Chapter 6
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

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ABSTRACT

For Jordanian economy, the insufficiency of its natural resources, the dependence of the volatility of its workers’ remittances on the global oil price fluctuations, the effect of the regional chaos on its economic sectors, rising requirements on education and health due to the increasing population generated by refugee influx are some of its important issues. Agricultural products are among the country’s main exports. Nevertheless, the water scarcity in the Middle East which may be defined “the key issue” to be solved for the welfare of Jordan (and the Middle Eastern-Islamic World) has been a block for its economy. Improving the bilateral relations and “skilled partnerships” with Turkey, would be a solution for the Jordanian economic issues, for the general welfare of the region as well. One specific sector may be healthcare services through which an integrated system may be formed for the future well-being of the Middle Eastern and Islamic World. An important issue for Jordan and the Middle Eastern-Islamic countries is that the success of economic policies, the stability, the peace, safety and welfare of the general are dependent on how “justice and compassion” are defined and on the mentality or belief from which they are derived.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND BRIEF HISTORY OF THE COUNTRY

Al Mamlakah al Urduniyah al Hashimiyah or Jordan is a Middle Eastern country, bordered by Saudi Arabia on the South, by Iraq on the east, by Syria on the north, Palestinian Hills and Israel on the east; (Waskey, n.d., p.498) with latitudes 29° and 34° N, and longitudes 35° and 40° E. (Honorary Consul of The Hashemite Kingdom, 2016).

Its total area is 92,300 sq km; coastline is 26 km; Jabal Ram is its highest point with 1,754 m; its lowest point is Dead Sea with -396 m. (The Robinson Library, n.d.).

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Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is the conventional long form of the country name; Jordan is the conventional short form; the local long form is Al Mamlakah al Urduniyah al Hashimiyah; and the former was Transjordan. (index mundi, n.d.). The origin of the name of Jordan was “derived from a Hebrew and Canaanite word” and is related to the River Jordan. Its meaning is “descend”; as the flowing river into the Dead Sea. (Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc. online; 2016).

During the Eastern Roman period, throughout Jordan, there was a great act of construction. The major cities of the Roman era developed and there was a boom in the regional population. In the 4th century, Christianity had been progressively accepted in the area; so that the churches and chapels grew suddenly across Jordan, and many of them were clustered together on the ancient Roman settlements’ foundations. Thereby, many pagan temples were destroyed. For the plague of 542 CE and the Sassanian invasion of 614 CE, there was a severe depopulation in the 6th and 7th centuries CE, In Jordan. The Sassanians, occupied Jordan, Palestine and Syria until the Eastern Roman Emperor Heraclius regained the area in 629 CE. (Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, History- Christendom and the Byzantines, n.d.).

When the Meccans threatened the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be Upon Him) and his followers, the migration to Medina in 622 CE- Hijra- occurred. When he (PBUH) returned to Mecca and converted its people to Islam; the new faith became widely known and present very quickly throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Thus, the Arabic language had progressively been as the main language. In 10 years the Arabs completely removed the Eastern Roman control over Jordan, Syria and Palestine. The Muslims took Damascus, and in 661 CE it became the capital city of the Umayyad Empire. As Jordan was close to Damascus, it flourished during the Umayyad period (661-750 CE). Its geographic position was strategic- it was on the road connecting pass for pilgrims to the holy Muslim sites in Arabia. Christianity was still commonly present through the 8th century. In 747 CE, a powerful earthquake destroyed many buildings in Jordan. Three years later Abbasids defeated the Umayyads; and they established their new capital city in Baghdad. Jordan became a “provincial backwater” from a great distance to the center of the empire. The Fatimids of Egypt gained control over Jordan in 969 CE. In 1095, the Emperor of Constantinople, Alexiis, made his European brothers know that his city was under “threat of attack by the Muslims”. Pope Urban II willed to assemble the army for the Crusades in a manner of supporting for Constantinople, for the recapturing of Jerusalem as well. The result was the conquest of Jerusalem. Crusaders willed to protect of the road to Jerusalem and prompted the Crusader King Baldwin I to construct a line of fortresses down the major pathway within the connections of Jordan, like Karak and Shobak. After having taken the control of Egypt and Syria, Salah ad-Din al-Ayyubi (Sultan Saladin), the Muslim commander, took the control of Jerusalem from the Crusaders at the Battle of Hittin in 1187 CE. He regained the pathway for the Muslim armies “to liberate Jerusalem”, for an effective elimination of the foreign power on Jordan. For the next 80 years, Salah ad-Din provided the ruling of Jordan, much of Syria and Egypt. In 1258 CE, an invasion of Mongols occurred. It was turned back in 1260 CE by Baybars, the Mamluk Sultan. The Mamluks seized the control of Jordan, Egypt, and Syria, from the capital city Cairo. After Jordan, Syria and Egypt were unified by the Ayyubids and Mamluks; Jordan regained welfare for its position. Trade and communication were strong with the reconstruction of castles and building of caravanserais; and the pilgrims were hosted. In 1401 CE another Mongol invasion made the region lose its strength. In 1516 CE, the Ottomans gained control over Jordan from the Mamluks, by the Battle of Ridaniya (Fanack Chronicle of the Middle East & North Africa, n.d.). Hence Jordan, for the next 4 centuries became a part of the Ottoman Empire. (The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, The Islamic Periods and the Crusades, n.d.). A relative welfare was seen in the agricultural villages in the 16th century. The Hejaz Railway constructed by Ottomans in 1910, that linked Mecca
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