

Jordan:

Case Study of a Pivotal State

May 1, 2000



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The stability of the Hashemite Kingdom has consistently confounded observers. Jordan's imminent demise has been predicted time and again, only to be defied by the seemingly extraordinary capacity to endure and remain one of the most stable states in the region. If the death of King Hussein gave rise to renewed doubt and speculation about Jordan's stability, these hesitations were dispelled by the smooth transition from Hussein to 'Abdullah II. In the popular view, Jordan's very existence had come to be so intimately identified with Hussein's person that many questioned whether the monarchy could survive his passing. There are, of course, a variety of explanations for Jordan's longevity, not the least of which is the political astuteness, acumen, and courage of its monarchs.

But Jordan has never been a one-man show, and above and beyond the role and personality of its monarchs, a variety of other factors have contributed to the unexpected longevity of the Hashemite Kingdom. In this Policy Paper, Asher Susser, senior research fellow, reviews how Jordan's geopolitical centrality accorded the kingdom a strategic importance that has remained intact in the face of frequent regional changes during the last fifty years.

- **43 pages**

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