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Borders, conflict and security

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Abstract

Purpose – Border environments differ as foci for conflict discourse. While classic realist theories are used to account for mechanisms of securitized borders, socially oriented theories are often invoked to characterize relaxed borders. This distinguishing pattern regarding securitization reflects a deeply rooted focus on idealized borders, based on implicit expectations that relaxed borders are a viable option and goal for all. This orientation is prone to mistaken assumptions regarding local, national and regional interests and ultimately threatens delicately balanced states of stability. This paper aims to question this somewhat simplified categorization and posit that securitized borders are longstanding realities which warrant more complex theoretical conceptualization.

Design/methodology/approach – The analysis is based on documentary study and qualitative field research, mapping and evaluating Israel–Jordan cross-border interactions conducted during 2006-2014. Local civilian interactions were studied using three tools: interviews, non-participant observations and a sector-based analysis of original and secondary sources. In the course of research, many tours and observations of the border region were conducted, and key actors in Israel and Jordan were interviewed: entrepreneurs, local residents, local and national government officials, security personnel and representatives of non-governmental organizations involved in the administration and funding of normalization-promoting initiatives.

Findings – In light of internal and external security threats which challenge states and border regions in conflict environments and in normalized settings, there is increasing value in recognizing multi-level power relations ("bringing the state back in") that design, inhibit and ultimately control the inevitability, circumstance and social–political effectivity of any cross-border interaction. Cross-border cooperation (CBC), which evolves gradually, monitored by the border regime and reflecting actual levels of inter-state political dialogue, is a slower yet safer option and a more realistic expectation for CBC, especially in regions of minimal communication between cross-border neighbors. In the backdrop of the Middle East turmoil, Israel and Jordan mark 20 years of peaceful relations, enjoying stability based on shared political and security interests, yet displaying no apparent tendency toward increased cross-border interaction. Given the stark differences in regimes and ongoing regional unrest, this securitized border fulfills local and regional needs and is far from a temporary "second-best" reality.

Originality/value – The analysis is based on original fieldwork and documentary study, mapping and evaluating Israel–Jordan cross-border interactions conducted during 2006-2014.

Keywords Conflict, Cooperation, Security, Borders

Paper type Conceptual paper

Introduction

Border scholarship reflects a somewhat simplistic theoretical divergence, where traditional, state-dominated theories are used to account for the mechanisms of securitized borders, while post-modern theories of social processes are invoked to characterize processes of social–economic integration and hybridization developing across open, idealized borders.

This paper attempts to resolve traditional border theories to their post-modern counterparts, questioning how these theories converge to explain contemporary

complexities of borders. What can we learn by applying classical border study models to the modern phenomena of globalization, regional cooperation and deteritorialization/reterritorialization processes?

Border research has evolved from the classic focus on the border as a line functioning mainly as a barrier to that of "borderlands" as a social construct, reflecting the pronounced phenomena of economic, social and cultural globalization. Thus, rather than passive recipients of policy, border communities have come to be viewed as proactive players that have the potential to affect wider political systems (Henrikson, 2000; Gilles et al., 2013). This development has caused border management practices to fall hostage, to some degree, to rather liberal rhetoric and expectations regarding perceptions and potential of conflict.

The vast majority of the world's borders, at varying degrees of permeability, serve multiple functions of national security, economy and society. European integration processes are a relatively new phenomenon, impressive in their institutional sophistication, especially in light of Europe's history of conflict and war, implying a possible redundancy of national borders. This contrast between interdependent and integrated border management practices and those "still" focused on national rhetoric project an assumption of progress and a pronounced agenda for border research, as reflected in this call:

> We need to analyze how they (borders) function, to understand the obstacles to cross-border cooperation, how networks of trust can be established and how the democratic governance of cooperation might be achieved (Anderson et al., 2003, p. 7).

This rhetoric of universalism gives rise to a known flaw of democratic societies, especially those with liberal ideational habits – conflation of particular national interests and preferences with imagined threads of civilization's progress, that is, what is good for others (Quinn, 2014). Yet national and group preferences regarding social and political order are value- and culture-based and thus specific rather than universal. Optimism regarding the eventual emancipation of securitized borders reflects the presumption that there is only minor and surmountable resistance to practical efforts to realize visions of cross-border interaction and interdependence, which reflect the true interests of all peoples concerned.

The promotion of ideals and practices of cross-border enterprises can therefore be based on mistaken assumptions regarding local, national and regional interests and ultimately threaten delicately balanced states of stability. The absence of open borders and cross-border cooperation (CBC), widely considered as "positive", may be nothing to flaunt but local preferences and needs, as demonstrated through regional insecurities of the Middle East, highlight the relative essence of what is to be considered good regarding borders.

The case study of Israel–Jordan relations has been researched and is therefore not presented here to unearth hitherto unknown facts (Arieli, 2012, 2015; Arieli and Cohen, 2013). Rather, the aim is to illustrate the theoretical insight of how in certain circumstances, stable securitized borders, rather than open borders and CBC, may be optimal in satisfying particular national interests of the sides involved. In contrast, expectations for deepening civilian cross-border interactions are highly unrealistic, disregarding the essential need for stability and are potentially damaging given the

regional sensitivities and the differences in regime, ethnicity and social–economic gaps between cross-border neighbors.

The Arab Spring, the wave of demonstrations and revolutions that uprooted many long-standing regimes in the Middle East and North Africa, also has significant implications for the regimes in the region not immune to the challenges they pose. Thus, the political and social unrest in the Middle East has fundamentally changed the environment in which Israel and Jordan interact and has clear implications for their border regime.

The analysis of this case study is based on documentary study and qualitative field research, mapping and evaluating Israel–Jordan cross-border interactions conducted during 2006-2014. Local civilian interactions were studied using three tools: interviews, non-participant observations and a sector-based analysis of original and secondary sources. In the course of research, many tours and observations of the border region were conducted, and key actors in Israel and Jordan were interviewed: entrepreneurs, local residents, local and national government officials, security personnel and representatives of non-governmental organizations involved in the administration and funding of normalization-promoting initiatives. As Cohen and Arieli (2011) noted regarding post-conflict research environments, snowball sampling was found to be the most effective in identifying, accessing and engaging interviewees and in overcoming occasional sensitivities. Furthermore, because of the political and social sensitivities of this border region, policy entrepreneurs are central to CBC, and their identification and engagement is critical to understanding the border regime (Arieli and Cohen, 2013).

This discussion will begin with an analysis of theories of security and borders and then move on to present Israeli and Jordanian perspectives on security and analyze the border regime and the degree of realization of shared interests in which CBC plays a role.

Regimes and security in border theory
High politics in border classification
Classical ideas and approaches to border theory have focused on state-imposed status of borders and associated management mechanisms. Various categorizations reveal how traditional border studies, in addition to the development of mapping methods and typological distinctions, analyzed the formulation and stability of the border line and the relationship between regimes, their functions and the balance of the economic, political and military might of neighboring countries (Brunet-Jailly, 2005; Kolossov, 2005; Paasi, 2005). Later theoretical efforts categorized borders as "open" or "closed" through a functional approach, which focused on border permeability and the effects of CBC on societies. These border typologies reflected the nature of political relations between neighboring countries (House, 1982; Minghi, 1963; Prescott, 1965). The focus on border functionality expressed through civilian initiatives, remained anchored in the political realm in light of state centrality in designing border functions. Despite the multiplicity of non-state actors in international relations, the state was perceived as the main actor in adapting border functions to foreign policy and political regime (Moraczewska, 2010).

Newman points to the "end of territorial absolutism" as extinguishing the perception of absolute control exercised by the state through practices of fixed territoriality (Newman, 2003). Indeed, modern theories view borders as evolving social institutions, "reminder of the ways in which the special and social realities are inseparably connected" (Kaplan and Hakli, 2002, p. 3) affected by the interests and directives of

multiple local, national and international actors and agencies. The focus on globalization has contributed to a shift, highlighting the nature of power relations and their respective interests in determining who benefits from the maintenance and institutionalization of the bordering process and, conversely, who benefits from the opening and removal of borders (Newman, 2006). The divergence in perception of states as opposed to multiple actors regarding border interests illustrates the above discussed illusive universal "good" border regime.

Open borders – a local perspective
Decades of interest in diverse models and practices of interaction, interdependence and integration have raised theoretical questions regarding the utility and even existence of sovereignty and territoriality. Indeed, for neighboring democracies, borders have far less to do with conflict; rather, they have become vehicles for interactional opportunities of interpersonal and intergroup communication and cooperation (Starr, 2006).

The concept of borderlands as spaces of civilian life rather than state-drawn lines (boundaries) reflects a transition from traditional to modern and post-modern theories of borders. Coinciding with the realist–liberal paradigmatic divide, borderlands draw attention away from state mechanisms of border enforcement to the phenomenon and potential of cross-border relations in realizing social, cultural, economic and environmental needs of the cross-border region, posing resistance to state control.

Cross-border regions, as typified by Marti'nez (1994), embody a range of interfaces where societies of different socio-economic, ethnic and cultural composition define and govern their interface. His oft-quoted typology that has been central to the depiction of borderland development is aligned along an axis, progressing from a state of closure and discontinuity toward one of interdependence and integration.

Contemporary border theory focuses on mechanisms through which border regions progress along Martinez's axis toward relaxation of borders as social, economic and political divides. This process leads to varying degrees of convergence such that the borderland becomes a transition zone of hybridity, one that does not resemble the social heartlands of either of the neighboring states, yet embodies norms and opportunities stemming from both sides of the border.

In progressing toward interdependent borders, local and national actors may complement or contradict each other. Postmodern themes of border research have focused on simultaneous bordering, de-bordering and re-bordering as social processes, reflecting the inherent link between identity and affiliation and the formation and existence of borders (Wilson and Donnan, 1998). While suggesting the decline of the exclusivity of the state as a bordering force and celebrating multifaceted social difference, social bordering mechanisms address political importance to cultural distinctions and identities (Dalby, 2007). Thus, social and cultural borders can be viewed as a constructed bottom-up process reflecting difference and a potential for social unrest and even violence. Alternatively, these borders may reflect top-down power relations which are constructed or manipulated to create or maintain categories and divides, as a means of imposing order, maintaining administrative efficiency or realizing ideology. Thus, power relations are inherent to the analysis of any social bordering process, inviting the question as to whose interests open or closed borders serve at any given time.

This stage of theoretical development has taken on an applied dimension, seeking to promote mechanisms that enable borders to be opened, reducing the frictions and tensions of socially constructed difference (Newman, 2003). Such mechanisms promote a vision of "overcoming" borders, through re-imagining them as places where people meet and overcome social constructions of spatial fixation (Van Houtum, 2000). A primary example is processes of European Union (EU) enlargement, which have set off a general expectation of transitional "advance" from "boundaries to borderlands" (Comelli *et al.*, 2007) and a conceptualization of borders as "doors and bridges" rather than walls and barriers (Van Houtum and Strüver, 2002). These processes rely on the assumption that shared values and liberal border policies are the inevitable basis for stability. For example, in the initial stages of the INTERREG project, borders were viewed as barriers to success, that is, to prosperous integration and harmonization (Van Houtum and Ernste, 2001). State enforcement of borders as barriers was portrayed as a cumbersome and costly bureaucratic remnant of the past, one which ultimately hindered the potential of cross-border interdependence and integration to achieve regional prosperity. The EU has since invested vast resources in the creation of trans-boundary activity spaces, creating frontier zones of interaction along borders that were sealed in the past (Rumford, 2006; Scott, 1999). Thus, the EXLINEA project examined opportunities and constraints to local/regional cross-border co-operation in Europe where cross-border region building is conceptualized as a process of formal and informal integration (Scott and Matzeit, 2006). The Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) aims to safeguard CBC as a priority of European cohesion and regional policy (Association of European Border Regions – AEBR, 2011). The European Neighborhood Policy sees the EU's effective engagement in the transformation of its neighborhood as a realistic goal and views the transformation of the EU's external borders into interdependent borderlands as hinged on a shared understanding of political objectives (Comelli *et al.*, 2007).

A critical view of borders and promotional agendas of CBC suggests that border maintenance, in both the political and social sense, is not an anomaly to be fixed, but rather a widespread and lasting phenomenon. Thus, in the context of urban cross-border relations, Van Houtom and Ernste point to the dangers of what they see as a "boosteric" agenda to promote CBC, with the discourse of cross-border governance becoming a theoretical trend. Their criticism is based on the resistance of people, communities and cities to disassociate, economically and culturally, from their local identity and interests. They point to the possibly inverse effect of increased cross-border movement, an active border strengthening awareness of social and other differences (van Houtum and Ernste, 2001). Thus, seemingly relaxed border practices facilitating increased cross-border activity do not actually challenge existing power relations; rather, they simply transfer them to less visible but no less effective channels of control. This argument does not challenge the agenda-based theme of promoting CBC in border theory, rather only addresses the problems of its realization.

Critical views of even non-conflict, normalized border environments are cautious in crediting significant power and effect to cross-border interaction. Scott (1999) analyzed European and US contexts of cross-border regionalism, finding significant difference in terms of goals and institutional actors. The pervasiveness of national borders despite incentives to facilitate CBC demonstrates the deep involvement of national governments in monitoring regional initiatives and points to the continued significance of traditional,

classic aspects of borders even within the EU (Scott, 1999). Koff (2007) concludes that despite different continental, political and cultural contexts, border integration succeeds only in areas where local political actors cooperate with their cross-border counterparts. Rather than proving to be a force of change, cooperation and integration depend on supporting local power structures.

The case for an integrated model

Kolossov (2005) rightly points out that at each stage of development of border theory, new approaches are applied together with rather than instead of traditional themes which are not superseded and do not lose their value. Newman (2003) too calls for using concepts taken from the traditional study of borders to redefine, rather than discarding them as relevant concepts for the study of contemporary borders and border institutions.

The attempt to resolve traditional border theories to their post-modern counterparts raises questions. How, exactly, do these theories converge to explain contemporary complexities of borders? A bridge between traditional and contemporary border theory has been proposed by Brunet-Jailly (2005), in which cross-border activity is portrayed as a balance of structural and agent levels of analysis. This model demonstrates the interaction between key factors in designing border regions:

- market forces and trade flows;
- policy activities of multiple levels of governments on adjacent borders;
- the particular political clout of borderland communities; and
- the specific cultures of borderland communities.

These factors are identified as equally important analytical lenses that are mutually influential and interrelated in the shaping of emerging and integrated borderlands.

While Brunet–Jailly's model of cross-border activity is compelling and comprehensive in its enumeration of mutually interrelated factors, it does not address their relative weight and significance in designing border environments. In certain settings, local and market interests alone can determine border policy, while in others, the state remains the central all-powerful actor in dictating border policies and practices, independent of market dynamics.

An additional underlying dominant factor, not identified in the above model, is the perception of threat, whether local – personal or communal, or national – political, cultural or economic. Perception of threat, directly related to perceptions of security, is central to explaining the marginality and lack of legitimacy of CBC in conflict and even in post-conflict border regions, as well as in border regions between states of non-liberal regimes. Border-related policies and practices evolve reflecting the balance of interests and potential vested in cross-border activity (local, national, global) offset by the mutual perception of threat which neighboring regimes and societies may pose to each other. States clearly prioritize stability (Chauprade, 1999 in Moraczewska, 2010). Accordingly, when stability is perceived to be challenged, borders will be more characterized by security concerns than by cross-border opportunities.

Just as the classic and modern theories need to adapt to changing border realities that may defy the old models, the borders themselves are dynamic and sometimes defy reified categorization. Thus, ironically, the same globalization that contributes in some

regions to open borders also creates perceived threats which increase the need to monitor and even reclose them. This reverse trend of securitizing borders has been a dominant theme of border research since 9/11 and ensuing reemphasis of border regulations, and the increasing attention to threats posed by global fundamentalism and militancy. Many Western borders have become membranes facilitating a delicate balance, facilitating "good" cross-border expressions of cooperation and integration while keeping out undesirables suspected of posing potential threats to security or even to preferred social or economic components of life (Ashby, 2014; Boehmer and Peña, 2012; Cowen and Bunce, 2006;). Therefore, the dynamics of opening and closing borders is a circular, rather than a linear, process. Open borders can be administratively closed; most countries strictly maintain the means and the infrastructure to do so, almost immediately, when the need or desire arises (Moraczewska, 2010).

The essence of economic integration in globalization is inherently linked to increased cross-border communication and traffic and thus is posed to increase existing security threats, perceived or actual, and generates new ones. These threats inspire further border security initiatives which in turn, have detrimental impacts on integration. Hence the US policy concern with the "dark side of globalization" reflected in North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) – the empowerment of illicit actors within interconnected economies that have put stress upon "traditional" sovereign borders (Ashby, 2014).

This is clearly demonstrated in the USA–Mexican border dynamics with seemingly mutually opposed agendas being pursued simultaneously, often driven by competing interest groups (Andreas, 2003, 2009). Thus, the drive towards North American economic integration, encompassing enhanced and facilitated cross-border flows in finance and trade (culminating in the NAFTA) has advanced in parallel to the steep rise in US efforts to secure the border. The emphasis on border security has impacted negatively on efficiency in border trade and bilateral cooperation, creating the hybrid that is "both a borderless economy and a barricaded border" (Andreas, 2003, p. 4).

Reactions to perceived threat posed by cross-border movement are far from uniform, reflecting the constructed nature of securitization (Ackleson, 2005). Personal, social and political choices design border environments by interpreting and balancing degrees of opportunity and threat; therefore, the impact of globalization is geographically and socially differentiated. Some borders' administrations embrace, while others remain resistant to the potential of relaxed barriers and increased cross-border interaction (Newman, 2006). These opposing agendas of borders are a manifestation of the Copenhagen School of securitization discourse. They demonstrate how borders can be perceived and portrayed as an existential threat requiring emergency measures of securitization despite significant interests and potential in CBC. Usually, the process of securitization conforms to the particular rhetorical structure in which the problem/challenge is equated with state survival, and then given priority of action in the form of fortified borders and their administrations (Buzan et al., 1998).

Resistance and a tendency toward closed and highly monitored borders are evident not only in cases of long-rooted tensions and conflict but also between neighboring countries of strikingly different regimes and/or cultures. To some degree, in these cases, good fences actually can make good neighbors, especially when and where there is a preference to maintain and perpetuate social, political or economic difference. Difference and separation do not necessarily entail animosity or threaten stability.

Israel–Jordan – an integrated model of securitization and cross-border cooperation

October 2014 marked the twentieth anniversary of the Israel–Jordan peace treaty. In Israel, this was commemorated by numerous attempts of the media and academia to "take stock" and evaluate the achievements and mourn the missed opportunities of social and economic interaction since the signing of the treaty. The fact that Jordanians were not present or heard in these forums contributed to the very dominant negative sentiment of these evaluations, depicted as "a wedding celebration without the bride" (Ephraim Halevi, former Israeli head of Mossad, during a conference at Hebrew University marking 20 years since the peace treaty, November 10, 2014). In Jordan, the anniversary was at best ignored. The few references to the date emerging from the Jordanian side were not complementary, such as the Jordanian newspaper *Al-Arab Al-Yawm* which summed it up as "Twenty Years of Odious Peace" (10.26.2014).

The Israel–Jordan border regime and its attendant practices have developed gradually but steadily since 1994, demonstrating mutual sensitivity toward each side's social and political circumstances while facilitating basic but regular cooperation in areas of shared environmental and economic need. The practices of CBC, which serve local and national interests, are executed far from the political limelight, with a clear preference to avoid media exposure. This preferred type and level of CBC is explained both by the state of Israel–Jordan relations and by regional and global developments (Arieli, 2012).

The Israel–Jordan peace treaty of 1994 envisions "good neighborly relations" as which were to be based on cooperation along the shared border as a "valley of peace" (King Hussein Address at the Signing of the Israel-Jordan Treaty of Peace, October 26, 1994).

The peace treaty emphasizes the broader aspects of peaceful and neighborly relations with the border as their focal point. Article 11 points to neighborly relations as the basis for overarching security. The treaty mentions "cooperation" 20 times, "mutuality" 11 times and "joint efforts" 10 times. The areas of shared interest mentioned include environment, water, energy development, economic activity and security. Security issues are not central in the treaty, as Israel and Jordan did not consider each other as actual security threats (Susser in Eisenberg and Caplan, 2003, p. 99). Thus, in 1994, the Israel–Jordan border was not central to security concerns rather it was perceived as a possible basis for realizing shared interests.

This vision has been burdened from the outset by the ongoing Israeli–Palestinian conflict. The Arab Spring has since increased regional instability, adding to the political difficulty of realizing the civilian potential of cross-border relations. Yet, paradoxically, this regional instability has also increased perceptions of interdependence in both Israel and Jordan, leading to augmented cooperation in areas of security, border management and infrastructure. In contrast to the European model of parallel deepening political and civilian interaction spilling over to social and cultural realms, this case study demonstrates a border highly monitored and securitized as the basis for specific cooperative activities, reflecting perceptions of interdependence in parallel to a preference of social separation. Theoretically, this suggests the need for an adjusted conceptualization of borders, in which regional security and national and local interests interplay in the design of the border and its social and political potential.

Security perspectives: Israel and Jordan

Israel

Both Israel and Jordan experience internal conflicts of interests and perceptions regarding management policies of their shared border. A wide variety of Israeli government ministries and local and international organizations, have been involved in promoting various cross-border initiatives, both initiating cooperative interactions and responding to challenges and problems in areas such as health, education, culture, environment, business and tourism. Yet, Israel's management of its borders, even its peaceful ones, is based on perceptions of regional threats. Its early security doctrine, formulated in the 1950s, focused on three pillars – deterrence, early warning and decision – the military capability to impose a desired outcome (Shabtai, 2010). Recognition of regional alliances in terms of their contribution to security has since developed but has yet to achieve the status of a pillar. CBC is widely recognized for its potential to solve problems, facilitate communication and thus contribute to some degree of regional stabilization; but, it is clearly secondary to traditional security perceptions and means. As will be outlined, Israel's border-administration policy *vis-à-vis* Jordan demonstrates this relational pattern between the security and civilian sectors.

Securitization discourses is very dominant in Israeli political and social realms of life which Michael (2007a) attributes to a complex reality of internal and external security threats, and the Jewish majority's admiration for (and deference to) the security apparatus's knowledge infrastructure and expertise. Thus, the various agencies in Israel's security sector are deeply involved in political processes, and even influence them, although they are formally subordinate to the civil government. This pattern of relations explains why the civil government system often fails to prevail over the security sector in determining priorities and strategy. Michael defines this relational pattern as "strategic helplessness" of the political echelon, which suffices in providing vague guidelines or mere reaction to assessments and proposals made by security agencies and experts (Michael, 2007b). This analysis is highly significant to understanding Israel's border management policies regarding the peaceful Israel-Jordan border. The security establishment will prefer to minimize exposure to perceived external threats, to the extent that at times contradict the original intentions of the political echelon as manifested in the peace treaty.

Dominance of security discourses in Israel is likely to be further enhanced with the recent political uprisings in the Arab world, which have significantly changed the fronts of potential threats for Israel (Harel, 2013). The increasing instability of neighboring states and multiplicity of regional actors and threats and has clearly affected Israel's expectations and needs regarding its borders, specifically that shared with Jordan.

The border with Jordan is Israel's longest. Since the 1994 Israel–Jordan peace treaty, Israel has cooperated with Jordan's preference for non-advertised cross-border interactions. The border regime allows some civilian cross-border initiatives and long-term and stable institutionalized cooperative interactions in the areas of water and security. While only minimal potential of CBC is realized (but spanning such realms as cooperative environmental monitoring of the Gulf of Aqaba, agricultural pest control, emergency preparation), this compliance has the beneficial side-effect for Israel of serving security interests by minimizing exposure to threats of potential border infiltrators posing as CBC actors.

To further minimize potential border-related threats, Israel has developed a complex policy and bureaucracy regarding visas for visiting Jordanians, which again works in two directions, both limiting threats but also significantly deterring and delaying many potentially civilian-beneficial cooperative initiatives (personal communications with Dr David Govrin, Director of Jordan & North Africa Department, Middle East & Peace Process Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israel, March 2014; Gideon Bromberg, Director of Friends of the Earth Middle East, January 2009).

Elevating regional ties and treaties to be included as a pillar of the above security doctrine would entail attaching real significance to CBC as a contribution to security, both national and human. This would be a significant divergence from current policy and practices, unlikely in the current regional political climate. Another reason for the generally passive acceptance of securitized rather than civilian border discourse regarding this peaceful border is the relative marginality of Israel–Jordan commerce and insignificance of joint business and industrial enterprises. Thus, local border-region actors – farmers, environmentalists, scientists, civil servants and business people together with various NGO representatives – have been left to deal with the many costs and efforts of planning and executing CBC as a marginalized activity in an extremely securitized environment (Arieli, 2012; Arieli and Cohen, 2013).

Jordan

Jordan has historically been challenged by huge waves of refugees at its borders. In 1948 and 1967, it was the Palestinians, over two million of which currently reside in Jordan, most of them as citizens, 370,000 in refugee camps (UNRWA, Jordan Report, 2014). The Palestinians were eventually incorporated in Jordan's society and are currently a majority of its population, dominant in both the private and government sectors, despite distinct social and political divides between them and the original Bedouins of Jordan from which the monarchy stems.

Currently, Jordan's northern and eastern borders are strained to prevent the spillover of unrest and fighting from Syria and Iraq. Internally, the nearly two million Syrian and Iraqi refugees add a significant burden to the already overtaxed water, energy and housing resources and pose increasingly significant social, economic and political challenges to the regime. Most of the refugees live in cities rather than in refugee camps. Although legally they are not allowed to work, refugees have become dominant in the Jordanian workplace, especially in the cities of Amman, Irbid and Mafraq, where unemployment of local Jordanians has risen during the past four years from 14.5 to 22.1 per cent. Over 30 per cent of Jordanians once employed in construction and agriculture have been replaced by Syrian refugees who are willing to work longer hours, for less money and without the threat of labor strikes (International Labor Organization-Jordan Report, 2014).

The developments in Iraq, Egypt and Syria have significance for the political stability of Jordan. On the one hand, the chaos in other Arab countries strengthens support for the king, although many criticize his rule. On the other hand, while the Islamic State does not pose an immediate threat to Jordan's stability, Jordan is challenged to control the growing Salafist–Jihadist movement which currently has 5,000 local members, mainly in the towns of Zarqa and Ma'an. Reports claim that a few thousand Jordanians have joined hard-line Islamist Al-Qaida-linked factions in Syria, which serves as a military training ground. In light of threats to assassinate the king and

of suicide attacks against Hashemite intelligence installations, Jordan has implemented a series of US-backed security protocols which closely monitor cross-border movement to and from both Syria and Iraq. Wary of fueling Islamist tendencies, Jordan's forces have sought to keep the most radical Jordanians from crossing the border to Syria. "We had a 650-mile desert buffer with Iraq, but Syria's fighting is right on our borders", says Oraib al-Rantawi, a Jordanian political analyst who warns that the ISIS threat to move its fight to Jordan was real and imminent. "We in Jordan cannot afford the luxury of just waiting and monitoring", he cautioned. "The danger is getting closer to our bedrooms. It has become a strategic danger; it is no longer a security threat from groups or cells" (al-Rantawi in Abu Toameh, 2014). These developments have a significant effect on Jordan's border policy, simultaneously facilitating and hindering cooperation with Israeli agencies.

King Abdullah has long been wary of how the Israel–Arab, and specifically Israel–Palestinian, conflict is giving the Muslim Brotherhood growing clout in Jordan. For years, the Brotherhood has been one of the most organized political forces in the kingdom, consistently claiming discrimination in the Jordanian political system. And while the movement has remained loyal to the monarchy and worked within the system, its leaders has shown an increasing readiness to challenge royal authority in recent months, as their counterparts in other countries have swept to power (Pelham, 2013).

The slow and inhibited development of Israeli–Jordanian cooperation is because of multiple factors, mainly Palestinian origin of Jordan's middle-class and consequently its general hesitance toward normalization because of the ongoing Israel–Palestinian conflict, fear of Israeli dominance because of the significant gap between Israeli and Jordanian economic capacities and income (the dependency paradigm), Israel's Western economic and cultural orientation and the bureaucratic obstacles of both countries (Shamir, 2004).

Since the 1994 peace treaty, a powerful anti-normalization lobby has developed in Jordan regarding its relations with Israel. This lobby has grown and strengthened as has its growth and increased political power and representation in Jordan. This political and social lobby enjoys a majority in the Parliament and regularly threatens the pro-Western-oriented monarchy with exposure of the depth of Jordan's cooperation with Israel as betrayal of the ongoing Israel–Palestinian conflict. This is clearly extremely sensitive politically in light of the Palestinian majority in Jordanian population and Jordan's regional standing with regard to the Arab world.

Israel–Jordan relations touch upon issues of immense psychological, political, spiritual and ideological importance to most Jordanians. The 1994 peace treaty with Israel was initially viewed as the "King's peace" (referring to the late King Hussein). The treaty was tolerated for practical reasons and yet remained disconnected from real values and beliefs on a deeper level. Thus, Frisch found that the sources and ranks of the opposition to normalization with Israel cross ethno-national lines to include Jordanians of both Palestinian and Bedouin origin, secular, religious, left and right and even members of the official elite (Frisch, 2003). Yet, he pointed to a somewhat dual position in the Jordanian public regarding relations with Israel. Notwithstanding the outspoken opposition, the general public, according to various polls, has voiced pragmatic support of the treaty, provided that it produces economic dividends. Nevo (2002) called this dual position of Jordanian society toward normalizing relations with Israel a condition of passive normalization. This passivity regarding relations with Israel is long-lived and

remains evident in Jordan's border regime *vis-à-vis* Israel, and in its mostly passive participation and reluctance to initiate or portray CBC.

The border regime since 1994

Since 1967, the Lower Jordan River Valley serves as the border between Israel and Jordan. The northern section (A on Figure 1) is a stretch of 38 km, between the point where the Yarmuk and Jordan Rivers meet until the Palestinian section of the valley. The southern section of this valley (B on Figure 1), 96 km long and 15 km wide extending from the Green Line south of Beit She'an in the north to the northern section of the Dead Sea in the south, is actually the eastern strip of the West Bank which has been under Israeli control since 1967. Both ends of this section on its western side are marked by army checkpoints on the Route 90 north–south highway, as are the crossing roads connecting to Jerusalem and the highlands of the West Bank.

The mid-section (B on Figure 1) of the Jordan Valley is discussed in Annex I (Israel-Jordan International Boundary Delimitation and Demarcation) of the Israel–Jordan Peace Agreement. Approximately 47,000 Palestinians live in this southern section (B) of the Lower Jordan Valley, in about 20 villages and towns, including the city of Jericho. Thousands more live in refugee camps (B'tselem Database).

Israeli Governments since 1967 have declared the Jordan Valley as Israel's eastern border to remain under Israeli control in any future diplomatic agreements. Based on the perception of this politically sensitive region as Israel's eastern border, Israel has

Figure 1.
Israel, Jordan and the West Bank

Source: Adapted from the CIA Factbook

established restrictive policies distinguishing and between the Palestinian section of the Jordan Valley and the West Bank.

Jordan does not consider this section of the Jordan Valley to be legitimate Israeli territory and views the Israeli population of this section as illegal settlers. Therefore, there is no Israel–Jordan civilian CBC in this border region rather only security cooperation. The northern and southern sections of the border (A and C on Figure 1) serve as the platform for civilian Israeli–Jordanian CBC.

Cross-border practices
Current events in the Middle East, rather than changing border management policies, have mainly emphasized policies, practices and trends that have been dominant in shaping the border regime since the peace treaty was signed. These practices include regular and semi-regular cross-border cooperative interactions, at four levels:

(1) *National-institutional*: This includes security-, energy- and water-related policies.
(2) *Local-municipal*: This includes problem-solving initiatives.
(3) *Civil society*: This includes ideological agendas facilitating people-to-people peace and environmental initiatives.
(4) *Private initiatives*: This includes business and tourism.

National-level cooperation in areas of security, water and infrastructure is ongoing and remarkably flexible, although rarely publicized. Security cooperation is ongoing, deep and viewed by intelligence agencies of both countries as the treaty's greatest achievement, although also not exposed in the media (Schenker, 2014, personal communication Ephraim Halevi, March 2007). Cooperation regarding water goes far beyond mere adherence to the commitments of the treaty and actually entails ongoing dialogue and advanced problem-solving. Thus, apart from a few misunderstandings, the two countries have consistently worked together on water allocation since 1994. This culminated in the signing of an historic agreement in December 2013 stipulating that Israel would provide Amman with 8-13 billion gallons per year of fresh water from the Sea of Galilee, while Jordan would deliver the same amount of desalinated water pumped from Aqaba to Israel's Negev desert region (Schenker, 2014). The enlarged allocation of water in light of the needs of hundreds of thousands of refugees demonstrates flexibility and attentiveness that goes far beyond the contractual commitments of the peace treaty (personal communications Qais Ouais, Engineer of Jordan Valley Authority, November 2009; Moshe Yizraeli, Israel Water Authority, March 2013).

The ongoing development of the infrastructure of the border itself also demonstrates the investment in ongoing institutional cooperation. Jordan's three eastern border-crossing points entail continuous dialogue with Israel in planning and executing the construction of facilities and adaptation of policies in response to contemporary needs. Thus, the northern Jordan-Sheikh Hussein crossing point has been expanded and developed allowing significantly increased Jordanian transit of import and export through the Haifa port formerly routed through Syria. The southern Rabin-Wadi Arava border crossing point is in the process of coordinated expansion to facilitate Israeli export and import through the Port of Aqaba. Finally, the expansion of the

Allenby-King Hussein Bridge accommodates the growing Palestinian traffic between the Palestinian Authority and Jordan, and is also the result of national-level Israel–Jordan communication and coordinated planning (Israeli Forum of the Lobby for Regional Cooperation Israeli Knesset, 12.2.2014).

A \$15bn agreement was signed in September 2014, establishing the export of Israeli natural gas to Jordan for 15 years. The agreement, promoted by John Kerry, was signed not by Israeli Government representatives but rather by officials of Noble Energy, a syndicate brought into the deal to mask the Israeli involvement, although it is a known secret. Nevertheless, the infrastructure to provide the gas to Jordan will be built by Israel, reflecting highest level of national involvement in the deal. The details of this deal are striking – the negotiations continued through Operation Protective Edge in Gaza, and the final details were apparently closed between Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and King Abdallah during their meeting in Amman days before the war ended, just before the agreement was signed.

An interesting level of CBC which is not easily categorized in the above categories is municipal CBC in the Gulf of Aqaba region, until recently a highly developed institutionalized structure of committees, active in both problem-solving and regional planning. Because of Jordanian political opposition, cooperation is now reduced to specific individuals within the neighboring cities who maintain regular yet informal ties to address local problems on a daily basis (multiple personal communications with Samo Samorai, head of Department of Regional Cooperation in the municipality of Eilat and Dr. Salim Al-Mughrabi, former Director of Environment Studies, Permitting & Monitoring Division of the Aqaba Special Economic Zone (ASEZA), 2005-2014; Arieli, 2015).

To analyze the border regime, one must identify the forces that sustain these regular cross-border cooperative interactions and those that minimize their legitimacy, impact and potential spillover to wider areas of activity. Cooperative interactions have developed since the 1994 Israel–Jordan peace treaty. They vary in many ways, their chosen area of activity, scope and regularity, identity of initiators, regional versus national actors. Yet they also share many characteristics – and they have been operating under the radar for nearly 20 years, with little public attention in the media of both countries. This preference for minimal exposure both enables the continuity of these interactions and drastically limits the development of a perception of CBC as a legitimate activity between neighboring communities.

Conclusion

The dynamics of evolution from closed and segregating borders toward borderlands of interdependence and integration has been a dominant theme in border research. Yet the direction of evolution based on developments in political, social and economic relations between neighboring countries is far from exclusive. Martinez's axis of border typology demonstrates both the mechanisms of relaxed borders and the pervasiveness of static state-local cross-border relations as reflected in non-evolving border management policies. The axis also clearly portrays the potential for a reversed development course, where border communities lose dominance as policy entrepreneurs leading interdependence, towards stricter state controlled border management, suppressing local social, economic and environmental cross-border interests in the name of real or perceived national interests (Arieli and Cohen, 2013).

Neighboring states of similarly democratic–liberal political regimes will generally agree in evaluating potential benefits and dangers and therefore tend toward cooperation regarding relaxed border-management policies. This cooperative tendency overcomes disagreements regarding border management, to sustain broader political relations and shared interests. This is the basis for the implicit or explicit objective of promoting cross-border integration with regard to border communities. Yet, the focus on border management dynamics of similar regimes creates an expectation that open borders which facilitate cross-border interaction are a viable option for all border regions, including those of contrasting regimes who maintain minimal communication between them. This expectation is especially pronounced with the growing emphasis on human rights and freedom of movement in liberal discourse.

Despite the varied border environments across political, social and economic contexts, there is an underlying assumption that border communities share cultural ties that cross "artificial" political boundaries which can serve as a resource for economic and ultimately political integration (Gilles *et al.*, 2013). Yet, the regional context remains critical to evaluating displays of CBC and the extent to which they represent the development of real communities of interest on a local scale (Scott, 1999).

In light of internal and external security threats which challenge states and border regions in conflict environments and in normalized settings, there is increasing value in recognizing multi-level power relations ("bringing the state back in") that design, inhibit and ultimately control the inevitability, circumstance and social–political effectivity of any cross-border interaction. CBC which evolves gradually, monitored by the border regime and reflecting actual levels of inter-state political dialogue, is a slower yet safer option and a more realistic expectation for CBC, especially in regions of minimal communication between cross-border neighbors.

On the backdrop of recent Middle East turmoil, the sustainability of basic Israel–Jordan cooperation is clearly derived from local interests and national and political needs in the areas of water and environmental management, as well as policing and securitizing the border itself. Yet, the minimal impact and limited development of CBC is because of causes that are external to the border realm and lay entirely in national perceptions and practices of security and in regional international and global processes.

The Israel–Jordan border regime is clearly more characterized by security concerns, than by the potential, economic, environmental or social, of CBC simply because in this region, the perception of imminent threat and danger is very real, both internally and externally, to both countries. Therefore, the link between CBC and conflict amelioration, so basic to a presumed normalization processes, is minimized in the context of Israel–Jordan relations. Given the political and social sensitivities of the ongoing regional conflict and allegiances, rapidly developing and highly visible CBC could undermine the potential for any CBC at all. The security domination evident in the policies of both Israel and Jordan regarding the border regime therefore paradoxically both inhibits the development and expansion of CBC and serves as its main source of legitimacy. This securitized border is thus a delicate platform balancing civilian initiatives of regional needs with national perceptions of security and threat. This delicate balance may be extreme in conflict environments but is not exclusively relevant to them, pointing to the continued relevance of classic border theories.

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