

## Introduction

Throughout the twenty-first century, and much of the twentieth, conflict in the Middle East has dominated the international news headlines. Since the 2011 uprisings, popularly referred to as the Arab Spring, different parts of the region have almost taken it in turns to lead the international segments of Western news media broadcasts: Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Gaza, Syria, and Iraq have all had their moment in the spotlight. Jordan, though, has remained largely overlooked, except, if you listen carefully, as a location on which refugees have descended from other states that have dominated the headlines, such as Palestine, Syria, and Iraq. This hints at Jordan's centrality, if only geographically. However, Jordan's apparent absence within the international current affairs consciousness belies its centrality to the politics of the region, particularly its historical significance in relation both to the Arab–Israeli conflict and to Britain's imperial moment in the Middle East.

The purpose of this book is to unpack Jordan's pivotal relationship to these two critical issues during what is arguably *the* most crucial decade in the history of the Arab world.<sup>1</sup> Based on significant new sources, this study provides an analysis of the post–Second World War role of the Arab Legion – the Jordanian Army, as it was known until 1956 – and its British commander, John Bagot Glubb – more commonly known as Glubb Pasha. This is not a history of Jordan. Nor is this simply an account of a parochial army in a colonial backwater. At heart this is an assessment of

<sup>1</sup> Eugene Rogan posits that the first decade of the twenty-first century has a strong case for being the most significant. See: Eugene Rogan, 'A History of the West Through Arab Eyes', 8 March 2010: [www.wilsoncenter.org/event/the-history-the-west-through-arab-eyes](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/the-history-the-west-through-arab-eyes) (accessed: 12 August 2014).

Jordan, the Arab Legion, and Glubb within the context of Britain's gradual retreat from empire in the Middle East during the emerging Cold War era. Along the way, this book provides significant new revelations and insights into key historical issues, including the partition of Palestine; the 1948 Arab–Israeli War; the royal succession crisis following the assassination of King Abdullah; the abrupt dismissal of Glubb by King Hussein; and the 1956 Suez Crisis.

## BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Jordan first became a direct British interest as a result of the First World War, when the Middle East became a new frontier of Britain's empire, as it sought to uphold its interests in the region – not least, protection of the Suez Canal and the increasing importance of oil.<sup>2</sup> Despite long-standing involvement in Egypt and the Persian Gulf, throughout the nineteenth century Britain had acquiesced in the Ottoman Empire's control of the deserts east of Suez as a means of limiting the influence of its European rivals – notably Russia – and allowing transit to India and the East. Britain had no desire to become embroiled in direct control of the region.<sup>3</sup> This changed after the Ottoman Empire allied with Germany in 1914. This prompted Britain to support an Arab revolt against the Ottomans, led by the Hashemite family: Sharif Husayn of Mecca and his sons, Ali, Abdullah, Faysal, and Zayd. As part of this wartime alliance Britain promised to support the creation of an independent 'Arab Kingdom' ruled by Husayn. Meanwhile, unbeknownst to the Hashemites, Britain made an essentially incompatible agreement with another of its wartime allies: France.<sup>4</sup> When the moment of truth arrived during the post-war peace negotiations, it was the Anglo–French alliance that took precedence. At the San Remo Conference in April 1920 a new map of the Middle East was drawn; the former Ottoman Empire was divided into British and French spheres of influence, creating the modern Middle East state system that we know today. Two new states, Lebanon and Syria, were established and placed under French tutelage.

<sup>2</sup> M. A. Fitzsimons, *Empire by Treaty: Britain and the Middle East in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1965), pp. 15–16; Mary C. Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> Fitzsimons, *Empire by Treaty*, pp. 4–6; L. Carl Brown, *International Politics and the Middle East: Old Rules, Dangerous Game* (London, 1984), pp. 107–12.

<sup>4</sup> Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East, 1914–1920* (London, 2016), pp. 275–309; Jonathan Schneer, *The Balfour Declaration: The Origins of the Arab–Israeli Conflict* (London, 2010), pp. 64–103.

Meanwhile, Britain was granted a League of Nations mandate over Iraq and Palestine, which Britain subsequently divided in two, thus creating another new state: Transjordan, east of the River Jordan.<sup>5</sup>

In Palestine, west of the river, Britain retained administrative control of the mandate, effectively running it as a colony, but in Iraq and Transjordan the British installed two of Husayn's sons to rule: Faysal in Iraq and Abdullah in Transjordan. Faysal and Abdullah were not native to these regions; they were parachuted in to rule these new states as compensation for their thwarted ambitions elsewhere. Abdullah arrived in the Transjordan area in January 1921 while travelling from Mecca, in the Hashemites' Hijazi heartland, to reclaim Syria from the French. While there he formed relationships with local tribal leaders. Because this threatened to derail Britain's formative control of the area, and because of fears that his ambitions in Syria might disturb the accord with France, the British were motivated to collaborate with Abdullah in Transjordan.<sup>6</sup> Given Britain's broken promise to support an independent Arab kingdom, Abdullah might have been expected to avoid another alliance with the British. However, Abdullah was a pragmatist who 'saw no benefit in responding to Britain with enmity from a position of weakness'.<sup>7</sup> Abdullah appraised that, as a first step, his dynastic ambitions were best served by working with the British in Transjordan. And Abdullah's reliance on Britain deepened after the Saudis wrested control of the Hijaz from his father in the mid-1920s.<sup>8</sup> Initially the Anglo-Abdullah relationship in Transjordan was an uncertain one, largely due to British frustration at the Amir's style of administration.<sup>9</sup> However, by the end of the Second World War Abdullah had established himself as Britain's most reliable ally in the Middle East, a region that the foreign secretary of the new post-war Labour government described as 'of cardinal importance to the United Kingdom, second only to the United Kingdom itself'.<sup>10</sup> Given that Jordan had become Britain's closest ally in its most important

<sup>5</sup> Throughout this book, 'Transjordan' will be used to refer specifically to the pre-1948 state, prior to Transjordan's occupation of the West Bank of Palestine when its name changed. When referring specifically to the post-1948 state, or when referring to the state in general terms, it will be referred to as 'Jordan'. State association will be referred to as 'Jordanian' throughout, regardless of periodisation.

<sup>6</sup> Yoav Alon, *The Making of Jordan: Tribes, Colonialism and the Modern State* (London, 2007), pp. 38–40; Wilson, *King Abdullah*, pp. 39–53.

<sup>7</sup> Sulayman Musa, *Cameos: Jordan and Arab Nationalism* (Amman, 1997), pp. 128–9.

<sup>8</sup> Wilson, *King Abdullah*, pp. 53, 88–90.

<sup>9</sup> Alon, *Making of Jordan*, pp. 46–8, 57–60.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in: Ron Pundik, *The Struggle for Sovereignty: Relations between Great Britain and Jordan, 1946–1951* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 41–2.

sphere of influence, the Anglo–Jordanian relationship is a crucial area of exploration for understanding the final throes of the British Empire.

Despite this, historians have largely treated Jordan’s relationship with Britain with barely more attention than the mainstream Western media. The literature on British involvement in Jordan is steadily growing, but it remains largely overlooked.<sup>11</sup> Nowhere is this more glaringly obvious than in a recent edited collection designed to explore Britain’s historical and contemporary involvement in the Middle East. While Palestine, Israel, the Levant (in this case, Lebanon and Syria), Iraq, Egypt, Yemen, and the Gulf all have at least one chapter devoted to them, Jordan – which remains a stalwart ally of Britain and the West – is conspicuous by its absence.<sup>12</sup> The problem, as Peter Sluglett has observed, is that historians of British imperialism in the Middle East have focused primarily on the Eastern Question, Egypt, and Palestine.<sup>13</sup> Yet exploring how Britain managed relations with its closest regional ally during this period of upheaval is crucial to helping us understand how Britain’s role in the Middle East evolved after the Second World War.

The relative lack of attention to Jordan is not just an issue for historians of British imperialism; regional historians have also traditionally overlooked the Hashemite Kingdom. Though as Betty Anderson has highlighted, it has become something of a cliché to begin a study of Jordan by referencing this lack of scrutiny, and the paucity of Jordanian studies has started to be remedied in recent years.<sup>14</sup> As a general rule, the literature on the history of Jordan can be divided into two categories. In the first instance, historians have been interested in the making of the Jordanian state under Amir Abdullah (he became king in 1946).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Notable exceptions include: Tancred Bradshaw, *Britain and Jordan: Imperial Strategy, King Abdullah I and the Zionist Movement* (London, 2012); Pundik, *Struggle for Sovereignty*; Nigel Ashton, ‘“A ‘Special Relationship’ Sometimes in Spite of Ourselves”: Britain and Jordan, 1957–73’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 33:2 (2005), pp. 221–44; Stephen Blackwell, *British Military Intervention and the Struggle for Jordan: King Hussein, Nasser and the Middle East Crisis, 1955–1958* (New York, 2009).

<sup>12</sup> Zach Levey and Elie Podeh (eds.), *Britain and the Middle East: From Imperial Power to Junior Partner* (Eastbourne, 2008).

<sup>13</sup> Peter Sluglett, ‘Formal and Informal Empire in the Middle East’, in: Robin W. Winks (ed.), *Oxford History of the British Empire, Volume V: Historiography* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 421–3.

<sup>14</sup> For a pithy overview of the literature on Jordan, see: Betty S. Anderson, ‘Review Essay: The Evolution of Jordanian Studies’, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 12:2 (2003), pp. 197–202.

<sup>15</sup> Uriel Dann, *Studies in the History of Transjordan, 1920–1949: The Making of a State* (Boulder, 1984); Alon, *Making of Jordan*; Wilson, *King Abdullah*.

In the second instance historians have explored the political survival of Abdullah's grandson, King Hussein – and the inherent survival of the state.<sup>16</sup> There are only a handful of exceptions to this periodisation, including two general histories of Jordan by Ann Dearden and Philip Robins;<sup>17</sup> N. H. Aruri's study of Jordan's *Political Development*;<sup>18</sup> Ilan Pappé's single chapter on British rule between 1943 and 1955;<sup>19</sup> Joseph Massad's study of the 'production' of Jordanian national identity and culture;<sup>20</sup> Betty Anderson's analysis of Jordanian nationalism;<sup>21</sup> Kamal Salibi's pro-Hashemite *Modern History of Jordan*;<sup>22</sup> and Roberts Satloff's *Jordan in Transition*. However, while as the title suggests, Satloff explores the transition from Abdullah to Hussein, his primary focus is 'the years following the 1951 assassination of Abdullah'.<sup>23</sup> This book, however, transcends this dividing line and examines Britain's relationship with Jordan across this transitory period, thus involving the reigns of all three of Jordan's first three kings: Abdullah, Talal, and Hussein.

As instruments of control Glubb and the Arab Legion provide the ideal focal point. It is worth emphasising that Britain's global imperial interests were not maintained using one single method. For that reason historian John Gallagher coined the phrase 'British world system' to account for the broader context of Britain's imperial reach. He explained:

The 'empire', as a set of colonies and other dependencies, was just the tip of the iceberg that made up the British world system as a whole, a system of influence as well as power which, indeed, preferred to work through informal methods of influence when possible, and through formal methods of rule only when necessary.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Nigel Ashton, *King Hussein of Jordan: A Political Life* (New Haven, 2008); Avi Shlaim, *Lion of Jordan: The Life of King Hussein in War and Peace* (New York, 2008); Uriel Dann, *King Hussein and the Challenge of Arab Radicalism: Jordan, 1955–1967* (Oxford, 1989); Lawrence Tal, *Politics, the Military and National Security in Jordan, 1955–1967* (Basingstoke, 2002).

<sup>17</sup> Ann Dearden, *Jordan* (London, 1958); Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (Cambridge, 2004).

<sup>18</sup> N. H. Aruri, *Jordan: A Study in Political Development, 1921–1965* (Hague, 1972).

<sup>19</sup> Ilan Pappé, 'British Rule in Jordan, 1943–55', in: Michael Cohen and Martin Kolinsky (eds.), *Demise of the British Empire in the Middle East: Britain's Responses to Nationalist Movements, 1943–55* (London, 1998), pp. 198–219.

<sup>20</sup> Joseph A. Massad, *Colonial Effects: The Making of National Identity in Jordan* (New York, 2001), p. 1.

<sup>21</sup> Betty S. Anderson, *Nationalist Voices in Jordan: The Street and the State* (Austin, 2005).

<sup>22</sup> Kamal Salibi, *The Modern History of Jordan* (London, 1993).

<sup>23</sup> Robert Satloff, *From Abdullah to Hussein: Jordan in Transition* (Oxford, 1994), p. vii.

<sup>24</sup> John Gallagher, *The Decline, Revival and Fall of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 75. See also: John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970* (Cambridge, 2009), pp. xi, 12–17.

Transjordan was a quintessential part of Britain's informal empire. Britain ruled indirectly, via Abdullah, who was guided, politically, by a British resident. As Priya Satia elucidates, though, the system of indirect rule implemented in the Middle East meant that the installed rulers, such as Abdullah, were sidelined 'for all matters pertaining to "imperial security"'.<sup>25</sup> In Transjordan security was maintained – and Abdullah's authority backed – by the Arab Legion. This system of indirect rule continued even after Transjordan became independent in 1946. Alec Kirkbride continued to advise Abdullah – albeit his job title superficially changed from British resident to British minister – and Glubb continued to command the British-financed Arab Legion.

Glubb and the Arab Legion were absolutely central to the Anglo-Jordanian relationship and characteristic of the twentieth-century shift towards liberal counterinsurgencies. If nineteenth-century colonial pacification was characterised by mass violence and destruction, the twentieth century experienced what Laleh Khalili described as a 'constant seesawing between the idea of violently *detering* the civilian population from supporting the insurgents and the notion that these civilians would be best *persuaded* to disavow the insurgents'.<sup>26</sup> This oscillation between violent deterrence, on one hand, and humane persuasion on the other was a key part of Glubb's formative imperial experience.<sup>27</sup>

Born in Preston, Lancashire, in 1897, Glubb began his adult life as a newly commissioned officer of the Royal Engineers serving on the Western Front, where his experiences were recorded in a meticulous diary.<sup>28</sup> In his autobiography Glubb recounted that: 'From my earliest childhood, it had always been assumed that I would be an officer in the Royal Engineers like my father. No alternative career had ever been dreamed of – much less discussed.'<sup>29</sup> This was not strictly true. At the age of twenty-three Glubb revealed, in a diary-like note, that privately he dreamed of being a writer. He put this ambition on hold, though, because he lacked confidence and had neither the money to sustain himself, nor the experiences to write about. Consequently Glubb resorted to his other

<sup>25</sup> Priya Satia, *Spies in Arabia: The Great War and the Cultural Foundations of Britain's Covert Empire in the Middle East* (Oxford, 2008), p. 7.

<sup>26</sup> Laleh Khalili, *Time in the Shadows: Confinement in Counterinsurgencies* (Stanford, 2013), p. 42 [emphasis in original].

<sup>27</sup> Massad, *Colonial Effects*, pp. 149–50.

<sup>28</sup> John Glubb, *Into Battle: A Soldier's Diary of the Great War* (London, 1978).

<sup>29</sup> John Glubb, *The Changing Scenes of Life: An Autobiography* (London, 1983), pp. 2–5, 10–12, 16–25.

love: soldiering.<sup>30</sup> Thus, when the First World War ended Glubb answered a War Office call for volunteers to serve in Iraq, where a rebellion had broken out against British rule in June 1920.<sup>31</sup> Using heavy artillery and aerial bombardment, the uprising was crushed by the British, in what Eugene Rogan described as ‘scorched-earth tactics’.<sup>32</sup> Glubb arrived in October, with the fighting having ‘practically all finished’.<sup>33</sup> Yet he would nonetheless become an integral tool in the maintenance of British control in this newly created state.

In 1921 the British decided that the cheapest and most efficient means of ruling the desert was to use ‘air control’, where “terror” was the scheme’s underlying principle.<sup>34</sup> As Glubb explained:

If the tribes rose in rebellion several hundred miles from Baghdad ... a military expedition might take many weeks and cost millions of pounds. But if the RAF was in control, aircraft could take off after breakfast from Baghdad, bomb the insurgents and be back in Baghdad for lunch. The cost of such an operation would be negligible.<sup>35</sup>

Initially this tactic proved ineffective and problematic, as RAF pilots struggled to identify correct targets. Key to this scheme was local knowledge. To that end, Glubb was seconded to the RAF as one of several intelligence officers. Selected because of the Arabic language skills he had developed, his task was to become familiar with a designated part of the desert. As Glubb explained: ‘my duties were merely to know every tribe and village in my area so that, in the event of operations, I could lead aircraft to their target’.<sup>36</sup> By this method the British sought to ensure that the desert tribes paid their taxes and complied with the laws of the central Iraqi government. Glubb was a vital cog in this system and therefore began his career in the Middle East as a key component of Britain’s strategy of violent deterrence.

Glubb was also a conduit of persuasion during his time in Iraq, a skill that saw him headhunted by the government in Transjordan. In 1926 Glubb was informed that he would have to return to England because he

<sup>30</sup> ‘Of the Object of My Life’, Glubb, 24 October 1920, Glubb Papers (2006 accession) [Hereafter: GP2006], Box 47, Middle East Centre Archive, St Antony’s College, Oxford [Hereafter: MECA].

<sup>31</sup> Glubb recounts his career in Iraq in: John Glubb, *Arabian Adventures: Ten Years of Joyful Service* (London, 1978).

<sup>32</sup> Rogan, *Fall of the Ottomans*, p. 402.

<sup>33</sup> Glubb to Aunty, 24 October 1920, GP2006, 23.

<sup>34</sup> Satia, *Spies in Arabia*, pp. 246, 252–3.

<sup>35</sup> Glubb, *Arabian Adventures*, p. 32.

<sup>36</sup> Glubb, *Changing Scenes*, pp. 60–3.

could only remain on secondment from the British Army for a maximum of five years. Not wanting to leave the region, Glubb resigned his commission and accepted an offer to work as a civilian administrator contracted directly to the Iraqi government. Glubb remained in this essentially political role until March 1928, when he was transferred to the southern desert, tasked with administering Iraq's southern border region and protecting it against tribal raiding from the Ikhwan in Saudi Arabia. Believing that air control would be ineffective in this instance, Glubb sought to create a desert police force made up of local Bedouin tribesmen.<sup>37</sup> The problem Glubb faced was that the 'tribes were intensely resentful against the Iraqi government which made them pay taxes but did nothing to protect them'. Glubb's task, therefore, was to win their confidence and 'co-operation'. This he did. Glubb established the Southern Desert Camel Corps, armed with machine guns and made up of men from the local Bedouin tribes. With this force he successfully brought order to Iraq's southern desert.<sup>38</sup>

As a consequence of this success, the Jordanian government offered Glubb a contract in the hope that he could achieve the same feat in Transjordan. Prior to Glubb's arrival the authorities had relied on the Tribal Control Board – a Court of Justice based in Amman – to deal with raiding, which inflicted severe and collective punishment. The Jordanian tribes considered this treatment unjust given that they were victims of raiding by the Ikhwan, who were immune from the same treatment in Saudi Arabia. This led to a significant fracturing of the tribes' relationship with the central Jordanian government.<sup>39</sup> When Glubb arrived in Transjordan in November 1930 as second-in-command to the Arab Legion's founder, Frederick Peake, he was given free reign 'to take "immediate" punitive action in the desert'.<sup>40</sup> Yet Glubb preferred to focus on cooperation. He was given 'a free hand in raising a Bedouin police'.<sup>41</sup> And by distancing himself from the Arab Legion – which the tribes considered their enemy – and distributing money during what was a period of economic crisis, Glubb persuaded the Jordanian tribes to stop raiding and cooperate. With the help of Bedouin who had served with him in Iraq, Glubb was able to recruit tribesmen in Transjordan – who were also traditionally

<sup>37</sup> Glubb, *Arabian Adventures*, pp. 161–85.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 172–85; Glubb, *Changing Scenes*, pp. 83–94.

<sup>39</sup> Alon, *Making of Jordan*, pp. 87–92.

<sup>40</sup> Robert S. G. Fletcher, *British Imperialism and 'The Tribal Question': Desert Administration and Nomadic Societies in the Middle East, 1919–1936* (Oxford, 2015), p. 241.

<sup>41</sup> Humphreys to Glubb, 9 December 1930, GP2006, 4.

suspicious of the central government – into his new force: the Desert Patrol.<sup>42</sup> He convinced the tribes that it was in their interest to work with him, that they would get good government pay, and, if they stopped raiding, they could breed their own flocks.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, by enlisting the sons of Bedouin shaykhs into his Desert Patrol, Glubb gave these tribal leaders a stake in the central government's authority. This was a crucial pacification technique in itself, and by the summer of 1932 Glubb had successfully brought tribal raiding from both sides of the border to an end.<sup>44</sup> In his own words, this had been achieved 'without firing a shot or sending a man to prison'.<sup>45</sup> Despite Glubb's cooperation with Bedouin shaykhs, the central authority's relationship with the desert tribes remained subject to moments of restlessness and punitive action was always a tool in the armoury of the Desert Patrol. Yet Glubb preferred to control the desert periphery using methods of persuasion, such as the provision of subsidies and the offer of employment.<sup>46</sup> In his own somewhat rosy summary: 'The basis of our desert control was not force but persuasion and love.'<sup>47</sup>

Glubb's construction of the Desert Patrol had a profound effect on the very nature of the Arab Legion after he replaced Peake as the force's commander in 1939. Glubb's cooperation with the Bedouin and their integration into the Desert Patrol was the very antithesis of the Arab Legion created by Peake, who had little interest in the desert periphery and considered the nomadic tribes nothing more than a nuisance.<sup>48</sup> He therefore excluded the Bedouin from the Arab Legion. As Peake explained: 'My policy was to raise a Force from the sedentary, or village, Arabs, which would gradually be able to check the Bedouin and allow an Arab Government to rule the country without fear from tribal chiefs.'<sup>49</sup> Glubb, meanwhile, was more wary of the *hadari* – men from settled towns and villages – because they tended to be better educated and therefore more inclined to be politically minded.<sup>50</sup> When Peake retired in 1939 the makeup of the Arab Legion therefore began to change, as the integration

<sup>42</sup> Alon, *Making of Jordan*, pp. 92–8; John Glubb, *The Story of the Arab Legion* (London, 1948), pp. 91–3.

<sup>43</sup> Alon, *Making of Jordan*, p. 99.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98; Glubb, *Changing Scenes*, pp. 99–102; James Lunt, *Glubb Pasha: A Biography* (London, 1984), p. 80.

<sup>45</sup> Glubb, *Changing Scenes*, p. 145.

<sup>46</sup> Alon, *Making of Jordan*, pp. 121–4; Glubb, *Story of the Arab Legion*, p. 170.

<sup>47</sup> Glubb, *Changing Scenes*, p. 105.

<sup>48</sup> Fletcher, *Tribal Question*, p. 256; P. J. Vatikiotis, *Politics and the Military in Jordan: A Study of the Arab Legion, 1921–1957* (London, 1967), p. 69.

<sup>49</sup> Quoted in: Massad, *Colonial Effects*, p. 106.

<sup>50</sup> Peter Young, *The Arab Legion* (Reading, 1972), p. 22; John Glubb, *A Soldier with the Arabs* (London, 1957), p. 436.

of the Bedouin became a crucial component of the force that Glubb moulded.<sup>51</sup> He raised several all-Bedouin battalions, which became the cornerstone of Glubb's Arab Legion.<sup>52</sup>

This was not the only change the Arab Legion was subjected to once Glubb took charge. Under Peake's command the Arab Legion was essentially a gendarmerie, or police force, charged with maintaining internal security of this fledgling political entity.<sup>53</sup> But just months after Glubb replaced Peake as commander of the Arab Legion, the Second World War broke out and the Arab Legion had to adapt. Almost overnight it was revolutionised, converted from an internal security force of approximately 1,000 men in 1939 into an ad hoc army containing about 6,000 men by 1945. It is Glubb's role as commander of the Arab Legion with which he has become synonymous, and this book explores the evolving role of this newly formed army and its British commander thereafter; until Britain's formal connection with Jordan and the Arab Legion ended in 1957, twelve months after Abdullah's grandson, King Hussein, ordered Glubb to leave the country.

Hitherto the Arab Legion has largely been spared significant critical analysis. It does feature prominently in Ron Pundik's account of Anglo-Jordanian relations, as well as *The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*, written by former Arab Legion officer Maan Abu Nowar.<sup>54</sup> The nature and existence of this force, though, has often been taken for granted. As a subject it has predominantly been the preserve of its former officers.<sup>55</sup> Along with an account by journalist Godfrey Lias, who described his experience observing the Arab Legion while 'in search of a story of adventure', these books merely provide a narrative account of life within the force they had fond memories of serving, but offer very little in terms of critical analysis or the wider context of British policy and regional politics; they are essentially memoirs and not based on extensive archival research.<sup>56</sup> The most detailed analytical appraisal remains Vatikiotis's 1967 *Study of the Arab*

<sup>51</sup> Alon, *Making of Jordan*, pp. 120–1.

<sup>52</sup> Vatikiotis, *Politics and the Military*, pp. 72–3; Young, *Arab Legion*, p. 22; Glubb, *Soldier*, p. 436.

<sup>53</sup> Anderson, *Nationalist Voices*, p. 43; Vatikiotis, *Politics and the Military*, p. 75.

<sup>54</sup> Pundik, *Struggle for Sovereignty*; Maan Abu Nowar, *The Struggle for Independence 1939–1947: A History of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan* (Reading, 2001); Maan Abu Nowar, *The Jordanian–Israeli War 1948–1951: A History of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan* (Reading, 2002).

<sup>55</sup> James Lunt, *The Arab Legion, 1923–1957* (London, 1999); Peter Young, *Bedouin Command: With the Arab Legion, 1953–1956* (London, 1956); Young, *Arab Legion*; Glubb, *Soldier*; Glubb, *Story of the Arab Legion*.

<sup>56</sup> Godfrey Lias, *Glubb's Legion* (London, 1956), p. 7.