

SYRIA

A NEW ERA?

JPS

Jordanian Politics & Society Magazine

معهد
السياسة والمجتمع
Politics & Society Institute



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“ABOUT JPS

There is often a significant gap between political transformations, both domestic and international, and the knowledge produced by researchers, academics, and specialists regarding social issues and phenomena. Despite the proliferation of many journals in the human and social sciences, there is a shortage of publications that provide deep, research-based knowledge and perspectives, that offer valuable alternatives and recommendations to decision-makers across various policy dimensions.

The Jordanian Politics & Society Magazine (JPS), published periodically by the Politics and Society Institute, aims to fill this gap. JPS serves as a scientific platform dedicated to fostering rigorous intellectual debate on issues related to domestic and foreign policies at regional and international levels, with a particular focus on the Jordanian political landscape. The magazine emphasizes the development of scientific and intellectual concepts to address various real-world variables and promotes the exchange of ideas and interactive efforts among specialists.

Note

The views and opinions expressed in the magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of neither PSI nor the Editors.

Do We Have the Capacity to Learn Lessons?

This issue of the Jordanian Politics & Society magazine is released as the dust momentarily settles between Iran and Israel, at a time when the region trembles under the weight of an unprecedented tension, one that could reignite at any moment. The Middle East continues to undergo dynamic, destabilising transformations that push it into unfamiliar scenarios and complex questions. Much of this uncertainty is compounded by a weak and fragmented Arab position, which—despite attempts at cohesion and strategic recalibration—has yet to materialise as a serious player capable of reshaping regional balances or influencing strategic outcomes.

Since October 7, 2023, the region has stood at a genuine crossroads: entrenched powers face existential challenges, fortresses are losing their walls, and entire systems are entering foundational phases. Others, still under construction for decades, are searching for their identity. What's clear is what Antonio Gramsci once captured: the old world is dying, and the new has yet to be born. Amidst the strategic planning of the Americans, Israelis, Turks, Iranians, and perhaps even the Chinese and Russians, one must ask: Where are the Arab strategies? Where are the visions that secure the vital interests of the peoples of this region?

From its first issue, which examined the regional repercussions of the war on Gaza, to its second, which addressed Jordan's national security in a shifting geopolitical landscape, JPS has consistently sought to provide analytical frameworks and policy insights to decision-makers in Jordan and the Arab world. Today, this third issue turns to Syria and its layered, contentious transition—a case that reflects and affects broader regional dynamics.

The historic collapse of the Assad regime on December 8, 2024—after more than five decades of authoritarian rule—marked a transformational moment for Syria, the region, and possibly the international system. This development invites not only immediate analysis but also reflection on the long arc of Syria's pre-revolutionary, revolutionary, and post-revolutionary experience.

Syria may well be entering a new and hopeful era—or heading toward renewed uncertainty. The answer lies in its ability to navigate the transitional phase with wisdom and an inclusive national spirit. The Syrian test, like many in the region, will have ripple effects far beyond its borders. In a globalised world, regional political trajectories are interlinked—but in the Middle East, they are exceptionally so.

There is no doubt that the Arab world is confronting a multitude of threats and structural challenges. The Arab uprisings—over a decade and a half ago—were not a fleeting anomaly or tragic detour, but the beginning of a

new historical phase defined by volatility. These upheavals laid bare the consequences of decades of governance models that marginalised justice, liberty, and political participation. The result: a dangerous chasm between state and society, one that continues to swallow a generation of youth amid unemployment, radicalisation, and existential uncertainty.

This raises a pressing question: Have Arab governments and political elites absorbed the lessons of this “Arab wandering”? According to political scientist Karl Deutsch, the strength of a political system lies in its capacity to learn and adapt. Yet how many genuine reviews or policy shifts are underway within Arab research centres, political parties, or state institutions? Are there efforts to invest in a generation described by World Bank reports as the “waiting generation,” due to soaring unemployment rates?

Sustainable political stability cannot be achieved without a healthy environment rooted in liberty, belonging, and participatory governance. Repression and authoritarianism, far from preserving order, will only perpetuate crises and deepen alienation.

The recent Iran-Israel conflict revealed another critical reality: the world is changing rapidly, even in the very nature of warfare. Fifth-generation hybrid wars now fuse AI with psychological operations, disinformation, and cognitive manipulation. This compels us to strengthen our internal frontlines—not only to prevent infiltration, but to transform the social fabric itself into a source of national strength rather than vulnerability.

This issue features contributions from a distinguished group of researchers and experts offering critical insights that deserve the close attention of policymakers. What deserves particular reflection is the fact that Israel’s military operation targeting Iranian leadership also included the assassination of scientists and researchers, and that Iran, in turn, chose to strike Israel’s Weizmann Institute, the country’s most prominent scientific research institution. This mutual targeting underscores a shared recognition: investing in human capital and scientific research is not a luxury—it is the very engine of national power.

The coming period presents multiple scenarios. While strategic foresight is essential, it must be complemented by rigorous policy research to grasp the implications of every possible trajectory fully. The region is witnessing the fragmentation of alliances, Israeli escalation across the region and in Jerusalem and the West Bank, and an unrelenting war on Gaza—all of which have direct repercussions for Jordan, situated at the heart of this turbulent landscape.

We cannot afford to wait passively for events to unfold. The new order has not yet arrived—but it will.

Abdul Karim Al-Kabariti
Chairman of the Advisory Board
Jordanian Politics & Society Magazine

“ ABOUT PSI

Politics and Society Institute (PSI), is a Jordanian nonprofit, policy and research organization established to advance practical research, innovative ideas and realistic solutions toward building a more prosperous Jordan and a stable region.

The Institute is an independent organization that aims to deepen the understanding of public policy and decision-making processes and to build a better knowledge platform of domestic and regional dynamics that will define our future.

The Institute advances its mission guided by the values of the rule of law, civil society, good governance, and moderation. It provides an innovative, integrated, and global approach to its analysis of complex trends and transformations with particular attention to youth dynamics.

The Institute aims to provide practical solutions, based on up-to-date studies and research in political, economic, security, and social fields. The Institute hopes to define future trends for Jordan and the region through its analysis and projections, focusing on the impact of accelerating transformations on the politics and societies of the Middle East.

By bringing together experts and thinkers from various disciplines and regions, the institute hopes to be able to build ideas and solutions through current and relevant research and integrated analysis that can help policymakers advance national interests and build a more stable region by effectively responding to complex challenges and rapid transformations.

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