

Legacies of the Anglo-Hashemite Relationship in Jordan:
How this symbiotic alliance established the legitimacy and political
longevity of the regime in the process of state-formation, 1914-1946

An Honors Thesis for the Department of Middle Eastern Studies

Julie Murray

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Abstract

In this paper, I explore the origins and legacies of the Anglo-Hashemite relationship in Jordan, focusing on the period from 1914 to 1946 – from the first World War to the end of the British Mandate for Transjordan. I argue that the independent political entity of Jordan was created chiefly in order to serve British imperial interests in the Middle East, which happened to coincide with the Hashemite desire for an Arab state. In the first chapter on the historical context of the British Mandate in Transjordan, I analyze Britain’s intentions for the Jordan and how those intentions came to be. In the second chapter, I examine the significance of Jordan’s borders and the border delineation process in the context of Britain’s relationships with Jordan’s neighbors. Finally, in the third chapter, I explore the connection this geographical state-formation has to the political state-formation of Jordan. I contend that while the origin of the Jordanian state and its borders may have been incidental in nature, after the establishment of Transjordan, there was a concerted effort made by the ruling Anglo-Hashemite government to build legitimacy and consolidate the state, primarily through the development of the Arab Legion and the integration of the Bedouin tribes into the state. I claim that this effort was successful, as evidenced by the existence to this day and relative (to the other Middle Eastern states created in the wake of the Ottoman Empire’s demise) political stability of the Hashemite regime in Amman.

Introduction

Although prior to 1921 Jordan was not the vacuous no-man's land that some have claimed,¹ before that time it is true that “no common identity or political order bound the districts of Transjordan.”² In this paper, I will examine the formation of the territorial state, national identity, and governing authority of Jordan.

I believe that chief in the creation of the distinct political entity of Jordan are Great Britain and the Hashemite family, and I argue that Jordan was really created by indirect forces: the product of policy towards other concerns much more than any collective movement or grassroots desire for an autonomous Jordanian state. Tariq Tell writes, that “in fact, the Trans-Jordanian state was very much a British rather than a Hashemite creation, although its imperial architects built upon foundations laid down by Ottoman reform.” In essence, I argue that the independent political entity of Jordan was created to serve the British imperial interests in the Middle East, and lucky for Abdullah ibn Hussein, these coincided with the Hashemite desire for an Arab state: “a product of mutual utility,”³ as Mary Wilson puts it in her biography of King Abdullah.

Here, I refer to Britain's imperial interests; imperialism defined by Edward Said as “the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant

¹ James L. Gelvin, “Was There a Mandates Period?,” in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of the Middle East Mandates*, ed. Cyrus Schayegh and Andrew Arsan, 1 edition (London: Routledge, 2015), 420–32, 424.

² Eugene L. Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan, 1850-1921* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 9.

³ Mary Christina Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 2.

territory,”⁴ and the specific interests in this case “were [primarily] limited to economic rights and to strategic needs regarding the defence of the roads to India.”⁵

While the origin of the Jordanian state may have been incidental in nature, I contend that after the establishment of Transjordan, there was a concerted effort made by the ruling Anglo-Hashemite government to build legitimacy through expanding the reach of the state and manufacturing a Jordanian identity - an effort of which I will analyze only the very beginnings of, but which continues to this day. I also argue that this effort was successful, as evidenced by the existence to this day and relative (to other Middle Eastern states created in the wake of the Ottoman Empire’s fall) political stability of the Hashemite regime in Amman. The strategic significance of Jordan has not been lost to Western powers (Great Britain for the first thirty years of Jordan’s existence, and the United States from the 1950’s on to today), and that certainly accounts in part of the longevity of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (HKJ), however the initial state-making policies of the mandate period cannot be ignored in explanation either. While many have focused on the determination of King Hussein to keep the state of Jordan going, here instead I will concentrate on his grandfather, the first King and architect of the HKJ, Abdullah ibn Hussein, as “the solid foundations laid down during the mandate period is one of the keys to understanding the regime’s resilience.”⁶ How did this non-native leader establish such political legitimacy and subsequent longevity for his regime?

In the first chapter on the historical context of the British Mandate in Jordan, I examine Britain’s intentions regarding Jordan, how those intentions came to be, and how those intentions

⁴ Edward W. Said, “Overlapping Territories, Intertwined Histories: Empire, Geography, and Culture,” in *Culture and Imperialism*, Reprint edition (New York: Vintage, 1994), 3–14, 9.

⁵ Jukka Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920* (Athlone Press, 1969), 2.

⁶ Yoav Alon, “Tribes and State-Formation in Mandatory Transjordan,” *Civil Wars* 8, no. 1 (March 1, 2006): 66–82, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13698240600886081>, 80.

are exacted onto the region. I will look at how the Anglo-Hashemite relationship developed and how it works within Britain's imperial interest, and I will consider the evolution of the territorial construction of Jordan. The first chapter lays the groundwork for the British attitudes of ambivalence that guided state-making in the Mandate period, and establishes the setting within which the state of Transjordan was constructed.

In the second chapter, I will clarify the ultimate boundaries of Jordan, and the influences upon each international border, particularly looking at the value of each neighboring state to Great Britain. The focus on borders delineation is crucial in understanding the setting in which nation-building was then set, as "boundary formation provided the British with the circumscribed space within which an infrastructure of power could be developed."⁷ In the third chapter, I will dive further into the practices engaged in, the specific ways in which the imperialist attitude is enacted onto Jordan by the British, to create the Jordanian state and consolidate their rule. "In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, territories and boundaries became political symbols,"⁸ and Jordan is no exception. In this thesis, I will examine the significance of Jordan's borders and the border-making process, and the relationship this geographical state-building has to the political state-formation of Jordan. Since, of course, the processes of nation building, identity formation, and even territorial formation are not static, I will focus on the beginnings of such processes from the eve of World War I through the end of mandate in 1946, but it is important to note that these processes continue to this day. The scope of this paper will not extend beyond nominal Jordanian independence from Great Britain in 1946.

⁷ Amadouny, V. M. "The Formation of the Transjordan-Syria Boundary, 1915–32." *Middle Eastern Studies* 31, no. 3 (July 1, 1995): 533–49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263209508701068>, 544.

⁸ Peter Sahlins, *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees*, Reprint edition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 3.

A point of clarification with regard to terminology: Jordan has been known by a variety of names and has been incorporated into other territories without necessarily being defined as a distinct entity. In this paper, I am examining the region “from Aqaba on the Gulf of Aqaba... bounded on the east by the Arabian Desert, on the north by the Yarmuk River valley, and on the west by the River Jordan, the Dead Sea and the Wadi Arabah,”⁹ which generally has been known as Transjordan, or the land east of the Jordan River, and today is encompassed by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (see Map 1). This region is not a homogenous one with regard to geography, population, or development, as throughout its history there has been marked contrast between the desert regions, the valleys (or wadis), and the mountainous northwest, between the nomadic and settled peoples, and between the north and south, and east and west, and even in the discontinuous nature of Jordan’s development and importance to its ruling power. As such, when I am generally referring to the area covered in this definition of the territory I will use the term Jordan; I will use the term Transjordan when I am referring to the political entity of the British Mandate for the Emirate of Transjordan lasting from 1921-1946; and I will refer to the political entity established in 1946, the current Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, as the HKJ.

⁹ Benjamin Shwadran, *Jordan: A State of Tension* (Council for Middle Eastern Affairs Press, 1959), 3.



Map 1 Current political map of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.¹⁰

A second note of clarification: as many of the place and personal names of importance are transliterations from Arabic, spellings tend to differ from text to text. I will use traditionally accepted transliterations for my spellings for the sake of consistency (for instance: Hussein, Abdullah, Al-Salt, etc.), however other sources may use different spellings, and in quotes I will preserve the original spelling of the text.

¹⁰ U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, “Jordan (Political).” Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, 2004, http://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/jordan_pol_2004.jpg.

Theories of State and Nation Formation

In examining the creation of Jordan as a state that exists in the modern era of nation-states, it is necessary to look at both its territorial and political formation (though with the caveat that the state is not static entity, but continuously evolving, and being formed and reformed to this day). As Peter Sahlins states in *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees*, “the creation of the territorial state [as opposed to a state based on “jurisdiction over subject, not over a delineated territory”¹¹] constituted one component of the modern nation-state; the emergence of national identity formed another.”¹² Jordan represents a rather unique case in that both its territorial distinction and its national identity were created in the post-WWI period in a top-down manner.

“Modern definitions of territorial sovereignty focus on political boundaries as the point at which a state’s territorial competence finds its ultimate expression. States are defined by their exclusive jurisdiction over a delimited territory; and the boundaries of territorial competence define the sovereignty of a state.”¹³ As an extension of this idea brought forth by Sahlins, I think it is because the state is a territorial organization that the definition of its territory is the definition of the state itself, and thus a vital component of the state-building process, and one necessary to examine closer in the case of Jordan.

Furthermore, the territorial definition of Jordan is important to consider in the state-making process because of the conception of “borders as social constructions possessing both material and symbolic aspects.”¹⁴ National borders define and politicize a sociocultural group of

¹¹ Sahlins, *Boundaries*, 6.

¹² *Ibid.*, 7.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁴ Alexander Diener and Joshua Hagen, eds., *Borderlines and Borderlands: Political Oddities at the Edge of the Nation-State* (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010), 9.

people within a geographic area, implying (in the age of nation-states) that there is a national bond because of their territorial proximity. Conversely, Simon Schama puts it rather more romantically in *Landscape and Memory*: “National identity... would lose much of its ferocious enchantment without the mystique of a particular landscape tradition: its topography mapped, elaborated, and enriched as a homeland... And landscapes can be self-consciously designed to express the virtues of a particular political or social community.”¹⁵ The landscape can thus be offered as the foundation for a nation: “territory is often described as the body of the national organism.”¹⁶

Here, I offer Benedict Anderson’s definition of nation as

“an imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign... [which] is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion... [and] is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.”¹⁷

Anderson’s description of the modular forms by which nationalism is promoted are not the only ways in which nationalism can be expressed, as explained by Partha Chatterjee.¹⁸ Chatterjee argues that nationalism can exist in either the outer, material domain, which Anderson addresses, or in the inner domain, which Anderson ignores, where nationalism grows in much of Africa and Asia:

“In fact, here [the inner domain] nationalism launches its most powerful, creative, and historically significant project: to fashion a “modern” national culture that is nevertheless

¹⁵ Simon Schama, *Landscape And Memory*, Vintage ed. edition (New York, NY: Vintage, 1996), 15.

¹⁶ Sahlins, *Boundaries*, 3.

¹⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised edition (London New York: Verso, 1991), 6.

¹⁸ Partha Chatterjee, “Whose Imagined Community?,” in *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1993), 3–13, 5.

not Western. If the nation is an imagined community, then this is where it is brought into being. In this, its true and essential domain, the nation is already sovereign, even when the state is in the hands of the colonial power.”¹⁹

By the twentieth century, territory and nationhood were inextricably linked, and a coherent nation was theoretically necessary for a legitimate claim to rule a territory, as “the idea of the nation-state, where the political borders of the state would coincide with the cultural boundaries of the nation, had become the ideal, although not the norm,”²⁰ and as such, the Anglo-Hashemite regime worked to create a Jordanian nation after the establishment of the Jordanian territory in order to solidify “absolute political sovereignty over [its] clearly defined territory and the undivided allegiance of its inhabitants.”²¹ As Alexander Diener and Joshua Hagen put it in *Borderlines and Borderlands*, “yet despite their rather arbitrary origins... borders have very real consequences for the peoples, places, and things they divide,”²² and this is no less true for those of Jordan.

Boundary delineation is a particularly telling exercise for a new state. By examining who draws the borders, and where those borders are placed, it is possible to extrapolate who holds power, and what will influence how they utilize that power. Diener and Hagen trace trends in the logic behind border drawings over recent history:

“the idea that borders should coincide with ‘natural’ features had become widely accepted [by the end of the eighteenth century]. It was believed that these natural borders, as opposed to artificial borders, would be more stable and less likely to generate conflict. The assumption was that nature had already predetermined ‘correct’ international borders. States simply had to seem them out and adjust their borders accordingly. Although seemingly offering an objective basis for delineating international boundaries and arbitrating border disputes, individuals tended to interpret the term *natural* in ways that supported their particular geopolitical agendas. Many French writers, for example, argued that borders should follow physiographical features, such as rivers or mountain

¹⁹ Ibid., 6.

²⁰ Diener and Hagen, *Borderlines and Borderlands*, 6.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., 11.

ranges, a view that provided a convenient justification for annexing new territories. Reflecting rising nationalist sentiment, other contended that it was ‘natural’ for the state’s borders to encompass all the members of one nationality. Numerous German nationalists believed that the borders of their state should expand to include all German speakers, regardless of physiographical features.”²³

With the generally accepted concept of the nation-state, the latter sentiment was widely agreed upon - “that it was ‘natural’ for the state’s borders to encompass all members of one nationality.”²⁴ In the case of Jordan, as there was no established nation whose members were to be encompassed by the state, this meant that the state would have to create the nation.

The Jordanian identity is one that had especially to be distinguished from that of Arabia, Palestine, and Syria, as prior to the existence of the Transjordan mandate, the area was oft lumped in with one of the aforementioned territories. Sahlins clarifies: “in this sense, national identity, like ethnic or communal identity, is contingent and relational: it is defined by the social or territorial boundaries drawn to distinguish the collective self and its implicit negation, the other.”²⁵ Since the borders of Jordan were drawn prior to the creation of a distinct identity, the identity was shaped by what was contained within the borders.

While of course “all borders, whether they appear oddly contrived and artificial... or appear to be based on objective criteria, such as rivers or lines of latitude, are and have always been constructions of human beings [and] as such, any border’s delineation is subjective, contrived, negotiated, and contested,”²⁶ the borders of Jordan are particularly so because they were not drawn by the indigenous population or even by conquest but rather arbitrarily so by an imperial power, and ignored all prior socioeconomic networks between towns in northwestern

²³ Ibid., 7.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Sahlins, *Boundaries*, 271.

²⁶ Diener and Hagen, *Borderlines and Borderlands*, 3.

Jordan and southern Syria and eastern Palestine. There is almost no logic in how, for instance, northern Jordan is politically, culturally or geographically distinct from southern Syria, northeastern Jordan from southwestern Iraq, southeastern Jordan from northwestern Saudi Arabia, or western Jordan culturally distinct from Palestine. Though some of these borders vaguely followed the borders of the Ottoman vilayets, and there is the occasional natural (geographic) boundary, for the most part the boundaries of the Transjordanian territory are particularly artificial. This holds true even when comparing Jordan to the other states of the Middle East whose borders were influenced by the Sykes-Picot Agreement, to the point that Winston Churchill “liked to boast that in 1921 he created the British mandate of Trans-Jordan, the first incarnation of what still is the Kingdom of Jordan, ‘with the stroke of a pen, one Sunday afternoon in Cairo.’”²⁷ The Transjordanian borders were created in a reactionary manner, responding to the prioritized states elsewhere in the Middle East. However, in spite of, or perhaps because of, their incidental nature, the early Anglo-Hashemite regime took very concrete measures to invoke the legitimacy of the new state.

The evolution of the Transjordanian map and the state’s borders is crucial to look at when examining the formation of the state, and specifically, British influence in that state-formation.

As quoted by Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities*, Thongchai states:

“In terms of most communication theories and common sense, a map is a scientific abstraction of reality. A map merely represents something which already exists objectively ‘there.’ In the history I have described, this relationship was reversed. A map anticipated spatial reality, not vice versa. In other words, a map was a model for, rather than a model of, what it purported to represent...It had become a real instrument to concretize projections on the earth’s surface. A map was now necessary for the new administrative mechanisms and for the troops to back up their claims... The discourse of

²⁷ Frank Jacobs, “Winston’s Hiccup,” *Opinionator*, 1331055608, [//opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/06/winstons-hiccup/](http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/06/winstons-hiccup/).

mapping was the paradigm which both administrative and military operations worked within and served.”²⁸

Here Thongchai is referring to the history of Siam, however this statement can certainly be applied to British imperialism in Jordan. The physical land, the people, the cities existed in the area of Transjordan before the British imposed political borders over the region. However, no political will of a Transjordan, specifically, existed before those lines were drawn. Not only did these new borders create a political entity that had never existed in reality or the collective imagination before, but “the extension of European colonial and imperial control over much of the world entailed wide-ranging political and territorial reorganization of these lands, societies, and economies according to European norms,”²⁹ meaning that not only was the political organization of territory changed by European imperialism following WWI, but so to was the sociocultural milieu.

The territorial definition of the state is intertwined with national myths particularly in the case of European colonies or imperial conquests. Again, Anderson explores this link deeply with regard to Siam, though it can easily be applied to Transjordan and the Anglo-Hashemite regime’s reliance on Abdullah’s prophetic lineage and the Levant as part of the ancient Islamic caliphate as a means of legitimacy (a hagiography which to this day is vital to the state):

“Fully aware of their [the Europeans] interloper status in the distant tropics, but arriving from a civilization in which the legal inheritance and the legal transferability of geographic space had long been established... the usurpers were in the business... of reconstructing the property-history of their new possessions. Hence the appearance, late in the nineteenth century especially, of ‘historical maps,’ designed to demonstrate, in the new cartographic discourse, the antiquity of specific, tightly bounded territorial units. Through chronologically arranged sequences of such maps, a sort of political-biographical narrative of the realm came into being, sometimes with vast historical depth.

²⁸ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 173.

²⁹ Diener and Hagen, *Borderlines and Borderlands*, 5.

In turn, this narrative was adopted, if often adapted, by the nation-states which, in the twentieth century, became the colonial states' legatees."³⁰

Although Jordan's borders were unintentional, and created in response to the surrounding states, the Anglo-Hashemite regime took very concrete steps to legitimize the new state contained within these borders. The creation of Jordan can be broken down into two parts: the geographic conception of the state, which was primarily reactionary in nature, and the political conception of the nation, which was somewhat more intentional as a means of legitimizing the seemingly incidental nature of the geographic state formation.

³⁰ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 174.

Chapter 1: Historical Context

Ottoman Jordan

In examining the creation of the political entity of Jordan, it is necessary to begin further back in time, as it was in the Ottoman era that the underlying foundations for the state of Jordan were set. Jordan was conquered by the Ottoman Turks in 1516,³¹ but was largely left autonomous until the Tanzimat reforms of the mid-nineteenth century, when the Ottoman Empire tightened its grip, particularly on its Levantine territories.

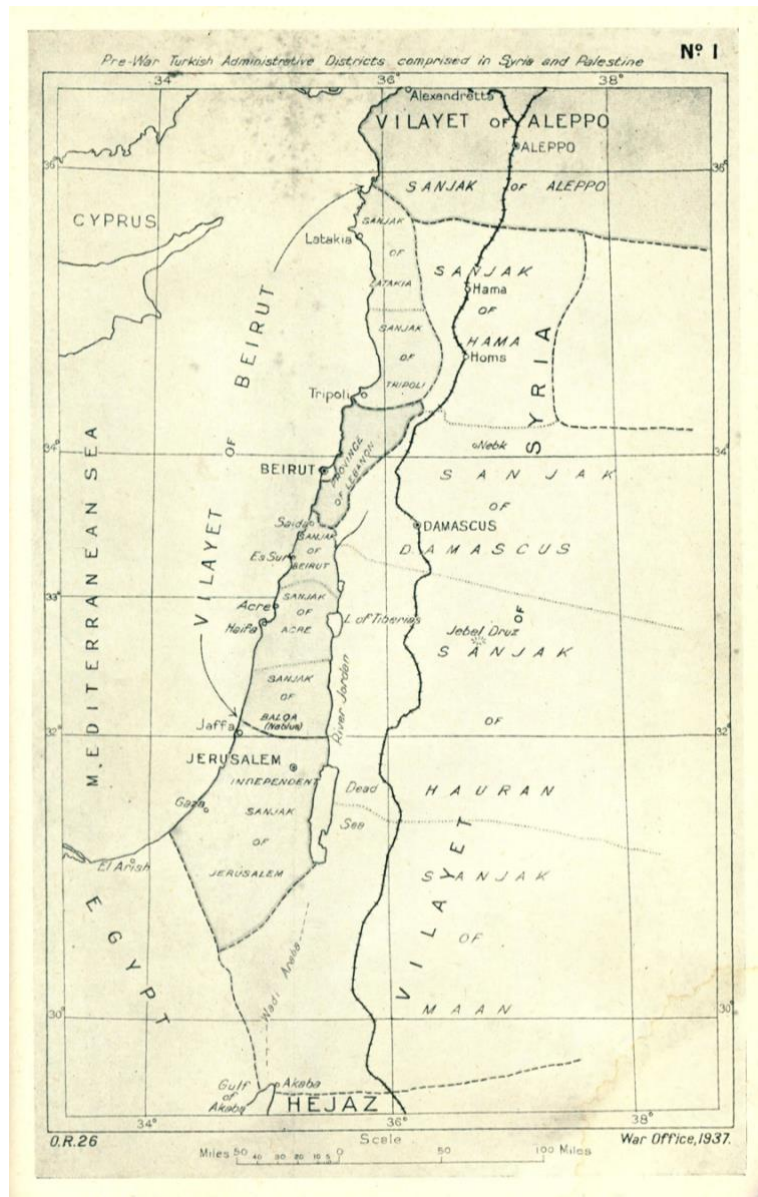
During this time, the Ottoman Empire was divided into vilayets, or administrative regions. While some modern states in the Middle East were clearly created from one or a combination of Ottoman vilayats (for instance, the modern state of Iraq was formed from the consolidation of the Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra vilayats), the HKJ's borders today look nothing like the Ottoman vilayats imposed upon the region. In fact, there was no Jordanian vilayat at all: what is today the western half of the HKJ was contained within the vilayats of Syria (alternatively known as Damascus) and Beirut, in the sanjaqs of Hawran, Karak (originally part of the Nablus sanjaq), and Maan³² (see Map 2). Before the vilayat system was instituted, Jordan was simply a part of an administrative unit over Damascus that encompassed Palestine and parts of Jordan and Syria, and, as noted by Asher Kaufman in "Colonial Cartography," the Ottomans did not even define Greater Syria or the Levant as a distinct and coherent region, let alone Jordan.³³ Additionally, the eastern half of what is today the HKJ was outside the purview of the Ottoman Empire, instead considered part of the Arabian desert (see Map 3). As far as Jordan was

³¹ Michael Fischbach, *State, Society and Land in Jordan* (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2000), 8.

³² Shwadran, *Jordan*, 98.

³³ Asher Kaufman, "Colonial Cartography and the Making of Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria," in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of the Middle East Mandates*, ed. Cyrus Schayegh and Andrew Arsan, 1 edition (London: Routledge, 2015), 225–43, 234.

concerned, Ottoman jurisdiction fell in “a thin belt of land stretching from the Jordan Rift Valley in the west, to the desert Pilgrimage Road to the east [and] the Ottomans made no claim to administer the vast desert regions to the east of the Pilgrimage Road - a territory which would remain more under Bedouin than Ottoman control.”³⁴



Map 2 Ottoman administrative division of Jordan. Railway marked by ticked line running north-south (northwards split at Aleppo to Istanbul and Baghdad, southwards to Medina).³⁵

³⁴ Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire*, 23.

³⁵ “Map of the Near East showing the pre-First World War Ottoman Vilayets and Sanjaks,” Palestine Royal Commission Report, 1937. In Zeine, Zeine N. *The Struggle for Arab*



Map 3 Empires between Turkey and India, 1912; Ottoman Empire is outlined in dark green. Insert provided to focus on the imperial control over the Levant and northern Arabia.³⁶

For much of the Ottoman era, this territory's central importance was in that it comprised a large portion of the passage of the Hajj from Istanbul to Mecca. This route was cemented in a north-south highway that offered a significant amount of trade to the surrounding economy, and later in the Hejaz railway (running from Damascus to Medina), which was completed in 1908 (see Map 2).³⁷ The highway, and the pilgrims that travelled along it, had to be protected from

Independence: Western Diplomacy and the Rise and Fall of Faisal's Kingdom in Syria, first edition, 1960, Plate 5.

³⁶ Edward Stanford Ltd., "A map of the countries between Constantinople and Calcutta: including Turkey in Asia, Persia, Afghanistan and Turkestan," London, 1912. Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2006627678/>.

³⁷ Shwadran, *Jordan*, 100.

Bedouin raids, and so Istanbul offered bribes to the tribes,³⁸³⁹ and began incorporating sheikhs into the Ottoman administration of the region.⁴⁰ This, along with the Tanzimat land reforms (solidified in the 1858 Land Code⁴¹) and the institution of taxes by the Ottomans as a means of financing the railroad, began the more formal relationship of the state to the Jordanian population.

By the eve of World War I, however, this relationship was not one particularly popular with much of the population, as illustrated by the 1910 Karak Revolt.⁴² Parallel to this disquiet in the Levant, Hussein of the Hejaz, who had been supported by the Ottomans as the Sharif of Mecca,⁴³ began to sense some animosity from the Turks. As his hold over the Hejaz grew increasingly precarious, he began to consider other, possibly more advantageous, alliances.⁴⁴ In early 1914, Hussein's second son, Abdullah, stopped in Cairo on his way to Istanbul, and met with the British officials (notably including Lord Herbert Kitchener) stationed there to inform them of the Arab dissatisfaction with Ottoman rule and inquired about British support if there were to be an altercation between Hussein and the Ottomans, yet the British were unresponsive.⁴⁵

³⁸ Ibid., 83.

³⁹ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan*, First Edition (Cambridge, U.K. ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 10.

⁴⁰ Fischbach, *State, Society and Land in Jordan*, 19.

⁴¹ Ibid., 24.

⁴² Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire*, 185.

⁴³ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 7.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 22.

⁴⁵ Shwadran, *Jordan*, 106.

World War I

The Hussein-McMahon Correspondence

Following Turkey's entrance into the Great War, the British reconsidered the Hashemites as a potential ally. At that time, the British Empire had a sizeable Muslim population, and London was nervous about the implications for their colonial control of a war against the caliph seated in Istanbul. Sharif Hussein, as the protector of the holiest city in Islam, was viewed as a promising rival leader of the Islamic world, and thus the Hussein-McMahon (Sir Henry McMahon, the High Commissioner in Egypt) Correspondence of 1914-1915 established a vague alliance between the two (see Appendix A for full text). Influenced by the Damascus Protocol of 1915 (in which a number of Arab legions of the Turkish army and Arab secret societies within Syria expressed support for Hussein and dissent towards Turkey⁴⁶), Hussein demanded an independent Arab state secured by the British in return for orchestrating an Arab revolt against the Turks. While the "original demands [for the bounds of this proposed state] were as fantastic as the reply of the British was vague, obscure, and indefinite,"⁴⁷ (in part, because McMahon saw Hussein "as a spiritual rather than a material force"⁴⁸) the correspondence established the Anglo-Hashemite relationship that would persist for the next half-century, and confirmed British support for a future "British-protected independent Arab kingdom"⁴⁹ with a Hashemite at the head.

⁴⁶ David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (Phoenix Press, 1989), 175.

⁴⁷ Shwadran, *Jordan*, 108.

⁴⁸ Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 173.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 183.

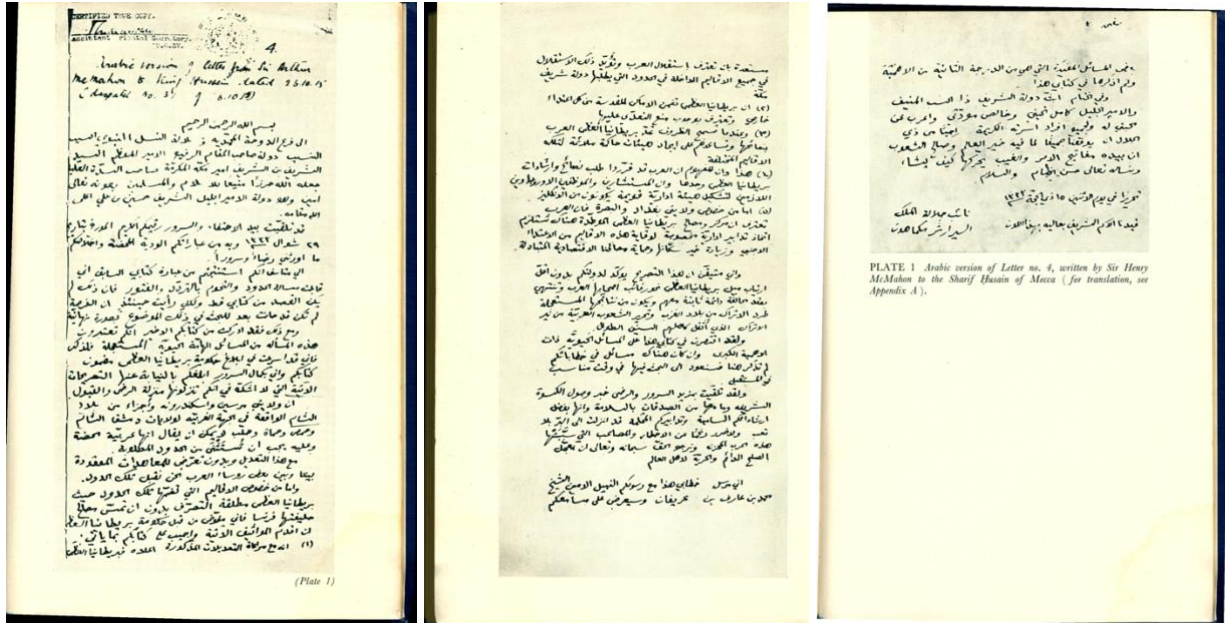


Image 1 Letter no. 4 of the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence, from Sir Henry McMahon to Sharif Hussein, detailing territorial exemptions from Hussein's request, and outlining what the Anglo-Arab relationship will look like.⁵⁰

These letters outlined the beginnings of a British-secured independent Arab state in terms of territorial and fiscal expectations, but not in any sort of binding way. While Hussein demanded a territory

“bounded on the north by Mersina and Adana up to the 37th degree of latitude, on which degree fall Birijik, Urfa, Mardin, Midiat, Jezirat (Ibn 'Umar), Amadia, up to the border of Persia; on the east by the borders of Persia up to the Gulf of Basra; on the south by the Indian Ocean, with the exception of the position of Aden to remain as it is [a British possession]; on the west by the Red Sea, the Mediterranean Sea up to Mersina.”⁵¹

McMahon limited a significant portion of the Middle East from this proposed area. According to McMahon, exempt from Hussein's demand was:

1) Mesopotamia, on the grounds that “the established position and interests of Great Britain [in Baghdad and Basra] necessitate special administrative arrangements in order to secure these territories from foreign aggression, to promote the welfare of the local

⁵⁰ “Arabic version of Letter no. 4, written by Sir Henry McMahon to the Sharif Husain of Mecca,” October 24, 1915. In Zeine, Zeine N., *The Struggle for Arab Independence: Western Diplomacy and the Rise and Fall of Faisal's Kingdom in Syria*, First Edition, 1960, Plate 1.

⁵¹ “The Hussein-McMahon Correspondence (July 1915-August 1916),” letter no. 1.

populations and to safeguard our mutual economic interests,”⁵² although what exactly these arrangements would be was left unspecified.⁵³

2) Syria (explicitly, “the two districts of Mersina and Alexandretta [now southern Turkey] and portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus, Homs, Hama and Aleppo,” and presumably extending down the coast through the vilayat of Beirut - it was unnamed in McMahon’s letter, but has been disputed whether or not Palestine, specifically the sanjuq of Jerusalem, was included in this region), as that area could not “be said to be purely Arab”⁵⁴ and “Britain could extend assurances to Hussein only in”⁵⁵ “those regions lying within those frontiers wherein Great Britain is free to act without detriment to the interest of her ally, France”⁵⁶ as at the time it was well-known that France had a claim to the Eastern Mediterranean, an economic and religious (particularly with the Christians of Lebanon) relationship which the British acknowledged as “compensation for Paris accepting the British position in Egypt.”⁵⁷

3) Arabia, because “he [McMahon] could not promise anything to Hussein that would prejudice Britain’s relationships with other Arab chiefs,”⁵⁸ of whom there were many at the time, chief among them Ibn Saud, who Britain also had already established a significant relationship with.

The early conception of the HKJ is conceivable in this correspondence (see Map 4), though the eventual state was greatly whittled down from this initial design, as will be described in further detail in the next chapter. Evident, too, is a precedent for the prioritization, over the Hashemite state, of British claims in southern Mesopotamia and the British relationships with France and Ibn Saud. Hussein and McMahon did not come to a clear conclusion on the bounds of the proposed state, yet Hussein still encouraged the Arab Revolt the next year on the basis that “he regarded all matters as being subject to negotiation at the Peace Conference,”⁵⁹ and hoped to receive a kingdom in the spoils of an Entente victory.

⁵² “The Hussein-McMahon Correspondence (July 1915-August 1916),” letter no. 4.

⁵³ Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 183.

⁵⁴ “The Hussein-McMahon Correspondence (July 1915-August 1916),” letter no. 4.

⁵⁵ Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 183.

⁵⁶ “The Hussein-McMahon Correspondence (July 1915-August 1916),” letter no. 4.

⁵⁷ D. K. Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958*, 1 edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 45.

⁵⁸ Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 183.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 185.



Map 4 Possible conception of the Arab state outlined in the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence.⁶⁰

British Strategy and the Sykes-Picot Agreement

WWI was an opportunity for the Hashemites and British alike to expand their influence in the Middle East, and at this point Britain was solidifying its aspirations in the region by way of the de Bunsen committee (“the interdepartmental group... created to advise the Cabinet as to what Britain ought to want in the Middle East,”⁶¹ guided by Lord Kitchener and led by Sir Mark Sykes) report in mid-1915. The committee decided that “British influence or control would be

⁶⁰ “Arab State Outlined in Husayn-McMahon Correspondence.” Maps of the Middle East, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, the University of Chicago, <https://cmes.uchicago.edu/sites/cmes.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/Maps/Map%20-%20Husayn-McMahon.pdf>.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 146.

desirable in a wide swath across the Middle East from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf,”⁶² ideally with “a line running from Acre to south of Damascus, then via Tadmor (Palmyra)-Deir ez-Zor-Zakhu to Ruwandiz, [to form] the northern boundary of the British sphere of enterprise in the area”⁶³ as this would connect the British possessions of Egypt and India by land, and offer an alternative route to the one that went through the Suez Canal to the Red Sea and all the way around the Arabian Peninsula. This became Britain’s policy, and really, vision, for a post-war empire, and in early 1916 Britain created an Arab Bureau,⁶⁴ headquartered in Cairo, demonstrating the newfound importance of the region to the Empire.

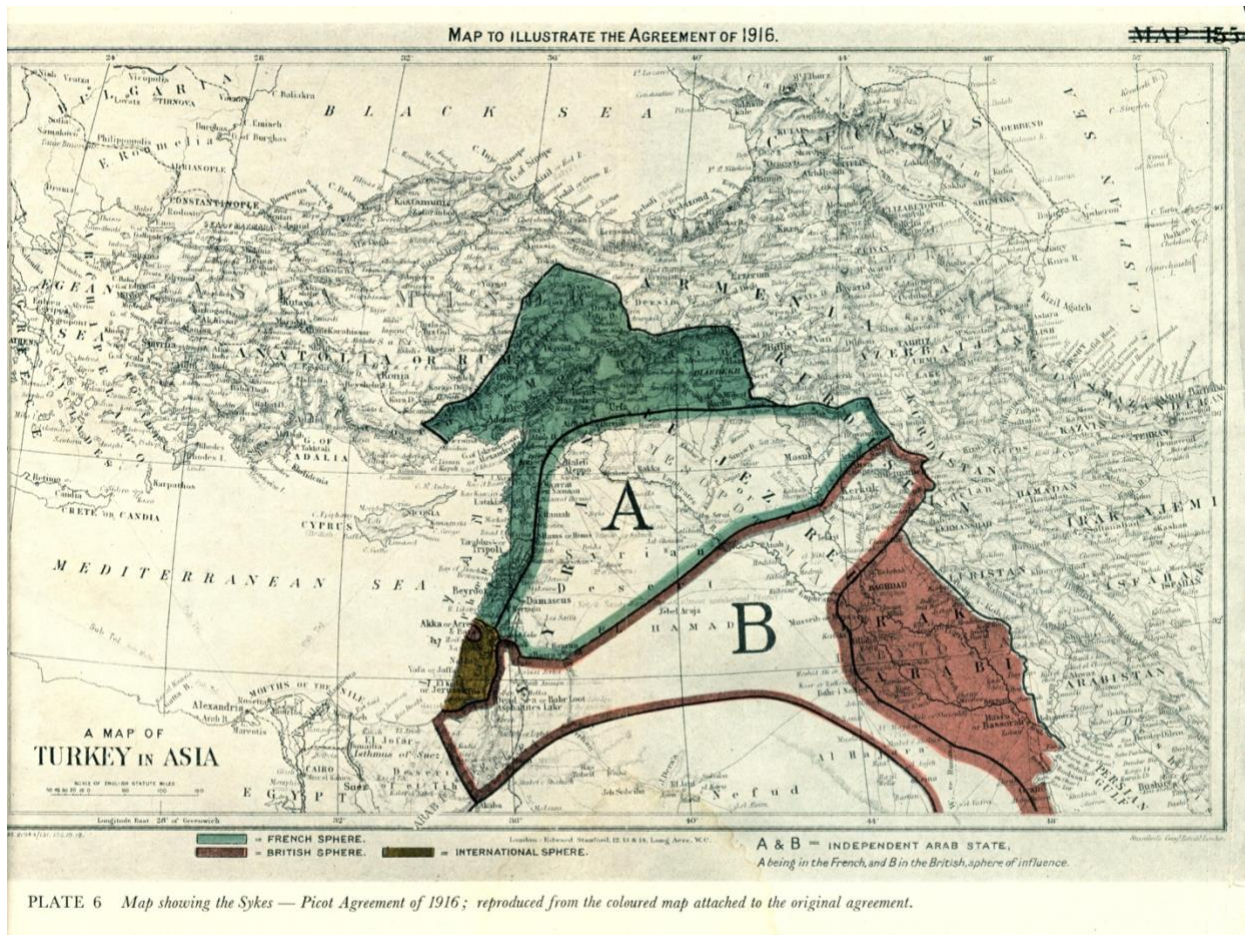
This newly-decided upon British interest in the region was formalized a few months later in secret negotiations with the French, beginning in late 1915 and culminating in the Sykes-Picot Agreement, ratified by Britain, France, and Russia in May of 1916,⁶⁵ and considered one of the most influential policies in shaping the modern state borders of the Middle East (see Appendix B). This agreement consisted of the division of the previously-Ottoman Middle East into spheres of influence and control by the Entente powers (see Map 5).

⁶² Ibid., 148.

⁶³ Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920*, 19.

⁶⁴ Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 170.

⁶⁵ Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958*, 51.



Map 5 The Middle East as divided by the Sykes-Picot Agreement. The blue zone indicates direct French control, the red zone indicates direct British control, and the yellow zone indicates international control. Letters indicate independent Arab states, wherein Zone A would be a French sphere of influence and Zone B, a British sphere of influence.⁶⁶

The British would have influence over an independent Arab state covering a swath of territory reaching from Sinai to Mesopotamia, and full control over the crucial Basra region and, although the sanjaq of Jerusalem was to become an international zone, the British would still have access to the Mediterranean through the enclave of British-controlled Haifa and Acre.⁶⁷ The French would have influence over an independent Arab state located in inland Syria and northern

⁶⁶ “Map showing the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916; reproduced from the coloured map attached to the original agreement.” In Zeine, Zeine N., *The Struggle for Arab Independence: Western Diplomacy and the Rise and Fall of Faisal’s Kingdom in Syria*, First Edition, 1960, Plate 6.

⁶⁷ Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958*, 51.

Mesopotamia (extending to Mosul), and control over nearly the full eastern Mediterranean coast up through the Gulf of Alexandretta (known as the Gulf of Iskenderun today) to Mersina. The plan also included territory from the old Ottoman Empire in Anatolia and Armenia allocated for Italy and Russia, respectively. The British hoped to create their independent Arab state in the southern belt of the Middle East, out of reach of Russian influence, and so the French area acted as a buffer zone between the two imperial powers that posed a real threat in the Middle East (Russia due to its proximity northwards; Britain, its position in Egypt). Creating a British state in this region would also serve “to keep France away from Palestine and Egypt,”⁶⁸ both territories it had at one point laid claim to, but which eventually fell to Britain.

Most of Jordan fell within the British sphere of influence, with no distinction in that area between what would become the mandates of Palestine, Transjordan, and Iraq (see Map 5). The southern border between the British sphere of influence and Arabia is placed further north than the current southeastern border of the HKJ because the Sykes-Picot Agreement followed the bounds of what was accepted to be the extent of the Ottoman Empire (the same curved boundary can be seen in Map 3). While Jordan itself did not offer much to the British in the way of natural resources or cultural capital, it “did provide a territorial link between Iraq, on the one hand, and Palestine and Egypt, on the other, and imperial strategy required, at a minimum, that it be denied to potential adversaries,”⁶⁹ and thus the British would hold onto this territory, and their influence there, for decades to come.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 222.

⁶⁹ Mark Heller, “Politics and the Military in Iraq and Jordan, 1920-1958: The British Influence,” *Armed Forces & Society* 4, no. 1 (1977): 75–99, 87.

The Arab Revolt

During WWI, Jordan became a theater of combat, particularly because of the strategic significance the Hejaz railroad offered (connecting the center of the Ottoman Empire with its religiously important periphery, the Arabian Peninsula, and providing an alternative route to the Red Sea from the British controlled Suez Canal).⁷⁰ The recently established Anglo-Hashemite relationship encouraged the Great Arab Revolt of 1916-1918. Though despite talk of the many secret societies and Arab soldiers in the Turkish army that would desert and join Hussein's force, in actuality the force that undertook the Arab Revolt was quite small. Hussein's sons, Ali, Abdullah, and Faisal, led the forces, guided by the British officials T.E. Lawrence and F.G. Peake. These forces started their fighting on the Arabian Peninsula, and worked their way up to the Levant. While they easily took Mecca, Medina was held by the Turks until the end of the war,⁷¹ but after reaching Aqaba, the revolt entered its second phase,⁷² centered on a series of guerilla attacks primarily aimed at the Jordanian portion of the railroad.⁷³ It has been estimated that Britain sent "11 million pounds sterling to subsidize Hussein's revolt,"⁷⁴ not an insignificant investment considering the real power (or lack thereof) Hussein had at the time.

Though Abdullah was not an unimportant player during the war, it was Faisal, the youngest, and not so much Abdullah, who showed himself to be the budding military mind and particularly impressed Lawrence (adding to the difference in their personalities the fact that Faisal was successful in reaching and taking Damascus in 1918, while Abdullah was stuck on the

⁷⁰ Nicholas J. Saunders and Neil Faulkner, "Fire on the Desert: Conflict Archaeology and the Great Arab Revolt in Jordan, 1916-18," *Antiquity: Cambridge*, 2010, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/504814147/abstract/755E3BC8551B435APQ/1>, 515.

⁷¹ Shwadran, *Jordan*, 113.

⁷² Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire*, 232.

⁷³ Saunders and Faulkner, "Fire on the Desert," 517.

⁷⁴ Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 223.

arduous Medina campaign⁷⁵). As such, following the end of the war, it was Faisal who was initially set up to rule an independent Arab nation in the Levant, a Syria that extended from southern Anatolia down to the Hejaz (encompassing nearly the whole of the HKJ), though the real administrative authority of which was confused and tenuous.⁷⁶

Of course, this happened to benefit the British at the detriment of the French, as “shortly after the capture of Damascus, Feisal had been allowed to occupy and administer the city,”⁷⁷ a city that fell, according to the Sykes-Picot Agreement, within the bounds of the French sphere of influence. Yet it was this prince of the Hashemite clan, his father having been in an alliance with the British for almost five years at this point, who had worked closely with British officials and the Egypt Expeditionary Force (led by General Edmund Allenby and conducting operations against the Turks in Palestine⁷⁸), and was clearly under the influence of the British that would rule Damascus, and so it seemed this would be the Hashemite kingdom the British had promised to Hussein. As justification for this, “Lloyd George obtained from Feisal a public statement that the Arabs who at one time or another during the war had served with him or his father numbered about 100,000,”⁷⁹ when in reality his forces numbered only about 3,500, and argued that “the Arabs under Feisal ‘contributed materially to [their] victory,’”⁸⁰ and therefore it was necessary to uphold Faisal’s claim to Syria over any contractual obligations Britain had made to France previously.⁸¹

⁷⁵ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 34.

⁷⁶ Yoav Alon, *The Making of Jordan: Tribes, Colonialism and the Modern State* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2009), 14.

⁷⁷ Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 394.

⁷⁸ Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire*, 232.

⁷⁹ Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 377.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 378.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 396.

Faisal officially took the throne of Syria in March of 1920, and Paris was naturally displeased with this situation. Feeling cheated out of the Syrian spoils of war they were promised, the French deposed him in July of the same year.⁸² The British and the tribes of the region had, at this point, abandoned Faisal, and thus he left Damascus.⁸³ Interestingly enough, the Congress that endorsed Faisal for the throne of Syria called for Abdullah to sit on the throne of Iraq, and, although of course this did not come to fruition, it ignited Abdullah's grand ambitions for an Arab kingdom of his own.^{84,85}

After the Great War

The Mandate System

In the aftermath of the peace process entailing numerous conferences and agreements ending WWI, the previous Ottoman territory had more or less been realized as planned in the Sykes-Picot Agreement; with the exception that the French territory was more limited, in that it did not extend as far north into Anatolia, and the British gained the territory of Mosul (see Map 6). While the boundaries, and the political entities themselves, were still unclear, it was discussed at the Paris Peace conference of 1919,⁸⁶ and ultimately decided at the San Remo conference in April 1920 that the British would, in fact, have a provisional mandate over Palestine (one political unit consisting of the Ottoman sanjuqs of Jerusalem, Nablus, and Acre, being the modern area of Israel/Palestine, and Transjordan, being the modern HKJ - "without any

⁸² Shwadrán, *Jordan*, 115.

⁸³ Alon, *The Making of Jordan*, 16.

⁸⁴ Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958*, 223.

⁸⁵ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 49.

⁸⁶ Paul Mantoux, *The Deliberations of the Council of Four*, trans. Arthur S. Link and Manfred F. Boemeke, First Edition edition, 2 vols. (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1992), vol. 2, 132.

‘intention at this stage of forming the territory east of the River Jordan into an independent Arab state’⁸⁷) and Mesopotamia (Iraq), and France would have a provisional mandate over Syria (including Lebanon).⁸⁸ The division between the British and French territories was clarified in the Franco-British Convention on Certain Points Connected with the Mandates for Syria and the Lebanon, Palestine and Mesopotamia, signed in December of 1920, in which there is no mention of Transjordan, as it is presumed to be part of the British mandate of Palestine.⁹⁰



Map 6 The post-war Middle East, 1923.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Shwadran, *Jordan*, 126.

⁸⁸ Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958*, 61-62.

⁸⁹ Mantoux, *The Deliberations of the Council of Four*, vol. 2, 140.

⁹⁰ “Franco-British Convention on Certain Points Connected with the Mandates for Syria and the Lebanon, Palestine and Mesopotamia,” *The American Journal of International Law* 16, no. 3 (1922): 122–26, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2213236>.

⁹¹ “New Middle East after World War I (ca. 1923).” Maps of the Middle East, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, the University of Chicago,

In contrast to the African colonies obtained by the allied powers after WWI, these Middle Eastern territories of the “class A” status⁹² were “framed by a late colonial discourse of ‘responsibilities’ rather than, like before 1914, a high colonial discourse of ‘power.’”⁹³ This materialized in a very paternalistic framing of the mandates, wherein the British set up preliminary governments until the Arabs were advanced enough to rule themselves, as they were at that time “not capable of governing themselves.”⁹⁴ This was done in the hopes that an Arab reliance on the imperial powers would be established, which would last long after they formally left the region. The French established what was “in all but name a French colony”⁹⁵ in Syria, with a very different relationship between the mandate government and the imperial power than was established in Transjordan.

Here, I use Elizabeth Thompson’s definition of paternalism, being a “system of rule [in which] the ruler distributes benefits according to his will, not by the right of the ruled, and power is devolved in a mediating hierarchy of males enjoying a priori authority over females and the power to discipline weaker males.”⁹⁶ While the post-WWI class A mandates may have been created in good faith, they still offered a way for the imperial powers to exercise control over and exploit these lands in an enduring manner.

<http://cmes.uchicago.edu/sites/cmes.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/Maps/Map%20-%20The%20New%20Middle%20East%201923.pdf>.

⁹² Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958*, 63.

⁹³ Cyrus Schayegh, “The Mandates and/as Decolonization,” in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of the Middle East Mandates*, ed. Cyrus Schayegh and Andrew Arsan, 1 edition (London: Routledge, 2015), 412–19, 417.

⁹⁴ Mantoux, *The Deliberations of the Council of Four*, vol. 2, 165.

⁹⁵ Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958*, 63.

⁹⁶ Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial Citizens* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 67.

Interregnum in Jordan

In the post-war period, there was a brief interregnum in Jordan, perceived by the British as “a disordered area of tribal conflict.”⁹⁷ This posed a threat to British sovereignty east of the Jordan (particularly vulnerable because they did not have a military force stationed there), as the Bedouin often launched raids into French Syria, and the British were concerned this would provoke a French invasion, and perhaps even occupation, of Jordan.⁹⁸ Additionally, Jordan was a hotbed of Syrian nationalists (exiled from the French mandate) and “propaganda hostile to the Palestine administration.”⁹⁹ As such, the British considered it necessary to bring the mandate under more close management, and raised the first iteration of the Arab Legion¹⁰⁰ and installed a regime of self-government for the Jordanian territory in 1920. Then, too, Sir Herbert Samuel announced that “Transjordan would not come under Palestinian administration,”¹⁰¹ despite the fact that, at the time, the two were joined under the British Mandate for Palestine.

This administration by self-government consisted of three local councils, in Ajlun (centered at Irbid), the Balqa’ (centered at Al-Salt), and Karak, supplemented with a few British advisors.¹⁰²¹⁰³ Suffice to say, these councils “proved unsatisfactory”¹⁰⁴ and did not last long: the territory of Ajlun fragmented and authority decentralized further; authority of the council in Karak did not extend beyond the limits of the town; and while the administration in Al-Salt was

⁹⁷ Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 442.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 443.

⁹⁹ Aaron Klieman, *Foundations of British Policy in the Arab World: The Cairo Conference of 1921*, 1st edition (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), 206.

¹⁰⁰ Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958*, 222.

¹⁰¹ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 47.

¹⁰² Robins, *A History of Jordan*, 14.

¹⁰³ Walid Kazzuha, “The Political Evolution of Transjordan,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 15, no. 2 (May 1979): 239–57, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263207908700407>, 240.

¹⁰⁴ The Trans-Jordan Mandate. Durbin. *The English review*, 1908-1937; London (Jul 1929): 78

mildly successful by comparison, the arrival of Abdullah in Ma'an in November disrupted this system and undermined its legitimacy.¹⁰⁵

Abdullah Enters

This move by Abdullah was a reaction to the loss of Hashemite Syria, as he was supposedly moving up to Damascus to liberate the area from the French and reassert Arab rule.¹⁰⁶ Once upon a time focused on expanding Hashemite rule in Arabia,¹⁰⁷ increasing losses to Ibn Saud (including a humiliating retreat at Turaba¹⁰⁸), combined with the fact that Abdullah was the second son (though supposedly favored by his father) and it was unlikely his elder brother Ali would be passed over for the Hejaz,¹⁰⁹ convinced Abdullah to turn his ambitions northward.¹¹⁰ So in late September of 1920, he left Mecca with a small force, and started for Damascus. Abdullah stopped in Ma'an for about three months, to gather support and clarify his plan.¹¹¹¹¹² After this period, he continued on to Amman at the invitation of a number of Syrian nationalists living there in exile,¹¹³ who would go on to become some of his main Arab advisors while ruling Transjordan, and ended up staying in Amman, despite his professed ambivalence towards the region.¹¹⁴

At the Cairo Conference in March 1921, Britain formulated the Arab kingdoms that it would rule through in the Middle East, appointing Faisal king of Iraq (as compensation for the

¹⁰⁵ Robins, *A History of Jordan*, 15.

¹⁰⁶ Kazziha, "The Political Evolution of Transjordan," 241.

¹⁰⁷ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 31.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁰⁹ Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958*, 63.

¹¹⁰ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 38.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹¹² Kazziha, "The Political Evolution of Transjordan," 241.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Robins, *A History of Jordan*, 20.

loss of Syria) and Abdullah temporary governor of Transjordan,¹¹⁵ in “fulfillment of the undertaking given by Sir Henry MacMahon to the Sharif Husain.”¹¹⁶ Faisal was to be the Arab figurehead for a supposedly independent Iraq, but his close relationship with and reliance on the British ensured a continuation of de facto British control. Abdullah, who had also placed a bid for the Iraqi throne, was overlooked on the grounds that “...Abdullah’s abilities and character would qualify him for the position of titular amir... [and Abdullah was considered] to be cleverer than his brothers, but also unscrupulous, extravagant and very ambitious, and therefore not likely to be content for long as a mere figurehead,”¹¹⁷ and this resulted in heightening the rivalry between him and Faisal.

As Abdullah had just reached Amman,¹¹⁸ Transjordan instead was offered as a means of placating him. The British were unable to grant him Damascus (which he desired most of all),¹¹⁹ and this prevented him from continuing on to invade Syria and provoke the French,¹²⁰ while also compensating him for the lost Iraq. Simultaneously, this served the British by “help[ing] to restrain both the anti-French and the anti-Zionist movements that otherwise might establish their headquarters east of the Jordan.”¹²¹ Particularly as “Sharifian influence in general was increasing steadily at Ma’an under the direction of Abdullah and under his lieutenant, one Sharif Ali ibn Husayn, in Transjordan proper, while British prestige and authority were declining,”¹²² bringing Abdullah under close British administration seemed to be the best option to retain their hold on

¹¹⁵ Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 503.

¹¹⁶ Shwadran, *Jordan*, 134.

¹¹⁷ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 42.

¹¹⁸ Shwadran, *Jordan*, 131.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 133.

¹²⁰ Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 504.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 505.

¹²² Klieman, *Foundations of British Policy in the Arab World*, 206.

the territory while “avoiding [both] military intervention and direct control in Transjordan.”¹²³ For Abdullah, not only was he granted a state to rule, but “thus he would not be forced to lose face by either challenging France or withdrawing to the Hijaz.”¹²⁴

One key difference here is that Faisal was to be made to seem chosen by the Iraqi people,¹²⁵ whereas, since Abdullah was only to be a temporary ruler, there was no issue with a blatantly British-installed Arab administration. In reality, as both brothers were natives of the Hejaz and not of the regions they were to govern, they were completely and utterly dependent on the British to hold their new offices.¹²⁶¹²⁷ Abdullah met with Churchill in Jerusalem in March of 1921 and (somewhat reluctantly) accepted the offer,¹²⁸ which was outlined as follows:

“1) Abdullah to prevent action against the French; 2) to renounce his rights and claims to Iraq; 3) to undertake to maintain order in Transjordan; 4) to recognize the British mandate over Transjordan as part of the Palestine mandate; and to set up an Arab government and administer the territory in the name of the mandatory; 5) to receive for six months a monthly subsidy of £5,000; 6) a British representative of the High Commissioner to be stationed in Amman as adviser to the Amir’s government and to help set up the administration; 7) the British to recognize the independence of Transjordan at some future date.”¹²⁹

In this original understanding it was clear that this arrangement was a temporary one, to last only six months, and Abdullah was wholly on board with this temporal brevity, as he still harbored aspirations beyond Jordan (and even suggested to Churchill the combination of Palestine or Iraq with Transjordan, and clearly wished for the reunification of Syria and Jordan - evidenced by his

¹²³ Ibid., 210.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 506.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 505.

¹²⁷ Harrison Guthorn, “A Point of Order: A Battle for Autonomy in the First Legislative Council of Transjordan,” in *The First World War and Its Aftermath, The Shaping of the Middle East* (Gingko, 2015), 295–312, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1h1hxfv.21>, 299.

¹²⁸ Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958*, 224.

¹²⁹ Shwadran, *Jordan*, 132.

“cabinet [composed almost] entirely of nationalists who had previously served Faysal in Syria... [which] looked like a government in exile and aptly symbolized Abdullah’s ambitions to move on to Damascus”¹³⁰ - any of these scenarios of course under his rule, and the latter of which Churchill in fact led Abdullah to believe was a real possibility).¹³¹

This plan appealed to the British in that it was the cheapest option (as it did not necessitate any additional troops) and “the ideal [ruler of Transjordan] would be a person who was not too powerful, and who was not an inhabitant of Transjordan, but who relied upon His Majesty's Government for the retention of his office.”¹³² Abdullah was just this person, and this plan appealed to him as a stepping stone to greater power.

Early Mandatory Transjordan

Abdullah established his government in April of 1921. These first six months did not go as well or even as uneventful as hoped due to Abdullah’s ambivalence towards Transjordan and the ineptitude of his chief political officer appointed by the British, Albert Abramson. Abdullah was often torn between his Syrian nationalist and British advisors, and seemed to be an ineffective and unsatisfactory leader and a spendthrift. This problem was exacerbated by a number of other disturbances in the young state: the refusal of Kura to pay taxes;¹³³ the resistance of the tribes to the Syrian nationalists in the government¹³⁴; an attack, thought to be carried out by Syrian nationalists (perhaps even those in Abdullah’s government) living in Transjordan, across the Syrian border on a French officer, which came to be known as the

¹³⁰ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 62.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 53.

¹³² Kazziha, “The Political Evolution of Transjordan,” 244.

¹³³ Shwadran, *Jordan*, 146.

¹³⁴ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 65.

Gouraud incident;¹³⁵¹³⁶ and the creeping threat of Wahhabism uniting tribes across Arabia and later culminating in an attack near Amman.¹³⁷¹³⁸ The British used these conflicts to their advantage, to oust Syrian nationalists from the cabinet, thus improving relations with France and strengthening their own influence over Abdullah, and to protect Palestine, while encouraging Abdullah's dependence on Britain in terms of monetary and military support to address these conflicts.¹³⁹¹⁴⁰

In spite of these bumps in the road, Lawrence (who had disproportionate influence over British policy towards the Middle East after his famed exploits in WWI) saw no better alternative for the administration of Transjordan, and so convinced Abdullah to stay on (fairly easily, as at this point it was clear that his dream for Syria was not to be realized) and the British to keep him on, and had Abramson was replaced by the more effective St John Philby, and later the influential Henry Cox.¹⁴¹ Still, British concern with Transjordan was “not so much encouragement of national aspirations... as protection of Palestine from anti-British and anti-Zionist activities [particularly in the form of rapidly expanding Wahhabism¹⁴²] and of Syria from propaganda against the French.”¹⁴³ Britain was continuing to make its policy towards Transjordan indirectly policy towards other, more important concerns, and harbored the desire to reconcile Transjordan as an Arab province of Palestine.¹⁴⁴¹⁴⁵

¹³⁵ Ibid., 65-66.

¹³⁶ Kazziha, “The Political Evolution of Transjordan,” 248.

¹³⁷ Shwadran, *Jordan*, 149.

¹³⁸ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 71.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 72

¹⁴⁰ Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958*, 222.

¹⁴¹ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 68.

¹⁴² Ibid., 71.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 69. Ellipses included in original text.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 70.

¹⁴⁵ Kazziha, “The Political Evolution of Transjordan,” 249.

Abdullah continued on as Emir of Transjordan beyond the six months initially agreed upon, though not in a further defined capacity until he went to London in the fall of 1922, a visit which marked the clear establishment of Transjordan as a distinct political entity. During this visit, the terms of his rule were redefined in a more permanent agreement, and the visit resulted in the written assurance that

“Subject to approval of the League of Nations, His Britannic Majesty’s Government will recognise the existence of an independent Government in Trans-Jordan, under the rule of His Highness the Amir Abdullah ibn Husain, provided such government is constitutional and places His Britannic Majesty’s Government in a position to fulfill their international obligations in respect of the territory by means of an agreement to be concluded between the two Governments.”¹⁴⁶

Following this, the creation of a separate Transjordan was formalized when the League of Nations recognized the Mandate of Transjordan as distinct from that of Palestine, as Transjordan was “exclude[d] from the Zionist provisions of the Palestine Mandate [and] thus Transjordan was internationally recognized as an independent political entity.”¹⁴⁷

Moving into the Mandate Period

It is evident that Jordan was completely and utterly at the whim of British imperial interest (of which Jordan was almost always near the bottom of the list of priorities). There was not a coherent policy aimed at Jordan, but rather the British used it to execute their policies towards its more valuable neighbors, as will be further explained in the next chapter: as stated plainly by Mark Heller, “the state of Transjordan was not only artificial, but accidental as well.”¹⁴⁸ From the beginnings of the Anglo-Hashemite relationship, Britain makes clear its priorities from the definitions of the Sykes-Picot Agreement (in which French claims to Syria

¹⁴⁶ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 75.

¹⁴⁷ Kazzuha, “The Political Evolution of Transjordan,” 253.

¹⁴⁸ Heller, “Politics and the Military in Iraq and Jordan, 1920-1958,” 88.

and British desire for the oil-rich and strategic Basra region steer the agreement), to the post-WWI governance of Jordan as a hesitant rejection of French power, and the ultimate installation of Abdullah as Emir due to a lack of viable alternatives.

Ultimately, the creation of Transjordan, and the installation of Abdullah, can be boiled down to a few key strategic interests. This political entity was established by Britain to balance French power in Syria; connect other, more valuable British territories by land and airspace (those territories being Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, and India); and provide a buffer zone for Palestine, in the way of an Arab counterbalance to the emerging Zionist state, and a pro-Western buffer between this Zionist state and other Arab states. The realpolitik nature of Jordan's importance to Britain is reflected accurately by Philip Robins, in his characterization of Britain's increasing level of attentiveness to Jordan following WWI:

“Britain therefore soon realised that it could not permit a political vacuum in Transjordan for fear that it would soon be filled by others in what was still a highly dynamic, post-conflict regional context... From its very inception as an entity Transjordan's value, not for its own sake but as a buffer and a bridge among lands of inestimably greater importance, was recognised.”¹⁴⁹

Abdullah offered a way of both fulfilling McMahon's promise to King Hussein of an independent, Hashemite-governed Arab state, and providing a pliable, pro-British, Arab governor to rule over the region. Despite the geographic insignificance and lack of natural resource wealth of Jordan, Abdullah was willing to take on this role because, while he had grand ambitions for a kingdom of his own, the Hejaz was unavailable as it had been promised to his older brother (and was conquered by Ibn Saud a few years later, in any case), Syria was out of the question because of vocal French resistance to a Hashemite governor, and he had been overlooked for his younger brother in the case of Iraq, so Transjordan was the only opportunity

¹⁴⁹ Robins, *A History of Jordan*, 13.

left for him. Just as Abdullah's options in the Middle East were narrowed down, so, too, was the territory that would become his kingdom, as the next chapter will clarify. This symbiotic relationship between HMG and Abdullah would continue on for the entirety of Mandatory Transjordan, and into the independent Hashemite Kingdom's first decade or so.

Here, I have aimed to answer how the state of Jordan came into existence, specifically, in the iteration that it does today, and why Abdullah, a prince of the Hejaz and a non-native to Jordan, was installed as its king. To these questions, I believe the answer lies wholly in the British imperial interest. I examine the historical precedent for and the considerations that led to the creation of the Jordanian state in order to emphasize its artificiality, and situate the territorial and political definition of the state that will be examined in chapters two and three, respectively.

Chapter 2: Geographical State-Formation

"The formation of international boundaries in the Middle East in this period was an important exercise in the reconstruction of political space following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and it played an equally important role in redefining the spatial parameters of life inside TransJordan."¹⁵⁰

As established in the previous chapter, the groundwork for a territorial Jordanian state was laid from the beginnings of the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence through the First World War peace negotiations. However, many of Jordan's official borders were not clearly defined until much later. In this chapter, I argue that the reasoning and process of delineation reinforces the premise that Jordan was created in a reactionary manner, rather than an intentional one. (A note: though the borders of the HKJ have changed some since the original drawing of the mandate, I will focus on the original borders established by the British.)

In this chapter, I will examine the process of state formation through the lens of geography and border delineation. Yizhak Gil-Har writes:

"The southern boundaries of Trans-Jordan created a novelty in the geographical landscape of the Middle East. They were determined not according to historical or administrative precedents or any ethnic factors. The boundaries were delimited in contradiction to the needs of the local government and to those of the administration of the Hijaz Railway. The military and the political authorities conceived the boundary lines under the pressure of current events. The inability of the Royal Air Force or the Army to defend distant areas was the dominant factor in fixing the boundaries, while at the same time they kept in mind the Imperial interests. The new boundaries also reflected the changes in ideas about the geo-strategic importance for the British of the Middle East in the aftermath of the First World War."¹⁵¹

Gil-Har is explicitly discussing the Transjordan-Saudi border here, however this argument can be applied to all the borders of Jordan. For the most part, these borders ignored prior administrative zones and tribal migratory patterns, and created political distinctions with little regard to the

¹⁵⁰ V. M. Amadouny, "Correspondence," *Middle Eastern Studies* 29, no. 4 (October 1, 1993): 770–73, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263209308700979>, 770.

¹⁵¹ Yitzhak Gil-Har, "Delimitation Boundaries: Trans-Jordan and Saudi Arabia," *Middle Eastern Studies* 28, no. 2 (1992): 374–84, 382.

indigenous population. These borders were created by the British with imperial strategy as the main concern, rather than with the interest of the people living within the borders at the forefront. The Hashemite schemes for a larger Arab kingdom were overlooked, too, as “despite the resort [of the British] to a Sharifian solution in Iraq and Transjordan, Hashemite aspiration in the postwar era labored under the double handicap of France’s determination to carve out a Syrian Empire and British hostility or indifference to Hussein’s efforts to protect the Hijaz against Ibn Sa’ud.”¹⁵² In this chapter I will further examine these neighboring interests, and how they affected the territory of Transjordan.

Carving up the Middle East

“Britain’s interests and policies in the Middle East... were undoubtedly dominated by commerce, politics and strategy. Commerce was the informal, operating structure and the language of diplomacy, politics was the means of upholding British power, and strategy was the aim of British power in the region, an end which was ultimately to secure the route and the communications to the East.”¹⁵³

The “Eastern Question,” or the dilemma of the absence of a hegemon in in the Middle East in the event of the demise of the Ottoman Empire, was one that intrigued the European powers for perhaps a century leading up to this question actually having to be answered. Britain and France were especially eager to claim prior Ottoman territory as “German power and influence in Constantinople were greater than ever [especially with the German building of the Baghdad railway¹⁵⁴ and the “modernization and re-organization of the Army under German instruction” and] the threat of Russia was still worrying the Indian government severely...”¹⁵⁵ In

¹⁵² Tariq Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 2013 edition (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 55.

¹⁵³ Marian Kent, *Moguls and Mandarins: Oil, Imperialism and the Middle East in British Foreign Policy 1900-1940*, 1 edition (London, England ; Portland, Or: Routledge, 1993), 26.

¹⁵⁴ Khalidi, *British Policy Towards Syria and Palestine, 1906-14*, 75.

¹⁵⁵ Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920*, 2.

the wake of WWI and the ultimate collapse of the Ottoman Empire, France and Great Britain wasted no time in replacing Istanbul and claiming spheres of influence in the Middle East. This was begun with the Sykes-Picot Agreement and reiterated in the peace conferences that ended WWI, discussed in the prior chapter, and this Agreement influenced the next decade of demarcating the Middle East.

In the de Bunsen report, the British had taken “a pessimistic view of the future of Turkey,” and already made assumptions about the future of the land being one of spheres of influence rather than autonomous states: “it was probably no longer possible to preserve the empire; the Russians, the Greeks and the Italians needed a minimum, the French would be angered if not given anything, and international financial interests would take over the rest.”¹⁵⁶

As, in the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence, the British had promised to secure an Arab kingdom in the Middle East in exchange for the Arab Revolt, the Hashemite sons of Hussein remained key players in British deliberation regarding the Middle East mandates. To Abdullah at the 1921 conference on the Middle East, Churchill, the head of the Middle East Department of the Colonial Office at the time, claimed that “the fact [was] that the peace settlement [of WWI] and their promises to third parties did not leave Great Britain free to act in Syria and in Western Palestine”¹⁵⁷ on behalf of the Sherifian family and Arab nationalist cause, and thus, Abdullah was left with Transjordan as the promised Arab state. Here, the referral to “promises to third parties” can be interpreted as chiefly to the French, with regards to Syria, as established in the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the peace settlements following the war, and to the Zionists, with regards to Western Palestine, as outlined in the Balfour Declaration.

¹⁵⁶ Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920*, 24.

¹⁵⁷ “Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem March 12th to 30th, 1921,” First Conversation on Trans-Jordania, 108.

In an official note on British policy in Arabia by the India office, Sir Frederic Arthur Hirtzel wrote:

“We are not pledged to King Husain to prevent the French from establishing a protectorate: our pledges only relate to those areas in which we can act without detriment to French interests, and we ought to take our stand firmly on that ground, and not allow ourselves to be used by the Arabs to secure their interests in Syria at the expense of the French. That is, however, what we are doing at present; and in doing it we risk losing the fruits of the Mesopotamian campaign for the beaux yeux of King Husain and his scheming sons.”¹⁵⁸

Hirtzel demonstrates first, the British prioritization of the French over any relationship or agreement with Hussein (or other Arabs); second, the British perception of Mesopotamia as the most valuable of its Middle Eastern mandates; and third, the British ambivalence towards Hussein and their willingness to cooperate with him only if it worked to their advantage.

Kitchener was the primary proponent of a “an Arab caliphate and a British-protected Arab state,” writing in 1915, “Should the partition of Turkey take place... it is to our interests to see an Arab Kingdom established in Arabia under the auspices of England, bounded in the north by the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates and containing within it the chief Mahommedan Holy Places, Mecca, Medina and Kerbala.”¹⁵⁹ The British administration in India preferred “a solid treaty system with local Arab rulers and chiefs,” with particular focus on the Persian Gulf, yet the influence of Kitchener’s Cairo staff won out in the aftermath of WWI, as the Arab Bureau and the bulk of British policy towards the Middle East was based in Cairo as well.

British priority in the post-war negotiations on the Middle East was the strategic linkage of the Empire above all else:

“Defence of the communications route to the East was fundamental, which meant, according to the British General Staff in 1919, maintaining ‘a chain of contiguous areas under British influence’, which could be strengthened, it was hoped, by rail and air

¹⁵⁸ “Policy in Arabia. Note by India Office,” November 20, 1918, 2.

¹⁵⁹ Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920*, 18.

communications to India which, ‘as our greatest possession in the East, may be likened to a most valuable appendage at the end of the chain’. The political means for achieving this aim was through the mandates system.”¹⁶⁰

Transjordan was, of course, an important piece in this connection of British territories (particularly “in order to draw Palestine and Mesopotamia more closely together”¹⁶¹) and as a balance to French influence in the region, but its strategic value ended there. Here, I will examine the specific reasons why and ways in which the surrounding countries were prioritized over the Jordanian interest, and how this was reflected in the creation of their borders.

Border Delineation

Israel/Palestine

Great consideration was given by the British to the borders of Palestine, however this same care was not given to those of Transjordan. Rather, the debate over the Palestinian borders inadvertently shaped the western border of Transjordan.¹⁶² This is perhaps because while there was a heated debate sparked by the Zionists over the Palestinian territory, there was no equivalent movement in Transjordan or the Arab world beyond addressing the Transjordanian territory. As such, the western border of Transjordan was simply a byproduct of the eastern border of Palestine. After the Balfour Declaration of 1919, the British were committed to the Zionist cause and the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. According to Robert Lieshout, “it was generally accepted by the British policy makers, whether eagerly or reluctantly, that Great Britain would be the mandatory power for Palestine, that it would be the mandatory’s duty to

¹⁶⁰ Kent, *Moguls and Mandarins*, 25.

¹⁶¹ “Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem March 12th to 30th, 1921,” First Conversation on Trans-Jordania, 110.

¹⁶² Robert H. Lieshout, *Britain and the Arab Middle East: World War I and Its Aftermath*, (I.B.Tauris, 2016), 382.

implement the Balfour Declaration and that this entailed creating the conditions that would give the Zionists the opportunity eventually to establish in Palestine a Jewish state.”¹⁶³

While the Zionists did push for an expanded Palestine whose eastern border was “a line close to and west of the Hejaz railway,”¹⁶⁴ somewhere slightly to the east of the Jordan River, Lord Curzon, a vocal anti-Zionist and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs after Balfour, pushed back on the grounds that the strip of land to the east of the Jordan was not historical Palestine. The border was eventually decided to follow the general guide of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which distinguished in the north the international zone of Jerusalem from the British sphere of influence, and was set along the Jordan River.¹⁶⁵

Palestine offered a much greater strategic and symbolic value to the British than Transjordan did. Adjacent to British Egypt, from which British WWI operations and Middle East policy were headquartered, “Palestine guarded the Suez Canal, with Haifa as the base both for land defences inland and as a potential base for light Naval forces in the Eastern Mediterranean.”¹⁶⁶ The economically valuable port city of Haifa would offer a trade base for the British on the Eastern Mediterranean, and later, the Baghdad-Haifa railway and pipeline would bring Iraqi oil to the Mediterranean for transport to the British Isles. Jukka Nevakivi outlines the specific strategic significance of Haifa:

“Since the Sinai border dispute with Turkey in 1906, the Committee of Imperial Defence had accelerated its plans in fear of an eventual attack against the weak eastern flank of the Suez Canal area... The Morley committee [in 1909 “appointed under the presidency of Lord Morley to consider the military requirements of the empire as affected by the defence of the Canal”] decided in favour of Haifa as the most suitable landing-place for the offensive defence of the [Suez] Canal. It was near enough to have a disturbing effect on any enemy lines of communication, and provided a suitable bridgehead for a possible

¹⁶³ Ibid., 381.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 383.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 382.

¹⁶⁶ Kent, *Moguls and Mandarins*, 157.

advance by the Haifa-Dera'a line to the Hijaz railway and from there to the centre of Syria."¹⁶⁷

Additionally, the conquest of Palestine during WWI by Edmund Allenby was seen as a sort of modern-day crusade, bringing the Holy Land back under Christian power. The Zionist cause had much more European support than the Arab nationalists looking to Syria or elsewhere in the Arab world, and this, too, gave Britain cause to focus on Palestine. Early Zionism and waves of European Jewish immigration to Palestine also meant that there was more of both economic growth in Palestine as compared to Transjordan (which, while experiencing population growth of its own in this time, was not growing at the same rate as Palestine, and did not have as well-established of cultural and economic cities as hubs for growth, and the immigration into Transjordan did not spark the tension it did in Palestine).

The conceptual boundary between Palestine and Transjordan, in the British view at the least, is expressed in the tactical division of the Middle East in WWI by the British military; wherein "Palestine [proper, "i.e. the area west of the Jordan-Dead Sea-Akaba line and south of the Lebanon, which forms the Sanjak of Jerusalem"¹⁶⁸] was designated the main theatre of war for the EEF [and thus] the organization of war drew up a sketch map separating Trans-Jordan from the Hijaz and Trans-Jordan from Palestine."¹⁶⁹ Following this, in the post-war military occupation of the Ottoman territory, General Allenby declared in 1918 "the line along the Jordan Valley, Dead Sea, Wadi Araba to Akaba served as a border between Palestine proper and Trans-Jordan."¹⁷⁰ This vague line would serve as the border between Palestine and Transjordan

¹⁶⁷ Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920*, 7.

¹⁶⁸ Yitzhak Gil-Har, "Boundaries Delimitation: Palestine and Trans-Jordan," *Middle Eastern Studies* 36, no. 1 (January 2000): 68–81, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263200008701297>, 68.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 69.

until the official partition of the mandates in 1921. “Seasonal changes in regional water systems”¹⁷¹ affected the territory accorded to each Palestine and Transjordan, with flooding and drying changing the landscape based on the water lines, and thus it was necessary to make a more formal delineation between the two to avoid conflict over territory of and resources from the water sources.

With the partition of Transjordan from the Palestinian Mandate in 1921, Transjordan was determined to be the land east of the Jordan River, after “British officials in London and Palestine carried on a ‘fevered correspondence’ in order to determine the exact placement of the border,”¹⁷² and in 1922, the border was approved by the League of Nations in the Palestinian Mandate as more or less continuing south from the Dead Sea to the Red Sea: “compris[ing] all territory lying to the east of a line drawn from a point two miles west of the town of Akaba on the Gulf of that name, up the centre of the Wadi Araba, Dead Sea and River Jordan to its junction with the River Yarmuk; thence up the centre of that river to the Syrian border.”¹⁷³ This area east of the Jordan would serve as a buffer between the more valuable Palestine proper and the threat of raids from inner Arabia by the Ikhwan.¹⁷⁴

Iraq

As noted in the previous chapter with reference to the Sykes-Picot Agreement, the area in Zone B, most of which would eventually become Transjordan, was defined as a zone of British influence, whereas most of Mesopotamia would be under direct British control. This is an

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 76.

¹⁷² Fredrik Meiton, “Throwing Transjordan into Palestine: Electrification and State Formation, 1921-1954,” in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of the Middle East Mandates*, ed. Cyrus Schayegh and Andrew Arsan, 1 edition (London: Routledge, 2015), 291–307, 293.

¹⁷³ Gil-Har, “Boundaries Delimitation,” 70.

¹⁷⁴ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 56.

important distinction to note when it comes to British attitudes and policy differences between that towards Transjordan and Iraq, as it reflects the clear prioritization of Iraq over Transjordan by the British Foreign Office.

Also mentioned in the previous chapter was that early on, Abdullah was considered for the throne of Iraq, but it was professed by the British India office that “Abdullah, who is personally unknown in Mesopotamia, would find in his father’s prestige a very weak claim to acceptance”¹⁷⁵ and so “Abdullah would not be accepted by the Arabs of Iraq as King, and would greatly embarrass us.”¹⁷⁶ This rejection of Abdullah was based on the evaluation by Gertrude Bell, perhaps the most prominent British expert on Iraq, that “the recognition awarded to the Sherif [Hussein]... is of the most tenuous kind [in Mesopotamia]. The respect which his name undoubtedly arouses is given to him as a religious luminary, the first in Islam, not as a political leader.”¹⁷⁷ The same analysis of the Transjordanians regarding how they might receive Abdullah was not conducted, indicating that the British were less concerned about his ejection from or instability in Jordan.

Later, Abdullah suggested the combination of Iraq and Transjordan into one kingdom under his rule,¹⁷⁸ however this did not come to fruition either. This was perhaps because of the vast difference in the British evaluation of the two territories: while Britain had little interest in the land east of the Jordan much prior to WWI, “Southern Mesopotamia was considered in London to be a British sphere of interest. ‘The situation of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf has well been described as unique,’ Sir Edward Grey wrote in 1910, ‘...She has for generations borne

¹⁷⁵ “Policy in Arabia. Note by India Office,” November 20, 1918, 2.

¹⁷⁶ “Policy in Arabia. Note by India Office,” November 20, 1918, 3.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁷⁸ “Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem March 12th to 30th, 1921.”

burdens there which no other nation has ever undertaken anywhere except in the capacity of sovereign.”¹⁷⁹

Why this prioritization of Mesopotamia existed is quite simple: it can be boiled down to the potential of oil reserves and the strategic location of Mesopotamia on the Persian Gulf in relation to the jewel in England’s crown, India. At the very beginning of the twentieth century, the true potential of oil as a means to power the British Empire had just been revealed, (and the Middle East as a source of that oil, since oil was discovered in Persia in 1908¹⁸⁰). Oil could be a viable alternative for the at-that-time coal-powered British naval fleet, and thus decrease both the number of stops needed to refuel, and the weight and space taken up by heavy coal on board, as well as requiring fewer crew members to maintain it.¹⁸¹ As such, in 1911, “the Royal Navy began its conversion from coal to oil.”¹⁸² A railway and pipeline from Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean had already been proposed by 1921 in line with a “far-sighted policy of Imperial... development in the future,”¹⁸³ despite the fact that oil reserves had not yet been confirmed in Mesopotamia.

Additionally, a hold on Mesopotamia would facilitate trade and the connection of British holdings by offering a route to India by way of the Persian Gulf as opposed to that of the Red Sea, and it would shorten the air route to Australia from Britain (see Map 7).¹⁸⁴ In this sense, too, Transjordan offered some value as a way of connecting the more valuable British territories of Mesopotamia and Palestine, and thus offering a land route from the Mediterranean to the Persian

¹⁷⁹ Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920*, 2.

¹⁸⁰ Kent, *Moguls and Mandarins*, 36.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁸² Bradshaw, *The Glubb Reports*, 7.

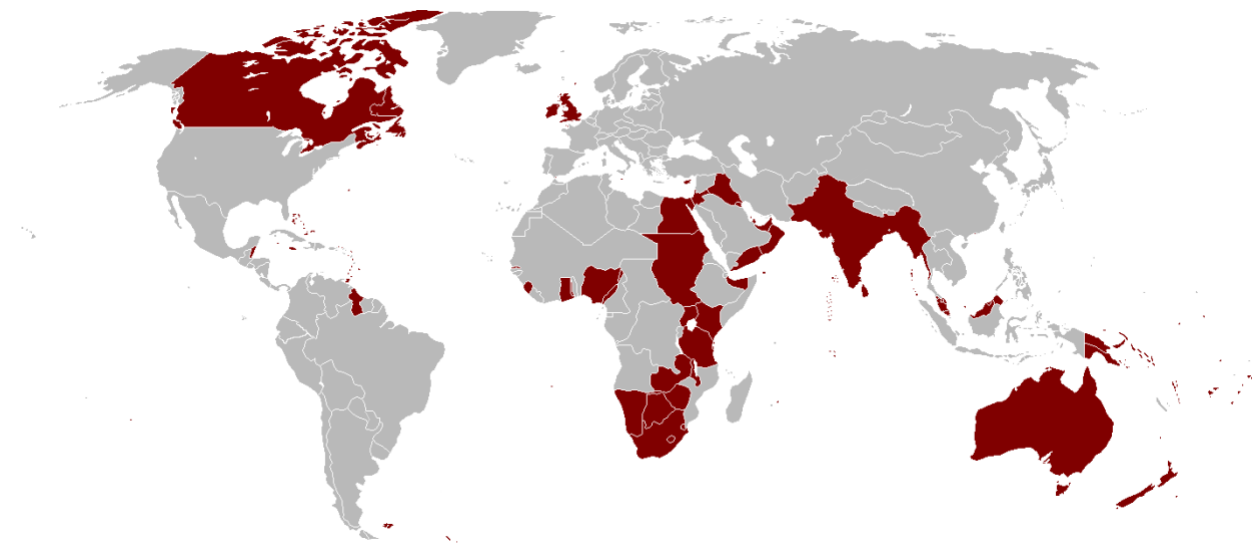
¹⁸³ “Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem March 12th to 30th, 1921,” 11.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

Gulf, and offering an alternative to the Suez Canal and circumnavigating the Arabian Peninsula to reach India from the British Isles (see Map 7). Marian Kent explains the essence of British interest in Mesopotamia in the WWI-era quite succinctly in *Moguls and Mandarins: Oil, Imperialism and the Middle East in British Foreign Policy 1900-1940*:

Imperialism and the Middle East in British Foreign Policy 1900-1940:

“Although, again, we have to remember that oil was not struck in commercial quantities until 15 October 1927 and was not brought on-stream until 1934, the whole question of the Mesopotamian oil concession was to prove to be of considerable diplomatic and strategic importance to British policy-makers. In the first place, it was located next to the British-controlled Persian oil concession, of which the Admiralty had such high hopes. For that reason it was important not to allow foreign interests to dominate the area. But in the second place, British control over a possible source of oil that would be available by pipeline at the Mediterranean (and so avoid the costly Suez Canal dues) would clearly be advantageous to British naval and strategic interests. In the third place, Mesopotamia was of strategic importance in its own right. For that reason also, foreign and potentially hostile interests must not be allowed to have a predominant presence.”¹⁸⁵



*Map 7 The British Empire as of 1921.*¹⁸⁶

Ultimately, there was not a formal border delineation treaty concerning the Transjordan-Iraq border as there was with Saudi Arabia, or even much reference to boundary disputes as with

¹⁸⁵ Kent, *Moguls and Mandarins*, 16.

¹⁸⁶ “British Empire 1921.” Wikimedia Commons, August 27, 2008, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:British_Empire_1921.png.

Syria and Palestine.¹⁸⁷ As this border is truly in the middle of the desert (and not a contentious territory with a figure like Ibn Saud threatening infringement upon it, but at the time the territory of the brother and political ally of Emir Abdullah), there was little debate or concern over where the border should lie. Additionally, as these were both Anglo-Hashemite states, there was even less concern over overlapping territorial commitments or external threats.

Syria

With respect to Syria, it is clear that “much of the history of the formation of the Transjordan-Syria boundary is concerned with diplomatic, rather than geographical issues.”¹⁸⁸ This border is the clearest example of impact of the imperial schemes and rivalries of European powers on the modern Middle East. From the beginning of the twentieth century, the two Great Powers had divided the Levant between themselves: “they included Palestine in a de facto British sphere of influence via delicate railway negotiations which accorded the rest of Syria to France.”¹⁸⁹ For the French awarding Britain the oil-rich Mosul in the post-WWI peace negotiations, Britain was happy to defer to French interest in Syria and Lebanon as to not upset their ally in WWI and regional rival: “At no time did Great Britain claim rights there [Syria] on grounds of tradition... [Britain’s] presence in the Levant was never... comparable to the extensive, continuous and determined French penetration in the area.”¹⁹⁰ The French claimed a cultural link and economic legacy with Syria and Lebanon, citing the Christian minorities in the region that Paris saw itself as the protector of, and investing heavily in Syria throughout the

¹⁸⁷ Shwadran, *Jordan*, 12.

¹⁸⁸ V. M. Amadouny, “The Formation of the Transjordan-Syria Boundary, 1915–32,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 31, no. 3 (July 1, 1995): 533–49, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263209508701068>, 536.

¹⁸⁹ Khalidi, *British Policy Towards Syria and Palestine, 1906-14*, iii.

¹⁹⁰ Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920*, 5.

nineteenth century.¹⁹¹ During the Ottoman period, the French held “the major share of European investments in the Empire”¹⁹² and managed to take large control of the Syrian economy through banking and investment, a strategic play by the French looking forward to answering the Eastern Question.¹⁹³

Following the division of the Middle East into European mandates, the French continued this heavy-handed management of Syria; in comparison to the British method of ruling through appointed monarchs (at least in Iraq and Transjordan). As such, the Hashemite claim to Greater Syria was dashed when the French forced Faisal out only months after his establishing a kingdom based in Damascus. Upon arrival in Ma’an in 1920, Abdullah stated that “his original intention [in coming to Transjordan] had been to preserve the remnant of his brother's kingdom of Syria.”¹⁹⁴ Syria was clearly more valuable territory than Transjordan, because its land was wholly arable and its cities well-established centers of culture and politics, and there were swells of Arab nationalism that would have potentially given grassroots support to Abdullah. However, even if Abdullah had made it to Syria, the French would never have allowed rule through an alliance with a Hashemite kingdom, as they took a much more hands-on, paternalistic approach to their mandates in Syria and Lebanon.

While “the Peace Conference at its meeting in San Remo on 25 April 1920 decided to entrust the mandate of Syria to France, and the mandates of Palestine and Mesopotamia to Great Britain, [it did so] without defining the borders of these territories.”¹⁹⁵ De facto, the border

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Khalidi, *British Policy Towards Syria and Palestine, 1906-14*, 75.

¹⁹³ Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920*, 6.

¹⁹⁴ “Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem,” March 12th to 30th, 1921, Second Conversation on Trans-Jordania, 111-112.

¹⁹⁵ Gil-Har, “Boundaries Delimitation,” 70.

between the Mandate of Transjordan and that of Syria followed the lines drawn in the Sykes-Picot Agreement (see Map 5).

A horizontal division of the Middle East between the British and French was preferable for both powers. For the French, this ensured the preservation of economic interests along the northeastern Mediterranean as well as influence over the Levantine Christians, who were concentrated more in the north, and for the British, this offered a means of creating a contiguous land connection towards India and put a French buffer zone (another proposal of Kitchener) between the British territories and Russia, which presented a threat of influence and potential expansion from the north.¹⁹⁶

The primary consideration of the official demarcation of the French Syrian-Transjordanian border was the presence of Druze, who were considered to fall under the jurisdiction of the French, and whom the French used to attempt to expand their territory into that of Transjordan.¹⁹⁷¹⁹⁸ While the delineation of the border was first officially discussed at the Franco-British Convention of 1920, the final demarcation of the border did not occur until 1931-1932.¹⁹⁹²⁰⁰

Saudi Arabia

The Transjordan-Saudi border is distinct from Jordan's other borders because, at the time, it was the only border with a state which was not under a European mandate. However, the British did have an alliance with Ibn Saud (even when he was Hussein's rival, also a British ally), and gave him priority over their least valuable mandate in Transjordan, as to not provoke

¹⁹⁶ Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920*, 23.

¹⁹⁷ Amadouny, "The Formation of the Transjordan-Syria Boundary, 1915-32," 537.

¹⁹⁸ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 100.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 101.

²⁰⁰ Amadouny, "The Formation of the Transjordan-Syria Boundary, 1915-32," 543.

him or have to get more involved militarily: the British “abandoned the pro-Sharifian policy of the war years and embraced instead Ibn Sa’ud [as] the latter was now viewed as the coming power in Arabia, and his conciliation was seen as the best means of securing British interests in the Hijaz and the Persian Gulf.”²⁰¹ The border here did not end up following that outlined in the Sykes-Picot Agreement (see Map 5), which looked more like a concave curve into the Jordanian desert and followed the general boundary of the Ottoman Empire with the Arabian Peninsula (see Map 3), but instead became the jagged, triangular border that exists today (see Map 1). This part of the border represents the wildest extent of imperial myth: “Winton’s Hiccup,” the theory that the slip of a drunk Churchill’s pencil became the oddly angular border between the two countries.²⁰²

It is also a strange border because at the time of Transjordan’s inception, the Emir Abdullah’s father, King Hussein, was still in control of the Hejaz, and so it is easy to see how these two territories could have been combined. It was clear, though, that the British were not particularly concerned about King Hussein after the end of WWI, as they made clear that “Ibn Saud, for example, was very strong-much stronger than King Hussein [and] it was impossible for His Majesty's Government to compel Ibn Saud - they could only influence him,”²⁰³ and thus would not interfere in the affairs of Arabian Peninsula on Abdullah’s or his father’s behalf. During the First World War, the British maintained friendly relationships with both Hussein and Ibn Saud, and were reluctant to choose between the two.

²⁰¹ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 55.

²⁰² Jacobs, “Winston’s Hiccup.”

²⁰³ “Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem,” March 12th to 30th, 1921, First Conversation on Trans-Jordania, 108.

The border at very beginning of the Mandate was much less important, and rather ill-defined, but followed the general line of “the southern-most part of the Syrian (or Damascus) administrative province (Vilayet) during Ottoman rule... [which] started at Wajh on the Red Sea coast thence to Madayin Saleh and in the East to the environs of Jauf.”²⁰⁴ However, as Ibn Saud moved across Arabia, he launched a number of raids into Jordan, some of which landed rather close to the administration in Amman and posed a threat to the security of the British mandates in Transjordan and Palestine.²⁰⁵ This threat of invasion prompted the definition of borders through diplomatic channels. In the spring of 1924, the British attempted to hold a conference to delimit borders between Transjordan, the Hejaz, and the Nejd, yet both Abdullah and Ibn Saud were unsatisfied with the proposed borders and efforts quickly dissolved.²⁰⁶

At the conquest of the Hejaz by Ibn Saud in 1925, the British found it much more pressing to establish a formal border between the two new states, despite the migratory patterns of the tribes that existed in the near terra incognita of the desert.²⁰⁷ This was codified in the Hadda Agreement of 1925, in which the British government negotiated with Ibn Saud the terms of the Transjordan-Nejd border (Nejd, and not Saudi Arabia, because at this point Ibn Saud was ruling the Hejaz and Nejd but did not officially establish the state of Saudi Arabia until 1932 - however, de facto this agreement would set the boundary for what was to become Saudi Arabia and Transjordan, and was solidified in the Treaty of Friendship and Bon Voisinage between Trans-Jordan and Saudi Arabia of 1933). In this agreement, Wadi Sirhan was given to Ibn Saud

²⁰⁴ Gil-Har, “Delimitation Boundaries,” 374.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 376.

²⁰⁷ Bradshaw, *The Glubb Reports*, 34.

in exchange for a Transjordanian port on the Red Sea at Aqaba, thus creating the awkward triangular Saudi jut seemingly into Jordanian territory that still exists today.

Much of the Hadda Agreement dealt with tribal migration between the two states,²⁰⁸ calling into question the logic of such a border, and a notable example of the ways in which the European-modelled nation-state and accompanying political borders triggered larger reorganization of non-European societies. Yitzhak Gil-har makes an important distinction on this matter with regard to intent of the negotiators and their conception of borders, illustrating the conflict between European boundaries and non-European actors affected by those boundaries:

“During the negotiations the two main parties held different conceptions about the frontiers and the means of effecting their delimitation. Saudi Arabia delegates argued for the conception which was common in the Middle East that frontiers across which nomadic tribes moved must be flexible; that boundary lines were not barriers, and should not prevent innocent passage to common pasturage areas and water resources. Therefore, the boundary line could not be one that marked the limit of the sovereign state authority. The Saudi Arabians also raised an ethnographic argument. The tribes who were living in the disputed area belonged, in their opinion, to the central Arabian stock. A third argument was that the transit trade that was carried on, in the disputed area, from the Arabian Peninsula to Syria was essential to the economy of Arabia. The British delegates argued for the principle that boundaries represented the limit of power of the modern sovereign state. A compromise was arrived at which took into account the arguments of the two parties. The chosen boundary line should be governed by the ethnographic principle but would acquire a political character. The line would be drawn between the living space of the Syrian tribes and the Arabian tribes. Moreover, it was agreed that the Valley of Wadi Sirhan was a common pasturage area. The main difficulty arose when the parties came to put their agreed principles into practice in the area.”²⁰⁹

Here, there is a clear conflict in the perceived nature of boundaries, or role that boundaries were expected to play, from the traditional tribal-based societies of Arabia versus the western conception of tight political boundaries. Of note, too, is the fact the British negotiated this border, rather than local Transjordanians or the Emir Abdullah, who would presumably hold the

²⁰⁸ “Agreement with the Sultan of Nejd Regarding Certain Questions Relating to the Nejd-Trans-Jordan Frontier, Signed at Bahra-Camp,” November 2, 1925, 436.

²⁰⁹ Gil-Har, “Delimitation Boundaries,” 378.

same position as the Saudis with regard to the nature of borders, if not on the matter of where the borders should fall. In the Transjordan-Syrian negotiations “the Emir Abdullah was mostly concerned that Transjordan retain the village lands where there had been time-honoured rights to grazing and cultivation,”²¹⁰ so it is fair to presume that he would hold the same priorities in Transjordanian-Saudi negotiations. While some provisions were made in the Hadda Agreement to accommodate the movement of nomadic tribes across borders, such provisions were not made in the case of the Transjordan-Syrian border, and did not change the conceptual nature of the borders (or the fact that these provisions were often ignored in practice). Despite the ethno-sectarian tensions that plague the current state system and borderlines of the Middle East, the western conception of boundaries did win out as the modern Middle East still conforms to European notions of nation-states with sovereign borders as first established by the Peace of Westphalia.²¹¹ This is a clear example of where, not just Jordan, but the whole of the region, carries the legacy of European colonialism. In the forced implementation and transmutation of society and political infrastructure to conform to European ideas there was not much regard for the effect on the quotidian aspects of life for peoples in the region.

In this case, the official Nejd-Transjordan border delineation “injected the high politics of dynastic rivalry into the Bedouin’s mundane attempts to obtain the means of their existence,”²¹² making their lives unnecessarily more complicated because of a feud between the Hashemites and Ibn Saud. Since the British objective in the negotiations was to maintain a contiguous British-controlled area, most of Wadi Sirhan was ceded to Ibn Saud despite the fact that it was

²¹⁰ Amadouny, “The Formation of the Transjordan-Syria Boundary, 1915–32,” 539.

²¹¹ Mark Zacher, “The Territorial Integrity Norm: International Boundaries and the Use of Force,” *International Organization* 55, no. 2 (Spring 2001): 215.

²¹² Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 70.

within the migratory pattern many of the tribes in southeastern Transjordan. As a result, “the desert tribes now faced the prospect of a double tax burden: zakat payments to Ibn Sa’ud during the winter months and the payment of animal tax to the Trans-Jordan Government at the other end of their migratory cycle during the summer.”²¹³ This neglect of the Transjordanian tribes, and their subsequent impoverishment, would play a large role in the internal stability and ensuing policy and policing of Transjordan, as the next chapter will explain.

²¹³ Ibid., 79.

Chapter 3: Political State-Formation

Once the territorial integrity of the new political entity of Transjordan was established, and it was determined to be independent (separate from Palestine, not from Britain) and permanent, it was necessary to corroborate this new state's legitimacy, and consolidate its monopoly on power. Particularly in an era in which much of the world was beginning to move away from colonialism, and one in which the British did not care to establish many new, expensive colonies for which they would be responsible, it was necessary to give the new state and its regime an aura of legitimacy in the hopes of creating a lasting regional stability in the wake of the Ottoman Empire's decline.

Alexander Diener and Joshua Hagen state, "the idea of the nation-state, where the political borders of the state would coincide with the cultural boundaries of the nation, had become the ideal, although not the norm, by the beginning of the twentieth century."²¹⁴ As there was no historical precedent for an independent or united political entity east of the Jordan River, there was also no historical precedent for a unified Jordanian identity or nation. Therefore, it was necessary for the Mandate administration to make a concerted effort to create such a national identity. While there was a limited grassroots nationalist movement, still in this period the primary decision makers were a handful of British officials and Abdullah with very little influence from the Jordanian people, and still, the British considered Transjordan to be very low on their list of priorities. In examining colonial identity formation and state expansion, I will primarily focus on the incorporation of the Bedouin into the Jordanian military apparatus as a means of consolidating the state and molding the image of the Jordanian nation because this is

²¹⁴ Diener and Hagen, *Borderlines and Borderlands*, 6.

where the most explicit state-making took place, however I will also examine the developing political system and administrative infrastructure of the new state in this chapter.



Image 2 Two of the primary decision makers in the mandate period: King Abdullah (left) pictured with Glubb Pasha (right).²¹⁵

While in examining the process of territorial formation I focused on the earliest days of the Mandate, primarily within the 1920s, the process of political state formation by the mandatory administration was primarily undertaken slightly later because of the British hesitancy and general lack of vision for Transjordan in the early years of the mandate.²¹⁶ This chapter will focus on the 1920s and 1930s, which were “devoted to consolidating the unity of the kingdom... and the authority of the king.”²¹⁷ In this chapter, I will examine the Anglo-Hashemite

²¹⁵ In John Bagot Glubb, *A Soldier with the Arabs*, First Edition (Hodder & Stoughton, 1957), 209.

²¹⁶ Alon, *The Making of Jordan*, 5.

²¹⁷ Heller, “Politics and the Military in Iraq and Jordan, 1920-1958,” 89.

administration of the mandate period in considering the lasting impact of this formative period on the stability and longevity of the regime.

The stability and longevity of the Hashemite regime, unlike the creation of the state of Jordan, was not incidental but “must be seen as the result of a specific historical process of state-building during the formative years of the British mandate.”²¹⁸ The mandate state of Transjordan successfully created the state by having its presence acknowledged by its residents, either because of the imperial bureaucracy’s administrative reach into villages with increasing land reforms or because of the Arab Legion’s ability to pacify and cultivate the loyalty of tribes in rural areas. And while “the laissez-faire nature of British rule in Transjordan, which was limited in scope and less intrusive than other colonial regimes in the Middle East,”²¹⁹ may account for the lack of serious grievances with the regime or organized resistance to colonial rule, and thus the subsequent longevity of the regime, it can also be held responsible for the fact that “Transjordan remained poor, underdeveloped, and dependent on British aid”²²⁰ during the Mandate period.

Modes of Legitimacy

Tancred Bradshaw writes that in Mandatory Transjordan there were “three centres of power: Abdullah and his government, the British resident and the commander of the Arab Legion,”²²¹ and each of these undertook explicit means of establishing the legitimacy of their regime in Jordan. P.J. Vatikiotis explains the conundrum, and necessity, of establishing legitimacy for the Anglo-Hashemite government:

²¹⁸ Alon, *The Making of Jordan*, 1.

²¹⁹ Alon, *The Making of Jordan*, 2.

²²⁰ Tell, “The Social Origins of Mandatory Rule in Transjordan,” 220.

²²¹ Bradshaw, *The Glubb Reports*, 9.

“One hardly expects such symbols of loyalty and structures for the institutional expression of allegiance to be developed – or even to exist – in societies, or countries, where the idea of the nation-state is so recent; or in regions where many sovereign states have emerged, or were deliberately created, in geographic contiguity to one another, amidst what their inhabitants consider to be one umma (the spiritual notion of the nation determined by the universalist tradition of Islam); where the tribal members of this “nation” find it difficult by custom and tradition to recognize legal boundaries that restrict their free movement, and where until recently the principle of legitimacy and the basis of loyalty were based upon a religious identity and determined by membership in a religious community.”²²²

These claims that Vatikiotis makes are all present in the case of Jordan: prior to the British mandate, there was no separate political Jordanian entity, or notion of a nation-state; there was little cultural distinction between settled Jordanians and Syrians or Palestinians, or tribal Jordanians and Iraqis or Saudis; political boundaries were imposed on the population without consideration for the prior-mentioned two conditions, as established in the previous chapter; and before the mandate system was implemented, legitimacy and loyalty were first to the tribe and the Caliph (at that time, the Sultan in Istanbul). All this considered, the Anglo-Hashemite regime had their work cut out for them to establish a state recognized as legitimate by the Jordanian population, and thus “engaged heavily in manifesting [their] ideological power.”²²³

The Hashemite Claim: Muslim and Arab

The Hashemites, to this day, propagate the idea that their rule is a divine right, as descendants of the Prophet Muhammed (see Image 2). As King of the Hejaz, Abdullah’s father Hussein was the guardian of the two holiest sites in Islam, Mecca and Medina, and as the Sharif of Mecca, was incorporated into a lineage of Hashemites entrusted by the Prophet with protecting the Kaaba.²²⁴ As claimed descendants of the Prophet, the Hashemite rulers evoke the

²²² Vatikiotis, *Politics and the Military in Jordan*, 2.

²²³ Endelman, “Displaying the State,” 201.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 207.

sense that their reign is the revitalization of the Golden Age of Islam. Particularly in contrast to the Ottoman Empire, “the Hashemite saviours... represent[ed] pan-Arab ideals, religious legitimacy and progress.”²²⁵ Not only did this quality lend Abdullah import to all Muslims, but by emphasizing that the Hashemites are of the same tribe as the Prophet, the Quraysh,²²⁶ the weight of his tribal identity was stressed as well, particularly important in a society traditionally built on segmentary lineage.

²²⁵ Al-Mahadin, “An Economy of Legitimizing Discourses: The Invention of the Bedouin and Petra as National Signifiers in Jordan.”

²²⁶ Endelman, “Displaying the State,” 207.

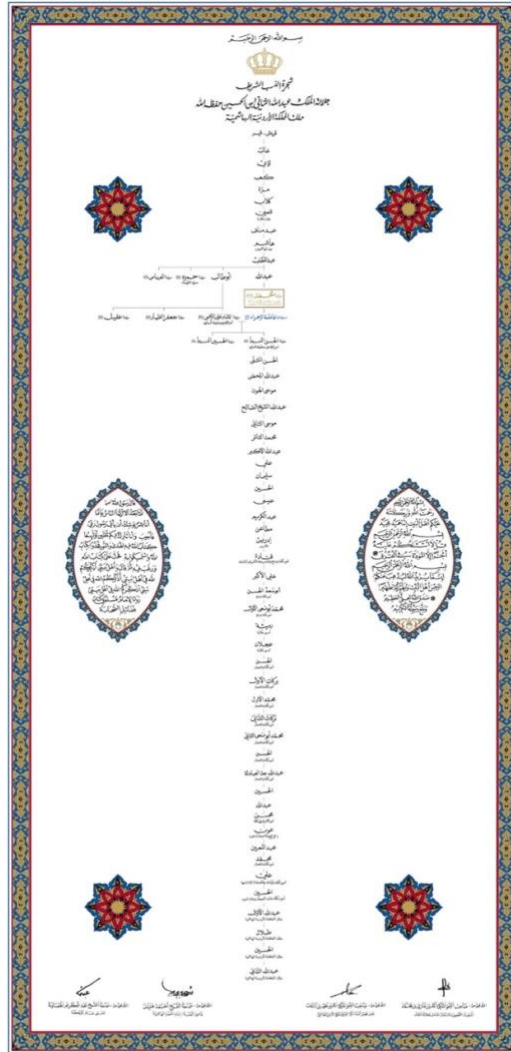


Image 3 The Hashemite lineage, taken from King Hussein’s official website.²²⁷

In choosing Abdullah to rule Transjordan, the British did in fact consider his “Sharifian provenance [which] served to make him a useful symbol to the local tribes,”²²⁸ despite the fact that he was Hejazi implanted in Jordan. During WWI, the British strategic receptivity towards Hussein was directly a result of his religious position. Following the end of the nominal caliphate in Istanbul, Hussein declared himself the Caliph, or the religious leader of the Islamic world.

²²⁷ “The Hashemite Family Tree.” http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/rfamily_hashemites.html.

²²⁸ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 60.

Though this did not last long, it still is evidence of the fact that the Hashemites considered themselves leaders within Islam.

As the primary opponents to Istanbul as the political center of the religion, this translated to the Hashemites evolving into the figureheads of Arab nationalism as well. Hussein claimed to speak for “the whole of the Arab nation,”²²⁹ and united his religious and nationalist identities by claiming, in a letter to McMahon that “there is no difference between a Moslem and a Christian Arab: they are both descendants of one forefather.”²³⁰ While this was in reference to a bid for Lebanon, still it represents the role Hussein hoped to take on as the leader of the Arab world in addition to that of the Islamic world. This was actualized by the Hashemite role leading the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire in WWI, and again reiterated in the deliberate naming of the military: al-Jaysh al-Arabi in Arabic, literally translated as the Arab Army, though in English referred to as the Arab Legion (as opposed to the Transjordan Army or Legion).²³¹

At the beginning of the mandate, Abdullah, with his “impeccable Arabist credentials,”²³² sustained the notion that he was a representative of Arab nationalism, and the materialization of the Arab kingdom as promised in the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence. The primary means of his doing so was the incorporation of the exiled Istiqlal party into his administration. Much of this party took refuge in Amman after the French occupation of Syria had ousted the nationalists that supported Faisal’s kingdom. Not only did Abdullah need the experienced Istiqlalists for their administrative familiarity from Damascus,²³³ but as he harbored hopes to eventually reclaim

²²⁹ “The Hussein-McMahon Correspondence (July 1915-August 1916),” letter no. 1.

²³⁰ “The Hussein-McMahon Correspondence (July 1915-August 1916),” letter no. 5.

²³¹ John Bagot Glubb, *The Story of the Arab Legion* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1948), 59.

²³² Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 60.

²³³ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 62.

Syria, they were necessary to legitimize such a claim,²³⁴ and so he filled his cabinet with the Syrian nationalists. However, “his ties with the Istiqlal were compromised by a signal inability to pursue reunification of Faysal’s kingdom”²³⁵ and the British perception of the nationalists as a threat to the colonial regime (a notion I will explore further later in the chapter).

The British Case: The Agreement of 1928

As has been mentioned in the first chapter, by this point in history, much of the international community had stopped establishing new colonies (at least in name). Of course, that did not mean the end of colonization, but simply a different form of imperial control. In the Middle East, this was reflected in the discourse of the mandate system, in which ‘responsibilities’ took place of hard power.²³⁶ The European powers took administration of the prior Ottoman territory “out of a strong commitment to the imperial panacea of ‘development’”²³⁷ (regardless of how asymmetrically enacted this was from state to state). As the international community at large had recognized the principle of self-determination, outlined in Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points,²³⁸ the British concluded that the best course of action would be to obtain the approval of their formal rule by the local population, and did so through the Anglo-Transjordanian Treaty of 1928 (see Appendix C).²³⁹ The treaty established an elected, representative Legislative Council that would have to ratify the treaty (the Council itself will be further discussed in the section on governance of the Mandate).

²³⁴ Ibid., 62.

²³⁵ Ibid., 18.

²³⁶ Schayegh, “The Mandates and/as Decolonization,” 417.

²³⁷ Meiton, “Throwing Transjordan into Palestine: Electrification and State Formation, 1921-1954,” 300.

²³⁸ Woodrow Wilson, “Fourteen Points” (Yale Law School Lillian Goldman Law Library, January 8, 1918), The Avalon Project Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/wilson14.asp.

²³⁹ Guthorn, “A Point of Order,” 297.

While in the initial nebulous days of the Mandate the British relationship with Transjordan was unclear, by 1924, Abdullah was forced to cede formal control of public finances and the Arab Legion to the British²⁴⁰ due to financial difficulties, and this cession of power grew exponentially with the 1928 Anglo-Transjordanian Treaty. The Treaty formally redefined the terms of the Anglo-Hashemite relationship, and established a constitutional government (in the Organic Law of Transjordan).²⁴¹

Drafted with almost no local input, in this treaty Transjordan was forced to “accept client status as formalized.”²⁴² At this early point in Abdullah’s tenuous rule of the new Transjordan, Wilson writes that, “an alliance with Britain was necessary, but conditional, and in 1928 it was Britain that laid down the conditions. The Anglo-Transjordanian agreement, with inequality written into every clause, was the price of [Abdullah’s] position and one that he was willing to pay.”²⁴³ The local population did not accept this new definition of the Anglo-Transjordanian relationship without resistance, but rather this treaty provided the key point of anti-colonial action during the early Mandate period, which I will detail later in this chapter.

There are a number of particularly restricting articles in this document which minimize the power of the Transjordanian regime and emphasize the power of the British. In Article 5, Abdullah submits to British oversight of foreign relations and public finances; Article 6 gives the British approval of the annual budget and forbids Abdullah from making specific amendments to the form of governance; Article 10 gives the exclusive right to “raise, organize and control” armed forces to His Britannic Majesty, and forbids Abdullah from raising any forces without

²⁴⁰ Tell, “The Social Origins of Mandatory Rule in Transjordan,” 215.

²⁴¹ “Transjordan Constitutional Arrangements,” accessed February 6, 2018, http://www.archivesdirect.amdigital.co.uk/Documents/Images/CO%20935_1/325#Sections.

²⁴² Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 20.

²⁴³ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 102.

British consent; Article 16 gives the British military use of all Transjordanian infrastructure; Article 17 gives the British oversight of any foreign investment in the economic development of Jordan.²⁴⁴ All these restrictions increased the power of the British to mold the state while limiting that of Arab actors. Still, the treaty did so in a way that the British could claim was agreed to by the Transjordanians because of the ratification clause. There was organized Transjordanian resistance to this treaty, which, notably, was voiced as an appeal to the international community:

“The National Pact called on the League of Nations to recognise Transjordan’s right to self-determination. In an eleven-point doctrine, it stated the need for the establishment of a constitutional monarchy under the amir. It also argued that that the electoral process should be changed, and that the indirect electoral system of the 1928 Electoral Law should be replaced with direct elections and representation determined by population demographics. Finally, it demanded complete independence for Transjordan from Great Britain.”²⁴⁵

However, the League of Nations ignored this appeal,²⁴⁶ and ultimately, the Agreement was signed by the Emir Abdullah and ratified by the Legislative Council, because they recognized the legitimacy such a treaty would lend to the state.²⁴⁷

Even in the creation of the Legislative Council “the British hoped that this new legislative body would create a class of clients who depended upon the British for their position,”²⁴⁸ as in many other colonies, the imperial power would rule through a smaller subsection of the population, be it an ethnic or religious minority or simply a particular social class. The British were successful in this, as with time it “became more important for Transjordanian elites to be a part of the Council than vocally oppose the government. The prize became the Council seats

²⁴⁴ “Agreement between His Majesty and the Amir of Trans-Jordan,” February 20, 1928, UK Treaties Online, <http://treaties.fco.gov.uk/docs/pdf/1930/TS0007.pdf>.

²⁴⁵ Guthorn, “A Point of Order,” 303.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 307.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 300.

themselves, as opposed to any actual legislative authority exercised by the elected representatives”²⁴⁹ – indicative, too, of the extent to which the state had become legitimized and accepted in the minds of the population.

Consolidating the State

Tariq Tell writes, “the social control exercised by the Jordanian monarchy was given enduring form through the evolution of a “Hashemite Compact”... [which was] composed of a nexus of formal organizations and informal institutions, ranging from a militarized welfare regime to dynastic patronage networks, [and essentially] exchanged loyalty for economic security.”²⁵⁰ In the rest of this chapter, I will examine the formation of this “Hashemite Compact,” including the specific policies which enabled it and individuals that enacted them. These policies included Glubb Pasha’s expansion and development of the Arab Legion as a tool of economic development and a vehicle for both control and loyalty of the Bedouin tribes, land reform, and generally a relatively laissez-faire style of imperial control. While the original intention in expanding the Arab Legion may have been “prevent[ing] the spread of disorder”²⁵¹ and securing the southern border, it became a vehicle for welfare to and loyalty from the desert tribes.

De facto, British state-making was limited in scope, focused on strategic support for the Empire and expanding the “infrastructure of imperial power”²⁵² within Transjordan: “requir[ing]

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 311.

²⁵⁰ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 12.

²⁵¹ Bradshaw, *The Glubb Reports*, 37.

²⁵² Ibid., 77.

low investments in terms of finance, manpower, and military presences... the British in Jordan implemented the idea/vision - rarely achieved elsewhere - of 'Empire on the cheap.'²⁵³

The British vision for Transjordan was expressed explicitly by Herbert Young of the Middle East Department: “We regard Trans-Jordania more as a buffer to Palestine than as a country capable of development in itself, and at present at any rate, money spent in that territory is only justified by the fact that it reduces what might otherwise have to be spent on military measures.”²⁵⁴ Glubb Pasha echoed this statement, stating that “the sums required [to build up the Arab Legion and satisfy the tribes] are trivial, compared to the expenses of a war”²⁵⁵ that could potentially come of unrest in Transjordan. Despite the complete British control of the state’s resources, these statements by members of the British administration of the territory illustrate British ambivalence towards Transjordan itself, which was reflected in the lack of development. It is clear that it was the British reluctance to entangle themselves further in Transjordan which led to a state “run on a shoestring budget that privileged the military and the bureaucracy and left little funds available for development or social services.”²⁵⁶

Infrastructure and Development

In trying to preserve the stability of Transjordan and establish an effective government, the British drastically expanded the reach of the administration, “bringing the direct influence of the state into the life of every East Bank village, and turning its agents into the ultimate arbiters

²⁵³ Alon, *The Making of Jordan*, 5.

²⁵⁴ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 71.

²⁵⁵ John Bagot Glubb, “A Note on the Reactions in Transjordan in the Event of a European War,” in *The Glubb Reports: Glubb Pasha and Britain’s Empire Project in the Middle East 1920-1956*, by Tancred Bradshaw, 1st ed. 2016 edition, Foreign Office, 371/20032/E1472/G (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1935), 48–49, 48.

²⁵⁶ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 73.

of rural rights and fiscal obligations.”²⁵⁷ The primary policies the British undertook were a series of land and tax reforms, as well as an expansion of infrastructure. The distribution of land previously held under common possession, or the *musha’a*, was distributed so that nearly no Transjordanians were landless.²⁵⁸

Tariq Tell designates the beginning of Transjordanian administration reach “‘state-simplification’ – an intrusive process of classifying, mapping, and enumerating society and space to make them legible to the agents of government for fiscal extraction or administrative regulation.”²⁵⁹ This extended reach of the state is a significant marker for the mandate state, “every manifestation of state administrative power becomes simultaneously an ideological one to broadcast state presence and authority... [and] all administrative regulations and instruments have a symbolic aspect to them.”²⁶⁰ Michael Fischbach claims that “it was the state’s land department that played a singularly crucial role in determining the boundaries of the country, its villages, and thus the very idea of identity for the country’s population.”²⁶¹ With this level of examination, the administrative reach of the state can be seen as a moving along the path to legitimacy and recognition by the citizens of the state, indicating the power of the state, and laying the groundwork for the stability of the regime that has now lasted four generations.

Following the tradition of land reform under the late Ottoman Empire, as well as that exercised in nearly all other British possessions, one of the few clear (not intentionally strategic for the imperial military) policies of the British administration in Transjordan was the reform of land holding and taxation policies, suggested in Ernest MacLeod Dowson’s 1927 report and

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 95.

²⁵⁸ Tell, “The Social Origins of Mandatory Rule in Transjordan,” 218.

²⁵⁹ Tell, “The Social Origins of Mandatory Rule in Transjordan,” 219.

²⁶⁰ Endelman, “Displaying the State,” 203.

²⁶¹ Fischbach, *State, Society and Land in Jordan*, 196.

codified in the Land Tax Law of 1933.²⁶² This land reform was instituted to “increase and regularize”²⁶³ taxation through extensive surveying, partitioning of musha, or commonly held, lands, and administrative recording and registration of lands,²⁶⁴ though “at heart [they represented] the imposition of Western conceptualizations of tenure, agricultural exploitation, and the relationship between the state and the land regime.”²⁶⁵ Additionally, these policies reinforced the stability of the economy, as Britain was injecting a fair amount of capital into the administration in Amman, and did not wish to see this investment lost in an economic collapse.

The land reform program did require local cooperation and was, on the whole, accepted by the Transjordanian population as a positive form of state-societal interaction. However, it was still an explicit means of exerting British authority and ideas onto the population, and one that the British utilized in nearly all their colonies, not specifically devised for Jordan.

As one of the primary means of interaction between Transjordanians and their government (beyond the military), the land survey and reform program actualized the state by bringing it into the day-to-day lives of the population. Fischbach even argues that by “creating a tangible sense of what “Jordan” and “property” meant in the country, [the land program] helped create and foster a sense of Jordanianness beyond mere tribal identity,”²⁶⁶ and thus established an enduring connection between the Anglo-Hashemite regime and the population.²⁶⁷ This echoes the importance of defining Jordan’s international boundaries in the conception of the nation, and the role Benedict Anderson claims mapping plays in forming the nation.²⁶⁸

²⁶² Ibid., 84.

²⁶³ Ibid., 95.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 80.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 78.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 196.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 176.

²⁶⁸ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 173.

The expansion of the state was not limited to land reform, but the development of other infrastructure was more reflective of the typical British attitude of ambivalence towards Transjordan. As the territory of Transjordan does not have a preponderance of natural resources like some of its neighbors, its government was incredibly fiscally weak and dependent on British subsidy, which “covered one-half of government expenditure.”²⁶⁹ Transjordan’s economic dependence on Great Britain ensured the continuation of the British imperial interest in Jordan. A steady flow of British pounds to the state also ensured the relatively stability of the regime because the British subsidized so much of society and would continue to do so in order to avoid regional instability. Perhaps reflective of this source of funding, the administration directed the majority of its budget “to cover its own needs rather than those of the local population.”²⁷⁰ In response, there was a call from the Congress movement for local contributions to government finances to be allocated towards education and health programs, rather than to the expansion of the military.²⁷¹

This allocation of government funding can be explained by the British strategy in Transjordan. The British imperial strategy did not necessitate the development of Transjordan, but simply the creation of enough infrastructure to facilitate the British military, and the preservation of relative stability within the Mandate. Few large scale public works projects or social services were undertaken during this period, but “such public projects as were undertaken - whether the Haifa-Baghdad road or the metaled road linking Amman, Al-Salt, and Jerusalem [or the construction of the Iraq Petroleum Company pipeline] - were constructed in order to meet

²⁶⁹ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 77.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Tell, “The Social Origins of Mandatory Rule in Transjordan,” 217.

Britain's strategic needs."²⁷² While these projects did provide some employment for sectors of the population suffering from the famine years of the early 1930s,²⁷³ for the most part they ignored the needs of the local economy.²⁷⁴ Tariq Tell explains the imperial prioritization of the economy:

“The budgetary bias towards colonial ends did little to promote the welfare of most of the Transjordanians. However, the socioeconomic, transport, and communications infrastructure needed to sustain the military and its bureaucratic supports; the incomes and expenditures of the men enlisted to serve Britain's aims; and their demand for staples and consumption goods together generated what Michael Mann calls a “military Keynesianism.””²⁷⁵

Tell calls this phenomenon “military Keynesianism” because of the way the British used the development of the military as a mechanism for economic stabilization (a concept that will be further explained later in this chapter). By investing in the military, a tactic strategically advantageous for the British Empire, incidentally the Jordanian economy was advanced.

The “infrastructure of imperial power”²⁷⁶ is enunciated in Article 16 of the Anglo-Transjordanian Treaty:

“every facility shall be provided at all times for the movement of His Britannic Majesty's forces (including the use of wireless and land-line telegraphic and telephonic services and the right to lay land-lines), and for the carriage and storage of fuel, ordnance, ammunition and supplies on the roads, railways and waterways and in the ports of Trans-Jordan,”²⁷⁷

and therefore, this was the infrastructure developed during the Mandate period, for the use of, but not limited to the benefit of, the military.

²⁷² Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 77.

²⁷³ *Ibid.* 89.

²⁷⁴ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 77.

²⁷⁵ Tell, “The Social Origins of Mandatory Rule in Transjordan,” 216.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 77.

²⁷⁷ “Agreement between His Majesty and the Amir of Trans-Jordan.”

A key example of the neglecting of the local population was the “70-year concession granted to Pinhas Rutenberg and the Palestine Electricity Group in 1926... [which] granted Rutenberg ‘the rights to every scrap of water on both sides of the [Jordan] valley for the making of electricity.’”²⁷⁸ In 1921, when Rutenberg first undertook the project, Palestine and Transjordan had yet to be partitioned, and the British granted him full rights to the electrification of Palestine. However, upon partition this concession was not amended, and Rutenberg retained exclusive rights over the electrification of Transjordan, in spite of immense popular resistance to the PEC due to the Zionist nature of the group and the strong local fear of Jewish colonization of Transjordan.²⁷⁹ Although this popular resistance stopped the PEC from actually electrifying Transjordan, they did sustain their exclusivity over Transjordanian market and managed to prevent any other company from electrifying the country.²⁸⁰ The failure of the administration to amend the concession meant that Transjordan remained “largely unelectrified [with the exception of Amman] until independence.”²⁸¹

In addition to this lack of modernization, the PEC “held an effective veto over the further development of irrigated agriculture and was even entitled (subject to paying compensation to its owners) to water being used for agriculture from streams flowing into the Jordan,”²⁸² which hindered agricultural production. This concession impeded well-digging or extensive irrigation projects, which could have helped to alleviate some of the harm of the drought years to the

²⁷⁸ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 97.

²⁷⁹ Renate Dieterich, “Electrical Current and Nationalist Trends in Transjordan: Pinhas Rutenberg and the Electrification of Amman,” *Die Welt Des Islams* 43, no. 1 (2003): 88–101, 95.

²⁸⁰ Meiton, “Throwing Transjordan into Palestine: Electrification and State Formation, 1921-1954,” 302.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 303.

²⁸² Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 97.

tribes.²⁸³ Ultimately, the Rutenberg concession hindered both the electrification and irrigation of Jordan, limiting its economic growth and development during the Mandate period.

In spite of these land reforms and limited infrastructural expansion, agricultural output did not much exceed that during Ottoman times.²⁸⁴ The redistribution of land, construction of roads, and sedentarization of the tribes were at the center of British policy, instead of policies that would have increased agricultural production or income, such as irrigation projects, or social services, such as widespread provision of education or health improvement initiatives.

Governance and Representation

“When the nation-state as the organisational unit of a sovereign political order finally came to these societies... it was largely the result of a combination of circumstances and the outcome of a series of events upon neither of which the native general public had great influence or control.”²⁸⁵

The lack of local voice in the governance of Transjordan is, too, a clear example of how “the mandatory was a cloak for the expansion of British and French influence and no reference was made to the wishes or interests of the populations of these territories.”²⁸⁶ Not only in the explicit guidance of the mandate by the British, but even in more quotidian aspects of governance, “Trans-Jordanians were for the most part excluded from decision-making.”²⁸⁷ There was “only one native Transjordanian”²⁸⁸ in the first government, with the administration instead filled with Syrian Istiqlalists. Even after their expulsion, by 1926, a pattern was established “whereby the key posts in the administration were filled by seconded officials from the

²⁸³ Ibid., 98.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 126.

²⁸⁵ Vatikiotis, *Politics and the Military in Jordan*, 2.

²⁸⁶ Bradshaw, *The Glubb Reports*, 8.

²⁸⁷ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 74.

²⁸⁸ Alon, *The Making of Jordan*, 40.

government of Palestine.”²⁸⁹ And aside from the Palestinians and Syrians, and the few landowning notables, Circassians (relocated to Jordan by the Ottoman Empire), also held a disproportionately large amount of representation in the bureaucracy and Abdullah’s personal guard, as opposed to their relatively small percentage of the population at large.²⁹⁰²⁹¹

The mandate did have an elected Legislative Council, established in the Anglo-Transjordanian Treaty of 1928. Frederick Meiton claims this was “the only governing body with meaningful native representation”²⁹² however, although its members Transjordanian, they were not representative of the actual demographics of the country. The Council only had fourteen members, indirectly elected, representing the settled regions of Ajlun, Balqa, and Karak, and an additional two Bedouin representatives (one for the North and one for the South of Transjordan).²⁹³ The Council was to consist of nine Muslim Arabs, three Christian Arabs, and two Circassians, despite the fact that Muslim Arabs made up nearly 90% of the population.²⁹⁴ This allocation of seats gave disproportionate weight to the religious and ethnic minorities, who were more likely to be pro-British, and decreased the weight of the Muslim Arabs and citizens of Ajlun.²⁹⁵

Beyond simply the unequal representation of the Legislative Council members, these elected representatives could not introduce new legislation but only vote on it. Even then, most of their votes could be overruled by members of the Executive Council (Abdullah’s cabinet).²⁹⁶

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 76.

²⁹¹ Meiton, “Throwing Transjordan into Palestine: Electrification and State Formation, 1921-1954,” 301.

²⁹² Ibid., 296.

²⁹³ Ibid., 300.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 301.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁶ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 74.

However, all this is not to say that there was no nationalist sentiment or local resistance to the implementation of Anglo-Hashemite rule. Primarily in opposition to the Rutenberg concession and the lack of Jordanians in government positions, the slogan “Transjordan for Transjordanians” came about in the 1920s, establishing a nativist, nationalist sentiment.²⁹⁷ Most notably from this movement was the nationalist poet Arar – Mustafa Wahbi al-Tall, whose

“poetry propagated a ‘patriotism of place’ that ‘inextricably linked’ each locale in Transjordan to the ‘rejection of imperialism and colonialism.’ National identity was ‘delineated... as encompassing the family and tribal relationships’ as well as ‘the reliance of the entire population – whether bedouin or settled – on the land for its sustenance.’”²⁹⁸

The dependence on land as a uniting mechanism for Transjordanians is notable in evaluating administrative policy during the Mandate. For instance, electrification failed because nationalist pushback was strongest in regard to Rutenberg’s claims on Transjordanian land and water; whereas land reform succeeded with relatively little resistance because of the cooperation between British officials and local elite.

Perhaps the most notable grassroots resistance during the Mandate period was sparked by the disagreeable 1928 Anglo-Transjordanian Treaty. This consisted of the formation of the political party Hizb al-Shaab, or the party of the people,²⁹⁹ which turned into the more momentous Congress movement.³⁰⁰ From 1929 to 1933, five National Transjordan Congresses were held.³⁰¹ The main grievance of these Congresses was the exploitation of Transjordan by the British as determined by the 1928 Agreement. Protests swept the country in 1928, and the district

²⁹⁷ Betty S. Anderson, *Nationalist Voices in Jordan: The Street and the State*, 1st edition (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2005), 42.

²⁹⁸ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 81.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 80.

³⁰⁰ Guthorn, “A Point of Order,” 297.

³⁰¹ Tell, “The Social Origins of Mandatory Rule in Transjordan,” 216.

of Ma'an even boycotted elections for the Legislative Council.³⁰² However, always a rather unorganized alliance of general anti-colonial sentiment, by the early 1930s the Congress movement had split into two main factions and its sway disintegrated. This unified nationalist sentiment was not revived later in the Mandate period in a significant way.

An Instrument of Force and Identity

It would be near impossible to analyze the early Jordanian state-formation without discussing at some length the military, which P.J. Vatikiotis claims “created the state.”³⁰³ Particularly as the British were invested in Jordan as a strategic possession rather than as a territory to develop or mine the resources of, the expansion of the military was the main form of explicit British state-making. The Arab Legion was the primary instrument for the consolidation and projection of the state, in addition to acting as a mechanism for security, nation-building, and social welfare. The development of the military, consisting of the recruitment, training, and arming of a sufficient local force by British leaders, was considered in London to be the most efficient and effective method of keeping Transjordan under control. This meant that, just as Lawrence carried particular weight in carving out an independent entity of Jordan, a few British individuals (specifically, Major-General Frederick Peake Pasha and Lieutenant-General John Bagot Glubb Pasha) carried significant weight in shaping the early state through the military apparatus.

The Transjordanian military in the Mandate period served four main functions for the formation of the state: first, to secure the Transjordanian territory from internal unrest; second, to secure the Transjordanian territory from external threat; third, to provide for the economic

³⁰² Guthorn, “A Point of Order,” 303.

³⁰³ Vatikiotis, *Politics and the Military in Jordan*, 5.

welfare of the Bedouin tribes, particularly during the drought years of the 1930s, thus cultivating the loyalty of the East Bank tribes to the Hashemite regime (making this group the base of Hashemite support to this day); and fourth, to act as an instrument of statecraft through the overt display of the state's presence, and the intentional co-optation of the Bedouin dress and values as those of Transjordanian.

In the immediate postwar period, it became evident how difficult the policing of Jordan would be. With the quick failure of the three councils of local government in 1920, the British decided to centralize authority in an effort to more effectively secure the region, yet internal unrest still plagued the Mandate, which was exacerbated by the fact that “the Transjordanian borders were demarcated without consideration of tribal migration patterns, rendering the policing of the desert difficult.”³⁰⁴ Abdullah had arrived with Hejazi troops that was insubstantial for the maintenance of a state, and the al-Kura insurgency required the British RAF to be put down, making it very clear that a stronger force was needed to uphold Abdullah and secure the regime. As such, Abdullah recognized the need for a security apparatus to consolidate and maintain his rule, and requested troops from the British, “but the British Government did not wish to support this scheme because of the great expense that its realisation would entail.”³⁰⁵

While the greatest threat to the early Anglo-Hashemite regime was the agitation of the Bedouin tribes, the administration was, at this point, green and vulnerable: “the Transjordanian borders were demarcated without consideration of tribal migration patterns, rendering the policing of the desert difficult”³⁰⁶ yet “they had no experience of desert administration and no

³⁰⁴Alon, “Tribes and State-Formation in Mandatory Transjordan,” 75.

³⁰⁵ Vatikiotis, *Politics and the Military in Jordan*, 60.

³⁰⁶ Alon, “Tribes and State-Formation in Mandatory Transjordan,” 75.

money”³⁰⁷ to control the tribes (or even keep the Bedouin happy and not to clash with them to maintain stability)³⁰⁸ or pay their endowments, as the Ottoman administration had for safe passage through to the Hejaz. And although “the Amman Residency acknowledged that the security agencies could only enforce law and order in tribal areas with the assent of the nomadic populations themselves,”³⁰⁹ there was very little respect for the mandatory government, particularly as the desert became increasingly unstable as the threat of Ibn Saud crept closer.

While the Hashemites were the leaders of the Arab Revolt, and cultivated alliances with the tribal networks, these relationships did not transfer to mean support for Abdullah in the new entity of Transjordan. Yoav Alon explains:

“...during the 1916-1917 revolt the Hashemites had led a tribal confederacy of the sort that had for centuries been the prevalent form of government in Arabia. They forged alliances with the dominant tribes in the areas they sought to rule. They paid them large sums of money, expecting them, in return, to pledge their allegiance to the Arab alliance, join it and on occasion even fight for it. The relationship between the Hashemites and the tribes was a personal one, conducted through the shaykhs. But the tribes were neither fully integrated into the new entity nor were they required to reform their values or social structure in accordance with alliance norms nor give up their autonomy.”³¹⁰

The key difference from the relationship the Hashemites had with the tribes during the Arab Revolt was that in the mandatory state the tribes were expected to integrate into the state and cede some of their autonomy, and Abdullah had no money to grant them.

Accustomed to raiding and with much stronger kinship ties to their tribe than to the new foreign government, the tribes had the potential to unseat the Emir if the will was present, as

³⁰⁷ John Bagot Glubb, “Note on the Situation on the Southern Frontier of Transjordan,” in *The Glubb Reports: Glubb Pasha and Britain’s Empire Project in the Middle East 1920-1956*, by Tancred Bradshaw, 1st ed. 2016 edition, Colonial Office, 831/11/1 (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1930), 44–46, 44.

³⁰⁸ Nasasra, *The Naqab Bedouins*, 67.

³⁰⁹ Thomas, “Bedouin Tribes and the Imperial Intelligence Services in Syria, Iraq and Transjordan in the 1920s,” 544.

³¹⁰ Alon, *The Making of Jordan*, 16.

demonstrated by the destabilizing effect of the al-Kura uprising and the Adwan revolt.³¹¹ Although in 1920, Samuel called for “the occupation of Trans-Jordan west of the Hejaz railway”³¹² because of tribal raids from Jordan into Palestine, “there is no indication that prior to late 1928 the government made any attempt to control the tribes on the southern frontier or to exert its influence east of the Hejaz railway.”³¹³ However, with the increase in raids from across the southern border and subsequent impoverishment of the tribes in the southern desert, the administration deemed it necessary to address this with increased control of the region to mollify the starving tribes and prevent them from either revolting against the Transjordanian regime or defecting to Ibn Saud.³¹⁴ For Abdullah’s administration, “the prevention of bedouin dissent was less a matter of repressive policing than of penetrating nomad society to secure the co-operation of clan leaders.”³¹⁵

The Arab Legion was created in October 1923 by Lt-Col. F.G. Peake, who would command it until 1939.³¹⁶³¹⁷ In November 1930, John Bagot Glubb was brought to Transjordan to create the Desert Patrol of the Arab Legion, in order to enact such control following his success with the tribes of Iraq.³¹⁸ Glubb would be an enormously influential figure in shaping the way in which the tribes interact with the Hashemite regime. Glubb’s philosophy was simple, and he followed throughout his tenure in Jordan: “in dealing with our tribesmen, let us... remember:

SYMPATHY

³¹¹ Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 78.

³¹² Tell 57

³¹³ Bradshaw 32

³¹⁴ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 84.

³¹⁵ Thomas, “Bedouin Tribes and the Imperial Intelligence Services in Syria, Iraq and Transjordan in the 1920s,” 542.

³¹⁶ Frederick G. Peake, *History and Tribes of Jordan* (Coral Gables, Florida: University of Miami Press, 1958), 106

³¹⁷ Bradshaw, *The Glubb Reports*, 33.

³¹⁸ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 71.

SUBSIDIES
TRIBAL LAW³¹⁹

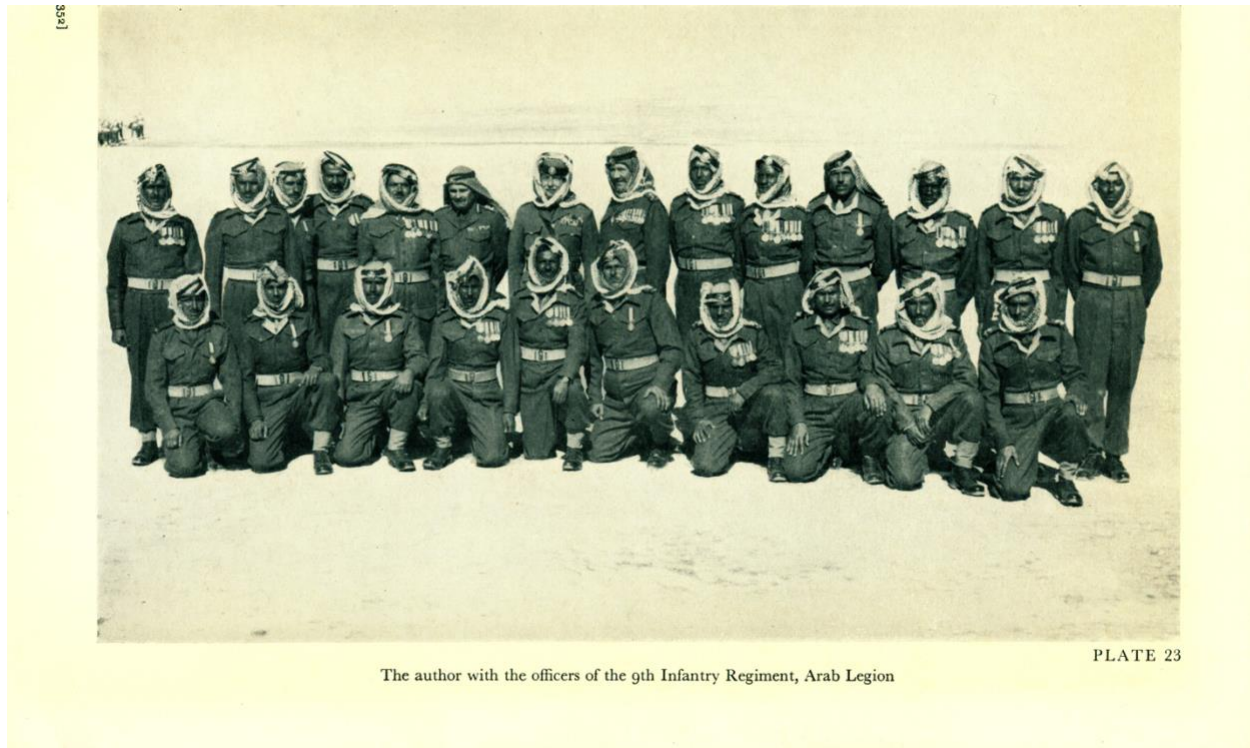


Image 4 Glubb Pasha (bottom center) pictured with officers of the Arab Legion.³²⁰

From his experience in Iraq, Glubb believed that only tribesmen would be able to police other tribesmen, and that the economic well-being of the tribes was necessary to secure Transjordan, as “when the country families [of the great sheikhs] are dying of hunger, they are as ready to foment revolution as any proletariat.”³²¹ By the early 1930s, the combination of the Ikhwan raids from the Nejd, numerous drought years, and the worldwide impact of the Great

³¹⁹ John Bagot Glubb, “A Monthly Report on the Administration of the Transjordan Deserts for the Month of March 1935,” in *The Glubb Reports: Glubb Pasha and Britain’s Empire Project in the Middle East 1920-1956*, by Tancred Bradshaw, 1st ed. 2016 edition, Foreign Office, 371/19016/E3536 (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1935), 46–47, 47.

³²⁰ Glubb, *A Soldier with the Arabs*, 352.

³²¹ John Bagot Glubb, “A Monthly Report on the Administration of the Transjordan Deserts for the Month of June 1936,” in *The Glubb Reports: Glubb Pasha and Britain’s Empire Project in the Middle East 1920-1956*, by Tancred Bradshaw, 1st ed. 2016 edition, Colonial Office, 831/37/3 (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1936), 52–53, 52.

Depression had left the tribes nearly destitute and desperate, and the general insecurity of the new mandate, particularly in the tribal regions led Glubb to write:

“In reality, the tribe is a small government, and carries out for its members the principal functions of government. As such, it is of course to some extent a rival of organised government... He [the tribesman] puts his tribe first as long as his tribe affords him more protection than the government... As soon as the government becomes more efficient than the tribe at protecting his life and property and at providing him with the means of livelihood, the tribesman will gradually lose his feeling for his tribe, and learn to trust and follow his government.”³²²

As such, Glubb firmly believed in the responsibility of the government to provide for the tribes, and used the military to institute a welfare system to supplement the tribal way of life, in the hopes of gaining the trust of the tribes. Glubb was immensely successful in this mission, as the tribes of the East Bank still form the bedrock of Hashemite support to this day: as Tancred Bradshaw writes, “During the process of pacification... the tribes were transformed from the state’s most intractable opponents into its most loyal adherents.”³²³

The Bedouin, while initially resistant to the mandatory government, ultimately did join the Desert Patrol because of their dire economic status. The combination of economic stressors, and, most of all, the constant raids of Ibn Saud’s Ikhwan meant that the tribes of Transjordan sustained devastating losses: “the numbers of livestock held by Trans-Jordanian Bedouin fell by 70 percent between 1932, already a famine year, and 1936,”³²⁴ and “while the resource base available to the tribes could have been expanded by means of well digging or irrigation, in practice lack of capital and the terms of the Rutenburg concession limited this option.”³²⁵

³²² John Bagot Glubb, “Note on the Application of the Tribal Courts Law,” in *The Glubb Reports: Glubb Pasha and Britain’s Empire Project in the Middle East 1920-1956*, by Tancred Bradshaw, 1st ed. 2016 edition, vol. Glubb Papers, box 208 (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1936), 49–51, 50.

³²³ Bradshaw, *The Glubb Reports*, 32.

³²⁴ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 86.

³²⁵ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 98.

Glubb attributed the plight of the tribes ““primarily due to the diplomatic policy of Her Majesty’s Government in failing to protect these tribes from Akhwan [sic] raids and... in failing to face up to Ibn Saud and compel him to return the loot,””³²⁶ and resolved to use the Arab Legion to rebuild the tribes, particularly as he believed that it would strengthen public security. Though there were few purely nomadic tribes at the establishment of the Mandate, Glubb “provided [the Bedouin] with the wherewithal to begin cultivation... [and thus] stabilize[d] a multi-resource economy, based on a mixture of farming and sheep herding.”³²⁷ Additionally, the pay of a soldier in the Desert Patrol “could sustain several Bedouin families.”³²⁸

Through Glubb’s “humane imperialism,” the stabilization and security of the Bedouin in combination with the soldiers’ pay and direct subsidies ensured “the economic dependence of the Bedouin ensured their loyalty to Hashemite rule [which] allowed the creation of a cohesive instrument of coercive power and... [transformed] the desert Bedouin into a central element in the infrastructure of colonial control.”³²⁹ The pacification of the tribal regions had unintended economic benefits as well, as “markets became more integrated:” “this allowed the Bedouin herder to obtain better prices for his produce by circumventing the middlemen who had acquired what were virtually local monopolies over the trade in livestock in the steppe” because it was now safe in the desert for the “individual herdsman.”³³⁰

Glubb’s influence did not end at the pacification of the tribes, but in fact used the Bedouin to create a national identity, “recasting the Bedouins as the *main* national signifier of

³²⁶ Ibid., 84.

³²⁷ Ibid., 86.

³²⁸ Ibid., 87.

³²⁹ Ibid., 93.

³³⁰ Ibid., 91.

Jordanian identity.”³³¹ With the intentional design of the uniform to project both an official state apparatus of force and the traditional authority of the tribal leaders, the “Bedouin soldiers would serve as visual representations of state authority and their appearance was carefully managed to great effect,”³³² and the Bedouin values of hospitality and ferocity were claimed as native Jordanian values.³³³



*Image 5 Desert Patrol, 1936.*³³⁴

A secondary internal threat, as seen by the British at least, was the strong presence of the Syrian nationalists in exile, the Istiqlalists, that were essentially running Abdullah’s administration in the beginning. This group’s extreme anti-French sentiment also threatened the British colonial administration, and “Churchill [at the time the secretary of the Colonial Office]

³³¹ Al-Mahadin, “An Economy of Legitimizing Discourses: The Invention of the Bedouin and Petra as National Signifiers in Jordan,” 90.

³³² Endelman, “Displaying the State,” 210.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 208.

³³⁴ Glubb, *The Story of the Arab Legion*, 200.

concluded that it was the Amir's 'Syrian entourage [who] were at the root of the difficulty,' and the British determined to oust the Istiqlal,"³³⁵ as opposed to ousting Abdullah as the Palestine administration wanted "in order to defuse French fears,"³³⁶ and as "the government of Palestine still had hopes of incorporating Trans-Jordan after the six-month trial agreed with Churchill had come to an end."³³⁷ The British then used the Gouraud incident as a way to push out much of the cabinet, after which "Abdullah's relations with the Istiqlal deteriorated... and his dreams of a Syrian throne proved chimerical."³³⁸ By 1924, Abdullah was "handed an ultimatum forcing him to accept total British administrative and economic control and to remove the last Istiqlalists from Amman,"³³⁹ and thus the Syrian nationalist threat was neutralized.

The Arab Legion was not just beneficial in maintaining the internal security of the mandate, but also defended the new state from external threats, the most pressing of which were Ibn Saud's Ikhwan on the south and the unrest of Palestine on the west. As far as the British were concerned, securing Transjordan from the threat of losing territory or defections of tribes to the Ikhwan was most important because of its use as a buffer to the more valuable Palestine: "Given the hostility between Mecca and Riyadh, [Lawrence] had argued that a Sharifian administration in Amman would provide the ideal foil to Ibn Sa'ud. With Wahhabism now threatening the eastern marches of Palestine, Lawrence's idea of using Trans-Jordan, with RAF support, as a buffer between Palestine and the Arabian interior gained support even in Jerusalem."³⁴⁰

³³⁵ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 64.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 60.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, 64.

³³⁸ *Ibid.* 62.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, 70.

³⁴⁰ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 66.

Ibn Saud's expansionary campaign threatened not only Abdullah's family kingdom of the Hejaz, but his own emirate. The British were particularly nervous because the further Ibn Saud moved northwards, the closer he came to cutting off Transjordan's border with Iraq, and thus severing Britain's contiguous land corridor from the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Gulf. Therefore, the Hadda Agreement, negotiated by Sir Gilbert Clayton, ceded Wadi Sirhan to Ibn Saud in exchange for retaining the Iraq-Transjordan border. However, this made the British look rather weak to Ibn Saud, and the fact that neither the British nor the Amir Abdullah could stop the cross-border raids exacerbated this perception. The McDonnell Commission was "appointed to adjudicate between the competing claims of T-J and Saudia on cross border raids in the late 1920s, [but] failed to reach a clearcut decision,"³⁴¹ and this further hurt the prestige of the Transjordanian administration in the eyes of both the Ikhwan and the Transjordanian Bedouin, so the Ikhwan raids continued while the Transjordanian Bedouin grew discontented and impoverished, as "the banning of counter-raiding mean that the tribes were debarred from recovering their losses, and diplomacy [had] failed to produce restitution."³⁴²

Unrest in Syria and Palestine threatened the security of the new state as well, but not in a directly interstate manner as Ibn Saud did. The British were already hoping that their mere presence in Transjordan would perform as a balance to the French in Syria, and prevent their expansion southward. The Druze Revolt of 1925-1927 in Syria increased the number of Syrians flowing into Jordan, and even more so, the Palestinian revolt of 1936-1939 threatened the internal stability of the mandate. Hajj Amin al-Husseini was known to be disseminating propaganda from Palestine in the hopes of inciting other Arab populations to join in the anti-

³⁴¹ Ibid., 79.

³⁴² Bradshaw, *The Glubb Reports*, 36.

colonial violence, and “sections of the population were becoming increasingly disaffected since they were subjected to the mufti’s propaganda,”³⁴³ and this sentiment was exacerbated by “Abdullah’s acceptance of the Peel recommendations on partition [of Palestine] in the summer of 1937.”³⁴⁴ Glubb Pasha stated the options “in order to keep the Transjordanians from joining in anti-Jewish disturbances [as being]: 1) cash gifts and subsidies to shaikhs, 2) the influence of HH [his highness] the Amir, 3) prompt action against agitators, 4) a favourable press, 5) control of W/T [wireless telegraphy aka radio communication] propaganda;”³⁴⁵ the foremost of these being “the payment of subsidies and stipends to the leading shaikhs by Glubb and the Amir Abdullah.” Additionally, during this period of unrest in Palestine, “the Desert Patrol was used to patrol the Syrian frontier to prevent the movement of armed bands”³⁴⁶ that were crossing through Transjordan to support the riots in Palestine.

The combination of the threat of Ibn Saud that Abdullah was unable to repel on his own and the economic plight of the Transjordanian people “drove Abdullah into the imperial embrace in the mid-1920s”³⁴⁷ and “render[ed] cooperation with the British government essential”³⁴⁸ for the survival of the state. The investment in and development of the Arab Legion had long term consequences for the state of Jordan, epitomized by Heller’s claim of the “‘bedouinization’ of the legion.”³⁴⁹ He argues that “the reasons for the political reliability of the Bedouin are clear:

³⁴³ Ibid., 38.

³⁴⁴ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 89.

³⁴⁵ Bradshaw, *The Glubb Reports*, 48.

³⁴⁶ Ibid., 36.

³⁴⁷ Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*, 56.

³⁴⁸ John Bagot Glubb, “A Further Note on Peace Terms in the Middle East,” in *The Glubb Reports: Glubb Pasha and Britain’s Empire Project in the Middle East 1920-1956*, by Tancred Bradshaw, 1st ed. 2016 edition, vol. Glubb Papers, box 210 (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1943), 66–73, 71.

³⁴⁹ Heller, “Politics and the Military in Iraq and Jordan, 1920-1958,” 91.

their relative indifference to ideological arab nationalism... and the importance of the images of Bedouin-as-warrior and the primacy of the monarch-chief, images which Glubb, Abdullah, and Husayn assiduously cultivated,”³⁵⁰ and these two characteristics are key. The Arab Legion, in contrast to many other militaries of the post-Ottoman Middle East, were never “prostitute[d] for political purposes.”³⁵¹ The East Bank tribes have been and continue to be the base of support for the Hashemite regime,³⁵² and the Bedouin image and values have been co-opted as the national identity to an extent.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., 1920-1958,” 93.

³⁵¹ Glubb, “A Further Note on Peace Terms in the Middle East,” 70.

³⁵² Nasasra, *The Naqab Bedouins*, 40.

Conclusion

In understanding the longevity of the Hashemite regime, it is necessary to explore its origins. I have aimed to do so by examining the Anglo-Hashemite alliance, and its definition of the territory and administration of Transjordan. Through WWI and its immediate aftermath, the Anglo-Hashemite relationship was established as an alliance of mutual benefit, and during this period, too, the territory that was to become the HKJ evolved into what it is today. Despite the lack of historical precedent for a unified political or cultural entity in Jordan, the borders drawn by the British, for the most part, still exist today, as does the regime the British installed within those borders.

It is vital to examine how the British administration interacted with the Hashemite monarchy and the local population, and the ways in which these interactions shaped the development of Jordan. Policies during the Mandate period, such as land reform and the expansion of the Arab League, served to expand the reach of the state and establish the relationship between the state and its citizens. While, as illustrated in their reactionary attitude in defining borders and lack of policy for economic development, the British had a rather ambivalent attitude towards Transjordan beyond its strategic value for connecting the Empire, they played an enormously influential role in shaping the state and nation of Jordan. During the Mandate era, the foundation for the stability of the Hashemite government was built through ensuring the loyalty of the tribes through integration into the military, and urban elites through incorporation into the representative political sphere. The actual British rule of the Emirate was rather limited in terms of development, however this combination of a narrow imperial reach and a locally integrated gendarmerie may be the explanation for the lack of resistance to the Anglo-

Hashemite regime, which threatened many other Middle Eastern regimes established in the post-WWI period.

During the mandate period, the Anglo-Hashemite regime cultivated a sense of legitimacy and national identity on the bases of religious and tribal significance. This established the basis for the continuing efforts of the Hashemite monarchy to claim legitimacy from the Islamic religion. This was reiterated in the Hashemite annexation of the West Bank, and later, after Israel re-occupied the West Bank, acknowledgement as the protectors of Al-Aqsa Mosque in the 1994 Jordanian-Israel Peace Treaty. And particularly after the events of Black September and in recent efforts to increase tourism, the Jordanian identity has been emphasized as essentially Bedouin.³⁵³

In this paper, I hope to have illustrated a rather comprehensive picture of the formation of Jordan as an independent political entity, from the initial inklings of British-influenced Arab kingdom in the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence and the Sykes-Picot Agreement, to the actual establishment of a constitutional mandate ruled by a Hashemite Emir. I have aimed to identify the legacy of the British Mandate, and this has required a focus on British attitudes and policy towards and in Jordan, but this does not mean that Jordan was exclusively shaped by the British. I do not wish to assert that the Transjordanian population was completely nascent and accepting of the imposition of Anglo-Hashemite rule without any voice whatsoever, but the primary drivers of the state were the British and the Emir Abdullah.

I have also explored the immense role of the Hashemites, and the impact of this alliance on the local population. In essence, I contend that the Anglo-Hashemite alliance had an enduring impact on the state of Jordan, in the political, economic, and social domains. In the attitudes and

³⁵³ Al-Mahadin, "An Economy of Legitimizing Discourses: The Invention of the Bedouin and Petra as National Signifiers in Jordan," 96.

policies enacted before and during the Mandate period, this alliance created the modern state of Jordan.

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Appendix A. Hussein-McMahon Correspondence, 1915-1916

Original letters in Arabic; translations taken directly from the Jewish Virtual Library (also found in Appendix A of *The Arab Awakening*, George Antonius, 1939).

No. 1

From Sharif Husayn of Mecca to Sir Henry McMahon, His Majesty's High Commissioner at Cairo, July 14, 1915

Whereas the whole of the Arab nation without any exception have decided in these last years to accomplish their freedom, and grasp the reins of their administration both in theory and practice; and whereas they have found and felt that it is in the interest of the Government of Great Britain to support them and aid them in the attainment of their firm and lawful intentions (which are based upon the maintenance of the honour and dignity of their life) without any ulterior motives whatsoever unconnected with this object;

And whereas it is to their (the Arabs') interest also to prefer the assistance of the Government of Great Britain in consideration of their geographic position and economic interests, and also of the attitude of the above-mentioned Government, which is known to both nations and therefore need not be emphasized;

For these reasons the Arab nation sees fit to limit themselves, as time is short, to asking the Government of Great Britain, if it should think fit, for the approval, through her deputy or representative, of the following fundamental propositions, leaving out all things considered secondary in comparison with these, so that it may prepare all means necessary for attaining this noble purpose, until such time as it finds occasion for making the actual negotiations:-

Firstly.- England will acknowledge the independence of the Arab countries, bounded on the north by Mersina and Adana up to the 37th degree of latitude, on which degree fall Birijik, Urfa, Mardin, Midiat, Jezirat (Ibn 'Umar), Amadia, up to the border of Persia; on the east by the borders of Persia up to the Gulf of Basra; on the south by the Indian Ocean, with the exception of the position of Aden to remain as it is; on the west by the Red Sea, the Mediterranean Sea up to Mersina. England to approve the proclamation of an Arab Khalifate of Islam.

Secondly.- The Arab Government of the Sherif will acknowledge that England shall have the preference in all economic enterprises in the Arab countries whenever conditions of enterprises are otherwise equal.

Thirdly.- For the security of this Arab independence and the certainty of such preference of economic enterprises, both high contracting parties will offer mutual assistance, to the best ability of their military and naval forces, to face any foreign Power which may attack either party. Peace not to be decided without agreement of both parties.

Fourthly.- If one of the parties enters into an aggressive conflict, the other party will assume a neutral attitude, and in case of such party wishing the other to join forces, both to meet and discuss the conditions.

Fifthly.- England will acknowledge the abolition of foreign privileges in the Arab countries, and will assist the Government of the Sherif in an International Convention for confirming such abolition.

Sixthly.- Articles 3 and 4 of this treaty will remain in vigour for fifteen years, and, if either wishes it to be renewed, one year's notice before lapse of treaty is to be given.

Consequently, and as the whole of the Arab nation have (praise be to God) agreed and united for the attainment, at all costs and finally, of this noble object, they beg the Government of Great Britain to answer them positively or negatively in a period of thirty days after receiving this intimation; and if this period should lapse before they receive an answer, they reserve to themselves complete freedom of action. Moreover, we (the Sherif's family) will consider ourselves free in work and deed from the bonds of our previous declaration which we made through Ali Effendi.

No. 2

From McMahan to Husayn, August 30, 1915

To his Highness the Sherif Hussein.

(After compliments and salutations.)

WE have the honour to thank you for your frank expressions of the sincerity of your feeling towards England. We rejoice, moreover, that your Highness and your people are of one opinion-that Arab interests are English interests and English Arab. To this intent 'we confirm to you the terms of Lord Kitchener's message, which reached you by the hand of Ali Effendi, and in which was stated clearly our desire for the independence of Arabia and its inhabitants, together with our approval of the Arab Khalifate when it should be proclaimed. We declare once more that His Majesty's Government would welcome the resumption of the Khalifate by an Arab of true race. With regard to the questions of limits and boundaries, it would appear to be premature to consume our time in discussing such details in the heat of war, and while, in many portions of them, the Turk is up to now in effective occupation; especially as we have learned, with surprise and regret, that some of the Arabs in those very parts, far from assisting us, are neglecting this their supreme opportunity and are lending their arms to the German and the Turk, to the new despoiler and the old oppressor.

Nevertheless, we are ready to send your Highness for the Holy Cities and the noble Arabs the charitable offerings of Egypt so soon as your Highness shall inform us how and where they should be delivered. We are, moreover, arranging for this your messenger to be admitted and helped on any journey he may make to ourselves.

Friendly reassurances. Salutations!

(Signed) A. H. McMAHON.

No. 3

From Husayn to McMahan, September 9, 1915

To his Excellency the Most Exalted, the Most Eminent-the British High Commissioner in Egypt; may God grant him Success.

WITH great cheerfulness and delight I received your letter dated the 19th Shawal, 1333 (the 30th August, 1915), and have given it great consideration and regard, in spite of the impression I received from it of ambiguity and its tone of coldness and hesitation with regard to our essential point.

It is necessary to make clear to your Excellency our sincerity towards the illustrious British Empire and our confession of preference for it in all cases and matters and under all forms and circumstances. The real interests of the followers of our religion necessitate this.

Nevertheless, your Excellency will pardon me and permit me to say clearly that the coolness and hesitation which you have displayed in the question of the limits and boundaries by saying that the discussion of these at present is of no use and is a loss of time, and that they are still in the hands of the Government which is ruling them, &c., might be taken to infer an estrangement or something of the sort.

As the limits and boundaries demanded are not those of one person whom we should satisfy and with whom we should discuss them after the war is over, but our peoples have seen that the life of their new proposal is bound at least by these limits and their word is united on this.

Therefore, they have found it necessary first to discuss this point with the Power in whom they now have their confidence and trust as a final appeal, viz., the illustrious British Empire.

Their reason for this union and confidence is mutual interest, the necessity of regulating territorial divisions and the feelings of their inhabitants, so that they may know how to base their future and life, so not to meet her (England?) or any of her Allies in opposition to their resolution which would produce a contrary issue, which God forbid.

For the object is, honourable Minister, the truth which is established on a basis which guarantees the essential sources of life in future.

Yet within these limits they have not included places inhabited by a foreign race. It is a vain show of words and titles.

May God have mercy on the Khalifate and comfort Moslems in it.

I am confident that your Excellency will not doubt that it is not I personally who am demanding of these limits which include only our race, but that they are all proposals of the people, who, in short, believe that they are necessary for economic life.

Is this not right, your Excellency the Minister?

In a word, your high Excellency, we are firm in our sincerity and declaring our preference for loyalty towards you, whether you are satisfied with us, as has been said, or angry.

With reference to your remark in your letter above mentioned that some of our people are still doing their utmost in promoting the interests of Turkey, your goodness (lit. "perfectness") would not permit you to make this an excuse for the tone of coldness and hesitation with regard to our demands, demands which I cannot admit that you, as a man of sound opinion, will deny to be necessary for our existence; nay, they are the essential essence of our life, material and moral.

Up to the present moment I am myself with all my might carrying out in my country all things in conformity with the Islamic law, all things which tend to benefit the rest of the Kingdom, and I shall continue to do so until it pleases God to order otherwise.

In order to reassure your Excellency I can declare that the whole country, together with those who you say are submitting themselves to Turco-German orders, are all waiting the result of these negotiations, which are dependent only on your refusal or acceptance of the question of the limits and on your declaration of safeguarding their religion first and then the rest of rights from any harm or danger.

Whatever the illustrious Government of Great Britain finds conformable to its policy on this subject, communicate it to us and specify to us the course we should follow.

In all cases it is only God's will which shall be executed, and it is God who is the real factor in everything.

With regard to our demand for grain for the natives, and the moneys ("surras") known to the Wakfs' Ministry and all other articles sent here with pilgrims' caravans, high Excellency, my intention in this matter is to confirm your proclamations to the whole world, and especially to the

Moslem world, that your antagonism is confined only to the party which has usurped the rights of the Khalifate in which are included the rights of all Moslems.

Moreover the said grain is from the special Wakfs and has nothing to do with politics.

If you think it should be, let the grain of the two years be transported in a special steamer to Jedda in an official manner, in the name of all the natives as usual, and the captain of the steamer or the special "Mamur" detailed as usual every year to hand it over on his arrival at the port will send to the Governor of Jedda asking for the Mamur of the grain at Jedda or a responsible official to take over the grain and give the necessary receipt signed by the said Mamur, that is the Mamur of the grain himself. He should make it a condition that he would (? not) accept any receipt but that signed by this Mamur.

Let the captain of the steamer or the "Mamur" (detailed with the grain) be instructed that if he finds anything contrary to this arrangement he should warn them that he will return home with the cargo. Thereupon the Mamur and the special committee detailed with him, which is known as the committee of the grain for the natives, will take over the grain in the proper form.

Please accept my best regards and salutations.

If you choose to send a reply to this, please send it with the bearer. 29th Shawal, 1333.

No. 4

From McMahan to Husayn, October 24, 1915

I have received your letter of the 29th Shawal, 1333, with much pleasure and your expressions of friendliness and sincerity have given me the greatest satisfaction.

I regret that you should have received from my last letter the impression that I regarded the question of the limits and boundaries with coldness and hesitation; such was not the case, but it appeared to me that the time had not yet come when that question could be discussed in a conclusive manner.

I have realised, however, from your last letter that you regard this question as one of vital and urgent importance. I have, therefore, lost no time in informing the Government of Great Britain of the contents of your letter, and it is with great pleasure that I communicate to you on their behalf the following statement, which I am confident you will receive with satisfaction:-

The two districts of Mersina and Alexandretta and portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus, Homs, Hama and Aleppo cannot be said to be purely Arab, and should be excluded from the limits demanded.

With the above modification, and without prejudice of our existing treaties with Arab chiefs, we accept those limits.

As for those regions lying within those frontiers wherein Great Britain is free to act without detriment to the interest of her ally, France, I am empowered in the name of the Government of Great Britain to give the following assurances and make the following reply to your letter:-

1. Subject to the above modifications, Great Britain is prepared to recognize and support the independence of the Arabs in all the regions within the limits demanded by the Sherif of Mecca.

2. Great Britain will guarantee the Holy Places against all external aggression and will recognise their inviolability.

3. When the situation admits, Great Britain will give to the Arabs her advice and will assist them to establish what may appear to be the most suitable forms of government in those various territories.

4. On the other hand, it is understood that the Arabs have decided to seek the advice and guidance of Great Britain only, and that such European advisers and officials as may be required for the formation of a sound form of administration will be British.

5. With regard to the vilayets of Bagdad and Basra, the Arabs will recognise that the established position and interests of Great Britain necessitate special administrative arrangements in order to secure these territories from foreign aggression, to promote the welfare of the local populations and to safeguard our mutual economic interests.

I am convinced that this declaration will assure you beyond all possible doubt of the sympathy of Great Britain towards the aspirations of her friends the Arabs and will result in a firm and lasting alliance, the immediate results of which will be the expulsion of the Turks from the Arab countries and the freeing of the Arab peoples from the Turkish yoke, which for so many years has pressed heavily upon them.

I have confined myself in this letter to the more vital and important questions, and if there are any other matters dealt with in your letter which I have omitted to mention, we may discuss them at some convenient date in the future.

It was with very great relief and satisfaction that I heard of the safe arrival of the Holy Carpet and the accompanying offerings which, thanks to the clearness of your directions and the excellence of your arrangements, were landed without trouble or mishap in spite of the dangers and difficulties occasioned by the present sad war. May God soon bring a lasting peace and freedom to all peoples!

I am sending this letter by the hand of your trusted and excellent messenger, Sheikh Mohammed Ibn Arif Ibn Uraifan, and he will inform you of the various matters of interest, but of less vital importance, which I have not mentioned in this letter.

(Compliments)

(Signed) A. H. McMAHON.

No. 5

From Husayn to McMahan, November 5, 1915

(In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!)

To his Excellency the most exalted and eminent Minister who is endowed with the highest authority and soundness of opinion.

May God guide him to do His Will!

I RECEIVED with great pleasure your honoured letter, dated the 15th Zil Hijja (the 24th October, 1915), to which I beg to answer as follows:

1. In order to facilitate an agreement and to render a service to Islam, and at the same time to avoid all that may cause Islam troubles and hardships-seeing moreover that we have great consideration for the distinguished qualities and dispositions of the Government of Great Britain-we renounce our insistence on the inclusion of the vilayets of Mersina and Adana in the Arab Kingdom. But the two vilayets of Aleppo and Beirut and their sea coasts are purely Arab vilayets, and there is no difference between a Moslem and a Christian Arab: they are both descendants of one forefather.

We Moslems will follow the footsteps of the Commander of the Faithful Omar ibn Khattab, and other Khalifs succeeding him, who ordained in the laws of the Moslem Faith that Moslems should treat the Christians as they treat themselves. He, Omar, declared with reference to Christians: "They will have the same privileges and submit to the same duties as ourselves." They will thus enjoy their civic rights in as much as it accords with the general interests of the whole nation.

2. As the Iraqi vilayets are parts of the pure Arab Kingdom, and were in fact the seat of its Government in the time of Ali ibn Abu Talib, and in the time of all the Khalifs who succeeded him; and as in them began the civilisation of the Arabs, and as their towns were the first towns built in Islam where the Arab power became so great; therefore they are greatly valued by all Arabs far and near, and their traditions cannot be forgotten by them. Consequently, we cannot satisfy the Arab nations or make them submit to give us such a title to nobility. But in order to render an accord easy, and taking into consideration the assurances mentioned in the fifth article of your letter to keep and guard our mutual interests in that country as they are one and the same, for all these reasons we might agree to leave under the British administration for a short time those districts now occupied by the British troops without the rights of either party being prejudiced thereby (especially those of the Arab nation; which interests are to it economic and vital), and against a suitable sum paid as compensation to the Arab Kingdom for the period of occupation, in order to meet the expenses which every new kingdom is bound to support; at the same time respecting your agreements with the Sheikhs of those districts, and especially those which are essential.

3. In your desire to hasten the movement we see not only advantages, but grounds of apprehension. The first of these grounds is the fear of the blame of the Moslems of the opposite party (as has already happened in the past), who would declare that we have revolted against Islam and ruined its forces. The second is that, standing in the face of Turkey which is supported by all the forces of Germany, we do not know what Great Britain and her Allies would do if one of the Entente Powers were weakened and obliged to make peace. We fear that the Arab nation will then be left alone in the face of Turkey together with her allies, but we would not at all mind if we were to face the Turks alone. Therefore it is necessary to take these points into consideration in order to avoid a peace being concluded in which the parties concerned may decide the fate of our people as if we had taken part in the war without making good our claims to official consideration.

4. The Arab nation has a strong belief that after this war is over the Turks under German influence will direct their efforts to provoke the Arabs and violate their rights, both material and moral, to wipe out their nobility and honour and reduce them to utter submission as they are determined to ruin them entirely. The reasons for the slowness shown in our action have already been stated.

5. When the Arabs know the Government of Great Britain is their ally who will not leave them to themselves at the conclusion of peace in the face of Turkey and Germany, and that she will support and will effectively defend them, then to enter the war at once will, no doubt, be in conformity with the general interest of the Arabs.

6. Our letter dated the 29th Shauul, 1333 (the 9th September, 1915), saves us the trouble of repeating our opinions as to articles 3 and 4 of your honoured last letter regarding administration, Government advisers and officials, especially as you have declared, exalted Minister, that you will not interfere with internal affairs.

7. The arrival of a clear and definite answer as soon as possible to the above proposals is expected. We have done our utmost in making concessions in order to come to an agreement satisfying both parties. We know that our lot in this war will be either a success, which will guarantee to the Arabs a life becoming their past history, or destruction in the attempt to attain their objects. Had it not been for the determination which I see in the Arabs for the attainment of their objects, I would have preferred to seclude myself on one of the heights of a mountain, but they, the Arabs, have insisted that I should guide the movement to this end.

May God keep you safe and victorious, as we devoutly hope and desire.

27th Zil Hijja, 1333.

No. 6

From McMahon to Husayn, December 14, 1915

(After customary greetings and acknowledgment of previous letter.)

I AM gratified to observe that you agree to the exclusion of the districts of Mersina and Adana from boundaries of the Arab territories.

I also note with great pleasure and satisfaction your assurances that the Arabs are determined to act in conformity with the precepts laid down by Omar Ibn Khattab and the early Khalifs, which secure the rights and privileges of all religions alike.

In stating that the Arabs are ready to recognise and respect all our treaties with Arab chiefs, it is, of course, understood that this will apply to all territories included in the Arab Kingdom, as the Government of Great Britain cannot repudiate engagements which already exist.

With regard to the vilayets of Aleppo and Beirut, the Government of Great Britain have fully understood and taken careful note of your observations, but, as the interests of our ally, France, are involved in them both, the question will require careful consideration and a further communication on the subject will be addressed to you in due course.

The Government of Great Britain, as I have already informed you, are ready to give all guarantees of assistance and support within their power to the Arab Kingdom, but their interests demand, as you yourself have recognised, a friendly and stable administration in the vilayet of Bagdad, and the adequate safeguarding of these interests calls for a much fuller and more detailed consideration than the present situation and the urgency of these negotiations permit.

We fully appreciate your desire for caution, and have no wish to urge you to hasty action, which might jeopardise the eventual success of your projects, but, in the meantime, it is most essential that you should spare no effort to attach all the Arab peoples to our united cause and urge them to afford no assistance to our enemies.

It is on the success of these efforts and on the more active measures which the Arabs may hereafter take in support of our cause, when the time for action comes, that the permanence and strength of our agreement must depend.

Under these circumstances I am further directed by the Government of Great Britain to inform you that you may rest assured that Great Britain has no intention of concluding any peace in terms of which the freedom of the Arab peoples from German and Turkish domination does not form an essential condition.

As an earnest of our intentions, and in order to aid you in your efforts in our joint cause, I am sending you by your trustworthy messenger a sum of twenty thousand pounds.

(Customary ending.)

(Signed) H. McMAHON.

No. 7

From Husayn to McMahon, January 1, 1916

(In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!)

To his Excellency the eminent, energetic and magnanimous Minister.

WE received from the bearer your letter, dated the 9th Safar (the 14th December, 1915), with great respect and honour, and I have understood its contents, which caused me the greatest pleasure and satisfaction, as it removed that which had made me uneasy.

Your honour will have realised, after the arrival of Mohammed (Faroki) Sherif and his interview with you, that all our procedure up to the present was of no personal inclination or the like, which would have been wholly unintelligible, but that everything was the result of the decisions and desires of our peoples, and that we are but transmitters and executants of such decisions and desires in the position they (our people) have pressed upon us.

These truths are, in my opinion, very important and deserve your honour's special attention and consideration.

With regard to what had been stated in your honoured communication concerning El Iraq as to the matter of compensation for the period of occupation, we, in order to strengthen the confidence of Great Britain in our attitude and in our words and actions, really and veritably, and in order to give her evidence of our certainty and assurance in trusting her glorious Government, leave the determination of the amount to the perception of her wisdom and justice.

As regards the northern parts and their coasts, we have already stated in our previous letter what were the utmost possible modifications, and all this was only done so to fulfill those aspirations whose attainment is desired by the will of the Blessed and Supreme God. It is this same feeling and desire which impelled us to avoid what may possibly injure the alliance of Great Britain and France and the agreement made between them during the present wars and calamities; yet we find it our duty that the eminent minister should be sure that, at the first opportunity after this war is finished, we shall ask you (what we avert our eyes from to-day) for what we now leave to France in Beirut and its coasts.

I do not find it necessary to draw your attention to the fact that our plan is of greater security to the interests and protection of the rights of Great Britain than it is to us, and will necessarily be so whatever may happen, so that Great Britain may finally see her friends in that contentment and advancement which she is endeavouring to establish for them now, especially as her Allies being neighbours to us will be the germ of difficulties and discussion with which there will be no peaceful conditions. In addition to which the citizens of Beirut will decidedly never accept such dismemberment, and they may oblige us to undertake new measures which may exercise Great Britain, certainly not less than her present troubles, because of our belief and certainty in the reciprocity and indeed the identity of our interests, which is the only cause that caused us never to care to negotiate with any other Power but you. Consequently, it is impossible to allow any derogation that gives France, or any other Power, a span of land in those regions.

I declare this, and I have a strong belief, which the living will inherit from the dead, in the declarations which you give in the conclusion of your honoured letter. Therefore, the honourable and eminent Minister should believe and be sure, together with Great Britain, that we still remain firm to our resolution which Storrs learnt from us two years ago, for which we await the opportunity suitable to our situation, especially in view of that action the time of which has

now come near and which destiny drives towards us with great haste and clearness, so that we and those who are of our opinion may have reasons for such action against any criticisms or responsibilities imposed upon us in future.

Your expression "we do not want to push you to any hasty action which might jeopardise the success of your aim" does not need any more explanation except what we may ask for, when necessary, such as arms, ammunition, &c.

I deem this sufficient, as I have occupied much of your Honour's time. I beg to offer you my great veneration and respect.

25th Safar, 1334.

No. 8

From McMahon to Husayn, January 25, 1916

(After customary greetings.)

WE have received with great pleasure and satisfaction your letter of the 25th Safar (the 1st January) at the hands of your trusty messenger, who has also transmitted to us your verbal messages.

We fully realise and entirely appreciate the motives which guide you in this important question, and we know well that you are acting entirely in the interests of the Arab peoples and with no thought beyond their welfare.

We take note of your remarks concerning the vilayet of Baghdad a", and will take the question into careful consideration when the enemy has been defeated and the time for peaceful settlement arrives.

As regards the northern parts, we note with satisfaction your desire to avoid anything which might possibly injure the alliance of Great Britain and France. It is, as you know, our fixed determination that nothing shall be permitted to interfere in the slightest degree with our united prosecution of this war to a victorious conclusion. Moreover, when the victory has been won, the friendship of Great Britain and France will become yet more firm and enduring, cemented by the blood of Englishmen and Frenchmen who have died side by side fighting for the cause of right and liberty.

In this great cause Arabia is now associated, and God grant that the result of our mutual efforts and co-operation will bind us in a lasting friendship to the mutual welfare and happiness of us all.

We are greatly pleased to hear of the action you are taking to win all the Arabs over to our joint cause, and to dissuade them from giving any assistance to our enemies, and we leave it to your discretion to seize the most favourable moment for further and more decided measures.

You will doubtless inform us by the bearer of this letter of any manner in which we can assist you and your requests will always receive our immediate consideration.

You will have heard how El Sayed Ahmed el Sherif el Senussi has been beguiled by evil advice into hostile action, and it will be a great grief to you to know that he has been so far forgetful of the interests of the Arabs as to throw in his lot with our enemies. Misfortune has now overtaken him, and we trust that this will show him his error and lead him to peace for the sake of his poor misguided followers.

We are sending this letter by the hand of your good messenger, who will also bring to you all our news.

With salaams.

(Signed) H. McMAHON.

No. 9

From Husayn to McMahon, February 18, 1916

(In the name of the Merciful, the Compassionate!)

To the most noble His Excellency the High Commissioner. May God protect Vim. (After compliments and respects.)

WE received your Excellency's letter dated 25th Rabi El Awal, and its contents filled us with the utmost pleasure and satisfaction at the attainment of the required understanding and the intimacy desired. I ask God to make easy our purposes and prosper our endeavours. Your Excellency will understand the work that is being done, and the reasons for it from the following:— Firstly.—We had informed your Excellency that we had sent one of our sons to Syria to command the operations deemed necessary there. We have received a detailed report from him stating that the tyrannies of the Government there have not left of the persons upon whom they could depend, whether of the different ranks of soldiers or of others, save only a few, and those of secondary importance; and that he is awaiting the arrival of the forces announced from different places, especially from the people of the country and the surrounding Arab regions as Aleppo and the south of Mosul, whose total is calculated at not less than 100,000 by their estimate; and he intends, if the majority of the forces mentioned are Arab, to begin the movement by them; and, if otherwise, that is, of the Turks or others, he will observe their advance to the Canal, and when they begin to fight, his movements upon them will be different to what they expect.

Secondly.—We purposed sending our eldest son to Medina with sufficient forces to strengthen his brother (who is) in Syria, and with every possibility of occupying the railway line, or carrying out such operations as circumstances may admit. This is the beginning of the principal movement, and we are satisfied in its beginning with what he had levied as guards to keep the interior of the country quiet; they are of the people of Hejaz only, for many reasons, which it would take too long to set forth; chiefly the difficulties in the way of providing their necessities with secrecy and speed (although this precaution was not necessary) and to make it easy to bring reinforcements when needed; this is the summary of what you wished to understand. In my opinion it is sufficient, and it is to be taken as a foundation and a standard as to our actions in the face of all changes and unforeseen events which the sequence of events may show. It remains for us to state what we need at present:

Firstly.—The amount of £50,000 in gold for the monthly pay of the troops levied, and other things the necessity of which needs no explanation. We beg you to send it with all possible haste.

Secondly.—20,000 sacks of rice, 15,000 sacks of flour, 3,000 sacks of barley, 150 sacks of coffee, 150 sacks of sugar, 5,000 rifles of the modern pattern and the necessary ammunition, and 100 boxes of the two sample cartridges (enclosed) and of Martini-Henry cartridges and "Aza," that is those of the rifles of the factory of St. Etienne in France, for the use of those two kinds of rifles of our tribes; it would not be amiss to send 500 boxes of both kinds.

Thirdly.—We think it better that the place of deposit of all these things should be Port Sudan.

Fourthly.—As the above provisions and munitions are not needed until the beginning of the movement (of which we will inform you officially), they should remain at the above place,

and when we need them we will inform the Governor there of the place to which they may be conveyed, and of the intermediaries who will carry orders for receiving them.

Fifthly.—The money required should be sent at once to the Governor of Port Sudan, and a confidential agent will be sent by us to receive it, either all at once, or in two installments, according as he is able, and this (§) is the (secret) sign to be recognized for accepting the man.

Sixthly.—Our envoy who will receive the money will be sent to Port Sudan in three weeks' time, that is to say, he will be there on the 5th Jamad Awal (9th March) with a letter from us addressed to Al Khawaga Elias Effendi, saying that he (Elias) will pay him, in accordance with the letter, the rent of our properties, and the signature will be clear in our name, but we will instruct him to ask for the Governor of the place, whom you will apprise of this person's arrival. After perusal of the letter, the money should be given to him on condition that no discussion whatever is to be made with him of any question concerning us. We beg you most emphatically not to tell him anything, keeping this affair secret, and he should be treated apparently as if he were nothing out of the way.

Let it not be thought that our appointment of another man results from lack of confidence in the bearer; it is only to avoid waste of time, for we are appointing him to a task elsewhere. At the same time we beg you not to embark or send him in a steamer, or officially, the means already arranged being sufficient.

Seventhly.—Our representative, bearer of the present letter, has been definitely instructed to ensure the arrival of this, and I think that his mission this time is finished since the condition of things is known both in general and in detail, and there is no need for sending anyone else. In case of need for sending information, it will come from us; yet as our next representative will reach you after three weeks, you may prepare instructions for him to take back. Yet let him be treated simply in appearance.

Eighthly.—Let the British Government consider this military expenditure in accordance with the books which will be furnished it, explaining how the money has been spent.

To conclude, my best and numberless salutations beyond all increase.

14 Rabi al Akhar, 1334.

No. 10

From McMahon to Husayn, March 10, 1916

(After customary greetings.)

We have received your letter of the 14th Rabi el Akhar (the 18th February), duly delivered by your trusted messenger.

We are grateful to note the active measures which you propose to take. We consider them the most suitable in the existing circumstances, and they have the approval of His Majesty's Government. I am pleased to be able to inform you that His Majesty's Government have approved of meeting your requests, and that which you asked to be sent with all haste is being despatched with your messenger, who is also the bearer of this letter.

The remainder will be collected as quickly as possible and will be deposited at Port Sudan, where it will remain until we hear from you officially of the beginning of the movement and of the places to which they may be conveyed and the intermediaries who will carry out the orders for receiving them.

The necessary instructions, as set forth in your letter, have been issued to the Governor at Port Sudan, and he will arrange everything in accordance with your wishes.

Your representative who brought your last letter has been duly facilitated in his journey to Jeizan, and every assistance has been given him in his mission, which we trust will be crowned with good results.

We have arranged that, on completion, he will be brought to Port Sudan, whence he will proceed by the safest means to join you and report the results of his work.

We take the opportunity, in sending this letter, to explain to you a matter which might otherwise not have been clear to you, and which might have given rise to misunderstanding. There are various Turkish posts and small garrisons along the coasts of Arabia who are hostile to us, and who are said to be planning injury to our naval interests in the Red Sea. We may, therefore, find it necessary to take hostile measures against these posts and garrisons, but we have issued strict instructions that every care must be taken by our ships to differentiate between the hostile Turkish garrisons and the innocent Arab inhabitants, towards whom we entertain such friendly feelings.

We give you notice of this matter in case distorted and false reports may reach you of the reasons for any action which we may be obliged to take.

We have heard rumours that our mutual enemies are endeavouring to construct boats for the purpose of laying mines in the Red Sea, and of otherwise injuring our interests there, and we beg of you that you will give us early information should you receive any confirmation of such reports.

We have heard that Ibn Rashid has been selling large quantities of camels to the Turks, which are being sent up to Damascus.

We hope that you will be able to use influence with him in order that he may cease from this practice and, if he still persists, that you will be able to arrange for the Arabs who lie between him and Syria to seize the camels as they pass, a procedure which will be to our mutual advantage.

I am glad to be able to inform you that those misguided Arabs under Sayed Ahmed el Senussi, who have fallen victims to the wiles of Turkish and German intriguers, are now beginning to see the error of their ways, and are coming in to us in large numbers, asking for forgiveness and friendship.

We have severely defeated the forces which these intriguers had collected against us, and the eyes of the Arabs are now becoming open to the deceit which has been practiced upon them.

The capture of Erzerum, and the defeats sustained by the Turks in the Caucasus, are having a great effect in our favour, and are greatly helping the cause for which we are both working.

We ask God to prosper your endeavors and to further the work which you have taken in hand.

In conclusion, we beg you to accept our warmest salutations and expressions of friendship.

Jamad Awwal, 1334.

(Signed) A. H. McMAHON

Appendix B. Sykes-Picot Agreement

Taken directly from the Avalon Project, Yale Law School Lillian Goldman Law Library (also found in Appendix B of *The Arab Awakening*, George Antonius, 1939). [Also known as the Anglo-Franco-Russian Agreement.] Signed May 16, 1916.

It is accordingly understood between the French and British governments:

That France and Great Britain are prepared to recognize and protect an independent Arab states or a confederation of Arab states (a) and (b) marked on the annexed map, under the suzerainty of an Arab chief. That in area (a) France, and in area (b) Great Britain, shall have priority of right of enterprise and local loans. That in area (a) France, and in area (b) Great Britain, shall alone supply advisers or foreign functionaries at the request of the Arab state or confederation of Arab states.

That in the blue area France, and in the red area Great Britain, shall be allowed to establish such direct or indirect administration or control as they desire and as they may think fit to arrange with the Arab state or confederation of Arab states.

That in the brown area there shall be established an international administration, the form of which is to be decided upon after consultation with Russia, and subsequently in consultation with the other allies, and the representatives of the Shereef of Mecca.

That Great Britain be accorded (1) the ports of Haifa and Acre, (2) guarantee of a given supply of water from the Tigris and Euphrates in area (a) for area (b). His Majesty's government, on their part, undertake that they will at no time enter into negotiations for the cession of Cyprus to any third power without the previous consent of the French government.

That Alexandretta shall be a free port as regards the trade of the British empire, and that there shall be no discrimination in port charges or facilities as regards British shipping and British goods; that there shall be freedom of transit for British goods through Alexandretta and by railway through the blue area, or (b) area, or area (a); and there shall be no discrimination, direct or indirect, against British goods on any railway or against British goods or ships at any port serving the areas mentioned.

That Haifa shall be a free port as regards the trade of France, her dominions and protectorates, and there shall be no discrimination in port charges or facilities as regards French shipping and French goods. There shall be freedom of transit for French goods through Haifa and by the British railway through the brown area, whether those goods are intended for or originate in the blue area, area (a), or area (b), and there shall be no discrimination, direct or indirect, against French goods on any railway, or against French goods or ships at any port serving the areas mentioned.

That in area (a) the Baghdad railway shall not be extended southwards beyond Mosul, and in area (b) northwards beyond Samarra, until a railway connecting Baghdad and Aleppo via the Euphrates valley has been completed, and then only with the concurrence of the two governments.

That Great Britain has the right to build, administer, and be sole owner of a railway connecting Haifa with area (b), and shall have a perpetual right to transport troops along such a line at all times. It is to be understood by both governments that this railway is to facilitate the connection of Baghdad with Haifa by rail, and it is further understood that, if the engineering difficulties and expense entailed by keeping this connecting line in the brown area only make the project unfeasible, that the French government shall be prepared to consider that the line in

question may also traverse the Polgon Baniyas Keis Marib Salkhad tell Otsda Mesmie before reaching area (b).

For a period of twenty years the existing Turkish customs tariff shall remain in force throughout the whole of the blue and red areas, as well as in areas (a) and (b), and no increase in the rates of duty or conversions from ad valorem to specific rates shall be made except by agreement between the two powers.

There shall be no interior customs barriers between any of the above mentioned areas. The customs duties leviable on goods destined for the interior shall be collected at the port of entry and handed over to the administration of the area of destination.

It shall be agreed that the French government will at no time enter into any negotiations for the cession of their rights and will not cede such rights in the blue area to any third power, except the Arab state or confederation of Arab states, without the previous agreement of his majesty's government, who, on their part, will give a similar undertaking to the French government regarding the red area.

The British and French government, as the protectors of the Arab state, shall agree that they will not themselves acquire and will not consent to a third power acquiring territorial possessions in the Arabian peninsula, nor consent to a third power installing a naval base either on the east coast, or on the islands, of the red sea. This, however, shall not prevent such adjustment of the Aden frontier as may be necessary in consequence of recent Turkish aggression.

The negotiations with the Arabs as to the boundaries of the Arab states shall be continued through the same channel as heretofore on behalf of the two powers.

It is agreed that measures to control the importation of arms into the Arab territories will be considered by the two governments.

I have further the honor to state that, in order to make the agreement complete, his majesty's government are proposing to the Russian government to exchange notes analogous to those exchanged by the latter and your excellency's government on the 26th April last. Copies of these notes will be communicated to your excellency as soon as exchanged. I would also venture to remind your excellency that the conclusion of the present agreement raises, for practical consideration, the question of claims of Italy to a share in any partition or rearrangement of turkey in Asia, as formulated in article 9 of the agreement of the 26th April, 1915, between Italy and the allies.

Appendix C. Anglo-Transjordanian Agreement of 1928.

Text from original document, published by His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1930, located on UK Treaties Online. [Also known as the Agreement between His Majesty and the Amir of Transjordan, 1928.]

Agreement between His Majesty and the Amir of Trans-Jordan.
Jerusalem, February 20, 1928.

[Ratifications exchanged, October 31, 1929.]

WHEREAS His Britannic Majesty in virtue of a Mandate entrusted to him on the 24th of July, 1922, has authority in the area covered thereby; and

Whereas His Highness the Amir of Trans-Jordan has set up an Administration in that part of the area under Mandate known as Trans-Jordan; and

Whereas His Britannic Majesty is prepared to recognise the existence of an independent Government in Trans-Jordan under the rule of His Highness the Amir of Trans-Jordan, provided that such Government is constitutional and places His Britannic Majesty in a position to fulfil his international obligations in respect of that territory by means of an Agreement to be concluded with-His Highness.

Now therefore His Britannic Majesty and His Highness the Amir of Trans-Jordan have resolved to conclude an Agreement for these purposes, and to that end have appointed as their Plenipotentiaries :

His Majesty the King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, For Great Britain and Northern Ireland : Field-Marshal the Right Honourable Lord Plumer, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., G.B.E. ;

His Highness the Amir of Trans-Jordan: Hassan Khaled Pasha Abul Huda;
who, having communicated their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed as follows:

Article 1.

His Highness the Amir agrees that His Britannic Majesty shall be represented in Trans-Jordan by a British Resident acting on behalf of the High Commissioner for Trans-Jordan, and that communications between His Britannic Majesty and all other Powers on the one hand and the Trans-Jordan Government on the other shall be made through the British Resident and the High Commissioner aforesaid.

His Highness the Amir agrees that the ordinary expenses of civil government and administration and the salaries and expenses of the British Resident and his staff will be borne entirely by Trans-Jordan. His Highness the Amir will provide quarters for the accommodation of British members of the staff of the British Resident.

Article 2.

The powers of legislation and of administration entrusted to His Britannic Majesty as Mandatory for Palestine shall be exercised in that part of the area under Mandate known as Trans-Jordan by His Highness the Amir through such constitutional government as is defined and determined in the Organic Law of Trans-Jordan and any amendment thereof made with the approval of His Britannic Majesty.

Throughout the remaining clauses of this Agreement the word "Palestine," unless otherwise defined, shall mean that portion of the area under Mandate which lies to the west of a line drawn from a point two miles west of the town of Akaba on the Gulf of that name up the centre of the Wadi Araba, Dead Sea and River Jordan to its junction with the River Yarmuk; thence up the centre of that river to the Syrian frontier.

Article 3.

His Highness the Amir agrees that for the period of the present Agreement no official of other than Trans-Jordan nationality shall be appointed in Trans-Jordan without the concurrence of His Britannic Majesty. The numbers and conditions of employment of British officials so appointed in the Trans-Jordan Government shall be regulated by a separate Agreement.

Article 4.

His Highness the Amir agrees that all such laws, orders or regulations as may be required for the full discharge of the international responsibilities and obligations of His Britannic Majesty in respect of the territory of Trans-Jordan shall be adopted and made. and that no laws, orders or regulations shall be adopted or made in Trans-Jordan which may binder the full discharge of such international responsibilities and obligations.

Article 5.

His Highness the Amir agrees to be guided by the advice of His Britannic Majesty tendered through the High Commissioner for Trans-Jordan in all matters concerning foreign relations of Trans- Jordan, as well as in all important matters affecting the international and financial obligations and interests of His Britannic Majesty in respect of Trans-Jordan. His Highness the Amir undertakes to follow an administrative, financial and fiscal policy in Trans-Jordan such as will ensure the stability and good organisation of his Government and its finances. He agrees to keep His Britannic Majesty informed of the measures proposed and adopted to give due effect to this undertaking. and further agrees not to alter the system of control of the public finances of Trans-Jordan without the consent, of His Britannic Majesty.

Article 6.

His Highness the Amir agrees that he will refer for the advice of His Britannic Majesty the annual Budget law and any law which concerns matters covered by the provisions of this Agreement, and any law of any of the following classes, namely:

- (1.) Any law affecting the currency of Trans-Jordan or relating to the issue of bank-notes.
- (2.) Any law imposing differential duties.
- (3.) Any law whereby persons who are nationals of any States Members of the League of Nations or of any State to which His Britannic Majesty has agreed by treaty that the same rights should be ensured as it would enjoy if it were a member of the said League, may be subjected or made liable to any disabilities to which persons who ar•n British subjects or nationals of any foreign State are not also subjected or made liable.
- (4.) Any special law providing for succession to the Amir's throne, or for the establishment of a Council of Regency.
- (5.) Any law whereby the grant of land or money or other donation or gratuity may be made to himself.

(6.) Any law under which the Amir may assume sovereignty over territory outside Trans-Jordan.

(7.) Any law concerning the jurisdiction of the Civil Courts over foreigners,

(8). Any law altering, amending or adding to the details of the provisions of the Organic Law.

Article 7.

Except by agreement between the two countries there shall be no customs barrier between Palestine and Trans-Jordan, and the Customs tariff in Trans-Jordan shall be approved by His Britannic Majesty.

The Government of Palestine shall pay to the Trans-Jordan Government the estimated amount of customs duties levied on the part of the goods entering Palestine from territory other than Trans-Jordan which subsequently enters Trans-Jordan for local consumption, but shall be entitled to withhold from the sums to be paid on this account the estimated amount of customs duties levied by Trans-Jordan on that part of the goods entering Trans-Jordan from other than Palestine territory, which subsequently enters Palestine for local consumption. The trade and commerce of Trans-Jordan shall receive at Palestinian Ports equal facilities with the trade and commerce of Palestine.

Article 8.

So far as is consistent with the international obligations of His Britannic Majesty no obstacle shall be placed in the way of the association of Trans-Jordan for customs or other purposes with such neighbouring Arab States as may desire it.

Article 9.

His Highness the Amir undertakes that he will accept and give effect to such reasonable provisions as His Britannic Majesty may consider necessary in judicial matters to safeguard the interests of foreigners.

These provisions shall be embodied in a separate Agreement, which shall be communicated to the Council of the League of Nations, and, pending the conclusion of such Agreement, no foreigner shall be brought before a Trans-Jordan Court without the concurrence of His Britannic Majesty.

His Highness the Amir undertakes that he will accept and give effect to such reasonable provisions as His Britannic Majesty may consider necessary in judicial matters to safeguard the law and jurisdiction with regard to questions arising out of the religious beliefs of the different religious communities.

Article 10.

His Britannic Majesty may maintain armed forces in Trans-Jordan, and may raise, organise and control in Trans-Jordan such armed forces as may in his opinion be necessary for the defence of the country and to assist His Highness the Amir in the preservation of peace and order.

His Highness the Amir agrees that he will not raise or maintain in Trans-Jordan or allow to be raised or maintained any military forces without the consent of His Britannic Majesty.

Article 11.

His Highness the Amir recognises the principle that the cost of the forces required for the defence of Trans-Jordan is a charge on the revenues of that territory. At the coming into force of this Agreement, Trans-Jordan will continue to bear one-sixth of the cost of the Trans-Jordan Frontier Force, and will also bear, as soon as the financial resources of the country permit, the excess of the cost of the British forces stationed in Trans-Jordan, so far as such forces may be deemed by His Britannic Majesty to be employed in respect of Trans-Jordan, over the cost of such forces if stationed in Great Britain, and the whole cost of any forces raised for Trans-Jordan alone.

Article 12.

So long as the revenues of Trans-Jordan are insufficient to meet such ordinary expenses of administration (including any expenditure on local forces for which Trans-Jordan is liable under Article 11) as may be incurred with the approval of His Britannic Majesty, arrangements will be made for a contribution from the British Treasury by way of grant or loan in aid of the revenues of Trans-Jordan. His Britannic Majesty will also arrange for the payment of the excess of the cost of the British forces stationed in Trans-Jordan, and deemed by His Britannic Majesty to be employed in respect of Trans-Jordan, insofar and for such time as the revenues of Trans-Jordan are insufficient to bear such excess.

Article 13.

His Highness the Amir agrees that all such laws, orders or regulations as may from time to time be required by His Britannic Majesty for the purposes of Article 10 shall be adopted and made, and that no laws, orders or regulations shall be adopted or made in Trans-Jordan which may, in the opinion of His Britannic Majesty, interfere with the purposes of that Article.

Article 14.

His Highness the Amir agrees to follow the advice of His Britannic Majesty with regard to the proclamation of Martial Law in all or any part of Trans-Jordan and to entrust the administration of such part or parts of Trans-Jordan as may be placed under Martial Law to such officer or officers of His Britannic Majesty's forces as His Britannic Majesty may nominate. His Highness the Amir further agrees that on the re-establishment of civil government a special law shall be adopted to indemnify the armed forces maintained by His Britannic Majesty for all acts done or omissions or defaults made under Martial Law.

Article 15.

His Britannic Majesty may exercise jurisdiction over all members of the armed forces maintained or controlled by His Britannic Majesty in Trans-Jordan.

For the purposes of this and the five preceding Articles, the term "armed forces" shall be deemed to include civilians attached to or employed with the armed forces.

Article 16.

His Highness the Amir undertakes that every facility shall be provided at all times for the movement of His Britannic Majesty's forces (including the use of wireless and land-line telegraphic and telephonic services and the right to lay land-lines), and for the carriage and storage of fuel, ordnance, ammunition and supplies on the roads, railways and waterways and in the ports of Trans-Jordan.

Article 17.

His Highness the Amir agrees to be guided by the advice of His Britannic Majesty in all matters concerning the granting of concessions, the exploitation of natural resources, the construction and operation of railways, and the raising of loans.

Article 18.

No territory in Trans-Jordan shall be ceded or leased or in any way placed under the control of any foreign Power; this shall not prevent His Highness the Amir from making such arrangements as may be necessary for the accommodation of foreign representatives and for the fulfilment of the provisions of the preceding Articles.

Article 19.

His Highness the Amir agrees that, pending the making of special extradition agreements relating to Trans-Jordan, the Extradition Treaties in force between His Britannic Majesty and foreign Powers shall apply to Trans-Jordan.

Article 20.

This Agreement shall come into force so soon as it shall have been ratified by the High Contracting Parties after its acceptance by the constitutional Government to be set up under Article 2. The constitutional Government shall be deemed to be provisional until the Agreement shall have been so approved. Nothing shall prevent the High Contracting Parties from reviewing from time to time the provisions of this Agreement with a view to any revision which may seem desirable in the circumstances then existing.

Article 21.

The present Agreement has been drawn up in two languages, English and Arabic, and the Plenipotentiaries of each of the High Contracting parties shall sign two English copies and two Arabic copies. Both texts shall have the same validity, but in case of divergence between the two in the interpretation of one or other of the Articles of the present Agreement, the English text shall prevail.

In faith whereof the above-mentioned Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Agreement.

Done at Jerusalem, this twentieth day of February, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-eight.

(Signature in Arabic.)

HASSAN RHALID ABOULHOUDY.

PLUMER, F.D.M.