By the 1950s, however, responsibility for public security shifted to the interior ministry. Today, Jordan has a centralized police force, known as the Public Security Directorate (PSD), under the Ministry of the Interior. The Urban Police, Motorway Police, Desert Patrol, and the country's prison service are all included in the PSD.^{311, 312} Jordan's PSD is one of the best-trained police forces in the Middle East, and has a response time in the capital of 3 to 5 minutes.³¹³



© High Contrast / Wikimedia.org
Jordanian Police van

The PSD had an elite unit, the Special Security Forces, that in 2008 was incorporated into a new directorate known as the General Directorate of the Gendarmerie. Like the PSD, the Gendarmerie operates under the Ministry of the Interior. In addition to the former Special

³⁰⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

³¹⁰ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, "Jordan," 31 December 2010, <http://www.unrwa.org/etemplate.php?id=66>

³¹¹ General Directorate of Gendarmerie, Ministry of the Interior, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "The History of Security Agencies in Jordan," n.d.,

http://www.jdf.gov.jo/Gendarmerie/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4&Itemid=10&lang=en

³¹² IHS Jane's, "Security and Foreign Forces (Jordan)," Jane's Sentinel Country Risk Assessments—Eastern Mediterranean Countries, 14 January 2011,

<http://search.janes.com/Search/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/emedsu/jords140.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=tank&backPath>

³¹³ Bureau of Diplomatic Security, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan 2011 Crime and Safety Report," 21 April 2011, <https://www.osac.gov/Pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=10877>

Security Forces, the Gendarmerie includes the police air wing and the Diplomatic Security Unit. The Gendarmerie is divided among brigades that are located throughout the country. Its primary responsibilities include riot control, special operations for dangerous criminals, security at high-value installations (including tourist sites, banks, and power plants), and diplomatic and VIP security. The Gendarmerie also provides assistance to the country's other security agencies.³¹⁴

315

Military

Overview

Jordan spends 8.6% of its gross domestic product (GDP) on military expenditures annually, the fourth-highest proportion in the world (only Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar spend a higher percentage of their GDP on defense).³¹⁶



© Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff / flickr.com
Jordanian soldiers

The Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF) are organized and well trained, but lack sufficient funding to modernize equipment or enhance their capabilities. The strength of the JAF lies in their armored artillery and anti-tank elements.³¹⁷ Jordan deployed these elements to bolster Syrian forces against Israel in 1973.³¹⁸ Yet Jordan's military capabilities are behind its neighbors. Israel's capabilities are much more technologically advanced and the Israeli air force is superior. Syria has ballistic missile capabilities that Jordan does not.³¹⁹

The Jordanian military has been reorganizing to facilitate rapid reaction and strengthen its Special Forces. This restructuring occurred in recognition of the fiscal constraints on

³¹⁴ General Directorate of Gendarmerie, Ministry of the Interior, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "The History of Security Agencies in Jordan," n.d.,

http://www.jdf.gov.jo/Gendarmerie/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4&Itemid=10&lang=en

³¹⁵ IHS Jane's, "Security and Foreign Forces (Jordan)," Jane's Sentinel Country Risk Assessments—Eastern Mediterranean Countries, 14 January 2011,

<http://search.janes.com/Search/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/emedsu/jords140.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=tank&backPath>

³¹⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, "Country Comparison," in *The World Factbook*, n.d.,

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2034rank.html>

³¹⁷ IHS Jane's, "Armed Forces (Jordan)," Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment—Eastern Mediterranean, 15 June 2011,

<http://search.janes.com/Search/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/emedsu/jords100.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=tank&backPath>

³¹⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

³¹⁹ IHS Jane's, "Armed Forces (Jordan)," Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment—Eastern Mediterranean, 15 June 2011,

<http://search.janes.com/Search/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/emedsu/jords100.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=tank&backPath>

modernizing its military and because of changes in threat assessment. Counterterrorism has replaced the emphasis on a large expeditionary force.³²⁰

Capabilities

The military has an active force of 100,000 personnel, nearly 90% of whom are in the army. The army's 88,000 active service members function under four commands (Northern, Central, Eastern, and Southern Commands), with an additional strategic reserve and a special operations command (SOCOM). The army is tasked with maintaining border security and internal state stability. More than 400 self-propelled howitzers and 94 towed howitzers make up the muscle of the army's artillery. These artillery units are supplemented by additional mortar units. The army operates nearly 1,000 battle tanks and hundreds of armored infantry fighting vehicles and armored personnel carriers. Defensive capabilities include anti-tank weapons and surface-to-air missiles.^{321, 322}

The air force accounts for an additional 12,000 troops. The bulk of the air force is in the 10 active squadrons of the Operations Command. Flight instruction occurs in the three squadrons of the Training Command. The air force lacks advanced combat systems, but its acquisition of more than 50 F-16s since the 1990s has helped to alleviate this. Transport planes and rotary wing aircraft, including 12 attack helicopters, make up the remainder of the air force's equipment.^{323, 324}

Jordan's navy (or coast guard) is small at roughly 500 troops, but like the rest of the military, it is well trained and adaptable. Rather than being designed for combat operations against neighboring navies, the navy patrols the waters in the Gulf of Aqaba and also performs search-and-rescue and counterterrorism operations.^{325, 326}

³²⁰ IHS Jane's, "Armed Forces (Jordan)," Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment—Eastern Mediterranean, 15 June 2011,

<http://search.janes.com/Search/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/emedsu/jords100.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=tank&backPath>

³²¹ International Institute for Strategic Studies, "Chapter Seven: Middle East and North Africa," *The Military Balance* 111, no. 1 (7 March 2011): 315–316.

³²² IHS Jane's, "Army, Jordan," Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment—Eastern Mediterranean, 27 June 2011,

<http://search.janes.com/Search/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/emedsu/jords110.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=tank&backPath>

³²³ International Institute for Strategic Studies, "Chapter Seven: Middle East and North Africa," *The Military Balance* 111, no. 1 (7 March 2011): 315–316.

³²⁴ IHS Jane's, "Air Force, Jordan," Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment—Eastern Mediterranean, 12 August 2011,

<http://search.janes.com/Search/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/emedsu/jords120.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=tank&backPath>

³²⁵ International Institute for Strategic Studies, "Chapter Seven: Middle East and North Africa," *The Military Balance* 111, no. 1 (7 March 2011): 315–316.

³²⁶ IHS Jane's, "Navy, Jordan," Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment—Eastern Mediterranean, 15 June 2011,

<http://search.janes.com/Search/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/emedsu/jords130.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=tank&backPath>

Water Security

Jordan has less available water than almost every country in the world, and many of its neighbors are nearly as dry. In 2010, Jordan's water availability met only 44% of its demand, and by 2040 it is estimated that Jordan's water availability will meet just 30% of demand.³²⁷



© Effib / Wikimedia.org
Yarmuk river, northern Jordan

River flows in Jordan have decreased significantly in the last half century. It is estimated that in 1960, the Yarmuk River carried 600 million cubic meters (MCM) of water, but by 2010 it carried just half that much. For the Jordan River, the numbers are even more dramatic: in 1960 it carried 1,300 MCM of water, but by 2010 that had fallen to 100 MCM; during dry summer and autumn months, the river carries as little as 15 MCM. This represents a depletion of more than 90% since 1960.³²⁸ These rivers are vital arteries in Jordan because it receives so little rainfall; 90% of the country receives less than 200 mm (7.8 in) of rain a year. These and other factors are leading to desertification in Jordan that is decreasing its already meager arable land.³²⁹

Jordan's water stress is a significant security issue not only because of Jordan's dependence on its upper riparian neighbors, but also because many of its neighbors are water stressed. According to a leading risk-analysis group, 15 of the world's 18 countries with "extreme risk" in terms of their water supply lie in the Middle East and North Africa. Jordan is listed as having the third least-secure water supplies in the world, with its neighbors Egypt (4), Israel (5), Iraq (7), Syria (10), and Saudi Arabia (11) making the list.³³⁰ Because of the region's concentration of water-scarce countries, many analysts (including former secretary-general of the UN, Boutros Boutros-Ghali) believe tensions could easily escalate into conflict.^{331, 332, 333}

Outlook

Internal instability, the potential for terrorist attacks, and the realities of depleted water resources all threaten Jordan's future security. Although Jordan was not spared when protests and popular uprisings swept the region in 2011, protests in Jordan were not ultimately directed at King Abdullah. Security forces did not respond with the brutality seen in Egypt or Syria, and King

³²⁷ Hana Namrouqa, "Water Can Be an Opportunity for Peace in Region—Report," *Jordan Times*, 24 January 2011, <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=33796>

³²⁸ Strategic Foresight Group (firm), "The Blue Peace: Rethinking Middle East Water," 2011, <http://www.strategicforesight.com/Highlights%20The%20Blue%20Peace.pdf>

³²⁹ North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), "Tackling Desertification and Food Security Risks in Jordan," 15 June 2011, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_75464.htm

³³⁰ Maplecroft (firm), "Oil Producing Middle East and North African Countries Dominate Maplecroft Water Security Risk List," 22 March 2011, http://maplecroft.com/about/news/water_security.html

³³¹ Hussein A. Amery, "Water Wars in the Middle East: A Looming Threat," *The Geographic Journal* 168, no. 4 (December 2002): 313–323, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3451474>

³³² Mike Thomson, "Ex-UN Chief Warns of Water Wars," *BBC News*, 2 February 2005, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4227869.stm>

³³³ Martin Asser, "Obstacles to Arab-Israeli peace: Water," *BBC News*, 2 September 2010, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-11101797>

Abdullah placated many concerns by dismissing the government, appointing a new prime minister, and making several economic and political concessions. The degree to which the government can continue to mitigate popular concerns will play an important role in maintaining internal stability.^{334, 335}

Some challenges, such as threats of terrorism, create further opportunities for bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Military and intelligence cooperation have become hallmarks of U.S.-Jordan relations. Intelligence cooperation has also strengthened ties with Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Jordan will continue its cooperative counterterrorism efforts in hopes of keeping itself safe from external and internal threats.³³⁶



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The Dead Sea in Jordan

As eyes have turned to water's potential for starting conflict in the region, some analysts see water not only as a threat but also as an opportunity for cooperation. One example of regional cooperation is the proposed Red Sea–Dead Sea Water Conveyance Study Programme, also known as the Red-Dead project, which brings together Jordan, Israel, and Palestine. Under the project, 1 billion cubic meters of water would be pumped annually from the Red Sea into the Dead Sea to save it from shrinking and to provide desalinated drinking water to the sea's neighbors. Other cooperative measures aim to standardize water resource measurements and to bring countries together on water technology research and development.^{337, 338}

³³⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

³³⁵ Dale Gavlak, "Jordan's King Abdullah Vows to Allow Elected Cabinets," *BBC News*, 12 June 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13744640>

³³⁶ Jeremy M. Sharp, "Jordan: Background and U.S. Relations," Congressional Research Service, 21 June 2011, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33546.pdf>

³³⁷ Hana Namrouqa, "Water Can Be an Opportunity for Peace in Region—Report," *Jordan Times*, 24 January 2011, <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=33796>

³³⁸ Strategic Foresight Group (firm), "The Blue Peace: Rethinking Middle East Water," 2011, <http://www.strategicforesight.com/Highlights%20The%20Blue%20Peace.pdf>

Chapter 5 Assessment

1. U.S. relations with Jordan have been strained since September 11, 2011.

FALSE

The United States has supported Jordan for more than 60 years, and relations between the two countries have been especially strong since 9/11. The United States provides development and military aid to Jordan.

2. Saudi Arabia seeks to support the continuance of Jordan's monarchy.

TRUE

In 2011, Saudi Arabia and the other gulf monarchies of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) invited Jordan and Morocco to join the GCC. The motivations behind this move were political, because the gulf countries sought to bolster other monarchies in the region.

3. Jordan's military has 100,000 personnel, roughly 90% of which is in the army.

TRUE

In addition to the 88,000 army personnel, the military also has 12,000 air force and 500 navy personnel. The navy is responsible for the waters in the Gulf of Aqaba.

4. Jordan's General Directorate of the Gendarmerie was disbanded in 2008.

FALSE

The Gendarmerie was established in 2008 and incorporated the Public Security Directorate's (PSD) elite Special Forces unit. Like the PSD, the Gendarmerie operates under the Ministry of the Interior.

5. The proposed Red-Dead project aims to save the Dead Sea from continued shrinkage.

TRUE

The project would pump one billion cubic meters of water a year into the Dead Sea and also provide desalinated water to the sea's neighbors. The project is an example of "blue peace" in which water security concerns can foster regional cooperation.

FINAL ASSESSMENT

1. The Jordan River forms Jordan's northwestern boundary, ending in the Dead Sea.
TRUE/FALSE
2. The *khamsin* are cool evening winds blowing in from the Mediterranean Sea.
TRUE/FALSE
3. Although Aqaba lies on the Red Sea, it is not a port city.
TRUE/FALSE
4. Today, Jordan's population is nearly 30 times what it was in 1921.
TRUE/FALSE
5. Jordan suffers from constant devastating earthquakes, forcing Amman to be rebuilt three times in the last century.
TRUE/FALSE
6. Israeli tribes settled primarily on the west bank of the Jordan River.
TRUE/FALSE
7. Islam came to Jordan early, with Muhammad leading an expedition into the region.
TRUE/FALSE
8. The British refused to support the Arab Revolt, fearing backlash from the Ottoman Empire.
TRUE/FALSE
9. Jordan remained neutral in the 1967 war and received only minor losses.
TRUE/FALSE
10. Black September is a term used by Palestinians to refer to hostilities in Jordan in 1970.
TRUE/FALSE
11. Lacking substantial oil reserves, Jordan's economy is primarily agricultural.
TRUE/FALSE
12. More than 8 million foreign visitors came to Jordan in 2010.
TRUE/FALSE
13. Jordan consumes more than 10 times the electricity it did 30 years ago.
TRUE/FALSE
14. Trade between the United States and Jordan has decreased since 11 September 2001.
TRUE/FALSE

15. Protests against economic hardships prompted political change in 2011.
TRUE/FALSE
16. English is widely understood in Jordan.
TRUE/FALSE
17. Jordan has been roughly 40% Christian since the Crusades.
TRUE/FALSE
18. Like Jordan's Gulf neighbors to the south, the country largely rejects Western attire.
TRUE/FALSE
19. Jordan's women are among the Arab world's least educated.
TRUE/FALSE
20. Women create many of Jordan's traditional handicrafts, such as weaving and pottery.
TRUE/FALSE
21. Jordan's King Abdullah was the first Arab leader to visit Iraq after Saddam Hussein's fall.
TRUE/FALSE
22. Jordan has had an ambassador in Israel since the two countries made peace in 1994.
TRUE/FALSE
23. Jordan depends on Syria's Latakia port for European goods.
TRUE/FALSE
24. Jordan is water scarce but its neighbors have easy access to excessive amounts of water.
TRUE/FALSE
25. Mass public protests in 2011 called for the end of Jordan's monarchy.
TRUE/FALSE

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