Distribution Agreement

In presenting this thesis as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for a degree from Emory University, I hereby grant to Emory University and its agents the non-exclusive license to archive, make accessible, and display my thesis in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter now, including display on the World Wide Web. I understand that I may select some access restrictions as part of the online submission of this thesis. I retain all ownership rights to the copyright of the thesis. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of this thesis.

Mary Kathryn Healy April 16, 2020

Democracy in Jordan: An Authentic Aspiration or Imperialist Imposition?

by

Mary Kathryn Healy

Dr. Vincent Cornell

Adviser

Arabic Studies

Dr. Vincent Cornell

Adviser

Dr. Donald Beaudette

Committee Member

Dr. Rkia Cornell

Committee Member

2020

Democracy in Jordan: An Authentic Aspiration or Imperialist Imposition?

By

Mary Kathryn Healy

Dr. Vincent Cornell

Adviser

An abstract of
a thesis submitted to the Faculty of Emory College of Arts and Sciences
of Emory University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the degree of
Bachelor of Arts with Honors

Arabic Studies

2020

Abstract

Democracy in Jordan: An Authentic Aspiration or Imperialist Imposition?
By Mary Kathryn Healy

The United States has had a long and complicated political history with the Middle East region spanning from the Barbary Wars to more recent democracy building efforts in the region. This project tackles the issue of democracy building in Jordan by the United States, questioning the real motives behind these efforts, whether they align with the goals of Jordanian political actors, and whether they have created any material change to Jordan's political realities. Jordan has played a key role in American foreign policy in the Middle East because of its stability, relatively moderate stance to the state of Israel, and geographic positioning. Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, the U.S. has partnered with Jordan in anti-terrorism efforts and has diverted large sums of money to promote democracy in Jordan. This project examines the ways in which the United States has allocated these funds and the actual work that is being done by U.S.-based organizations. It studies how these projects are situated in the larger relationship between the United States and Jordan and the actual effects that they have on Jordanian democratic processes. It compares these efforts to those of the Jordanian government, political parties, civil society movements, and popular protests to promote democracy. By framing this comparison with an in-depth analysis of Jordan's history, its relationship to Western powers, the nature of its civil society, and its relationship to the United States, this paper uses qualitative analysis to critically examine the utilitarian value of U.S. democracy building efforts in Jordan.

Democracy in Jordan: An Authentic Aspiration or Imperialist Imposition?

By

Mary Kathryn Healy

Dr. Vincent Cornell

Adviser

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Emory College of Arts and Sciences
of Emory University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the degree of
Bachelor of Arts with Honors

Arabic Studies

2020

Table of Contents

Introduction

The United States' relationship with the Middle East is one that spans over two centuries and has been one of the most contentious facets of modern U.S. foreign policy. From the Barbary Wars in the eighteenth century to the recent death of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani on Iraqi soil, the United States and the Middle East have been interlocked in a complicated relationship driven by resource wealth, religious tension, the legacies of colonial state building, and polarized struggles for regional hegemony. This shared history has been influenced by an Orientalist understanding of the Middle East by the United States, an understanding rooted in a combination of wonder, fear, and paternalism. More recently, as the United States expanded its reach following its newfound identity as a global superpower following the Second World War, it adopted neoliberal policies towards the Middle East that view democratic states as the surest guarantee of stability and pro-U.S. sentiment in the region. While touting moral considerations such as the expansion of human rights through democracy building, the United States has poured money and troops into the Middle East region to attain a particular vision of a democratic Middle East. This paper will examine democracy promotion specifically in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan through the lens of history, civil society, and grassroots movements to better understand the intricacies of democracy promotion. It will use this discussion to evaluate the overall utility of democracy promotion initiatives in Jordan by the United States.

Research on U.S. foreign policy has often utilized a top-down, realist interpretation of international politics, which views states as unitary actors maneuvering to attain their own regional hegemony and security. More liberal scholars posit that international institutions, such

as the United Nations, are arbitrators among states that reduce the chance of conflict. This project is an effort to provide an alternative to these two approaches and, instead, to study democracy promotion as an example of foreign policy efforts with a civil society-oriented and non U.S.-centric approach to foreign policy.

In the pursuit of these goals, this thesis examines the democracy building efforts of the United States in Jordan during the reign of King Abdullah II. In particular, it seeks to understand the methods used by both U.S.-based and Jordan-based actors to promote democracy in the country. It contextualizes these efforts in Jordan's history and civil society, examining the different kinds of democracy-promoting actors in the country as well as the effects of their work on Jordan's democracy. It studies the work that is being done by both American and Jordanian governments, organizations, and activists to promote democratic principles such as free speech, voter mobilization, and human rights. By contrasting the goals and methods of Jordanian activists with those of U.S.-sponsored organizations, it reviews the effectiveness of American democracy-promotion efforts in Jordan alongside the real motivation behind these efforts given the context of Jordanian history and society.

Ultimately, the research questions for this project are as follows: What democracy promotion initiatives in Jordan are American and Jordanian actors undertaking? How do these efforts fit into the context of Jordan's history and its current political realities? How do democracy promotion efforts by the United States align with those of Jordanian actors, and what can we learn about U.S. interests in Jordan from this comparison? Lastly, what can we learn from this project about the depth of research that needs to be done to create effective foreign policy regarding democracy promotion?

Before delving into the project, it is important to explain my background and positionality with respect to this topic. As an American researcher, I have been raised in a political climate regarding the relationship between the United States and the Middle East that has been defined by the War on Terror and general security concerns regarding the Middle East region. This climate has been characterized by aggressive policy and an ambitious foreign policy program introduced by former president George W. Bush, which viewed democracy as a vital step toward creating sustainable peace between the United States and the Middle East region. Like most Americans, I saw this security-based relationship with the Middle East as vital to American interests but did not exactly know why. My academic interests in Political Philosophy, International Affairs, Middle Eastern politics, and Arabic led me to question this relationship and brought me to this topic.

This project stemmed from a desire to highlight aspects of U.S. foreign policy that perhaps are not as simple as they appear. It also stemmed from a desire to study foreign policy from a qualitative lens that placed significant emphasis on the dynamics of history, civil society, and political actors as a fundamental step in understanding the impact of foreign policies. I chose Jordan in particular because it is a country that is often overlooked in the media but receives a significant amount of foreign aid from the United States.

Before I delve into the body of this project, it is important to name and outline some important theory that has informed this work and the field of international affairs as a whole. Throughout this paper, I will refer to several theories of international politics that have dominated the international political sphere. The first of these is Realism. In his book *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, Hans Morgenthau, a renowned proponent of Realism, outlines six principles of political realism. He explains that political Realism is

"defined in terms of power. . . It sets politics as an autonomous sphere of action and understanding apart from other spheres, such as economics, ethics, aesthetics, or religion . . . The concept of interest defined as power imposes intellectual discipline upon the observer, infuses rational order into the subject matter of politics, and thus makes the theoretical understanding of politics possible."[1]

This focus on power is critical to Realist theory. It views states as unitary actors within an anarchic system, struggling for power over each other to ensure their own survival. Stephen Walt expands on this definition in relation to other theories in his article, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories." He explains that "realism emphasizes the enduring propensity for conflict between states; liberalism identifies several ways to mitigate these conflictive tendencies; and the radical tradition describes how the entire system of state relations might be transformed."[2] He describes Realism in the context of the Cold War, a conflict that he believes was guided by Realist ideology because two powerful states were competing against each other for global hegemony, acting as unitary actors and expanding their influence around the world to gain dominance. As Walt explains, "'Classical' realists such as Hans Morgenthau and Reinold Neibuhr believed that states, like human beings, had an innate desire to dominate others, which led them to fight wars. Morgenthau also stressed the virtues of the classical, multipolar, balance-of-power system and saw the bipolar rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union as especially dangerous."[3] This theory of international affairs has guided foreign policy around the world, particularly when more hawkish governments are in place.

---

[1] Hans J. Morgenthau and Kenneth W. Thompson. *Politics among Nations: the Struggle for Power and Peace*. (New Delhi: Kalyani Publishers, 2018). 54.
[2] Stephen M. Walt. "International Relations: One World, Many Theories." *Foreign Policy*, no. 110 (1998): 29–46. https://doi.org/10.2307/1149275, 30.
[3] Ibid., 31.

The next important theory of international politics is Liberalism. Walt describes Liberal Theory as a theoretical alternative to realism.

> The principal challenge to realism came from a broad family of liberal theories. One strand of liberal thought argued that economic interdependence would discourage states from using force against each other because warfare would threaten each side's prosperity. A second strand, often associated with President Woodrow Wilson, saw the spread of democracy as the key to world peace, based on the claim that democratic states were inherently more peaceful than authoritarian states. A third, more recent theory argued that international institutions such as the International Energy Agency and the International Monetary Fund could help overcome selfish state behavior, mainly by encouraging states to forego immediate gains for the great benefits of enduring corporations. . . liberalism generally saw states as the central players in international affairs.[4]

Liberal theory still views states as the primary actors in the field of international affairs but adds a level of complexity by moving beyond the paradigm of power as the dominating force in international affairs. It makes the case for self-interest as a crucial motivator that can be harnessed to deter conflict and promote cooperation. Liberalism became more popular after the Cold War, but really took shape on the international political sphere with the creation of institutions such as the United Nations, which were designed to promote cooperation among states.

Another dominant international political theory is Constructivism. Constructivism challenges both realist and liberal ideology by arguing that states are not simply unitary actors but rather the reflections of complex cultural ideologies. "Whereas realism and liberalism tend to focus on material factors such as power or trade, constructivists' approaches emphasize the impact of ideas . . . Constructivists regard the interests and identities of states as a highly malleable product of specific historical processes. . . Consequently, constructivism is especially attentive to the sources of change, and this approach has largely replaced marxism as the

[4] Ibid., 32.

preeminent radical perspective on international affairs."[5] This theory accounts for the fact that states are composed of people and cultures with significant power. It also acknowledges that perhaps governments are made up of people who will not always act simply out of desires for power or self-interest, but instead embody personal beliefs and cultural norms that influence their decision-making.

International political theory is not the focus of this project and therefore does not warrant much more discussion. However, it is important to keep these theories in mind because they have defined much of our world order. This project generally falls in the Constructivist camp, positing that an understanding of history, civil society actors, distributions of power, money, institutions, and popular movements is a critical step to painting a complete picture of international affairs and creating worthwhile foreign policy.

This project begins by outlining Jordan's history from its time under the Ottoman Empire until the reign of King Abdullah II. It paints this history in the context of Jordan's colonial roots and its relationship to Western powers. The following chapter focuses on the structure of Jordan's government and the government's relationship to civil society. It also outlines the various actors that play a role in Jordan's civil society, describing their roots and ideologies. The following chapter gives an overview of democracy promotion work in Jordan. It addresses the work being done by international actors and the motivations behind these efforts. It also discusses various perspectives of powerful political, social, and religious groups on democracy in Jordan to present a nuanced understanding of the ideological conflict in the country. The next chapter focuses on democracy-promotion initiatives in Jordan by United States-based actors. It examines the foreign policy of the U.S. government to Jordan and the formal channels through

[5] Ibid., 32.

which it has tried to push Jordan to democratize. It then discusses the initiatives of non-governmental organizations and the ways in which their motives align with that of the U.S. government. The next chapter parallels this by examining the democracy promotion efforts of Jordanian groups, focusing on the work of civil society organizations based on their social media pages. The final chapter of the project launches into a critical discussion of the various forms of democracy promotion work being done in Jordan. It highlights the relative utility of these various efforts and the kind of work that needs to be done to promote democracy in Jordan given the country's history and the nature of its civil society. Through these six chapters, this research aims to paint an in-depth picture of the complexities of the environment in which these efforts take place as well as the barriers to attaining true democracy in Jordan.

Chapter 1

Jordan: A Colonial Product and International Oddity

The history of Jordan is one tied up in colonial interests and conflicts over regional hegemony. A construction of Western colonialism, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has been of key interest to Western powers as a region amenable to influence and reliant on monetary support because of its lack of natural resources. In order to understand the role that Jordan plays in the Middle East today and its relationship with the United States, it is important to trace its present situation back to its history of statehood. Jordan's history, much like its current politics, has been largely defined by its international position. It is no surprise, then, that the process of democratization in Jordan has become a project for the United States because of the historical precedent set by Jordan's past and the perceived international implications of the political realities of the country.

For years, Jordan has played an important role in the Middle East as a relatively moderate and stable country locked between two large players in the region: Israel and Saudi Arabia. It has absorbed the refugees resulting from conflicts in the region and formed a multifaceted national identity tied around its tribal roots, colonial legacy, and refugee experience to create the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan that we know today. However, the territory now known as Jordan was not always so valued.

Before the colonial incursion, Jordan was an often-forgotten territory of the Ottoman Empire. It was called Transjordan because it was known as the land beyond the Jordan River. Since it did not have any natural resources to offer the Ottoman Empire, it was administratively

but not fully incorporated into the Ottoman territory. As Philip Robins explains in his book *A History of Jordan*, "Transjordan clearly generated no special priority for the Ottoman state itself, with its attention firmly fixed on its European not its Middle Eastern provinces, and, as far as the latter were concerned, its essentially urban and arterial focus. . . If [Transjordan's] nominal rulers could summon little enthusiasm for the place, then why should anyone else?"[6] For this reason, the area of Transjordan was mostly left to its own devices before the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Without significant urban concentrations or defined centers of political and economic power, the concept of statehood was not one that was raised by the local population. This is not to say that there was no concept of identity in the area. The region was organized on tribal and familial hierarchies that had complex political inner workings and rules for interpersonal interaction. However, the modern notion of nation-statehood had not yet been imposed on the region. There were few foreign travelers to the area and the culture was centered around oral tradition, leaving little concrete evidence of the area's history.

The relationship between the region of Transjordan and the Ottoman Empire was fundamentally different from its relationship with the colonial powers. However, certain factors helped pave the way for the region's eventual transformation:

> In the Transjordanian case, the experience of Ottoman imperialism was not one of a life-and-death struggle, but rather one of emerging accommodations. The tribes were increasingly incorporated into the state-inspired security regime. This meant that they lost the opportunity themselves to extract a security tax, or khuwa, from the peasantry of the north, who now paid their taxes to the Ottoman state. Instead, the tribes benefited directly through the payments they received from the state for assuring the pacification of trade and communications routes, and indirectly through an increase in trade, from which they were in part the beneficiaries.[7]

[6] Philip Robins. *A History of Jordan*. (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 6.
[7] Ibid., 7.

This dynamic characterized the political relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Transjordan, solidifying the power of tribal leaders over trade and societal relationships and giving this leadership important experience in navigating their position relative to the ruling power. The people of Transjordan gained a crucial understanding of the costs and benefits of a relationship with a centralized state that would play an important role in their experience of colonialism.[8]

This is not to say that the relationship between the people of Transjordan and the Ottoman Empire was one of tranquility and relative autonomy. In fact, the tensions between the inhabitants of Arabia and the Ottoman Empire defined the future of Jordan. In 1916, Arab forces rose up against the Ottoman Empire. The revolt began in Mecca on June 10, 1916 and was the result of an agreement between Hussein bin Ali, Sharif of Mecca, and the British government. Hussein bin Ali was a member of the Hashemite family, which traced its lineage back to the Prophet Muhammad over thirty-seven generations. He saw a future for a unified Arab state stretching from modern-day Syria to Yemen and gained further confidence in this possibility from the support of the British for such a state. Hussein and the Hashemites partnered with the British Egyptian Expeditionary Force to push the Ottomans out of Transjordan and Western Arabia. Supported by Bedouin tribes, Circassians, and Christians in this effort, Hussein and his sons Ali, Abdullah, Faisal, and Zeid saw a future for themselves as the rulers over an imagined Arab state. As Philip Robins explains, "Tellingly, the initial attempt at forging a regional state disregarded any claims to an exclusive existence that Transjordan might have had . . . throughout this short process, it was assumed that Transjordan would simply continue to function as the southern extension of Damascus' natural hinterland."[9] The roots of the Jordanian state and the

[8] Ibid., 5.
[9] Ibid., 13.

Hashemite rule over the country thus came from an early pan-Arab vision and cooperation with British imperial rule. In October 1918, Faisal I bin Hussein, the youngest son of Hussein bin Ali, was proclaimed King of Damascus following the expulsion of the Ottomans from the city. For a brief moment, it appeared that the Hashemites' vision of a united Arab state with them at the helm would become a reality. However, the Hashemite reliance on the British for the legitimacy and military force behind their campaign proved to be more complicated than they had anticipated.

When the Ottoman Empire fell, the Western powers were not content to leave the region to its own devices. The future of Transjordan, like the rest of the region, was decided in conferences and secret agreements thousands of miles away. The San Remo conference in 1920 divided the region into three "mandates," regions subject to colonial rule as a kind of paternalistic guiding force to shepherd them into becoming viable autonomous states of their own. Although this conference only designated three mandates, "Palestine," "Syria," and "Mesopotamia," it laid the groundwork for the division of the Middle East between French and British rule: "At San Remo France claimed mandate responsibility for Lebanon and Syria, and Britain assumed responsibility for Iraq and Palestine. Any specific mention of Transjordan was omitted, a reflection of its relative unimportance, though it was assumed to be covered by the jurisdiction of Palestine."[10] Once again, Transjordan had fallen to the wayside because of its lack of natural resources and ambiguous identity. However, its fate was still determined by international powers that had backed the Hashemites and reneged on their promises to support a united Arab state.

[10] Ibid., 13.

Even though they had not followed through with their pan-Arabist promises to the Hashemites, the European powers still viewed the Hashemites as valuable allies with the potential to build stability in the region. As the British began to build their administrative presence in the area, local politics and colonial competition began to take shape, occupying the power vacuum left by the fall of the Ottoman Empire. In Central Arabia, the al-Saud dynasty, the ancestors of the present-day rulers of Saudi Arabia, along with the Wahhabi religious puritans had begun to challenge the power of the British and the Hashemites. They took arms against Sharif Hussein who had declared himself Caliph of the Arab World. Led by Ibn Saud, the Saudi clan successfully overthrew Sharif Hussein and took over Mecca and Medina, establishing the Saudi dynasty's hold on the Arabian peninsula. France had also begun to make expansionist moves, creating threats to Britain from the East and the South. In order to consolidate their control and simplify the administrative task of ruling Palestine, the British decided to separate the mandate of Palestine into two entities: Palestine and Transjordan. The British knew that they could not allow the power vacuum to continue if they were to prevent the incursion of the al-Saud dynasty or French forces. Therefore, "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 recognized."[11] By separating the two mandates, Transjordan finally became a separate entity of its own rather than just a periphery. However, its identity was still rooted in both the colonial gaze and its geographic reality as a buffer zone.

The Hashemites continued to rule at the mercy of the British. In 1918, the British put forward the Sharifian Solution, a plan that installed the four sons of Hussein bin Ali as the rulers of the Arabian Peninsula. The plan did not take shape as intended, however, and Faisal was

[11] Ibid., 14.

installed as King of Iraq after he lost control of Syria. Abdullah, much to his chagrin, was given Transjordan, and the other two sons were left with little or nothing. From there, the political dynamic of the British mandate in Transjordan began to take shape:

> With the British taking responsibility for the creation of the framework of a modern administration, and introducing a ready-made executive elite from outside Transjordan, a formula for governance had been forged that would last for a generation. Abdullah provided the titular Arab leadership, and increasingly managed the vicissitudes of local politics; British overseers and their appointees took responsibility for the commanding heights of the state, especially in its coercive and financial embodiments; rent, in the form of an enduring subsidy paid by Britain, helped to build up the infrastructure of the state, and forged the beginnings of what was to become an enduring political economy for the state's survival.[12]

The British held administrative power over the region but worked within the local tribal system and the leadership of Abdullah to enforce their will. Meanwhile, Abdullah navigated the tribal power structures to consolidate his own power. Even though he was dissatisfied with his allotment of Transjordan, seeing it as a second-place prize to the more fertile and wealthy territory of Iraq that had been granted to his brother Faisal, he worked to expand his power base to satisfy his desire for a true kingdom. Britain, on the other hand, was bound by the terms of Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, which stated, "Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone. The wishes of these communities must be the principal consideration of the selection of the Mandatory."[13] Therefore, Britain supplied military and administrative support to

---

[12] Ibid., 18.

[13] "The Covenant of the League of Nations." Avalon Project. Yale Law School. Accessed March 10, 2020. https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/leagcov.asp.

Transjordan, but was bound by the stated goal defined by Article 22 of shepherding these protectorate communities towards independent statehood.

This power structure continued until 1946, when an Anglo-Jordanian treaty formally ended the British Mandate and established an independent nation with the Hashemites at the head: "Consequently, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was formally declared in May 1946, when Abdullah was crowned King. Though officially independent, the substance of the relationship was more one of continuity than change. . . The kingdom, like the emirate before it, remained dependent on the British for its annual subsidy."[14] This dependence on the British continued for years to come, followed by a dependence on the United States for economic and military support.

The newly formed nation would not be free from troubles for long. In 1948, Israel declared itself an independent nation, sparking a war over the territory of the former Mandatory Palestine. Jordan, along with Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen, declared war on the newly formed state. The details of the war are too extensive for this discussion, but the results of the conflict were mixed for Jordan. While losing some strategically important territory, the war left Abdullah in a politically sound position, since it had forced the other Arab states to take his leadership seriously. Transjordan's Arab Legion was among the most successful military units in the Arab alliance against Israel, bringing recognition and respect for Jordan as a nation-state. Additionally, Jordan gained control of the West Bank and annexed its Palestinian population. Jordan granted Jordanian citizenship to all Palestinians in the West Bank and allocated half of Jordan's Parliament to Palestinian representatives. This annexation doubled the population of Jordan. As Robins states, "Abdullah [was left] with most of his gains intact, and

[14] Philip Robins. *A History of Jordan*, 59.

with a de facto Israeli recognition of his sovereignty over them. At last, after nearly three decades of politicking, Abdullah had finally succeeded in expanding his domains from merely those of the territory of Transjordan, into the realisation of a Hashemite dream."[15] However, despite the success of the war for King Abdullah, the conflict left Jordan with a stark reality that would define its politics until the present day: half a million Palestinian refugees had fled their homes to find solace in Jordan. This was the first large wave of Palestinian refugees to settle in Jordan as a result of conflicts with Israel. This influx of people would put pressure on the newly-formed country's infrastructure and national identity for years to come, further contributing to the degree to which Jordan was subject to international interests.

Three years later, in 1951, King Abdullah I was shot and killed by a Palestinian while he was visiting the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. His grandson, Hussein, was with him when he died. His death highlighted the internal conflicts among Palestinians and Jordanians. Many Palestinians felt that Jordan had betrayed them by taking their territory for political gains and then later considering peace with Israel, thus abandoning the Palestinian cause. Abdullah's death set off a crisis among the Jordanian elite and the Hashemite family. He had left two sons: Prince Talal and Prince Naif. Talal, the older of the two, was deemed mentally unstable, yet he still took the throne following his father's death. He ruled for a year and, during that time, instituted a wave of liberalization measures. "As Robert Satloff has written, 'Talal was wedded to the notion of reigning as a constitutional monarch, an idea that most likely grew as much out of his driving need to be what Abdullah was not as it did out of his liberal inclination.' Whatever his motivation, Talal's move helped to nurture his reputation at home. Even some five decades later

[15] Ibid., 74.

in Jordan, Talal is routinely referred to as a liberal and the 1952 constitution is seen as his monument."[16]

Some of the provisions of the new constitution included guarantees of personal freedom, separation of political powers, and circumscription of the power of the head of state. In reality, there was not a significant substantive difference between the political rights ensured by this constitution and the one before it. Although it outlined liberal values, it still allowed for the provision of martial law. For a year, King Talal suffered from serious mental illness while fighting to establish his legitimacy through the new constitution. Ultimately, he was forced to step down from the throne by the royal family and the political leaders of the country. "When the end came it must almost have been a relief for Talal, who accepted his fate with resignation. Ironically, it was his own constitution that had provided the process for his demise, fittingly though for a man who was uncomfortable with his inherited role as a titular autocrat."[17] Talal had ruled the country from 1951-1952, and left Jordan quietly to live in a sanatorium in Istanbul where he died twenty years later. After a year of interim rule by Tawfik Abu Al-Huda, King Talal's prime minister, Talal's son Hussein came of age to take the throne.

The young King Hussein inherited a social and political climate rife with problems. Jordan had recently absorbed over half a million refugees with few resources or infrastructure to deal with such a challenge. The dynamics between the Palestinian population and East Bank Jordanians, those whose families had lived in the region for generations, became difficult due to disparities in wealth and distrust of one another. Many Palestinians lived in refugee camps in Amman, and these camps were subject to heightened police surveillance. "The newly established refugee camps were made up mostly of displaced villagers who tended to be

[16] Ibid., 83.
[17] Ibid., 85.

disproportionately unskilled, illiterate and poor. Many of their number had become embittered by . . . the Arab Legion's failure to secure more territory of historic Palestine."[18]

This tension heightened the perceived need for surveillance by a police force dominated by East Bank Jordanians from traditional families and created an atmosphere of distrust between the Palestinian and native Jordanian populations. The young King Hussein had inherited this host of problems, even though the years after his coronation were relatively calm. With the longest shared border with Israel of any Arab country, a third of his country's population made up of refugees, and a heavy strain placed on Jordan's resources from the conflict with Israel, his hands were full. He also had to deal with a complicated relationship with Britain. Even though Jordan was now an independent country, it relied on British aid to boost its economy and was seen by many as a puppet of Britain. Through political maneuvering, Jordan had also emerged as a moderate mediator between Britain and Egypt under Gamal Abdel Nasser. Nasser's discontent with colonial rule influenced King Hussein, who asserted his power over the Jordanian military and the Arab Legion by promoting officers without the approval of the British, while still claiming British funding for the Legion. He was even bold enough to publicly voice his support for Nasser's anti-colonial efforts: "Paradoxically in view of his reputation as a pro-Western figure, Hussein was the first Arab leader to respond to Nasser's coup with a public letter of congratulation, in which he declared: 'The shadow of exploitation is fading from the Arab world. The wrong is eliminated and substituted by the right.'"[19]

While King Hussein was embroiled in diplomatic maneuvering with Britain and the other Arab states in order to secure Jordan's place as an independent entity with Arab regional backing, he faced a challenge from his government that would define much of his remaining time

[18] Ibid., 86.
[19] Nigel Ashton. *King Hussein of Jordan: A Political Life*. (Yale University Press, 2008), 57.

as a monarch. The government, headed by Prime Minister Suleiman Nabulsi, had caused many problems for the King while he was dealing with diplomatic issues. King Hussein had begun to court the United States, understanding that they would be valuable allies and that, since they openly supported Israel, it would be better to lay the groundwork of diplomatic alliances rather than facing them as an enemy if another conflict erupted with Israel. In particular, King Hussein was considering accepting aid from the United States as part of the Eisenhower Doctrine, which promised aid to any nation fighting the influence of communism. The final straw of Hussein's frustration with his government came when the Nabulsi government decided to open diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union, a move that Hussein knew would enrage the West. Hussein had already made contact with the CIA and had begun to receive monthly aid from the United States, so he immediately ordered the government to resign. "His tough action may well have been prompted by the events of 8 April, when the First Armoured Car Regiment . . . had surrounded Amman in what [Captain] Rashid later argued was only a traffic census. Hussein was far from convinced, later claiming that the move could have meant only one thing: 'imminent danger to Jordan, a possible attack on the Palace.'"[20] Nabulsi stepped down without a fight, perhaps expecting to be back in the government before long. In the following days, King Hussein heard rumors of a military coup, in which the armored car unit under Captain Rashid would surround the palace and kidnap him. The King drove out of the city to where the troops were stationed to find out for himself what was going on. "Without a moment's hesitation, he jumped out of the vehicle and waded into the crowds to rally the troops in person. It was a huge gamble . . . His personal bravery had saved the day."[21] In April 1957, perhaps as a reaction to this threat of a coup and to preempt the growing Palestinian military threat in Jordan, Hussein used the

[20] Philip Robins. *A History of Jordan*, 63.
[21] Ibid., 64.

provision in his father's constitution to place the country under martial law. He ended the constitutional democracy of the country, censored the press, and disbanded most civil society organizations, placing the country in what would be a twenty-five-year blackout of civil society.

Throughout the political crisis that followed, King Hussein consolidated his support from the United States and gained their respect. The Americans ensured that the Israeli government did not take advantage of the opportunity of political turmoil to take territory away from Jordan. "Eisenhower also ordered the US Sixth Fleet to move into a forward position in the Eastern Mediterranean, a gesture intended to help face down any Soviet-backed move against the King."[22] This turmoil had come in the wake of the Suez Crisis in 1956 during which Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal Company, making a crucial step for Egyptian nationalism and Pan-Arabism, which encouraged the Arab world to break away from the influence of Western powers. This move put the United States in a vulnerable position because of Egypt's growing power and the fear that the already left-leaning Pan-Arab movement would side with the Communist Cause. This made Jordan vitally important to U.S. interests, since King Hussein had made it a point to side with the United States over the Soviet Union. During this period in early 1957, the United States returned the favor to King Hussein by deploying U.S. forces to ensure Jordan's stability during this period of political turmoil. These few weeks were the real beginning of Jordan's relationship with the United States, one that has played a significant role in the politics of the Middle East ever since.

Once Hussein had dealt with the threat of overthrow, he received $50 million in aid over the course of the year from the United States. He continued to receive aid from the U.S. as a buffer against the encroachment of Communism in the region. He also continued to politically

[22] Ibid., 65.

maneuver in his country by forming alliances with important politicians and powerful families in Jordan, as well as spearheading diplomatic relations with the other Arab countries, particularly Egypt and Syria, who were more sympathetic to the cause of communism and were not confident in Hussein's leadership. Through these efforts, King Hussein ensured that he was in control of his country's politics. These kinds of diplomatic complications characterized the years of his rule up to the Six-Days War of 1967.

In June 1967, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, and Syria suffered a humiliating defeat by the Israeli army. In the so-called Six Days War, Israel took the Old City of Jerusalem and the West Bank from Jordanian control, along with much other territory formerly under Egyptian and Syrian control. This war caused another influx of Palestinian refugees from Israeli territory into Jordan. It also strengthened Palestinian leadership in Jordan, who saw that they could no longer rely on the other Arab states to protect their interests. Palestinian military units had been forming since the 1950s, and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) had set up its headquarters in Jordan. While the Jordanian government had been sympathetic to the PLO, it began to pose a security threat as it made more aggressive moves against Israel:

> The latter part of the decade (50s) saw an existential crisis comparable to that of the mid-1950s. On this occasion it was the presence of the Palestinian guerrillas, and the existence of a PLO entity within the Jordanian state, that presented the challenge, coming as it did against a backdrop of a fluctuating low-level conflict with Israel and the renewed attentions of an often hostile Arab diplomatic milieu. In spite of countless negotiations and arrangements, the fluctuating tensions between Jordan and the PLO would continue, coming to a head in 1970.[23]

This tension escalated into an armed conflict known as "Black September," when Palestinian forces hijacked three international airliners and used the passengers as leverage to demand that Israel release Palestinian prisoners. In the ensuing conflict, pro-monarchy forces,

[23] Ibid., 111.

predominantly though not entirely East Bank Jordanians, fought pro-PLO forces, predominantly Palestinians. The pro-monarchy forces, with the help of Bedouin troops from Transjordan, won the conflict. PLO fighters were driven to southern Lebanon, where the PLO reformed its headquarters. The memory of Black September still echoes in the everyday life of Jordanians, placing a strain on the ability to create effective pro-democracy reform coalitions between the different factions of the country. The memory of this conflict also takes on a very physical form even today in the security apparatus of the state, which is dominated by East Bank Jordanians, a body that has been significant in preventing progression to democracy. As Curtis Ryan explains, "the security sector in Jordan perceives itself as the guardian, protector, and stronghold of this Jordanian nationalism in the face of a demographic or political Palestinian takeover of Jordan. The roots of this perception go back to the Jordanian-Palestinian confrontation of 1970-71."[24] During this crisis, martial law continued, limiting political organization and cracking down on Palestinian communities.

Jordan came out of this conflict intact. However, its political course over the next few decades was far from stable. In 1989, Jordan suffered a recession caused by the recommendations of the International Monetary Fund that slashed food subsidies. Riots broke out throughout the country, calling for both political and economic reform. In response to these demonstrations, King Hussein lifted martial law and resumed the parliamentary elections that had been on hold since 1967. He also appointed a royal commission to draft a National Charter that outlined the steps and timeline through which the government would democratize.

The next round of conflict for Jordan would come in 1972 with the rule of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, who nationalized the country's oil industry and posed a challenge to Western

[24] Curtis R. Ryan. "Identity Politics, Reform, and Protest in Jordan." *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 11, no. 3 (December 15, 2011), 567.

powers and Israel, championing the Palestinian cause and providing free government services to Palestinians. Jordanians saw this support for Palestinians and challenge to Western powers, causing them to support Saddam Hussein's rule in Iraq despite his extensive violence against the Shi'a and Kurdish populations. Additionally, Saddam Hussein's government gave enormously subsidized and sometimes free oil to Amman, boosting his support among the Jordanian monarchy and population. This support for Saddam Hussein continued through the first Gulf War from 1990-1991. Because of this support for Saddam Hussein, the United States removed its economic support to Jordan, highlighting the extent to which the country relied on U.S. monetary and diplomatic support. In an effort to regain its support from the United States, Jordan entered into diplomatic talks with Israel, with King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin signing the Israel-Jordan peace treaty on the White House lawn in 1994. The United States promptly resumed its economic aid to Jordan.

Only four years later in 1998, King Hussein was admitted to the Mayo Clinic in the United States with serious symptoms of an unknown illness. He was diagnosed with lymph gland cancer and received chemotherapy treatment in the United States. After being gone for six months, he returned to Jordan and declared himself cancer free. He appointed his son Abdullah the crown prince of Jordan, and abruptly returned to the United States when his symptoms returned. After a few days of treatment, he returned to Jordan and died three days later. He left a country united over its grief for him, but still rife with economic and political problems.

King Hussein's son, King Abdullah II, came to the throne following his death. He had been left with an economy in crisis in the aftermath of the Gulf War. Prices had soared along with unemployment, and 50% of those employed worked for the government. The private sector was mostly reserved for Palestinians while East Bank Jordanians occupied the ranks of the

government and the military. This dynamic had built up divisions in the country and left little room for economic growth. Abdullah II began a series of economic liberalization efforts in order to create a self-sustaining economy for Jordan. He adopted neo-liberal policies to make it easier for foreign companies to invest in Jordan and entice business growth. Much of King Abdullah II's reign has been focused on the economic development of the country. He has also facilitated a fluctuating wave of democratic liberalization measures that have been dependent on the country's security considerations. The details of his reign will be discussed in more detail in the coming chapters as they relate to political liberalization and cooperation with the United States.

Today, despite democratization efforts, Jordan remains a constitutional monarchy with only a portion of the government being democratic. The king has broad executive powers, with the role of appointing and dismissing prime ministers, the crown prince, senior military leaders, justices of the constitutional court, the 75 members of the senate, and cabinet ministers. He can dissolve both houses of parliament and postpone lower house elections for two years. He can also circumvent parliament through constitutional mechanisms. The king must also approve any law that has been passed by parliament before it can take effect. Only one portion of the lower parliament is democratically elected, but even these elections are subject to significant gerrymandering that pushes the parliament toward a pro-palace majority. This makes the relationship between the government, civil society organizations, and activists very interesting, since so much of the government is run by the king, and activists have only a small portion of the government that they can try to influence. As Curtis Ryan explains, "Jordan can therefore be best described as a 'hybrid regime' or 'liberalising autocracy,' in which the regime has allowed moderate levels of political reform, not to transform the system but to preserve it."[25] This type of

[25] Curtis Ryan. "Political Opposition and Reform Coalitions in Jordan." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 38, No. 3 (December, 2011), 368.

hybridization has defined the reign of King Abdullah II, which has weathered the Arab Spring and a period of political turmoil in the Middle East while maintaining a stable hold on the monarchy.

The history of Jordan is fundamental to its political realities today, particularly its relationship with Western powers and democratic principles. The coming chapters will rely on this history to paint a legal, social, and political picture of the state of democracy in Jordan. By understanding the issues that have characterized Jordan's history, the complicated nature of the country's relationship to civil society and democracy becomes more clear. Jordan's history has been defined by Western intervention, political changes, and strains on the country's limited resources by the influx of refugees, first Palestinians and now Syrians. All of these issues have shaped Jordan's civil society and any future of democracy the country may attain.

Chapter 2

The Tensions Between Government and Civil Society in Jordan

The history of Jordan described in the previous chapter has created a nation inherently bound by the will of international politics, although bearing its own internal dynamic through a centralized monarchy, complex national identity, and robust history of tribal affiliations. All of these complications of history have formed a society that is now caught between the stability and power of the monarchy, the outside push for democracy promoted by the United States, internal protests for economic and political reform, and the dynamic politics of religion. Needless to say, Jordan's civil society has always been complicated, as it is situated at the intersection of all of these actors and interests. This chapter is an attempt to explore these complications and ground them in Jordan's history in order to make space for a well-rounded understanding of the role that non-governmental organizations and human rights activists play in Jordan's politics today. It will also explore the ways in which the Jordanian government has used political reforms in favor of civil society as a political bargaining chip on the global stage to ensure Western political and economic support. These complexities are crucial for an understanding of the place that democracy promotion, whether from external or internal actors, takes in Jordan today.

In his article "Civil Society as Social Control: State Power in Jordan," Quintan Wiktorowicz examines the history of civil society in Jordan. His article is particularly useful since it examines the political philosophy of civil society while simultaneously contextualizing Jordan's relationship to civil society with the rest of the Middle East. He starts his article by providing a valuable working definition of Civil Society:

> Although plagued by definitional ambiguity, civil society is generally seen as the constellation of associational forms that occupy the terrain between individuals and the state. It is viewed as a mechanism of collective empowerment that enhances the ability of citizens to protect their interests and rights from arbitrary or capricious state power.[26]

Civil society is more than the vacuum left between the state, the populace, and the private sector. It is a space where people and groups can bind together to negotiate their relationship with the state and with one another. It is a dynamic phenomenon that is bound to the political climate but also has the power to change political realities. Through these kinds of associations, individuals make their own problems collective ones and organize to address these issues as a unit.

The history of this kind of civil society in Jordan can be seen before the imposition of Martial Law by King Hussein in 1957. Civil society in Jordan traces its roots back to the tribal system, which created a space in which individuals and groups could advocate for subgroups within larger entities. This tribal system still exists in Jordan today and provides a kind of embedded civil society, which defines how people organize themselves. The nature of Jordan's civil society today also traces back to its colonial history and identity as a stabilizing entity between volatile neighbors. An article by the Brookings Institute titled "Civil Society and Public Freedom in Jordan: The Path of Democratic Reform" states that "the weakness of Jordan's civil society is closely related to the overall weakness of the political opposition in Jordan. Jordan's creation in 1921 as the British Mandate of Transjordan was meant to provide stability in the region and tame the tribes of the area. Consequently, the kingdom's initial purpose did not create an environment conducive to the creation of viable political parties, let alone a viable

[26] Quintan Wiktorowicz. "Civil Society as Social Control: State Power in Jordan." *Comparative Politics* 33, no. 1 (October 2000): 43–61. https://doi.org/10.2307/422423, 43.

opposition."[27] From the beginning, Jordan's priority as a political entity was internal and external stability. Such a goal meant that civil society was carefully monitored and given only marginal power, in favor of stabilizing the monarchy. However, civil society still played an active role in Jordanian society before the implementation of Martial Law. Civil society organizations existed and played an active role in society, mostly as charity organizations run by upper-class East Bank Jordanian women.

Whatever activity existed in Jordan's civil society came to a screeching halt with the implementation of Martial Law by King Hussein in 1957. With the imposition of Martial Law, King Hussein effectively shut down civil society. He disbanded political parties and civil society organizations and censored the press. The government had the power to prosecute anything that posed a threat to national security to any degree that it saw fit, leaving civil society organizations that vied for political reform little choice but to disband or go underground. Only charitable organizations were allowed to operate relatively free of censorship, since they relieved some of the state's burden of providing such services. However, the moment they became political, they faced government disbandment. Despite the severity of these measures, the most telling part of this era was Jordan's return to political normalcy. In 1989, Jordan faced an economic crisis, which sparked riots around the country. People could no longer afford to buy food and other basic necessities and were demanding economic, not political, reforms. Yet the government used political liberalization as a way to appease the public without addressing the fundamental issue at hand.

[27] Sameer Jarrah. "Civil Society and Public Freedom in Jordan: The Path of Democratic Reform." Brookings. The Saban Center for Middle East Policy at The Brookings Institution, July 28, 2016. https://www.brookings.edu/research/civil-society-and-public-freedom-in-jordan-the-path-of-democratic-reform/, 11.

As Quintan Wiktorowicz explains, "[Prime Minister] Malik Mufi's interviews with decision makers responsible for the process of political liberalization in Jordan show that incumbent elites 'calculated that some liberalization measures would serve as a useful safety valve once the inevitable austerity measures began to bite.' A decision was therefore made to hold elections and implement political liberalization reforms."[28] These political liberalization reforms opened the doors for political parties, opposition groups, and civil society organizations to form once again. At first, it appeared that these reforms had sparked a vibrant civil society. Between 1989 and 1994, the number of Jordanian non-governmental organizations increased by 67%, and the number of cultural societies increased by 271%.[29] However, this rapid growth of civil society is misleading. While King Hussein had lifted Martial Law, his political concessions came alongside a host of political and bureaucratic restrictions on civil society in order to maintain the stability that was so crucial to the regime's existence. "Once created, these organizations were embedded in a web of bureaucratic practices and legal codes which allows those in power to monitor and regulate collective activities. This web [renders] much of collective action visible to the administrative apparatus. Under such circumstances, civil society institutions are more an instrument of state social control than a mechanism of collective empowerment."[30] Jordan's liberalization measures were not a bout of good will from the government, but rather a calculated and highly monitored strategy for the regime's survival, one that would set the tone for the future liberalization efforts of the Kingdom. "The growth of civil society did not precede or lead to political change; it followed regime-sponsored reforms."[31]

---

[28] Quintan Wiktorowicz. "Civil Society as Social Control: State Power in Jordan." *Comparative Politics* 33, no. 1 (October 2000): 43–61. https://doi.org/10.2307/422423, 47.
[29] Ibid., 47.
[30] Ibid., 47.
[31] Ibid.. 47.

Although this may be a grim analysis of what could be seen as a promising step toward a robust democracy fueled by a vibrant civil society, a look at Jordan's legal and bureaucratic apparatus shows that it leaves much to be desired.

The overall strategy of the government to maintain regime stability is to make civil society as transparent as possible through a combination of government surveillance and bureaucratic requirements. This multi-level, panopticon-like exposure is meant to limit the lengths to which civil society actors are willing to go to disrupt the status quo. The country's legal code provides for this surveillance. For example, Law 33 of Jordan requires that all organizations maintain detailed reports of their activities and submit these reports on an annual basis to the state. The reports include all information on finances, board meetings, working members, correspondence, and revenues.[32] This is just one example of the ways in which civil society organizations are limited.

Many of these limitations are embedded in the legal code of the state, often contradicting the international treaties regarding human rights and democratic practices that Jordan has signed. One think tank based in Washington, D.C., called the International Center for Not-For-Profit Law, studies just such contradictions. Their stated goal is to provide "up-to-date information on legal issues affecting civil society and civic freedoms, including freedoms of association, expression, and peaceful assembly."[33] They maintain reports on fifty-four countries with overviews of key legal issues relating to civic freedoms and the legal barriers to civil society. One of these reports focuses on Jordan and provides valuable insight into the legal status of the

[32] Ibid., 52.
[33] "Home - ICNL The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law." ICNL. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.icnl.org/.

country with respect to civil society organizations. The report begins with a cursory description of the nature of the dynamic of the governmental restriction of civil society:

> Many formal civil society organizations (CSOs) in Jordan initially focused on charitable and aid activities. Once Jordan acceded to international conventions, such as the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, some CSOs emerged to raise public awareness in relation to human rights, including the rights of assembly and association. At the same time, however, fundamental rights and freedoms are still subject to governmental interference, due to the Government's claims of protecting national security.[34]

Based on this report, civil society organizations in Jordan are governed by the *Law on Societies and Social Bodies* (Law 33 of 1966). This law allows for the government to extensively monitor and interfere in the internal affairs of these organizations. The public pushed for the reform of this law, leading to the 2008 enactment of the *Law on Societies* (Law 51), which limited some of the control that the government wielded over civil society. However, it retained the bureaucratic control of civil society organizations that made their operations transparent and vulnerable to state intervention. Even after the law was amended in 2009, it retained these bureaucratic requirements of civil society organizations.

There are two articles of the Jordanian Constitution that are particularly important to the rights and restrictions of civil society. Both articles were amended in 2011 in the wake of the Arab Spring, meaning that they are the products of liberalization efforts designed to enhance regime stability. These articles are reproduced in their entirety below, since a full understanding of their contents is important to understand the contradictions embedded in the Jordanian legal code:

> Article 15: (1) The State guarantees freedom of opinion, and every Jordanian shall be free to express his opinion by speech, in writing, or by means of photographic representation and other forms of expression, provided that such does not violate

[34] "Jordan - ICNL The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law." ICNL. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.icnl.org/.

> the law. (2) Freedom of scientific research and literary, artistic, cultural, and athletic creativity shall be ensured provided that it does not contradict with the law or the public order or moral. (3) Freedom of the press, printing, publications and media shall be ensured within the limits of the law. (4) Newspapers shall not be suspended from publication nor shall their permits be revoked except by a judicial order and in accordance with the provisions of the law. (5) In case of declaration of martial law or state of emergency, it is permissible that the law imposes limited censorship on newspapers and publications, books, media and communication in matters related to public safety and national defense purposes. (6) The law shall specify means of censorship on the resources of newspapers. Article 16: (1) Jordanians shall have the right to hold meetings within the limits of the law. (2) Jordanians are entitled to establish societies, syndicates and political parties provided that the objects of such societies and parties are lawful, their methods peaceful, and their by-laws not contrary to the provisions of the Constitution. (3) The establishment of societies, syndicates and political parties and the control of their resources shall be regulated by law.[35]

The tone of these articles leans heavily on the French legal code, from which Jordan draws its secular law. However, the repetition of phrases such as "provided that such does not violate the law," "provided that it does not contradict with the law or the public order or moral," and "in accordance with the provisions of the law," leave gaping holes in the rights given to individuals and groups. The ambiguity of the language leaves a space for the government to interfere if organizations are deemed to be working outside the provisions of the law or "public moral." These ambiguities work together with bureaucratic barriers to entry for civil society organizations.

According to the legal code of Jordan, civil society groups must meet three conditions to organize: (1) their activities must be limited to a particular set of activities regulated by the state; (2) they cannot engage in "political" activities as defined by the state; (3) they may not present any assertive or critical opposition to the state. These requirements apply to all voluntary societies and organizations of at least seven individuals. Before it even faces these restrictions,

[35] Khair Bani Doumi. "Public Freedoms in the Jordanian Constitution: Rhetorics and Realities." Journal of Mass Communication & Journalism 08, no. 04 (2018). https://doi.org/10.4172/2165-7912.1000384.

however, a group must register with the Council of Ministers in order to become a legal organization and avoid a penalty of up to two years' imprisonment. Founding members of societies must be Jordanian citizens and not have been convicted of any crime or felony involving morals (once again, a vague stipulation). If the organization is founded by a non-Jordanian citizen, it must go through special examination by the Council of Ministers. Once an organization submits an application, the application is reviewed by the Council of Societies Registry, a process that may take between 90 and 97 days. "Societies are obliged to inform the Registry and the Relevant Minister of the date of their General Assembly meetings at least two weeks in advance, or the meetings will be deemed illegal. . . The approval of the Council of Societies Registrar is required for any resolutions by the General Assembly in order to amend the society's bylaws."[36] In addition to these requirements, Law 51 of 2008 requires that organizations submit a copy of the general assembly resolutions within 15 days of the meeting, an annual report summarizing their activities and achievements, an annual plan, and an audited annual balance sheet if their budget exceeds 2,000 Jordanian Dinars (JD). As stipulated in article 20(b) of the legal code, the Board of the Registry may decide to dissolve an organization in certain cases, such as the organization receiving unregistered foreign funds or not performing its work for one year. There are two legal restrictions on an organization's freedom of speech:

> First, any expression that constitutes defamation or libel of government officials is subject to sanction under the *Penal Code*. The *Penal Code* of Jordan defines defamation and libel to include attaching false accusations to a person or treating a person disrespectfully through speech, writing, drawings, and other forms of communication. . . Second, societies are prohibited by law from conducting political activities or having any political objectives. Political activities are not defined in either the Societies Law or the Political Parties Law. Such vague terminology invites government discretion and potentially subjects societies to a chilling effect in their expressive activity."[37]

[36] "Civic Freedom Monitor Addresses Civil Society's Challenges." Democracy Digest, March 4, 2019. https://www.demdigest.org/civic-freedom-monitor-addresses-civil-societys-challenges/.
[37] Ibid.

In addition to these barriers to free speech, Jordanian civil society organizations face two other kinds of restrictions: barriers to resources and to assembly. According to Law 51, organizations must record and submit notification of any foreign funding to the Council of Ministers. Any public fundraising requires the approval of the Ministry of Social Development. Organizations may only collect charitable donations a month after they have received official organizational status from the Council, and they must provide evidence that they will use the money for charitable purposes only. They may only collect charitable donations twice a year, unless given special permission by the Council. In regard to barriers to assembly, the legal code stipulates that organizations and groups cooperate with security forces when they assemble or protest. Article 4 of the Assembly law states that organizers must notify the administrative governor 48 hours before they hold an assembly or demonstration. The state also maintains leeway to disperse public gatherings based on vague wording in the law: "Under Article 7, the administrative governor 'may order the dismissal of an assembly or scattering of a demonstration the way he deems fit if the assembly's or demonstration's objectives change.'"[38] This gives the government a wide scope of power over public demonstrations. Lastly, Article 2(c) of the Instructions Regulating Public Assemblies and Demonstrations prohibits "slogans, cheers, cartoons, pictures, or symbols that compromise state sovereignty, national unity, or law and order."[39] Therefore, assemblies that include these elements are illegal and can be disbanded and punished.

These barriers to the activities of civil society organizations and the vague nature of the legal provisions that give space for the government to monitor the actions of these organizations

[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.

are extensive and significant. They define the nature of the relationship of the government to civil society as a whole, and therefore to any democratization efforts that happen in the country, since civil society is a fundamental aspect of democracy. They also define the relationship between different civil society actors as some find more favor with the government than others. As the Brookings Institute describes, "While there is a picture of political liberalization in Jordan, NGOs in fact have very little influence in the political sphere. The existence of a large civic sector is therefore a facade of political liberalization for a regime struggling to overcome an economic crisis. Thus, the government has used political liberalization and NGO expansion as a survival strategy."[40] This process of pseudo-political liberalization in return for stability characterized the later years of King Hussein and characterizes the current reign of King Abdullah II.

However, this is not the full picture. Jordanian civil society actors are often dynamic entities that work within a rigid and controlled system to make the most of their efforts. They have found methods through which to navigate the complicated bureaucracy and state surveillance in order to accomplish goals that they deem important. The Brookings Institute further explains this phenomenon:

> NGOs have crafted their founding documents to enable them to register under a ministry more likely to approve their applications, or more likely to turn a blind eye to their activities. Because the security services have different relationships with the various ministries, NGOs have tried to reduce security sector interference in their internal affairs through careful selection of the ministry least likely to interfere with their work.[41]

These methods of working around the bureaucracy have provided Jordanian NGOs with some level of autonomy, but their existence is ultimately left to the whim of the government.

---

[40] Sameer Jarrah. "Civil Society and Public Freedom in Jordan," 10.
[41] Ibid.. 8.

Some groups do not even have the luxury of using the channels discussed above, since their work has been deemed as threatening to the state. These restrictions particularly affect certain Islamist groups. Since the regime gains much of its legitimacy from Islam by tracing the Hashemite lineage directly back to the Prophet Muhammad and by highlighting their family history as the Sharifs of Mecca. Because of this inherently Islamic legitimacy, the Hashemites have a special interest in promoting a state-sponsored Islam that aligns with their family history. "The regime sponsors its own organizations, religious activities, and Islamic personalities to articulate an interpretation of Islam that supports regime and state power."[42] Islamic groups that are willing to work within the confines of the government and be supportive of the Hashemites are allowed to operate in the political sphere. For example, the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan has only been critical of individual policies, not the regime, as a whole. For this reason, they are allowed to operate in both the political and civil spheres. They were the only political party allowed to exist during the period of Martial Law in Jordan. Today, they are one of the most dominant political parties in Jordan and have extended their influence throughout Jordanian civil society.

The Salafi movement, on the other hand, has not been so fortunate. Advocating for a more conservative interpretation of Islam that involves intensive political reform, they have not been able to work within the Jordanian political sphere. They are repeatedly excluded from political space and the Islamic spaces that the state controls such as mosques and cultural centers. As Wiktorowicz explains, "Islamists, in particular, routinely complain that they are detained and questioned by the mukhabarat for allegedly holding public meetings. In reality, these meetings are typically religiously oriented, but they inevitably open political issues such as Jerusalem,

[42] Quintan Wiktorowicz. *The Management of Islamic Activism: Salafis, the Muslim Brotherhood, and State Power in Jordan.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002, 15.

peace with Israel, and ways to make the current system more Islamic."[43] To work around the restrictions placed on them by the state, the Salafis have relied on personal networks instead of formal organizational structures to accomplish their goals. These dynamics will be discussed further in the following chapter, but they are examples of the ways in which groups work around the confines of governmental restrictions to achieve their goals.

Overall, Jordan's civil society is a product of the country's history grounded in the pursuit of stability and political moderation. After fifty years of Martial Law, civil society in Jordan has experienced rapid growth in terms of participation, yet is bound by static and restrictive laws designed to maintain the country's stability by placing all efforts of civil society under government examination. While Jordan's Constitution outlines certain political liberties such as free speech and association, it constrains these liberties through addendums that guarantee these liberties so long as they do not disrupt the current balance of power or threaten the stability of the political order. These constitutional restraints are supported by a web of bureaucratic loopholes whose purpose is to limit the activities of civil society organizations and to make everything they do absolutely visible to the government. By making their work visible, the government prompts a kind of self-monitoring among these organizations as they seek to avoid government intervention and punishment for any activities that could disrupt the balance of power in the country. While civil society organizations have some ability to skirt these restrictions, they ultimately face intense government surveillance.

Charitable organizations have the most freedom since they take some of the humanitarian burden from the government, but only as long as their goals are apolitical. On the other hand, the Salafis face the most restrictions as a religious movement that is intensely critical of the

[43] Ibid., 50.

government. The rest of Jordan's civil society falls in the middle of this spectrum. As we delve into a more detailed discussion of democracy promotion in Jordan and the role that civil society plays in these efforts, it is important to remember the intense restrictions that Jordanian organizations face throughout every aspect of their existence. These restrictions are often overlooked by external actors who judge their own work in Jordan by the standard of Jordan's civil society. While Jordan's civil society actors make strides towards democracy, their very goals are subject to scrutiny by the government, meaning their promotion of democracy is limited. This observation is crucial to the following discussions of democracy promotion in Jordan and should be kept in mind throughout the coming chapters.

Chapter 3

Democracy-Promotion in Jordan: An Introduction

This chapter will provide an overview of the different actors involved in the conversation of democracy promotion in Jordan. While this thesis is not the place to provide an in-depth discussion of each actors' goals and activities, it is important to understand the broader picture of democracy promotion in Jordan. Democracy is a complicated reality in Jordan, which has many advocates from both inside and outside the country. While it may be inhibited by bureaucratic and political mechanisms, it is sometimes indirectly promoted by non-democratic actors, who have other goals in mind for Jordan but whose work sometimes overlap with that of pro-democracy actors. This chapter is the foundation for the next three chapters, which focus on the democracy promotion efforts of the United States and by Jordanian civil society actors. However, it is important to keep in mind that while these actors are the main focus of this discussion, they do not provide the entire picture of democracy promotion in Jordan. The full picture involves many actors promoting their own versions of democracy and many different initiatives that attempt to lay the foundation for democracy. Some actors are secular, some religious, some liberal, and some are conservative. All have a unique vision for a democratic Jordan, and all have varying levels of influence and resources.

The story of democracy promotion is tied up in Jordan's history and its path towards, and away from, political liberalization. As a monarchy with hints of divine-right-to-rule rhetoric based on the Hashemite family's lineage back to the Prophet Muhammad, Jordan seems to be a

state whose identity is antithetical to democratization efforts. However, democracy promotion for the Kingdom has come from all sides for many years - from internal activists, political parties, and organizations, external state actors, international institutions, and foreign civil service organizations. Perhaps this is because of the critical nature of Jordan's geography between powerful and historically volatile states, or because of Jordan's relatively moderate stance on Islam, which makes it a desirable target for Western democratization efforts. Or perhaps Western powers in particular see the lack of natural resources in the country as making it amenable to outside influence. This chapter will serve as an introduction to the history and politics behind these issues. It prefaces a more in-depth discussion about the democracy work being done in Jordan by the United States and internal civil society actors, by providing a preliminary picture of the state of democracy promotion in Jordan and what specific visions for democracy compete. It will specifically outline the major actors working for, against, or in tandem with democracy promotion efforts in the country.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Jordan has had a complicated history of civil society and government relations. The unique security concerns of the country, based on its regional geography, the difficult demographics caused by the continuous influx of refugees from surrounding conflicts, and its lack of natural resources have left Jordan in a tricky position with regard to Western powers. This has meant that democracy promotion in Jordan has also been complicated. Dalia Kaye, Frederick Wehrey, Audra Grant, and Dale Stahl summarize this history in their book, *More Freedom, Less Terror?* They explain that "the monarchy's acknowledgment of the political underpinnings of homegrown violence became apparent as King Hussein responded with a series of significant liberalization measures, leading to a 'golden era' of political reform from 1989 to 1993 intended to reduce political pressure and violence in order to

continue with economic reforms."[44] This pattern of political concessions in return for stringent, often neoliberal, economic policies would continue in 2011 during Jordan's experience with the Arab Spring.

Overall, there are three general categories of democracy promoters in Jordan - the regime, internal political actors, and external political actors. This chapter will discuss these three groups and briefly describe their vision for democracy and the work that they do to promote democracy. Its purpose is to provide a foundation for the following three chapters, which focus on the actual work that significant actors do to promote democracy in Jordan. It aims to show the larger picture of democracy building in Jordan before making more detailed discussions and analysis in the next portion of this thesis. Overall, there is no way to do full justice to the complexity of democracy promoting groups, since each of them contains different actors with unique, conflicting, and sometimes contingent motivations and visions for the country. However, by placing these actors into three general categories and discussing their work with a firm foundation of Jordan's history and the evolution of its civil society, this research will highlight the conflicting motivations of these actors and sharpen our focus on the work that the United States does in Jordan to promote democracy, which is often in contrast to the work being done by Jordanian civil society actors themselves.

The Regime

So far, this thesis has focused on the evolution of Jordan's government and its relationship to civil society. The monarchy has a similarly complicated relationship with democratic initiatives in the country. Ultimately, the regime's democracy promotion efforts have stemmed from the motivation to survive as an independent political entity. It has faced pressure

[44] Dalia Dassa Kaye., Frederick Wehrey, Audra Grant, and Dale Stahl. *More Freedom, Less Terror?: Liberalization and Political Violence in the Arab World*. Rand Corporation, 2008, 60.

from both internal and external political actors in the country, but its most extensive efforts towards democracy have come as a response to internal pressures. For example, in 1989, Jordan saw some of its most extensive steps towards democratization. These measures were not brought about by external political pressure from powerful allies, but rather by extensive and threatening protests by the Jordanian population at the rising prices of basic commodities resulting from an IMF-sponsored austerity plan. Western involvement in Jordanian affairs triggered widespread riots over the state of the nation's economy, which caused the government to make political concessions instead of economic ones as a survival strategy. The government sought to survive the internal unrest through political reforms and external pressure through the maintenance of economic austerity measures.

As discussed in Chapter 2, these political reforms were tightly controlled by the monarchy, and the methods by which they controlled newfound civil society, media, and parliamentary institutions have defined the dynamics of Jordanian civil society up until the present. For example, the monarchy's suspension of parliamentary elections has caused political parties and activists to lose faith in the effectiveness of the parliamentary system. Ultimately, the regime has sought to monitor the development of civil society and further democratization measures in order to maintain a strong hold on their main support bases - the army and security forces, wealthy business class, and East Bank tribal leaders. As Quintan Wiktorowicz explains, "Democratization thus served as a means for reinforcing ties to the king's traditional constituency of support by providing political space for the frustrations of groups adversely affected by the economic austerity measures."[45] This phenomenon is also described in the previously-mentioned book *More Freedom, Less Terror?*:

[45] Wiktorowicz. *The Management of Islamic Activism*, 11-12.

> The 1989 parliamentary elections, for example, while widely welcomed, were largely viewed as a "mechanism for political control" as seats were distributed disproportionately to prevent Palestinians (believed to constitute over half of Jordan's population) from gaining a majority . . . As one analyst explains, "although the two governorates of Amman and Irbid hold 57 percent of Jordan's voting population, they have only 38 percent of the parliamentary seats. It is no coincidence that underrepresented urban governorates have a large population of Palestinian origin, and that overrepresented largely rural governorates are considered mainstays of support for the regime." Frustration with this law contributed to the Islamic Action Front (IAF) boycott of the 1997 parliamentary elections, and there are few indications that the law will change anytime soon.[46]

The Jordanian monarchy has since rolled back some of its liberalization efforts because of the security threats it has faced from its own population following the 1994 peace treaty with Israel, the pressure created by the second Palestinian Intifada in 2000, and the September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States. King Abdullah II facilitated some of these new policies as one of his first political acts as king. He "postponed the November 2001 parliamentary elections, dissolved parliament, and passed 250 emergency and temporary laws limiting liberalization. Elections were finally held in 2013."[47] This sacrifice of democracy for security highlights the regime's primary strategy for survival. Its progress toward democratization has always been a defensive measure and has not been made out of the goodness of its heart. The regime's attempt to monitor and control democracy in the country has served to create mistrust in the system, promote conflict between pro-democracy groups, and create extensive barriers to any kind of organizing that might threaten the legitimacy of the regime.

Internal Actors

Jordan's list of internal political actors with notable power is tellingly short. The first group of internal actors are those inside the government, namely, the political parties. Although political parties in Jordan are not the main focus of this study, it is important to give a short

[46] Kaye, *et al. More Freedom, Less Terror*?, 61.
[47] Ibid., 62.

explanation of their role in the political sphere and decision-making in the country. According to a government-run database, there are twenty active political parties in Jordan. Their names correspond to their overall ideology, ranging from the National Constitutional Party, to the Jordanian Communist Party, to the Islamic Action Front. All political parties are relatively weak as a result of decades of political repression during the reign of King Hussein. Among these political parties, the Jordanian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, called "The Islamic Action Front," maintains the most influence. In his 2011 article, "Political Opposition and Reform Coalitions in Jordan," Curtis Ryan describes the shifting power among the political parties in Jordan both before and after Martial Law:

> The Islamic Movement, in the form of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and its legal party the Islamic Action Front (IAF), has been the most popular and best organized of the opposition forces, while the parties of the left remain to some extent in the shadows of the Islamists, competing for far smaller segments of the electorate. This shift in hegemony within the Jordanian party system, from the secular left to religious right, reflects the broader trends across the entire region from the 1950s to the present.[48]

Ryan further explains that the most consistently active leftist parties include the Jordanian Communist Party (JCP), the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the Popular Unity Party (PUP), and two Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'ath parties (one linked to Syria and one to Iraq).[49] However, despite the fact that the Islamic Action Front (IAF) overpowers the other political parties by a great degree, not even it is able to dominate the Jordanian Parliament by itself. Of the 130 available seats in the House of Representatives, the IAF holds only ten seats, twice as many as any other political party. Most other parties hold only one seat or none at all. In total, political parties only hold 31 of the 130 seats in the House of Representatives, with individuals

[48] Curtis Ryan. "Political Opposition and Reform Coalitions in Jordan." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 38, no. 3 (December 13, 2011): 367–90. https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2011.621699, 374.
[49] Ibid., 374.

independent of any party [i.e. beholden to the monarchy] holding the remaining 99 seats. In the Senate, all of whose members are appointed by the King, no political party holds a seat. Needless to say, despite the fact that political parties are not the focus of this project, their marginal role in a weak political institution that answers entirely to the King leaves little more to be said.

Islamists in Jordan are another important group of political actors. One actor within the Islamist movement is the IAF (Muslim Brotherhood) mentioned above. The IAF represents the formal political embodiment of the Muslim Brotherhood, but the Muslim Brotherhood plays a larger role than other political actors in Jordan's civil society. It maintains significant influence in civil society by sponsoring non-profit organizations, some of which work to indirectly promote democracy, although this is not the Brotherhood's stated goal. There is much to be said in this about the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, some of which will be addressed in the following chapter. However, their activities are only the focus of this thesis insofar as they fall into the categories of civil society and pro-democracy work.

Apart from the Muslim Brotherhood, the Salafi movement holds an important place in Jordanian civil society. The Salafi movement has traditionally been much more critical of the regime itself, and therefore has been excluded from participation in parliamentary politics and the religious sphere, both of which are controlled by the government. According to Quintan Wiktorowicz, "The Salafis are attempting to institute religious behavior and practices that capture the purity of Islam, as understood by practitioners during the initial phase of its development."[50] In order to circumvent state control, the movement has relied on social networks rather than grassroots organizations. Because of this reliance on social networks, it is difficult to

[50] Wiktorowicz. *The Management of Islamic Activism: Salafis, the Muslim Brotherhood, and State Power in Jordan*, 6.

identify exactly what specific causes the Salafi movement promotes or if any of their work overlaps with that of pro-democracy movements. The Salafis are an important example of resistance to the regime, but their work in Jordan is not pro-democracy, though it may sometimes support aspects of civil society that are important for democracy such as education or access to basic living essentials.

Another set of noteworthy democracy-promoting actors are grassroots organizations and activists that work to promote human rights. These actors constitute the main focus of this study because they provide the clearest view of the priorities and goals of the Jordanian population. While there is, of course, selection bias since those who are already more politically inclined will be more likely to join these organizations, these groups also offer the smallest barriers to public entry into civil society. This category additionally overlaps with Islamic actors such as the Muslim Brotherhood, since many charitable or aid organizations in Jordan are founded on Islamic ideology of varying positions, from liberal to conservative. These groups work within the confines of the government bureaucracy and regulations to strive towards goals of mobilizing voters, increasing literacy, and providing space for women in the workplace. Their goals are often explicitly democratic or focus on facets of the essential framework of democracy, such as freedom of speech. Overall, the political actors in Jordan who work toward democracy have complicated and distinct visions of what a democratic Jordan should look like. Based on Jordan's history, the greatest steps toward democracy have come as a response to the demands of the Jordanian public. Although these demands have been voiced in the form of mass demonstrations around the country, they nonetheless show the strength of the political will of Jordan's people.

External Actors

Political actors from outside of Jordan who work to promote democracy in the Kingdom can be placed in two categories - foreign governments and non-government organizations. This distinction often becomes blurred because, as will be discussed at length in the next chapter, foreign governments such as the United States will often funnel funds through non-governmental organizations in order to support certain goals without dealing with the political repercussions of their influence. Democracy promotion in the Middle East by the Western powers has become an understandably controversial topic as a result, because of the extent of Western interference, the ensuing political violence that this has engendered, and the use of the term "democracy" as a slogan to gain strategic influence in the region.

The power of indigenous civil society has not been lost on these external actors, who have poured significant funds into Jordanian democracy-building organizations. "Western and international democratization projects in the Arab world, as elsewhere, have been controversial mainly because, unlike traditional foreign aid through government-to-government channels that strengthened executive institutions, projects in the field of elections, rule of law, and civil society are funded and executed principally through extra-governmental channels."[51] This triangulation of aid has made it difficult to trace the exact forms of democracy-promoting aid that have been funneled into Jordan by foreign governments. Democracy promotion in the Middle East, in general, has become institutionalized separately from governmental institutions and toward the network of think tanks, policy institutes, election-monitoring organizations, and other NGOs, whose ideologies align with those of the government. This institutionalization has also occurred on the political margins of the countries receiving this aid, which have tried to monitor the initiatives flowing into their country. "By the same token, governments tried to intercept

[51] Sheila Carapico. "Foreign Aid for Promoting Democracy in the Arab World." *Middle East Journal* 56, no. 3 (2002), 379. f

democratization resources by founding national commissions and quasi-non-governmental federations of their own. National human rights organizations and councils for women were established to 'coordinate' donor programs and 'represent' NGOs in international forums."[52] By pumping funds into civil society organizations, the governments of the United States and Jordan, have artificially promoted civil society institutions, giving power to the organizations receiving the aid.

This phenomenon is common in Jordan and has reflected the values of the countries sending resources to Jordan. For example, "The nonappearance of Islamist and Arab nationalist institutions among scores of recipients of democratization funds seemed to verify allegations of ideological bias. More than a few targets of feminist consciousness-raising felt patronized, and . . . talented researchers grappled with the ethical implications of Western funding for projects critical of Arab governments and especially the Palestinian Authority."[53] It is no surprise that foreign powers fund organizations and causes with which they agree. However, as will be discussed in the following chapters, this often comes with only cursory consideration of which causes the receiving population actually champions or whether democracy can be promoted without carefully considering the will of the people.

The most notable external power promoting democracy in Jordan is the United States. The U.S. gave $1.7 billion in aid to Jordan in 2019, which is the peak of an upward trend that has been ongoing since 2003. $537 million of this money went to government and civil society institutions. The only other country that comes anywhere close to this level of aid is Canada, which has pledged $2.1 billion over three years for stabilization aid, humanitarian aid, and development. The United Kingdom follows Canada, having pledged $848 million over five

[52] Ibid., 392.
[53] Ibid., 395.

years. Other European countries that have dedicated significant aid to Jordan have specified that the purpose of this aid was to support Jordan's refugee programs since the onset of the Syrian Civil War. It is difficult to determine exactly where each dollar of foreign aid is spent in the country. While a significant amount of aid from the United States goes to Jordan's military, an even larger portion has gone to government and civil society organizations. The $537 million in democracy-promotion funds that go to the Jordanian government and civil society initiatives will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Through these methods of explicit aid and non-explicit forms of aid funneled through non-governmental organizations, external actors have also exerted their influence in Jordan by providing critical aid to Jordan's economy, which is contingent upon the expansion of democracy in the country in return. While these two categories of governmental and non-governmental aid are theoretically distinct, they often work in tandem towards the same goals. In order to narrow the focus of research, this project examines the United States' role in democracy promotion in Jordan because it is the primary external actor with regard to Jordan. The United States dedicates more funds as aid to Jordan than other countries, making it a critical player in Jordan's political and economic realities. Additionally, the role of the United States in Jordan's politics through economic aid and democracy promotion sheds lights on the goals of the U.S. in the region more generally. In order to examine the realities of this relationship, the following chapter will deal with the specifics of U.S. democracy promotion in Jordan in terms of official aid and informal non-governmental channels. The remainder of this project will critically examine the complexities of democracy building in Jordan through the lens of this comparison by contrasting the work of the United States with that of the internal actors previously described in this chapter.

Chapter 4

Democracy-Promotion in Jordan by the United States

Since the conclusion of World War II, the United States has taken increasing interest in the Middle East, seeing itself as the guarantor of a stable world order. This interest has grown as the importance of the Middle East has permeated all aspects of politics. The crucial natural resource of oil and the United States' gas guzzling population made the Middle East a vital economic ally. The rise of Pan Arabism threatened Western hegemony in the region and brought to light the necessity of the region's resources to Western economies. Violent language and actions against Western powers caused the area to be heavily scrutinized by American security apparatuses as a major threat to the West. Jordan falls into this complicated milieu of cooperation and conflict as the object of Western democracy promotion efforts that were spurred from a motivation to build lasting cooperation and peace in the Middle East by investing in civil society and popular participation. This chapter will focus on how the relationship between the United States and Jordan falls within this network of politics, economics, religion, and history. It will trace the history of this relationship and the vision of democracy for Jordan to which the United States has devoted significant resources over the past sixty years. Ultimately, this chapter serves as an outline of the kind of involvement the U.S. has had with Jordan over the years and as a prelude to the following chapter about the democracy promotion being done by internal actors.

To many, the relationship between the United States and the Middle East is fairly new, perhaps tracing back to the advent of oil on the global scene or the creation of the state of Israel. However, this relationship goes back to the very beginning of the United States with its first

hostage crisis in the Barbary Wars in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. While the details of these wars are a discussion for another time, they resulted in the creation of a particular identity of the Middle East in the minds of Americans and the enforcement of Orientalist notions of the region as culturally backward. In the book *The Crescent Obscured*, Robert Allison explores this history and particularly the way in which the United States situated itself in relation to the region as a result of these early conflicts. He explains, "Americans and Europeans had distorted ideas about Islam, but they found these ideas useful. Enlightenment writers created a picture of the Muslim world that served as a sober warning about the dangers of submitting to despotism, about the dangers of suppressing public debate, and about the twin evils of tyranny and anarchy."[54] Through this process of skewed understanding, the U.S. as part of the West, once again built part of its identity in contrast to the East, relying on the East to provide the counter to its values, which enforced the dynamic between the East and West that Edward Said describes in his book *Orientalism*.[55]

The Barbary Wars enforced stereotypes about the Arab East and laid the groundwork for the idea that military force was the only means of influencing the Middle East, an idea that has characterized much of American foreign policy even while democracy building became a popular solution in the minds of U.S. policy makers. Since then, the framers of the Constitution and those who were involved in the early American government believed that "only conquest by the West would free Muslims from 'that system of blasphemy and iniquity by which they are at present.' No peaceful invasion by missionaries or teachers could enlighten the Muslims, whose rulers supported their own beliefs with 'carnal weapons' and respected no argument but force."[56]

---

[54] Robert Allison. *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World, 1776-1815*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014, 35.
[55] Edward Said. 1978.
[56] Ibid., 36.

This kind of thinking about the Middle East even influenced the debates surrounding the creation of the American Constitution. "As the American people debated the Constitution in 1787 and 1788, anti-Federalist critics, not surprisingly, used the image of Turkish despotism to attack the proposed government . . . What, the anti-Federalists asked, would prevent the new government from introducing hordes or janissaries to prop it up or from establishing Islam as the state religion, replacing the Bible with the Koran?"[57] Because of these early conflicts between North African states and the United States, a new perceived identity of the Middle East emerged in the minds of the early framers of the Constitution. This identity infused American political discourse and perceptions of foreign policy, laying the groundwork for the relationship between the two regions today.

A thorough discussion of the history of United States' foreign policy in the Middle East since the Barbary Wars is too extensive a topic for this project. However, it is important to note the historical roots of contemporary foreign policy projects as they relate to Jordan. For example, the policy of democracy building to create lasting cooperation has its roots in the Cold War, particularly during Ronald Reagan's presidency. "During the second half of the twentieth century, the world's division into two camps reflected the competition between the liberal democratic and centralized, authoritarian socialist model of political organization and economic governance."[58] The polarized ideological conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union led the United States under Reagan to promote democratic values around the world as a way to both preempt and resist the rise of Communism. This practice became a crucial part of U.S. foreign policy once again following the attacks of September 11, 2001. During the War on

[57] Ibid.. 57.
[58] Dorothee Schmid, and Fares Braizat. "The Adaptation of EU and US Democracy Promotion Programmes to the Local Political Context in Jordan and Palestine and their Relevance to Grand Geopolitical Designs." *EuroMesco* 50 (October, 2006), 7.

Terror, the George W. Bush Administration adopted a policy of investing in democratic institutions in the Middle East in order to promote a vision of international peace that would stem from the spread of democracy, formalized international institutions, and connected economies. The Euromesco article, "The Adaptation of EU and US Democracy Programmes to the Local Political Context in Jordan and Palestine and their Relevance to Grand Geopolitical Designs" describes this investment:

> The Bush administration's September 2002 National Security Strategy, which lays out the US post-September 11 strategic vision, prominently features democracy promotion and describes it as a core part of the U.S. national security doctrine. In November 2003, following the American intervention in Iraq, George Bush exposed clearly his intentions in a famous discourse at the National Endowment for Democracy. He affirmed his intention to pursue the spread of democracy worldwide, emphasising that "the Middle East (...) must be a focus of American policy for decades to come", and insisting that this "forward strategy of freedom in the Middle East (...) requires the same persistence and energy and idealism that (the US) have shown before.[59]

Bush's prediction was correct: creating stability in the Middle East continues to be a core part of the U.S. National Security doctrine. For almost twenty years, the United States has poured money and resources into the region through investment in democratic institutions, election monitoring, refugee assistance, and military intervention. This has created a complicated situation for Jordan, which relies on U.S. aid but also takes in thousands of refugees from wars in the region, some of which are perpetuated by the United States. For example, after the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, Jordan publicly condemned the United States' role in the Middle East. Jordan then had to absorb the refugees created in part by the presence of the U.S. in the region, placing more strain on their relationship. However, Jordan needed the economic and military support to be able to govern their diverse population, so they signed a peace treaty with Israel to earn the good graces of the pro-Israel Western powers. Curtis Ryan explains that "the peace

[59] Ibid., 7.

treaty earned Jordan a top spot among U.S. foreign aid recipients, with the United States increasing economic and military aid to the Hashemite Kingdom."[60]

This dynamic of support and control is a vital part of U.S. democracy building projects in Jordan. The first aspect of the relationship between the two countries is that of economic aid. Jordan is the fourth largest recipient of U.S. aid, trailing only Afghanistan, Iraq, and Israel and surpassing aid to Egypt. Jordan has received aid from the United States since 1951, meaning the country has spent most of its existence receiving this money. "Between FY2002 and FY2005, Jordan received an annual average of $780 million in economic and military aid (including supplemental funding), up from an average of $246 million per year between FY1996 and FY2001. The Senate version of H.R. 4939, the FY 2006 Emergency Supplemental Bill, contains $100 million in economic aid for Jordan to continue and accelerate economic reforms."[61] For a country with a GDP of 40 billion (compared to the 19.4 trillion GDP of the United States), this aid is both substantial and critical. Even though the U.S. and Jordan have never been formally linked in a treaty, Jordan has been an important ally of the U.S. since the pan-Arabist, leftist movement, during which Jordan remained a conservative, anti-Communist bulwark. In 2018, the U.S. and Jordan signed a new Memorandum of Understanding on U.S. foreign assistance in which the U.S. committed to provide $6.375 billion of aid to Jordan over the next five years. The U.S. has also supported neoliberal economic policies in Jordan that have created extensive political and social unrest in the country.

---

[60] Curtis Ryan. *Jordan and the Arab Uprisings: Regime Survival and Politics beyond the State*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018, 147.

[61] Jeremy Sharp. "U.S. Democracy Promotion Policy in the Middle East: The Islamist Dilemma." CRS Report for Congress, June 15, 2006. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235060576_US_Democracy_Promotion_Policy_in_the_Middle_East_The_Islamist_Dilemma, 27.

Not only is Jordan the third-largest recipient of U.S. aid, but it also receives the largest amount of support given to any U.S. foreign aid recipient worldwide.[62] The annual aid to Jordan has quadrupled in historical terms over the last several years, with the U.S. giving $1.3 billion in aid in 2017 along with two thousand American troops being stationed in the country. The United States has also granted Jordan Loan Guarantees (LG), which "allow recipient governments to issue debt securities that are fully guaranteed by the U.S. government in capital markets, subsidizing the cost for governments of accessing financing."[63] Since 2013, "Congress has authorized LGs for Jordan and appropriated $413 million in ESF (the 'subsidy cost') to support three separate tranches, enabling Jordan to borrow a total of $3.75 billion at concessional lending rates."[64]

The influence of the United States over Jordan is not limited to economic aid distribution. In addition to this significant power, the U.S. also holds sway over Jordan's economy through the International Monetary Fund (IMF). As the largest cumulative contributor to the IMF at $155 billion and the largest voting bloc in the IMF, the United States holds effective veto power for most of its decisions. While the influence of the U.S. has increased following the 2008 financial crisis, it also held significant sway in the IMF previously. In 1989, Jordan accepted an IMF program to overhaul the Jordanian economy. The goal was to reduce the level and scope of state intervention in the economy and bring government revenues and expenditures back into balance. This program, as discussed in the previous chapters, slashed public welfare programs and government subsidies of basic necessities. As a result, prices skyrocketed, and an angry population took to the streets to demand economic change. What they got was the "new liberal

---

[62] "Jordan: Background and U.S. Relations." EveryCRSReport.com. Congressional Research Service, December 4, 2019. https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL33546.html, 15.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.

bargain," a series of political liberalization measures as a means to restructure relations between the monarchy and two critical constituencies during the era of economic austerity - Transjordanians and the business community. While the full degree of U.S. influence in the IMF program is unclear, it is clear that austerity measures placed a significant strain on Jordan's economy, which then made the monarchy more reliant on U.S. aid.

The United States has also played an important role in developing Jordan's military. The U.S. has sponsored programs designed to enable Jordan to procure and maintain U.S.-originated conventional weapon systems. Jordan also participates in the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program. According to the U.S. Department of State, IMET is a program that "provides training and education on a grant basis to students from allied and friendly nations. In addition to improving defense capabilities, IMET facilitates the development of important professional and personal relationships, which have proven to provide U.S. access and influence in a critical sector of society that often plays a pivotal role in supporting, or transitioning to, democratic governments."[65] This program has had a critical influence over the U.S.-Jordanian relationship, as many powerful Jordanian military figures have gone through the program. Some of the most notable of these individuals are King Abdullah II, the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Air Force commander, and the Special Forces commander.[66]

This involvement in the Jordanian military goes beyond the IMET program. Between 1946 and 2017, the United States gave $20.4 billion in bilateral aid to Jordan.[67] $7,748,700,000

---

[65] U.S. Department of State Archive . U.S. Department of State, January 20, 2009. https://2001-2009.state.gov/t/pm/65533.htm.
[66] Ibid.
[67] "Jordan: Background and U.S. Relations." EveryCRSReport.com. Congressional Research Service, December 4, 2019. https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL33546.html, 15.

of this was military aid, and $12,681,400,000 was economic aid.[68] The distribution of military aid is mostly overseen through the Foreign Military Financing (FMF) account for Jordan, along with some separate channels designated by Congress to improve Jordan's border security system. "FMF may be used to purchase new equipment (e.g., precision-guided munitions, night-vision) or to sustain previous acquisitions (e.g., Blackhawk helicopters, AT-802 fixed-wing aircraft)."[69] The United States Department of Defense also works with Jordan's military by supporting ad hoc defense systems to respond to immediate threats and contingencies. This cooperation has only increased with the advent of the Syrian Civil War and the U.S. Operation Inherent Resolve against the Islamic State. Because of these conflicts, Congress has authorized special defense appropriations to support Jordan's border security. Lastly, in terms of military cooperation, the United States has partnered with Jordan in anti-terrorism operations. "Since 9/11, some supplementary aid has been explicitly granted to Jordan as a reward for its support of the American 'War on Terrorism' and as a compensation for the effects of the Iraq war on its economy."[70] Overall, the military partnership between the United States and Jordan is just as robust as their economic partnership. Spanning nearly sixty years, this partnership has shaped Jordan's position within the region and its reliance on the United States for at least a part of their military prowess.

In addition to economic and military support, the United States has also given Jordan nearly $1.1 billion in humanitarian assistance to support Syrian refugees in Jordan. Ever since the beginning of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, Syrian refugees have flowed into Jordan, placing

[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., 15.
[70] Schmid and Braizat. "The Adaptation of EU and US Democracy Promotion Programmes to the Local Political Context in Jordan and Palestine and their Relevance to Grand Geopolitical Designs," 12.

significant strain on the country's already limited resources. The kind of humanitarian aid provided by the United States and other countries has made it possible for Jordan to provide the basic infrastructure to support this new community.

It is important to keep these aspects of the relationship between Jordan and the United States in mind in any discussion of U.S. democracy building in the area. Regardless of whether the United States is carrying out positive programs in Jordan, there is a critical difference in power relations that should not be ignored. In many ways, the Jordanian government relies on U.S. assistance for its economic stability and therefore, its legitimacy. The regime remembers the 1989 riots and the political maneuvering it had to do to maintain its position of power. In many ways, the Hashemite dynasty continues this kind of maneuvering by providing nominal political reforms at the behest of the United States in order to retain access to the economic, military, and humanitarian aid that has allowed the regime to survive power.

However, the monarchy has not been able to escape conflict over the years. Jordan experienced its own Arab Spring in 2011 with protesters calling for economic and political reforms, largely protesting the neoliberal economic policies that had created a great difference in wealth, an expanding private sector, and lower wages overall. King Abdullah II appeased these protesters by reforming a third of the constitution and firing several ministers. Protests broke out again in 2018 at the Fourth Circle, a landmark in Amman in one of the most high-income, neoliberally developed areas of the city. The protest was organized by 30 trade unions to protest the renewed austerity measures that had been put in place at the suggestion of the IMF in 2016 to address Jordan's public debt. The protest continued until Prime Minister Mulki resigned and the new Prime Minister promised to withdraw a proposed tax bill.

This is all to say that democracy promotion in Jordan comes at the intersection of unequal powers. The United States holds significant power over the affairs of the country, and the regime navigates this power by using U.S. aid to secure its hegemony while implementing some of the minor democratization demands of the United States. Overall, democratization efforts in Jordan by the United States come in two major forms, as discussed in the previous chapter - government programs and civil society organizations. The remainder of this chapter will be dedicated to these two kinds of reform efforts.

The first major player in this dichotomy is, of course, the United States government. In the paper, "The Impact of US Aid Policy on Democracy and Political Reform in Jordan and Other Arab Countries," Professor Abdel Mahdi Alsoudi of Jordan University describes the goals of U.S. democracy building efforts:

> The strategic goal of US aid to Jordan is to support the development of a more effective and accountable system of governance. It aims at building democracy by increasing citizen participation, expanding the role of civil society, increasing the flow and diversity of information to citizens, and strengthening selected democratic institutions. It also addressed the special needs of women and to improve the ability of female parliamentarians to perform their role in the recently elected legislature, and ensure that the state of Jordanian women improves through greater advocacy by non-governmental organizations.[71]

These goals have been promoted since the Cold War era, but more concretely following 9/11. The United States government has pursued them through several avenues. Beyond verbal demands for political reform, the U.S. established the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), which was designed to move beyond government-to-government types of reform efforts and promote political freedoms in the country. The Initiative was part of the Bush government's response to the 9/11 attacks. He proposed creating and funding the MEPI in order to consolidate

[71] Abdelmahdi Alsoudi. "US Aid Policy to the Arab World: The Impact of US Aid Policy on Democracy and Political Reform in the Arab World." *The International Journal of the Humanities: Annual Review* 4, no. 10 (2007), 117.

a multifaceted approach to foreign aid and democracy building in the Middle East. According to the Brookings Institute, MEPI was designed to "provide smaller grants to build partnerships with non-governmental Arab groups and local citizens, and to build links across Middle Eastern countries. Inherent in this approach was a judgment that Arab governments had not sufficiently recognized their looming demographic and economic challenges . . . Instead, the thinking went, they would need to be goaded toward change by a combination of independent American assistance and grassroots activism."[72] Even though MEPI recognized the importance of investing in civil society programs and grassroots activism, the reality of its investments were very different from its goals. Over 70% of the MEPI's first $103 million in grants went to government agencies or provided training to government officials throughout the Middle East, including in Jordan. Additionally, "only eighteen percent of the allocated funds supported either American or Arab non-governmental organizations working in the region, and five percent went to build the Arab private sector and promote U.S.-Arab business ties. 5.7 percent of the funds were spent on exchange programs."[73]

Overall, this initiative did not produce any notable or lasting democratic reforms, but rather propped up the status quo by putting the process of democracy building in the hands of the government, not civil society or grassroots organizations. The Brookings Institute outlines three major flaws in the MEPI effort to build democracy throughout the Middle East: a scatter-shot approach to promoting reform, overemphasis on government-directed assistance, and a lack of support at higher policy levels.[74] The initiative focused on short-term programs to prove to

[72] Sarah Yerkes and Tamara Wittes. "The Middle East Partnership Initiative: Progress, Problems, and Prospects." Brookings, July 28, 2016. https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-middle-east-partnership-initiative-progress-problems-and-prospects/.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid.

Congress that they were reaching tangible goals and therefore required more funding, which meant that their programs did very little to enable civil society to advocate for democracy, but instead promoted a nominal vision of civil participation that only maintained the status quo.

The second initiative that the Bush administration funded following 9/11 was the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). NED is an important example of the ways in which the government overlaps with civil society, particularly when it comes to democracy promotion. According to its website, "The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) is a private, nonprofit foundation dedicated to the growth and strengthening of democratic institutions around the world. Each year, NED makes more than 1,600 grants to support the projects of non-governmental groups abroad who are working for democratic goals in more than 90 countries."[75] The organization defines itself as non-partisan and non-governmental, yet is subject to oversight by the U.S. Congress, the Department of State, and an independent financial audit.

Its work in Jordan has four major facets: (a) enhancing government accountability, (b) monitoring the media to ensure freedom of information, (c) promoting transparency about the Labor Market, and (d) Strengthening the capacity of business associations for democratic participation. Organizations are able to apply for grants from the NED if they work in one of these four areas and adhere to the organization's goals and standards. For example, the grant description for the goal of enhancing government accountability is as follows:

> To strengthen government responsiveness to citizen demands and priorities, particularly at the newly decentralized level. The grantee will lead a nationwide effort to identify the needs of local communities, determine whether these needs are prioritized by local authorities, and verify implementation of government promises. The organization will conduct town hall meetings that convene citizens

[75] "About the National Endowment for Democracy." NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.ned.org/about/.

> with their elected officials to discuss priority issues, live stream the meetings, and publish short reports on the findings.[76]

Grant opportunities for the other three categories follow similar lines. They prioritize local organizations doing the work of promoting the goals of NED but place strict guidelines around what these groups can actually do if they wish to receive grant money. NED receives much of its funding from the government and therefore represents a trend in democracy aid in which the U.S. government uses independent organizations as a way to funnel aid throughout the world without going through formal political channels.

Another vital aspect of U.S. democracy promotion in Jordan is the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This agency works in areas spanning economic aid to democracy promotion. The agency describes itself as "the world's premier international development agency and catalytic actor bringing development results. USAID's work advances US national security and economic prosperity, demonstrates American generosity, and promotes a path to recipient self-reliance and resilience."[77]

Its work in Jordan, beyond funding the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), includes six other initiatives: (1) Democracy and Governance; (2) Economic Development and Energy; (3) Population and Family Health; (4) Education and Youth; (5) Water Resources and Environment; and (6) Gender Equality and Female Empowerment. Its democracy programs specifically "support civil society, promote human rights through democratic reforms, strengthen representative political parties, promote free and fair elections, and enhance community resilience."[78] USAID partners with national democratic institutions, regional governments,

---

[76] "Jordan 2018." NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.ned.org/region/middle-east-and-northern-africa/jordan-2018-2/.
[77] "What We Do." U.S. Agency for International Development. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.usaid.gov/.
[78] "Our Work." U.S. Agency for International Development. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.usaid.gov/.

municipal governments, and civil society actors. However, based on its website and self-proclaimed initiatives, it is difficult to tell exactly what work its initiatives do beyond funneling money to supportive groups. On its Jordan website, USAID is very vocally pro-monarchy, stating, "USAID works with the Government of Jordan to advance the King's vision for a more stable, prosperous and democratic future by strengthening partnership and collaboration between governing institutions and their constituents to better address local needs."[79]

It is not surprising that a U.S. government agency would work in cooperation with another government. However, this declaration of working within governing institutions reveals the true nature of USAID's democracy-promotion activities: reforming the regime without focusing on true change through the enabling of civil society. For example, USAID responded to direct requests by Jordanian Members of Parliament to work with the Jordanian government, civil society organizations, and the media to strengthen the capacity of parliament to legislate, oversee the affairs of the country, and represent the Jordanian people.[80] Here, USAID supported civil society only at the behest of the Jordanian government, which begs the question about the organization's vision of democracy. According to Dorothée Schmid and Fares Braizat of EuroMesco, "the USAID official discourse concerning Jordan seems to stick rather strictly to the official motto of the Palace, insisting on good governance as an important element to bolster economic liberalization and foster economic growth. It also insists on the sincere commitment of the Jordanian regime to pursue democratic reforms, while some entrenched interests might oppose reforms."[81] USAID is just one example of the ways in which the United States promotes

[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Dorothee Schmid and Fares Braizat. "The Adaptation of EU and US Democracy Promotion Programmes to the Local Political Context in Jordan and Palestine and their Relevance to Grand Geopolitical Designs," 12.

nominal democratic reforms, but does not invest in the civil society initiatives necessary for real democratic reform.

In addition to these government institutions, it is important to examine the other way in which the United States channels aid to build democracy in Jordan: through non-governmental organizations that receive government funding. Two well-known examples of such routes of democracy promotion are the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI). Both organizations were launched in 1983 as two of the core institutions of the National Endowment for Democracy, along with the American Center for International Labor Solidarity and the Center for International Private Enterprise. According to its website, the NDI is a "nonprofit, nonpartisan organization working to support and strengthen democratic worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government."[82] It works on projects around the world to "promote openness and accountability in government by building political and civic organizations, safeguarding elections, and promoting citizen participation."[83] Much of its work in the Middle East includes election monitoring, writing reports about the state of democracy in the region, and creating programs to increase democratic participation among groups such as women and university students. For example, the program "Ana Usharek" ("I Participate") aims to educate young people about democratic values and political systems, human rights, non-violent dispute resolution, and civic responsibility.[84] Overall, NDI programs do make an effort to engage with civil society, but at the same time they also work to bolster the regime. For example, they say that their programs "are designed to respond to on-the-ground political developments while ensuring that assistance

[82] "National Democratic Institute." National Democratic Institute. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.ndi.org/.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid.

contributes to the longer-term development of civic groups, political parties, parliaments, and governing institutions."[85] These programs are funded by the National Endowment for Democracy, USAID, the U.S. Department of State, and other donations. Based on the 2017 tax return, NDI spent about $13,000,000 on "democracy report" programs in the Middle East alone. In the same year, it spent about $71,000,000 on similar programs around the world, initiatives that were made possible by the monetary support of the United States' government.

Another organization that represents a nominally non-governmental organization whose existence is tied to government support is the International Republican Institute (IRI). Also formed by the National Endowment for Democracy, the IRI does similar work to that of the NDI. It was created after Ronald Reagan's speech to the British Parliament proposing to help countries build democratic infrastructures as a way to create global stability and lasting peace. The organization promotes conservative economic growth strategies in countries such as Jordan as a way to support "true" democracy, overlooking the fact that much of the discontent in Jordan stems from these very economic policies. Based on its website, the IRI is committed to "advancing freedom and democracy worldwide by helping political parties to become more issue-based and responsive, assisting citizens to participate in government planning, and working to increase the role of marginalized groups in the political process."[86] The website also describes IRI projects as working to "link political parties and people, amplify marginalized voices, bring citizens together, ensure elections count, build citizen-centered governments, and put data to work."[87] It describes its work in the Middle East as spanning public opinion research, women's empowerment, civil society initiatives, democratic governance, and multi-party political systems.

---

[85] Ibid.
[86] "What We Do." International Republican Institute. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.iri.org/what-we-do.
[87] Ibid.

Aside from incorrectly identifying Pakistan as part of the Middle East, the work of the IRI mirrors much of that done by the NDI. However, it produces more in-depth studies on the state of democracy in the region that center on the voices of populations rather than the organization's understanding of these voices. For example, in 2019, the IRI conducted a poll to understand the Jordanian public's expectations of the role of citizens and government and their perceptions of democracy. In 2018, it conducted a similar poll to assess the level of Jordanians' trust in the government and perception of economic hardships. Additionally, it works with the National Democratic Institute to conduct election monitoring projects and write pre-election assessment recommendations for countries in the Middle East. However, it is unclear what it does with those reports. While they may be helpful, there is no indication that the IRI sends these reports to the Jordanian government in order to promote better elections or show members of Parliament the level of confidence that their constituents have in them. IRI resources have also written assessments of Jordan's vulnerability to violent extremism. Again, it is unclear what they do with these assessments beyond promoting them in the circuit of think-tanks, NGOs, government agencies. One of their articles, titled "IRI Women's Empowerment Program in Jordan Praised in The Hill," reveals a crucial aspect of their work: performing government-supporting projects to reform democracy in Jordan that are both visible and favorable to the Jordanian government. This is not surprising since their primary donors are USAID, the U.S. Department of State, and the National Endowment for Democracy.

U.S. democracy promotion in Jordan thus takes several forms. This chapter has summarized the ways in which this promotion occurs. A significant amount of U.S. democracy promotion comes from the United States' considerable power over Jordan through military, economic, and humanitarian aid. This aid caused the monarchy to rely on American aid to help

maintain the status quo, on which its legitimacy depends. Another portion of U.S. democracy-building work comes through quasi-non-governmental organizations like the IRI, which are able to engage more with civil society than explicitly governmental programs, but yet promote pro-regime reforms that prop up the Jordanian government as the champion of reform rather than the primary object of that reform. These programs have been very explicit about their vision of democracy by the local groups with whom they partner, causing indignation and the need for a kind of moral reckoning for local activists:

> On the other hand, foreign funding for explicitly political projects raised the same kinds of doubts and suspicions as they would, and have, in the United States. The nonappearance of Islamist and Arab nationalist institutions among scores of recipients of democratization funds seemed to verify allegations of ideological bias. More than a few targets of feminist consciousness-raising felt patronized, and joined their male colleagues in complaining that foreigners with little understanding of political realities controlled project purse strings. Meanwhile talented researchers grappled with the ethical implications of Western funding for projects critical of Arab governments and especially the Palestinian Authority.[88]

The distribution of funds by the United States to different organizations in Jordan based on their alignment with the U.S. 's vision of the future is hardly surprising. It makes perfect sense that any government would support groups whose ideology aligns with its own. However, the popular reaction to this distribution should be taken seriously, especially when compared with the existing power dynamics among the Islamist groups in Jordan. It is telling that the United States promotes a specific vision of democracy in Jordan that retains the integrity of the monarchy and thus protects U.S. interests through the security apparatus and regional stability that Jordan provides for the United States. Ultimately, the United States government, through its official institutions and non-government channels, has advocated for a democracy that calls for

[88] Sheila Carapico. “Foreign Aid for Promoting Democracy in the Arab World,” 395.

fair elections, women's participation, and widespread voter mobilization. However, it has done nothing to truly expand the power of democratic institutions in the country, as these would challenge the power of the Jordanian monarchy, upsetting the status quo and therefore U.S. interests.

Chapter 5

Democracy Promotion in Jordan by Jordanian Actors

This chapter is perhaps the most critical of this project. It explores the nature of democracy promotion by Jordanian organizations, situating them in the context of Jordanian civil society discussed in Chapter 2 and the overview of external democracy-promoting actors outlined in Chapter 4. It is important to remember that democracy promotion does not have to be explicit. Much of the democracy promotion work in Jordan comes from actors working towards a particular goal that is critical to democracy, such as free speech or women's participation in the political realm. As discussed in previous chapters, the Jordanian government is not strongly committed to the promotion of civil society-based democracy, meaning that democracy promotion by internal actors must work within a system-induced dichotomy of improving the existing limited democratic portion of the government or taking a more radical stance that advocates intensive reform of the current system. Jordanian actors must work within a web of bureaucratic controls placed on them by the government, meaning that their work will have a different impact on Jordan's civil society based on whether they are formal organizations, grassroots activists, or part of a protest group.

As explained in Chapter 2, Jordanian civil society is bound by layers of bureaucratic control that require organizations to petition the government to be legally formed and report most of their actions to the government. Islamist groups such as the Salafis thus have little hope of forming more institutionalized networks, since they are not in the good graces of the government. Groups that wish to protest anti-democratic policies of the government must get a

permit in order to organize protests, leaving them subject to the whims of the government. Political parties that wish to expand the power of Parliament are subject to a weak party system and to the very structure of their own government, which requires the Monarch to ratify any laws that are passed before they can go into effect. Therefore, democracy promotion in Jordan is in many ways a zero-sum game: any power gained by democratic institutions is power lost by the regime. The only times in Jordan's history in which the regime has made meaningful strides toward democracy were when the regime's very survival depended on such concessions. In those instances, the stakes of the zero-sum game shifted, forcing the regime's hand. This leaves a dismal picture for more moderate and institutionalized reform efforts, whether by Jordanian or foreign actors. Jordanian pro-democracy actors are at the mercy of the system more than foreign actors, since they are subject to the surveillance and punishment of the Mukhabarat (Jordan's secret service network) on behalf of the government. All this should be kept in mind with respect to the present discussion of the work of pro-democracy actors in Jordan. Whatever their vision of democracy may be, or whatever aspect of democracy they advocate, they are subject to the limitations of the system and the high stakes of any challenge to the regime. Yet it is still important to carefully examine their goals, since these goals are the best reflection of the vision of democracy held by Jordan's civil society.

The most formalized democracy promoting actors in Jordan, as discussed before, are political parties, internal groups formed by the government, non-governmental organizations, groups that have been relegated to the social sphere, and any individual activists or groups that form spontaneously in events such as protests. However, despite their differences, "all democracy activists, regardless of ideological, ethnic, or religious background, seemed to agree that in addition to electoral reform, parliament too needed to change and become a more genuine

legislative body, which, in turn, implied changes regarding the nature of government, of governance, and of the balance of power in the state itself."[89] There seems to be a general feeling of discontent with the nature of the status quo of Jordan's democracy, regardless of the differences in the ways that groups and individuals envision reform. Some groups work in more of a reformist mindset, others advance democracy without ever even mentioning the term, and yet others push for sweeping reforms of the broader system; however, few are content with the status quo. For example, Curtis Ryan notes that there is widespread discontent with the function and nature of the political parties in Jordan:

> The parties are not near people's hearts and minds. That's why they have these Facebook groups. That's their political parties. It is like an election, people signing up or "liking" and agreeing to support a figure or group or demonstration. Social media is their device to convert and share their aspirations. But the Mukhabarat are also now trying to infiltrate social media groups. But people just aren't afraid anymore. Measures that used to scare people just don't now. They are sure that they are smarter than the regime. They are just not afraid.[90]

This statement from a respondent echoes the discontent that many Jordanian activists feel with the current situation, their reliance on social media for democratic reform, and the diminishing fear of the stakes of social media presence if it becomes subject to Mukhabarat observation. In many ways, social media has become the pivotal aspect of Jordan's democratic activity. This mimics a wider trend in the region, a trend that brought down governments and even sparked civil wars. In the Middle East, access to social media was a crucial factor of the Arab Spring, as thousands of pro-democracy protesters took to Facebook and Twitter to build coalitions, organize protests, and notify each other of the military's movements. Social media allowed word of protests to spread once they had started in Tunisia, sparking similar protests throughout the region. While the use of social media has now taken on a different shape in

[89] Curtis Ryan. *Jordan and the Arab Uprisings,* 58.
[90] Ibid., 61.

Jordan, it still serves as a vital forum for democratic discussion and the record of democratic activity. In many ways, Facebook has provided the bulk of the evidence for this chapter, since many Jordanian organizations have active Facebook pages in which they share information about their meetings, forums, and initiatives.

Political parties, while not a particularly powerful part of Jordan's government or democratic system, have also made steps toward a broader democracy. They have called for election reforms, boycotted elections that they believed to be unfair, and protested government corruption. According to Curtis Ryan, "[In 2010] In addition to demands for proportional representation to enhance the strength of political parties, many in the opposition called for major changes in Jordan's highly gerrymandered electoral districts (in which urban areas with Palestinian majorities are under-representation, while rural and mainly East Jordanian districts are comparatively over-represented). When a new law did emerge, meeting virtually none of the opposition demands, demonstrators hit the streets again."[91] This explicit challenge to the status quo has characterized much of Parliament's work on expanding democracy. However, beyond verbally pushing back against unfair election laws or boycotting those elections, there is not much that political parties can do because of the way in which the Jordanian Constitution places the King as the dominant figure over Parliament. Whatever electoral laws they pass to expand their power must be approved by the King, which leaves them little room to seek substantial change.

Additionally, their strongest form of protest, boycotting elections, can work to the detriment of political parties since it could leave them with fewer seats, and therefore less power, than they had before. For example, "Jordan's large Islamist movement boycotted the 2010

[91] Curtis Ryan. "Identity Politics, Reform, and Protest in Jordan," 564.

elections, and hence soon found themselves not in parliament, but on the streets opposing the new government of re-appointed Prime Minister Samir al-Rifa'i. Yet while the Islamist movement and leftist opposition parties participated in many of the demonstrations in 2010 and 2011, they did not represent the majority of the pro-democracy street protesters. Rather, most protesters seemed to be non-partisan."[92] Not only did the Islamist movement lose much of their power in Parliament because of this boycott, but they also did not gain popularity in the streets since they were out of touch with the will of the majority of the protesters. This represents a fundamental problem of parliamentary protest against the system: should a political party use weak verbal attacks to ask the regime for democratic reform, or should it risk whatever power it has by boycotting elections, signaling its own distrust in the democratic process, and situating itself to lose ground in terms of parliamentary power? It is this question that has limited the pro-democracy work of the Jordanian Parliament and political parties. One activist's lamentations on the pace of democratic reform reflects the effects of this stalemate: "[He] lamented both Jordan's comparatively glacial pace of change and also the troubling resilience of identity politics in the kingdom. 'Today, we are still debating the same issues', he argued, 'Who is Jordanian? Who is Palestinian? It is amazing we are still debating this. The whole region is moving at high speed like a BMW while we are riding donkeys . . . *donkeys*, not even horses.'"[93]

Not only is there frustration with the system, but also with the issues on which the system has chosen to focus. Identity politics, coupled with the parliamentary system, makes it virtually impossible for political parties or members of parliament in general to unite in a coalition with a strong enough voice to force the government's hand. Overall, political parties and members of

[92] Ibid., 564.
[93] Ibid., 565.

Parliament either work within the system through relatively weak reform efforts, or completely boycott the system for their vision of democracy.

The next important aspect of pro-democracy work in Jordan is Islamic activism. This kind of activism comes in many forms but ultimately relies more heavily on social networks than other forms of pro-democracy work. While it does not explicitly advocate for a specific vision of democracy, it supports different initiatives that are crucial to democracy, such as education and population mobilization. The goals of this activism are unclear beyond supporting vulnerable communities through both institutionalized and informal methods. Whether Islamic activism is truly striving for democracy, using democratic humanitarian efforts to gain political power, or simply happens to support the foundations of democracy through its humanitarian and social work is beyond the scope of this project because an explicit outline of the goals of different Islamic groups is not readily available to outside researchers. In part, this is because there are many kinds of Islamic activism, each with different understandings of Islam and its application to the political and social world. Therefore, some forms of Islamic activism support democracy more than others. For example, "Islamic NGOs, such as medical clinics, hospitals, charity societies, cultural centers, and schools, provide basic goods and services to demonstrate that "Islam is the solution" to everyday problems in Muslim societies. Within these organizational contexts, Islamic activists not only provide needed social services (often in areas where state programs are absent or ineffective) but use social interactions with local communities to propagate and recruit followers as well."[94]

These NGOs fill in the gaps of government work to serve populations that are often overlooked by the government. While this work is not explicitly democratic, it is an example of

[94] Wiktorowicz. *The Management of Islamic Activism: Salafis, the Muslim Brotherhood, and State Power in Jordan*, 11.

segments of the population voicing their political and religious opinions by working within the bounds of civil society. This is a fundamental aspect of democracy. While Islamic NGOs do not explicitly advocate for democracy, they do take advantage of civil society and support underrepresented groups by filling in the gaps of government services. Overall, "where the state constraints formal political space, outreach programs through Islamic grassroots activities can provide tangible resources for mobilization."[95] Because of state restrictions, Islamic groups such as NGOs create grassroots networks that benefit from their provision of social services, forming coalitions simply by nature of their efforts.

As Quintan Wiktorowicz explains, "Islamic activists are embedded in complex network-oriented societies that tend to favor informality over formalized institutionalization . . . Movements in Muslim societies are more likely to utilize the dense associational networks of personal relationships that characterize much of politics, economic activity, and culture."[96] In many ways, the method of Islamic activism, more than its message, supports democracy in Jordan by strengthening interpersonal networks and creating the social networks necessary for coalition building. For example, Islamist movements in Jordan and the rest of the region have used their social networks to challenge regimes and argue for a different understanding of the "good life." "While Islamist groups have certainly targeted their governments, made claims against regimes, and established mass organizations and political parties, they have more commonly and successfully directed their message and organizational strategies toward changing practices of the meaning of everyday life."[97]

[95] Ibid., 11.
[96] Ibid., 22.
[97] Ibid., 150.

Islamist groups take advantage of their social connections but are often forced into this reliance on social networks by the restrictions placed on them by the government, such as in the case of the Salafis of Jordan. "Islamists explicitly acknowledge that the embedded social structure serves as a constraint on their activities and as a source of strength. The point is that opposition leaders work within this social structure, rather than trying to dismantle it. One commented, 'We must work within this framework until we have domination, then we will work for the bigger picture.'"[98] Overall, one can say that Islamist movements in Jordan advocate for democracy by placing their emphasis on the power of social networks, even if these networks are the only spaces in which they have been allowed to function.

Another aspect of Islamic activism consists of Islamic non-governmental organizations, which utilize more institutionalized approaches for social and political reform, since they have been allowed to operate in such spaces by the government. "The volunteers at these organizations are predominantly moderate Muslims driven by socioeconomic concerns for their communities. They do not represent an ideological opposition movement and do not articulate a counter discourse of Islam that could serve as the basis of a fundamental critique of the state or regime."[99] It is because of their moderation that they have been allowed to utilize existing institutional frameworks to serve their communities. Much of their work still relies on social networks, but it is not only relegated to that sphere. Instead, it uses institutional means to complement the services provided by the government by providing similar services such as healthcare and education to demographic groups that are often neglected by the government.

However, the makeup of Islamic NGOs reflects a patriarchal system that makes these organizations sometimes antithetical to democracy. Islamic organizations in Jordan and

[98] Ibid., 260.
[99] Ibid., 92.

throughout the Middle East are largely male-dominated. "The dominance of men in Islamic NGOs reflects two factors. First, the Islamic movement itself is male-dominated. There are women involved, but they are often part of separate 'women's auxiliaries' or branches. . . Second, the absence of women in Islamic NGOs reflects Islamist values of gender segregation, which separates men and women and typically places women in less public roles."[100] It is easy to view this phenomenon with a kind of Western exceptionalism when, in fact, the organizations discussed in the previous chapters are also male-dominated, though perhaps to a lesser extent. However, Islamist gender disparity is important to recognize because it differs from the gender makeup of some other Jordanian organizations, whose leaders are women and whose goals are to improve women's rights in the Kingdom.

Islamic NGOs are also led by an older generation than the one that spearheaded the Arab Spring or any of the major protests in Jordan since then. "The majority of Islamic NGO volunteers are between forty and sixty years old; a generation which more critical groups argue has become increasingly moderate over the years. This generational composition is an important issue for NGO members given that the majority of the Jordanian population is less than eighteen years old."[101] This dimension of Islamic activism in Jordan represents another barrier to a truly democratic process. While these organizations may advocate for aspects of democracy such as education and freedom of speech, their internal processes are not truly democratic because they hinder the participation of certain groups, and therefore limit the foundations of the democratic civil society that they may build through their efforts. The work of secular Jordanian organizations will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter, as they have been the focus of much of the research for this project. However, it is important to recognize the distinction

[100] Ibid., 88.
[101] Ibid., 89.

between explicitly religious organizations and those that are secular but are still influenced by religious principles. Explicitly religious organizations tend to display this difference at the level of leadership and the involvement of men versus women because they tend to work in sectors where government services are not adequate or simply do not reach. Secular organizations, on the other hand, often work in more explicitly political arenas and do not have as great a difference in the level of involvement of men and women.

Another vital sector of democracy promotion in Jordan is that of popular protest movements. These protest movements, often led by workers' unions, have had the largest impact on the state of democracy in the Kingdom as they have challenged the regime's very legitimacy rather than promoting that legitimacy by submitting to the government's restrictions. For example, the protests in 1989 over economic austerity measures instituted at the recommendation of the IMF took over the country and threatened the very future of the regime. These protests spurred on the end of Martial Law and the most significant democratic reforms the country had ever seen. In 2012, protests also erupted against the Monarchy as part of Jordan's Arab Spring. To respond to these demands, the King held parliamentary elections two years early and promised to consult with Parliament over the choice of the Prime Minister for the first time in the history of Jordan's Parliament. While these democratic reforms were not radical changes in the grand scheme of things, they were important steps toward the creation of a more democratic system. In 2018, protests led by 30 trade unions erupted in response to Prime Minister Hani Mulki submitting a new tax law to Parliament in order to implement a new round of IMF austerity measures. Thousands of protesters gathered around the Fourth Circle in Amman outside of the Prime Minister's office. To respond to these protests, King Abdullah agreed to postpone the price hikes that were a part of the austerity measures, costing the government $20 million,

and Prime Minister Mulki resigned. Again, these protests forced the government's hand in making serious concessions in order to preserve the regime. These kinds of popular movements, while the most radical and risky approach to democracy building, have had the most material impact on the state of Jordan's democracy.

The next group of Jordanian democracy-promoting groups are Jordanian non-governmental organizations. While they have not produced the kind of changes in Jordanian politics as popular protests over the years, they provide an important parallel to the democracy promotion work being done in the country by the United States. Many Jordanian organizations publish their activities on public Facebook pages in order to gain a larger audience and organize their activities. They are a central focus of this project because their presence on social media makes their activities more accessible than those of other groups. While there is no way to know if the posts that they publish on their Facebook pages are a complete picture of the activities that they perform on a daily basis, it is a valuable starting point for accessing their contribution to democracy promotion in Jordanian society. Social media has proven to be a vital tool for social organizing in Jordan following the Arab Spring. In addition, it reveals these organizations' understanding of themselves as they communicate their message to their communities. Not only does this highlight an important aspect of their identity, but it also provides an important contrast to the work of U.S.-based NGOs. This project has studied U.S.-based organizations through a similar process of online observation. While U.S. NGOs have more robust formal websites than Jordanian ones, and therefore do not have to rely on social media to share their work and goals, they engage in the same process of self-reflection that Jordanian organizations undergo when they decide what parts of themselves to highlight as they turn to the internet to gain legitimacy.

Before discussing the work and goals of these organizations, it is important to recall the political environment in which they work. Jordanian NGOs are subject to a host of bureaucratic restrictions that have been discussed in the previous chapters. Not only do they have to appeal to the government to form an official organization, but all of their activities and spending habits are subject to government oversight. According to the Brookings Institute, they are also subject to the vague language used by the government to oversee and exert veto power over their initiatives:

> One concern is that the [government] criminalizes 'support through actions or financing of terrorism either directly or indirectly' but does not stipulate that an accused knew or intended that their action or financial contribution would assist terrorism. This raises the possibility that an individual who donates money innocently or otherwise assists what they believe to be a charitable organization, but is actually a 'front' organization assisting terrorism, could be prosecuted under the act.[102]

This vague language and excessive concern for security reveals both the government's concern for self-preservation and the way in which it is able to take advantage of this concern to preserve the regime's political dominance. However, despite these restrictions, Jordanian NGOs receive a number of privileges based on their legal status. According to the Civic Freedom Monitor, "The *Income Tax Law* (Law 75 of 1985) makes the income of societies and other social entities eligible for tax exemption. It allows for the income of any religious, charitable, cultural, educational, sports, and health organizations with public benefit purposes to be tax-exempt as well. Societies must apply to the Income Tax Department requesting tax-exempt status."[103] This tax-exemption status goes a long way in a country with a poor economy and high rate of

[102] Jarrah. "Civil Society and Public Freedom in Jordan," 7.
[103] "Civic Freedom Monitor Addresses Civil Society's Challenges." Democracy Digest, March 4, 2019. https://www.demdigest.org/civic-freedom-monitor-addresses-civil-societys-challenges/.

unemployment. It gives NGOs important financial freedom, which in turn draws professionals to work in the NGO and non-profit sector.

Jordanian civil society is flooded with NGOs. Perhaps this is a product of the lack of government services provided to the population due to the country's poor resources. Perhaps it also results from the growth of civil society following the liberalization measures of 1989. Perhaps it is merely a reflection of the nature of Jordanian culture, which supports collective engagement. Regardless of its roots, however, the sheer number of NGOs has ironically done little to produce meaningful democratic reforms. "Although the number of non-governmental organizations in Jordan doubled between 1989 and 2005, the NGOs remained apolitical, and did very little to further political freedoms . . . state repression takes the form of governmental interference - often via the security services - in the process of electing NGO leadership and building membership."[104] While Jordanian organizations navigate around governmental interferences with tactics such as working with a particular minister known to look favorably on civil societies, they are still tightly bound by the system of restrictions. As Curtis Ryan summarizes, "While there is a picture of political liberalization in Jordan, NGOs in fact have very little influence in the political sphere. The existence of a large civic sector is therefore a facade of political liberalization for a regime struggling to overcome an economic crisis. Thus, the government has used this cover of political liberalization and NGO expansion as a survival strategy."[105]

This picture of the limited influence of NGOs in Jordan is grim. However, while it is true that their efforts have not resulted in the kind of legislative reforms that resulted from the waves of political protests over the years, their work represents an essential part of any democratic

[104] Jarrah. "Civil Society and Public Freedom in Jordan," 7.
[105] Ibid., 10.

future of Jordan because it promotes the creation of civil society. The process of organization makes their goals more articulate and focused than the goals of the protests in the country. They can be seen to represent the disparate visions of democracy for Jordan as they advocate for different causes that are essential to a democratic future. They also provide a sense of the complexity of the Jordanian political will. For example, some NGOs are vocally pro-monarchy, while others are silent on the issue. Some focus on judicial reform while others focus on voter mobilization.

The following portion of this chapter will review the work of several civil society organizations that promote important aspects of democracy in Jordan. The information about these organizations came from a Jordanian-run database called the Guide to Civil Society Organizations in Jordan, which contains basic details about all organizations registered in Jordan. In addition, I searched for organizations related to democracy promotion on social media and throughout the Jordanian media in general. Some organizations did not have significant social media presence. It is unclear how this situation reflects on the overall picture of the work of civil society organizations in Jordan, but there were no significant differences in the goals of the organizations without social media presence (as listed in the Guide to Civil Society Organizations in Jordan database) compared with the goals of those with social media presence. Overall, I researched forty different organizations through this process, of which I will review six that reflect the different aspects of democracy-building in Jordan and which have the largest internet presence. The majority of the posts on the organizations' social media pages were in Arabic, so many references to the content of those sites will either be a direct translation from the original Arabic or will be the English translation built into the "Guide to Civil Society Organizations in Jordan's website.

One important civil society organization that is doing pro-democracy work in Jordan is the Jordanian Women's Union. This organization has substantial media presence. They have their own website along with an active social media presence. According to the English version of their website, they are a "non-governmental, democratically elected organization that is committed to improving the status of women."[106] Their website also recounts their history as follows:

> The JWU was established in 1945. In 1957, martial law was declared in Jordan and all non-governmental organizations were dissolved. Thus, the JWU was forced to disband. In 1974, the organization re-emerged as the Women's Union of Jordan and continued its activities until 1981 when, once again, it was compelled to discontinue its operations. With the democratization of Jordan's parliament in 1990, the Women's Union of Jordan again resumed operation. In 1994, it adopted its present name, the Jordanian Women's Union.[107]

Their work focuses on responding to the needs of Jordanian women, who are at risk of gender-based violence, gender-based inequality, and other human rights violations.[108] The goals of the organization are as follows:

> To eliminate all types of discrimination against Jordanian women; to emphasize the role of Jordanian women in society and to empower them to practice their rights on the basis of equality, justice, and respect; to enhance and encourage Jordanian women's participation in public life; to eliminate legal, cultural, and political illiteracy among Jordanian women; to eliminate all legal, economic, social, and cultural barriers against women, in accordance with the human rights conventions signed by the Jordanian government; to network and cooperate with other Arab women's organizations, with a specific focus on the rights of Palestinian and Arab women; to establish and maintain solidarity with international women's rights movements.[109]

In order to pursue these goals, they run several programs - a hotline, a women's shelter, a child guest house, a legal awareness program, and a health program, among others. In addition to

---

[106] "Jordanian Women's Union ::. Home." Accessed March 16, 2020. http://jwu.org.jo/Home.aspx?lng=1.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid.

these programs, they draft legislation on issues that they deem to be critical for the promotion of women's rights and other political issues. For example, in 2010, they drafted a parliamentary election law in order to change the articles of the law that deprive Jordanians of the right to choose their representatives, focusing on the articles that specifically affected women's participation in elections. The organization chose a team of activists, lawyers, and representatives from other human rights organizations to draft this legislation. They held training sessions on parliamentary procedures and electoral procedures in order for these activists to be well-versed in the inner workings of Parliament so that they could best advocate for electoral reform. According to their records, twenty-five organizations supported their vision of electoral reform, one hundred organizations signed the petition, five hundred women were trained in electoral and parliamentary processes, and five hundred women were expected to begin participating in electoral politics.[110] While their website does not recount the results of these efforts, this project is indicative of their goals and their methods of coalition building.

Another of their broader projects focuses on the issue of why certain communities, and women in particular, elected candidates who did not work in the best interests of their communities. According to their website, the goals of the project are to "identify the obstacles that prevent Jordanians from choosing their best representative, focusing on the materials that constitute an obstacle to women's participation in the elections, increasing the participation of women in the elections as voters and candidates, and supporting and training women candidates to formulate electoral programs that aim at achieving more justice for women."[111] The project also focuses on addressing the tribalism that influences Jordan's electoral politics. In order to pursue these goals, the group spearheaded three initiatives: a training program to train lawyers

[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.

and activists on how to train others in parliamentary politics and voter mobilization, a training program for female political candidates on how to best manage their campaigns, and a conference during which the group worked with other organizations to draft an amendment to the electoral law. The organization also made an important statement on the meaning of democracy in response to legislation being proposed by the House of Representatives. They critiqued the House's idea that elections are enough to create a democratic system. They stated that "the democratic system, of course, means much more than just periodic elections, and the elections are not an end in themselves, but rather a necessary and important step to democratizing societies . . . the democratic system includes the right to participation in political life and the right to hold high office without discrimination."[112] Overall, the organization consists of a team of lawyers and activists that seriously engage with the state of Jordan's civil society by identifying problems with Jordan's electoral law and the barriers to electing the best possible candidates and addressing those problems with a series of training programs and the drafting of electoral laws.

Another organization promoting democracy in Jordan is Al-Marsad Capacity Building. They function similarly to the Jordanian Women's Union in that their work focuses on professional training in order to develop democratic institutions. Their work focuses on the legal field and civil society in general. According to the civil society organization database, their efforts include the following: providing training for citizens and individuals in the legal field; holding workshops, courses, and training aimed at developing and raising awareness of civil society from a legal and environmental aspect; holding training courses in human rights within democratic concepts; training in the field of good governance and promoting the principles of integrity, transparency, justice, and tolerance; promoting legal awareness of civil society and

[112] Ibid.

active participation of young people in political action.[113] They do not have a very active social media presence since their Facebook page mostly serves as a platform to advertise job openings at the organization. However, even though it is difficult to discern what exactly the organization does to work towards the goals listed above, the very publication of these goals reflects a vision for democracy that focuses on governance and the integrity of the law.

The Jordanian Jurists Association provides another look at democracy promotion in the Kingdom that focuses on legal integrity. According to the civil society database, the group was established in 1978, and its goals are to take care of the Arab Islamic Law to the widest extent, participate with Arab human rights organizations in the development and unification of law in Arab countries, encourage studies in various branches of law, develop the spirit of legal research, protect human rights in the Kingdom, and provide legal guarantees for human rights. The group is composed of 500 jurists, who convene to discuss pressing legal issues. For example, on October 19, 2019, they convened to discuss their response to U.S. President Donald Trump's "Deal of the Century," which proposed a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by the relegation of land and resources to Israel in return for a sovereign Palestinian state devoid of military capacity. Most of the group's social media activity serves to update their followers on relevant news such as tax reforms or news about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They also post important take-aways and topics of discussion from their annual conferences. This organization represents a highly institutionalized and structured aspect of democratic reform in Jordan. For example, it holds formal elections for all of their board members and has structured meetings that follow formal rules of debate. It relies on a strict organizational hierarchy and highly educated members to inform their followers of relatively complicated issues, such as Jordanian tax reform,

[113] "Almersad for Capacity Building." المرصاد لبناء القدرات, Civil Society Organizations in Jordan, Phenix Center for Economics and Informatics Studies. Accessed March 16, 2020.

while advocating for human rights through their high-profile status as an organization of jurists. In this way, it represents a highly structured portion of Jordan's civil society organizations that requires certain levels of education and structures its leadership like a governmental body.

The Aman Society for Civil Society Development takes a different approach to democracy building: it interacts in a more hands-on way with the population than the Jordanian Jurists Association. According to the civil society database, its goals are as follows: to hold conferences, seminars, and forums in fields concerned with civil society issues; to support the issues of civil society centers (such as fundraising, maintaining access to resources, supporting personnel, etc.); provide awareness and education programs for members of civil society and inform them of their civil and political rights; educate members of society and clarify the importance of participation in political life to build a healthy society; monitor parliamentary, municipal, university, and youth club elections; and activate the role of women in political life through training courses, seminars, and advertisements. Their work overlaps with that of the Jordanian Women's Association and Al-Marsad Capacity Building. In addition to the work of these two organizations, the Aman Society for Civil Society Development also monitored the elections of 2013. Based on their Facebook page, they have invited international election observers to speak at local forums on the essential aspects of free and fair elections. They also post information about the locations and dates of municipal elections, along with information about their other initiatives. Based on their Facebook page and the civil society database, it seems that much of their work involves direct interaction with both urban and rural communities through outreach programs or simply speaking to people in the street about local elections. This is in direct contrast to the work of the Jurists Association, which is more institutionalized and

relies on forums and formal publications rather than face-to-face interactions with the population.

The National Center for Civil Protection, another Amman-based pro-democracy organization, promotes parts of the democratic process by monitoring the work of public institutions while also providing for communities in need when government services do not do so. Based on the civil society database, they provide tools for supervision, research, investigation, studies, receipt of complaints, monitoring, follow-up violations and mistakes committed by government institutions and security services, or prisons and other public or private institutions; [they] work to remove the damage to all parties in the service of the public interest; they strive to build a society of justice and equality; and they promote transparency, human freedom, and dignity in addition to the dissemination of human rights principles and culture.[114] The organization has 700 members, though it is unclear how many of them play an active role in the group. According to their website, they are an independent body dedicated to enhancing governmental transparency, human freedom and dignity, and to spread the principle and culture of human rights through seminars and legal workshops. In terms of the method of holding workshops to promote community awareness of human rights issues, their work overlaps that of the organizations discussed previously. They emphasize the importance of public freedoms such as freedom of the press and often release public statements condemning the government's limitations of these freedoms. For example, they recently addressed a public statement to the government to demand the release of journalists that had been arrested by the secret service. The group also called public attention to the issue of polluted water at a local school. In this way, their work overlaps with that of the Jordanian Women's Association in that it

[114] "National Center for Civil Protection." المركز الوطني للحماية المدنية, Civil Society Organizations in Jordan, Phenix Center for Economics and Informatics Studies. Accessed March 16, 2020.

directly addresses the government by drafting public documents. Most of their social media presence is on their Facebook page, in which they post statements that confirm the right to work with dignity, to be free from injustice, to protest against the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem and the West Bank, to be free from domestic violence, etc. This group reflects a common trend of Jordanian NGOs - to make public statements about human rights and to hold training workshops to train people about their rights.

The last organization to be mentioned in this discussion is Bayt al Salam Association for Rights and Freedoms, an organization that focuses on promoting women's rights while maintaining a very pro-Hashemite political stance. For example, one of their longest public statements discusses the ways in which the Hashemite Dynasty has protected Palestinian interests both in Palestine and in Jordan and also protects Islamic interests by overseeing the holy places in Jerusalem. The organization's goals are to protect and promote women's issues and democratically empower them, protect the rights of children in all fields, and protect the human rights of asylum seekers.[115] Much of their work involves holding public forums to discuss women's problems in Jordan and to honor the work of female professionals and human rights defenders in Jordan. They also publish commentaries on bills that are under consideration in the House of Representatives. Overall, their work seems to reside mostly in workshops and public statements. Their Facebook page is dominated by photos from these workshops and forums designed to recognize women's work in Jordan.

These are just examples of the civil society organizations in Jordan that support human rights and democratic principles. They reflect the democratic process in their work through using electoral methods to choose their leadership. They support democratic initiatives such as

[115] "Bayt Al Salam Association for Rights and Freedoms." جمعية بيت السلام للحقوق والحريات, Civil Society Organizations in Jordan, Phenix Center for Economics and Informatics Studies. Accessed March 16, 2020.

providing access to education and voting to communities all around Jordan. These six organizations provide clear pictures of the civil society work being done through institutionalized channels in Jordan as they have significant social media presences and appear with detailed description in the Civil Society Organizations in Jordan database. However, there are dozens of other such organizations who actively work in Jordan, but whose initiatives are not as accessible to outside researchers such as myself because they are not extensively published on online platforms. Some of these organizations are the Hadithah Association for Democracy and Development, the Mawtani Forum for Civic Education, the Association for Vigilance Forum for Building Democracy, the Pioneers of Change Association, and the Sofraa Alensania Association for Democracy and Human Rights. These organizations have limited social media presence, but appear in the Civil Society Organizations in Jordan database alongside a summary of their goals. These goals include promoting and enhancing the participation of citizens in public life, raising citizens' awareness of the importance of participation in public life, promoting electoral participation, disseminating citizenship and civil freedoms, promoting the concepts of citizenship and human rights in society, monitoring government practices regarding democracy and human rights, and training advocacy campaigns with parliament. While these efforts are not well documented on social media platforms, their goals add to the picture of democracy building by Jordanian civil society organizations.

Overall, these organizations utilize largely formal processes like hosting forums or drafting written responses to government initiatives to promote their causes that are fundamental to democracy. The next chapter will critically discuss the nature of their work alongside other Jordanian actors mentioned in this chapter, contrasting this work to that done by American-based democracy actors in the country. Going into this chapter, it is important to keep in mind both the

constraints that force Jordanian organizations to pursue certain goals that focus on reform rather than upheaval. Additionally, it is important to note that the most widespread democratic reforms in Jordan have resulted from protests that threatened the legitimacy of the regime instead of working within its restrictive system.

Chapter 6

Conclusion: The State of Democracy Building in Jordan

This project has approached the issue of democracy promotion in Jordan through an in-depth discussion of Jordan's history, the dynamics of its civil society, and the various democracy promotion efforts coming from both inside and outside of the country. The reason for this level of depth is to conduct frank and informed analysis of the state of democracy in Jordan with a holistic understanding of exactly what has been happening in the country since its foundation and, most importantly, who holds the real power when it comes to the key issues of Jordanian democracy promotion. This groundwork covered in previous pages, while extensive, is an essential process for anyone coming from the outside to understand what is happening in the country. This project has engaged with this approach for two reasons - to be able to present a different understanding of democracy promotion work that moves beyond the realist/liberal dichotomy that often defines foreign policy and general understandings of international affairs, and also to provide greater knowledge of the conditions for a just and productive foreign policy on the part of the United States.

The United States, through its various aid efforts, exerts major influence on Jordan's economy and political system and thus the legitimacy of its monarchy as well. Jordan needs the United States' aid to keep its economy afloat, its military trained, and its refugee population docile. While the U.S. views itself as the "leader of the Free World," it does not give aid out of the goodness of its heart. Jordan is vital to U.S. interests because of its relative political stability and moderation. Unlike the Saudi-U.S. partnership, which is fundamentally economic, the

Jordanian-U.S. partnership is based on the moderate ideology of the Hashemite Dynasty, their long history of cooperation with the West, and the security benefits that the U.S. gains from having a dedicated partner in the Middle East apart from Israel. Jordan has also played a historically important role in the United States' struggles against Communism and, later, Islamic terrorism.

According to research conducted in this project on the effect of foreign aid on the relationship between the United States and Jordan, one thing is clear: the United States maintains significant influence over the political and economic choices that the Hashemite Dynasty makes, since their legitimacy rests on the stability of Jordan's economy, which is largely supported by U.S. aid. However, despite this power, U.S. democracy promotion efforts in Jordan have never pushed back against Jordan's fundamentally undemocratic system of government, but rather have focused on "empowering" the groups functioning within Jordan's weak civil society without advocating for real, structural change. The United States funnels billions of dollars into supporting Jordan's military, providing aid to its refugee population, stabilizing its economy, and empowering its civil society. This is just enough to moderately increase democratic practices and appease a democracy-hungry population without sparking any major disturbances.

In general, the aid policy of the United States' towards Jordan reflects the overall goal of the U.S.-Jordanian partnership: maintain stability and capitalize on this stability to expand this influence in the Middle East region. Although the promotion of democracy is a noble goal and advances U.S. interests by bolstering its image of being the "leader of the Free World," too much democracy building would require an overhaul of a Jordanian political system that already functions in the interest of the United States. It is no surprise, then, that U.S. democracy promotion efforts follow the trends of the Middle East Partnership Initiative, whose goal is to

support civil society in the region, but which allocate 70% of its funds to training government officials to work within governmental systems that have already benefited the United States. It is also no surprise that other programs coming out of the United States promote issues of empowering women to vote, training individuals to advocate for human rights, monitoring elections, or supporting free press. All of these issues are worthwhile and vital to any democratic system, but they alone are not sufficient conditions for the establishment of democracy. Instead, such initiatives will only democratize the relatively limited sectors in which they function. In order for there to be a fully democratic government, the system itself must be democratized. While a strong and free civil society is necessary for a democratic system, the presence of this kind of civil society alone is not sufficient for democracy. True democracy must come from broader reform efforts that allow the people to decide their form of government for themselves and what level of direct or indirect representation they wish to have. This is clearly not the case in Jordan.

This leaves the question of whether this United States' relationship with Jordan falls under the Realist, Liberalist, or Constructivist umbrella in International Political Theory. Based on all of these observations, the United States uses Liberal rhetoric, arguing that the expansion of democracy is a crucial step towards ensuring international peace and cooperation. However, this rhetoric seems to be a front for a much more Realist strategy to support governments that support the United States and increase our security in a volatile region. The United States has the resources to make more structural changes in Jordan to make the country more democratic. Instead, the U.S. invests large amounts of its resources into military cooperation rather than democratic efforts. Perhaps ironically, this project has taken a Constructivist view the relationship between the two countries by studying them as complicated entities that are the

product of their histories, cultures, and internal balances of power rather than unitary actors struggling for their own security. By taking this approach to this topic, this project has allowed for a more nuanced understanding of the realities that have led to a Realist relationship between the United States and Jordan that is ultimately based on their respective security.

As noted previously in this thesis, the context of Jordanian democracy building is complex, since it encompasses the different visions of groups and individuals who have very different opinions about the future of Jordan. Some of the "democracy work" in the country comes from groups that never utter the word democracy but rather support initiatives such as education, which are important aspects of democracy-building. There is even the sense that the conversation around democracy in Jordan is one that is encouraged by the government to distract the public away from conversations about economic policy. This reflects the trend of the government to make political concessions instead of meeting economic demands time, such as when it faced major popular protests between the years 1989 and 2016. However, it would not be accurate to conclude from this that democracy is not foremost in the minds of the Jordanian population. In 2011 Jordan experienced its own Arab Spring, which was, in part, motivated by political unrest in favor of stronger democratic institutions. Many of the organizations discussed in the previous chapter openly advocate for democracy, and political parties have boycotted elections for being unfair and, thus, undemocratic. These organizations publish policy papers and provisional legal codes in order to give themselves more control over the political realities of the country. Popular protests have openly challenged the authority of the monarchy and have called for the removal of prime ministers whose policies do not reflect the best interests of the people.

Overall, there is no clear vision of the kind of democracy that the Jordanian population wants. The best way to get a good idea of this vision would be to turn to civil society, but the

Jordanian civil society is so constricted that it is difficult to tell the extent to which the goals of civil society groups are watered down in response to these political restrictions. However, it is still important to take these goals seriously. As they have been expressed through social media and online databases, these goals are to work within the confines set for them by the government to expand access to the existing civil society institutions in Jordan and to formulate more just legislation, while refraining from advocating for sweeping structural change. Consequently, one can conclude that their real purpose is to expand the access of the existing democratic institutions rather than to overhaul the system in order to expand democracy itself.

This purpose conflicts with the stated goals of grassroots movements in Jordan that have repeatedly protested the government's economic policies. These protests have challenged the monarchy and threatened more sweeping changes of the system. However, their demands have been tempered by the government concessions given in response to them. They have also been tempered by the very visible political and economic effects of other protests throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Jordanian protesters have experienced the aftermath of the Syrian Civil War by being forced to deal with the effects of the influx of Syrian refugees into the country. They have seen the failure of the Arab Spring protests across the region and the consequences of such unrest. Just like civil society organizations, the demands for political reform by grassroots movements have been tempered by such circumstances. However, despite these setbacks, popular movements have involved the largest portion of Jordan's population over the years and have made the most public demands for the expansion of the democratic portion of the Jordanian political system. This is an indication of a larger desire for democratic reform, which perhaps has not been openly voiced because of all the restrictions mentioned in the previous chapters.

Despite the complicated state of the prospects for democracy in Jordan, it is still important to compare the democracy work being done by Jordanian actors with that done by American organizations. In many ways, the work of U.S. democracy initiatives mimics the work of Jordanian civil society organizations. For example, virtually all of the U.S.-based initiatives and organizations emphasized empowering women to participate more fully in civil society. This is also a prominent goal of Jordanian organizations such as the Jordanian Women's Union. American organizations often conduct election monitoring projects and publish recommendations to the Jordanian government, which parallel the policies that Jordanian organizations such as the Jordanian Women's Union draft and send to parliament. However, in the case of the U.S.-based organizations, it is unclear what they actually accomplish with their initiatives in a practical sense. For example, many U.S. organizations monitor elections and write recommendations for Jordan on how to conduct more fair elections. It is unclear whether they send these recommendations to the Jordanian government, to the American government, or simply leave them to be forgotten in the morass of research and data. There is no indication that Jordanian actors actually receive this information, or whether U.S.-based actors are making use of it.

Two more points are important to note in this regard. First, neither American organizations nor Jordanian civil society actors have gained significant democratic concessions from the government. This begs the question of why is the United States pouring so much money into building Jordan's democracy when these efforts have not resulted in any major concessions and when the United States already benefits from the stability of the Hashemite regime through the exercise of autocracy with a quasi-democratic veneer. Second, Jordanian democracy promotion organizations are bound by stringent restrictions that control their very existence,

activities, and stated goals. How then can we even compare the work of U.S. and Jordanian organizations when U.S. organizations are not subject to the same restrictions? This also raises the question of moral jurisdiction and what right the United States has to expand its democracy building in Jordan in the first place, although this is a discussion for another time. The goal of the present project is not to argue the relative morality of democracy building, but rather to present the intricacies of Jordan's political system and the place that democracy building takes in that system.

In his article "The Impact of US Aid Policy on Democracy and Political Reform in Jordan and Other Arab Countries," Professor Abdel Mahdi Alsoudi of Jordan University comments on the Jordanian response to U.S. democracy-building efforts. As a Jordanian scholar, his perspective reflects a vital aspect of democracy building that is often overlooked: the opinions of the receiving population and, particularly, that population's most highly educated representatives. He explains that in general, Arab activists and political leaders throughout the Middle East region have "reacted with suspicion to Washington's attempt to recast itself as a champion of democracy and as the friend of all Arab reformers . . . Long-standing Arab suspicion of U.S. motives in the region was only exacerbated by the administration's unconditional support for Israel and later the occupation of Iraq on false ground."[116] This negative reaction is no surprise - the United States' continued involvement in Iraq as part of the War on Terror presents a grim picture of democracy-building. Alsoudi continues his commentary by focusing on the Jordanian responses: "Mustapha Al-Sayyed argues that US aid is not only ineffective but that some part of the Arab public does not see that aid as a sign of US commitment to promote democracy: rather they look at it as instrument for furthering US foreign

[116] Abdelmahdi Alsoudi. "US Aid Policy to the Arab World: The Impact of US Aid Policy on Democracy and Political Reform in the Arab World," 25.

policy goals."[117] He quotes another notable response to these efforts, which states, "At the unofficial level, the initial reaction in the Arab world to MEPI was largely negative, primarily in the Arab press. Jihad al-Khazin wrote that "there is an insult here, which I do not believe Powell intends. This sum [$29 million] means that only 10 cents will be spent on every Arab man, woman, and child to teach them democracy."[118]

These opinions raise two fundamental questions about U.S. democracy building in Jordan. First, if the United States is truly trying to promote democracy in Jordan, why is it pouring money into supporting the existing system instead of leveraging its influence over the government to expand the country's democratic system rather than just expanding access to the minimal form of democracy that exists today? The way things are currently going, it appears that these efforts merely serve U.S. interests in supporting the Hashemite regime while supporting its efforts to appear nominally democratic in order to prevent a more serious Arab Spring than occurred in the past. Second, if the U.S. is truly trying to promote democracy in Jordan, then why is it investing so much money in Jordan's military instead of investing these funds to have more of an impact on Jordan's democracy than the 10 cents for every person allocated by the MEPI and other such programs?

Overall, there is an important difference between what the United States says that it wants to do in Jordan and what it is actually is doing. American democracy building efforts have done little to expand Jordan's democracy, but instead have mirrored the efforts of Jordanian organizations to incrementally expand access to democracy while still propping up the Hashemite monarchy. However, the United States is in a tricky political position when it comes to democracy building. As a foreign entity, how can it acknowledge and also take into account

[117] Ibid., 26.
[118] Ibid., 22.

that the most successful democracy building strategy in Jordan has been popular protests? To add another layer to the complexity of this problem, these protests were necessary because of the military and security strength of the Hashemite regime and the slow rate of democratic progress. In many ways, this status quo was created by foreign powers like the United States, through nominal democracy building efforts that in effect propped up the power of the regime in order to secure support for non-democratic initiatives such as anti-terrorism efforts, the creation of to security networks, and attempts to attain regional hegemony. Once again we must ask: Why does the United States dedicate so many resources to promote democracy when these efforts, in fact, have strengthened the position of the regime and have pushed democratic movements further away from the creation of an organized civil society and closer to mass protests and, perhaps one day, armed revolt? Given the current situation, one is led to two possible conclusions: Either the United States is unaware of the effects of its initiatives, or it never had any intention to truly promote democracy in Jordan if there was a danger that it might upset the stability of a friendly monarchy.

Bibliography

"About the National Endowment for Democracy." NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.ned.org/about/.

Allison, Robert. *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World, 1776-1815*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014.

"Almersad for Capacity Building." المرصاد لبناء القدرات, Civil Society Organizations in Jordan, Phenix Center for Economics and Informatics Studies. Accessed March 16, 2020. http://www.civilsociety-jo.net/en/organization/52179/المرصاد-لبناء-القدرات.

Alsoudi, Abdelmahdi. "US Aid Policy to the Arab World: The Impact of US Aid Policy on Democracy and Political Reform in the Arab World." *The International Journal of the Humanities: Annual Review* 4, no. 10 (2007): 113–26. https://doi.org/10.18848/1447-9508/cgp/v04i10/42411.

Ashton, Nigel. *King Hussein of Jordan: A Political Life*. (Yale University Press, 2008).

"Bayt Al Salam Association for Rights and Freedoms." جمعية بيت السلام للحقوق والحريات, Civil Society Organizations in Jordan, Phenix Center for Economics and Informatics Studies. Accessed March 16, 2020. http://www.civilsociety-jo.net/en/organization/21894/جمعية-بيت-السلام-للحقوق-والحريات.

"Civic Freedom Monitor Addresses Civil Society's Challenges." Democracy Digest, March 4, 2019. https://www.demdigest.org/civic-freedom-monitor-addresses-civil-societys-challenges/.

Carapico, Sheila. "Foreign Aid for Promoting Democracy in the Arab World." *Middle East Journal* 56, no. 3 (2002): 379-395.

Doumi, Khair Bani. "Public Freedoms in the Jordanian Constitution: Rhetorics and Realities." Journal of Mass Communication & Journalism 08, no. 04 (2018). https://doi.org/10.4172/2165-7912.1000384.

"Home - ICNL The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law." ICNL. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.icnl.org/.

Jarrah, Sameer. "Civil Society and Public Freedom in Jordan: The Path of Democratic Reform." Brookings. The Saban Center for Middle East Policy at The Brookings Institution, July 28, 2016. https://www.brookings.edu/research/civil-society-and-public-freedom-in-jordan-the-path-of-democratic-reform/.

"Jordan 2018." NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.ned.org/region/middle-east-and-northern-africa/jordan-2018-2/.

"Jordan: Background and U.S. Relations." EveryCRSReport.com. Congressional Research Service, December 4, 2019. https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL33546.html.

"Jordan - ICNL The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law." ICNL. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.icnl.org/.

"Jordanian Women's Union ::. Home." . Accessed March 16, 2020. http://jwu.org.jo/Home.aspx?lng=1."Jordanian Women's Union ::. Home." . Accessed March 16, 2020. http://jwu.org.jo/Home.aspx?lng=1.

Kaye, Dalia Dassa., Frederick Wehrey, Audra Grant, and Dale Stahl. *More Freedom, Less Terror?: Liberalization and Political Violence in the Arab World*. Rand Corporation, 2008.

Morgenthau, Hans J., and Kenneth W. Thompson. *Politics among Nations: the Struggle for Power and Peace*. (New Delhi: Kalyani Publishers, 2018).

"National Center for Civil Protection." المركز الوطني للحماية المدنية, Civil Society Organizations in Jordan, Phenix Center for Economics and Informatics Studies. Accessed March 16, 2020. http://www.civilsociety-jo.net/en/organization/22015/المركز-الوطني-للحماية-المدنية.

"National Democratic Institute." National Democratic Institute. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.ndi.org/.

"Our Work." U.S. Agency for International Development. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.usaid.gov/.

Robins, Philip. *A History of Jordan*. (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

Ryan, Curtis R. "Identity Politics, Reform, and Protest in Jordan." *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 11, no. 3 (December 15, 2011): 564–78. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-9469.2011.01135.x.

Ryan, Curtis R. *Jordan and the Arab Uprisings: Regime Survival and Politics beyond the State*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018.

Ryan, Curtis. "Political Opposition and Reform Coalitions in Jordan." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 38, No. 3 (December, 2011): 367-390.

Schmid, Dorothee, and Fares Braizat. "The Adaptation of EU and US Democracy Promotion Programmes to the Local Political Context in Jordan and Palestine and their Relevance to Grand Geopolitical Designs." *EuroMesco* 50 (October, 2006): 3-24.

Sharp, Jeremy. "U.S. Democracy Promotion Policy in the Middle East: The Islamist Dilemma." CRS Report for Congress, June 15, 2006. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235060576_US_Democracy_Promotion_Policy_in_the_Middle_East_The_Islamist_Dilemma.

"The Covenant of the League of Nations." Avalon Project. Yale Law School . Accessed March 10, 2020. https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/leagcov.asp.

U.S. Department of State Archive. U.S. Department of State, January 20, 2009. https://2001-2009.state.gov/t/pm/65533.htm.

Walt, Stephen M. "International Relations: One World, Many Theories." *Foreign Policy*, no. 110 (1998): 29–46. https://doi.org/10.2307/1149275.

"What We Do." International Republican Institute. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.iri.org/what-we-do.

"What We Do." U.S. Agency for International Development. Accessed March 14, 2020. https://www.usaid.gov/.

Wiktorowicz, Quintan. "Civil Society as Social Control: State Power in Jordan." *Comparative Politics* 33, no. 1 (October 2000): 43–61. https://doi.org/10.2307/422423.

Wiktorowicz, Quintan. The Management of Islamic Activism: Salafis, the Muslim Brotherhood, and State Power in Jordan. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002.

Yerkes, Sarah E., and Tamara Cofman Wittes. "The Middle East Partnership Initiative: Progress, Problems, and Prospects." Brookings, July 28, 2016. https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-middle-east-partnership-initiative-progress-problems-and-prospects/.