

The Education System in East Jerusalem during the Period of Jordanian Rule, 1948-1967

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Abstract

The article below deals with the Arab educational system in East Jerusalem during the period of Jordanian rule, 1948-1967. Its main aim is to examine the attempts and efforts of the Jordanian government promote a new sense of identity among the Palestinians residing in Jerusalem in order to strengthen their loyalty to the Hashemite regime that had annexed the West Bank and turned it into an inseparable part of the Kingdom of Jordan. The article shows how the educational system was inducted for the purpose of constructing this new identity through a comprehensive change in study programs and textbooks. However, in spite of this, these efforts failed and Palestinian identity was preserved and even strengthened.

Keywords: East Jerusalem, Jordan, Palestinians Education System, Palestinian Nationality, Palestinian Identity West Bank, West Jerusalem

1. Introduction

At the end of the war in 1948, the city of Jerusalem was transformed from a united city into a city divided into two parts, one Israeli and the other Jordanian. This was done despite the decision of the UN General Assembly of November 29, 1947, that the city and its surrounding enclaves were supposed to be an international area. In an additional decision of December 10, 1949, the UN General Assembly again called for the internationalization of the city. But both of these decisions were strongly rejected by the State of Israel and also by the Jordanians, and the city remained divided. Its division into two parts, East and West Jerusalem, caused serious damage and turned it into a marginal and fractured border city. With the aim of strengthening its political status as the capital of Israel, the Israeli government decided in December 1949 to relocate the Knesset to Jerusalem. This was followed by the transfer of most of the government ministries that had until then been located in Tel Aviv. These steps, and other economic and social ones, contributed to the establishment of Jerusalem as the capital city, and this status was gradually reinforced over time, leading to the growth and florescence of the western Israeli controlled part of the city in all spheres.

It is interesting that in the eastern part of the city, which had been annexed by the Jordanians as well as all the other areas of the West Bank, the situation was entirely different. This part was forced to cope with the new and difficult realities it had not known before. The connection with the western Israeli part was broken off, and the historical connection with the port of Jaffa and the coastal cities also ceased to exist. Arab Jerusalem lost a large section of its population that had once lived in the western neighborhoods of Talbieh, Bak'a and Katamon. These neighborhoods had been populated by a middle and high class society, and the damage caused to them had a detrimental effect on the economy of the city. Thus, contrary to the process of florescence and the Israeli policy of establishment and reinforcement, the very opposite occurred in the eastern part of the city, a process of decline and paralysis. The main attention of the Jordanians was focused upon their capital city, Amman, and most of the economic investments and development projects were concentrated in the eastern part of the kingdom. It should be noted that the resources of Jordan in those days were extremely limited, and the economy of the kingdom was based on the external support of a few Western and Arab states.

It is also interesting that these changes affected education as well. This was one of the important issues that greatly concerned the Jordanians after the annexation of Jerusalem and the West Bank. Their desire and especially that of King Abdullah, who aspired to form a single Palestinian-Jordanian identity, was very strong. The hope was to form a new identity that would include the populations of both banks and turn them into one

people. This was meant to fulfill the dreams of Abdullah to extend the borders of his kingdom and to annex the lands that were richer both in natural and human resources.

In order to achieve this aim, the Jordanian government realized that they had to act immediately to weaken the Palestinian identity, for which Jerusalem was an important and leading centre in the Mandate period. The Jordanian government took a series of steps for this purpose. For example, at the beginning of the annexation process, which was termed by the Jordanians as the process of unification, the historical name of the Jerusalem, Hebron and Shechem areas was replaced by a new name: the West Bank. The Mandatory borderline between Palestine and Jordan was also eliminated, the barricades on the bridges were removed, as well as the taxes, customs duties and other elements of separation that had existed since the Mandate period. With the aim of integrating the political and demographic changes that the Palestinians and Jordanians had undergone during the war and its aftermath, the Jordanians initiated a change in the educational system and in school textbooks throughout the West Bank including East Jerusalem, turning it from a Palestinian Mandatory educational system¹ into a new Jordanian educational system.²

The ruling Hashemite elite with the king at its head, wanted to cope with the realities that had been created in its relations with the Palestinian people. On one hand, the Jordanians regarded this situation as the source for new and future hopes of a kingdom that had an expanding demography and new economic horizons opening before it. On the other hand, the annexation of the West Bank included elements that threatened the Jordanian tribal identity that had existed since the founding of Emirates in 1921 until 1948. The Jordanians were now asked to cope with a new political, geographical and demographic situation. They were aware of the importance of the educational system and the building up of a new national identity, and began working in this direction immediately after the annexation of the West Bank.

It should be noted that in all the studies dealing with the construction of national identity and awareness, decisive weight is always given to the educational system. For example, Anthony Smith argues that a people or nation is defined by a number of main components such as territory, language, religion, culture, history and race.³ Anderson and Hobsbawm also think that the ruling authority and state plays a decisive role in the formation of national identity, and quite frequently it is the government and the intellectual elite that artificially imposes and constructs the commonly shared components and the sense of collectivity that it desires to promote and that serves its aims.⁴

With regard to Palestinian and Jordanian identity, it may be said that the Kingdom of Jordan after it was released from British rule was perhaps more in need than any other state in the region for promoting a unique identity. Unlike the Syrians, Lebanese, Egyptians and even the Palestinians, Jordan had not undergone the same process of modernization and cultural revival that these states had sustained during the second half of the 19th century, which had included among other things the establishment of modern educational institutions and even academic colleges, mainly in Beirut and Cairo. In these countries, the first stirrings of a local identity had already sprouted and grew stronger in time.⁵ This meant that in a post-colonial era, Jordan was in the state of searching and constructing an identity, which goes to explain its strong desire to weaken Palestinian identity in the West Bank that had become part of the Kingdom of Jordan.

It is important to note that many studies have been written on the history of Jordan in general, and on the history of the relations between Jordanians and Palestinians and their rule over the West Bank, both by Israeli⁶ and by

¹ On Palestinian education during the Mandate period, see:

Ayalon, A. (2004), *Reading Palestine: Printing and Literacy, 1900- 1948*, Austin: University of Texas

Luke, H. Keith-Roach. (1934). *The Handbook of Palestine and Trans Jordan*, London: Macmillan, pp.247-259

² Beeri, A. (1978). *Palestinians under Jordanian Rule: Three Issues*, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1978, pp. 53-55 (Hebrew).

³ Smith, A. (1986). *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 174-208.

⁴ Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, pp. 4-7.

Hobsbawm, E. (1990). *Nations and Nationalism Since 1870*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 90- 95.

⁵ Muslih, M. (1991). 'The Rise of Local Nationalism in the Arab East', in: Khalidi Rasid , Anderson Lisa, Muslih Muhammad & Simon Reeve, *The Origin of the Arab Nationalism*, New york: Colombia University Press. pp. 167-188.

⁶ Among these researchers in addition to Beeri mentioned above, we should note the following:

Nevo, Y. (1975). *Abdullah and the Arabs of the Land of Israel*, Tel Aviv: Shiloah Institute for the Research of the Middle East and African,

Palestinian and other researchers.⁷ These important studies have made an important contribution to the understanding of the period and the complex system of relationships between Jordanians and Palestinians, especially in the area of Jerusalem and the West Bank. But it is important to stress that in most cases it is the political and diplomatic aspects that are emphasized, while the issue of education has not been given sufficient attention despite its centrality in the construction a new identity and its contribution towards the achievement of the declared aims of the kingdom for the area of the West Bank after 1948.

The present article is an attempt to discuss the question of education, and to show that it was an important component in Jordanian policy in the Palestinian areas and in the Holy City between the two wars – the War of 1948 and the Six Day War 1967. The article will focus on the following questions:

- How did the process of annexation of Jerusalem and the West Bank occur?
- What was the Jordanian policy in Jerusalem? What changes did the Jordanians introduce in the educational system in comparison with the Mandate period?
- To what extent did the Jordanians succeed in carrying out their educational policy and in creating a new collective identity through the educational system?

2. The Annexation of the West Bank – Decline in the Status of Jerusalem

At the beginning of December 1948 the Jericho Conference, chaired by the Mayor of Hebron, Sheikh Mahmud Ja'bari, was held in the presence of delegations from most of the cities in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem, Ramallah, and with the participation of representatives of the military authorities, officers of the Legion, Members of the High Muslim Council, tribal chiefs, and hundreds of leaders and heads of the Palestinian people besides many others. This conference adopted a series of resolutions, the most important being the demand that King Abdullah should unite the West Bank with the Kingdom of Jordan and be recognized as the king of both banks.⁸ The resolution by these leaders and others was not only due to the friendship and historical alliance between them and the Hashemite crown, but was also the result of the total collapse of the Palestinian leadership under Hajj Amin Hussein during the 1948 war. This leadership had tried to continue ruling through all kinds of measures, especially after the establishment of the 'All Palestine Government', but it did not win the confidence of the public, some of whom regarded Abdullah as redeemer and savior, and Hajj Amin as an irresponsible adventurer.

Abdullah, who had taken this step and saw it as the historical realization of his dream, quickly dismissed his government in May 1949 and set up a new government which included a number of Palestinian ministers.⁹ In April 1950, elections were held for the newly expanded Jordanian parliament which had an equal number representatives from both banks, 20 members from each of them. In that very month, the new parliament approved the Palestinian resolution and the decision to unite the two banks. In addition, it was decided to eliminate the borderlines between Jordan and the West Bank, to dismantle the administration systems that had

(Hebrew).

Nevo, Y. (2005). *Jordan: The Search for Identity*, Tel Aviv: Open University, (Hebrew).

Milson, M. (1984). *Jordan and the West Bank*, Jerusalem: Hebrew University, (Hebrew).

Maoz, M. (1985). *The Palestinian Leadership in the West Bank*, Tel Aviv: Reshafim, (Hebrew).

⁷ Among these researchers we note the following:

Abu-Dayih, S. (1989). *Jordanian Political Thought*, Amman: Dar al-Bashir, (Arabic).

Riji, A. (1995). *Palestinian Education and the Challenges of the Future*, Al-Quds: al- Jama'ya al-Filastiniyah al-Acadimiya, 1995 (Arabic).

Badran, N. (1979). Education and Modernization in the Palestinian Arab Society 1948-1967, Vol.2, Beirut: Markiz al-Abhath, 1979 (Arabic).

Bashour, N. (1978). Palestinian Cause and the Arab Unity in the Curricula of Education in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, Beirut: Muasasat Dirasat al-Wihda al-A'rabiya, (Arabic).

⁸ For further details on the Jericho conference of December 1, 1948, see:

Nevo, Abdullah and the Arabs of the Land of Israel (above, note 5), p. 116.

Abu-Dayih, *ibid*, p. 11.

Milson, *ibid*., pp. 11-14.

⁹ Maoz, *ibid*., p. 28.

been set up in the West Bank during the Mandate period, and to grant Jordanian citizenship to the Palestinians in the West Bank including the refugees amongst them.¹⁰

It is interesting that in spite of all the rapid Jordanian measures to integrate the two banks, and the efforts to restore life in Jerusalem to their normal lines of conduct, post-war Jerusalem was transformed from a central capital city into a border city divided between two hostile states. While the western part of the city became the capital of the State of Israel, and was given special attention by the Israeli government, the eastern part was mired in a difficult economic and social situation. The new dividing border disrupted life intolerably, caused serious damage to the residents and to their sources of livelihood,¹¹ and greatly increased the sense of frustration within the city.

Beeri justifiably notes that the Hashemite regime treated the city which had been the stronghold of his rival, the Mufti, with a certain suspicion, and regarded it as a center of opposition to his plans. This attitude towards the city became even more ingrained after the murder of king Abdullah in the al-Aqsah mosque on July 20, 1951.¹²

It is important to recall as well that when the city was divided, most of the government buildings and offices remained in the western part which had already been given an impressive boost in development during the Mandate period and where most of the government departments were located.¹³ Among these departments we should note the Post Office, the Police, Electricity, Supplies, Law Courts, Municipality, and the government printing houses that also dealt with the publication of textbooks. On the other hand, in the Jordanian sector there were only the offices of the Kishle-police station-, the museum, and the broadcasting authority. As for schools, some of them were also in the western part of the city, especially those built in the Arab upper-class neighborhoods of Katamon, Talbieh and Bak'a. This meant that East Jerusalem had lost much of its administrative status in comparison with the earlier period.¹⁴ To all this, we must add the severe damage to the tourist industry during those years of instability. As is well known, this branch had always been the main source of livelihood in the economy of the city, so that the new political and geographical circumstances and realities also seriously affected the city residents.

Both Maoz and Beeri point out that among the measures adopted by Jordan to weaken the Palestinian national movement in the West Bank was to restrict the function of Jerusalem as the center for this movement by granting some of the administrative positions to those who had been Husseinis opponents since Mandate times. For example, Raghib Nashashibi was appointed as supervisor over the holy places, a position that traditionally had been held by the Husseinis. In addition, the government departments that had remained in Jerusalem since Mandate times were transferred to Amman,¹⁵ which was the very opposite of what the Israeli government had done. In the political sphere, Jerusalem usually had three representatives in the Jordanian parliament,¹⁶ quite a significant representation in comparison with other cities. But it is important to remember that the power of the Jordanian parliament was limited in that period, and the determination of policy was entirely in the hands of King Abdullah. As for the Jerusalem municipality, which was the leading local body, Anwar Khatib was appointed mayor from 1948-1950, and in the elections of 1951, A'rif al-A'rif won the position of mayor. He was followed by a number of mayors, among whom were Hanna Atallah, Amar al-Wa'ri, Amin Majaj, and Rouhi al-Khatib. It is worth noting that the appointment of a mayor in 1948 was due to the circumstances and the feeling of emergency that prevailed in the city at that time. Mayors were usually appointed by the authorities even in the days of the British Mandate. According to the Mandate system, the mayor was generally appointed from among the two city members who had garnered the highest number of electoral votes.

With the aim of strengthening the status of the city, A'rif al-A'rif wanted to declare it as the second capital of Jordan, but the Jordanians rejected this resolutely,¹⁷ and even adopted a contrary policy. For example, in 1956

¹⁰ Nevo, Jordan: The Search for Identity, *ibid.*, p. 49.

¹¹ Nevo, *ibid.*, p. 50.

¹² Beeri, *ibid.* p. 55.

¹³ On the development of Jerusalem during the Mandate period, see: Ben-Aryeh, Y. (2001), *Land in the Mirror of its Past: Studies in the Historical Geography of the Land of Israel*, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, pp. 377-439 (Hebrew).

¹⁴ Dikadak, N. (2001). *Conditions of Education in Jerusalem During the Jordanian rule*, al-Quds: al-Quds University, p. 28 (Arabic).

¹⁵ Maoz, *ibid.*, p. 28.

¹⁶ Beeri, *ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁷ Maoz, *ibid.*, p. 28.

they transferred to Amman the Shari'a court of appeal, the Department of Education, and the UN aid and employment agencies. These measures continued the trend that had already begun in 1951.¹⁸

From the letter of Anwar Nusseibeh, who was a member of parliament in 1950 and closely affiliated with the Hashemite regime, we learn about the degree of embitterment caused by this policy. In his letter to the head of the Jordanian parliament, he protested against the negative attitude towards the Jerusalem municipality which suffered from problems due to budgetary deficits. According to him, the government had not agreed to give guarantees to Barclays Bank in order to receive funds for managing the city, while at the same time it had given similar guarantees for even greater amounts to other municipalities.¹⁹

On March 29, 1951, a protest meeting was held at the Jerusalem Municipality against the steps taken to transfer government departments to Amman, and the assembly even sent a telegram to the king on this issue. The Minister of the Interior, Abbas Mirza, quickly responded to them in a sharp and forceful letter in which he said: "The decision to remove the central offices from the municipal departments in Jerusalem is one of the necessary outcomes of the line adopted by the government with regard to the realization of unification".²⁰ The Minister even noted that the mayor and members of the city council had exceeded their authority and he requested them not to engage in these matters in the future. It is important to stress in relation to municipalities that not only were the mayors of cities closely affiliated to the Jordanian regime and that the authorization of their appointments was in the hands of the governor, but that even the members of the city council were appointed by the Jordanian governor. The governor also intervened in budgetary issues, and took care that most of the municipalities, if not all of them, would demonstrate absolute loyalty to the Jordanian regime. The 1955 Jordanian law of municipal councils did not leave more than a restricted amount of authority in the hands of the mayor, which consisted mainly of providing the basic services to the residents.²¹

Stationed in Jerusalem, as in Nablus and Hebron, was a Jordanian civilian governor bearing the title of Mahfaz, who was appointed by the king and was directly responsible to him. He was charge with loyally reporting in detail on all matters, whether large or small. According to Menahem Milson, the military commander in the region was subordinate to the Mahfaz. In this way the centrality of government was created under the close supervision of the king, and prevented the creation of local power centers.²² In addition, all the government departments in the West Bank, including those in Jerusalem, were subordinate to the main ministries in Amman. In view of this, we see that after the annexation of the West Bank to Jordan and the division of the city of Jerusalem, the administrative status of the city was severely curtailed. It was slowly emptied of all its important departments, which encouraged the process of migration from it to Amman or to other places.²³ Finally, it should be stated that as a result of criticism against this policy, the Jordanians agreed in 1959 to declare Jerusalem as its spiritual capital alongside its political capital, Amman,²⁴ but it can be doubted whether this had any real significance.

3. Jordanian Educational System and Laws – The Attempt to Promote a New Identity

Together with the final unification of the two banks in 1950, the process began of unifying the two educational systems, which was completed in 1952.²⁵ However, the major turning point in the process of unification for the educational system occurred with the legislation of the Jordanian education law of 1955 (Law No. 20), which annulled all the laws that had preceded it, and laid the basis for a new and uniform educational and administrative system. According to it, education became mandatory and free throughout the kingdom which

¹⁸ Maoz, *ibid.*, p. 49; Beeri, *ibid.*, p.59; Badran, *ibid.*, p.41.

¹⁹ Beeri, *ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

²⁰ Beeri, *ibid.*, p. 60.

²¹ Maoz, *ibid.*, p. 29. For further details on the Municipality Law of 1955, see also pp. 46-48.

²² Milson, *ibid.*, p. 15.

²³ Badran, *ibid.*, p.40. Badran notes that because of the Palestinian migration to Amman, the number of its residents grew constantly. In 1949 the population of the city was 61,600 and by 1952 it had grown to 108, 304.

²⁴ Dikedak, *ibid.*, p. 29.

²⁵ al-Tal, A. (1989). Political, Economic and social Conditions that have influenced the development of education in Jordan 1921-1989, 2nd ed., Amman, 1989, p. 237. (Arabic).

was divided into seven educational districts, including that of Jerusalem.²⁶ In 1964, a new educational law was passed in which the stress was strongly laid on the need for turning the educational system into a melting pot for the creation of a homogeneous, harmonized and consolidated Jordanian society. In the law it was written that among the tasks of the educational system was “the fusion of the various population groups within a homogeneous and united Jordanian Arab society”.²⁷ It should be noted that during this period, Bahjat al-Talhouny was the Prime Minister. In the letter of appointment and guidelines from King Hussein, Talhouny was required to give maximum attention to promoting the connections and unity between the two banks.²⁸ This was most probably due to the rise of the PLO and the challenge it posed to Jordan regarding the future of the Palestinian people in general and the West Bank in particular.

It is interesting how this far-reaching goal of the 1964 law corresponds precisely to the definition of Anderson and Hobsbawm mentioned above. According to them, in the process for building up a new national awareness it was necessary to consolidate an institutional and ideational foundation for the existence of a new community. Within this process, the educational system serves as the main tool in the hands of the state or regime to create a new identity, a new heritage, the strengthening of affiliation and links between the individual and the state. This process is also carried out through the rewriting of history, the composition of a new narrative that contains new messages and ideas both for the educator and for the pupil.²⁹ And this is true for all states, not only for Jordan.

As stated, the policy that the Jordanians wanted to promote in accordance with their education laws, especially the law of 1964 was the Jordanization of education. In Paragraph 9 of the law the subject of the consolidation of Jordanian society was stressed, and its transformation into a single and united society in the course of time.³⁰

From the various studies that have dealt with the contents of textbooks on history and geography used in the kingdom at that time, it appears that most of them agree with one clear fact, which is the limited range of these subjects in textbooks. For example, in the research of Dikedak it seems that 10% of the history textbooks refer to Palestinian history, and only 1% covers the geography of Palestine.³¹ Even the comprehensive and in-depth research of Najalla Naser Bashour who studied the status of the Palestinian question in the study programs in three countries – Jordan, Syria and Lebanon – arrived at similar conclusions. Bashour examined ten history textbooks in Jordan and found that only four of them dealt with the history of Arabs in general, and that only 10.5% of these four textbooks referred to the Palestinian question. She also examined the subject of geography that was studied in eight textbooks, of which five taught the geography of Arab countries, and of these only 0.9% referred to the geography of Palestine. Bashour also found that in Grade 11 of the Humanities trend, the history textbook devoted 70 pages entirely to the Palestinian issue, but alongside it was a book of 294 pages on the history of the Arabs in modern times, and a book of 153 pages on modern European history,³² which clearly indicates that the main attention was directed less towards Palestinian history and more to general Arab and European history.

Regarding these history textbooks, it is interesting to note that in 1964 the well known historian, Ihsan al-Nimer, addressed the Jordanian Minister of Education and protested against the contents of the history textbooks in the kingdom. According to him,

“there is neglect and distortion in local history textbooks; instead of teaching the history of local leaders, they teach the history of leaders who were created by Western colonialism”.³³ It is doubtful whether the Jordanian Minister of Education gave any importance to what Nimer said to him.

With regard to study programs, scholars agree that the knowledge contained in textbooks in most countries are neither objective nor neutral. The contents of these books usually reflect the power relations in each and every

²⁶ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Order of Legislation in Jordan, General Education Law No. 20, 1955, Paragraph 4, Official Bulletin, April 14, 1955.

²⁷ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Order of Legislation in Jordan, General Education Law No. 16, 1964, Paragraph 3, Official Bulletin, May 26, 1964.

²⁸ Abu-Dayih, *ibid.*, p. 164.

²⁹ Anderson, *ibid.*, pp. 6-7; Hobsbawm, *ibid.*, pp. 90-91.

³⁰ Dikedak, *ibid.*, p. 34.

³¹ Dikedak, *ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

³² Bashour, *ibid.* *Palestinian Cause*, p. 14.

³³ From Ihsan al-Nimer to the Jordanian Minister of Culture of Education, Israel State Archives, File Nos. 30-33, August 23, 1964.

society, especially the dialogue between the ruling group and the group that is ruled.³⁴ In our case, it is clear that the Jordanians were the ruling group and it was they who determined the contents in order to blur the identity of the Palestinians as much as possible.³⁵

From the research of Iris Ronen on the textbooks in Jordan, it appears that all the authors were Transjordanians and not Palestinians. According to her, the Hashemite regime wished to ensure that the responsibility for disseminating the standard ideology and preserving collective memory would be in the hands of officials identified with the regime and with the royal house. In her view, the textbooks in Jordan well represented the need to promote tradition, to inculcate new values, and to grant legitimacy to the Hashemite regime and the new borders of the kingdom. The new Jordanian narrative was obviously selective, with events associated with the history of the Hashemite dynasty and family, such as the revolt of Sharif Hussein of Mecca, the history of the strong tribes and their role in setting up the kingdom, which was mentioned in detail. On the other hand, the events associated with the history of the Palestinian people were not mentioned to the same extent.

Besides these motifs, a few Arab ideals were stressed in Jordan at that time. Jordan was presented as a small homeland that was part of the larger Arab homeland. The role of Arab nationalism in the war against colonialism was also given special emphasis. This testified to the desire of the Jordanians to present the annexation of the West Bank as the first step and stage in an all-Arab unification process, and as part of their opposition to Zionism. According to these textbooks, when the Arabs were united they overcame their external enemies, and when they were divided they suffered defeat and retreat.³⁶

Najalla Bashour also noted that the textbooks presented Arab history in general and Palestinian history in particular from a perspective that served the narrative of the Hashemite family. According to her, Sharif Hussein ben Ali, the Sheriff of Mecca, and his sons Faisal and Abdullah, were the pioneers of Arab unity. Hussein was called "Al-Munkidh al-Kabir", the great deliverer, and he was the central figure in the Arab struggle for independence against the Turks. He was presented as a fighter against colonialism who had devoted his life to serve the interests of the nation until his death. His burial in the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem was not fortuitous, but was carried out to demonstrate his close ties with the Holy Land.³⁷ King Hussein ibn Talal is also presented as a 'young king and mighty man' whose aim was to restore to the Arabs and the Palestinians what had been taken from them by force.

Bashour adds that when the revolts by Arab nations against foreign rule are mentioned, such as the revolt of Emir Abd al-Qader in Algeria against the French in 1830, the revolt of Ahmed Orabi Pasha against the British in Egypt in 1882, and the revolt in Libya against Italian conquest in 1911, the Palestinian people were not given similar attention. The reference to these revolts stressed in particular the contribution and involvement of the Arabs including Jordanian volunteers who fought in the framework of a rescue army, and later on in the framework of the Jordanian legionary forces. All this testifies, in her view, to certain biased tendencies in the study program.³⁸

In this connection of the glorification and acclaim for the contribution of the Hashemites to the strengthening of the Arab national movement, Mary Wilson similarly notes that the Hashemites still represented the Arab revolt against the Ottoman state during the First World War as a national revolt with the main aim of liberating the Arab nation from the oppressive rule of the Turks, and against this background one may explain the ties and cooperation between Sharif Hussein of Mecca and the British.³⁹

Besides all that has been said, the textbooks tried to give special emphasis to the contribution of the Jordanians in the defense of Palestine, and that there was no alternative to the ceasefire with Israel. Stress was also given in particular to the fact that the annexation of the West Bank to Jordan was done at the request of the Palestinians who asked and even pleaded with the king to save them, and that without the self-sacrifice of the Jordanian army

³⁴ Appel, M. (1993). *Official Knowledge*, New York: Routledge.

³⁵ Anderson, B. (2001). 'Writing the Nation: Textbooks of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan', *Comparative Studies of South Africa and the Middle East*, 21, pp.5-14. <http://cssaame.com/issues/21/anderson.pdf>

³⁶ Ronen, I. (2012). 'Between a Jordanian Homeland and a Palestinian Homeland', *Iyyunim be-Tkumat Israel*, 22(2012), pp. 152-178. See also: Abu-Dayih, ibid., pp. 156-158. <http://in.bgu.ac.il/bgi/iyyunim/22/22contentheb.pdf>

³⁷ Bashour, ibid. *Palestinian Cause*, p. 52.

³⁸ Bashour, ibid. *Palestinian Cause*, pp. 52-55, 70-72.

³⁹ Wilson, M. (1991). 'The Hashemites, the Arab revolt and Arab Nationalism' in: Khalidi, *Ibid*, pp. 204-224

it would not have been possible to guard the holy places for the Arabs in Jerusalem. It was also noted that after the unification of the two banks, the burden on the Jordanian army was increased because they had to guard a border that was now 650 km long, and it was thanks to this army that the cities and villages of the West Bank were preserved and protected.⁴⁰

It is important to note that this educational policy was carried out in spite of the fact that from among the Ministers of Education who served during the years 1948-1967 in Jordan, nine were Palestinians. The most prominent of them was the minister Ahmed Tukan, whose family had always been affiliated with the Hashemite royal family, and had strongly opposed the policy line taken by Hajj Amin Husseini.⁴¹ In this connection, it should be noted that the explanation for the fact that most of the Ministers of Education in Jordan during the period in question were Palestinians is presumably linked to the fact that in those days the level of education and progress of the West Bank population was higher than those of their brothers in the East Bank.

As part of their control, the Jordanian authorities forbade the introduction of books and articles that were perceived as threatening the security and stability of the kingdom. The Minister of Interior used occasionally to publish the list of forbidden books in the kingdom and transfer the list to the various districts. These books were written partly by Palestinian authors, and partly by other Arab authors. Among the books listed were those written by the Egyptian author, Yusuf al-Siba'i. In order to carry out this policy, the Jordanian Minister of the Interior based himself on the emergency regulations that dated from the time of British rule.⁴²

In view of what has been said, we see that the formal Jordanian educational system including the legislation in that area, was entirely geared towards the construction of a new national identity and the promotion of support for the political changes that the kingdom had undergone after the annexation of the West Bank. There is a noticeable absence of Palestinian history and geography in the textbooks, and important chapters in the history of the Palestinian people as well as prominent leaders and personalities are not mentioned at all. As we have seen in the words that the historian Ihsan al-Nimer addressed to the Minister of Education, he remonstrated against the fact that they were teaching about personalities who, in his view, had collaborated with colonialism, instead of teaching about national figures. It is also interesting that both in the contents and the legislation, special emphasis was laid on the subject of Arab national unity and the need for all-Arab unification, even though Jordan was not known as a leader in this sphere, not to mention the fact that it often did not regard this aim positively.

4. Educational Institutions in Jerusalem – Between Continuity and Change

According to the detailed list given by the Jerusalem historian A'rif al-A'rif, at the end of the Mandate period there were seven private Muslim schools in the city. Most prominent amongst them was the Rawdat al-Ma'rif College and the Muslim Orphanage School. Alongside these schools were another eleven state schools with a mixture of Muslim and Christian pupils, the most well known amongst them being the al-Kuliyya al-A'rabiya High School, the Teachers' Seminary, the al-Omariyya School, and the al-Rashidiyya School. There were also forty private Christian schools for all the communities, including amongst others the prominent ones for the Orthodox Community and the Frere school.⁴³ According to al-A'rif, the supervisor appointed by the Mandate authorities for education in the Jerusalem district was British, with a staff of five Britons and twenty-two officials from amongst various communities of the local population, besides the woman supervisor who was in charge of the schools for girls.⁴⁴ During the period of Jordanian rule, the education system continued to be divided between state and private education, to which was added a third system of education, that of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency – UNRWA.⁴⁵

The state education system was under the total control of the state at all levels of management, appointments and content. The Jordanian government did much to broaden the state education system that had been under their

⁴⁰ Bashour, *ibid.* *Palestinian Cause*, pp. 69-70.

⁴¹ For further details on the Palestinian opposition and the role of the Tukan in it, see: A'tiyah, A. (1985).

Palestinian Arab Party and the Party of Defense 1934-1937, al-Quds: Jama'yat al-Dirasat al-A'rabiya. (Arabic).

⁴² From the Minister of the Interior to the Governor of the Jerusalem District, Israel State Archives, File No. 44/1, May 4, 1961.

⁴³ al-A'raf, A. (1986). *Detailed in the history of Jerusalem*, Al-Quds: Matba'at al-Ma'rif, 1986, pp. 444-445. (Arabic). On foreign education and that of the Christian communities, see also: Luke and Keith-Roach, *ibid.*, pp. 253-255.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 445-446

⁴⁵ Riji, *ibid.*, p. 11; Badran, *ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

direct control, unlike the other two systems. Between the years 1951-1967, 36 new schools were built in the Jerusalem district, 14 of them in the eastern part of the city,⁴⁶ which testifies to the degree of Jordanian investment in the system.

In order to carry out these projects, the Jordanian government imposed a special tax called the Education Tax. This tax was intended to allow for the absorption of new teachers in addition to the renting of schools and classrooms. The number of those charged to pay this tax was extended to 10,000 households by the governor of the Jerusalem district, Salman al-Kudah in 1958,⁴⁷ and it was levied by state tax-collectors.⁴⁸ It seems that through this tax the Jordanians could finance a large portion of the cost of the education system in the city.⁴⁹ Apparently, because of the difficult economic situation of the residents, it was not easy to collect the tax. For example, during the half-year period from April to September 1958, the governor of the district collected the amount of 2,230 dinars from the residents which he used for various expenditures such as teachers salaries, the purchase of equipment, etc.⁵⁰

In addition to the construction of new schools, the authorities rented buildings and many rooms and converted them into places for study and teaching. From the files of the Ministry of Education found in the state archives, we can derive that this phenomenon was widespread and that it engaged many principals, supervisors and the governor as well. Most of the buildings that were rented belonged to Jerusalem residents who had decided to leave their city and move to Amman in the hopes of improving their economic situation.⁵¹

As for the private education system, except for two Muslim private schools, most of them were owned by the various churches, and were managed in a totally independent manner, although they were required to teach the subjects of history, geography and the Arabic language in accordance with the program authorized by the Ministry in conformity with all the other schools in the kingdom. However, it is important to note that the heads of the churches in Jerusalem made every effort to maintain the relative independence they possessed. For example, when the proposed Jordanian Education Law was presented for 1963, all the heads of churches and the bishops in Jerusalem expressed surprise that the proposal was being presented so swiftly, and that it was published before they had been given the opportunity to examine it. They applied to the Prime Minister and request him "to delay the proposed law since the Christian communities that were contributing much to the education of the people had not manage to express their comment on this law".⁵² The governor of Jerusalem also supported this application.

As for the UNRWA education system, this system was set up after the establishment of the UN relief agency on the basis of Resolution No. 302 of the General Assembly dated December 8, 1949. The task imposed on the agency was a double one, to offer immediate assistance to the refugees, and to provide various long-term services such as employment, training, social welfare, and education.⁵³ From the data it appears that there were 29,683 refugees in the city of Jerusalem and its immediate vicinity, and two UNRWA schools were set up for the refugee children.⁵⁴ In 1966, 8,690 pupils were studying in the agency schools, and the number of educators engaged by them in this district was 263.⁵⁵

It is interesting that despite the growth in the number of state schools and in the number of pupils at all levels of education, the system of higher education suffered from significant difficulties. Although there existed a

⁴⁶ Dikadak, *ibid.*, pp. 46-60.

⁴⁷ From Salman al-Kudah, Governor of the Jerusalem District, to the Minister of Culture and Education, File No. 49/25, March 10, 1958.

⁴⁸ From the Jordanian Minister of Finance to the Jordanian Minister of Education, Israel State Archives, File No. 49/25, May 10, 1958.

⁴⁹ From the Governor of the Jerusalem District, Hamdi Khalaf, to the Directors of the Tax Regions, Israel State Archives, File No. 49/25, October 22, 1958, November 10, 1958.

⁵⁰ From the Governor of the Jerusalem District, Hamdi Khalaf, to the Supervisor of the Education Ministry, Israel State Archives, File No. 49/25, October 2, 1958.

⁵¹ From Adnan Yunis al-Husseini, Governor of the Jerusalem District, to the District Engineer, Israel State Archives, File No. 12-57.

⁵² From the Heads of the Christian Churches in Jerusalem, to the Prime Minister of Jordan, Israel State Archives, File No. 30/33.

⁵³ Two general reports of UNRWA for the years 1964, 1965, Israel State Archives, File No. 58/934, pp. 1-2.

⁵⁴ For further information about the function of UNRWA in Palestinian education in general, including the West Bank, see: Bashour, M. (1990) 'Education in Palestine after the Nakba 1948-1968', in: *Palestinian Encyclopedia* second section, Beirut, pp. 79-155.

⁵⁵ The UNRWA Schools, Statistical Data, Israel State Archives, File No. 951/21, May 1, 1966.

seminary for the training of teachers in Beit Hanina, the city itself did not contain a single institution of higher learning. The first attempt to establish such an institution was led by George Shbir and the lawyer Jiryis Khouri, but this attempt failed. The second attempt was made by the mayor Rouhi Khateb in 1958, and it also failed. It appears that the Jordanians were more interested in the establishment of a university in Amman than in East Jerusalem.⁵⁶ And indeed, a Jordanian university was founded on September 2, 1962, becoming an important institution of higher learning in the kingdom. Before the founding of this university, most of the pupils in Jerusalem who wanted to continue with higher studies were forced to do so in Cairo, Beirut, or Damascus, and some were even sent to Libya.⁵⁷ According to Anwar Nusseibeh who had also served as a mayor of Jerusalem, the Jordanian explanation for not setting up a university in Jerusalem was “because of its proximity to Israel”.⁵⁸

The government of Iraq gave partial assistance to strengthening higher education by allocating a number of places in the University of Baghdad to students from the Kingdom of Jordan, including Palestinians. The allocation was divided into three parts, with some of the students studying in military institutions, some in the University of Baghdad at the expense of the Iraqi government, and some studying at their own private expense.⁵⁹ Similar cooperation was obtained from the Egyptian Ministry of Education, especially at the level of information transference, acquisition of experience, and supplementary studies.⁶⁰

To sum up this section, we see that the educational institutions in the eastern part of the city were not uniform, and consisted of three different types: state, private Christian and Muslim, and UNRWA. We saw that the main attention of the Jordanian government was directed towards the state schools where most of the investments were made with the cooperation of the residents. We also saw that the private schools continued to be managed independently, although certain contents had to be included in accordance with the guidelines of the Jordanian Ministry of Education. As for the UNRWA schools, they were conducted at the expense of the agency which provided education only for the refugees.

In addition to the above, we saw that the Jordanians were not interested in making Jerusalem their cultural capital, and therefore refrained from developing higher education institutions in the city. At the most they were prepared to give the city the status of a spiritual capital.

5. Involvement and Control of the Security Establishment in the Education System

In order to carry out the above policy, the Jordanians imposed full and strict control over the education system in the city of Jerusalem. All the appointments underwent security checks, and the examination was usually conducted by the commanding officer of the Jerusalem district. The examination was the strictest with regard to candidates from outside the kingdom, such as those who came from the American University of Beirut.⁶¹

The Jordanian secret service also kept close track of the activities at the schools, which we learn about from the various reports of the Intelligence Officer in the Jerusalem district. The tracking covered discussions that were conducted during the meetings of teachers held in the teachers' rooms in all the state and private schools.⁶² Menahem Milson also noted that the teachers, educators and supervisors were appointed by the authorities, with the system of appointment in exchange for loyalty in operation in this sphere as well.⁶³

⁵⁶ Milson, *ibid.*, p.18.

⁵⁷ Yaghi, A. (2001), *The life of the Modern Palestinian literature*, Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, pp. 62-118. (Arabic). See also: From the Director of Culture and Education in Jerusalem, to the Governor of the Jerusalem District, Israel State Archives, File No. 22/17. It should be noted that King Hussein financed from his private funds some of the cost of sending students to Libya.

⁵⁸ Milson, *ibid.*, p.18.

⁵⁹ From Kazim abu- Gazal, Governor of the Jerusalem District, to the Supervisor in the Ministry of Education, Israel State Archives, File No. 44/1, May 9, 1961.

⁶⁰ From Mukhtar Khayri, to the Governor of the Jerusalem District, Israel State Archives, File No. 44/1, June 16, 1960.

⁶¹ From the Governor of the Jerusalem District, Hassan al-Katib to the Minister of the Interior, Israel State Archives, File No.44/1, October 4, 1960.

⁶² From Major Ibrahim Krishan, Commander of the Jordanian Intelligence Department in the Jerusalem District to the Governor of the Jerusalem District, Israel State Archives, File No. 44/1, August 25, 1960.

⁶³ Milson, *ibid.*, p. 18.

To strengthen Jordanian identity and enhance the status of the king, the authorities repeatedly demanded that all the school principals in the city and the district should hang a photograph of King Hussein in all the administration offices or in some other prominent place in the schools. The principals were instructed to avoid hanging the photograph of the president of any other country except by prior permission granted by the authorities. The supervisor appointed over the Ministry of Education in the district warned the principals that any infringement of these guidelines would entail heavy punishment.⁶⁴

An example for the infringement of these guidelines occurred in a school for girls A'roura and Nabwani farms. It appears that the school principal, Siham Hassan Mansour hung the photograph of the President of Egypt, Gamal Abd al-Nasser, in her office. The secret service was informed of this, and she was ordered by the Intelligence officer, Radi Abd al-Hadi, to remove the photograph and to destroy it immediately.⁶⁵ In response to this, the teacher stated that she removed the photograph of Nasser and hung in its place the photograph of King Hussein, whom she said she admired and even venerated.⁶⁶

In this regard, it is important to note that support for Nasserism in the West Bank at that period was at its peak, and that extreme tension existed between Egypt and Jordan, sometimes covert and sometimes overt. Each state represented different and opposed world outlooks, and Egypt preached Arab unity and a tendency towards the Soviet bloc, while Jordan struggled to promote and preserve a local identity and tended towards Western states, mainly Britain which had ruled Jordan until its independence, and which continued to exert great influence even afterwards.

The secret service authorities and the Ministry of Education in Jerusalem contended not only against the Nasserist trend among the Palestinian teachers, but also with even greater force against the followers of the Communist trend. From the reports of the Jordanian Intelligence officer in Jerusalem we learn that a number of pupils in the al-Madrassa al-Rashidiyya school were Communist adherents. According to the reports, they were active in disseminating Communist doctrine among the various pupils. For example, the pupil Nabil al-Kablawi was accused of being a Communist activist, and for recruiting pupils for anti-government activities. In reaction to this, he was arrested for a short while and then released with a bail of 200 dinars by his parents. Police supervision was also imposed upon him for three years, he was forbidden to leave the area of Jerusalem, and was obliged to remain at home from sunset to sunrise.⁶⁷ The Communist Party was among the leading opponents to the Jordanian regime in the West Bank from the very beginning of the annexation measures, and demanded the establishment of a Palestinian state in accordance with the Partition Resolution of 1947.⁶⁸ According to Badran, most of the Palestinian intellectuals were attracted to the doctrines of two trends, the Nationalist and the Communist. Thus the support for nationalist parties such as the Baath and the Nasserite parties, in addition to the Communist party, was strong not only in the West Bank but also in the East Bank.⁶⁹

The authorities were also afraid of gatherings and meetings held by the pupils, even those in which national examinations were conducted. For example, Ibrahim Krishan who was appointed as security officer in the city, was apprehensive about the gathering of 500 pupils in the Omari College where graduation examinations were held. A similar apprehension was felt regarding the organized Maydan day for the pupils of the West Bank in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in the city. Krishan thought that the gathering or the large concentration of pupils was liable to be exploited by various inciting elements. He therefore asked his men to be alert and reinforced them with 70 policemen in order to maintain order in the city.⁷⁰

To sum up this section, it may be said that the Jordanians were not satisfied merely with changes in the study programs, but exerted pressure against anyone who opposed it, both by the teachers and by the pupils. The strict supervision and the policy of appointments were a regular practice during the period under discussion. The main

⁶⁴ From Radi Abd al-Hadi, Supervisor in the Ministry of Education, Jerusalem District, to all the supervisors in the district, Israel State Archives, File No. 44/1, July 4, 1959.

⁶⁵ From Radi Abd al-Hadi, to the Principal of the Aurora School, Israel State Archives, File No. 44/1, July 2, 1959.

⁶⁶ From Siham Hassan Mansour to Radi Abd al-Hadi, Israel State Archives, File No. 44/1, July 5, 1959.

⁶⁷ From Major Ibrahim Krishan, to the Governor of the District, Israel State Archives, File No. 44/1, May 31, 1959.

⁶⁸ Beeri, *ibid.*, p.31

⁶⁹ Badran, *ibid.*, pp.61-65.

⁷⁰ From Major Ibrahim Krishan, to the commanders of forces in the city, Israel State Archives, File No. 44/1, June 4, 1959.

fear was of the leftist elements on the Palestinian street, and those who identified themselves with the nationalist Nasserite trend.

6. Summary and Conclusions

The subject of Jordanian and Palestinian relations has engaged quite a few scholars, mainly because of its importance and decisive influence on the Israeli-Arab dispute in general and on the Israeli-Palestinian in particular.

From a review of the research literature at the beginning of the article, we saw that the main attention of most scholars was directed to the political history of the dispute, beginning with the days of the British Mandate when the Jordanian political entity was created, and ending with the peace agreements between Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians. The contribution of this research is in the attempt to cast light on the position and function of the educational sphere in the complex system of relations between the Jordanians and Palestinians in Jerusalem during the period of Jordanian rule from 1948 to 1967. From a discussion of the research questions raised in the article, three main conclusions have been reached:

Firstly, the article showed that the Jordanians acted in order to weaken the status of East Jerusalem in all its political, administrative and cultural aspects. They were well aware of the centrality of the city for the Palestinian national movement during the Mandate period, and that it was the stronghold of the Mufti who had adamantly opposed the political policy of King Abdullah. In order to weaken these elements, the Jordanians adopted a policy that weakened the status of the city. This found expression in the transfer of most of the government departments from Jerusalem to Amman, which became a central city that gained the greatest measure of economic investment. The article shows clearly that there was a policy of preference for Amman instead of Jerusalem, causing much anxiety and concern for the city mayors and its representatives in the Jordanian parliament who were unsuccessful in their efforts to restore the status and centrality of their city.

Secondly, it was shown that the Jordanians did all they could to weaken the Palestinian national identity in East Jerusalem and in the West Bank. Their declared aim was that they wanted to build up a new Jordanian identity that would include within it the two peoples and the two banks of the Jordan. They were well aware of the importance of the education system as a tool for realizing this aim, and therefore they began very early in their rule to create changes in the educational programs and textbooks after passing the required legislation.

In the framework of this policy, the Jordanian Ministry of Education unified the study program and turned the main subjects that served to build identity, such as the Arabic language, history and geography, into mandatory subjects in all schools, whether state, private or of the relief agency UNRWA.

In the study programs and textbooks, no emphasis was laid on Palestinian history either during the Ottoman period or that of the British Mandate. The term Palestine was also rejected and instead the term West Bank was introduced. The Jordanians stressed and gave prominence to the role of the Hashemite dynasty and of Sharif Hussein of Mecca and his sons in the course of the First World War. The Hashemites were presented as those who had done and continued to do everything for the sake of unity and independence among the Arab countries, and that the unification of the two banks was the first step in the direction of a wider Arab unity. It is important to emphasize that these measures were given support by their sympathizers in the West Bank who were afraid of the policies of Hajj Amin.

Thirdly, it was made clear that this policy was carried out by strict security supervision by the Jordanians. The education system in the city and in the West Bank was subject to the central control of security officials and also of the governor of the Jerusalem district. Appointments of teachers and principals were made after careful sifting and selection, and whoever opposed this found himself in conflict with the system. The Jordanians were afraid of the infiltration of Nasserite as well as Communist ideology among the West Bank population, and acted against all those who identified themselves with these two trends, even if it sometimes involved school pupils.

It appears that in spite of the initial enthusiasm shown by the Palestinian elite and by the friends of Jordan in the city and the West Bank which was expressed in the Jericho conference for the annexation to Jordan, and despite all the efforts that were made, the Jordanians found it difficult in the long run to create the necessary change in identity. They were unable to create a homogeneous Palestinian-Jordanian society, especially in the second decade of their rule over the West Bank, a decade that is known by scholars as the "decade of awakening" as compared with the first decade that was termed "the decade of slumber". During this second decade two important Palestinian organizations were founded: the Fatah organization in 1959 and the PLO in 1964. Moreover, the conference in which the establishment of the PLO was declared was conducted on the Mount of Olives. To all this we should add the noticeable gaps between the population of the two banks. The population of

the East Bank which was less developed at that time did not succeed in absorbing and integrating the more highly developed and educated population of the West Bank including East Jerusalem.

Finally, it may be said that if the aim of the Jordanians was to construct a national identity from the merging of Jordanians and Palestinians, the task was not a simple one at all. As it is known, the construction of an identity in accordance with the European version was a long process that could last decades or centuries. In our case, this merging was even more complex and difficult because of the fact that the Palestinian national movement was already consolidated and had already waged a stubborn struggle against the British and the Zionist Movement in order to realize its aspirations and those of its people. This implied that the government of two decades that followed the events of the Nakba was incapable of creating a new identity in spite of the total recruitment of the educational system. Furthermore, this approach created a long lasting antagonism between the regime in Jordan and the Palestine national movement, which is evident from the harsh and violent riots that erupted in September 1970 known as the Black September.

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