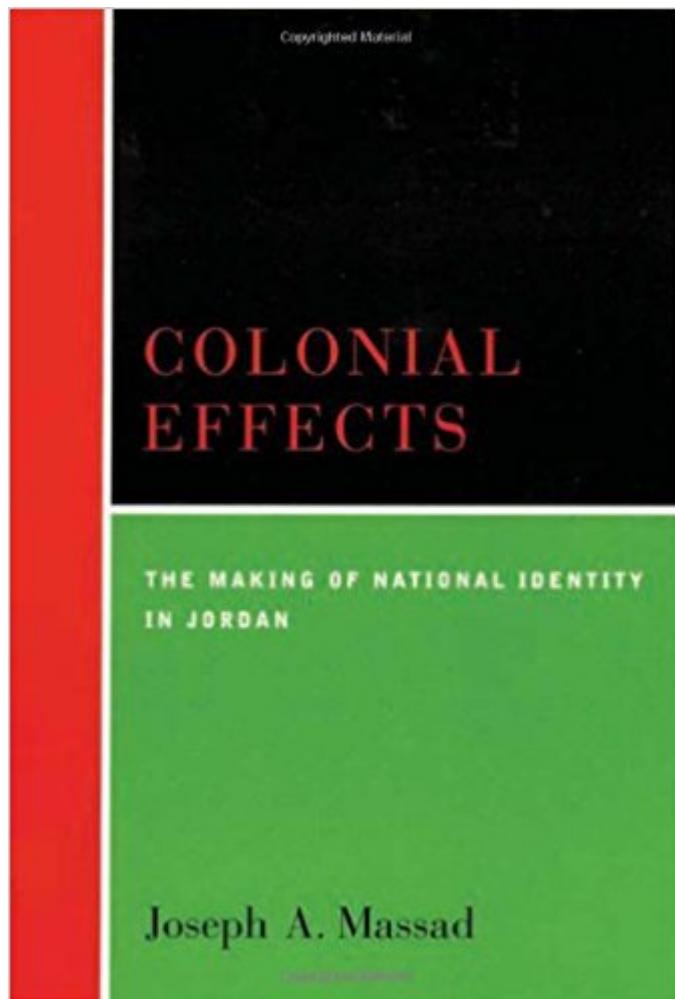


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# Colonial Effects



## **Synopsis**

Colonial Effects analyzes the creation and definition of modern Jordanian identity. Massad studies two key institutions-- the law and the military--and uses them to create an original and precise analysis of the development of Jordanian national identity in the postcolonial period. Joseph A. Massad engages recent scholarly debates on nationalism and richly fulfills the analytical promise of Michel Foucault's insight that modern institutions and their power to have productive, not merely repressive or coercive, capacities--though Massad also stresses their continued repressive function. His argument is advanced by a consideration of evidence, including images produced by state tourist agencies aimed at attracting Western visitors, the changing and precarious position of women in the newly constructed national space, and such practices as soccer games, music, songs, food, clothing, and shifting accents and dialects.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

A work of genuine brilliance, as much for its searing insights into Jordanian history and culture as for its extraordinary mastery of the vast material it deploys. It is rare to encounter a pathbreaking book: this is certainly one. (Edward Said) The thesis of this important and profound book transcends the Jordanian case and reaches into the heart of the debate about the formation of national identities, the idea of the nation, and the effect of the colonial context in shaping identities and nationalities. The [analytic and historical] benefits that this book contributes surpass those provided by many other books on the topic, and it will surely occupy a central place in the literature about the modern

history of Jordan. (Al-Jazeera (translated from the Arabic))Massad offers not the usual political history but a study of legal changes and the use of the military for nation-building. (Foreign Affairs)By focusing on the actions and motivations of the British Colonial administratorsâ in codifying laws and defining the national cultureâ •Massad provides an excellent analysis of state construction in the colonial realm. For this reason, his work is poised for use by scholars and teachers in a number of fields far beyond Jordanian and Middle Eastern studies... Massad beautifully expands the breadth of Jordanian studies by examining issues thus far neglected in all studies of the country... In a classroom setting... the thematic organizational structure means that students do not have to know very much about Jordanian history to be able to understand the main points. The chapters on the role of gender, law, and the military in nationalist construction can be read easily as case studies of national identity throughout the region and the world. A search of any Web engine will show how very popular this book has become for a range of disciplines and class types... As many scholars and teachers have discovered already, the book provides questions and answers about nationalism that few writers have posed before. (Betty S. Anderson Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies)Massad offers a theoretically informed and highly interesting analysis of the construction of national identity in Jordan... [Colonial Effects] is full of fascinating information and an analysis of the colonial and postcolonial state's production of national identity that should invigorate the field. (Mary C. Wilson Journal of Palestine Studies)Massad adopts an innovative approach by examining the effects of juridical and military institutions on the shaping of Jordan's national culture... [He] devotes very tangible attention to Bedouins, women, and Palestinians and their incorporation into the invented national culture of Jordan... [in a] sophisticated analysis. (Choice)Massad's book will occupy an important place in the literature on the modern history of Jordan, not only due to its unique and pioneering topic, but also due to its remarkably encyclopedic range. It is a book that engages the fields of politics, history, sociology, as well as popular culture... This is a great and distinguished book. (Al-Hayat (translated from the Arabic))This is an important book.... It is against the background of Massad's study that one will have to judge... current and forthcoming works. (Laurie Brand Middle East Journal)Historians interested in the emergence of national identities in other colonial and postcolonial countries and societies would do well to examine Massad's book. Reading it will require considerable concentration and patience, but the rewards should be substantial. (Philip S. Khoury American Historical Review)This is a potent, suggestive, and original work, based on extensive research including archival material and newspapers. It is a major contribution to the literature on Jordanian nationalism, anticolonial nationalism, and the wider field of postcolonial studies. It will be widely read and stir important

debates. (Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies)Massad's book is informative, original, and interesting.... Ultimately, this book is a pleasure. It is an innovative approach to the creation of Jordanian national identity and a much-needed and welcome addition to the scholarship on Jordanian national identity. (Arab Studies Journal)[I]n his provocative book... Massad eruditely examines and reconstructs the creation and evolution of the Jordanian nation... This insightful book will serve to provide readers with an immeasurable understanding and a methodology for exploring the complexities of colonialism and postcolonial national movements. (Al-Jadid)[P]ainstakingly researched... Massad's Colonial Effects is an enlightening exploration of national identity construction that... can illuminate the process of identity creation not only in Jordan, but in many other postcolonial nations as well. (Jouvert: A Journal of Postcolonial Studies)Massad chart[s] new ground methodologically [and] his substantive arguments are equally innovative... he uses new conceptual tools for interpreting the construction of colonial and postcolonial national identity... Always attuned to the political implications of culture, Massad shows how [cultural] inventions have been politically expedient, aimed at bolstering the unity of the nation in the face of real social cleavages... Colonial Effects is an ambitious book. It is sometimes hard to categorize because of the author's apparent comfort in different disciplines (political theory, diplomatic history, and cultural studies to name a few) and his use of different modes of argumentation (from the purely descriptive to the highly abstract)... [The book] illuminate[s] the complex negotiations between colonizer and colonized in an understudied period of mandate rule in the Middle East. In addition, [it] constitute[s] part of a small but growing group of works demonstrating the usefulness of Middle Eastern history and politics for theorizing modern processes like the gendered construction of citizenship and national identity. It is to be hoped that scholars of Europe in particular (who have paid little attention to the Middle East) will appreciate [its] insights. (Radical History Review)Massad has done a thorough job of mastering the source material. (Middle East Quarterly)Massad, puts forward a sophisticated constitutive analysis of Jordan's 'national' identity, singling out the different turns and twists in the formation of the 'Jordanian' character and make-up. (British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies)Impressive... meticulously documented throughout. (International Journal of Middle East Studies)

Studies two key institutions, the law and the military, and uses them to create an original analysis of the development of Jordanian national identity in the postcolonial period. Massad sifts such evidence as images produced by state tourist agencies aimed at attracting Western visitors, the changing and precarious position of women in the newly constructed national space, and such

practices as soccer games, music, shifting dialects, food, and clothes.

In his book "Colonial Effects", Mr. Massad analyzes how Jordan's identity has evolved since the colonial time. He emphasizes how this was achieved mainly by the means of two institutions: the law and the military. Considering that it was to take place in a newly formed country constituted of a very diverse population, this was quite a challenge. Colonial Effects was written as a dissertation, which makes it very structured and scholarly. Chapter one, "Codifying the Nation: Law and the Articulation of National Identity in Jordan", makes a review of how the Jordanian law came to exist, first during the Ottoman empire, already influenced by the Western world, and then by the British mandate. Jordan, according to Massad, would not have been possible before the era of the Nation-state, as the population was very diverse and divided. But the creation of this state predates the establishment of a Jordanian identity, since the enactment of Nationality Law didn't occur until 1928. The territory of Jordan, on the other side, has always been more malleable, since it has expanded and contracted, and a British concept of private ownership was put in force during the mandate, which territorialized the reorganization of national identity. Like British national law, Jordanian nationality was defined by ones paternity, which stayed mostly unchanged, or in certain cases by naturalization. Women's and children's nationality was until fairly recently dependent on their husbands and fathers nationality. In "Different Spaces as Different Times: Law and Geography in Jordanian Nationalism", Massad explains the different application of the law to urban males, women, and Bedouins. In Jordan, there is a distinction between the civil code, the personal status law, and the tribal law. Women weren't allowed to vote until the sixties, although they were regarded as equal to men on several other levels. A strong organization of women partly through societies and clubs, was able to offer a number of rights in society. The tribal law applied to Bedouins, who in the twenties represented close to half of the Jordanian population. The Bedouin population was closely supervised by the Arab Legion and partly forced to sedentarize until the mid seventies, at which point they finally gained access to Jordanian voting rights, but the tribal law was abolished, which brought about quite some resentment. Jordan has used the Bedouin culture as a means to attract interest from abroad and develop its tourism and economy. Jordan is faced with the problem of its dualities: modern-traditional, nomadic-settled. Chapter three is entitled "Cultural Syncretism or Colonial Mimic Men: Jordan's Bedouins and the Military Basis of National Identity". The Jordanian army, the Arab Legion tried to avoid discrimination of nationality or tribe. Glubb had a special interest in the Arab population, but also showed was of evolutionary and modernizationist thinking, although supporting local dictatorial rule as more "traditional". He had a strong antipathy to juridical

rule, which undermined his authority over the Bedouin. On the other side, he took a great interest in shaping the Arab Legion into a more European appearance, both exterior and culturally, and comes to identify with Bedouin Arabs as the basis for Jordanianness. During Glubb's time, the society in Jordan changed a lot. Although caring for the Bedouin tribes, his job was to sedentarize them, and to do so, he helped totally redefine the Bedouin culture and way of life. In "Nationalizing the Military: Colonial Legacy as National Heritage", we see how already during the British Mandate, anti-colonialism began to grow within the army. Abdullah al-Tall would have anti-British speeches and soon was considered a threat to the regime, but he eventually vanished from the political sphere of the anti-colonial opposition. When Husayn acceded to the throne, he was still undergoing great British influence, but already showed an interest in eventually doing without the British, and befriended Ali Abu-Nuwwar. This was a time when unrest grew, and the Free Officers gained a more important place regarding nationalism. The army was widely enlarged, and a request was made for the Arabization of the army. Finally, in 1956, the British and Glubb are dismissed. The new nationalist leadership saw the army as an instrument of national unification. But the King chose to turn towards the United States with the acceptance of the Doctrine. A coup was organized against the King, but was dismantled and had the result of reinforcing the existing government. Chapter five, "The Nation as an Elastic Entity: The Expansion and Contraction of Jordan", presents the effect that demographic and geographic expansion and contraction had on the Jordanian identity and culture. The Jericho Conference and the annexation of the West Bank called for a certain "Palestinian-Jordanian unity". With this territory, came a large number of Palestinians who were offered Jordanian identity, which only partially and half-heartedly accepted. A further displacement occurred after the 1948 loss of this territory to Israel, when a number of West Bank inhabitants resettled on the East Bank of Jordan. The PLO and other Palestinian related guerrilla activities who had their seat in Jordan came to be viewed as a growing threat to the government and were finally ousted in 1970 to avoid the spreading of a civil war. A Jordanian accent, new clothing, or football, also became symbols of the new Jordanianness. Finally, this Jordanianness is inclusive, many being also Palestinian, Bedouin, etc. In conclusion, I would say that in "Colonial Effects", Massad is able to show that the modern institutions of power of Jordan, namely the law and the military, have indeed shaped the national identity of the Jordanian population. Not merely repressing this population, but also producing something of greater importance: a sense of belonging to a particular nation, that is the Kingdom of Jordan. First imposed on the country under the British rule, those institutions have been progressively integrated into the "tradition" of a Jordanian past to eventually become the essence of Jordanianness.

It reads a bit like a thesis, so it seems overly preoccupied with being academically correct. Pretty solid read for those interested in Jordan. Would recommend.

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