

### The role of the geopolitical position of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan towards American foreign policy from 1990 to 2017

Alkhalwaldeh, Ala; Nayef Alakash, Mohammad Ahmad; Akho-Rashida, Hani A. M.; Al Wahshat, Ziad Mohammad; Mohammad Saleh, Bani Issa

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

#### Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Alkhalwaldeh, A., Nayef Alakash, M. A., Akho-Rashida, H. A. M., Al Wahshat, Z. M., & Mohammad Saleh, B. I. (2023). The role of the geopolitical position of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan towards American foreign policy from 1990 to 2017. *Journal of Liberty and International Affairs*, 9(3), 281-298. <https://doi.org/10.47305/JLIA2393270a>

#### Nutzungsbedingungen:

Dieser Text wird unter einer CC BY Lizenz (Namensnennung) zur Verfügung gestellt. Nähere Auskünfte zu den CC-Lizenzen finden Sie hier: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.de>

#### Terms of use:

This document is made available under a CC BY Licence (Attribution). For more information see: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>

Copyright © 2023 The author/s

This work is licensed under a CC-BY 4.0 license

(\*) Corresponding author

Peer review method: Double-blind

Original scientific article


DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47305/JLIA2393270a>


Received: 28.09.2023 · Revised: 02.10.2023 · Accepted: 03.10.2023 · Published: 26.12.2023





# THE ROLE OF THE GEOPOLITICAL POSITION OF THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN TOWARDS AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY FROM 1990 TO 2017


Ala Alkhalwaldeh<sup>1\*</sup>, Mohammad Ahmad Nayef Alakash<sup>2</sup>, Hani A. M. Akho-Rashida<sup>3</sup>,  
Ziad Mohammad Al Wahshat<sup>4</sup>, Mohammad Saleh Bani Issa<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Yarmouk University, Jordan  <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-8574-0908> ✉ [alakh274@yahoo.com](mailto:alakh274@yahoo.com)

<sup>2</sup>Jadara University, Jordan  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7321-8578> ✉ [dr.mohammadalakash@gmail.com](mailto:dr.mohammadalakash@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup>Al-Albait University, Jordan  <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-7931-5148> ✉ [dr-haniabid@yahoo.com](mailto:dr-haniabid@yahoo.com)

<sup>4</sup>Ajloun National University, Jordan  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8550-259X> ✉ [zyad.wahshat@anu.edu.jok](mailto:zyad.wahshat@anu.edu.jok)

<sup>5</sup>Jadara University, Jordan  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3179-1613> ✉ [baniissa@yahoo.com](mailto:baniissa@yahoo.com)

**Abstract:** *The role of the geopolitical location of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan towards United States (US) foreign policy from 1990 to 2017 is the focus of this study, which addressed the impact of important regional and international political events, positively or negatively, on the development of relations between the two countries in terms of political and security aspects. The study adopted a qualitative approach, and primary data was collected through interviews with 16 participants from political, economic, and security experts in Jordan and the US. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data obtained. The study concluded that US foreign policy recognizes Jordan as a close ally and considers its stability extremely important; Jordan has a suitable location to defend Israel because critical Arab countries surround it, and Jordan enjoys a unique geographical location in the Middle East. Some political events play an essential role in US foreign policy concerning security aid to Jordan, as the US links its aid to Jordan to political events.*

**Keywords:** Foreign Policy; Political; Security; Geopolitical Position; US; Jordan

## INTRODUCTION

Geopolitics is an approach to the study of contemporary international relations that is based on the study of history, geography, and culture, or, as Dr. James Kurth said, it is the study of “facts and mentalities of localities” (Granieri 2015). Diplomatic relations were established between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the United States (US) for the first time in 1949. Based on Jordan’s crucial geographical location in the Middle East, the United States granted economic and military aid to Jordan for the first time in 1951 and 1957, respectively, and it is continuing, depending on the critical location. The United States and Jordan share the common goals of achieving a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East and ending violent extremism threatening the security of Jordan, the region, and the world. The peace process and the fight against terrorism between the two countries help US interests. The US has helped Jordan maintain its stability and prosperity through military assistance and close political cooperation (Bush 2009).

This study deals with the role of the geopolitical position of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan towards American foreign policy from 1990 to 2017. This period witnessed important global

political events that greatly affected US foreign policy in the Middle East and the relations between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan from a special perspective. The political events covered by the study have the greatest impact on the increase or decline of relations between them regarding political and security related to the geographical location.

Therefore, the study focuses on four critical political events (Jordanian-American relations during the Iraq war on Kuwait in 1990, the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty (Wadi Araba) on October 26, 1994, the events of September 11, 2001, and Trump's decision to move the American embassy in Jerusalem in 2017) and explains them. In great depth to clarify the relationship and the degree of influence of the political event and geographical location on the relations between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the United States of America from the political and security aspects and their close connection because every political event has its political and security connotations (Sharp 2019; Vatikiotis 2017; Schuetz 2017; Harders 2016; Sharp 2015; Sharp and Blanchard 2012).

In addition to the political aspects, the United States also supported Jordan from the security side in the years 1990-2017 (Congressional Research Service 2018). Security assistance includes Foreign Military Financing (FMF), provision of Military Equipment, International Military Education and Training (IMET), and De-Mining Operations (Vatikiotis 2017).

This study aims to explore the impact of the geographical location of the Hashemite Queen of Jordan on American foreign policy and to clarify the relationship between the political event and its impact on Jordanian-American relations.

## Research Question

What is the importance of the geopolitical position of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in the Middle East to the foreign policy of the United States?

## Significance of the Study

This study is expected to be important in three dimensions. The first aspect will provide some of the literature that contributes to the body of knowledge by looking at the US foreign policy toward Jordan. The research will also shed light on the role and importance of the distinguished geographical location of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in the Middle East region for the benefit of the region and the United States.

The second aspect will benefit decision-makers in both the United States and Jordan by aiding them in making appropriate and strategic foreign policy decisions that are mutually beneficial for both countries.

The third aspect of this research is expected to serve as a guide for future studies in this field—the scope of the study.

This study deals with the US foreign policy towards Jordan from 1990 to 2017. The year 1990 represented a radical change in the world order as it shifted from a bipolar system to a unipolar one. The United States became the sole world power in the aftermath of the Cold War. The year 2017 marks the end of this study because it marked an important event, which is the transfer of the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Therefore, the embassy move is of great importance for Jordan

because Jordan is the custodian of the holy places in Jerusalem according to the Wadi Araba agreement.

The data covers the study period to analyze the impact of US foreign policy towards the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and to identify the impact of the geographical location of the Kingdom in relation to the US, given the importance of foreign policy as proven in the empirical literature.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Many political, economic, and military factors affected Jordanian-American relations, which came through Jordan's influence on the geopolitical environment and its international relationship as well as the factors and influences resulting from its demographic and economic situation, including the reality of national wealth, foreign aid, and the socio-economic transformations taking place throughout the reform process, and its implications for the composition of Jordanian society and its social and political structure. The geographical location, demographic factors, and economic conditions in Jordan have contributed to increasing Jordanian interest in the United States, which has raised the level of relations between the two friendly countries at various levels to distinct ranks. The American aid provided to Jordan in 2011 directed to the budget was conditional on Jordan achieving legislative reforms. Others are related to the business sector and investment promotion, and thus, they are achieving transparency and disclosure. Jordan obtaining the usual US aid for 2012 was subject to fulfilling a set of conditions discussed with the US Agency for International Development. Finally, the American military assistance program contributed to strengthening the relationship between the two countries at all levels within solid rules built on the foundations of mutual trust between the two countries while evoking the historical experience of the Jordanian leadership in dealing with successive American administrations that realized the importance of Jordan's role in the success of this strategy (Sheikh 2020).

A study by Kinne (2018) titled "The Confluence of American and Jordanian Exceptionalism: An Enduring or Transactional Relationship" explains that Jordan is a crucial partner for the United States in pursuing and protecting national security interests in the Middle East region. This is due to shared security interests, King Abdullah II's leadership, and Jordan's strategic location. US lawmakers and military leaders need to understand the various security, economic, and social threats that jeopardize Jordan's stability and strive for balance in the region. The US policy towards the Hashemite Kingdom should promote and recognize "Jordanian exceptionalism".

In his 2013 study, Al-Rousan used a historical analytical descriptive approach to identify the ongoing American bias towards Israel and develop concepts to explain it. The study considered the international system and external variables contributing to biased political decisions toward Israel.

A study conducted by Schuetze titled "Simulating, Marketing, and Playing War: US-Jordanian Military Collaboration and the Politics of Commercial Security" revealed that the King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Centre (KASOTC) was established and funded by the US Department of Defence, owned by the Jordanian army, and operated by a US-based private business. KASOTC serves as a training center for international Special Forces, Jordanian border guards, corporate leadership programs, military adventure vacations, and representative training. The study examines the methods and processes involved in US-Jordanian military cooperation, particularly the simulation,

marketing, and playing of war at KASOTC. It emphasizes the political judgments made regarding the value of human subjects and their role in the militarization and marketing processes.

The article argues that US-Jordanian military cooperation at KASOTC both blurs and enhances borders while moralizing commercial security and commercializing moral hierarchies. War at KASOTC is an interactive and expendable event for some, but it generates deadly realities for others. The study used a qualitative approach through empirical security studies based on interviews and observations made during a visit to KASOTC in early 2013 (Schuetze 2017). The study found clear evidence of blurred boundaries in the US and Jordanian military collaboration at KASOTC. However, the results do not support the idea that a new moralized security governance replaces the old neoliberal model. Instead, what we see at KASOTC is a combination of moralized market policies and the marketization of moral politics. The problematic idea that some human subjects are worth more than others, which was shown to be perpetuated by this collaboration, is not simply an external issue to the commercialization of the military but rather is at the core of it (Schuetze 2017).

It is important to note that Jordan has become a crucial strategic partner for the United States due to its efforts in combating terrorism and its unique geographical location. With ongoing counter-terrorism efforts and moderate policies towards Iraq and Israel, Jordan may become a target for violent extremism in the future. Its location on the borders with Israel, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and the Palestinian West Bank territories makes it an attractive target for revolutionary groups with regional aspirations. Therefore, the US must assist Jordan in dealing with terrorism and other risks as part of a Middle East policy that promotes moderation and a prosperous future for the region. The study concluded that the US must prioritize Jordan's survival, prosperity, and modernization in exchange for stability and prosperity in the Middle East. As such, the following policy recommendations were developed with these concerns in mind (Terrell 2008).

This study stands out from previous ones due to its comprehensive analysis of the role of the geopolitical position of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan towards US foreign policy from 1990 to 2017. The study's unique approach involved qualitative interviews, making it distinct from previous research. The analysis is based on significant political events during the period studied.

## Theoretical Framework

This study examines the realism theory, including classical and "neo-" variations. Classical realism operates under certain assumptions, such as power being the foundation of international relations, the state being the primary unit of analysis, ethics being secondary, and alliances determining the balance of power. Neo-realism, on the other hand, has updated these principles to fit current political, economic, and security realities (Milani 2018; Cox 2016).

Regarding political and military initiatives, the relations between the US and Jordan primarily serve US interests in the Middle East. Given the anarchic nature of the region, the US must maintain strategic allies to enhance its security and maximize its power. Jordan's geographical position in the Middle East makes it especially valuable to the US. For example, Jordan's border with Israel is essential for protecting US interests in that country. Additionally, as an ally of the US and sharing borders with Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the West Bank, Jordan places the US in a position of power, security, and dominance. Based on the study's interviews and results, the theory closest to its findings is neo-realism.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research is often considered more suitable than quantitative research for studying behavior and gaining a deeper understanding of participants' personal experiences (Bryman 2017; Yilmaz 2013).

In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary tool for gathering information. As this type of research involves interpretation, the researchers' personal biases, beliefs, and assumptions can potentially affect data analysis (Strauss and Corbin 1998). Therefore, social researchers should strive to be impartial by disclosing their biases fully (Noble and Smith 2015; Chenail 2011). To avoid conflicts of interest, the researchers did not have any direct relationship with the participants that might have influenced the research study, such as a reporting relationship, contract, or personal relationship. The researchers interviewed numerous individuals to collect thorough information to address the research questions.

In qualitative research, samples are typically small and focused on a specific goal of achieving saturation. This study's sample consisted of political, economic, and security experts from Jordan and the US. This included individuals in decision-making positions in Jordan, such as former prime ministers and former foreign ministers, government and private study center officials, university lecturers in international relations from Jordanian public universities, and senior military retirees from the Jordanian army. Notably, the Jordanian participants did not have English as their mother tongue.

Contact information for decision-making individuals from relevant ministries was accessed to recruit participants. They were contacted, and a suitable date for a face-to-face interview was determined. University lecturers were contacted and coordinated to schedule the interview at a suitable location and date. For study centers and military experts, interviews were scheduled by phone coordination.

The study centers, and military experts coordinated their efforts through phone communication to schedule interviews. In terms of sample size, for qualitative research to reach saturation point, Creswell (1998) recommended a range of 5 to 25, while Morse (1994) suggested a minimum of 6.

The primary data was collected through interviews, while secondary data was obtained from various sources, including books, journals, theses, newspapers, seminar papers, and articles.

According to Hill et al. (2005), a suitable interview protocol should consist of 8-10 questions that can be discussed within an hour. Conducting at least two trial interviews to test the questions is also recommended. Therefore, we conducted two experimental interviews to ensure the effectiveness of the questions. The first interview was conducted on campus with a university lecturer specializing in international relations, while the second interview was conducted with a political affairs university specialist. After the experimental interviews, eight questions were developed to gather saturated information for the main study questions.

**Table 1: Participant List (Source: Authors' selection)**

| Participant | Sex | State  | Major   |
|-------------|-----|--------|---|
| 1           | M   | Jordan | Head of the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies         |
| 2           | M   | Jordan | Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs 2016       |
| 3           | M   | Jordan | University lecturer (international relations)         |
| 4           | M   | Jordan | University lecturer (international relations)         |
| 5           | M   | Jordan | University lecturer (international relations)         |
| 6           | M   | Jordan | Head of the University of Jordan Studies Centre       |
| 7           | M   | Jordan | University lecturer (international political economy) |
| 8           | M   | Jordan | Prime Minister (June 1991 - November 1991)            |
| 9           | M   | Jordan | University lecturer (political science)               |
| 10          | M   | Jordan | Foreign Minister 2011                                 |
| 11          | M   | Jordan | Retired Major General (modern)                        |
| 12          | M   | Jordan | Retired Major General (modern)                        |
| 13          | M   | Jordan | Minister of Foreign Affairs (1991-1993)               |
| 14          | M   | USA    | University lecturer (international relations)         |
| 15          | M   | USA    | University lecturer (international relations)         |
| 16          | M   | USA    | University lecturer (international relations)         |

To recruit participants, the phone numbers of decision-makers from relevant ministries were accessed, and they were contacted by phone to schedule a face-to-face interview. Coordination was made with university lecturers to set the interview date at a convenient location and time. All participants were asked for their consent before audio recording their data. Pictures were also taken with some of them, except for one person from Jordan who declined the audio recording. In this case, all communication with the participant was done in writing.

Data saturation is achieved when enough information is gathered for the study, and adding more information is unnecessary. In this study, saturation was reached after 16 interviews.

For qualitative research to be trustworthy and valid, it relies on the researchers' observations and recordings of what they see and hear (Noble and Smith 2015). To guarantee credibility and portability, it is crucial that the people being interviewed have knowledge about the phenomenon being explored and that the researcher remains unbiased (Noble and Smith 2015). The interviews in this section are fully transcribed manually to ensure reliability and compatibility. A thorough comprehension of the interview content and the participant's intentions is achieved through coding.

Chenail (2011) suggests that to reduce bias in research, it is essential to establish and adhere to precise rules. To achieve this, the researchers in question implemented a set of well-defined rules and controls coupled with audio recordings of all participant interviews to prevent data manipulation.

## Data Analysis

The interview data was analyzed in this study using thematic analysis (TA). Thematic analysis is a popular method for analyzing qualitative data in various fields and can be applied differently to answer research questions. The focus of thematic analysis is to identify patterns of meaning (themes) in qualitative data (Braun and Clarke 2006). Atlas.ti software for qualitative data analysis was used to analyze the interview data systematically. The purpose of using Atlas.ti software was to assist the researchers in discovering and analyzing the interview data. The program provides tools to locate, code, and annotate findings.

The information was gathered through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using inductive thematic analysis. As previously mentioned in the methodology section, Atlas.ti software was utilized for qualitative analysis to code and present the pertinent data from the interview responses. The interview questions were tested beforehand to assess if any restructuring was necessary before the interview. Upon refinement, these questions were implemented for the study. The outcomes of the interview analysis pertaining to the initial inquiry are depicted in the following figures.

The research question investigates the importance of Jordan's geopolitical location in the Middle East to the United States' foreign policy. The interviewees have shared their opinions on this topic, and their responses reflect their knowledge and experience of the research subject. The findings are closely related to the research question.

The participants in the interview were asked to share their opinions on how Jordan's geographical location affects US foreign policy. The results of this inquiry are presented in the table and figures below.



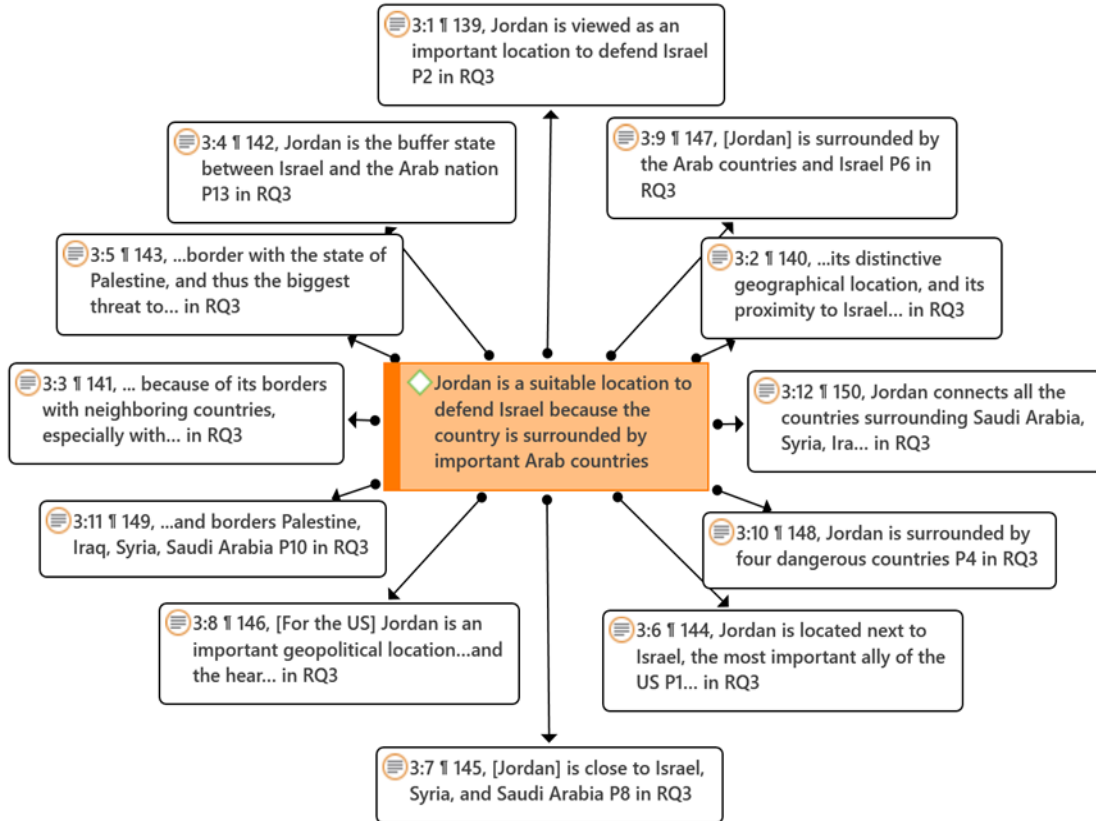


Figure 1: Significance of Jordan’s Geographical Location to Defend Israel (Source: Authors’ depiction)

As shown in Figure 1, the interview participants believe that the US foreign policy views Jordan as a suitable location to defend Israel because the country is surrounded by important Arab countries, the most important ally of the US. This theme is reflected in the participants’ responses to the question on the significance of Jordan’s geographical location. For instance, the most relevant statements include “Jordan is viewed as an important location to defend Israel” (P2) because of “its distinctive geographical location, and its proximity to Israel” (P14) and “because of its borders with neighboring countries, especially with Israel” (P16). According to P12, Jordan shares a “border with the state of Palestine, and thus the biggest threat to Israel” (P12). Another theme suggests that Jordan’s geographical location is significant to the US foreign policy because important Arab nations surround the country. The responses that formed this theme are presented in the following figure. Finally, another theme suggests that Jordan has a unique geographical location in the Middle East, as represented in Figure 2.

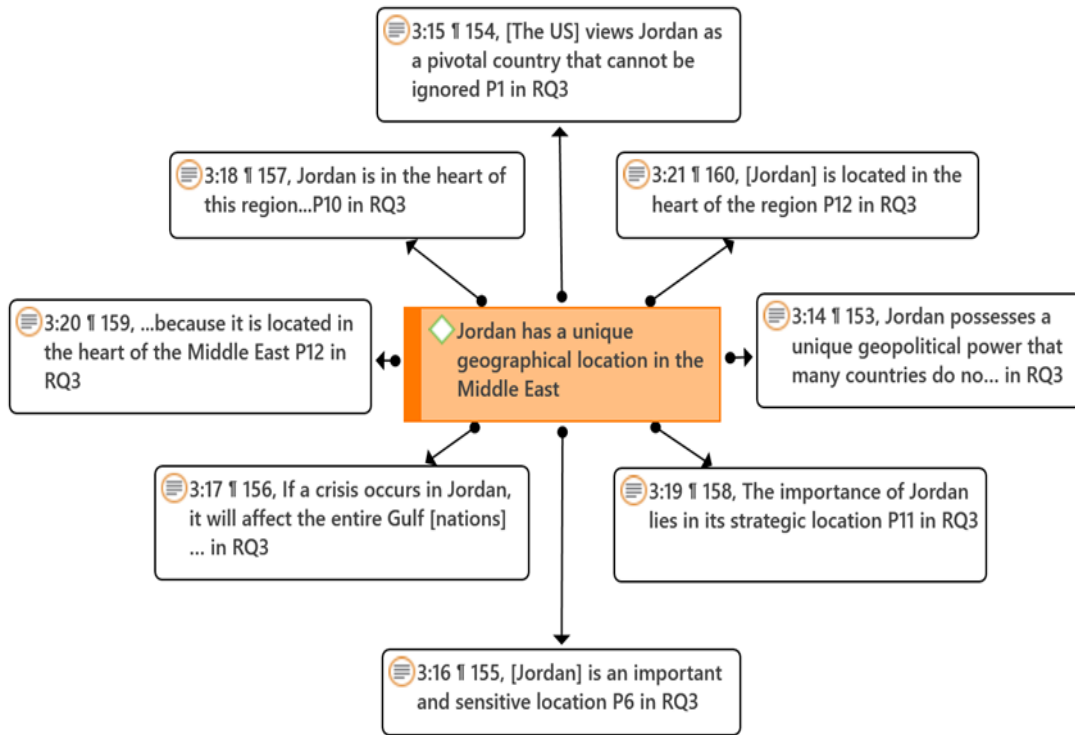


Figure 2: Uniqueness of Jordan’s Geographical Location (Source: Authors’ depiction)

Figure 2 demonstrates that Jordan has a unique geographical location in the Middle East. This theme is reflected in the participants’ responses, such as the US “views Jordan as a pivotal country that cannot be ignored” (P1); Jordan is “an important and sensitive location” (P6); Jordan is in the heart of this region (P10, P12); as well as “the importance of Jordan lies in its strategic location” (P11).

Table 1: Significance of Jordan’s Location to the US Foreign Policy (Source: Authors’ depiction)

| SN | Themes  | Exemplary Quotes   | Source  |
|----|---|--|---|
| 1  | Jordan is a suitable location to defend Israel because important Arab countries surround the country. | Jordan is viewed as an important location to defend Israel<br>... its distinctive geographical location and its proximity to Israel<br>... because of its borders with neighboring countries, especially with Israel<br>Jordan is the buffer state between Israel and the Arab nation<br>... border with the state of Palestine, and thus the biggest threat to Israel<br>Jordan is located next to Israel, the most important ally of the US<br>[Jordan] is close to Israel, Syria, and Saudi Arabia<br>[For the US ] Jordan is an important geopolitical location...and the heart of the Middle East | P2<br>P14<br>P16<br>P13<br>P12<br>P12<br>P8<br>P3 |

|   |  |  |     |
|---|--|--|-----|
|   |  | [Jordan] is surrounded by the Arab countries and Israel  | P6  |
|   |  | Four dangerous countries surround Jordan.  | P4  |
|   |  | ... and borders Palestine, Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia   | P10 |
|   |  | Jordan connects all the countries surrounding Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq, in addition to Palestine and Israel | P12 |
| 2 | <b>Jordan has a unique geographical location in the Middle East.</b> | Jordan possesses a unique geopolitical power that many countries do not possess                              | P1  |
|   |  | [The US] views Jordan as a pivotal country that cannot be ignored  | P1  |
|   |  | [Jordan] is an important and sensitive location  | P6  |
|   |  | If a crisis occurs in Jordan, it will affect the entire Gulf [nations]                                       | P7  |
|   |  | Jordan is in the heart of this region ...  | P10 |
|   |  | The importance of Jordan lies in its strategic location  | P11 |
|   |  | ... because it is located in the heart of the Middle East  | P12 |
|   |  | [Jordan] is located in the heart of the region   | P12 |

Note: P=Participants

As presented in Table 1, two different themes emerged from the participants' responses to the questions regarding the significance of Jordan's location in the Middle East, particularly to the US foreign policy. First, Jordan is a suitable location to defend Israel. Second, Jordan has a unique geographical location in the Middle East.

## CONCLUSION

The interview participants were asked to express their views regarding the significance of Jordan's geographical location to the US foreign policy. This section discusses the analysis result related to the significance of Jordan's geographical location to US foreign policy.

As presented in Table 1, two different themes emerged from the participants' responses to the questions regarding the significance of Jordan's location in the Middle East, particularly to the US foreign policy. First, Jordan is a suitable location to defend Israel. Second, Jordan has a unique geographical location in the Middle East.

As shown in Figure 1, the interview participants believe that the US foreign policy views Jordan as a suitable location to defend Israel because important Arab countries surround the country. The participants believe that Jordan is close to Palestine, Iraq, Syria, and Saudi Arabia, which are very important nations in the Middle East (P4, P6, and P10). According to P12, Jordan connects all the countries surrounding Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Iraq, in addition to Palestine and Israel. Similarly, P3 believes that for the US, Jordan is an important geopolitical location as well as the heart of the Middle East.

According to the participant's responses, a participant (P2, P16) explains that Jordan is surrounded by several neighboring countries, namely Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Israel. Therefore, Jordan considers it a vital position to defend Israel.

Participants (P13, P14) believe that Jordan is the buffer state between Israel and the Arab nations and a buffer zone between Israel and the rest of the countries. From this point of view, the US maintains Jordan's stability to maintain Israel's stability. The US supports Jordan within certain limits, and Jordan cannot be supported within limits that give it the ability to eliminate Israel. The US is fully

aware of Jordan's role in several issues, such as combating terrorism, peace with Israel, Jordanian moderation, and the peace agreement between the two parties.

Thus, through the previous responses, the study believes that the United States wants the stability of Jordan for the sake of the stability of Israel. Instability in the region has led to the civil war in Syria and the increase of extremists there, as well as the instability in Iraq. Therefore, the US fears the instability of Jordan because it will become a center for extremists and terrorists. Therefore, it will be difficult to confront it, and perhaps it will lose the most powerful ally in the region, which is Israel.

The impact of geographical location on foreign policy varies from one country to another depending on several things, the most important of which are the features of the state's territory, the role that can be exercised at the regional and international levels, and the geographical location determine the personality of the state, and many political, economic and military decisions depend on it. Therefore, Jordan is located within a region that fell in the first episodes of American hegemony and the Arab-Israeli conflict (Al-Owaimer, Abdul-Hadi, Al-Musayedin, and Salameh 2016).

The result is inconsistent with Sheikh (2020) and Keenen (2018) in that Jordan's distinguished geographical location had an impact on the US. Aid was linked to that, and Israel had nothing to do with linking aid.

Figure 2 demonstrates that Jordan has a unique geographical location in the Middle East. According to the participant's responses, participants (P4, P7, P9) explain that the US fear of the Iranian and Russian presence in the region through Syria made the US foreign policy look at Jordan's position in an important strategic place and its support politically, economically and militarily to prevent Jordanian rapprochement with Russia and Iran.

Participant (P7) sees the importance of Jordan through its position, as the United States lost the Arab market due to the lack of force of attraction as it was in the past. Now, the Arab market has become in favor of China at the expense of the US and the attempt of Chinese and Russian influence to interfere in the region. Thus, Jordan can be used to apply pressure to thwart the Russian and Chinese projects to interfere in the region in the future (because if China took control through the initiative project (the Belt and Road) and took control of the region, including most of the land and sea passages through the region) America will support Jordan more. Therefore, Jordan's location is what gives it its importance, not its resources and capabilities.

Participants (P8, P11) expressed that Jordan's importance lies in its strategic position in the Middle East, and Jordan geographically is considered the crossing between Africa and Asia. Due to this important location, it imposed significant challenges on Jordan, and the United States supports Jordan because of its important position in the Middle East.

Jordan's geographical location constitutes a passageway for communication between the Arab Mashreq and the Arab Maghreb. It constitutes the northern crossing for the countries of the Arabian Peninsula to link them by land with Syria, Turkey, and Europe. Also, Jordan's proximity to a major regional state made it consider the balance of power calculations as the saying of politics behind geography agrees with Jordan (Al-Owaimer, Abdul-Hadi, Al-Musayedin, and Salameh 2016).

Participants (P10, P12) stress that geographical location is important because it surrounds neighboring countries with different ideologies and geography, from the west on the borders of the democratic state (Israel) and the east on the borders of the politically unstable state (Iraq).

The result is consistent with Sheikh (2020) and Keenen (2018) in that Jordan's distinguished geographical location had an impact on bringing the US.

Both results are consistent with neorealism theory through the relations between the US and Jordan that are expressed in terms of economic, political, and military initiatives that ultimately serve the American interests in the Middle East. The anarchic nature of the world in general and the Middle East, in particular, made the United States maintain and appease strategic allies in the region to achieve the maximization of power and enhance its security. The geographical position of Jordan in the Middle East made it very important to the United States' interests. For instance, the border that exists between Jordan and Israel made Jordan crucial for the protection of US interests in Israel. Also, as an ally of the US in the region, Jordan is sharing the border with Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the West Bank, placing the US in a position of power, security, and hegemony dominance.

The study believes that the US worry about the Iranian and Russian presence in the region through Syria made the American foreign policy look at Jordan's location as an important strategic location and support it politically, economically, and militarily to prevent Jordanian rapprochement with Russia and Iran clearly. Thus, Jordan will use pressure to thwart Russian and Chinese projects to intervene in the region in the future.

Jordan is important in its strategic location in the Middle East, and Jordan is considered a geographical crossing between Africa and Asia. Because of this important location, significant challenges have been imposed on Jordan, and the United States supports Jordan because of its important location in the Middle East.

## Recommendations

The results show the importance of Jordan's geographical location. The country should utilize its location to promote international cooperation and strengthen Arab security as a buffer zone between itself and Israel. The Arab nations should be encouraged to resolve the Palestinian issue and act as mediators through their peace agreement with Israel and strategic alliance with America.

After analyzing the data, it is recommended that the Jordanian government enhances its collaboration with international and regional economic alliances, especially by engaging with the European Common Market. This is the most significant economic and political group that significantly impacts European policies and global politics overall. It is crucial to have clear and effective strategies in place to direct this collaboration.

Furthermore, Jordan's policies must be updated to align with global realities and exert pressure on the US to involve Jordan in regional and international affairs. This can be achieved by adapting to new structures, systems, and situations in the international arena.

It is evident that the United States values its interests in the region and has prioritized its partnership with Israel through the embassy move. Consequently, Jordan must focus on developing its political, economic, and military capabilities to defend itself and compete with Israel's progress, given its neighboring country's advancements in these areas.

Based on the findings, the United States offers Jordan security assistance and equipment as long as it does not upset the balance of power with Israel. Consequently, the security focus with America needs to be reevaluated to align with the Jordanian-American strategic alliance and the security partnership they share in areas such as counter-terrorism rather than tying it to Israel.

To promote stability and moderation in Jordan, we will continue to pursue policies of cooperation and non-extremism that serve the national interest.

To effectively navigate the changes brought about by the Arab Spring, it is essential to review internal and external policies regularly. This should be done with a commitment to flexible and dynamic approaches that avoid stagnation while also upholding core principles such as non-interference in the affairs of other nations, a focus on dialogue to solve problems, ongoing cooperation with Arab and Islamic allies, respect for international laws and norms, and a rejection of foreign interference and land seizures by force.

It is essential to prioritize Jordan's primary concern, which is the Palestinian issue. The Jordanian-American partnership should not impose any pressure on Jordan through aid or the International Monetary Fund to solve the Palestinian issue at Jordan's expense, nor should Jordan be considered as an alternative homeland.

## CRediT AUTHOR STATEMENT

**Ala Alkhawaldeh:** Conceptualization, methodology, writing - original draft, and correspondence.

**Mohammad Ahmad Nayef Alakash:** Software, reviewing.

**Hani. A. M. Akho-Rashida:** Validation.

**Ziad Mohammad Al Wahshat:** Data curation.

**Mohammad Saleh Bani Issa:** Editing.

All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the article.

## COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

### **Acknowledgments:**

Not applicable.

### **Funding:**

Not applicable.

### **Statement of Human Rights:**

This article does not contain any studies with human participants performed by any authors.

### **Statement on the Welfare of Animals:**

This article does not contain any studies with animals performed by any authors.

### **Informed Consent:**

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

### **Disclosure statement:**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author/s.



## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The Institute for Research and European Studies remains neutral concerning jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

## REFERENCES

1. Al Sarhan, A. S. 2017. United States Foreign Policy and the Middle East. *Open Journal of Political Science*, 7(04), 454-472. doi: 10.4236/ojps.2017.74036.
2. Al-Rousan, M. A. 2013. American-Israeli Relations During President Bill Clinton's Reign. *European Scientific Journal*, 9(11).
3. Braun, V. & Clarke, V. 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
4. Bryman, A. 2017. Quantitative and qualitative research: further reflections on their integration. In *Mixing methods: Qualitative and quantitative research* (pp. 57-78). California: Routledge.
5. Bush, G. W. 2009. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. Washington: Wordclay.
6. Bush, G. W. 2009. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. Washington: Wordclay.
7. Cash, G. L. 2018. *A Comparative Analysis of Jordanian and United States Counter-terrorism* (Doctoral dissertation, Appalachian State University).
8. Chenail, R. J. 2011. Interviewing the investigator: Strategies for addressing instrumentation and researcher bias concerns in qualitative research. *Qualitative Report*, 16(1), 255-262.
9. Cleveland, W. L. 2018. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. New York: Routledge. doi: 10.4324/9780429495502.
10. Cleveland, W. L., & Bunton, M. 2016. *A history of the modern Middle East*. Hachette UK.
11. Cox, M., & Campanaro, R. 2016. Introduction to international relations. *International Journal of Economics, Management, Finance and the Social Sciences*, 5(11), 45-92.
12. Cox, R. W. (Ed.). 2016. *The new realism: Perspectives on multilateralism and world order*. New York: Springer.
13. Gutkowski, S. 2016. We are the very model of a moderate Muslim state: The Amman Messages and Jordan's foreign policy. *International Relations*, 30(2), 206-226.
14. Harders, C. 2016. *Beyond Regionalism? Regional Cooperation, Regionalism and Regionalization in the Middle East*. Oxon: Routledge.
15. Kinne, M. A. 2018. *The Confluence of American and Jordanian Exceptionalism: An Enduring or Transactional Relationship*. AIR UNIV MAXWELL AFB AL MAXWELL AFB.
16. Lang, H., Wechsler, W. & Awadallah, A. (2017). *The Future of U.S.-Jordanian Counter-terrorism Cooperation*. Washington: Centre for American Progress.
17. Milani, M. M. 2018. *The making of Iran's Islamic revolution: from monarchy to Islamic republic*. Oxon: Routledge.
18. Noble, H., & Smith, J. 2015. Issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research. *Evidence-based nursing*, 18(2), 34-35.
19. Saleh, M. M., & Yassin, T. K. 2020. Jordanian-American Political Relations 1990-1993. *Al Malweah for Archaeological and Historical Studies*, 7(20).
20. Schuetze, B. 2017. Simulating, marketing, and playing war: US-Jordanian military collaboration and the politics of commercial security. *Security Dialogue*, 48(5), 431-450.
21. Sharp, J. M. 2007. *Jordan: US Relations and Bilateral Issues*. Library Of Congress Washington DC Congressional Research Service.

22. Sharp, J. M. 2009. Jordan: Background and US relations. Diane Publishing.
23. Sharp, J. M. 2015. Jordan: Background and US relations. Congressional Research Service.
24. Sharp, J. M. 2019. Jordan: Background and US relations. Congressional Research Service.
25. Sharp, J. M., & Blanchard, C. M. 2012. Armed conflict in Syria: US and International Response. Washington DC: Congressional Research Service.
26. Sheikh, A. M. 2020. Political and Economic Relations between the United States of America and Jordan (1990-2019). *Journal of Humanities and Education Development (JHED)*, 2.
27. Sheikh, A. M. 2020. Relationship Between Jordan and the United States of America in the Context of Military Aid and Alliance. Fadilssa Ali Almashaqbeh, AabidMajeed Sheikh." Relationship Between Jordan And United States Of America In The Context Of Military Aid And Alliance", *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT)*, ISSN, 2320-2882.
28. Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. 1998. Basics of qualitative research techniques. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage publications.
29. Terrill, W. A. 2008. Jordanian national security and the future of Middle East stability.
30. Vatikiotis, P. J. 2017. Politics and the military in Jordan: a study of the Arab Legion, 1921-1957. London: Routledge.
31. Yilmaz, K. 2013. Comparison of quantitative and qualitative research traditions: Epistemological, theoretical, and methodological differences. *European Journal of Education*, 48(2), 311-325.