

DEVELOPING RENAISSANCE: *NAHDA* DISCOURSE
IN JORDANIAN HUMANITIES TEXTBOOKS

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By

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ABSTRACT

This analysis addresses the subject of *nahda*, or renaissance, in Jordanian history, civics, religion, and literature textbooks from the 1970s to 2009. “*Nahda*” is a keyword in the textbooks signifying both the historical period of Arab modernist thought and nationalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the Jordanian state’s present-day national development. The textbooks use the language of *nahda* to portray the Hashemite king as Jordan’s historically qualified and legitimate leader. *Nahda* operates in nuanced ways across the genres. History and civics textbooks reflect “*nahda* as national development” in which the Hashemite kings are the primary actors in history and leaders of a comprehensive societal renaissance. Religion and literature textbooks, meanwhile, rely on “*nahda* as intellectual ideal” in which the state is hesitant to co-opt the ideals of pan-Arab and pan-Islamic unity because they exceed the territorially bounded Jordanian nation-state. These portrayals of *nahda* in the textbooks are coercive in the sense that they seek to preserve monarchic power by reducing Jordanian citizens to the loyal subjects of a progress-oriented king who not only raises their material well-being, but serves as the model for their civic virtue, tolerance, pluralism, and piety.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Dynasty and government serve as the world's market-place, attracting to it the products of scholarship and craftsmanship alike. Wayward wisdom and forgotten lore turn up there. In this market stories are told and items of historical information are delivered. Whatever is in demand on this market is in general demand everywhere else. Now, whenever the established dynasty avoids injustice, prejudice, weakness, and double-dealing, with determination keeping to the right path and never swerving from it, the wares on its market are as pure silver and fine gold. However, when it is influenced by selfish interests and rivalries, or swayed by vendors of tyranny and dishonesty, the wares of its market-place become as dross and debased metals. The intelligent critic must judge for himself as he looks around, examining this, admiring that, and choosing the other.¹

- Ibn Khaldun

Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true.²

- Michel Foucault

Textbook writing is a contentious process, for much is at stake in how knowledge is presented to the younger generation, those who will inherit the future of the nation. Wielded by governments, textbooks are tools to retell history and interpret social realities with the goal of promoting particular regimes of truth. They often seek to preserve elite power and hegemony by portraying official discourse as fact or debatable only within a range of acceptable parameters. Their truths, however, are hardly beyond critical analysis. Rather, textbooks can be teased apart and compared against other sources; their very words broken down, observed, and understood in context. Such a deconstructive process may reveal gold or dross, as Ibn Khaldun puts it, and perhaps help us understand when and why students and citizens examine this knowledge, admire that, and choose the other.

¹ Ibn Khaldun, *Ibn Khaldun: The Muqaddimah An Introduction to History*, ed. N.J. Dawood, trans. Franz Rosenthal, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 23-24.

² Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 131.

In the Arab world, textbooks are caught up in a web of discourses concerned with the future of the nation. These discourses – whether nationalist, socialist, Islamist, liberal, or otherwise – overlap, contradict, and respond to one another in complex ways in the discussion of the past and how to create the “good society.” Such contemporary intellectual exchange on Arab modernity and identity was sparked by waves of intellectual production in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in a period called the *Nahda*, or Arab renaissance/awakening. While the legacy of the *Nahda* is much contested in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, its centrality in the debate over identity and development of the modern Arab nation state has not escaped the attention of governments and their textbook-writers who co-opt it in their bid to construct national narratives.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan presents an interesting case study for the intersection of *nahda* discourses and the creation of knowledge for the consumption of students. Textbooks in the kingdom, produced by the Ministry of Education since the 1950s, reflect various intellectual trends in the Arab world, which often blend together. This analysis of Jordanian textbooks suggests that the state is increasingly asserting its own discourse across disciplines of knowledge. Building on its Hashemite identity, the state looks to “*nahda*” both as a historical epoch (capital-N *Nahda*) in which the Hashemite kings played a foundational role and as a catch-all word for its national project (small-n *nahda*). While such variance is not unique, given that *nahda* assumes a great variety of meanings for intellectuals and people in the region, the pattern of the Jordanian state’s portrayal of *nahda* is significant in its implications for Jordanian power relations: the state uses the language of *nahda* in the textbooks to legitimate Hashemite monarchic rule.

The approach in this analysis is to trace the treatment of “*nahda*” across four genres of Jordanian humanities textbooks – history, civics, religion, and literature – from the 1970s to 2009. I argue that the state constructs two primary discourses on *nahda* in these textbooks. First, the history and civics textbooks exhibit a discourse of “*nahda* as national development” in which the Hashemites are the primary actors in history and leaders of a comprehensive societal renaissance. In this narrative, Jordanian citizens are the loyal subjects of a progress-oriented king who not only raises their material well-being, but serves as the model of their civic virtue, tolerance, and pluralism. The year 1989 is a turning point in the curricular development of these textbooks: while earlier history textbooks generally cover Jordan as one lesson in the broader history of the Arab world, later texts “Jordanize” history by devoting entire books and chapters to the study of Jordanian history. Additionally, the civics curricula appear after 1989 – a year marking the return of parliamentary life to Jordan, a reinvigorated (if more exclusive) national identity, and the state’s increased reliance on international aid from neo-liberal institutions.

Religion and literature textbooks, meanwhile, rely on a discourse of “*nahda* as intellectual ideal.” In contrast to the prominent portrayal of the Hashemites in the history and civics textbooks, the state is hesitant to insert its Hashemite leadership into the religion and literature textbooks explicitly. I argue that this is due to the pan-Arab and pan-Islamic ideals these texts promote, which exceed the territorially bounded nation-state of Jordan. Even the literature and religion textbooks, however, are influenced by the events of 1989 and the new internationalism of the state. Particularly with the advent of a new king in 1999 and the events of September 11, 2001, which give birth to the 2004 Amman Message on Islamic moderation and tolerance, the textbooks begin to see the state’s penetration of the ideal and the imprinting of the Hashemite stamp on the religious and literary *nahda* dreamscape.

(a) Nahda: A Field of Intellectual Contestation

“*Nahda*” is loosely translated as renaissance. Stemming from the Arabic root *n-h-d*, associated with “rising” or “standing” up, the term has come to signify not only the phenomenon of renaissance, but an era beginning in the latter half of the nineteenth century that witnessed a revival of Arabic language and literature and a growing sense of a unified Arab nation (*watan*).³ Albert Hourani poses the central question *Nahda*-era Arab intellectuals addressed: “What is the good society, the norm which should direct the work of reform?”⁴ This question continues to pervade contemporary Arab thought. Particularly after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and loss of historic Palestine, Arab intellectuals have reflected on the legacy of the *Nahda* and how its promises of unity and civilizational progress stack up against the present reality of divided post-colonial nation-states and incomplete (often ineffective) development.⁵

While it is difficult to categorize nuanced intellectual trends in broad terms, Arab thinkers have taken various approaches in conceiving of renaissance and responding to the historical challenge to be “modern” as articulated by *Nahda*-era writers and European missionaries and Orientalists.⁶ Islamists such as Muhammad ‘Amara tend to view a holistic “Arab-Islamic renaissance” as the path that state and society should take to rise up out of decline, in contrast to a Western model that turned to secularism for its renaissance.⁷ This Islamist trend, while ascendant in the latter half of the twentieth century, is not without its critics coming from different backgrounds. Sadik al-Azm, for example, says that while he used to consider his

³ N. Tomiche, “*Nahda*,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, ed. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, and W.P. Heinrichs (Brill, 2010).

⁴ Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 67.

⁵ Issa J. Boullata, *Trends and Issues in Contemporary Arab Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 5.

⁶ Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, *Contemporary Islam and the Challenge of History* (Albany: State University of New York, 1982), 14.

⁷ Alexander Flores, “Secularism, Integralism and Political Islam: The Egyptian Debate,” *Middle East Report* 183 (July-August 1993): 33.

socialist-nationalist project as having “historically superseded” the *Nahda*, the discussion of renaissance has been revived with Islamist reflection on the Islamic reformers of the *Nahda*, including Muhammad ‘Abduh and Jamal al-Din al-Afghani.⁸ Liberal-secularists meanwhile are developing their own approaches to national “enlightenment.”⁹

Western scholars have also addressed *nahda*. One strand of scholarship focuses on the supposed backwardness of Arab society and asks what is “wrong” with the Arab “mindset”¹⁰ or why the nationalist-modernist “dream palace” is crumbling under an ascendant “nemesis” political Islam.¹¹ Bernard Lewis perhaps goes the farthest among this group of scholars in portraying the *Nahda* as a liberal movement entirely European in origin, implemented only partially and by non-Muslims, and rejected by increasingly militant and fatalistic Muslims whose societies have failed to progress economically and politically due to a “historical romanticism” with a supposed golden age past.¹²

These scholars’ attention to the secular-religious question is not necessarily misplaced, given the centrality of the question to the Islamic reformists of the *Nahda* era and post-*Nahda* Islamist movements. Where these scholars can be questioned, however, is their tendency to essentialize their Muslim subjects and place them in fixed cultural categories. Lewis’ portrayal of Islamists, for example, is centered around the 1979 Iranian Revolution, which he says returned Islam as organized religion “to something like the status which it enjoyed in the medieval world.”¹³ More careful studies recognize the diversity of thought within Islamist circles,¹⁴ as

⁸ _____, “An Interview with Sadik al-Azm,” *Arab Studies Quarterly* 19, 3 (Summer 1997): 115.

⁹ Fauzi M. Najjar, “Ibn Rushd (Averroes) and the Egyptian Enlightenment Movement,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 31, 2 (November 2004).

¹⁰ Brian Whitaker, *What’s Really Wrong With the Middle East* (London: Saqi, 2009), 19.

¹¹ Fouad Ajami, *The Dream Palace of the Arabs: A Generation’s Odyssey* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998), xiv.

¹² Bernard Lewis, *Islam in History: Ideas, People, and Events in the Middle East* (Chicago: Open Court, 1993), 351.

¹³ Lewis, *Islam in History*, 268.

well as Islamists' own self-conception as both modern and pious.¹⁵ Such studies contest Benedict Anderson's assertion that prayer has been replaced by newspaper reading as modern nations are imagined¹⁶ by suggesting that it is possible for one to both pray and read the paper without sacrificing her modernity.

In contrast to the culturalist Western academic take on the *Nahda*, a more nuanced intellectual exchange has emerged between the likes of Hisham Sharabi and Ernest Dawn. Sharabi frames the *Nahda* as primarily a struggle between Islamic reformers asking "Who are we?" and nationalists who had already found the answer in Arab culture (with obvious preference for the secular tendencies of the latter),¹⁷ whereas Dawn questions the assumption that the Arab nationalist project was primarily one begun by Western-inspired secularists, asserting "Arabism's birth in Islamic modernism."¹⁸ Rashid Khalidi takes a more middle-ground position, recognizing the limited impact of the Syrian-Christian-led literary *nahda* on the Muslim-majority population, but stressing the importance of pre-World War I Arabist thought for the later development of Arab nationalism.¹⁹

This background understanding of intellectual approaches to the *Nahda* is useful in the present analysis of Jordanian textbooks because the textbooks engage with various discourses, blending Islamist, pan-Arab, and nationalist ideas. Although some scholars, such as Steve

¹⁴ Asma Afsaruddin, "Demarcating Fault-Lines Within Islam: Muslim Modernists and Hardline Islamists Engage the Shari'a," in *Shari'a as Discourse: Legal Traditions and the Encounter with Europe*, ed. Jørgen S. Nielsen and Lisbet Christoffersen (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2010), 35–37.

¹⁵ Lara Deeb, *An Enchanted Modern: Gender and Public Piety in Shi'i Lebanon* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 3.

¹⁶ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1983), 35.

¹⁷ Hisham Sharabi, *Arab Intellectuals and the West: The Formative years, 1875-1914* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), 130.

¹⁸ Dawn C. Ernest, "The Origins of Arab Nationalism," in *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, ed. Rashid Khalidi, Lisa Anderson, Muhammad Muslih, and Reeva S. Simon (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 19.

¹⁹ Rashid Khalidi, "Ottomanism and Arabism in Syria Before 1914: A Reassessment," in *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, ed. Rashid Khalidi, Lisa Anderson, Muhammad Muslih, and Reeva S. Simon (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 51.

Tamari, question the assumption common to all of these discourses – that civilizational “rise-decline-awakening” even exists – by pointing out the difficulty of containing the *Nahda* within precise historical parameters,²⁰ I maintain that the truth of the awakening/renaissance narrative is not the most important consideration. Rather, the more interesting questions are: how does the discussion of renaissance take place in particular contexts, what are its effects, and how does power figure into the equation?

In Jordan, perhaps the most outspoken proponent of *nahda* is Prince El-Hassan bin Talal, uncle of the current king ʿAbdallah II. For El-Hassan, “Arab renaissance” came in two phases: the literary and intellectual renaissance of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the “Great Arab Revolt” against Ottoman rule led by Sharif al-Husayn of Mecca in 1916 with British backing. The first “continues to pervade the thoughtful Arab soul,” while the second “took a different, worldlier form” spurring political nationalism.²¹ Given present-day bumps in the road to development in the Arab world, these two *nahdas*, in his view, demonstrate the need for a third *nahda* – based this time on gender equality, democracy, human rights, security, religious freedom, protection of the environment, and rule of law – summed up in making “the citizen a ‘stakeholder’ in his country.”

El-Hassan’s call for a third *nahda* is a useful introduction to the Hashemite *nahda* discourse that this analysis traces in Jordanian humanities textbooks. First, El-Hassan teases out two aspects of the *Nahda* – the political/worldly and the literary/intellectual. I draw a similar analytic dividing line between the development-oriented history/civics textbooks and the ideal-prone literature/religion textbooks. Second, El-Hassan’s reference to the Hashemite-led Great

²⁰ Steve Tamari, “Between the ‘Golden Age’ and the Renaissance: Islamic Higher Education in Eighteenth-Century Damascus,” in *Trajectories of Education in the Arab World: Legacies and Challenges*, ed. Osama Abi-Mershed (New York: Routledge, 2010), 37.

²¹ El-Hassan bin Talal, “The Third Arab Renaissance,” *Al-Ahram Weekly*, November 13, 2007, accessed April 24, 2014, <http://www.commongroundnews.org/article.php?id=22093&lan=en&sid=1&sp=0>.

Arab Revolt hints at the primacy of this event in the Hashemite narrative. The Revolt in the textbooks is the Hashemites' defining moment in the *Nahda*-era. It represents their triumphant entry onto the stage of Arab nationalist history and the territory that would become Jordan, and it historically qualifies them to lead the ongoing *nahda* of developing the Jordanian nation. Third, El-Hassan's third *nahda* is particularly heavy with international development agency-speak (e.g., portraying the citizen as "stakeholder") and concern for managing the pressures of globalization. The post-1989 textbooks similarly invoke internationally friendly categories of meaning in articulating the twenty-first century, comprehensive renaissance the Hashemites claim to be leading.

The political realities in Jordan are, of course, more nuanced than either El-Hassan or the school textbooks admit. For one, the Hashemites are hardly democrats. Jordan's semi-authoritarian system permits a degree of popular participation in governance,²² but places the ultimate levers of power in royal hands,²³ thereby preventing democratic maturation and undermining Hashemite claims to be leading a civic and democratic renaissance. Another complication is that the Jordanian classroom has always been a politically contested space in which students and teachers challenge that state's Hashemite-centric discourse. In the 1950s, for example, teachers brought their Arab nationalist leanings into the classroom and together with students made up the largest component of mass demonstrations against Hashemite rule.²⁴ Likewise today, Jordanian students of Palestinian origin walk into the classroom with their own

²² Ghassan Salame, "Small is Pluralistic: Democracy as an Instrument of Civil Peace," in *Democracy Without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World*, ed. Ghassan Salame (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001), 87.

²³ Shadi Hamid, "Jordan: The Myth of the Democratizing Monarchy," in *The Struggle Over Democracy in the Middle East: Regional Politics and External Policies*, ed. Nathan J. Brown and Emad El-Din Shahin (New York: Routledge, 2010), 122

²⁴ Betty Anderson, "Domestic Influences on Policy-Making: The History of the Jordanian National Movement, 1946-57," in *The Resilience of Hashemite Rule: Politics and State in Jordan, 1946-67*, ed. Tariq Tell (Amman: CERMOC, 2001), 56.

complex dual-national identities and have protested their underrepresentation in universities vis-à-vis students of East Bank/Transjordanian origin.²⁵

Finally, this analysis would be incomplete without noting that the Hashemite *nahda* discourse is fragile from both historical and conceptual perspectives. As this analysis will demonstrate, the textbooks selectively choose which *Nahda*-era stories to tell, carefully avoiding criticism lodged by prominent thinkers (such as Rashid Rida and Mustafa Wahbi al-Tal) against the Hashemites for their cooperation with British colonial administrators and neglect of early Transjordanian citizens' demands for inclusion in state apparatuses. Furthermore, on a conceptual level, "*nahda*" is potentially just as prone to sparking disloyalty to the Hashemites as it is loyalty. In fact, there is precedent for this. As Orit Bashkin demonstrates, the Ba'athist ideologues who overthrew Hashemite rule in Iraq in 1958 sought to revolutionize the *Nahda* by vowing their commitment to "revival" and highlighting the Hashemite monarchy's failure to bring about revival and renaissance in the country.²⁶ Although the Hashemite regime in Jordan weathered its own Arab nationalist challenge in the 1950s and is seemingly well established today, the Arab Spring demonstrates the revolutionary potential of slogans such as "bread, freedom, social justice" (*'iysh, huriyya, 'adala ijtimaiyya*)²⁷ – the twenty-first century equivalent of "revival" and "renaissance." By using the language of *nahda* in official statements and school textbooks, therefore, the Hashemites may be planting the discursive seeds of their own undoing, or at least their political transformation.²⁸

²⁵ Yitzhak Reiter, "Higher Education and Sociopolitical Transformation in Jordan," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 29, 2 (November 2002).

²⁶ Orit Bashkin, "Looking Forward to the Past: Nahda, Revolution, and the Early Ba'ath in Iraq," in *Other Renaissances: A New Approach to World Literature*, ed. Brenda Deen Schildgen, Gang Zhou, and Sander L. Gilman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 61.

²⁷ Paul Sedra, "The Revolution and History," *Jadaliyya*, Jan. 25, 2013, accessed April 24, 2014, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/9764/the-revolution-and-history>.

²⁸ The propensity of education to challenge elite power is not unique to Jordan. As Gregory Starrett demonstrates in his study of education in Egypt, although cultural elites believe modern education to be a means of social

(b) Methodology: Critical Discourse Analysis of Textbooks

In studying Jordanian humanities textbooks through the lens of *nahda*, I employ the tools of qualitative content analysis and postcolonial theory on discourse construction. I seek to evaluate *what* the texts say in relation to *nahda*, *how* they say it (i.e., the discursive strategies they employ), in *which context*, and toward *which ends*.

Content analysis is a broad research technique for making valid inferences from a text to its context.²⁹ Content analysis of textbooks may be qualitative or quantitative in nature. Quantitative analyses measure how frequently words and phrases appear in textbooks, whereas qualitative analyses delve deeper into the construction of the texts, inferring “readability and reading interest of a text from the kind of words, grammatical constructions, punctuation, and so on used.”³⁰ Discourse analysis is a subset of qualitative content analysis in which the researcher “deconstructs textbook content to identify what information, groups and events the author values, takes for granted, valorises or regards as unimportant.”³¹ Discourse analysis may also consider changes in textbook content over time by taking into account both internal factors, such as the educational constituencies lobbying for curricular change, and external factors, such as social and political developments.³²

Discourse analysis of textbooks is a particularly important method for understanding national narratives because embedded within textbooks are “stories that nation states choose to tell about themselves and which, it has been decided, offer a core of cultural knowledge which

pacification, they underestimate students’ reception of lessons in school and the potential for schooling to create tension and contradiction. Gregory Starrett, *Putting Islam to Work: Education, Politics, and Religious Transformation in Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 24.

²⁹ Klaus Krippendorff, “Content Analysis” (Departmental Papers, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, 1989), 403.

³⁰ Krippendorff, “Content Analysis,” 405.

³¹ Jason Nicholls, “Methods in School Textbook Research,” *International Journal of Historical Learning, Teaching and Research* 3, 2 (July 2003): 13.

³² William A. Reid, *Curriculum as Institution and Practice: Essays in the Deliberative Tradition* (London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 1999), 152.

future generations are expected to both assimilate and support.”³³ Textbook knowledge is not neutral, however. Rather, textbooks reflect knowledge considered important by powerful groups who compete to have a say in how collective national memory is formed. In a Foucauldian sense then, textbook discourses can be said to always be operating in the field of power relations.³⁴

Postcolonial theory also has implications for discourse analysis of textbooks. It suggests that texts should be seen as a form of “re-presentation,” or a process by which colonized and formerly colonized peoples write themselves into national scripts and reclaim subaltern identities.³⁵ Partha Chatterjee, for example, demonstrates how nineteenth-century nationalist thinkers in India sought to reclaim education from the British colonialists by writing their own authoritative Indian history books, which called for a renaissance of national culture.³⁶ Even in “writing back to the empire,”³⁷ however, subaltern texts (like all texts) remain “worldly,” that is, “part of the social world, human life, and of course the historical moments in which they are located and interpreted.”³⁸ Thus they too are subject to critical analysis of their content and context.

Postcolonial theory helps to provide context. It suggests that texts often resort to “Othering” perceived outsiders as culturally backward.³⁹ The curricula British colonial administrators promoted in Egypt and the Levant, for example, covered European history, the European

³³ Keith Crawford, “The Role and Purpose of Textbooks,” *International Journal of Historical Learning, Teaching and Research* 3, 2 (July 2003): 5.

³⁴ Joao M. Paraskeva, *Conflicts in Curriculum Theory: Challenging Hegemonic Epistemologies* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 175.

³⁵ Shehla Burney, *Pedagogy of the Other: Edward Said, Postcolonial Theory, and Strategies for Critique* (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 64.

³⁶ Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 79.

³⁷ Burney, *Pedagogy of the Other*, 105.

³⁸ Edward Said, *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (New York: Random House, 1991), 4.

³⁹ Burney, *Pedagogy of the Other*, 175.

Renaissance, and other topics unresponsive to the needs of the Arab students who read them.⁴⁰ Even in the colonial context, however, coercive knowledge production was always contingent on colonized people's localized production and performance of education.⁴¹

Studies of Arab textbooks demonstrate that newly independent postcolonial states continue the colonial tradition of using coercive discourses in their school curricula to bolster their regimes of truth. Gregory Starrett theorizes that modern Arab textbooks should be read as

symptoms of a political order whose reformist modernism proclaims that the future can be shaped through the personal transformation formal education brings, at the same time as it hedges its bets, as all states do, by deploying the ancient and indispensable troika of police, patronage, and propaganda that shapes people's interpretation of the books they read in school.⁴²

Similarly, scholars have pointed to the Jordanian regime's use of textbooks to discursively marginalize threats to Hashemite power, including the Arab nationalist movement of the 1950s⁴³ and the Palestinian demography in Jordan.⁴⁴ Others demonstrate the regime's use of archeological sites and myths of antiquity in the textbooks to produce a more exclusive Jordanian national identity in the 2000s under the slogan "Jordan First."⁴⁵ My analysis of Jordanian textbooks reveals a similar trend: the regime uses *nahda* discourse in the textbooks to reduce Jordanian citizens – the relevant "other" – to the loyal subjects of a progress-oriented king singularly qualified to lead national renaissance.

⁴⁰ Kwabena Dei Ofori-Attah, *Going to School in the Middle East and North Africa* (London: Greenwood Press, 2008), 19.

⁴¹ Daud Ali and Indra Sengupta, introduction to *Knowledge Production, Pedagogy, and Institutions in Colonial India*, ed. Indra Sengupta and Daud Ali (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2011), 6-7.

⁴² Gregory Starrett, "Textbook Meanings and the Power of Interpretation," in *Teaching Islam: Textbooks and Religion in the Middle East*, ed. Eleanor Abdella Doumato and Gregory Starrett (London: Lynne Rienner, 2007), 218.

⁴³ Betty S. Anderson, "Writing the Nation: Textbooks of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 221, 1-2 (2001): 9.

⁴⁴ Nasser, *Palestinian Identity in Jordan and Israel*, 141.

⁴⁵ Elena Dodge Corbett, "Jordan First: A History of the Intellectual and Political Economy of Jordanian Antiquity" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2009), 274.

Katalin Morgan and Elizabeth Henning outline a useful model for textbook discourse analysis that I will follow. They suggest that the researcher consider: the types of knowledge the textbooks mediate; the social consequences of advancing that knowledge; the “origin myths” the students are asked to identify; the emotional response, or reflexivity, the texts seek to induce; stories told; and textbook design, including images, formatting, and languages (which are all sign-makers orienting the reader).⁴⁶

Pursuant to this model, I am careful in my investigation of *nahda* discourse in Jordanian textbooks to consider several methodologically relevant issues, including: the type of knowledge addressed; the type of renaissance myth advanced; the loyalty and submission to the Hashemite regime that the texts seek to induce in students; and the pictures and lists that populate the texts. In my Conclusion, I include a chart summarizing variances and similarities among history, civics, literature, and religion texts on these methodological dimensions.

There are several limits to my analysis. First, as a textual study, my analysis does not address how textbooks are taught in the Jordanian classroom and received by students.⁴⁷ Rather than uncovering what is *actually* conveyed to students, I reveal the “wish-images,” or official narratives, that state actors seek to convey through the textbooks.⁴⁸ Although lacking the breadth of a study on both textbook content and reception, my analysis explores content in depth and draws from it critical conclusions about the nature of the state and implications for power configurations in Jordan.

⁴⁶ Katalin Morgan and Elizabeth Henning, “Designing a Tool for History Textbook Analysis,” *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 14, 1 (January 2013): 24-36.

⁴⁷ Others such as Fida Adely have addressed this subject. Fida J. Adely, *Gendered Paradoxes: Educating Jordanian Women in Nation, Faith, and Progress* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

⁴⁸ Mandana E. Limbert, “Oman: Cultivating Good Citizens and Religious Virtue,” in *Teaching Islam: Textbooks and Religion in the Middle East*, ed. Eleanor Abdella Doumato and Gregory Starrett (London: Lynne Rienner, 2007), 121.

Second, my analysis does not address in great detail at which stage of education and for which groups of students each of the textbooks is taught. According to the Ministry of Education's Curriculum Department, all Jordanian primary school students study the same textbooks, including history, civics, religion, and literature textbooks.⁴⁹ At the secondary school level, however, students pursue one of several separate tracks, primary among them: humanities, sciences, information management, and health. Secondary school students in all tracks study religion, "general culture," and grammar, but only humanities students are assigned history and literature textbooks. Although I provide grade levels for each textbook in footnotes, I do not explore the pedagogical significance of how texts are written differently for different levels, but rather delve directly into their content.

Finally, I analyze *nahda* across a range of textbook genres and publication years from the 1970s to 2000s in order to gauge treatment of *nahda* as comprehensively as possible. Often, however, textbooks of one genre will include lessons from another. History textbooks, for example, discuss civic virtues, while civics textbooks frequently reference significant events in Jordanian history such as the Great Arab Revolt. Other textbooks, such as the *General Culture* series, do not fit neatly into one genre. Thus, I note throughout my analysis where disciplines of knowledge are fused. Similarly, while I point to 1989 as an important year for curricular development in Jordan, many of the trends I highlight in earlier textbooks persist in post-1989 textbooks. Thus, I recognize that 1989 is not a hard dividing line for curricular reform, even as I demonstrate generally that post-1989 textbooks have increasingly portrayed the Hashemite regime as central to telling Jordanian history, building a cohesive national identity, and preserving intellectual and religious heritage.

⁴⁹ Jordanian Ministry of Education, "Editions of Approved Textbooks and Their Prices, 2012-2013," accessed April 24, 2014, [http://www.moe.gov.jo/Files/\(25-6-2012\)\(12-47-27%20PM\).pdf](http://www.moe.gov.jo/Files/(25-6-2012)(12-47-27%20PM).pdf) [Arabic].

II. *NAHDA* AS STATE-GUIDED DEVELOPMENT: HISTORY AND CIVICS TEXTBOOKS

Jordanian history and civics textbooks reveal the Hashemite regime's idealization of past renaissance and its tendency to portray present-day national development efforts as guided by a legacy of greatness. Epitomized by the Great Arab Revolt led by Sharif al-Husayn in 1916, the *Nahda* era in Jordanian history textbooks comes to represent a glorious revolution in which the Hashemites are the main actors in history. "*Nahda*" does not signify only a historical era in the textbooks; rather it comes to describe all of the educational, economic, social, and political projects the Hashemite kings have engaged in since the Revolt and until the present-day. These projects, the textbooks say, are imbued with the nationalist spirit of the Revolt.

Framing *nahda* as an ongoing renaissance led by the Hashemite kings enables the regime to engage in another development project of sorts: molding moderate Jordanian citizens with lessons about tolerance and democracy in civics textbooks. Prompted by international aid organizations concerned with stabilizing an unpredictable Arab-Islamic culture in a globalized era, the Hashemite regime has made significant changes to its civics curricula in recent years to promote globalized values of citizenship. But the regime has also used tolerance discourse as pretext to designate, and thereby limit, the citizens it wants to participate meaningfully in Jordan's semi-authoritarian, monarchic system. Groups that pose a political threat to the regime, such as political parties, are portrayed as falling outside the boundaries of tolerance.

The history and civics texts in this chapter employ a variety of discursive strategies that are conducive to preserving Hashemite power. Selective story-telling is one. Early historical events in the birth of the nation are framed as inevitable, as guided by a superbly qualified leadership that not only fought for the pan-Arab nation in the face of foreign Ottoman rule and

British colonial manipulation, but that forged a nation-state to fulfill the promises of the past: unity, nationalism, cultural revival, renaissance. Lists of historical events and national achievements in the texts also help discursively anchor the Hashemite identity of the state, and thus the uncontested right of the Hashemites to rule it. Finally, the texts utilize words such as “revolt” and “*nahda*” interchangeably in several instances, fusing the significance of the short-term armed revolt launched by the Hashemites with a broader civilizational project in the Middle East spanning decades. The overall message is: the state is the primary actor throughout the nation’s history and in developing society, and the state is Hashemite.

The year 1989 marked the beginning a formative period for Jordanian curricula. Generally, history textbooks appearing before 1989 focus on the Hashemites’ national development of the country as one lesson in the broader history of the Arabs, whereas post-1989 textbooks “Jordanize” history by devoting significantly more space to the Hashemite narrative and emphasizing Jordan’s leadership of the Arab world. Civics textbooks, meanwhile, appear as their own genre in schools after 1989.⁵⁰ These curricular developments are not unrelated to the political and social instability that shook Jordan in the late 1980s when citizens launched mass protests demanding a return to parliamentary life after two decades of martial law and criticizing the regime’s neo-liberal economic reforms and relinquishment of claims to the West Bank (*fakk al-irtibat*). Like other nations that reformed school curricula in the face of mass social

⁵⁰ Civics has always been taught in some form in Jordan; however, before the appearance of the “national upbringing” (*al-tarbiya al-wataniyya*) series in the 1990s, civics lessons were contained in social studies (*al-tarbiya al-ijtima’iyya*) or geography curricula. The 1967 *My Little Nation* geography textbook is a good example. Yacqub al-Dajani et al., *My Little Nation*, fourth grade (Amman: Ministry of Education, 1967) [Arabic]. Child characters in the text take a tour of various historical and religious sites on both the East and West Banks (both of which were under Jordanian control until 1967). The students learn not only about the physical locations of the sites, but the teacher-guide emphasizes the social unity of the Jordanians throughout the kingdom. The only differences the teacher-guide mentions are in terms of dwelling (urbanite, bedouin, and villager), thereby avoiding any suggestion of ethnic, religious, or national division. Most notably the text implicitly denies that a separate Palestinian national identity exists on the West Bank. Riad M. Nasser, *Palestinian Identity in Jordan and Israel: The Necessary ‘Other’ in the Making of a Nation* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 68.

instability,⁵¹ Jordan began a process of textbook re-writing after 1989, which this chapter argues, was geared at both calming social tensions and asserting a new “democratic,” East Bank national identity in the country following the 1989 parliamentary elections. It is not unsurprising, therefore, that post-1989 textbooks “Jordanize” history at the same time as they seek to shape the modern Jordanian citizen-voter with civics lessons.

(a) History Textbooks: Rooting the Great Arab Revolt

History writing is a power-laden process, one that simplifies and often obscures complex historical events. The very act of writing history is fraught with the potential danger of challenging citizens’ identities, for one makes history permanent by fixing it in ink, in contrast to the keepers of oral history who are able to change their narratives depending on the audience.⁵² In the context of history textbook-writing, the threat is that government-funded text writers will glorify the founders of the state and present-day successor regimes as the sole actors in the nation’s history worthy of mention or praise. Taken too far, such texts become like “those dreary textbooks” described by Marc Bloch that “surrender the mass of defenseless readers to the false brilliance of a bogus history, in which lack of seriousness, picturesque rubbish, and political prejudices are supposed to be redeemed by shameless self-assurance.”⁵³

While Bloch’s portrayal of textbooks is a reminder of the coercive role they play in monopolizing national history, a critical analysis of history textbooks also recognizes the constructive role textbooks play in crafting national narratives. As Ralph Coury explains, post-colonial Arab states certainly have flawed records in terms of class, gender, and minority

⁵¹ The United States, for example, sought to make drastic changes to its school curricula following the instability of the 1960s and the erosion of support for racial segregation. Paraskeva, *Conflicts in Curriculum Theory*, 95.

⁵² Andrew Shryock, *Nationalism and the Genealogical Imagination: Oral History and Textual Authority in Tribal Jordan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 32.

⁵³ Marc Bloch, *The Historian’s Craft* (New York: Vintage, 1964), 87.

oppression and the neo-colonial relationships they are complicit in maintaining; however, “negativity towards these polities, and particularly the summary dismissal of their real achievements, cannot be isolated from a universal intellectual and political assault upon states and their nationalisms as such.”⁵⁴ A more useful approach to understanding historical education, therefore, is to see it as part of the project of “creating a nation” by establishing a collective memory for national identity to latch onto – particularly in states where territorial boundaries do not necessarily correspond to the ancestral homeland claimed by the nation.⁵⁵ Power is not absent from the process of crafting national mythologies, for even as these mythologies reify the imagined community that is the nation, they are also sites of competition in which counter-hegemonic forces contest dominant narratives.⁵⁶

Jordan is a particularly interesting case of post-colonial national identity. While Jordanian national identity is no less “imagined” than any other, “outsiders” played a formative role in Jordan’s history and continue to do so in the present: British colonialists conceived of its borders; the Hashemite family from the present-day Sa^cudi Hijaz rule over it; a majority of its population are of Palestinian origin; and its resource-poor economy depends on foreign assistance in the form of aid and remittances.⁵⁷ Nonetheless, this section maintains, Jordanian identity is constructed according to certain unifying mythologies, one of the most prominent of which is the Hashemite-led Arab Revolt.

⁵⁴ Ralph M. Coury, “Nationalism and Culture in the Arab and Islamic Worlds: A Critique of Modern Scholarship,” in *Islamic Thought in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Suha Taji-Farouki and Basheer M. Nafi (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 156-157.

⁵⁵ Michael E. Geisler, “What Are National Symbols – and What Do They Do to Us?,” in *National Symbols, Fractured Identities: Contesting the National Narrative*, ed. Michael E. Geisler (Middlebury: Middlebury College Press, 2005), xv-xvi.

⁵⁶ Geisler, “What Are National Symbols,” xxxi.

⁵⁷ Joseph A. Massad, *Colonial Effects: The Making of National Identity in Jordan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 15.

(i) Early History Textbooks: Revolt and Progress

Central to the formulation of national development among Arab elites is the search for progress, or the idea “that human history represents a continuous movement from bad to better, as if climbing the rungs of a ladder.”⁵⁸ While historical progress is a modern idea stemming from the European Renaissance that stands in contrast to a cyclical view of history held by ancient Greek philosophers and even the fourteenth-century thinker Ibn Khaldun, the discourse on progress has taken root in the Arab world as the result of a tendency of the conquered to imitate the conqueror; furthermore, it helps to explain the *khawaga*, or foreigner complex, many Arab elites have in viewing the West as model for development.⁵⁹

Modern Arab historiography is, of course, wide-ranging in its theoretical approaches to history, and many intellectuals have developed elaborate, indigenous ideas on progress and the rise of the nation. In contrast to Muslim chroniclers of the Middle Ages who identified cyclical, recurring themes without attention to geographical boundaries, modern *Nahda*-era historians viewed the territorially bounded nation-state as itself the “subject of historical treatment, lending its name to whichever dynasties are deemed worthy of the characteristics of its national identity.”⁶⁰ The nineteenth-century Egyptian thinker, Rifa‘a al-Tahtawi, for example, responded to European Orientalist criticism of Islamic backwardness with a focus on illustrious leaders like Muhammad ‘Ali who were called by history to improve society.⁶¹ The late nineteenth-century Syrian writer Ilyas Matar likewise identified a long history of glorious accomplishments contributing to an emerging Syrian consciousness,⁶² which Jurji Yanni saw as crystallizing in a

⁵⁸ Galal Amin, *The Illusion of Progress in the Arab World: A Critique of Western Misconstructions*, trans. David Wilmsen (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2006), 1.

⁵⁹ Amin, *Illusion of Progress*, 9.

⁶⁰ Youssef M. Choueiri, *Modern Arab Historiography: Historical Discourse and the Nation-State* (London: Routledge, 2003), 7.

⁶¹ Choueiri, *Modern Arab Historiography*, 21.

⁶² Choueiri, *Modern Arab Historiography*, 50.

yaqdha, or nationalist awakening, sparked by the new forms of media and education westerners introduced.⁶³ The early twentieth-century meanwhile saw thinkers such as Shafiq Ghurbal, who wrote on the revolutionary, anti-colonialist aspect of awakening and viewed history as a stabilizing process of self-improvement whose goal is the creation of the responsible citizen.⁶⁴

Contemporary Arab historians struggle to reconcile *Nahda*-era thought on national progress with the historical reality of a divided Arab nation. Chapter III explores the ideological divisions created by the events of 1967 in detail, but in a nutshell, the pan-Arab unity and development promised by the *Nahda* was frustrated by the loss of Palestine, failure of Arab nationalism, and hardening of colonially imposed borders. While Albert Hourani held onto the progress of the *Nahda* as a historical school of thought to be encouraged by Arab intellectuals,⁶⁵ others like Kamal Salibi documented the potentially violent splintering of the nation-state between nativist and pan-Arab trends – no more apparent than in Lebanon, where historical myths stressing either the native Phoenician past or regional Arab-Islamic belonging competed with one another.⁶⁶ In contrast to nineteenth-century Levantine historiography, which explored regional connections to Egypt and a territorial, socially inclusive identity that superseded religious loyalties,⁶⁷ contemporary Arab historians wrestle with the reality of social division even within the nation-state. Progress and national development are therefore complicated today by the messiness of post-colonial politics.

⁶³ Choueiri, *Modern Arab Historiography*, 60.

⁶⁴ Choueiri, *Modern Arab Historiography*, 79.

⁶⁵ Choueiri, *Modern Arab Historiography*, 1.

⁶⁶ Choueiri, *Modern Arab Historiography*, 132. It must be noted, however, that Salibi is more optimistic regarding Jordanian history. In his rather uncritical book on the subject, Salibi praises Hashemite state-building, noting °Abdallah's status as an intellectual with a "vast store of historical and literary information." Kamal Salibi, *The Modern History of Jordan* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 1993), 75. For Salibi, the question of sectarianism is a paramount one, and is handled with delicacy in Jordan where the Hashemites embraced Christians at the founding. Salibi, *Modern History of Jordan*, 41.

⁶⁷ Thomas Phillip, "Class, Community, and Arab Historiography in the Early Nineteenth Century: The Dawn of a New Era," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 16, 2 (May 1984): 170-172.

Much like the *Nahda*-era historians, the authors of Jordanian history textbooks attempt to hold on to the promise of historical progress in constructing Jordanian national identity around the Hashemite crown and thereby avoid discussion of internal divisions within the contemporary nation-state. The textbooks are written in a teleological fashion to stress the historical inevitability of the creation of the Jordanian state by the Hashemite royalty,⁶⁸ which is the thankworthy source of Jordan's unity and progress up until the present day. As Betty Anderson says in her analysis of textbooks written in the 1950s:

Throughout the textbooks, the language is of 'modernity' and the singular role of the state in providing the means for achieving this goal. Thus, texts instruct students to look to Abdullah and Hussein as the generators of state largesse; to thank Abdullah and Hussein for protecting the rights of the Palestinians; and to profess loyalty to the Hashemite family, and by so doing simultaneously extend loyalty to the state itself. The overall message conveyed is that Jordan *is* the Hashemite family and, furthermore, that all students should express their gratitude for it.⁶⁹

The textbooks clearly exalt the Hashemite kings for the progress they realize throughout history in establishing the state. While they downplay uncomfortable historical facts that call into question the legitimacy of Hashemite decision-making, the books nonetheless root their Hashemite-centric historical narrative in specific events, primary among them the 1916 Great Arab Revolt against Ottoman rule in the Hijaz and Levant.

The Revolt's relevance in the textbooks to the treatment of national development and the *Nahda* is hard to understate. The Revolt is listed by the Ministry of Education as one of the pillars of the kingdom's philosophy of education, among which are also the Jordanian constitution, Arab-Islamic civilization, and the Jordanian national experience.⁷⁰ In the textbooks,

⁶⁸ The teleological tendency of Jordanian textbooks is not unique. Scholars have identified this trend in other histories of the *Nahda* era, such as George Antonius' 1969 book *The Arab Awakening*. William Cleveland, "The Arab Nationalism of George Antonius Reconsidered" in *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East*, ed. Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

⁶⁹ Anderson, "Writing the Nation," 9.

⁷⁰ Jordanian Ministry of Education, "The Education System in Jordan," accessed April 24, 2014, <http://www.moe.gov.jo/MenuDetails.aspx?MenuID=91> [Arabic].

the Revolt is portrayed as the political culmination of the intellectual renaissance led by the Arab nationalists and the Hashemites, including Sharif al-Husayn of Mecca and his sons, °Abdallah and Faysal, the former of whom would become the founder of the state of Transjordan.⁷¹ Furthermore according to this narrative, the renaissance has not ended, but rather continues with the development of the modern state of Jordan under Hashemite guidance.

A sixth-grade 1972 text on *Arab History* illustrates the mythical proportions the Revolt assumes in Jordanian textbooks. First, the text draws a teleological connection between the “state of backwardness and stagnancy that fell on the Arab *umma* at the end of the Ottoman rule” and the “state of awakening (*yaqdh*) and awareness, then armed revolt.”⁷² The text further cites several *Nahda*-era Islamic reformists, including Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and °Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi, for their campaigns of resistance to European colonialism and calls for Islamic unity. Finally, the text comes full circle to the present day by labeling King al-Husayn’s clearly post-*Nahda* supervision of Jordanian economics, culture, healthcare, agriculture and education as his “*nahda*” in each of these areas. The text thus ties the *Nahda* of the past to the *nahda* of the present – Jordan’s ongoing national development.

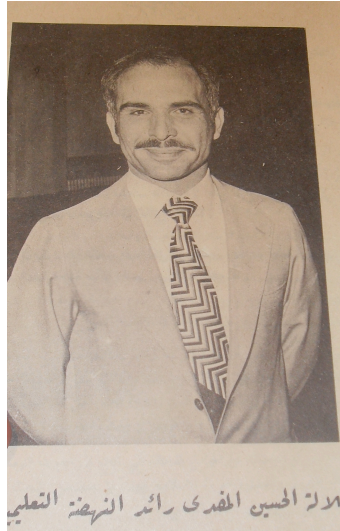
A later 1974 textbook is even more explicit in its characterization of the king as the leader of the ongoing *nahda*. The text displays the king’s picture on its first page with the caption, “His dearly beloved majesty al-Husayn, pioneer of the educational *nahda*.” Interestingly the subject of this book is the European Renaissance (translated as *nahda*), and the page immediately following the picture of the king discusses “different reasons that led to the

⁷¹ Tariq Tell, introduction to *The Resilience of the Hashemite Rule: Politics and State in Jordan, 1946-67*, ed. Tariq Tell (CERMOC, 2001), 21.

⁷² Hasani °Ayish et al., *Arab History: Modern and Contemporary*, sixth grade (Amman: Ministry of Education, 1972) [Arabic], 60.

European Renaissance, especially the influence of the East and the Arab-Islamic civilization.”⁷³

This association of the king with human progress across cultures discursively lauds the king as the primary builder and developer of Jordan. The overall message is one of an enlightened ruler singly qualified to guide the nation.



Capital-N *Nahda* as historical era and small-n *nahda* as national development are also fused in *General Culture*, a post-1989 high school social studies textbook. Appearing in 2007, the textbook itself is a fusion of various topics, which together convey the connection between past glory and present development, including: Islamic morals and citizenship, the Hashemites, the Amman Message, the Dead Sea scrolls, Jordanian landmarks, and Jordan as example of the modern state. “The Hashemites” chapter displays on its second page a chart tracing the Hashemites’ prophetic lineage and proceeds to number the sources of legitimacy of the Hashemite state, including religious (Prophetic lineage), historical (Arabist and Islamic history), political (including their genuine Arab nationalism and unifying impact for all Arabs), and achievement (including leading the Arab *nahda*). This section goes on to switch intermittently

⁷³ Sayf al-Din Zayd al-Kilani, *Modern Europe: Intellectual and Political Development*, third-level, secondary school (Amman: Ministry of Education, 1974) [Arabic], 5.

between “*nahda*” and “revolt” as keywords for the Hashemites’ historical appearance in the Levant and the territory that would become Jordan. The section on Sharif al-Husayn, for example, discusses the “leadership of the Great Arab *Nahda* movement” against the Ottomans⁷⁴ and connects it to state formation and development in the *mashriq*:

[The Hashemites led] the modern Arab *Nahda* project, the formation of its principles, and its translation into tangible reality in the Arab nations and kingdoms they built in the Hijaz, Syria, Jordan and Iraq. They were the reason for the rise of other Arab kingdoms and nations in the modern age after the Arabs had lost their power and unity since the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate. The Great Arab Revolt was the first revolt and *nahda* in the modern history of the Arabs.⁷⁵

Modern achievement, nationalism, even the Arab nation-state itself, is the result of the *nahda*/revolt of the Hashemites, the texts imply. So great was the Hashemite’s contribution in the Arab Revolt to the broader Arab *Nahda* that the Hashemites are historically on par with the Abbasids and their golden era. From revolution to nation-building, the Hashemites are pioneers and models to be emulated.

The lists in this text are particularly impressive. The list of Hashemite “positions against injustice” jumps from Muhammad bin °Abdallah in 145 (*hijri* calendar) to Sharif al-Husayn in 1913. The link between *Nahda*-era intellectuals and the Hashemites makes its way into another list, which emphasizes the inter-faith, Muslim-Christian nature of the Revolt (a topic earlier textbooks did not feel the need to do). Yet other lists trace the nationalism of the kings of Jordan, as well as their *nahdas* in the fields of education, health, industry, agriculture, tourism and economics. The present king °Abdallah II appears at the end of these lists, the logical successor of the glorious achievements of past Hashemite enlightened rulers.

The discursive effect of fusing *nahda*/revolt and *nahda*/progress is legitimation of the Hashemites’ arrival on the Arab nationalist scene and their founding of the Jordanian nation-

⁷⁴ Ghazi Muhammad Talal °Abdallah et al., *General Culture* (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2009) [Arabic], 85.

⁷⁵ °Abdallah et al., *General Culture*, 79-80.

state. By rooting the overthrow of Ottoman rule in the *Nahda* era, the textbooks frame the Hashemites as inheritors of the promise of pan-Arab unity that was so central to the *Nahda* and thereby obscure the historical reality that Jordan's borders were carved out of the larger Arab nation by British colonialists after the Ottoman collapse. The textbooks furthermore use the Great Arab Revolt as an example of a thankworthy Hashemite achievement, thereby deflecting criticism of the Hashemites' cooperation with the British at the time.

Literature on the history of the Great Arab Revolt generally concludes that the Revolt was the result of calculated political theater orchestrated in 1916 by the British army and Sharif al-Husayn. The Ottomans had announced an alliance with Germany at the outset of World War I in 1914, leading the British to open a dialogue with al-Husayn, the Ottoman-appointed ruler of Mecca, whom they saw as potentially capable of countering the Ottoman call for war with a counter-declaration of Arab revolution against the Turks.⁷⁶ While al-Husayn's exact motivations for allying with the British are unclear, the historical record indicates that he had been threatened by the centralization of power away from the provinces and the Ottomans' failure to guarantee the Hijaz to al-Husayn and his family.⁷⁷ By contrast, the British offered the admittedly vague (and ultimately unfulfilled) promise of securing for al-Husayn an Arab kingdom stretching from the Levant to Yemen and Mesopotamia.

On the eve of revolt, al-Husayn and his sons reached out to proponents of Arab nationalism, whose influence had been growing in the urban centers of Beirut, Damascus, and Cairo at the turn of the twentieth century. Mary Wilson argues that the Hashemites' limited contact with the Arabists was less the result of ideological commitment to the Arab nationalist

⁷⁶ Eugene Rogan, *The Arabs: A History* (New York: Basic Books, 2009), 151.

⁷⁷ Timothy J. Paris, *Britain, the Hashemites and Arab Rule 1920-1925: The Sherifian Solution* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 37.

cause than it was a strategic move to adopt an ideology suited to their ambitions.⁷⁸ Not only did the Hashemites fail to adopt Arabism until it became of particular use to them, but up until spring of 1916 while al-Husayn was in talks with the British, he continued to receive financial subsidies from Istanbul, demonstrating his lack of decisive commitment to Arab nationalism right up until the Revolt.⁷⁹

The actual fighting was limited. After initially capturing Mecca, Jedda, and Ta'if with British troop support, al-Husayn struggled to make headway in Syria or Palestine and did not take nearby Medina until 1919, months after the end of WWI.⁸⁰ Local support for the cause was also limited. Al-Husayn lacked a coherent ideology to appeal to either the tribes of the Hijaz or the Arab nationalists, and was only able to form alliances with the Hijazi tribes by outbidding the Ottomans with the guns, money, and booty his British patronage made available.⁸¹ Meanwhile, established merchant economies stretching from Damascus and Nablus through Transjordan had benefitted from the security and order provided by Ottoman rule, as well as the increased trade revenues generated at the beginning of WWI by the movement of goods and troops.⁸² Although there were protests against Ottoman rule, local communities tended to view themselves in terms of their religious, familial, or regional identities – a challenge newly established states in the region would find particularly difficult to overcome after the fall of the Ottoman Empire as they developed distinctive national narratives.⁸³

⁷⁸ Mary C. Wilson, "The Hashemites, the Arab Revolt, and Arab Nationalism," in *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, ed. Rashid Khalidi, Lisa Anderson, Muhammad Muslih, and Reeva S. Simon (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 205.

⁷⁹ Mary C. Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge, 1987), 27.

⁸⁰ Robert McNamara, *The Hashemites: The Dream of Arabia* (London: Haus Publishing, 2009), 60-61.

⁸¹ Joshua Teitelbaum, *The Rise and Fall of the Hashemite Kingdom of Arabia* (London: Hurst and Company, 2001), 75.

⁸² Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 11.

⁸³ Riad Nasser, *Recovered Histories and Contested Identities: Jordan, Israel, and Palestine* (New York: Lexington Books, 2011), 35.

Nonetheless, in Jordanian textbooks, al-Husayn is the uncontested hero of Arab nationalist history. A 1983 fifth-grade textbook on social upbringing describes the Arab Fatat Society, an early Arab nationalist group active in Damascus, as reaching out to al-Husayn and “appointing him to the leadership of the Arab *umma* and to the work of saving them from Ottoman rule.”⁸⁴ Yet nowhere does the text discuss criticism of the Hashemites among Arab intellectuals at the time, including none other than Rashid Rida, who called the Hashemites “the worst disaster that has befallen Islam in this age” due to their close cooperation with British colonialists.⁸⁵ A 1985 textbook only pays cursory tribute to Hashemite cooperation with the British, describing al-Husayn’s son, ʿAbdallah I, as a “smart” leader who “knew how to deal with the British and take from them gradually until he was able to found the Emirate of Transjordan.”⁸⁶ In reality, though, Winston Churchill’s offer to ʿAbdallah in 1921 to found Transjordan and aid it financially and militarily came with the condition of British clientelism: ʿAbdallah agreed to limit nationalist attacks on British colonial ambitions in Palestine and French rule in Syria and submitted to British domination of the political and military operations of the state until 1957 when Jordan’s Legion Army chief commander, John Bagot Glubb, was released from duty.⁸⁷

The textbooks’ focus on *nahda* and the historical promise of national development allows the state to evade criticism of Hashemite cooperation with the British launched by Arab nationalist movements particularly in the 1950s. As Anderson points out, the Hashemites solved the problem posed by the larger narrative of Arab nationalist history [... just as Egyptian president Gamal ʿAbd al-]Nasser would do in the 1950s, by designating the Jordanian

⁸⁴ Ibrahim Yassin al-Khattab, Mustafa Sulayman, and Murshid Dabour, *Memoir in Social Upbringing*, fifth grade, primary level (Amman: Ministry of Education, 1983) [Arabic], 38.

⁸⁵ Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*, 305.

⁸⁶ Fawzi Muhi al-Din ʿAbidin, Sulayman Ibrahim al-Habahba, and Muhammad Fadl ʿAwda, *Civic and Social Upbringing* (Amman: Ministry of Education, 1985) [Arabic].

⁸⁷ Nasser, *Recovered Histories*, 138.

state as the logical extension of that narrative. Similarly, the Hashemites proclaimed themselves the personal bridge connecting the two narratives. As the leaders of the Arab Revolt in World War I, they took on the mantle of Arab nationalist leadership, laying claim to the leadership of the whole Arab nationalism movement from that point forward.⁸⁸

Still, the textbooks' reliance on Hashemite state-building as the legacy of the Arab Revolt stands at odds with the political and social realities in which the texts were written. The textbooks disregard the reality of past and present reliance on Western regimes for economic aid in building the nation. They furthermore ignore the role the British played in fomenting the Revolt and permitting Jordan's independence at the cost of Hashemite clientelism. Such a historical narrative does not fit in with the textbooks' portrayal of Jordan as an independent state bearing the mantle of Arab nationalism.

(ii) Post-1989 History Textbooks: “Jordanization” and Loyalty

In validating Hashemite rule over the modern Jordanian state, the textbooks do not only rely on the Hashemites' own assertion of Arab nationalist leadership and continued development. Rather they also seek to portray the residents of proto-Transjordan – the Jordanian citizens to be – as supportive of the Hashemites during the Revolt and the later founding of the state. The 1983 textbook, for example, claims the people of °Ajloun, Balqa', and Karak

engaged in local revolts against Ottoman rule, demanding reform, the opening of schools, and attention to agriculture and industry, but the [Ottoman] state only struck those rebellions with cruelty. The situation in Transjordan did not improve until after Amir °Abdallah bin al-Husayn's advance to it, the announcement of the Great Arab Revolt, and the founding of the Emirate of Transjordan in 1921.⁸⁹

In the text, not only was the territory of present-day Jordan a crucial stage for the events of the Revolt, but the Hashemites' founding of the state was the only means of improving the lot of the

⁸⁸ Anderson, “Writing the Nation,” 9.

⁸⁹ al-Khattab, Sulayman, and Dabour, *Memoir in Social Upbringing*, 66.

proto-Jordanians. The result is not so much a cropping out of Jordanians from the history of the nation, but their re-creation as loyal and grateful Hashemite subjects. Still, Jordanians have “no faces and no names” as “Jordan is not, in the Hashemite lexicon, made up of a unique or united ethnicity, but rather of Arabs led by their Hashemite father-sheikhs.”⁹⁰

While earlier Jordanian history textbooks are careful to tell the story of the loyal Jordanian citizen, they do so in the broader context of modern Arab history. More recent textbooks developed since the 1980s, by contrast, “Jordanize” history by stressing the primacy and particularity of the present-day territory of the state. In these texts, the *Nahda* period and the Arab Revolt in particular more explicitly represent an epoch whose pan-Arab legacy the Hashemite state has faithfully inherited. Like the “misrification” Gabriel Piterberg identifies in Egyptian textbooks, emphasizing “territorial Egyptian nationness as it was shaped between the 1890s and the 1920s,”⁹¹ Jordanian historiography looks to this same time period as one of pan-Arab nationalism giving birth to the modern Jordanian state. In this sense, Jordan retains its *Nahda*-rooted Hashemite identity and more fully lives up to the progress-oriented call of history.

The *History of Contemporary Jordan*, a 1996 high school textbook, is the only book dedicated entirely to the history of Jordan that this analysis uncovered. Rather than occupying one section of a book on Arab history, Jordanian history is the sole focus, representing a “Jordanization” of history books that corresponds well with the more exclusive nationalistic slogans that have appeared in the kingdom in recent years, such as “Jordan First.”⁹² The text “Jordanizes” the *Nahda* to a far greater degree than prominent descriptions of al-Husayn and ‘Abdallah in previous history texts do. “Jordanian contributions” to the *Nahda* are listed, as are

⁹⁰ Anderson, “Writing the Nation,” 9.

⁹¹ Gabriel Piterberg, “The Tropes of Stagnation and Awakening in Nationalist Historical Consciousness,” in *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East*, ed. Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

⁹² Corbett, “Jordan First,” 274.

individuals from the territory that would become Transjordan who resisted the Ottomans. The text praises proto-Jordanian revolts against the Ottomans, including uprisings of Bani Hamida, al-Shrarat, Shobak and al-Karak at the turn of the twentieth century.

While these early revolts certainly occurred on the territory that would later become Jordan, the textbook does not emphasize the revolts as taking place within a regional context of several anti-Ottoman uprisings across the Levant at the time. Rather, the textbook frames the proto-Jordanian revolts as anticipating the inevitability of the Hashemites' arrival on the scene. Descriptions of the revolts are followed by a question posed to students: "Was it possible for the peoples of Jordan to rise up against the Ottoman state without preparation?" The question is, of course, a rhetorical one, but the text promptly provides the answer: the "people of southern Syria [...] hated Ottoman rule" and "waited for someone to save them from it."⁹³ The familiar story of the *Nahda* and Hashemites' Great Arab Revolt follows, establishing a link between the proto-Jordanians and their Hashemite father-shaykhs, between the pan-Arab Revolt and the geographically bounded territory that would become modern Jordan.

The textbook is also significant in its lists. Historical events, foreign relations with neighboring countries, and contemporary Jordanian political parties are described in brief, much like the listing of *Nahda* intellectuals such as al-Afghani and al-Kawakibi in previous texts. The effect of such list-creation is legitimation – it provides a series of accomplishments stacked against few, if any, failures. The inclusion of historical events in the lists also leads the reader to crave a conclusion to the story begun by Sharif al-Husayn during the *Nahda* – a bottom line to the list, which is inevitably the modern Hashemite state and its ongoing *nahda*. Finally, the lists

⁹³ Dhouqan °Abidat et al., *The History of Contemporary Jordan*, first level, secondary school (Amman: Ministry of Education, 1996) [Arabic], 35.

have the pedagogical effect of transforming narrative information into concrete data points, digestible facts that students are asked to take away from the text.

The use of the *Nahda* and the Arab Revolt in “Jordanizing” history textbooks is discursive in so far as it selectively uses history to craft a more exclusive Jordanian national identity and respond to present-day political challenges to Hashemite rule. As Riad Nasser explains:

[...] history becomes a selection process by which some events become mythically important, while others are either ignored or marginalized. In addition, the process of selection is governed by later developments in the nation’s history, meaning that the nation’s history becomes the contemporary interpretation of the past, which changes with the change of power over time.⁹⁴

Despite the political nature of selective history writing in Jordan, the process emphasizes continuity rather than change. Joseph Massad points out that “every retelling of the story of the nation becomes in fact a moment of sublation (incorporation and transcendence), wherein the newly constituted Jordanian identity sublates its predecessor in an interminable process.”⁹⁵ Thus the manipulation of history in Jordanian textbooks is not only a context-specific effort to manage the political present, but an ongoing and self-affirming pedagogical process.

While earlier incarnations of Jordanian historiography in the 1950s used the legacy of the Arab Revolt to respond to the political threat of Arab nationalists who accused the regime of lacking Arab nationalism,⁹⁶ the later threat to Hashemite legitimacy in the 1970s and 1980s stemmed from the Palestinian demographic question. Not only did Palestinians come to outnumber East-Bankers, but contrasting Hashemite and Palestinian visions of the nation had erupted in violence during the 1970 Civil War between the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Jordanian military. In response, the regime began to craft a narrow Jordanian identity

⁹⁴ Nasser, *Palestinian Identity in Jordan and Israel*, 141.

⁹⁵ Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 48.

⁹⁶ Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 164.

rooted in Bedouin culture and national symbols like Petra and *mansaf*, the national dish. Identity became more exclusive with the emergence of the red-and-white *hatta* (scarf) and a particularly masculine Jordanian accent, which stand in contrast to the Palestinian black-and-white *hatta* and a softer urban dialect.⁹⁷ By the late 1980s, Jordan relinquished its claims to the Israeli-occupied West Bank and entered into peace negotiations with Israel. Jordan's new borders were geographically on the East Bank, and the regime therefore embraced an East Bank national narrative to fit them.

The emphasis in contemporary textbooks on the loyal Jordanian citizen must be understood as an “Other-ing” project that pits Jordan's particularly East Bank Hashemite history against outside influences. Although Jordanians lack national homogeneity, or even territorial rootedness – with large segments of the population coming from Palestinian, Armenian, Circassian, Chechen, and other backgrounds – they find unity in the textbooks' “myth of origins,” which stresses the continuity of Hashemite rule and the people's vague identity as the Arab sons of the land that was destined to become Jordan.⁹⁸

Of course, this myth is problematic not only due to the heterogeneity of the Jordanian population and demographic change over the years, but also the reality that even East Bankers – those who were rooted in the territory that became Jordan – contested Hashemite rule from the very beginning. Indeed the early Transjordanian state faced a number of revolts immediately after its establishment. In 1923, Shaykh Sultan al-^cAdwan, a tribal ruler in the Balqa' region in the north, who was upset by the staffing of the government with outsiders, attempted to overthrow the Hashemites. Al-^cAdwan joined prominent intellectuals such as the poet Mustafa Wahbi al-Tal, who coined the slogan “Jordan for the Jordanians.” Although the government

⁹⁷ Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 250.

⁹⁸ Nasser, *Recovered Histories*, 129.

responded by shuffling the cabinet and pledging to appoint qualified Transjordanians to the government, the revolt continued, and eventually the government arrested al-Tal and resorted to British military force to quell the uprising and force ʿAdwan into exile in Syria.⁹⁹

Today, East Bank historical memory of the early years of the state contrasts with the Hashemite narrative by interjecting the proto-Jordanians' hesitant acceptance of the Hashemites into the story. Andrew Shryock points out in his study of oral history-telling among Balqa' Bedouin that tribesmen do not rely on grandiose historical "watersheds," but rather are always connected in the present to the "age of shaykhs" through their familial lineage.¹⁰⁰ Nonetheless, the resolution of the ʿAdwan rebellion is a key event in the tribesmen's history-telling. In one iteration of it, al-Husayn responds to his son ʿAbdallah's complaint that the ʿAdwan wanted to take his place and become kings, saying: "Because they were kings in this land before you, man! You came here yesterday. They were before you. I want you to break bread with them and open a new page." The story ends with an alliance, a recognition that the ʿAdwan tribe would lead the tribes while ʿAbdallah' controlled the government – "and they are brothers to this very day."¹⁰¹

This retelling of history is significant not only because it asserts a history of rebellion that the Jordanian textbooks do not acknowledge, but also because it demonstrates the continuing importance of local histories in the lives of Jordanians. Even East Bankers, whom the textbooks portray as always having been loyal to the Hashemite crown and who are privileged by the more exclusive Jordanian national identity that has developed since the 1970s, contest the regime's monopolizing narrative on history.

⁹⁹ Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 28-29.

¹⁰⁰ Shryock, *Nationalism and the Genealogical Imagination*, 35.

¹⁰¹ Shryock, *Nationalism and the Genealogical Imagination*, 92.

(b) Civics Texts: Creating the Tolerant Jordanian Citizen

Like the history textbooks, civics textbooks in Jordan rely on the legacy of the *Nahda* and its promise of progress in constructing the modern Jordanian state. Given the subject matter of civics, however, the texts only address one aspect of Jordan's ongoing Hashemite-led *nahda*: the development of the modern Jordanian citizen. Also, like the history textbooks, the civics books use the Arab Revolt as a paramount historical reference point. The goal in these books, however, is not to "Jordanize" the citizens who live within the boundaries of the state and dismantle their diverse identities and local histories, but to reconstruct the citizens in the mold of Hashemite civic tolerance and democratic pluralism.

Tolerance and pluralism are hardly neutral categories devoid of power implications in the civics textbooks. Rather, they are defined narrowly to respond to the challenge popular democratic participation poses to monarchic rule. Hashemite pluralism, for example, requires citizens to adhere to the rules of the political game laid down by the crown and avoid disruptive civic activism. Hashemite tolerance meanwhile is used to classify politically threatening citizens and parties as extremist and outside the bounds of acceptable political expression in a globalized era. Paradoxically then, Hashemite tolerance and pluralism function to exclude, rather than include, Jordanian citizens.

The civics textbooks are a rather new addition to the Jordanian school curriculum. First appearing in the 1990s under the subject "national and civic upbringing," the books respond to developments both inside and outside of Jordan after 1989. Domestically, 1989 saw the launch of a new constitutional era in which parliamentary life resumed for the first time since 1967 following the outbreak of mass protests against cuts to public subsidies and privatization of state-run industries in the 1980s. This new, supposedly democratic, era was conditioned on

acceptance of restrictive laws regulating political parties, media, and elections that provided the illusion of political liberalization without challenging the foundations of Hashemite power. Externally, the 1990s also saw the regime's increasing dependence on foreign aid and Western support as it launched peace negotiations with Israel. Such aid was conditioned on acceptance and promotion of neo-liberal categories of meaning stressing tolerance and non-extremism, which only ramped up after the events of September 11, 2001.

This section questions the premise that 1989 changed the balance of power in Jordan. The textbooks are cautious in their approach to reform and popular participation in the country's governance. They seek not only to discursively limit the citizen's civic activism, but also to stabilize the citizen in an era of uncertain globalization. Furthermore, they perpetuate the myth that the Hashemites are the only actors qualified by history to develop Jordan and steer it into the twenty-first century. Hashemite political development is portrayed as gradual in the textbooks; however, the undemocratic reality in Jordan suggests that the goal of such development is not to institute meaningful democratic change, but to obscure coercive underbelly of Hashemite rule, particularly the regime's continued implementation of its neo-liberal political and economic policies.

(i) Internal Developments: 1989 and Pluralism

The academic literature indicates that 1989 was a turning point in Jordanian politics and the beginning of a series of Crown-led liberalization efforts. Such efforts were not initiated by the monarchy, but were rather a response to pressure from Jordanian citizens demanding economic and political rights. Following more than two decades of martial law and monarchic rule without any form of elected political representation of the people (parliamentary life had

been suspended following the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank), an economic crisis beset Jordan in the late 1980s. Falling revenues from Gulf remittances forced the state to take loans from the International Monetary Fund, which insisted on a series of “reforms” including subsidy cuts. As a result, riots spread across Jordanian cities in 1989, transforming economic demands into political ones. The Crown responded by permitting long-delayed elections in November 1989 and formalizing popular political participation in the 1990 National Charter – part of what Russell Lucas calls a “survival strategy” to cope with political and economic outrage among the citizenry.¹⁰²

The regime’s acceptance of neo-liberal economic reforms was always guarded, however. Warwick Knowles’ analysis of the political-economic scene in Jordan indicates that when Jordan began assuming conditional aid from the International Monetary Fund in 1989, the country moved away from the traditional centralized rentier role it had previously assumed to a more privatized, market-driven system. Yet this transition has not been complete. The United States and the World Bank put pressure on lending institutions to provide greater aid to Jordan than would otherwise be available to it out of recognition for Jordan’s apparently moderate and pro-peace role in the Arab-Israeli negotiations.¹⁰³ Such political space has allowed Jordan to “rent-seek” and thus avoid implementing some neo-liberal reforms that would have been controversial among Jordanians, such as cutting subsidies on basic goods. It seems, therefore, that Jordan’s “moderate” role in the region (defined in terms of having diplomatically recognized Israel¹⁰⁴) has quite literally paid off.

¹⁰² Russell E. Lucas, *Institutions and the Politics of Survival in Jordan: Domestic Responses to External Challenges, 1988-2001* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), 27.

¹⁰³ Warwick Knowles, *Jordan Since 1989: A Study in Political Economy* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 141.

¹⁰⁴ As one example of western association of “moderateness” with Arab-Israeli peace, the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty requires Jordan to refrain from expressing hostility toward Israel in government publications, including textbooks. Carol Greenwald, “Can Arabs Make Peace With Israel?” *Middle East Quarterly* (September 1999): 35-42.

Like the regime's approach to neo-liberal economics, the regime's political liberalization has also been limited. The literature on the subject of Jordan's "democratization" efforts confirms the façade of a tolerant pluralism in Jordan since 1989. While scholars writing in the early 1990s initially labeled the Hashemite initiative "regulated pluralism" and viewed it optimistically as the first step in a series of potentially meaningful steps toward democracy,¹⁰⁵ later scholars would see through Hashemite democratic claims and recognize that the political opening in 1989 was closing. Glenn Robinson, for example, describes the Hashemite approach as "defensive democratization," which in fact is not aimed at democratic transition, but is rather "a series of pre-emptive measures designed to maintain elite privilege in Jordan while limiting the appeal of more fundamental political change."¹⁰⁶ Quintan Wiktorowicz adds: "the regime attempts to limit political participation to a narrow, relatively stable political space comprised predominantly of formal political institutions such as parties, elections, and Parliament."¹⁰⁷ Even outside of this formal, regulated domain, attempts to create alternative pluralist constituencies, such as tribal affiliations, are contained.¹⁰⁸

A brief survey of Jordan's post-1989 electoral history confirms the myth of Hashemite democratic pluralism. The elections of 1989 resulted in a large share of parliamentary seats going to opposition parties, including the Islamic Action Front, the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood. Startled by the opposition's electoral successes,¹⁰⁹ the regime initiated a series of legal maneuvers to limit opposition power, including laws on media censorship and party

¹⁰⁵ Rex Brynen, "Economic Crisis and Post-Rentier Democratization in the Arab World: The Case of Jordan," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 25, 1 (March 1992): 91.

¹⁰⁶ Glenn Robinson, "Defensive Democratization in Jordan," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 30, 3 (August 1998): 387.

¹⁰⁷ Quintan Wiktorowicz, "The Limits of Democracy in the Middle East: The Case of Jordan," *Middle East Journal* 53, 4 (Autumn 1999): 607.

¹⁰⁸ Andrew Shryock, "Dynastic Modernism and its Contradictions: Testing the Limits of Pluralism, Tribalism, and King Hussein's Example in Hashemite Jordan," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 22, 3 (Summer 2000): 72.

¹⁰⁹ Philip Robins, "Jordan's Election: A New Era?" *Middle East Report* 164/165 (May-August 1990): 55.

formation, among other early signs of the backsliding of the regime's promised reform.¹¹⁰ The regime's disingenuousness would only become more evident with the passage of time as it repeatedly manipulated the electoral law like a "safety valve."¹¹¹ In 1993, the regime introduced the first of such safety valve electoral reforms when the king issued a royal decree establishing the one-person-one-vote system, which drastically weakened party representation in parliament by permitting the voter to cast a ballot for only one seat in a multi-seat district, thereby inducing her to choose an associate or kinsman over an ideological candidate.

In 1999, King al-Husayn died and his son, the present king, ʿAbdallah II, assumed the throne. ʿAbdallah's electoral and political initiatives have proven no less conducive to genuine "democratization" than his father's. Following the start of the Palestinian Second Intifada, the king suspended parliament between 2001 and 2003, thus delaying parliamentary elections, and issued a series of decrees limiting civil liberties, including public assembly and association. A new electoral law was also announced ahead of the elections in 2003, and although it expanded the number of seats in the elected lower house from 80 to 110, the move resulted in even greater distortion in the representation afforded to districts.¹¹² At present, districts are gerrymandered to the extent that one seat represents 19,691 citizens in Tafila and 85,728 in Amman.¹¹³

While the regime continues to hamper campaigns for meaningful political reform through legal directive and bureaucratic encumbering,¹¹⁴ it also attempts to co-opt them in the name of national dialogue and stamp them with an official apparatus. Since the early 2000s, ʿAbdallah has proposed a series of national initiatives to stimulate "pluralism" in Jordan. The Jordan First

¹¹⁰ Abla Amawi, "Democracy Dilemmas in Jordan," *Middle East Report* 174 (January-February 1992): 26.

¹¹¹ Schirin Fathi, "Jordanian Survival Strategy: The Election Law as a 'Safety Valve,'" *Middle Eastern Studies* 41, 6 (November 2005): 889-898.

¹¹² Ellen Lust-Okar, "Competitive Clientelism in Jordanian Elections," 91.

¹¹³ Julia Choucair-Vizoso, "Illusive Reform: Jordan's Stubborn Stability," in *Beyond the Façade: Political Reform in the Arab World*, ed. Marina Ottaway and Julia Choucair-Vizoso (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2008), 55.

¹¹⁴ Sean L. Yom, "Jordan: Ten More Years of Autocracy," *Journal of Democracy* 20, 4 (October 2009): 158.

Initiative of 2002 suggested merging parties into three amalgamations (Islamist, leftist, and nationalist) to strengthen party life. Meanwhile, the “National Agenda” initiative in 2006 proposed a mixed electoral system in which half of the seats would be proportionally elected, and the other half elected through single-member districts, to replace the one-vote system. Crucially, however, the government has yet to implement its own recommendations.¹¹⁵ More recently in 2011, a national dialogue committee was formed in light of protests that have broken out in the country in one incarnation of the Arab Spring. While the committee proposed the creation of a high constitutional court, a lower minimum age for parliamentary candidacy, and a requirement that cabinets resign within a week of the king dissolving parliament, the recommendations fell short of citizens’ demands for a fundamentally more representative government. Even the monarch called for the election of cabinets (which he currently appoints)¹¹⁶; however, this promise has failed to materialize in the wording of proposed constitutional amendments.

Thus, contrary to the initial hopes of some observers who lauded the regime’s liberalization for expanding Jordanian civil society¹¹⁷ and opening a bright horizon¹¹⁸ with elections, post-1989 developments suggest the preservation of royal power in Jordan, rather than its erosion in favor of democratization. At the end of the day, it is unlikely that “limited” or “defensive” pluralism can meaningfully reform a system in which monarchy is constitutionally enshrined.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Choucair-Vizoso, “Illusive Reform,” 55.

¹¹⁶ Dale Gavlak, “Jordan’s King Abdullah vows to allow elected cabinets,” *BBC News*, June 12, 2011, accessed April 24, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-13744640>.

¹¹⁷ Atef Odhibat, “Civil Society in Jordan: A Preliminary Study” in *Toward Civil Society in the Middle East? A Primer*, ed. Jillian Schwedler (London: Lynne Rienner, 1995), 57.

¹¹⁸ Laurie Brand, “‘In the Beginning Was the State ...’: Civil Society in Jordan,” in *Toward Civil Society in the Middle East? A Primer*, ed. Jillian Schwedler (London: Lynne Rienner, 1995), 56.

¹¹⁹ Hamid, “Myth of the Democratizing Monarchy,” 122.

Despite the façade of Hashemite democracy, pluralism discourse persists in official rhetoric by operating on the assumption that the crown is a neutral guide for a country on the path to national development and democratization, and as such deserves recognition, appreciation, and loyalty. Echoing the *nahda* language of the history textbooks, Prince El-Hassan Bin Talal calls for a comprehensive renaissance, a vital part of which is “honouring the principle and practice of plurality” and “diversity within the framework of unity.”¹²⁰ He says the Hashemites are and have been convicted “that cultural diversity and political pluralism can ensure the development of a civic society, and contain the contagion of exclusive ideology whether of the religious or the ethnic variety.”¹²¹ Likewise, in an interview in 1994, King al-Husayn touted the National Charter as guaranteeing “tolerance and the right of citizens to hold varying opinions.”¹²²

The civics textbooks also echo the language of *nahda*, progress, comprehensive national development, and the Arab Revolt prevalent in the history texts. A 2004 third-grade civics textbook, for example, explains the slogan of the Great Arab Revolt “Freedom, Unity, and the Prosperous Life” to students. It presents a dialogue in which the teacher asks a student, Hanin: “What does ‘the prosperous life’ mean?”¹²³ Hanin replies: “The prosperous life means the human being reaches to the best level in all the areas of life.” Another student seeks to clarify Hanin’s answer by asking, “What are the areas that the Great Arab Revolt aimed to improve?” and the teacher replies, “Agriculture, education, health, communication, and dignified living.” Yet another student asks, “And were these areas ignored during the Turkish Ottoman rule?”

¹²⁰ El-Hassan bin Talal, “Third Arab Renaissance.”

¹²¹ El-Hassan bin Talal, *A Vision for the Future: Recent Speeches Delivered by H.R.H* (Amman: Jordanian Businessmen Association, 1994), 67.

¹²² King Hussein bin Talal, “A Pluralist Path in the Arab World,” *New Perspectives Quarterly* 11 (Winter 1994).

¹²³ Ranad al-Khateeb ‘Ayad, Nasima Dawoud, and Rawda al-Farakh al-Haddad, *Social and National Upbringing*, third grade, part two (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2004) [Arabic], 20.

Hanin answers, “Yes, and ignoring these led to the Great Arab Revolt.” In the pages following this dialogue, the textbook recites the history of the Arab Revolt, mentioning that °Abdallah I established Transjordan as “a base to liberate the Arab land for its unity and revival (*nuhud*) toward the prosperous life.” The text concludes “Jordan is the inheritor of the Great Arab Revolt; its army and government are Arab; and it strives always to unite the Arab *umma*.”¹²⁴

This text is pedagogically significant in its portrayal of the ideal Jordanian student who equates national development with the Great Arab Revolt and its Hashemite legacy in Jordan. Although Hanin’s initial answer to the teacher’s question about the meaning of the “prosperous life” does not mention the Revolt or Jordan, this absence is corrected by the inquiry of another student about the areas the Revolt aimed to improve. By the end of the dialogue, Hanin is able to respond to the other students’ questions and incorporate the Revolt into her conclusion that the Ottomans ignored national development. The text then comfortably states that the Hashemites established Jordan as the bastion of the Revolt to realize *nuhud* and the prosperous life.

This civics text affirms for students the role of Jordan’s Hashemite leadership in guiding the nation and its historical qualification to do so. A later seventh grade textbook connects the language of progress and development to pluralism and the liberalization of 1989. It says that Jordan is characterized by its geographic, religious, ethnic, socio-economic, and political variety, but is careful to note that such “variety does not mean disagreement, because all citizens agree on public goals and cooperate to achieve them, and these goals are the progress of the country, preserving the security and stability in it, defending it, raising living standards, and respecting

¹²⁴ cAyad, Dawoud, and al-Haddad, *Social and National Upbringing*, 23.

the views of the citizen as individual and group.”¹²⁵ The text then proceeds to address political pluralism in greater depth:

As Jordan is a democratic country, its laws allow the creation of unions for workers, farmers, doctors, engineers and other professionals to defend their professional interests for their members in line with the law. The law also allows the formation of political parties, provided they commit to the National Charter and the Constitution. Parties help in the progress of the nation with the participation of their representatives in the Chamber of Representatives in power, or they participate in the opposition. They contribute to directing the government with constructive criticism. Therefore the variety that is called “political pluralism” means giving freedom and equality to every group in society according to the law, and if every citizen feels that, then his enthusiasm will increase to build his country and defend it without fear or deprivation. Society becomes a big cooperative family in which individuals compete to present the best they can. This is the meaning of variety in a framework of unity, i.e., that society is composed of different groups yet it is unified in its goals. As for difference in social classes, such difference leads to division and conflict and wastes the efforts of citizens without any benefit. It hampers participation in economic development and pushes enemies to attack the independence of the nation and its sovereignty and unity. We have seen in previous studies that the independence and progress that Jordan achieved was a result of loyal efforts expended by the Hashemite leadership and all the citizens. Thus, it is necessary for all to preserve it and participate with other Arab territories in achieving Arab unity and returning the violated parts of our country.

The logic of the text runs as follows: First, pluralism is limited. It must be sanctioned by law and function in the interest of the nation. While professional unions fall within the bounds of pluralism, the status of political parties is less clear. They must commit to the National Charter and Constitution and offer “constructive criticism” to the government. Second, the nation is a big, cooperative family, the paternalistic head of which is the Hashemite monarchy, which is responsible for Jordan’s independence, sovereignty, economic development, and unity. Third, Jordan’s Hashemite-led progress must not be held back by either socio-economic protest or political disagreement that may emerge from pluralism, or else disunity, foreign attack, and economic backtracking will be the result.

¹²⁵ Dhouqan °Abidat, °Eissa Abu Shaykha, and Sahban Khaleefat, *National and Civic Upbringing*, seventh grade (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2006) [Arabic], 24.

The underlying message this text sends to students is: National unity depends on the king; there is a maximum to which you can raise your voice, because the multiplicity of voices inherent to pluralist democracy is ultimately a threat to the unity and stability provided by the king. In contrast to the Hashemite narrative, a democratic understanding would maintain that national unity is guaranteed precisely by the ability of individual citizens to voice their political will, thereby exercising their rights and giving life to pluralism. It is fair then to ask whether the pluralism espoused by the regime is truly rooted in a democratic understanding, or rather, is more prone to preserving elite political and economic power.

The civics textbooks only hesitantly embrace democracy. A 2001 history textbook begins by outlining the history of the *Nahda* with its familiar story – intellectuals, nationalists, Islamic reformers, secret societies, Ottoman oppression, Sharif al-Husayn, and the Great Arab Revolt. It then stresses Jordanian history’s compatibility with international norms, describing the 1989 elections as part of the country’s transition to democracy and the “logical result of factors,” including:

qualified leadership from a historical perspective, represented in its Hashemite-ness and its carrying the message of the Great Arab Revolt [...] a qualified people for this democratic transition, in addition to Jordan’s openness to the world in its entirety through work, education and culture [...] international and Arab factors: It appears that many of the countries of the world, including Arab ones, tried various types of regimes, policies, and modalities, but achieved none of their stated goals and slogans. They have found themselves forced to transition to democracy, which is considered the appropriate road to achieve the goals of different societies.¹²⁶

The text portrays democracy paradoxically as both the logical next-step in the history of the Arab Revolt and as something forced on nation-states by the history of the world. Even if democratic transition is forced, however, Jordan is nonetheless up to the task because of its qualified

¹²⁶ cAbdallah Muhammad cAwdah et al., *The History of the Arabs and the Contemporary World*, second level, secondary school (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2001) [Arabic], 61.

citizenry, openness to globalized trends, and most importantly, its Hashemite leadership, which the text has already demonstrated was capable of guiding the nation during the *Nahda*.

The textbooks ignore the contentious political realities that shaped the events of 1989. There are few surprises described in the books – no riots, no opposition, no demands for rights. Rather, politics develops according to a teleologically progressive plan. A 2000 history textbook, for example, explains the lack of parliamentary life in Jordan from 1967 to the late 1980s as the result of Israeli occupation, which was nevertheless not something the Crown was incapable of overcoming:

The Israeli occupation of the West Bank in 1967 affected parliamentary life in Jordan, and when it continued, the king and the government felt that according to the provisions of the constitution, the lack of the people's participation in the responsibility of governing was inappropriate and did not sit well with the democratic approach of the Jordanian constitution (Article 1-24 states that the Nation is the source of governance). Thus the National Consultative Council, rather than the Majlis al-Umma, was formed to counsel the government on all matters. [...] A constitutional amendment was passed in 1984 (Article 2/73) permitting the holding of elections in Jordan, and elections were held in 1989, resulting in an elected body [...] In 1990, the Jordanian National Charter was announced, and the Political Parties law was issued, confirming the principle of a multiplicity of political parties, allowing the individual to exercise freedom of opinion and party participation, with the exception of the armed forces, civil defense, and judicial apparatuses.¹²⁷

Such a justification of over two decades of non-representative government passes by as all part of the plan. Nowhere does the text mention martial law, the 1970 Civil War, or the re-articulation of Jordanian identity in more exclusive terms since the 1970s.¹²⁸ Likewise, no mention is to be found of the citizens whose protests initiated the reforms of 1989. Instead, Jordan's experiment with political pluralism is framed as the Hashemites' on-going democratic work in progress, which was only temporarily set back by Israeli occupation of the West Bank, and restored when the time was right.

¹²⁷ Dhouban °Abdallah °Abidat et al., *National and Civics Upbringing*, eighth grade, part two (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2000) [Arabic], 28-29.

¹²⁸ Peter Hinchcliffe and Beverley Milton-Edwards, *Jordan: A Hashemite Legacy* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 50.

The textbooks' emphasis on the importance of the events of 1989 is not necessarily unreasonable. Indeed, the political arrangement struck in the 1980s between the regime and opposition parties and civic organizations, culminating in the 1990 National Charter, meets Jean Luca's definition of a "political pact," or public agreement between a set of actors who seek to set ground rules for the exercise of power and mutually guarantee their vital interests.¹²⁹ The textbooks' flaw, however, is in their portrayal of the pact as establishing democratic, pluralistic ground rules. The normative dimension of a pluralistic political pact is the idea that no single group or party enjoys a monopoly on political truth, while the structural dimension emphasizes limited government.¹³⁰ As this analysis of civics textbooks demonstrates, the Jordanian pact fails on both counts because the Hashemites enjoy a monopoly on the truth and use it to obscure the preservation of monarchic power inherent in the Jordanian constitution. Democracy is framed as the correct path for political development, but the Hashemite semi-authoritarian gloss on it renders it what Luca calls "*dimuqratiyya shakliyya*," or façade democracy, rather than the people's democracy.¹³¹

This is not to say that Jordanian citizens and political parties do not consider democracy a worthy goal. As Aziz al-Azmeh explains, there are conceptual assonances between democratic discourse and populist discourses of Islamist, neo-nationalist, and left-wing varieties in the Arab world, which aim to close a perceived gap between state and society through democratic representation: "The trajectory of the populist discourse on democracy is one which has its initial terminus in an unintended but telling concordance between the main critiques of state despotism

¹²⁹ Jean Leca, "Democratization in the Arab World: Uncertainty, Vulnerability and Legitimacy," in *Democracy Without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World*, ed. Ghassan Salame (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001), 49.

¹³⁰ Leca, "Democratization in the Arab World," 49.

¹³¹ Leca, "Democratization in the Arab World," 53.

by left-wing authors and islamist ideologues, who both claim the state to be alien to society.”¹³² In the civics textbooks, however, these populist approaches to democracy are not represented. Rather, the discourse that prevails is a statist approach that is legalistic, technocratic, and gradual and de-emphasizes socio-economic rights – akin to the approach advocated by international organizations like the IMF that push for neo-liberal reforms.¹³³ As the next section demonstrates, international influence on civics textbook-writing in Jordan is profound.

(ii) External Influences: International Aid and Tolerance

Tolerance in the Arab-Islamic world is a much-discussed subject in contemporary media and academic discourse, particularly in the post-September 11, 2001 context. According to Khaled Abou El Fadl, the essence of the matter is a perceived “clash between Judeo-Christian civilization, with its values of individual freedom, pluralism, and secularism, and an amoral, un-Westernized, so-called ‘authentic Islam’ [...] associated with the ideas of collective rights, individual duties, legalism, despotism, and intolerance.”¹³⁴ Proponents of the existence of a clash of civilizations between “Islam” and the “West” (however fraught those categories are with ambiguity), stress the irreconcilable nature of the conflict due to Islam’s inherent intolerance and incompatibility with human rights and democracy. Any attempt to portray Islam or Arab-Islamic civilization as bearing hallmarks of tolerance is rejected by this view as a disingenuous liberal accommodation of Muslims¹³⁵ or historical myth-making.¹³⁶

¹³² Aziz al-Azmeh, “Populism Contra Democracy: Recent Democratist Discourse in the Arab World,” in *Democracy Without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World*, ed. Ghassan Salame (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001), 121.

¹³³ Al-Azmeh, “Populism Contra Democracy,” 116.

¹³⁴ Khaled Abou El Fadl, *The Place of Tolerance in Islam* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002), 3.

¹³⁵ George Weigel, *Faith, Reason, and the War Against Jihadism: A Call to Action* (New York: Doubleday, 2007), 118.

¹³⁶ Robert Spencer, “The Myth of Islamic Tolerance” in *The Myth of Islamic Tolerance: How Islamic Law Treats Non-Muslims*, ed. Robert Spencer (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2005), 40.

Responses to such a rejectionist view vary. Several scholars of Islam stress that meaningful articulations of non-violence and peace-building have emerged in an Islamic context,¹³⁷ or they refute the argument that Islamic political culture is somehow conducive to human rights violations.¹³⁸ Others propose Islam's theological potential for openness to human rights and democratic rule,¹³⁹ Islamic civilization's moral trajectory toward an understanding of tolerance that encompasses rights,¹⁴⁰ or even a cross-cultural understanding of a common basis of tolerance in Islam and the West.¹⁴¹ While these responses are important to mention given the important work being done on the subject of Islamic tolerance, another response more relevant to our discussion of Jordanian civics textbooks is that articulated by advocates of liberal tolerance discourse.

Liberal tolerance discourse neither rejects the possibility of Islamic tolerance outright nor critically evaluates its articulations; rather, it holds that the intolerant, unpredictable Arab-Islamic Other must be stabilized and made tolerant in the liberal image. Wendy Brown explains that liberalism, which has developed in a Western, secular context, assumes itself to be the neutral arbiter of what is tolerant, civilized, or human rights-oriented, because it claims to be removed from culture. With its secular and universalizable scope, it is qualified to classify the cultural practices of others as intolerant, backwards, or antagonistic to rights. The problem with liberalism, according to Brown, is precisely the "conceit of neutrality."¹⁴² Liberalism obscures

¹³⁷ Mohammed Abu-Nimer, *Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam: Theory and Practice* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 182.

¹³⁸ Daniel Price, "Islam and Human Rights: A Case of Deceptive First Appearances," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 41, 2 (June 2002): 222.

¹³⁹ Paul L. Heck, *Common Ground: Islam, Christianity, and Religious Pluralism* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2009), 215.

¹⁴⁰ Abou El Fadl, *Place of Tolerance*, 22.

¹⁴¹ Aaron Tyler, *Islam, the West, and Tolerance: Conceiving Coexistence* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 157.

¹⁴² Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 6.

cases involving cultural Others by focusing on their incomprehensibility and barbarity, rather than the complex political, socio-economic, social, or historical factors really at play. Thus in the name of tolerance, liberalism de-politicizes and de-contextualizes, leaving the Other without actionable claims.

Eve Haque illustrates this tendency in her discussion of the crisis of tolerance in cases involving Muslim women in Canada. She says that the “honor killing” of Aqsa Parvez in 2007 was seen in mainstream Canadian society as a result of the barbarity of Islamic culture, thus obscuring the socio-economic circumstances of the killing and the “marginalization of racialized communities” in Canada, which were central to the incident.¹⁴³ As another scholar puts it, liberalism’s assumed multiculturalism is an “enthusiastic endorsement of difference, to the point of indifference.”¹⁴⁴ The Islamic factor aside, even Western scholars are growing increasingly skeptical of the neutrality of liberal tolerance discourse. One researcher, for example, questions religiosity’s allegedly negative relation to tolerance among U.S. Christians,¹⁴⁵ while another highlights tolerance deficiencies among secularly educated German youth.¹⁴⁶

This background understanding of liberal conceptions of tolerance is crucial to approaching the subject of tolerance discourse in the Arab world, because it has helped shape it. To start with, Western scholars often fail to acknowledge the existence of tolerance- and rights-based intellectual movements in the Arab world, because these have taken forms unfamiliar to the Western experience (including Arab nationalist and Islamist forms).¹⁴⁷ When Arab-Islamic

¹⁴³ Eve Haque, “Homegrown, Muslim and Other: Tolerance, Secularism and the Limits of Multiculturalism,” *Social Identities* 16, 1 (January 2010): 90.

¹⁴⁴ Tyler, *Islam, the West, and Tolerance*, 9.

¹⁴⁵ Marie A. Eisenstein, “Rethinking the Relationship Between Religion and Political Tolerance in the US,” *Political Behavior* 28 (2006).

¹⁴⁶ Friedrich Schweitzer, “Religious Individualization: New Challenges to Education for Tolerance,” *British Journal of Religious Education* 29, 1 (January 2007): 89-100.

¹⁴⁷ Christoph Schumann, “The ‘Failure’ of Radical Nationalism and the ‘Silence’ of Liberal Thought in the Arab World,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 28, 3 (2008): 405.

tolerance is recognized as a relevant category for the region, some scholars feel bound to measure it against the European historical experience. Kanan Makiya, for example, suggests that the Arab-Islamic world's only option to escape the violence and civil wars of its recent history is to learn tolerance the way seventeenth-century European states learned it – by spilling enough blood that toleration is seen as the only means of survival.¹⁴⁸ Rather than critically investigating local, nuanced discourses on tolerance or exploring Western contributions to ethno-religious violence in the region, Makiya's solution is to export European tolerance to the Arab world and pass off continued bloodshed as one step on the predetermined, Western path to coexistence.

Liberal tolerance discourse also promotes education reform according to international standards as a primary means of creating “moderate” Islam and civic tolerance in the Arab world. Textbooks have become increasingly a concern of Western (and American in particular) governments due to their perceived role in fomenting extremism. Saudi Arabia in particular has faced international criticism pushing it to introduce “moderation” (*wasatiyya*) in its school curricula, official statements, fatwas, and sermons.¹⁴⁹ For its part, Jordan, in addition to responding positively to American advances for security cooperation in the so-called War on Terror, ramped up its rhetoric on moderate Islam after September 11, 2001 by introducing the 2004 Amman Message, which declared Islam to be a religion of moderation. The Ministry of Education proceeded to use the Message to set standards for revising Islamic textbooks, one of which was “urging tolerance,”¹⁵⁰ a topic covered extensively in Chapter III. Additionally, King Abdallah II has appeared frequently in U.S. media, stressing that Jordan is on a “road to reform”

¹⁴⁸ Kanan Makiya, “Can Tolerance Be Born of Cruelty in the Arab World?” *New Perspectives Quarterly* 19, 1 (Winter 2002): 133.

¹⁴⁹ Muhammad Al-Atawneh, “Wahhabi Self-Examination Post-9/11: Rethinking the ‘Other’, ‘Otherness’ and Tolerance,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 47, 2 (March 2011): 265.

¹⁵⁰ Tameem Odat, “Content Analysis of Value in Islamic Education Textbooks for Eighth and Tenth Grade in Jordan and the Extent to which they are Appropriate to Criteria Derived from the Amman Message,” January, 15 2008 (Irbid: Ministry of Education, 2008), 344-346.

based on “successful development directed from within, rooted in the Arab-Islamic heritage yet open to global ideas and partners.”¹⁵¹ Such rhetoric responds well to Western, liberal demands for centrally directed reform guided by international standards.

While Arab regimes have viewed education as a central element of domestic development agendas since World War II,¹⁵² the Jordanian government has shown a particular openness to partnering with international education development organizations in the last two decades and adopting the neo-liberal civic values they promote,¹⁵³ including: market-based creativity (summed up in the phrase “knowledge society”) and civic tolerance. Both “knowledge society” and civic tolerance appear extensively in the civics textbooks, and both in the context of *nahda*.

On the market-based creativity front, Jordan has adopted recommendations issued by several international institutions, such as the United Nations’ 2003 Arab Human Development Report, which calls for the creation of a “knowledge society” in the Arab world. Donors such as the World Bank have supported the Jordanian government’s Knowledge Economy Program, a 2004 campaign that included a comprehensive revision of textbooks,¹⁵⁴ and the World Economic Forum funds the Jordan Education Initiative, a public-private partnership to promote technology

¹⁵¹ King Abdullah II, “The Road to Reform,” *Foreign Policy* 145 (Nov.-Dec. 2004): 73.

¹⁵² Baha Abu-Laban and Sharon McIrvin Abu-Laban, “Education and Development in the Arab World,” *Journal of Developing Areas* 10, 3 (April 1976): 285.

¹⁵³ Upon assuming the throne, ‘Abdallah II adopted a notably more pro-Western foreign policy than his father and accelerated neo-liberal market reforms. Lamis Adoni, “King Abdallah: In His Father’s Footsteps?” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 29, 3 (Spring 2000): 77-89. Also early on in his reign, ‘Abdallah convened an economic retreat in 1999 that, in addition to prioritizing market privatization, called for the reform of textbook curricula as part of the “political, educational and social” dimension of economic development. Jamal Al-Shalabi and Adnan M. Hayajneh, “The Effects of Globalisation on the Information Technology and Educational Sector in Jordan,” in *Globalization, Modernization and Education in Muslim Countries*, ed. Rukhsana Zia (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 2006), 198.

¹⁵⁴ Georg-Eckert-Institut für internationale Schulbuchforschung Braunschweig, “Educational Sector, Reforms, Curricula and Textbooks in Selected MENA Countries: Images of ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ in Textbooks of Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and Oman,” October 2009, accessed April 24, 2014, <http://www.edumeres.net/urn:urn:nbn:de:0220-2011-00173>.

in the classroom.¹⁵⁵ The result has been the training of thousands of teachers and establishment of dozens of educational councils.¹⁵⁶

The targeting of knowledge in the AHDR is not only geared at promoting neo-liberal, market-expanding economic policies,¹⁵⁷ but also re-orienting Arab-Islamic civilization toward progressive knowledge-production. The report cites several *Nahda*-era Arab intellectuals, whom it calls “pioneers of the contemporary Arab renaissance.”¹⁵⁸ These intellectuals recognized the “diminution of science and knowledge as the main reason for the backwardness of the Arabs” and “were anxious to espouse the rational principles behind the surge of global knowledge and science and combine the values of Islamic civilisation with those of modernity.”¹⁵⁹ The report goes on to call for a renewed, comprehensive knowledge renaissance as the solution to Arab backwardness, for “no essential characteristic or aspect of Arab society should be excluded from a scientific perspective” – especially matters of history, heritage, and reform that “hold one of the keys to the production of knowledge and, therefore, to the knowledge society itself.”¹⁶⁰

On the civic tolerance front, Jordan participates in Arab Civitas, a project launched in 2003 at an education conference in Jordan to support a regional network of education reformists. With a budget of \$40 million in 2011 to support 50 projects in Jordan,¹⁶¹ the U.S.-funded Middle East Partnership Initiative supports Civitas projects and partners with the Jordanian Center for

¹⁵⁵ Michelle Sellinger, “The Jordan Education Initiative,” Cisco Systems, accessed April 24, 2014, www.unesco.org/iiep/PDF/pubs/JEI.pdf.

¹⁵⁶ Mohammad Ghazzal, “Education Reform Project Enters Second Stage,” *The Jordan Times*, July 29, 2010, accessed April 24, 2014, <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=28725>.

¹⁵⁷ Asef Bayet criticizes the report for being more conscious of economic concerns of international monetary organizations than actual development needs in the Arab world. Asef Bayat, “Transforming the Arab World: The Arab Human Development Report and the Politics of Change,” *Development and Change* 36, 6 (2005): 1231.

¹⁵⁸ United Nations Development Programme, “Arab Human Development Report 2003: Building a Knowledge Society” (New York: United Nations Publications, 2003), 45.

¹⁵⁹ United Nations Development Programme, “Arab Human Development Report 2003,” 119.

¹⁶⁰ United Nations Development Programme, “Arab Human Development Report 2003,” 45.

¹⁶¹ Ana Echague, “Assessing Democracy Assistance: Jordan,” FRIDE, accessed April 24, 2014, <http://www.fride.org/project/19/assessing-democracy-assistance>.

Civic Education Studies (JCCES)¹⁶² to translate curricula on topics such as political authority, responsibility, and privacy – all of which are developed by the Center for Civic Education, a large, USAID-funded organization that sets international civics standards.¹⁶³



Civic education has been a central pillar of the U.S. development strategy. The focus on education seems to stem from a fear of the Arab/Islamic school as a breeding ground for extremism that must be fought with “modern books.”¹⁶⁴ In the words of one academic, the United States must fight in the “war of ideas and values” in the Islamic world by promoting civic education.¹⁶⁵ This sentiment is echoed by the National Endowment for Democracy, which asserts in a strategy document that civic education plays a role in creating a “culture of tolerance” abroad.¹⁶⁶ At the same time, civic education is perceived as supporting individuals

¹⁶² The JCCES has also partnered with the United Nations Democracy Fund and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

¹⁶³ Center for Civic Education, “Arab Civitas: Strengthening Civic Education in Nine Arab Countries, Quarterly Programmatic Report, April – June 2005,” accessed April 24, 2014, pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACF257.pdf.

¹⁶⁴ Gregory Starrett, “The American Interest in Islamic Schooling: A Misplaced Emphasis?” *Middle East Policy* 13, 1 (Spring 2006): 121-122.

¹⁶⁵ Larry Diamond, “Promoting Democracy while Fighting Terror,” Open Forum, U.S. Department of State, September 21, 2001, accessed April 24, 2014, <http://2001-2009.state.gov/s/p/of/proc/tr/5958.htm>.

¹⁶⁶ National Endowment for Democracy, “2012 Strategy Document,” January 2012, accessed April 24, 2014, <http://www.ned.org/node/23, 2>.

capable of competing in a globalized market,¹⁶⁷ particularly given high unemployment and the alleged “youth bulge” in the Arab world.¹⁶⁸

Responding to the influence international organizations have had on the curricular reform front, Jordan has altered its civics textbooks to meet international standards¹⁶⁹ and included language on neo-liberal economics, democracy, and human rights.¹⁷⁰ The regime has even established its own civic organizations. It set up a national human rights center, for example, in 2000 under royal patronage as part of the mission to promote rights-based education. Crucially, however, the center seems to better serve the function of co-opting rhetoric on rights and deflecting criticism of the regime than actually advancing rights or responding to victims’ claims.¹⁷¹

International education development is not immune to politics or the accusation that it imposes its categories of meaning on other societies.¹⁷² As Timothy Mitchell explains, international aid organizations, which imagine themselves to be “a rational consciousness standing outside the country,” in reality are a “central element in configurations of power within

¹⁶⁷ Muhammad Faour and Marwan Muasher, “Education for Citizenship in the Arab World: Key to the Future,” Carnegie Middle East Center (October 2011), 18.

¹⁶⁸ Henrietta H. Fore, acting director of foreign assistance and acting USAID administrator, “Building Bridges of Understanding” (keynote address to the Meridian House Inaugural Conference, October 16, 2007), accessed April 24, 2014, <http://2001-2009.state.gov/f/releases/remarks2007/93732.htm>.

¹⁶⁹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, “World Data on Education: Jordan,” (2010), 5.

¹⁷⁰ Following curricular changes in 2003, Education Minister Khaled Tuqan announced that textbooks would clearly condemn terrorism and promote human rights. Imed Labidi, “Arab Education Going Medieval: Sanitizing Western Representation in Arab Schools,” *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies* 8, 2 (December 2010): 206. Also, government guidelines for curricular change stress the educational goal of meeting the needs of the global economy and following vision of the Knowledge Economy Project, “National Report on Adult Education in Jordan,” Sixth International Conference on Adult Education, Directorate of General Education, December 2009.

¹⁷¹ Sonia Cardenas and Andrew Flibbert, “National Human Rights Institutions in the Middle East,” *Middle East Journal* 59, 3 (Summer 2005): 413.

¹⁷² International development actors often struggle to reconcile their definitions of democracy with local conceptions. As the former head of the U.S.-government funded Civitas project states, he began to “question whether we should be seeking to impose particular models of democracy and democracy education that may not correspond to the needs, desires and values of those with whom we are working.” T.C. Mason, “Ethics and Democracy Education Across Borders,” in *Ethics and International Curriculum Work: The Challenges of Culture and Context*, ed. Terrence C. Mason and Robert J Helfenbein (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, Inc., 2012), 10.

the country.”¹⁷³ In the educational context, international development’s focus on Arab and Muslim schooling has brought textbooks to the fore as “new spaces for colonization.”¹⁷⁴ Rather than imposing foreign rule directly, however, international aid works by identifying a problem rooted in Arab cultural backwardness and framing neo-liberal reform (usually conducive to Western capitalist expansion) as the only neutral and technical solution to it.¹⁷⁵

Several scholars have illustrated the coerciveness of international education development and the values it seeks to promote in Jordan. In one study, Maysoun Sukarieh analyzes a USAID-funded “hope” campaign designed to combat the apparent culture of pessimism and despair in Jordan. She finds that the campaign essentializes Arab culture, internalizes beliefs about cultural backwardness in Jordanian elites, and obscures the goal of international development institutions and the Hashemite regime to produce neo-liberal consumers and subjects.¹⁷⁶ Fida Adely likewise asserts that the AHDR’s promotion of female education and entry into the workplace operates on the assumption that remaining in the home is an obstacle to female development – ignoring the possibility that many women, such as Adely’s Jordanian interlocutors, are acting on their own preferences.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 233.

¹⁷⁴ Andre Elias Mazawi, “Schooling and Curricular Reforms in Arab and Muslim Societies,” *Middle East Journal* 62, 2 (Spring 2008): 330.

¹⁷⁵ Tim Mitchell, “America’s Egypt: Discourse of the Development Industry,” *Middle East Report* (March-April 1991): 24. Gilbert Rist notes that “development” as a concept began with President Truman’s “fourth point” in his Inaugural Address of 1949. As a discourse, international development is nominally anti-colonial, but it shifts responsibility for problems in the formerly colonized world away from the former colonizers by portraying “underdevelopment” as a state of being. Development actors then derive solutions geared toward wealth-creation that appear to be neutral, but that are in reality hegemonic. The solutions are framed as not only the best, but ultimately the only ones worth pursuing. Gilbert Rist, *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith* (London: Zed Books, 2004), 70-74.

¹⁷⁶ Maysoun Sukarieh, “The Hope Crusades: Culturalism and Reform in the Arab World,” *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 35, 1 (May 2012): 121.

¹⁷⁷ Fida J. Adely, “Educating Women for Development: The Arab Human Development Report 2005 and the Problem with Women’s Choices,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 41, 1 (February 2009): 114.

The international development industry in Jordan also ignores its own complicity in sustaining the civics-related tolerance and “knowledge society” deficits it seeks to correct. As Larry Diamond argues, foreign aid is one of the reasons for the absence of democracy in the Arab world, as it gives regimes significant financial means to suppress peaceful political dissent – amounting in the case of Jordan to 27 percent of all domestic revenues from 2001-06.¹⁷⁸ Jordanians meanwhile are hardly ignorant of the misdirection inherent in many civic development projects. Batir Muhammad °Ali Wardam, for example, writes somewhat comically in a Jordanian newspaper that Jordan already has a “knowledge society” of sorts, but it is one that has “stalled development and reform in the public and private sectors.” In Jordan’s nepotistic knowledge society, whom one “knows” determines his or her social mobility.¹⁷⁹

This section evaluates Jordanian civics textbooks with a critical lens, cognizant of the permeation of international influence on civics education. It finds that the texts are conducive to the tolerance and “knowledge society” agendas of international development organizations, but concludes that for all their focus on democracy, tolerance, and pluralism, the textbooks fail to endorse meaningful citizen participation in government because such participation conflicts with the politics of exclusion the Hashemite regime practices. Untrue to the goal of a critical human rights pedagogy to produce responsible, active citizens aware of their rights,¹⁸⁰ the textbooks seem to be more concerned with producing loyal subjects and convincing them that the king is the guarantor of rights.

¹⁷⁸ Larry Diamond, “Why Are There No Arab Democracies?” *Journal of Democracy* 21, 1 (January 2010).

¹⁷⁹ Batir Muhammad °Ali Wardam, “Knowledge Society and Administration the Jordanian Way,” *Al-Dustour*, September 18, 2010, accessed April 24, 2014, http://www.addustour.com/ViewTopic.aspx?ac=\OpinionAndNotes\2010\09\OpinionAndNotes_issue1072_day18_id266632.htm [Arabic].

¹⁸⁰ David Suraez, “Education Professionals and the Construction of Human Rights Education,” *Comparative Education Review* 51, 1 (February 2007): 58.

The civics textbooks stress the centrality of “knowledge society” to Arab modernity and civilizational progress. Much like the AHDR, a 2004 tenth-grade textbook lists great Arab philosophers and scientists and discusses the necessity of “renewing knowledge.” The text gives the example of a doctor who graduated from medical school in 1960 but since then has practiced medicine based only on what he studied without participating in conferences or reading journals. “Do you think this is a successful doctor?” the text asks rhetorically. “Every human being whether he is working or not, young or old, laborer or merchant, needs information and knowledge that allows him to understand what is happening around him and cope with changes that occur. [...] Renewing knowledge makes a person modern, open to change, and effective in his work.”¹⁸¹ A few pages later, the text adds: “The *asala* (authenticity) of Arab values does not mean their fixedness and decline, but their vitality and effectiveness in confronting the needs of growth and progress in a changing society.”¹⁸²

The textbook’s authors are cautious, however, in their approach to globalized values that threaten public morality in Jordan. In one section, the text lists several social problems caused by globalization, including culture shock, family splintering, and generational conflict and warns: “The appearance of new values and customs is tied to change in all areas of life, including positive change such as participation in education, and negative change such as financial squandering and ostentation in appearance.”¹⁸³ Significantly, surrounding the text are several pop-out boxes with familiar themes, including “the educational *nahda*” (which the caption notes began with “the founding of the Emirate of Transjordan”) and a picture of the University of

¹⁸¹ Dhouban cAbidat et al., *National and Civic Upbringing*, tenth grade (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2004) [Arabic], 82.

¹⁸² cAbidat et al., *National and Civic Upbringing*, 86.

¹⁸³ cAbidat et al., *National and Civic Upbringing*, 61.

Jordan.¹⁸⁴ The effect of these boxes is to preserve a degree of *asala* and assert the relevance of Jordanian social values, even in the globalized present. Another 2004 text would draw a similar red line for globalization on the subject of religion, stating that while freedom in philosophical thought is healthy, “religious knowledge is fixed and does not change, because its source is from God and it is genuine.”¹⁸⁵

The civics textbooks encounter little difficulty endorsing the social value of tolerance in international terms. A 2007 tenth-grade textbook, for example, lays out the UN General Assembly’s 1981 definition of fanaticism (*ta^casub*) and proceeds to describe tolerance (*tasamuh*) as “a necessary condition for peace and social progress and the way we can overcome fanaticism, discrimination, and hatred.”¹⁸⁶ As an indication of the degree to which these categories are derived from international sources, the Arabic words for tolerance, fanaticism, and discrimination in the text are immediately followed by English translations in parentheses. Such translations, which are rare in Jordanian textbooks, are likely not only provided to expand students’ English vocabulary, but also to mark tolerance as an international category worthy of universal attention.

Like knowledge, tolerance is framed in internationally friendly terms, but it also obtains a particularly Jordanian character. A 2007 civics textbook discusses tolerance in reference to an international convention, the 1981 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, and ultimately defines it in pluralistic terms as the basis for “rights that distinguish any democratic system” and as “recognizing the prerogative of others to enjoy their basic rights and freedoms, which are

¹⁸⁴ °Abidat et al., *National and Civic Upbringing*, 62.

¹⁸⁵ Dhouqan °Abdallah °Abidat et al., *Civic and National Upbringing*, eighth grade, part two (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2004) [Arabic], 71.

¹⁸⁶ Khuloud Mutlaq al-°Eissa et al., *Civic and National Upbringing*, tenth grade, part two (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2007) [Arabic], 18

globally acknowledged.”¹⁸⁷ The passage concludes, however, by framing the state as responsible for the implementation of tolerance:

To realize the values of tolerance, it is necessary to unite the efforts of official state and civil institutions, because doing so reflects positively on all the members of society and those institutions.¹⁸⁸

In this sentence the text discursively places globalized tolerance and human rights under the purview of the state as a matter of national unity. As this section has noted, the Jordanian regime takes a state-centric approach to civic tolerance – establishing national institutions to promote human rights, playing host to several regional conferences on Arab civics education, and receiving millions of dollars from international organizations to reform curricula. This state-centric approach is hardly pluralistic, however. Through legal manipulation and bureaucratic encumbering, the state restricts non-state civic institutions such as the media, human rights groups, and above all, political parties that attempt to participate in elections. Thus in the Hashemite formulation of civic tolerance, the state becomes the sole arbiter of what is tolerant and rights-oriented, and it limits pluralism to a set of manipulable institutions that do not threaten the concentration of power in the monarch’s hands.

Other texts further identify the limits of tolerance for political parties. A 2006 textbook, for example, lists political zeal as one of the forms of fanaticism, which it identifies as the opposite of tolerance, and proceeds to chastise parties that do not “work for the interest of the nation.”¹⁸⁹ Another text similarly portrays political parties as the primary obstacle to political development in Jordan, given their supposed traditional leadership, ineffectiveness, and tendency

¹⁸⁷ Khuloud Mutlaq al-^cEissa et al., *National and Civics Upbringing*, tenth grade, part two (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2007) [Arabic], 17.

¹⁸⁸ al-^cEissa et al., *National and Civics Upbringing*, 19.

¹⁸⁹ Mousa Abu Sal et al., *National and Civics Upbringing*, sixth grade (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2006) [Arabic], 50.

to be centered around personalities rather than programs.¹⁹⁰ The texts, of course, leave out Jordan's political party laws and one-man-one-vote electoral regime, which are the structural cause for parties' ineffectiveness. In this light, the textbooks' discussion of tolerance should be read as a de-politicized and stern reminder that tolerance is best demonstrated by the Hashemite crown, not a plurality of political actors and parties.

Popular opposition parties have always posed a threat to monarchic power. As Betty Anderson notes, the 1950s nationalist opposition movement, which enjoyed impressive electoral victories and had a strong popular base of support, nearly toppled Hashemite rule.¹⁹¹ The regime responded to this movement with crackdowns and arrests and an appeal to the United States to preserve the regime. Today, the Muslim Brotherhood's political branch, the Islamic Action Front, constitutes the largest opposition party in Jordan. Although some scholars have posited that that regime has adopted a strategy of co-optation with the Brotherhood, which has reciprocated by acting as a loyal opposition,¹⁹² political developments since 2001 seem to have altered this relationship.

In the context of the 2005 hotel bombings in Amman and Hamas' parliamentary victory in the Palestinian Territories in 2006, tensions ran high between Jordanian security forces and IAF members. A rhetorical battle ensued in which the IAF alleged security forces' abuse of power, while government officials accused the IAF of support for terrorism and acting against the state.¹⁹³ While it may be difficult to determine the level of a particular Islamist movement's

¹⁹⁰ Khalil al-Hajjaj et al., *National and Civics Upbringing*, eighth grade (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2005) [Arabic], 47.

¹⁹¹ Betty S. Anderson, *Nationalist Voices in Jordan: The Street and the State* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005).

¹⁹² Quintan Wiktorowicz, *The Management of Islamic Activism: Salafis, the Muslim Brotherhood, and State Power in Jordan* (Albany: State University of New York, 2001), 83.

¹⁹³ Prime Minister Ma'rouf al-Bakhit stated that "the unprecedented verbal attack on Jordan's public security and military institutions goes straight to the bone and transgresses all boundaries in terms of the pillars that uphold the country," while a former head of the Public Defense Department declared that the Brotherhood has "two faces" and

moderation or openness to democracy in the absence of a politically open environment,¹⁹⁴ the IAF has frequently asserted that it does not aim to shut out other parties or political trends and that its aspiration is to participate in formal politics to establish an “effective parliamentary bloc.”¹⁹⁵ (Indeed, the greatest percentage of seats the Front has contested in national elections is 40 percent in 1993¹⁹⁶ – hardly a strategy for domination of the legislature). Nevertheless, the regime has restricted the Brotherhood’s political activities.

Whether active in formal politics or not, Jordanian students and teachers also resist the regime’s narrative on tolerance and pluralism. Although several studies conducted by researchers uncritically accept categories of meaning crafted by the regime (such as “global education”¹⁹⁷ and “security education”¹⁹⁸) and blame weak civic education in Jordan on a religious and cultural unwillingness to accept Western values,¹⁹⁹ other studies investigating the views of actual participants in civic education reveal the nuanced politics of education in Jordan. In one report, teachers say that even though they see citizenship classes as important to their students’ lives, the social studies curriculum is outdated and dull; administrators meanwhile

the state has clear means of dealing with “radical Islam”: “The problem with the Brotherhood is that it uses its influence, its activities and its institutions against the state. [...] the Brotherhood stands with the Iran-Syria axis and with the Hezbollah and Hamas movements. These are countries and organizations that are not on friendly terms with Jordan and the Jordanian regime.” Mohammed Abu Rumman, *The Muslim Brotherhood in the 2007 Jordanian Parliamentary Elections: A Passing ‘Political Setback’ or Diminished Popularity?* (Amman: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2007), 30-31.

¹⁹⁴ Tamara Cofman Wittes, “Three Kinds of Movements,” *Journal of Democracy* 19 (July 2008): 11.

¹⁹⁵ “Interview with Jordan’s Islamic Action Front Party Secretary General Hamzah Mansur, by Hazim al-Amin, from Amman: ‘Hamzah Mansur to Al-Hayat: Jordan Is the Country of the Two Riverbanks; We Disagree with the Government Over All Dossiers’” (text of report by London-based newspaper *Al-Hayat* website on July 23, 2010).

¹⁹⁶ Abu Rumman, *The Muslim Brotherhood*, 57.

¹⁹⁷ Mahmoud Sulayman Bani Abdelrahman, Eid El-Subhieen, and Mustafa Jwaifell, “Developing Global and Technological Education Standards of Social Education Curriculum in Mid-Stage in Jordan,” *Asian Social Science* 8, 11 (2012): 223.

¹⁹⁸ Zaid Suleiman Al-Edwan and Mohammad Fuad, “Education Leaders’ Points of View Toward the Role of School Curricula in Promoting Security Education in Jordan,” *International Forum of Teaching and Studies* 6, 1 (2010): 5.

¹⁹⁹ Khaled Alazzi, “Why is Social Studies Education in Jordan a Prisoner to the Past? A Study of Cross-History and Cultural Perspectives,” *Essays in Education* 23 (Winter 2008): 14.

claim that teachers are using ineffective methods of instruction centered on memorization.²⁰⁰ The teachers retort that they cannot teach effectively when the Ministry of Education and school supervisors set their lessons and require completion of bulky textbooks by the end of academic terms.²⁰¹ Teachers also express a desire to be more involved in curriculum development and emphasize their loyalty to their students over the state (while admitting they comply with administrative standards to keep their jobs).²⁰² Overall, education stakeholders feel frustrated that they do not know where the state is leading curricular reforms and remain skeptical of foreign influence over the process.²⁰³

These perspectives suggest that for all of the rhetorical effort the regime exerts in the civics textbooks to promote loyalty to the Hashemites, education actors contest regime control of the civic education process. Teachers' willingness to prioritize their students over the state shows that the regime's centralized control of education may be having the opposite of its intended effect to produce loyal subjects. These observations are consistent with Fida Adely's finding that "national ideals as they unfold in schools through rituals and performance often do as much to unbalance legitimacy as to produce it."²⁰⁴

Jordanian citizens also recognize the limits on their political and economic rights in this supposedly pluralist system, yet they continue to demand these rights. Studies show that nearly

²⁰⁰ Khaled F. Alazzi, "Social Studies in the Back Burner in Jordanian Elementary School: A Phenomenological Examination of Social Studies Teachers and Supervisors," *American International Journal of Contemporary Research* 2, 2 (February 2012): 89.

²⁰¹ Cedric Cullingford and Muhannad Mustafa, "Teacher Autonomy and Centralised Control: The Case of Textbooks," *International Journal of Educational Development* 28 (2008): 86.

²⁰² Kadhun Khan Al-Daami and Gwen Wallace, "Curriculum Reform in a Global Context: A Study of Teachers in Jordan," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 39, 3 (2007): 355.

²⁰³ Nafez Dakkak, "Obstacles towards Curriculum Reform in the Middle East: Using Jordan and the UAE as Case Studies" (policy brief, Dubai School of Government, October 2011), 3.

²⁰⁴ Adely, *Gendered Paradoxes*, 82.

80 percent of Jordanians prefer democratic governance to autocratic rule.²⁰⁵ In addition, nearly two-thirds of Jordanians define democracy in reference to civil liberties and freedoms, political accountability, the rule of law, and free elections.²⁰⁶ Following the outbreak of popular uprisings throughout the Arab world in 2011, tens of thousands of Jordanians demonstrated in the streets protesting corruption in the country and calling for a return to the 1952 constitution and the institution of a constitutional monarchy.²⁰⁷ A significant number of Jordanian citizens, it would seem, question the tolerance/pluralism narrative offered by the Hashemite crown, because their fundamental political and economic rights remain unrealized.

(c) Observations on History and Civics Textbooks

If history textbooks propagate the inevitability of Hashemite rule in Jordan, civics textbooks attempt to justify the present-day manifestation of that rule. In this respect, the civics lessons build off the history lessons, often repeating the Great Arab Revolt and *Nahda*-era narrative before discussing the values of citizenship. Unlike the history textbooks, however, which generally exclude Jordanian citizens as actors from the national stage (beyond demonstrating their support for the Revolt and the establishment of the state), civics texts are specifically addressed to citizens.

This chapter questions whether Jordanian history and civics textbooks are designed to produce democratic citizens or monarchic subjects. Throughout the texts, citizens are portrayed as objects to be transformed by an all-knowing regime historically qualified to lead national

²⁰⁵ Center for Strategic Studies, “Democracy Poll 2008,” accessed April 24, 2014, <http://www.css-jordan.org/subDefault.aspx?PageId=36&PollType=2>.

²⁰⁶ Fares Braizat, “What Arabs Think,” *Journal of Democracy* 21, 4 (October 2001): 132.

²⁰⁷ “Thousands call for reform on Jordan ‘Day of Anger,’” *AFP*, February 25 2011.

renaissance. From Hanin, the ideal student who learns to associate the Great Arab Revolt with the Hashemite-crafted “prosperous life,” to the counter-example of the doctor who fails to incorporate globalized knowledge into his career, the emphasis is on citizens’ submission, not agency.

Against this discursive backdrop stands the historical reality that Jordanians have contested Hashemite monopoly on political truth from the state’s founding. Not only do they develop alternative local histories that place themselves as actors in the national narrative, but they form political parties and attempt to participate democratically in parliamentary life. The history and civics textbooks, however, do not recognize these efforts.

Much like international development organizations, which tend to essentialize and improve their Arab-Islamic subjects, Hashemite *nahda* discourse essentializes citizens as unstable and in need of reform only the monarchy can provide.²⁰⁸ The Hashemites become the primary actors in history and the sole frame of reference for pluralism and tolerance in Jordan. Hashemite discourse thereby strips human rights of meaningful implementation and reduces the complex political and economic history of Jordan to a teleology of Hashemite-led development, ultimately obscuring the concentration of political power in the monarch’s hands.

²⁰⁸ Western governments and media have been complicit in promoting the gradualism of Hashemite-led *nahda*. Jon Stewart, for example, embraced King ‘Abdallah II in a 2012 appearance on Comedy Central’s Daily Show as an enlightened ruler shepherding his people toward democracy and away from terrorism/extremism, while steering clear of discussion of restrictive media and political laws in Jordan and accusations of the regime’s corruption. Kifah and Jennifer, “Jon Stewart’s Theater of the Absurd,” *Jadaliyya*, accessed April 24, 2014, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/7646/jon-stewarts-theater-of-the-absurd>.

III. *NAHDA* AS INTELLECTUAL IDEAL: LITERATURE AND RELIGION TEXTBOOKS

As Chapter II demonstrated, the *Nahda* is a critically important era in Jordanian history and civics textbooks. The Ministry of Education inserts the state and its Hashemite leadership directly into the history of the nation by focusing on Sharif al-Husayn's Arab Revolt, which comes to represent the political culmination of the *Nahda*. Furthermore, the Ministry uses the legacy of the *Nahda* in the texts to justify continued Hashemite-led state development, which is also described as a small-n "*nahda*," or ongoing renaissance. The result, Chapter II concludes, is that the texts use the language of *nahda* not only to minimize Jordanian citizens as actors in history, but also to reconstruct them in the tolerant Hashemite image as objects of political development.

The *Nahda* was not merely a series of political or historical events, however. Rather, the era also encapsulated a robust intellectual exchange throughout the Arab world (and in the Levant in particular) on religious reform, Arab culture, anti-colonial resistance, the Arabic language, and the future of the nation. It is this world of ideas and the intellectual legacy of the *Nahda* that Jordanian literature and religion textbooks address. In contrast to the history and civics textbooks analyzed in Chapter II, these literature and religion textbooks do not portray the Jordanian state and its Hashemite leadership as central actors. Indeed the state does not begin to appear in the textbooks until the 1990s and 2000s – and then only in a limited capacity.

This chapter argues that the state is hesitant to intrude into literature and religion textbooks because it views these books as containing sacred subject matter that exceeds the territorially bounded Hashemite state. In the literature texts, the *Nahda* assumes large-scale proportions as the intellectual foreground for Arab modernity and pan-Arab unity, while in the

religion texts, the *Nahda* is the beginning of the restoration, revival, and renaissance of Islamic civilization as a whole. The state is less willing to co-opt the broad, sacred ideals of pan-Arab/Islamic unity than it is the history of the Arab Revolt. While the Hashemites led the Revolt, they can less comfortably claim to speak on behalf of the global religion of Islam or the regional movement of Arab nationalism.

The state's hesitance to intrude in the literature and religion texts is also rooted in a deficit of legitimacy stemming from incomplete consolidation of Jordanian nationalism. As Raymond Hinnebusch argues, Arab regimes resort to supra-state ideologies like Arabism and Islam because the state formation they have attempted to realize within arbitrarily imposed colonial borders remains incomplete and flawed.²⁰⁹ Facing legitimacy deficits and a lack of credible national narratives to substitute for Arabism and Islam, state elites feel the need to be seen as defending broadly defined "Arab-Islamic norms."²¹⁰ Efforts to "statise"²¹¹ supra-state identities through mass media and mass education remain limited, however, because Arabism and Islam exceed the fragmented state system by calling for pan-Arab or pan-Islamic unity.²¹²

The pairing of literature and religion textbooks is particularly apt in an analysis of the *Nahda* because *Nahda*-era writers fused currents of religious and Arab nationalist thought. Indeed, in many cases intellectuals such as Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad °Abduh, or Rashid Rida, "who spoke for a revitalized Islam to counter the Western impact, blended imperceptibly with early nationalist spokesmen" like Mustafa Kamil and Lutfi al-Sayyid.²¹³ Scholarly studies that ignore this fusion of Arabist and Islamic discourses tend to portray the

²⁰⁹ Raymond A. Hinnebusch, *The International Politics of the Middle East* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 2.

²¹⁰ Hinnebusch, *International Politics*, 69.

²¹¹ Hinnebusch, *International Politics*, 57.

²¹² "Islam and Arabism both prioritize Arab or Islamic unity over individual reason of state; both insist on economic and cultural autonomy of the Western-dominated world system and both reject the legitimacy of Israel. Nationalist and Islamic identities overlap." Hinnebusch, *International Politics*, 69.

²¹³ Richard Pfaff, "The Function of Arab Nationalism," *Comparative Politics* 2, 2 (January 1970): 150.

Nahda as a primarily “liberal” or “secular” trend in history – as distinct from an illiberal Islamic counter-trend that began to emerge at the same time. Such a flawed portrayal, Christoph Schumann says, permits Western commentators to use rigid terms like “Islamism,” “liberalism,” and “nationalism” to differentiate ideologies, instead of recognizing the porousness of these categories.²¹⁴

This is not to say that Islamic reform and Arab nationalism in the *Nahda* era may be entirely equated. While the former sought internal civilizational revision, the latter was more exogenous, born out of colonial contact and exposure to European nationalism. Nonetheless both movements stemmed from a nineteenth-century dialogue on modernism, and both sought “rebirth and awakening, marked by faith in the future and by a deep confidence in the inevitable progress of societies.”²¹⁵ Furthermore, both were enabled by the emergence of a print culture, which permitted the quick spread of ideas and made the fame and careers of thinkers like Jamal al-Din al-Afghani possible.²¹⁶ Certainly ideas traveled in regional pockets, and the notion of the Arab nation, or *al-umma al-‘arabiyya*, gained favor among Lebanese Christians like Khalil al-Khuri and Ibrahim al-Yaziji before it resonated with leading Muslim intellectuals.²¹⁷ But even in the first generations of the *Nahda*, “Arabist, pan-Islamist, Ottomanist and Syrianist ideas were intricately intertwined.”²¹⁸

The centrality of renaissance-speak to the work of *Nahda* intellectuals is hard to understate. Renaissance in the mind of these thinkers meant both the raising up of the nation and reviving religion. The nineteenth century thinker ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi, for example,

²¹⁴ Schumann, “The ‘Failure’ of Radical Nationalism,” 415.

²¹⁵ Tomiche, “Nahda.”

²¹⁶ Juan R. I. Cole, “Printing and Urban Islam in the Medieval World, 1890-1920,” in *Modernity and Culture: From the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean*, ed. Leila Tarazi Fawaz and C. A. Bayly (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 355.

²¹⁷ Kais M. Firro, *Metamorphosis of the Nation (al-Umma): The Rise of Arabism and Minorities in Syria and Lebanon, 1850-1940* (Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2009), 35.

²¹⁸ Firro, *Metamorphosis of the Nation*, 39.

accused the Ottomans of “abandonment of religious tolerance and leniency in religious practice,” “policy-making [...] divorced from power and responsibility,” and “suppression of awakened thought.”²¹⁹ Publishing several decades after al-Kawakibi in the political context of colonial rule, Rashid Rida would propose an “independent renewal” to promote modern national interests and create the “dignified *umma*” that ʿAbduh and al-Afghani dreamt of – an *umma* whose “religion, culture, laws, and language” would be preserved.²²⁰ Thus for both al-Kawakibi and Rida, religious and political reform went hand-in-hand as part of “awakening” the nation.

The post-*Nahda* reality, of course, was the disappointment of these aspirations for renaissance. Not only did colonial and neo-colonial control persist in the twentieth century, but the Arab nation remained divided into separate states after the failure of the Arab nationalist project. Intellectuals did not cease calling for national renaissance; however, as this chapter will demonstrate, the meaning of renaissance became more contested among intellectuals, and the *Nahda* era itself came to represent more sharply differing visions for the Arab nation.

Over the course of the twentieth century, the state also became more willing to intervene in shaping renaissance. While Arab intellectuals tended to adopt holistic, utopian ideologies that reduce social ills to a single cause and propose an overall remedy, regimes chose a middle-of-the-road approach combining ideologies to gain wide appeal.²²¹ At the same time as they promoted “middle-of-the-roadism” as an alternative to the ideological poles however, the regimes’ flawed socio-economic policies prepared the conditions for a confrontation between the

²¹⁹ ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi, “Summary of the Causes of Stagnation,” in *Modernist Islam, 1840-1940: A Sourcebook*, ed. Charles Kurzman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 155.

²²⁰ Muhammad Rashid Rida, “Renewal, Renewing, and Renewers,” in *Modernist Islam, 1840-1940: A Sourcebook*, ed. Charles Kurzman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 78.

²²¹ Assem Dessouki, “Social and Political Dimensions of the Historiography of the Arab Gulf,” in *Statecraft in the Middle East: Oil, Historical Memory, and Popular Culture* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1991), 192.

poles and created *qalaq*, or social angst, which was and remains particularly acute after the 1967 war with Israel and loss of historical Palestine.²²²

In Jordan, literature and religion textbooks display not only divergent ideological poles, but also the Hashemite regime's middle-of-the-road approach to *nahda* (understood both as historical event and keyword for national renaissance). As for the poles, *nahda* assumes more secular-nationalist discursive forms in the literature texts, while it is more conducive to Islamist ideology in the religion texts – reflecting the well-established influence of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Ministry of Education since the 1970s.²²³ These ideological trends nevertheless remain in dialogue with one another, not in isolation, and at times overlap.

While generally absent from the texts until the 1990s and 2000s, the state eventually enters the picture as the guiding hand of the intellectual *Nahda* and Jordan's ongoing national renaissance. The message these latter texts convey is that the renaissance can be both nationalist and religious, pan-Arab/Islamic and particularly Jordanian. The texts stress that the Hashemites are the only legitimate leaders of the renaissance because only they are qualified by both their prophetic lineage and their intellectual contributions to the *Nahda* period. Such lofty Hashemite claims are called into question, however, by the reality of stalled reform and limited socio-economic development in Jordan. Such stagnation suggests that Hashemite rule may be creating *qalaq* even as it pursues *nahda*.

This chapter concludes that the statist turn of the later textbooks of the 1990s and 2000s is a result of two parallel historical trends discussed in Chapter II. First, the new constitution of 1989 gave the state a reinvigorated self-identity as a “democratizing” constitutional monarchy and prompted growing nationalism epitomized in slogans such as “Jordan First” and “God-the

²²² Dessouki, “Social and Political Dimensions,” 193.

²²³ Mansoor Moaddel, *Jordanian Exceptionalism: A Comparative Analysis of State-Religion Relationships in Egypt, Iran, Jordan and Syria* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 108.

Nation-the King” (*Allah, al-Watan, al-Malak*). The literature and religion textbooks’ portrayal of the king as a legitimate Islamic leader and intellectual guide for Jordan reflects this Hashemite-centric nationalism. Second, increasing international aid has had not only profound effects on Jordan’s economy with the push toward the opening of markets and privatization, but has also led to the insertion of neo-liberal categories of meaning into the texts. The literature and religion textbooks embrace discussion of terms such as tolerance, pluralism, citizenship, and openness to internationalism – all of which are portrayed as ideals Jordan’s Hashemite leadership is singularly qualified to realize.

(a) Literature Textbooks: Establishing the Mythic Past

Arabic literature has witnessed a prominent and long-established history since the spread of Islam in the *mashriq* and *maghrib*. Throughout this history, eras of crisis – particularly at the rise of Islam, the end of the Arab-Muslim empires, and the advent of modernity – drove intellectuals toward history-writing and canon-making, which “assured first a safe path to revelation and then provided a reliable path back to the beginnings of Arab genius.”²²⁴ Studying Arabic literary histories is crucial to understanding the past, for such histories reveal “vivid testimonies of textual communities of the learned” whose rationality becomes infused with the text.²²⁵ These literary histories are also crucial to understanding present-day intellectual discourse, for history is the “site of controversies, endeavours of restoration, embellishments, and demolition,” forming the “background against which theoretical discussions are launched.”²²⁶

²²⁴ Nadia Al-Bagdadi, “Registers of Arabic Literary History,” *New Literary History* 39 (2008): 440-441.

²²⁵ Al-Bagdadi, “Registers of Arabic Literary History,” 440-441.

²²⁶ Choueiri, *Modern Arab Historiography*, 3.

One such era of crisis in Arabic literary history is the post-1967 reckoning with the loss of the ideal in the Arab world. Saree Makdisi describes post-1967 literature as not only reflecting the loss of Palestine and failure of Arab unity, but also a sense that state-pioneered “modernization” in the region had brought about a very different kind of modernity than that envisioned in the *Nahda* era. Indeed colonial systems of power morphed after independence into “neocolonial relations of power and domination [...] that have locked the independent Arab states into a subalternity reminiscent of, but not identical to, that of the nineteenth century.”²²⁷ The resulting “literature of crisis” challenges the “unilinear temporality” of the *Nahda* – namely the assumption that modernity held out the future of a truly unified, independent Arab nation.²²⁸

Each of the countries in the Levant has taken its own approach to realizing the legacy of the *Nahda* in the post-independence era, thereby reinforcing the political division devised by colonial powers. Responding to this political and social reality, many post-1967 literary works include

historicizing operations and hypotheses, in which, for example, the possibility of a return to a mythic past is rejected along with the alternative possibility of an uncompromised and perpetually deferred great leap ‘forward’ to development. All that is left is, indeed, a highly unstable and contradictory present, one that defies the convenient and false reassurances of new and old political, religious, and literary dogmatisms.²²⁹

The loss of the ideal or mythic in post-1967 literature, should not, however, give the impression that the ideal was a stable category even in the *Nahda* era. Indeed, *nahdawi* writers in Egypt, who used the literary form of the “national or artistic novel” to construct their anti-colonial nationalist “renaissance,” had to contend with the lowbrow popular novel, which borrowed extensively from translated European works and allowed newly literate masses to escape

²²⁷ Saree Makdisi, “‘Postcolonial’ Literature in a Neocolonial World: Modern Arabic Culture and the End of Modernity,” *Boundary* 22, 1 (Spring 1995): 97-98.

²²⁸ Makdisi, “‘Postcolonial’ Literature,” 97-98.

²²⁹ Makdisi, “‘Postcolonial’ Literature,” 99.

Egyptian reality and enter culturally ambiguous melodramas.²³⁰ *Nahdawi* writers were suspicious of such popular novels precisely because they dislocated the “emergent national subject” from the territorial space of the nation and failed to place their content within the framework of anti-colonial resistance.²³¹ Thus, while the nationalist ideal of the *Nahda* era, which Makdisi identifies as being lost after 1967, undoubtedly achieved prominence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was always a tenuous myth that required constant maintenance by way of its adherents’ ink on paper.

The dominance of the nationalist narrative in *Nahda*-era literature is further called into question by a close reading of texts produced by nineteenth and twentieth century travelers and novelists. Tarek El-Ariss argues that while scholars often portray the texts as ridden with modernist anxiety over the question of European cultural hegemony, the texts in reality identify multiple sites for the modern, drawing from and rejecting both European and Arab-Islamic norms.²³² Modernity is performed by characters who encounter space defined across European and Arab-Islamic cultural influences and carve out existence for themselves within this space. The literature of the *Nahda*, therefore, hardly represents a pure incarnation of European renaissance or nationalism in the Arab world, but neither is it bound by the quest to bring back the golden ages of the Arab-Islamic past. Rather, *Nahda* literature simultaneously encompasses myth and frustration, national renaissance and colonial influence, hope and crisis.

²³⁰ Samah Selim, “The People’s Entertainments: Translation, Popular Fiction and the Nahda in Egypt,” in *Other Renaissances: A New Approach to World Literature*, ed. Brenda Deen Schildgen, Gang Zhou, and Sander L. Gilman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 39.

²³¹ Selim, “The People’s Entertainments,” 49.

²³² Tarek El-Ariss, *Trials of Arab Modernity: Literary Affects and the New Political* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 12-13.

(i) Early Literature Textbooks: Revival and Awakening

In contrast to both the nuanced visions of modernity in *Nahda*-era literature and the later loss of the ideal in the face of fragmented reality in post-1967 literature, early Jordanian literature textbooks attempt to hold onto the myth of renaissance. Thus, they seek to preserve, rather than challenge, the linearity of the *Nahda* and the teleological promise of history for a greater, more developed nation. Furthermore, they remain beholden to the dominant Eurocentric narrative of anti-colonial struggle and nationalist revival, rather than cognizant of the complex performance of both European and Arab-Islamic norms that *Nahda* literature characterized.

A 1968 book on literary history illustrates these trends. The textbook defines “*nahda*” in general terms compatible with both the historical era of the *Nahda* and the ongoing development of society:

[*Nahda* is] the raising of the cultural and moral level of the individual and society’s life. The material aspect is apparent in the raising of means of livelihood – both necessary and luxurious manners of living. The moral aspect is apparent in the advancement of political, economic, social and cultural progress.²³³

Emphasis is placed on reviving heritage (*ihya’ al-turath*) in the text, and *Nahda*-era thinkers are highlighted at some length. Muhammad ‘Abduh, for example, is praised for the modern “intellectual revolution” he brought to Egypt, his reason-focused educational reforms at al-Azhar, and his participation in the ‘Urabi Revolt against a British-installed khedive.²³⁴ The sense the reader is left with is that *nahda* is not only a historical era replete with epic anti-colonial revolutions and lofty thinkers, but that it still bears the promise of raising citizens’ livelihoods and advancing Arab civilization to this day.

²³³ ‘Ali Hasan ‘Awda, ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Kiyali, and Fa’iz ‘Ali al-Ghoul, *History of Literature*, third part (Amman: Ministry of Education, 1968) [Arabic], 25.

²³⁴ ‘Awda, al-Kiyali, and ‘Ali, *History of Literature*, 170-171.

A later textbook on literary history used in the 1980s takes a similar approach to modernity, portraying the *Nahda* as the launch of a string of ongoing developments in the life of the *umma*: “As a result of this intellectual awakening (*yaqdha*), the role of the *umma* had become important in matters of governance and politics, and that was the first of the appearances of this awakening.”²³⁵ While the 1968 text stressed *nahda* in its secular-nationalist sense as the rise and development of the nation, this 1980s text places emphasis on the *umma* in both Arabist and Islamic contexts, seeking to fuse the two. In discussing resistance to colonialism, for instance, it says:

The liberators began to call – from every place and throughout the Arab nation (*watan*) – for the defense of Arabism (*uruba*) and Islam. They undertook armed revolts everywhere from Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Tunisia, Algeria and Marakesh, until these countries achieved formidable victories.²³⁶

The 1980s textbook also more explicitly recognizes the role of Islamic reformist thinkers than the 1968 textbook, which references ‘Abduh’s nationalism without exploring his extensive writings on religious revival. The 1980s text states: “Most of the thinkers in the modern era were oriented to Islamic thought and sought to read it and be inspired by it to undertake a modern intellectual project stemming from the Islamic creed (*aqeeda*) and conducive to civilizational progress.”²³⁷ A main reason listed for the Arab awakening is “holding onto heritage,” and the Qur’an is cited as the source of the linguistic richness of the Arabic language and the reason why linguists of the *Nahda* were able to derive Arabic words for modern inventions and concepts.²³⁸

The textbook’s characterization of the *Nahda* as inclusive of Islamic reform recognizes the fusion of Arabist and Islamist thought at the time, but the stress on the unity of “Arab-

²³⁵ ‘Abd al-Jalil ‘Abd al-Mahdi, ‘Abd al-Rahman Khamis, and Samir Sharif Sutiya, *Memoir in the History of Arabic Literature* (Amman: Ministry of Education, ___) [Arabic], 112.

²³⁶ ‘Abd al-Mahdi, *Memoir in the History*, 127.

²³⁷ ‘Abd al-Mahdi, *Memoir in the History*, 112-113.

²³⁸ ‘Abd al-Mahdi, *Memoir in the History*, 107.

Islamic” cultural heritage only further elevates the *Nahda* as myth. Not only does “*nahda*” come to signify nationalist revolution, literary renaissance, and ongoing development, but it becomes a divinely ordained project. Rather than being an object of critical investigation, “*nahda*” is an almost unquestionable symbol of the promise of modernity. The ideal is never lost.

(ii) Post-1989 Literature Textbooks: Nationalism and Poetic Praise

In contrast to these early textbooks in which the state is formally absent, later textbooks from the 1990s and 2000s show an almost brazen insertion of the Hashemite-led state as actor. The effect of this insertion of the state is to nationalize and concretize the myth of modernity. As Vilashini Cooppan theorizes, post-colonial nationalizing of narratives represents the state’s “modern ideal, understood as a spirit of collective identity and zone of governmentality bonded to a bounded space, a linearized historical time, and a singular citizen-self.”²³⁹ While it is perhaps expected that nationalization of narratives would appear in educational curricula written by self-legitimizing post-colonial states, the relevant question in the Jordanian context is: Why does the Jordanian state, which attained independence from Britain in 1946, not make an appearance as direct actor in the intellectual legacy of the nation until the textbooks of the 1990s and 2000s?

This section hypothesizes that the rather late “Jordanization” of literature textbooks can be explained by several factors. First, the textbooks are uncomfortable with appropriating the categories of Arabism and Islam, which by the very nature of their pan-Arab or pan-Islamic subject matter exceed the geographically limited post-colonial state. Second, the post-1967 the loss of the ideal made it difficult for the Jordanian state to claim to have formed the ideal, and

²³⁹ Vilashini Cooppan, *World Within: National Narratives and Global Connections in Postcolonial Writing* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 7.

thereby take responsibility for its loss. Third, the Jordanian state's hesitance to adopt the myth of *nahda* until the last two decades can be explained by constitutional developments in Jordan in 1989 and the corresponding reassertion of Jordanian nationalism, which laid the groundwork for a reinvigorated state more comfortable in its own borders, history, and intellectual legacy. Finally, the economic and political pressures of globalization, which fueled the popular protests that preceded the 1989 constitution, necessitated the state's response. As Cooppan asserts, nationalization of narratives is meant "to contest the notion that we are, in the era of globalization, entirely beyond nations and national identifications."²⁴⁰ It is within such a regional and global historical context that we must therefore understand the rather late nationalization of literature textbooks in Jordan.

A 2006 Arabic language textbook employs rhetoric familiar to the history and civics textbooks covered in Chapter II, in which the Hashemite king is a prominent actor. The textbook describes King ʿAbdallah I as a leader who "was able to found a modern Arab state by means of the wise politics he employed," who took "steps urging the path of development and prosperity," and who led the "educational *nahda*."²⁴¹ Similarly, a 2003 literary reader describes ʿAbdallah as "a man of rules, politics, and leadership, who was also a literary poetic orator with a wide reading in Arabic literature in its successive ages; his majesty's palace was a meeting place for Jordanian and other visiting Arab literati."²⁴² These texts assert that the king was not only a nationalist during the *Nahda* era, but also an enlightened intellectual himself who patronized academic work. The king's founding of the Jordanian state did not sell the *Nahda* short, the texts imply, but rather bore the fruit of the *Nahda*'s nationalism and intellectual revolution.

²⁴⁰ Cooppan, *World Within*, 7.

²⁴¹ Jamil Muhammad Husayn Bani ʿAta et al., *Our Arabic Language*, sixth grade (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2006) [Arabic], 79.

²⁴² ʿAbd al-Jalil ʿAbd al-Mahdi et al., *Reader and Literary Texts*, eighth grade (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2003) [Arabic], 66.

The most direct insertion of the state in Jordanian literature textbooks comes from a 2008 Arabic language book. In it, an entire chapter is dedicated to the study of “the poetry of the Great Arab Revolt.” While the textbook is designed to teach students a variety of Arabic poetic forms, this chapter’s selection of the *ritha’* (or poetic elegy) of Sharif al-Husayn, the father of King ʿAbdallah I, as subject-matter representative of the Arab Revolt at large reflects the “Jordanization” of the *Nahda*. Indeed, the chapter reads as a literary hagiography for Sharif al-Husayn, describing him as the “hero of the Arabs and the greatest demander of their rights” in Arabic literary sources in the *mashriq*.²⁴³ It quotes from a host of poets who call him a tree with noble roots and good offspring, the rightful Arab caliph akin to the ʿAbbasid caliph Harun al-Rashid, the prowess of both Christ and Muhammad, a *nahid* (lit. the one who rises up or undertakes *nahda*), and resister of the British.

Perhaps the most significant portion of the chapter is the concluding paragraph, which reads:

The pensive reading of these poetic texts on the Revolt and its leadership reveals the deep impact that they left on the spirits of all the Arab liberators and how the ideas, principles, and sayings of Sharif al-Husayn bin ʿAli and his descendants remain alive even after their return to their Creator. This is what these elegies embody. [...] It is necessary to confirm that the Great Arab Revolt is not just a fleeting historical event. Rather, it is a movement of national, liberationist revival (*nuhud*) possessing a current presence and vitality through its historical extensions represented by the country of Jordan with its Hashemite leadership and its heavenly principles rooted in the spirit of Arab liberators, thinkers, and poets.²⁴⁴

The text implies that the *Nahda* and its Hashemite-led Great Revolt do not represent an era whose promise of modernity is lost to history, but rather constitute an ongoing process of revival.

The text is also clear that the revival, which Sharif al-Husayn began, is continued by his descendants, including the current king ʿAbdallah II. The modern state of Jordan is the

²⁴³ ʿAli Ahmad al-ʿAroud et al., *Arabic Language: Literary Issues*, third and fourth levels, secondary school (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2008) [Arabic], 132.

²⁴⁴ al-ʿAroud et al., *Arabic Language*, 138.

“historical extension” of the *Nahda* endowed with “heavenly principles,” and its Hashemite leadership is owed gratitude (even the praises of poets) for leading it.

Several factors complicate the claims in this text. First, the text is published in the post-1967 era of Arabic literature that is highly skeptical of the modern state and its promises. Undoubtedly, several students have been exposed to such literature and live socio-economic realities that suggest flawed development and waves of both stagnation and progress. Second, modernity is not a stable concept that survives unchanged from the *Nahda* era to the present-day Jordanian state, as the text suggests. As Jeff Shalan demonstrates, the “liberal” thought of the *Nahda* era on issues of class, gender, and popular participation in governance differs in significant ways from neo-liberal positions advanced by international actors and the modern state today.²⁴⁵ Yet the text pays little attention to social and historical nuance, preferring instead to portray the state as always having been qualified to lead vaguely defined national “progress”.

Finally, as the history of early state formation in Jordan outlined in Chapter II demonstrates, the Hashemites were hardly universally accepted by the great thinkers of the *Nahda*, some of whom such as Rashid Rida expressed outright hostility to the Hashemites for their cooperation with the British and Zionists. Neither were all of the residents of Transjordan at the time of the state’s founding, convinced of ‘Abdallah’s literary greatness. Mustafa Wahbi al-Tal was not only a political, but also a poetic, rival of ‘Abdallah and wrote poetry criticizing the Hashemite family.²⁴⁶ Thus, even as Jordanian literature textbooks attempt to portray the *Nahda* as in line with contemporary Hashemite governance, they downplay the varying implications of the *Nahda*.

²⁴⁵ Jeff Shalan, “Writing the Nation: The Emergence of Egypt in the Modern Arabic Novel,” *Journal of Arabic Literature* 33, 3 (2002): 211.

²⁴⁶ Corbett, “Jordan First,” 268.

(b) Religion Textbooks: Commanding Obedience in an Era of Islamic Revival

Like the literature textbooks, Islamic textbooks in Jordan emphasize the mythical non-violability of *nahda* as intellectual frontier. As Betty Anderson finds in a study of Islamic textbooks in Jordan, the state does not insert itself as an explicit actor in the texts for two reasons. First, the state seeks to avoid the appearance of secular intervention in the field of religion, and second, adding the state as actor would dilute what the texts portray as “irrefutable statements on every aspect of students’ lives” that ultimately command obedience to Islamic society.²⁴⁷ The state is not absent, but rather unnamed in the texts. Indeed the state’s commands are often indistinguishable from those backed up by verses from scripture, and thus the “state and the faith have melded together seamlessly to create a perfect patriarchal family structure.”²⁴⁸

This section builds on Anderson’s argument with an analysis of *nahda* and *nuhud* (rising-up or revival) in Islamic textbooks. It begins with a background on Islamic revival as conceived by both Islamic reformers in the *Nahda* era and contemporary Jordanian Islamists, who exert influence in the Ministry of Education. It then proceeds to analyze early textbooks in which the state remains formally absent. Finally, it concludes that like literature textbooks, religion textbooks published in the 1990s and 2000s reflect an intrusion of the Jordanian state in the texts students read. In particular, the texts stress the state’s Hashemite leaders as the legitimate spokespersons of Islam. Such an intrusion resolves the somewhat conflicting messages Anderson identifies as emerging from a parallel reading of civics textbooks, which are saturated with discussion of the state and the international community, and the older religion textbooks in which the state remained formally absent.²⁴⁹ This resolution is not necessarily a stable one,

²⁴⁷ Betty Anderson, “Jordan: Prescription for Obedience and Conformity,” in *Teaching Islam: Textbooks and Religion in the Middle East*, ed. Eleanor Abdella Doumato and Gregory Starrett (London: Lynne Rienner, 2007), 75.

²⁴⁸ Anderson, “Jordan: Prescription for Obedience,” 78.

²⁴⁹ Anderson, “Jordan: Prescription for Obedience,” 82.

however. The insertion of the state in the texts and the inclusion of a multiplicity of discourses (including Islamist and internationalist) threatens to stretch Islam too thinly over categories only tangentially related to religion.

The Islamic reformers of the *Nahda* era advanced the call for the “revival” (*nuhud*) of Islam in dialogue with two ideological phenomena: external theological challenges to Islam and internal secular discourses on the future of the Arab nation. On the external front, the reformers were largely responding defensively to claims by Western missionaries and Orientalists that the cause of Arab civilizational backwardness was Islam.²⁵⁰ They retorted that a reformed Islam bore the seeds of its own rebirth in the modern era and pointed to past golden eras in Islamic history as evidence of this potential.

On the internal front, the reformists were in dialogue with proponents of secularism as the dominant social and political norm for the Arab nation, as embodied in the phrase advanced by early *nahdawi*, primarily Christian, intellectuals: “Religion is for God and the nation for all.”²⁵¹ In some respects, the involvement of non-Muslims in the discussion of civilizational revival is nothing new: since the earliest days of Islam, non-Muslims have contributed significantly to philosophical thought during eras of crisis and cultural flourishing.²⁵² On the other hand, Islam also functions particularly for Muslim believers as a rational, discursive tradition guiding their lives by way of reference to authoritative sources, namely the founding texts of the *Qur’an* and the sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad (the *hadith*).²⁵³ Thus, while Islamic thinking on renewal during the *Nahda* was responsive to (and indeed incorporated)

²⁵⁰ Haddad, *Contemporary Islam*, 14.

²⁵¹ Sami Zubaida, “The Nation-State and Religious Community in the Middle East,” in *Religion Between Violence and Reconciliation*, ed. Thomas Scheffler (Lebanon: German Orient-Institut, 2002).

²⁵² Samir Khalil Samir, S.J., “The Significance of Early Arab-Christian Thought for Muslim-Christian Understanding” (Occasional Papers Series, Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University, 1997), 44.

²⁵³ Talal Asad, “The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam” (Occasional Papers Series, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1986), 14.

external ideas, it also operated within the framework of an established tradition of Islamic thought.

Post-*Nahda* Islamic thinkers continued to address the renewal of religion; however, with the rise of Islamist political movements in the 1970s, the meaning of “renewal” moved beyond limited calls for social reform to a wider range of options, including social engineering²⁵⁴ and overt political rule.²⁵⁵ Certainly some Islamists, like Muhammad ‘Amara and Muhammad Ahmad Khalafallah retained the spirit of *Nahda*-era reformists who articulated Islamic identity as compatible with pluralism, and even secular governance.²⁵⁶ But for the Islamist mainstream, the focus is on *da‘wa*, or proselytization, as the primary means of making society Islamic and thereby realizing religious revival – even if the extent of non-Muslim citizens’ belonging in that society is not clear.²⁵⁷

Education has been a central part of the Islamist social project in the latter half of the twentieth century. Generally, Islamists see educational reform as crucial to realizing Islamic renewal and renaissance,²⁵⁸ given a history of Western attempts to “Christianize” knowledge in the region through missionary activity²⁵⁹ and the contemporary influence of an “increasingly hegemonic Western-dominated global culture.”²⁶⁰ In response, Islamists attempt to “Islamize”

²⁵⁴ Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, “The Revivalist Literature and the Literature on Revival: An Introduction,” in *The Contemporary Islamic Revival: A Critical Survey and Bibliography*, ed. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, John Obert Voll, and John L. Esposito (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 3.

²⁵⁵ Basheer M. Nafi, “The Rise of Islamic Reformist Thought and its Challenge to Traditional Islam,” in *Islamic Thought in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Suha Taji-Farouki and Basheer M. Nafi (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 53.

²⁵⁶ Fahmi Jadaane, “Notions of the State in Contemporary Arab-Islamic Writings,” in *The Arab State*, ed. Giacomo Luciani (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 282.

²⁵⁷ Uriah Furman, “Minorities in Contemporary Islamist Discourse,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 36, 4 (October 2000).

²⁵⁸ Sherin Sadaalah, “Islamic Orientations and Education,” in *Educational Strategies Among Muslims in the Context of Globalization: Some National Case Studies*, ed. Holger Daun and Geoffrey Walford (Boston: Brill, 2004), 54.

²⁵⁹ Jacques Waardenburg, “Reflections on the West,” in *Islamic Thought in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Suha Taji-Farouki and Basheer M. Nafi (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 272.

²⁶⁰ Egbert Harmsen, *Islam, Civil Society and Social Work: Muslim Voluntary Welfare Associations in Jordan Between Patronage and Empowerment* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 312.

curricula – particularly social science materials – by screening un-Islamic content and inserting Islamic sources as reference points.

While the Islamization of education may assume sectarian dimensions and render forms of knowledge acceptable only to the adherents of Islamism if taken to an extreme,²⁶¹ it is a mainstream phenomenon today in many Arab states, explainable in large part by the rise of the nation-state and mass public education and the desire to legitimize political authority. In contrast to the pre-modern, largely decentralized system of education in the Islamic world which included wide-ranging pedagogical approaches,²⁶² the modern Arab state tasks itself with making religion a unified “object of study,” and in doing so, stresses the “unity of Muslim thought and practice.”²⁶³ Such a centralized method of curriculum-writing is aimed at producing regime-friendly conformity and adherence to a fixed canon of Islamic knowledge in students. However, by insisting on homogeneity, the state clashes with the plurality of approaches to Islamic knowledge in society and sparks a populist backlash of Islamist actors who begin to “think of religion in a similarly disembedded, formulaic, and political manner.”²⁶⁴ The result is the loss of innovative religious teaching and increasingly politicized religious texts.

In Jordan, the main Islamist social and political organization, the Muslim Brotherhood, has exerted considerable influence on the Ministry of Education.²⁶⁵ Interestingly in the Jordanian case, this influence is the result not only of the Brotherhood’s populism and periodic political power, but also a willingness on the part of the regime to adopt Islamization of

²⁶¹ Waardenburg, “Reflections on the West,” 272.

²⁶² Wadad Kadi, “Education in Islam-Myths and Truths,” in *Islam and Education: Myths and Truths*, ed. Wadad Kadi and Victor Billeh (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 6.

²⁶³ Dale F. Eickelman, “Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination in Contemporary Arab Societies,” in *The Book in the Islamic World: The Written Word and Communication in the Middle East*, ed. George N. Atiyeh (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 260-261.

²⁶⁴ Robert W. Hefner, “Introduction: The Culture, Politics, and Future of Muslim Education,” in *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education*, ed. Robert W. Hefner and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 33.

²⁶⁵ Nachman Tal, *Radical Islam in Egypt and Jordan* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2005), 217.

knowledge as state policy in particular instances. From the state's founding, 'Abdallah I disfavored the establishment of foreign schools in Jordan and considered traditional Islamic education to be paramount to maintaining the Prophet's teaching.²⁶⁶ Even after the state eventually assumed responsibility for the teaching of Islam in public schools, the Hashemite regime adopted an accommodationalist approach in dealing with the Brothers that involved them in the setting of educational standards. Rather than clashing politically with the Brothers, the regime granted them social and cultural space to operate in exchange for political quiescence²⁶⁷ and acceptance of regime management of religious minutiae in the country.²⁶⁸ Such an arrangement was part of the regime's "authoritarian pluralism," according to Mansoor Moaddel, which "ensured the multifaceted heterogeneity of the state vis-à-vis the Jordanian society" and "in practical terms meant that the Islamic criticisms of the Westernizing aspect of the state could not be generalized to the entire regime."²⁶⁹ By the 1970s, former head of the Brotherhood, Ishaq Farhan, was the minister of education and the Brotherhood wielded considerable influence to bring educational policy in line with the Brotherhood's vision of Islam – often to the disappointment of religious minorities, whose representation in cultural and educational matters was limited.²⁷⁰

(i) Early Religion Textbooks: "Islamization" and the *Umma*

One of the textbooks most illustrative of Islamist influence on religious education in Jordan is Mustafa al-Siba'i's *Of the Wonders of Our Civilization*, an English translation of which

²⁶⁶ Moaddel, *Jordanian Exceptionalism*, 34.

²⁶⁷ Marion Boulby, *The Muslim Brotherhood and the Kings of Jordan: 1945 – 1993* (Tampa: University of South Florida, 1999), 62.

²⁶⁸ Wiktorowicz, *Management of Islamic Activism*, 83.

²⁶⁹ Moaddel, *Jordanian Exceptionalism*, 63.

²⁷⁰ Jordanian Christians, for example, claim that Brotherhood officials in the ministry have repeatedly denied requests for the introduction of a Christian religious curriculum in government schools. Despite government approval in 1996, the curriculum has yet to be introduced. Moaddel, *Jordanian Exceptionalism*, 35.

will be used here.²⁷¹ Al-Siba^{ci}, a leader of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, published his book as a general piece of scholarship, but the Jordanian Ministry of Education printed it as a textbook under its seal in 1977 and 1981 and ordered its teaching at the secondary level. That the Jordanian government would publish a non-Jordanian's pan-Islamist book and adopt it as official state curriculum reflects the level of Islamist influence in the Ministry of Education, as well as the lengths to which the state was willing to go to preserve its accommodationalist relationship with the Brotherhood. Not only does the Jordanian state remain formally out of the text as an actor – like all pre-1989 Islamic textbooks – but the state is not even the text's author.

In his work, al-Siba^{ci} is critical of what he considers to be inauthentic, Westernized Arab worldviews that secular thinkers developed early on in the *Nahda*. In contrast to the fusion of secular-nationalist and Islamic-reformist themes in the literature textbooks, al-Siba^{ci}'s text is clear that the only *nahda* worth mentioning is Islamic: “the utopia or, at least, the golden period that the learned men and thinkers of the nineteenth century had contemplated on the basis of the scientific inventions and discoveries soon became a confused dream.”²⁷² The Islamic *nahda*, by contrast is decidedly authentic, but just as bound up in the teleological promise of history as secular-nationalism: “From the beginning of our renaissance we have been through various stages, every stage of which was the natural outcome of the preceding one. [...] Events of history are planned by Allah through the views of the thinkers and the call of the prophets and reformers.”²⁷³

In proposing his Islamic *nahda*, al-Siba^{ci} is aware of the modern reality of nation-states and a colonially divided *umma*. He describes the Islamic *nahda* as being anti-colonialist and

²⁷¹ Mustafa Siba^{ci}, *The Islamic Civilization*, trans. S.M. Hasan al-Banna (Milipitas, CA: Awakening Publications, 2002).

²⁷² Siba^{ci}, *The Islamic Civilization*, 1-2.

²⁷³ Siba^{ci}, *The Islamic Civilization*, 18-20.

even nationalist to the extent that it would put Muslims on equal footing with the West. But his focus is on spiritual and moral development first and material development second (in contrast to the 1968 literary history textbook, which reversed the order of priorities). Additionally, while “reformers” play a role in this *nahda* it is not clear that the nineteenth/twentieth century *Nahda* period is the primary golden age al-Siba^{ci} has in mind. Rather the *Nahda* appears to be yet just one manifestation of correct Islamic teaching. The real mythical period of Islamic greatness existed for al-Siba^{ci} at the time of the *salaf*, or the first generations of Muslims, before decline and Western imperialism set in.

The method of al-Siba^{ci}'s book is to: identify a “modern” issue in every chapter; point to its rootedness in Islamic history before decline befell Islam; show Islam’s civilizational superiority to other civilizations (especially the West); and give several examples of the *salaf* in relation to these issues. Chapters cover: history, philanthropy, racial equality, religious tolerance, morality in war, compassion to animals, welfare institutions, education, hospitals, libraries, academic societies, and cities.

Al-Siba^{ci}'s book contains several ironic weaknesses. First, some of the subjects covered in the book seem driven by a Western-dominated agenda on modernity. Al-Siba^{ci} admits as much, saying in the chapter on kindness to animals, “This is really a strange topic of discourse to be included within the topic of glory of Islamic Civilization, although in this day and age it may not be considered a novelty.”²⁷⁴ Some of his references to the West likewise seem contrived. Al-Siba^{ci} mentions, for example, Dante’s familiarity with Muhammad as an example of Islamic greatness and influence, yet he fails to mention, much less criticize, Muhammad’s gory fate in the lowest circle of Hell in *The Divine Comedy*. Furthermore, al-Siba^{ci}'s frequent references throughout the book to Western sources and examples undermines his claim that the Islamic

²⁷⁴ Siba^{ci}, *The Islamic Civilization*, 122.

nahda is an authentic, self-derived phenomenon that need not rely on Western ideas about modernity. Indeed the responsive and defensive nature of al-Siba^ci's work suggests an admission that while Muslims must "create in themselves the capability of becoming the *Best Nation*,"²⁷⁵ they may in reality be building that nation with tools that are at least in part of Western origin.

Al-Siba^ci's vision of *nahda* conflicts with the neo-liberal internationalist discourse adopted by the Hashemite state in recent decades and the more materialistic/worldly message of *nahda* one walks away with from reading Jordanian history and civics textbooks: the king as the leader of a developmental *nahda*. In fact, not only does al-Siba^ci fail to reference the Arab Revolt as part of the Islamic *nahda*, but he actually praises the Ottoman sultans as examples of "morality in war" and "religious tolerance," while in Jordanian history textbooks they are framed as oppressive and the cause of Islam's decline into ignorance. Furthermore, al-Siba^ci casts doubt on traitor rulers, those "enslaved by Western Civilization" and the " 'enlightened and liberal' leaders, who were stupid slavish and ignorant."²⁷⁶ The danger is that the Hashemites could be read as such leaders given their close cooperation with British colonialists in the early twentieth-century and their present partnership with international development agencies. As just one example of a potential textual conflict, al-Siba^ci describes the United Nations as a cover for former colonial powers "who denied the privileges of liberty, equality and fraternity" for those they ruled.²⁷⁷ Meanwhile, post-1989 religion textbooks emphasize the virtues of Islamic participation in the United Nations and promote civilizational reconciliation over clash.

On the whole, however, al-Siba^ci's work is noteworthy for several reasons. First, its totalizing Islamic perspective reflects not only the degree to which the Jordanian Muslim

²⁷⁵ Siba^ci, *The Islamic Civilization*, 49.

²⁷⁶ Siba^ci, *The Islamic Civilization*, 17.

²⁷⁷ Siba^ci, *The Islamic Civilization*, 55.

Brotherhood controlled curriculum production, but also a marked trend toward the Islamization of education in the kingdom. Second, while al-Siba^{ci} is skeptical of the secularist tendencies of the *Nahda* era, he nevertheless feels compelled to root his proposed *nahda* in the Islamic reformism of the era. Indeed, al-Siba^{ci}'s revival of religion is only comprehensible within the context of the dialogue *Nahda*-era Islamic reformists began on Islam's civilizational rise and decline. Finally, the target of al-Siba^{ci}'s work, which is admittedly politically charged at points, is Western imperialism, not domestic Arab regimes. Thus, al-Siba^{ci} can be seen as a non-threatening, Islamically totalizing author whose focus on renaissance generally aligns with the Hashemite approach to *nahda*. Even if the Hashemites never make an explicit appearance in his text, the *nahda* al-Siba^{ci} describes is teleological and promises progress as the result of religious revival.

A more traditional textbook on *Islamic Upbringing* published by authors commissioned by the Ministry of Education in 1980 echoes much of al-Siba^{ci} and other proponents of the Islamization of knowledge. The authors describe knowledge as “a means to raise up the *umma* and its affairs, given that the *umma* whose sons grow in knowledge will itself grow in power, remain in a position of sovereignty, and preserve its status among nations.”²⁷⁸ In contrast to the opinionated al-Siba^{ci}, however, the authors of the 1980 text remain apolitical, discussing rather generic descriptions of the “Muslim ruler,” whose mission it is “to guide the affairs of the *umma* and work for its interests while avoiding dangers and achieving glory and prosperity.”²⁷⁹ Notably, the emphasis here is on the *umma*, rather than the ruler, who is seen as a mere vehicle for the *umma*'s prosperity.

²⁷⁸ Yousef al-^cAdham et al., *Islamic Upbringing*, third level, preparatory school (Amman: Ministry of Education, 1980) [Arabic], 170.

²⁷⁹ al-^cAdham et al., *Islamic Upbringing*, 190.

Another *Islamic Upbringing* textbook from 1993 similarly relies on knowledge as conceived in a holistic Islamic light, viewing the power of the creed (*‘aqida*) as “not proven any more effectively than in the enormous wealth of jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and a scholarly heritage in different areas of life: astronomy, literature, chemistry, mathematics, linguistics, and Qur’anic sciences, etc., which are all welcomed by the Islamic library.”²⁸⁰ It goes on to call for all aspects of life, governance, and the universe to be based on Islam and its creed as a means for the *umma* to rise.

Although these *Islamic Upbringing* texts purport to embrace a universalist conception of religion as impacting all aspects of life, including governance, they do not get into the political details of what such Islamic governance would look like. The only description is of the generic “Muslim ruler” who provides for the *umma*. As such, the texts reflect the Jordanian state’s embrace of a de-politicized and vague Islamization of knowledge – an Islamic label that is wide enough to cover the universe, but noticeably fuzzy on matters of controversy. Like al-Siba‘i’s work, the *Islamic Upbringing* texts leave the reader wondering whether the Islamic label is being stretched too thinly, and whether the texts are losing their focus on the complex matter of Islamic theology and the variety of Islamic thought in the Arab world. The texts nevertheless are effective at promoting a unified, homogenous Islam that is devoid of a plurality of approaches and whose revival is the only promise of progress. Even if the Jordanian state is unnamed, the texts elaborate on the Islamic need for *nahda*, which leaves the students room for interpretation.

²⁸⁰ ‘Abd al-Salam al-‘Abadi, Muhammad Na‘im Yasin, and Mahmoud Ibrahim, *Islamic Upbringing*, second-level, secondary school (Amman: Ministry of Education, 1993) [Arabic], 34-35.

(ii) Post-1989 Islamic Textbooks: Globalization and the Amman Message

Like the literature textbooks published in the wake of Jordan's 1989 constitution, religion textbooks printed in the late 1990s and 2000s diverge from their earlier counterparts by inserting the state as explicit actor in the subject-matter of the text. In the religion textbooks, the Hashemites become leaders of the Islamic revival due to three primary factors. First, the Muslim Brotherhood's influence on the state declined after its affiliated political party made electoral gains in the early 1990s that presented a political challenge to the Hashemite regime. Second, corresponding with the decline in the Brotherhood's influence, international actors and donor nations gained influence over the state over the course of the 1980s and particularly after the signing of the peace treaty with Israel, and they encouraged the state to adopt categories of meaning stressing Islamic tolerance and moderation. Third and finally, the events of September 11, 2001 opened the door for the state's Hashemite leadership to assert itself as the global spokesperson for Islamic tolerance. Such global Islamic status allowed the Hashemites to fulfill the pan-Islamic promise of the *Nahda* despite the geographic boundedness of the Hashemite kingdom, and as a result, the textbooks recognize the Hashemites by name as praiseworthy and legitimate Islamic leaders.

The year 1989 marked the beginning of a decline in regime-Muslim Brotherhood relations. Already by the late 1980s, several of the conditions that had kept the Brotherhood and regime in their accommodationalist arrangement began to come undone: the regime was courting Western nations with foreign investment and tourism; leftist movements that both the regime and the Brotherhood opposed had lost much of their political power; and the regime was making moves toward peace with Israel.²⁸¹ The 1989 National Charter, meanwhile, paved the way for open political confrontation between the Brotherhood and the regime by staging parliamentary

²⁸¹ Moaddel, *Jordanian Exceptionalism*, 108.

elections in 1989 for the first time since 1967 – elections that the Brotherhood’s affiliated party, the Islamic Action Front decided to participate in. Although the IAF only contested a limited number of seats in 1989 (36 percent) it nonetheless won a respectable 27 percent of seats.²⁸² The regime’s subsequent scaling back of voting rights in the 1990s with the one-man-one-vote system (discussed in Chapter II) contributed to the IAF’s loss of over half the seats it contested in 1993 and fewer of its members entered the Parliament. In 1997 the Brotherhood boycotted the elections, sparking heightened political tensions between itself and the regime that continues to this day.

At the same time that the Brotherhood’s influence waned, international actors and donor nations gained influence over the state as it adopted neo-liberal economic policies, received foreign aid, and signed a peace treaty with Israel. These international actors used their influence to encourage the regime to promote a peaceful, tolerant version of Islam to counter the threat of extremism and terrorism. As a result of Western discourse’s demand for attention in the Arab world to the matter of moderation in the 1990s, states – and even Islamists – sought to frame pluralism and tolerance in terms of the totality of the Qur’anic message and offer examples of Islamic moderation throughout history.²⁸³ With the attacks of September 11, 2001, Western demand for Islamic tolerance discourse only grew. International aid entities and foreign intelligence agencies, such as the CIA, began monitoring religion textbooks for extremist content²⁸⁴ – a somewhat ironic development given that the American-backed neo-liberal privatization scheme that has gained ground in the Arab world since the 1970s (originally to

²⁸² Abu Rumman, *The Muslim Brotherhood*, 57.

²⁸³ Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, “Islamists and the Challenge of Pluralism,” (Occasional Papers, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1995), 3.

²⁸⁴ Yvonne Haddad, “The Shaping of Moderate American Islam,” in *Islam and the West Post 9/11*, ed. Ron Geaves, Theodore Gabriel, Yvonne Haddad, and Jane Idleman Smith (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2004), 105.

combat leftist movements) led to greater privatization of educational institutions and consequently made the monitoring of teaching, curricula, and funding all the more difficult.²⁸⁵

Throughout the 1990s and the 2000s the Hashemite leadership not only responded to the international demand for Islamic moderation, but also began to develop its own voice as an actor in the Islamic “revival”/renaissance narrative, which came to stand for moderation. Thus in a 1994 speech, Prince El-Hassan bin Talal, described the *Nahda* as an era of religious reform in which social, cultural, and religious barriers to citizenship in a pluralistic society were removed, concluding:

It has been the kind of pluralism that my own Hashemite forebears committed themselves. It has been our conviction that cultural diversity and political pluralism can ensure the development of a civic society, and contain the contagion of exclusive ideology whether of the religious or the ethnic variety.²⁸⁶

For El-Hassan, the religious renewal begun in the *Nahda* era finds contemporary expression in the pursuit of pluralism, which the Hashemite leadership of Jordan has exemplified throughout history.

Religious renewal is not limited to *Nahda*-era events associated with the Hashemites, but is also apparent in the small-n *nahda*, or ongoing national development, they are leading. Thus, a 2006 ninth-grade *Islamic Upbringing* textbook introduces the Jordanian ruling family as a progress-oriented actor in the history of Islam:

God willed that the ruling family in Jordan be tied to Bani Hashim of the House of the Prophet (*Al al-bayt*), and the country flourished in its era: construction spread; the land was cultivated; science and knowledge spread with the growth of schools and institutes and mosques; universities and *shari'ah* colleges were instituted; it was looked after with preaching and guidance, legal prescription and jurisprudence, to enlighten people on the affairs of their religion.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁵ John Waterbury, “Hate Your Policies, Love Your Institutions,” *Foreign Affairs* 82, 1 (January/February 2003): 64.

²⁸⁶ El-Hassan bin Talal, *A Vision for the Future*, 67.

²⁸⁷ Fadl Hasan cAbbas et al., *Islamic Upbringing*, ninth grade (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2006) [Arabic], 183.

Notice the difference in tone between this text and the 1980 text describing the generic characteristics of the “Muslim ruler.” Here, the ruler is named as a Hashemite; his accomplishments are listed; and he is said to be not only of prophetic lineage, but the one who “enlightens” people on their religion. The ruler is still not the grammatically active subject in the text, however. Rather the active subjects are God and the nation, with the Hashemite regime only acting with the suggestion of the passive voice. Nevertheless, the regime is present in the text and Islamically ordained.

In addition to introducing the Hashemites as actors in Islam, the newer textbooks introduce categories of meaning created by international discourse on Islamic intolerance discussed in Chapter II. Rather than respond with defensiveness to such foreign categories, as al-Siba⁶i tended to do in his effort to Islamize knowledge, these texts embrace them. A 2006 tenth-grade *Islamic Upbringing* text, for example, discusses *jihad* in the context of international laws of war: “These organized rules for international relations in the cases of war and peace which Islam has derived, were represented prior to and distinct from the rules which contemporary international laws guarantee.”²⁸⁸ While the text may be viewed as Islamizing knowledge (international law here), the authoritative voice in the text is one sympathetic to, not suspicious of, international agendas.

Royal Hashemite voices have similarly embraced the international in discussions of Islamic renewal. In an essay entitled “To Be a Muslim,” for example, Prince El-Hassan bin Talal stresses the need for Muslim society to “live up to the precepts of Islamic doctrine” by focusing on human rights and education, warning that failure to do so will only exacerbate

²⁸⁸ Ibrahim Hasan al-Manis et al., *Islamic Upbringing*, tenth-grade, part two (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2006) [Arabic], 171.

poverty, illiteracy, and the “appeal and potency that local extremist approaches can command.”²⁸⁹ The present king, ʿAbdallah II, similarly asserts in *Newsweek* that “the principles of traditional Islam can concur with the best of Western values on many critical issues,” including: human rights, the fight on terrorism, democracy, and respect for other religions.²⁹⁰ Interestingly, ʿAbdallah also ties international aid into his call for tolerant Islamic renewal, praising the “world’s leading democracies” who are “supporting this process through generous aid.”²⁹¹

The Hashemite regime’s most clear answer to the post-9/11 international call for Islamic tolerance was the 2004 Amman Message, a declaration of Islam’s peacefulness and moderation issued by leading Muslim clerics from across the Muslim-majority world whom the king invited to Amman. The signatories “ask God to prepare for our Islamic Nation the paths of renaissance, prosperity and advancement; to shield it from the evils of extremism and close-mindedness, to preserve its rights, sustain its glory, and uphold its dignity.”²⁹² Furthermore, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan makes an appearance in the Message’s description of “renaissance,” for it has “embraced the path of promoting the true luminous image of Islam.”

The Amman Message is relevant to this analysis not only because it uses *nahda* to advance an internationally friendly Islam represented by the Hashemites, but also because it has become a standard for textbook reform in Jordan. From its very publication, the Message was intended to be a guide for re-evaluating “school textbooks, curricula, teaching materials and teacher guidelines in all schools in the Islamic world,” according to the introduction written by Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad. And a 2008 study commissioned by the Ministry of Education

²⁸⁹ El Hassan bin Talal, *To Be a Muslim: Islam, Peace, and Democracy*, in collaboration with Alain Elkann (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2004), 4.

²⁹⁰ Abdullah II Bin al-Hussein, “Islamic Reaffirmation: Young Muslims Need to Learn that a Small Minority of Extremists is Trying to Hijack Our Faith. So Too, Do Opinion Makers in the West,” *Newsweek International Edition*, November 28, 2005, 28.

²⁹¹ Abdullah II Bin al-Hussein, “Islamic Reaffirmation.”

²⁹² Official website of the Amman Message, accessed April 24, 2014, www.ammanmessage.com.

operationalized just such a goal. Following a quantitative content analysis approach,²⁹³ the study analyzed two Islamic textbooks for their adherence to categories generated from the Amman Message. The texts are evaluated for how many instances highly specific phrases appear. Categories receiving 0% repetition in the Islamic textbooks, and therefore in greatest need of implementation, are of particular interest. They include for one of the texts:

“the unity of mankind,” “preserving the principles of human rights,” “the call of Islam to be involved and participate in modern society,” “Islam’s distance from all forms of extremism and terrorism,” “Islamic history’s confirmation of an Islam of moral ends and means,” “the Islamic *umma*’s participation in the building of human civilization,” “just, comprehensive peace for the peoples of the Earth,” “urging tolerance,” “adopting an Islamic program to achieve comprehensive development,” “respect for international law,” “respect for international treaties and resolutions,” “benefitting from the experiences of contemporary societies in applying *shura* and democracy,” “examining contemporary cultures,” and “renewing the civilizational project of Islam.”²⁹⁴

The categories identified in this study are largely in line with the international call for “moderate” Islam after September 11, 2001. Although pre-1989 Islamic textbooks emphasized ideas like the unity of mankind, the moral ends of Islam, peace, development, human rights, and tolerance, the study introduces several categories that are new to the Hashemite textbook lexicon, including: opposition to terrorism, respect for international law, and benefitting from the experience of other societies in applying democracy. Even these latter categories are not necessarily alien to Islam, but their globalized nature suggests a reliance on an international frame of reference, rather than on frames of understanding Islam propagated by either *Nahda*-era or later twentieth and twenty-first century leading Islamic scholars.

A look at some of the textbooks published recently in the kingdom suggests that the Amman Message has indeed had a significant impact on school texts and has bolstered the

²⁹³ Quantitative content analysis involves calculating how frequently particular words and phrases appear in textbooks. Such analysis is conducive to tracking content change over time and assessing the adequacy of textbooks in addressing particular topics. Rahima C. Wade, “Content Analysis of Social Studies Textbooks: A Review of Ten Years of Research,” *Theory & Research in Social Education* 11, 3 (Summer 1993): 235.

²⁹⁴ Odat, “Content Analysis of Value,” 344-346.

position of the king as religious leader. The three-part 2008 *Islamic Culture* series, for example, covers topics including: jihad as distinct from terrorism; Islam and human rights; interaction with non-Muslims and their belonging in Islamic civilization; globalization's positive and negative effects; Islamic civilization's openness to others; the association of Islam's rise with the presence of unity and reason; the Amman Message; Islamic institutions that promote "true Islam" (such as Al al-Bayt University); and the prophetic lineage of the Hashemites.

Nahda and Islamic revival plays a central role in the claims made by this series. In the discussion of globalization, for example, one text says:

In light of globalization's negative impacts, which threaten our Islamic culture, it is necessary for us to defend our values, morals, and economy to achieve a comprehensive Islamic *nahda* that will push the *umma* to visions of prosperity and progress in the framework of preserving identity and benefitting from modern progress.²⁹⁵

This text is notable for its inclusion of globalization – a largely economic phenomenon – as a topic worthy of consideration in the comprehensive renaissance of Islamic culture. Without rooting itself in Islamic sources on economic management and the role of the state, the text assumes that Islamic values endorse the state's economic program, and furthermore that this program is crucial to the preservation of identity and attainment of future progress. The discursive effect of placing the sacred stamp of Islam on an economic policy issue is that it removes debate on the state's allocation of resources from the table. Furthermore, in the process of stretching the Islamic brand to include broad international categories, the text strays away from the richness and complexity of Islamic theology and veers into more worldly, material matters conducive to the state's political agenda.

In contrast to the less structured Islamic textbooks of the past (usually divided into general chapters and occasionally sub-sections), the more recent Islamic texts are highly

²⁹⁵ cAziza Saleh cAliwa et al., *Islamic Culture*, level three, secondary school (Amman: Ministry of Education, 2008) [Arabic], 200.

structured with numbering, section-headings, and long lists populating chapters, resembling the structured reports produced by international development agencies. Significantly, the lists and sections include the Hashemites and the role of Jordan in achieving *nahda*, thus framing the Hashemite state as the logical last line in the list, and perhaps the most important one at that.

The 2009 *General Culture* text illustrates the tendency of lists to promote the Hashemites as legitimate Islamic rulers. In the chapter on the Amman Message, students read about the series of dangers that have faced Islam over the ages, including populist uprisings, the Crusades, the Tatars, colonialism, and today's threat: "fierce attacks at the hands of the *umma*'s enemies in the world's east and west aiming to distort Islam and lie about Muslims."²⁹⁶ After reminding the reader that Muslims defended their religion and *umma* when they were under threat by carrying the clear message (*risala*) of Islam, the text concludes:

God gave Jordan a Hashemite leadership that was formed through faith in the message of the great Islamic religion, carried that message, and served as advocates (*du'aa*) of the faith. Jordan was triumphant in carrying the message of Islam and clarifying it. His majesty King °Abdallah II, the son of al-Husayn (may God have mercy on his soul), called for, discussed, and defended this message in every corner of the world, demonstrating the degree of distortion that Islam had been exposed to at the hands of its enemies and some of its wayward sons. The Amman Message formed the center of this unity and crowned these great efforts.²⁹⁷

Of note is that the actors in this passage extend beyond God and Jordan to the king by name. The passage suggests that after God, Jordan and the king can be fused as the same actor, for part of Jordan's triumph in carrying the message of Islam is the action of King °Abdallah II in issuing the Amman Message. The alternating use of the word "message" between the "message of Islam" and the "Amman Message" in the text has a similar effect – the two messages are fused, thereby enhancing the Islamic status of the Hashemites' 2004 initiative.

²⁹⁶ °Abdallah et al., *General Culture*, 125.

²⁹⁷ °Abdallah et al., *General Culture*, 125.

The stress in this text – born out to a far lesser degree in the words of the Amman Message – is on the king as an authoritative spokesman of Islam, having carried its message, defended it against “distortion,” and clarified it with the Amman Message. And if there were any doubt as to whether the Hashemites’ religious legitimacy stemmed from a source beyond their prophetic lineage, which several leaders in the Islamic world also claim,²⁹⁸ the text makes clear that the Hashemite kings have not only believed in the message of Islam but promoted it as advocates of the faith. Thus they are pious and active Muslim leaders. In contrast to the pre-1989 Islamic textbooks, in which Islamic revival did not require explicit recognition of the leader but rather depended on social reform, revival in the twenty-first century is incomplete without the Hashemites and the tolerance they promote through vehicles like the Amman Message.

(c) Observations on Literature and Religion Textbooks

Both literature and religion textbooks in Jordan address sacred subject-matter: the ideal of pan-Arab unity in the literature textbooks and Islamic revival in the religion textbooks. Early textbooks are hesitant to concretize the myth by inserting the state’s Hashemite leadership as an explicit actor. In the Arabist context, doing so would threaten to hold the Jordanian regime responsible for the post-1967 loss of the ideal – illustrated by the loss of Palestine and the division of the Arab *watan*. Meanwhile in the Islamic context, the regime’s ability to cope with the Islamist political challenge required it to submit to an educational narrative on renewal that stressed gradual Islamization of knowledge and society.

²⁹⁸ Lisa Anderson, “Absolutism and the Resilience of Monarchy in the Middle East,” *Political Science Quarterly* 106, 1 (Spring, 1991): 11.

The year 1989 marked a turning point in the state's approach to both genres of textbook. The regime felt both emboldened by its democratic credentials following the National Charter and threatened by the dual challenges of globalization and Islamists running for office. The textbooks published in the 1990s and 2000s therefore witness an end to the state's formal absence in the material and an attempt to frame the Hashemites as uniquely qualified by both their historical role in the *Nahda* and their religious legitimacy as spokesmen of Islam to lead a comprehensive cultural and religious renaissance.

The later texts nevertheless stretch the pan-Arab and pan-Islamic myths to include the Hashemites and the geographically limited territory of Jordan. In the process, they also narrow discussion of the complexities and contradictions of Arabist and Islamic thought during the *Nahda*. Furthermore, they become politicized, offering the Hashemite leadership as the only entity capable of providing progress, while political and socio-economic realities demonstrate waves of prosperity and stagnation, liberalization and censorship in Jordan. The reader, growing up in these realities, may question therefore, whether the Hashemite renaissance lives up to the promise of the *Nahda*, or rather goes too far in appropriating the myth.

IV. CONCLUSION

Nahda appears across Jordanian humanities textbooks, including the genres of history, civics, literature, and religion. As this survey of textbooks from the 1970s to 2009 demonstrates, the state constructs two primary discourses on *nahda*. First, the history and civics textbooks exhibit a discourse of “*nahda* as national development” in which the Hashemites are the primary actors in history and leaders of a comprehensive renaissance targeting citizens’ material and moral well-being (including civic value construction). The religion and literature textbooks, meanwhile, rely on a discourse of “*nahda* as intellectual ideal.” In contrast to the prominence of the Hashemites in the history and civics textbooks, the state is hesitant before the 1990s to formally insert its Hashemite leadership into the religion and literature texts due to the pan-Arab and pan-Islamic ideals they promote, which exceed the territorially bounded nation-state of Jordan. Whether the state makes a formal appearance or not, all of the texts are aimed at discursively maintaining Hashemite monarchic power by framing the Hashemites as leaders uniquely qualified by the historical, Islamic, civic, and literary legacies of the *Nahda*.

As the following chart illustrates, (a) the type of discourse and (b) the state’s formal presence or absence in the text are not the only planes on which *nahda* operates across the genres. Rather, the discussion of *nahda* implicates a variety of: (c) values and (d) forms of knowledge the students are meant to adopt; definitions of (e) civilizational progress and (f) stagnation; and (g) Hashemite achievements. Additionally, Hashemite *nahda*-speak discursively contains (h) alternative approaches to *nahda* articulated by Jordanian citizens. The characterizations in this chart are neither fixed in place nor mutually exclusive. The chart merely summarizes general conclusions from the in-depth textual analysis conducted in preceding chapters.

HASHEMITE NAHDA ACROSS THE HUMANITIES

	History	Civics	Literature	Religion
(a) Discourse	Nat'l Development (comprehensive)	Nat'l Development (citizen)	Intellectual Ideal (pan-Arabism)	Intellectual Ideal (pan-Islam)
(b) State	Present	Present	Absent (prior to 1989)	Absent (prior to 1989)
(c) Values	Loyalty (to the state & Hashemite regime)	Moderation (pluralism & civic tolerance)	Respect (for the Hashemites' intellectualism)	Obedience (to religious commands)
(d) Knowledge	"Jordanization" of History	"Knowledge Society"	Literary-Arabic	"Islamization" of Knowledge
(e) Progress	<i>Yaqdha</i> (national awakening)	<i>Tasamuh</i> (tolerance)	<i>Ihya' al-Turath</i> (revival of heritage)	<i>Nuhud</i> (religious revival)
(f) Stagnation	Underdevelopment	<i>Ta'asub</i> (extremism)	Ignorance	Impiety
(g) Hashemite Achievements	Developing the Nation & the Great Arab Revolt	Democratic Liberalization	Intellectual Leadership	Promoting Islam & the Amman Message
(h) Alternative Narratives	Localized Histories	Political Parties and Activists	Poetic Rivals	Reformists & Islamist Parties

A more descriptive version of the information in the chart follows:

- In history textbooks, *nahda* is associated with the Arab national awakening (*yaqdha*). The texts seek to portray the Hashemites' leadership of the Great Arab Revolt – a crucial event in the increasingly "Jordanized" field of history – as historically qualifying the Hashemites to lead national development and command the loyalty of Jordanian citizens who benefit from Hashemite largesse.
- In civics textbooks, *nahda* is associated with creating a modern society based on tolerance (*tasamuh*). The texts seek to portray the Hashemites' leadership of political liberalization in 1989 – a crucial event in the increasingly neo-liberal and internationally friendly field of civics – as politically qualifying the Hashemites to develop moderate and tolerant citizens capable of handling the pressures of twenty-first century globalization.
- In literature textbooks, *nahda* is associated with the pan-Arab nationalist ideal of reviving Arab cultural and literary heritage (*ihya' al-turath*). While early texts keep the state formally out of the picture, post-1989 texts seek to portray the Hashemites' intellectual leadership of the *Nahda* – an increasingly important aspect of Jordanian national literature – as qualifying the Hashemites to lead a modern intellectual renaissance in which citizens offer poetic praise and respect for the regime.
- In religion textbooks, *nahda* is associated with the pan-Islamic ideal of reviving Islamic civilization (*nuhud*). While early texts keep the state formally out of the picture, post-1989 texts seek to portray the Hashemites' prophetic heritage and promotion of tolerant Islam through the signing of the Amman Message – increasingly important aspects of the politicized study of Islam – as religiously qualifying the Hashemites as legitimate Muslim rulers who command citizens' obedience.

Across the genres, *nahda* – in its formulation as both historical era and ongoing national development – qualifies the Hashemites to shape the Jordanian citizen and identify the boundaries of her participation in public life. The citizen in turn is discursively reduced to a grateful subject who welcomes the Hashemites’ historic leadership of the Great Arab Revolt, their *Nahda*-era literary achievements, their Islamic credentials, and their steering of the country through the choppy sea of globalization. In this regard, the treatment of *nahda* in the texts should be seen as coercive knowledge designed to condition modern Jordanian citizenship on loyalty to the regime.

As this analysis notes, however, the classroom is a politically contested space in Jordan in which students maintain their agency, even as they perform school functions and reproduce dominant national narratives. The Hashemite narrative on *nahda*, therefore is always tenuous and subject to contestation. Indeed the textbook authors carefully construct it through a number of strategies, including: avoiding criticism of the Hashemites from leading *Nahda*-era intellectuals, ostracizing political parties as obstacles to political development and tolerance, and appealing to international standards to legitimize the Hashemite *nahda*.

The Hashemite reliance on *nahda* is increasingly tenuous in the post-2011 Arab Spring. While this subject is worthy of more rigorous investigation than this analysis can provide, there is a parallel between the transformative potential of the Arab Spring and the political activism exerted by Jordanian citizens in the late 1980s, which had the transformative (if limited) effect of demonstrating the incompleteness of Hashemite-led development and launching a new political pact for the country. As Benoit Challand theorizes, the Arab Spring represents a particularly potent challenge to regimes in the region by questioning the foundations of authoritarian power

and positing in their place a new “political imaginary.”²⁹⁹ Should this imaginary more clearly latch onto the language of *nahda*, it has the potential to discursively undo Hashemite claims to be leading a comprehensive societal renaissance.

Thus far, the Arab Spring appears to have had a limited impact in Jordan. While tens of thousands of Jordanians demonstrated in the streets in 2011 to protest corruption in the country and call for a constitutional monarchy, their primary slogan has been *islah al-nidham* (reform of the system). Some demonstrators have invoked the more radical slogan of *isqat al-nidham* (toppling of the system), which has transformed politics in the neighboring states of Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen, but generally Jordanian protestors have not clearly articulated their demands or demonstrated how *islah al-nidham* would differ in approach from the series of Hashemite-led political reforms in the 1990s. In dealing with the protests, the regime seems to have revived its usual approach to political dissent by creating national dialogue committees and proposing political half-measures.³⁰⁰ The threat of being labeled a traitor to country and king remains a powerful one in Jordan, as evidenced by the decision of several protestors to carry the monarch’s picture in demonstrations and preface their activities with oaths of allegiance. And then there is always the threat of violence, intimidation and arrest. It would seem then that Jordanian protestors and proponents of change have not yet succeeded in breaking down the discursive parameters of the dominant narrative of elite-led reform.

My analysis confirms many of the findings scholars have made on Jordanian textbooks. Riad Nasser claims that the Great Arab Revolt in the history and civics textbooks provides a “myth of origins” in which Jordan’s diverse peoples are united as the Arab sons of the land the

²⁹⁹ Benoit Challand, “The Counter-Power of Civil Society and the Emergence of a New Political Imaginary in the Arab World,” *Constellations* 18 (2011): 271.

³⁰⁰ Alex Schank, “The Politics of Royal Pluralism in Jordan,” *Jadaliyya*, August 27, 2011, accessed April 24, 2014, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/2490/the-politics-of-royal-pluralism-in-jordan->.

Hashemites were destined to rule. While my analysis is less focused on the identity politics Nasser deconstructs in the texts, my substantive conclusion is similar: the Hashemite-led Revolt assumes epic proportions in the texts as the political culmination of the intellectual *Nahda*, thereby legitimizing continued Hashemite rule and development of the country and its citizens. My premise in looking to the *Nahda* as a historical reference point in the construction of the contemporary Jordanian national narrative also resonates with Elena Corbett's study of antiquity. Corbett looks to textbooks (among other media) to demonstrate how the Jordanian state constructs national identity around archeological sites such as Petra and incorporates myths of antiquity into present-day nationalism.

Betty Anderson's extensive work on Jordanian textbooks frames my analysis' starting point that the state and its Hashemite leadership are primary actors in the history/civics texts, whereas the state remains formally out of the literature/religion texts. My scholarly contribution is in identifying curricular evolutions in recent textbooks that fall outside the scope Anderson's work on textbooks from the 1950s. I confirm that while Jordanian citizens have no faces or names, as Anderson says, in earlier history textbooks, 1989 marked a curricular turning point. Not only do the 1990s textbooks begin to "Jordanize" history by elaborating on specific Transjordanian contributions to the Revolt and the *Nahda*, but these years also witness the emergence of civics textbooks that place the citizen at the center of the text as the explicit object of its development. Furthermore, I argue that recent curricular developments address an inconsistency Anderson identifies between the state's prominence in history/civics textbooks and its formal absence in religion textbooks. I demonstrate that post-1989 literature and religion texts, particularly in the late 1990s and early 2000s, insert the Hashemites explicitly as literary and religious pioneers in the *Nahda* and inheritors of its intellectual legacy today.

My analysis is limited by its sources, the textbooks themselves. Thus my focus is on the messages the textbooks seek to convey to students, not on the students' reception of these messages. Textbooks are rich sources for investigating the state's national narratives – what Mandana Limbert calls official “wish-images” – and critiquing them in light of the political and social context in which they are written; however, further inquiry into textbook reception in schools could reveal valuable insights into student reproduction and contestation of Hashemite discourse on *nahda*. Additionally, my analysis could be complemented by a study of how the Ministry of Education identifies curricular reform priorities and selects authors to write textbooks. Beyond the writing and reception of textbooks, scholarly attention to the textbooks' portrayals of the European Renaissance may help address cross-cultural references in the texts to *nahda*.

Despite these limitations, my analysis is to date the first comprehensive survey of Hashemite *nahda* discourse in Jordanian textbooks. In addition to teasing out the nuanced expressions of *nahda* across genres, I place curricular developments in political context, recognizing the role that textbooks play in responding to the political present. I point in particular to the economic and political conditions that led to Jordan's constitutional milestone of 1989 – a historical moment that would reinvigorate Jordanian nationalism in the 1990s and embolden the regime to pursue neo-liberal reforms in partnership with international aid organizations. I argue that these phenomena also permit the state to assert itself in post-1989 textbooks across the humanities as the leader of national renaissance.

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