

The Jordanian Polices toward the Political Life in Jerusalem “1948-1967”

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Abstract

This thesis studies the Jordanian policy towards political life in Jerusalem during the Jordanian rule which started following the *Nakba* of 1948 and ended following the *Naksa* of 1967. While this period is relatively short, it is rich with political events.

The first chapter of the study explores the political life in Jerusalem before 1948 and presents the role of Jordan and the relation of the Hashemite family with Jerusalem before the *Nakba*. It primarily focuses on the ambitions of King Abd Allah to annex Palestine or a part of Palestine, including Jerusalem, to a united Arab kingdom under his rule. It also studies the relations between Jordan, the Zionist leadership and the British government. The resulting political situation created a gap between the Jordanian official position and the Palestinian and Jordanian popular positions, contributing to a conflict between the leaderships over control and government.

The development of the Jordanian Palestinian relations is closely connected to the city of Jerusalem, which represented the capital of the Palestinian political leadership. Before 1948, Palestinian political leadership was founded on national and religious grounds. The leadership was headed by al-Hajj Amin al-Husseini, chairman of the Supreme Islamic Council and the Arab Higher Committee, and the principal supporter of Islamic parties. He chose to ally himself with Germany in a time where the opposition led by the Nashashibi family chose an alliance with Great Britain and Jordan. Palestinian political parties at the time were thus in their majority tribal based and elitist. Their effective political (the Mufti) role ended following the exile of the Mufti and the acceleration of the events leading to the *Nakba*.

Jordan participated to the events of the *Nakba* through its alliance with Great Britain and the realization of the vision of Prince Abd Allah who quickly turned from Prince to King.

General anger prevailed following the *Nakba* defeat despite the efforts of King Abd Allah to protect Jerusalem and maintain the old city under his rule. Following the *Nakba*, King Abd Allah worked on uniting the eastern and western banks into one kingdom. To reach this goal, he used members of the Palestinian elite, allied with the Jordanian government, and the organization of conferences calling on the king to unite the two banks, most importantly the Jericho conference. This resulted in the annexation of the area despite local, Arab and international opposition, which culminated with the assassination of King Abd Allah in Jerusalem in 1951.

A transitional period ensued, during and following which there was an effective British control over the Jordanian government through the presence of a large number of British officers, the most famous being an officer known as Glubb Pasha (Sir John Bagot Glubb).

This transitional period ended with the accession of King Hussein to the throne, following which began a new period during which the King's personality known for his strength and intelligence developed. Following a few years of the beginning of his rule, he worked on Arabizing his army and the expulsion of British officers, creating an alliance with the United States of America and declaring his strong opposition to both communism and nationalism. This therefore is what transpired in the political life in Jerusalem and other areas under the Jordanian rule.

In the mid 50's, King Hussein worked on expanding political freedoms and allowed parties to work openly. He however strongly combated these parties as soon as he felt that he started losing control over the rule, most significantly following the creation of a national government led by al-Nabulsi, which was later known as the "Palace coup". Jerusalem constituted an important part of the general political life, whether in the everyday life or in the context of exceptional events. The parties which were created in Jerusalem after the *Nakba* were ideological parties, different in nature from the parties which dominated before the *Nakba* or had poor presence on the political stage. For many reasons, Jerusalem thus played a major role in the lives of the leaders of the political parties and their political activities.

The third part studies the political life and events in Jerusalem during this period. The chapter studies the variety of political parties, the important personalities active in the political life, and the local and international relations of these parties. A shift occurred in the beginning of the 60s, when, in the years just before the *Naksa*, a transformation in the Arabic and international position vis-à-vis the Palestinian cause developed through the supporting of the creation of a Palestinian body, at a time when Palestinian armed groups striving to liberate the stolen land, were enforced. This in turn diminished the burden of the Palestinian cause on Arab countries which did not want to enter a war. This was the beginning of the end of the Jordanian rule on the West Bank, and culminated with the establishment of the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Palestinian national movement for Liberation (Fateh), with leading independent Palestinian figures exercising armed struggle for the liberation of Palestine. The *Naksa* of 1967 closed this historical phase, and was the start of a new phase.