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Development And It's Effect On
Jordan's Society

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Introduction

Enough has been written about the factors that eventually lead a society to change in response to changing circumstances or to real or imagined challenges it thinks it faces. There is no question that contact with the West, in the modern era, was one of the most important reasons. Yet it cannot, and indeed it does not explain the whole story⁽¹⁾. When the image of^a people about themselves, their place in the world, and their destiny is shaken as has happened in the case of Arab society, the impact is of momentous importance. The Arab society's contact with the West since the early nineteenth century was not a gentle affair of cultural, economic and/or diplomatic exchange. Rather it was, as it still is, of a basically superior military and technological adversary dealing with a less advanced society. For the Arab society and the Arab individual, Western superiority was shocking. This was the more shocking since Arab Muslim society thought itself superior.

On the level of the state an active search was soon commenced to ascertain the factors underlying Western superiority. From Mohammad Ali to the present day Arab leaders, their search was to acquire the necessary military skills that would enable them to defend themselves against this intrusion. Soon the Officers-Leaders realized that the necessary means of self-defense could not be achieved solely by acquiring military skills and that they should espouse social reform, as well as socialist and nationalistic ideologies. That the change needed must be comprehensive covering every^{walk} of life and that reforming the military is not enough to check western inroads and intrusions⁽²⁾.

(1) For further elaboration on this point see E. E. Hagen, "How Economic Growth Begins: A Theory of Social Change, The Journal of Social Issues, Vol. XIX, No. 1, p. 21.

(2) For a different and more elaborat version see halpern, of Cit., pp. 253-280, Passim.

On the level of the individual the process was initially that of imitation of western manerisms in dress-styles and tastes. Later however, the process of becoming franji-like became a genuine end in itself. "Westerization" became native since it demonstrated even on the level of the individual its worth and its practicality. Kemal Attaturk, founder of Modern Turkey spoke for individuals and nations alike when he stated that "... Before the impetuous torent of civilization resistance is futile: It is quite without mercy towards the heedless and the refractory. In the face of the might and superiority of civilization, which pierces mountains, flies in the sky, sees everything from the atoms invisible to the eye of the stars, and which enlightens and investigates, nations striving to advance with a medieval mentality and primitive superstitions are condemned to perish or at least to be enslaved and humiliated ... (3)" It would seem that Attaturk, as is the case with every leader in the developing countries of today was not speaking only of military prowess. The realization that total change is a necessity is implicit in every utterance made by these leaders today.

Jordan: External Factors:

Should one have taken a snap-shot of Jordan in the early 1940's he might have found a quite, rather contented little country on the side-lines of regional and world affairs. The Palestine Problem, later called the Middle or Near East Problem and then the Arab-Israeli Conflict, and now once more the Palestine Problem, helped change the situation, and Jordan was thrust into a vortex of events whose dimensions and depth were, as they still are, well beyond its power and means to deal with. Leaving aside the external difficulties that the Palestine Problem created for Jordan and other Arab countines as well, with all its ugliness, enormity and complexity; that Problem had both,

(3) In Halpern, Op. Cit., p. 36

a positive and a negative effect on Jordan's life and society in every sphere of activity whether social, economic or political. Negative in that it thrust masses of thousands of destitute, confused, and directionless refugees into an already overstrained economy and in a very short span of time. The dislocations were certainly so enormous it is a wonder that Jordan was ever able to deal with them⁽⁴⁾. Positive in that it introduced into Jordan's society a vast array of human resources whose energies and potential played a great role in its development. Men have always differed on the definition of happiness or its antithesis. They agreed even less on that stage in-between: Limbo. At least politically, Jordan, whose existence is real yet whose destiny is in question has remained since 1948 in that state⁽⁵⁾.

Development is best defined as the better control, direction and manipulation of man over his environment for his good⁽⁶⁾. Is this an economic, social, or political definition? No one really knows but with all its seeming simplicity this definition offers a deep insight into the issue of development and the race between the real and the potential; between the forces of change and those of tradition: a race between time and aspirations. Thus development becomes a continuing process whose major characteristic is the ^{expansion} ~~extension~~ of the means of a society to deal with problems⁽⁷⁾. Countries blessed with stability or whose existence is not in question have only to grapple with their own internal economic and political resources. Countries not so

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- (4) So enormous was the problem that many thought of Jordan as "One State With Two People".i.e. the Jordanians and the Palestinians which is the title of a chapter in See Lerner, Daniel, The Passing of Traditional Society, 1958. See also Patai, Raphael, The Kingdom of Jordan, 1958, p. 50.
- (5) See Patai, p. 3. where he describes Jordan as a "... small country, poor in resources, it seeks to make its way among conflicting tensions and policies.."
- (6) See Frontiers of Development Administration. ed. by F. W. Riggs, Durham, Duke University Press, 1970, pp. 72-75, Passim.
- (7) See Frank Marini, ed., Toward A New Public Administration. Scranton, Chandler Publ., 1971, p. 112.

blessed, like Jordan, and with a menacing neighbor frequently unleashing its forces of aggression have to deal with a double challenge: internal and external. They are kept constantly on the run yet are asked to deal with what has euphemistically been called the "Revolution of Rising Expectations". How does Jordan fare? What are the effects of development on its society?

Perhaps the most important aspect of the development of Jordan from the early 1940's to the present is its jump from semiprimitive to^a Consumer and services society without passing through the various agonizing stages of the industrial or even the agricultural revolution. But then that is not unique to Jordan. Political realities in many countries necessitated such a jump regardless of the price. And neither is the term primitive used here pejorative. A primitive or semi-primitive society largely produces what it consumes and its expectations of life do not usually extend beyond its means.

Only a generation ago almost four fifths of Jordan's population lived either a pastoral existence or in villages and small towns⁽⁸⁾. The change one observes today is not only in terms of urban versus rural residence, but in terms^{of} physical as well as psychological. Not only have the dress styles changed to become "Westernized" and "Modern" but changes have also taken place in consumer habits, in food consumption and calorie intake, and also in psychological and attitudinal terms as well. Working in an office or a factory does not teach punctuality alone, but, in due process, a healthy respect for time and a certain amount of emphasis on efficiency in the performance of one's affairs. The competition one faces in an urban environment necessitates such changes. And although a new arrival to the city carries with him a certain amount of loyalty to his family, kin and tribe, his very move, by definition has removed him a step or more away from his group. This process of the loosening of the ties with the

(8) As late as 1947 Amman, the Capital had no more than 30000 inhabitants; Patai, Op. Cit. p. 50. See also Op. Cit. pp. 306 - 308, Passim.

extended kin family or tribal group, coupled with the necessity of acquiring a new job or skill on one's own personal efforts and initiative, leads, in time, to a new emphasis on one's own interest, perhaps a little more sophistication and materialism and eventually, perhaps, to a questioning of one's loyalty to his kin group. The labor union, the professional association, the club... etc, no doubt begin to replace the old loyalties. This process is not unique to Jordan where it is now taking place. Old loyalties and habits die hard and in stages. Today's average Jordanian is in a state^{of} transition between the old and the new ways of life and the process is still in progress.

Governments Role:

The governments' role in effecting change is seen in almost every sphere of activity⁽⁹⁾. Economically the government has instituted the process of socio-economic planning since the early 1960's. Since then it has initiated the Five Year Plan 1962-1967 which was later replaced by the Seven Year Plan 1964-1970, the Three Year Plan 1972-1975 and is currently in the Five Year Plan of 1976-1980. The government encourages private enterprise and initiates economic projects that the private sector is unwilling or unable to undertake. It is currently a major partner in the largest thirty economic and industrial companies in Jordan.

Socially the government has been very active in the field of health, education and welfare^(*). Not the least of its efforts is its emphasis on the value and honor of manual labor and more recently on attempting to take a leading role in channeling changes in the role and status of Women⁽¹⁰⁾. Certainly the governments'

(*) See attached attached Facts And Figures Appendix.

(9) For a comprehensive treatise on the planning of change see W.G. Bennis, et. al., eds., The Planning of Change, 3rd. ed., New York, 1976.

(10) Women were given the right to vote in 1974. To emphasise its determination at alleviating the status of women, Jordan held its "Second Symposium on Manpower Development: The Role of the Jordanian Women", in Amman, April 4-7, 1976 which was chaired by H. R. H. Crown Prince Hasan.

efforts at asserting its authority in settling disputes between individuals and groups was a prime factor behind the abolishing of the Tribal law in 1975. By a variety of methods the insurance companies in Jordan have come to replace the old custom of the diyyah (blood money) paid to the family of a deceased as a result of crime whether intentional or accidental (by car) by the family of the accused. Though it cannot be substantiated, the government has accepted and no doubt have come to welcome this practice. The government has encouraged individuals and groups to settle disputes through the formal processes of the courts. As a result one witnesses in today's Jordan more formalism and legalism in the handling of affairs between individuals and groups.

A generation ago the state in Jordan, like its sisters in many other developing countries of the world was no more than a "policeman" regulating the flow of citizens' affairs with hardly any interference except where and when absolutely necessary. Today's Jordan is a welfare state where the affairs of man are regulated and manipulated in the fields of health, education, welfare, the economy and even attitudes⁽¹¹⁾.

As a result one witnesses in today's Jordan the rise of new classes and new leaders replacing the old classes and the old elite. A middle class with bourgeois tastes and attitudes is definitely a reality with emphasis on material acquisition and a "let us keep up with the Joneses" attitude. Military officers, bureaucrats, groups of intelligentsia, professional groups, clubs and a genuine labor movement with some class consciousness are also present.

The change is tilted, uneven, incomplete and is still in process. Its directions and its final outcome is not yet clear and cannot be clearly delineated as yet.

(11) On April 6, 1977, H. M. King Hussein addressed a letter to the Prime Minister and Cabinet asking them to begin laying down the groundwork for the enactment of a comprehensive social security law "guaranteeing the individual worker and the good citizen, comfort and peace of mind in case of illness, old age, and his family a decent living... "See text in al-Sha'b, April 7, 1977.

External factors including the Western intrusion and its Zionist manifestation into Arab society, politically, militarily, economically, and culturally, necessitated the price of living beyond one's means and often on borrowed time. There was a terrific need and pressure to modernize very quickly. Surely both masses and leaders of the Arab countries were aware of the challenges facing them and the price to be paid. The shock of this intrusion made the price seem appropriate.

Indigenous Factors:

But that was not the whole story. Arab society including Jordan's did not change solely in response to outside challenges. Forces from within were always present. Often in previous centuries dormant, but never absent. The glorious Quran eloquently stated that "God does not change a people unless they change within themselves". The clear implication is that change is a positive force. That the will and awareness to change is inherent in the nature of such a society and that change is not exclusively a response to external factors. Thus change would have come to Arab and Jordanian society even had there not been external challenges, albeit at a less accelerated rate.

The shrinkage of the world in the twentieth century in response to the impact of the means of communication and transportation made not only the movement of objects and people easier, but also of ideas⁽¹²⁾. Good ideas never lack an audience. They like and attract crowds. They are like a weed that craves light and thrives on cross-breeding and often grows better when stepped upon. Development and change are ideas that

(12) "The radio, movies, newspapers and books allow a young man for the first time to choose his intellectual and spiritual brothers. Modern scientific thought makes possible, indeed requires, a reexamination of all traditional relationships and structures: "In, Halpern, Op. Cit., p. 29.

have captured the imagination of humanity everywhere. It is often an anomaly that change often takes the shape of a haphazard metamorphosis rather than a deliberate process of transformation. Happily, change in Jordan has taken the ~~former~~^{latter} shape: that of transformation, deliberate, aware, and semi-planned, ~~and not a~~
~~by the way~~

Historically, change in the Western experience, came as a result of uncontrolled forces unleashed before and after the breakdown of the feudal system. This breakdown was coupled with the introduction of new modes of production, the rise of modern cities and the emergence of new social classes and ideologies. The indigenous evolutionary interection of all these groups, ideas and forces had genuine grass-root support among the people and often inspite of the desires and wishes of the ruling elite. In the developing countries most of the development and change was initiated by the positive will of the policy-maker. While the idea of change was inherent in Arab society, it had to be augmented by the will from above to accelerate the pace of the process. Thus, unlike Western experience the new social classes, the intelligentsia, the intellectual movement... etc! came as products rather than initiators of change. The leaders realized that change had to be induced to catch-up with the twentieth century.

Should I or anyone else write an article only in numbers it would be true and in Plato's scale be just; and nothing written or said in words can convey the concept with such exactitude as numbers can. But then even numbers are hollow and naked when stripped^(*). What I wish to do is not to pass-on some statistics and some knowledge but to cultivate some understanding. Undoubtedly many things can change without anything being lost or gained. Has this been the case everywhere in the world? Is it so in Jordan? The answer would have been easy had ordered development been a series of "nays" and "yeas ". But the process

(*) See comparison of per capita income and other socio-economic indicators in the the attached Facts and Figures oppendis

is certainly more complex. Absolute darkness is static but light has many shades. An aware society with proper leadership passes from darkness due to a number of internal as well as external forces. Suffering is a prime mover for all organisms and the passage from darkness into the variety of shades of light can be in response to it.

As a subculture of the Arab society, Jordan has had its share of suffering in the twentieth century. Proud of its history and culture, it, too was shocked with the reality of its inadequacies in the modern age ~~age~~ in addition to the challenges of the Palestine Problem. Its response was characteristic of certain human behaviour under ^a stress situation. Outwardly denying its shortcomings and manifesting a belligerent, though inadequate stance, while inwardly imposing upon itself a severe process of evaluation and reevaluation. As part of the predominant "Shame Culture" this process was necessary to "Save Face" in response to adverse challenges. Nothing else could, or should have been expected. For at the same time that the Arab accepts, and even secretly welcomes change, he has to pretend and proclaim that it has always been part of his culture and heritage. From the extreme left to the extreme right Arab ideologies find justification in Arab history and culture. Yet there remains within the Arab self the awareness that something somewhere is amiss and to be corrected.

Jordan is no longer a static society. The processes of modernization, urbanization, industrialization and development have left their heavy mark. The skylines of Jordan, as is the case with every Arab country, are studded with minarets and factory chimneys. The shape of the landscape itself has changed in response to the aware desire for development. It is true that the social and economic change that is taking place in Jordan covers the whole spectrum of life. But it is as equally true that the change is still incomplete and that its benefits are unevenly distributed. It may take a generation or more before

equity is evenly distributed among the rising classes; the middle class, the intelligentsia, the bureaucrats, the army officers, and the urban labor class. The old elite, landed and otherwise, has surely declined and is being replaced by new classes of people whose bases of power are modern and who are still struggling to maintain their newly acquired status. Within Jordan's urban centers one can still witness the socio-economic disparity between their various neighborhood and sectors. The contrast is more glaring when one considers the gap between the urban, village and badia life. The disputes and the class distinctions are a fact of life but a fully developed class consciousness has not, as yet, developed. It may take a long time before it can leave its mark on the economic or the political fields. The value of time has become a reality at least in the urban centers. Women, in various stages of development are to be seen everywhere. Physical labor has increased not only in value but in honor as well, and education has been given primacy unknown in the history of the Arab lands.

Perhaps the most fundamental change of all is that the idea of change itself has been consciously accepted, and even welcomed as a fact of life. What is traditional, unless it is fundamental and exceedingly basic, is no longer simply sacrosanct and unquestioned. The idea of development and positive change is no longer feared except by small pockets of resistance here and there. The breakdown of tribal and the extended patriarchal family relationships and authority are welcomed by the majority of the people⁽¹³⁾. Multiple marriages, though in certain circumstances permitted in principle by religious authority and sanction are no longer unquestionably completely socially desirable. Life has acquired

(13) Halpern states that under the impact of modernization the traditional family has experienced an increased process of disintegration. The mass media and modern scientific thought caused a severe reexamination of ones tradition and values. "As a result, moral and intellectual contact is broken between generations"... Many of the young new leaders"... act almost as if they has no ancestors". Op. Cit., pp. 28-29. Passim.

humane treatment of local political opponents and their eventual incorporation and full utilization of their energies into Jordan's private and public life. No undue violence was used in the treatment and later rehabilitation of political adversaries into enthusiastic supporters. Local yeast that otherwise could have turned into deadly virus was tamed towards more constructive endeavors. Protestors and adversaries were very wisely turned into ardent supporters and allies and the "trouble-makers" were swiftly turned into "builders". The realization early set in that a society that rids itself of all its opponents will quickly backslide. Surely one may be eliminating the most creative. It is better to channel their energy and exploit it for the positive welfare of the society, if at all possible. Some may claim that the end of such a society is not to do good, but simply to exist and the refrain from doing evil. Perhaps so. But then is not the absence of evil, in itself good? Yet Jordan has not simply refrained from violence; positive policies designed and directed towards the betterment of social and economic welfare of the people were pursued.

The state, any state deals with power and it recognizes no other language or media. To do so it must exist and assert itself in a variety of ways. From the 1920's to the 1940's Jordan was a state whose existence both internally and externally went relatively unchallenged. Since then it has continuously faced many challenges. In assessing its response one is struck by the tenacity with which it has maintained itself against very difficult odds both political, and economic. Adversity seems to have given Jordan endless new leases on life at every turn. perhaps that is because it has been blessed by several factors of extreme importance. One, is a conscious population aware of the internal and external challenges of the modern times and who has become very responsive to the call of the "revolution of rising expectations". Secondly because of the existence of an intelligently active and aware leadership whose moderate methods and style have demonstrated both agility and initiative. Blessed with

longevity and concern for the welfare of the people, this leadership has given social and economic content to the political ideas and slogans in vogue in the Arab world since the end of World War Two. If anything characterises the Jordan experiment, or experience it is a tenacious moderation whose dividends are clearly visible now in the economic and social fields. Not many explanations can be proffered ~~for the~~^{for} the continuing success of Jordan in the midst of so much intrasigence and adversity both from within and from without.

How can one measure the effects of development upon any society? surely it is easier to deal with numbers and quantities but then that is to partially avoid the crux of the matter. The unaware must surely be happy with his circumstances for nothing exists but the reality of his situation. But that is not the case with Jordan since the twentieth century has thrust itself into its midst politically, militarily, economically, and socially. Both quantitatively and qualitatively it has changed drastically and it is perhaps too soon or too unfair to assess it now. But should the standards be those of the western twentieth century, the ~~answer~~^{answer} no doubt will be in the affirmative. The process of economic and social change has certainly made Jordan, indeed the societies potential. The life style both quantitatively and qualitatively has changed and drastically. Even the physical shape of the landscape itself and the dress itself has changed. That is not a philosophers illusion nor the dream of a wild-eyed planner. That is a fact of life, consciously, or perhaps even subconsciously, desired by the people and their leaders. Calculated in most cases, that development has had a terrific impact upon the life of people. The change, the development is not yet complete. The process is still going on and its directions while plausibly discernable are not completely identified. Yet this development that one witnesses in Jordan, as indeed elsewhere in the Arab and the Third World, is reality whose psychological and physical impact and influence is

immeasurable. Jordan has succeeded in instilling a new sense of national loyalty which required no mean effort on the part of its people and its leaders⁽¹⁴⁾; A sense of nationhood that still needs further development should the political circumstances in the area permit.

(14) See Patai, Op. Cit., pp. 76-78. Passim. and pages 88 and 76.

Jordan in Figures
1952 - 1975

	1952	1975	Remarks
Population	587193	1951968	
% Urban Population	31%	60%	
% of Labor Force Working in Agriculture	35%	32.9%	Not Including the West Bank.
Birth Rate	3.3%	3.5%	
Death Rate	10%	3%	
Illiteracy Rate	70%	35.2%	
Illiteracy (Male)		23.6%	
Illiteracy (Female)		52.3%	
No. of Students	139670	539790	
Ratio of Students to Population	23.8	28	Including West Bank Student
Male Students	103189	301870	West Bank Students not Included for 1975
Female Students	36481	237920	
No. of Teachers	1184	18821	
No. of Female Teachers	49	8332	For 1950
Ratio of Female Students to Population	7%	22%	
% of Female to Total Enrollment	25%	44.6%	For 1950-57 & 1974-75
No. of Females in Universities	22	2669	For 1950-57 & 1974-75
No. of Students Per Teacher	41	30	
Jordanian Students Abroad	2861(a)	39913(b)	
No. of Schools	360	2232	
Vocational Schools	2	26	Private and Public
Teachers Institutes	-	17	
Physicians	97(c)	947(d)	
Pharmacists	49(c)	285(d)	
Hospitals	10	35	Private, Military & Public
No. of Beds	623	3291	

a - For years 1955/56

b - For the year 1974/75 and not including Jordanian students in Sudan, Algeria and Latin America.

c - Including those on the West Bank.

d - Not including West Bank.

	1952	1975	Remarks
Clinics	46	321	Excluding Military Clinics
Buildings, Houses	56734	156461	
Cars	7683	47243	
Radios Per Thousand	39	203	For the years 1957 & 1972
Televisions Per Thousand	-	128	
Telephones Per Thousand	7(e)	19	
No. of Newspapers and Periodicals	5	21	
Tourists	2775	707623	
Livestock	245069	1375800	
Agricultural Land (Dunum*)	3441626	2623331	Summer and Winter Crops
Area Planted in Grains	3253457	1985454	
% Area Planted in Grains	94.5	75.7	
Area Planted Vegetables	137368	262953	
% Area Planted Vegetables	.4	10	
Area Planted Fruits	19164	333064	
% Area Planted Fruits	.6	12.7	
Area Planted Tobacco	31637	41860	
% Area Planted Tobacco	.9	1.6	
Forestry Trees	274785(f)	3600000(g)	
Imports (Dinar**)	14216895	234012700	
Exports (Dinar)	1532807	48938400	
Government Revenue	22258826	206350000	Including Foreign Aid
Foreign Aid	6019000	110550000	
% Aid to Revenue	27	53.6	
Expenditures	20806620(h)	218250000	
Gross National Product	45000000(i)	373950000	
Per Capita Income	35	191	Employing Five People or more.
No. of Establishments	98	1325	Including Branches
Banks	3	77	

- e - For 1957
- f - East and West Banks
- g - East Bank only
- h - Including West Bank
- i - For 1954

Note:
 ** Dinar - 3.0 US. Dollars (approx).
 ** Dunum = ¼ of an Acr (approx).