Humboldt University - BGSS

Beyond Cross-National Frameworks: Examining Social Movement

Trajectory Variation in Authoritarian Contexts during the Arab

Spring, The Case of Jordan.

Doctoral Dissertation by Muath Abudalu

Defense Date: 10.05.2019

Präsidentin der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin:
　　　　Prof. Dr.–Ing. Dr. Sabine Kunst

Dekan der Kultur-, Sozial- und Bildungswissenschaftlichen Fakultät:
　　　　Prof. Dr. Christian Kassung

Referees:

1. Prof. Dr. Konstantin Vössing – (First Supervisor)
2. Prof. Dr. Ellen M. Immergut – (Second Supervisor)
3. Prof. Dr. Silvia von Steinsdorff
4. Dr. Martin Nagelschmidt
5. Mr. Philippe Joly

Kurzbeschreibung

Wie in vielen anderen Staaten in der Nahost-Region auch war es die hohe Armuts-und Arbeitslosenrate, die zu Beginn des Arabischen Frühlings im Jahr 2011 bei den Jordaniern den Ruf nach Reformen auslöste. Auf den Straßen und an anderen öffentlichen Plätzen beklagten sie die wirtschaftlichen, sozialen und politischen Missstände in ihrem Land. Fachleute, Journalisten und Persönlichkeiten des öffentlichen Lebens hatten bereits prognostiziert, dass Jordanien einer der Staaten sein würde, der bedeutende politische Veränderungen in dieser Region erleben wird. Nichtsdestotrotz, ist das jordanische Regime nach nur wenigen Monaten zum Alten zurückgekehrt.

Zur Erläuterung dieser Entwicklungen, untersucht diese Dissertation Untersucht die verschiedenen Strategie- und Aktionsbündel der Protestbewegungsgruppen, um ihre Ziele für Jordanien während des Arabischen Frühlings zu erreichen. Der Fokus dieser Arbeit liegt dabei auf drei Protestbewegungen, die in diesem Zeitraum im Königreich agierten: die *Free Assembly*, die *Liberation National Scoial Group* und *Sadaqa*. Mein besonderes Augenmerk gilt der Fragestellung, inwiefern gruppeneigene Ressourcen, ihre Nähe zum Regime, politisches Framing und die Beurteilung politischer Opportunität ihren Verlauf geprägt haben. Basierend auf einer mehr als neunmonatigen Feldforschung und einer gleichzeitig teilnehmenden Beobachtung innerhalb einer der genannten drei Protestgruppen zwischen 2011 und 2013, stelle ich fest, dass sich die Entwicklungsstadien der Gruppen im selben autoritär geprägten Kontext voneinander unterscheiden. Während ich festgestellt habe, dass die Entstehung beziehungsweise die Mobilisierung aller drei Gruppen zu just diesem Zeitpunkt in den regionalen Ereignissen des Arabischen Frühlings begründet sind, bin ich auch der Ansicht, dass dieser regionale Faktor die Entwicklungsverläufe dieser Gruppen nur teilweise erklärt. Vielmehr gilt, dass der Werdegang der Protestgruppen in Jordanien in örtlichen Bedingungen sowohl eingebettet, als auch stark mit ihnen verflochten ist. Namentlich sind diese lokale sozioökonomische Klassenhierarchien, Spannungen zwischen der städtischen und dörflichen Bevölkerung, sowie die umstrittene Geschichte der palästinensischen Jordanier im Land. Diese vorherrschenden Umstände sind für die Analyse, wie die Gruppen ihre Ressourcen mobilisiert, ihre Agenden formuliert und mit der Regierung interagiert haben, um staatliche Unterstützung zu erhalten, von wesentlicher Bedeutung.

Die Ergebnisse dieser Arbeit legen nahe, dass Analysen des Arabischen Frühlings in Jordanien, und eventuell generell im Nahen Osten, lokale und nationale Gegebenheiten als zentrale und explikatorische Variablen, die die Protestbewegungen mitgestalten, umfassender in einen Kontext setzen sollten. Außerdem heben die Ergebnissehervor, dass die Beziehungen zwischen Protestgruppen und Regime komplex sind. Wissenschaftler sollten das Regime konsequent nicht nur als einzelnen, einheitlichen Akteur in Bezug auf die Protestgruppen konzeptionalisieren, wenn sie die Dynamiken sozialer Bewegungen in autoritär geprägten Kontexten im Nahen Osten untersuchen.

Folglich leistet diese Dissertation folgende Schlüsselbeiträge. Erstens bietet sie einzigartige, umfassende und empirisch qualitative Daten aus Tiefeninterviews und teilnehmenden Beobachtungen in Protestgruppen.. Aufgrund langjähriger Kontrolle und Unterdrückung von Protestbewegungen, die sich für sozialen Wandel einsetzen, war der Zugang zu ihnen nur sehr schwer herzustellen und stellte somit ein risikoreiches Unterfangen dar. Zweitens untersucht diese Forschungsarbeit das Verständnis der Rolle von lokalen Gegebenheiten, die die Entwicklungsstadien von Protestgruppen im Nahen Osten im Arabischen Frühling weitgehend beeinflusst haben. Das Konzept dieser Arbeit könnte zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt bei Recherchen zur Rolle der lokalen Gegebenheiten bei der Gestaltung von Entwicklungsverläufe der Protestgruppen in anderen Ländern des Arabischen Frühlings angewandt werden; als Ergänzung zu den Studien, die gezeigt haben, wie regionale Faktoren Bewegungen in dieser Periode geprägt haben. Als Drittes zeigt sie, dass Interaktionen und Beziehungen zwischen Protestbewegungen und Regime vielschichtig und komplex in ihrem Einfluss auf die Entwicklungsstadien der Protestgruppen sind. Zukünftige Untersuchungen sollten das Regime weiterhin nicht als einzelnen Akteur, sondern vielmehr als Verflechtungmehrerer Akteure betrachten.

Abstract

Like many countries in the Middle East region at the onset of the Arab Spring in 2011, high levels of poverty and unemployment led Jordanians to call for reforms. They voiced their economic, social, and political grievances in the streets and other public spaces. Scholars, journalists, and public figures predicted that Jordan would be one of the countries that would witness significant political change in the region as a result. Yet, and only a few months later, the Jordanian regime remained status quo.

In order to explain these developments, this dissertation examines the trajectories, or the culmination of strategies and actions that protest groups take toward achieving their intended goals during the Arab Spring in Jordan. I focus on three protest groups in the kingdom during this time period: The Free Assembly, the Liberation National Social Group, and Sadaqa. I specifically look at how each groups' resources, regime links, framing, and assessment of political opportunity shaped its trajectory. Based on over nine months of fieldwork as well as participant observation within one of the three protest groups from 2011-2013, I find that the groups vary in their trajectories within the same authoritarian context. While I find that the regional events related to the Arab Spring explain why all three groups formed or mobilized at the time they did, I find this regional factor only partially explains the trajectories of these groups. Rather, the trajectories of protests groups in Jordan are also embedded and tied to local circumstances, namely: local socioeconomic class hierarchies, tensions between urban and local populations, and the contentious history of Palestinian-Jordanians in the country. These local circumstances are critical in shaping how the groups mobilized their resources, framed their agendas, and interacted with the regime in ways that allowed them to gain public support.

These findings suggest that analyses of the Arab Spring in Jordan, and perhaps in the Middle East more generally, should more fully contextualize local and domestic circumstances as central, explanatory variables that shape protest group developments. These findings further highlight that protest group-regime relations are complex in Jordan. Scholars should consistently conceptualize the

regime as more than a single, uniform actor in relation to protest groups when studying social movement dynamics within authoritarian contexts in the Middle East.

This dissertation subsequently makes the following key contributions. First, this study provides unique, rich, empirical qualitative data from in-depth interviews and participant observations with protest groups that is extremely difficult and risky to access in a context that has a long history of controlling and repressing protest groups advocating for social change. Second, this study elaborates understandings of the role of local circumstances in shaping protest group trajectories within the Middle East context broadly during this Arab Spring period. This study's approach could be subsequently applied to research the role of local circumstances in shaping protest group trajectories in other Arab Spring countries; to complement studies that account for how regional factors shaped movements during this era. Third, this study shows how regime-protest group interactions and relationships are nuanced and complex in how they affect protest group trajectories. Future analyses should further consider the regime as a culmination of actors rather than a single actor.

List of Tables

List of Figures

Table of Contents

1. Chapter One: Introduction: The Curious Case of Jordan during the Arab Spring

Like many of the other countries in the region at the onset of the Arab Spring, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has been under regime leadership for decades since its independence from the British in 1946. Political organizing and any form of public activism and free speech were banned under martial law from 1967 until 1989. Informal ad-hoc laws and regulations have prevented groups from politically organizing freely since. The country is facing a population crisis (more than 8 million people living in the Kingdom, primarily in urban spaces, and the country is now home to nearly 1.5 million Syrian refugees or displaced persons as well), as well as an economic one. The average annual income is 5160 USD, the public debt is approximately 96 percent annually, and unemployment is around 18.5 percent (Unofficial rate is approximately 30 percent). Since the start of Syrian refugee crisis, the numbers of people who live below poverty line has increased to reach more than 14 percent (CIA World Fact Book).

Like their regional counterparts in Tunisia and Egypt, Jordanians took to the streets to voice their economic, social, and political grievances, with some groups even calling for decreasing the kings' power and amending the constitution during the onset of the Arab Spring in 2011. More than 4,000 social movement-related activities—including protests, sit-ins, strikes, and demonstrations—took place in the Kingdom in 2011 alone. Many scholars and news outlets predicted that Jordan would be one of the countries that would witness significant political change in the region as a result. Yet, and only a few months after major uprisings in the Kingdom between 2011 and 2012, the Jordanian regime remained status quo, if not stronger.

So what factors explain this miscalculation of Jordan's political future? Academic and public discourses currently offer the following explanations. First, the unpredictable case of Jordan is part of a larger narrative in which the Arab Spring took scholars by surprise because of assumptions related to Middle East exceptionalism. Social science literature on political change within the Middle East has often assumed authoritarian exceptionalism as the starting point of analysis. Before the 2011 Arab Spring movements, scholars often dismissed—perhaps prematurely—the potential for democratic

transition or reform in the region due to this perception of "deeply rooted" authoritarianism (Geddes et al. 2014, Korany 2010; Lewis 1996). Scholars focused on questions related to how authoritarian regimes in the region maintain their power, or even strengthen their powers through different political, economic, and social framing strategies (Bellin 2012; Collier and Levitsky 1997; Lust-Okar and Jamal 2002; Ottaway 2013; Smith 2004). The tendency to focus on authoritarian strategies as the lens of analysis to understand political change in the region shrunk the scope of understanding the political environment within the Middle East to a single, one-dimensional actor: the all-encompassing regime who repressed all social activism. Stated differently, because the starting point is the assumption that the regime is always stable, scholars did not foresee the Arab Spring developing.

Second, scholars who studied social protest in Jordan before the Arab Spring tended to focus on the regime's interactions and relationship with the major oppositional political party registered in the country: Islamic Action Front (IAF). This is important to note for two reasons. One, limited scholarship accounts for political organizing and activism that was happening in forms that were outside of the political party structure (for exceptions, see Ababneh 2016; Schwedler 2005). We know little about how these pre-Arab Spring organizing activities created networks and relationships among activists that shaped groups' trajectories during the Arab Spring. The experience from these activities is also important to consider, given that it equipped activists with the knowledge on how to go about organizing effectively in a contentious authoritarian context like Jordan. One group in this study for example, the Liberation National Social Group (LNSG), was extremely effective in terms of mobilizing public support and members for their group because of their previous experience and established networks from their pre-Arab Spring work with the nationalist movement in the country. Second, whether the IAF actually advocates for social change is debated. Jordan's intellectual elite often posit that the IAF is the "loyal opposition": a cosmetic form of political opposition that legitimizes the regime as open to opposition and democracy. After all, the IAF has never been considered a threat to the Hashemite's rule. It was only during the late Arab Spring when the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated party won elections that the King began to rethink the regime's relationship with IAF in Jordan.

Third, research on the Arab Spring period in Jordan, although limited in comparison to work on Tunisia and Egypt, tends to utilize cross-national comparisons to study convergences and divergences of social movements. This work is critical to assess the impact of these movements at the regional and global levels, but this analytic approach also seems to assume countries' comparability given their shared regional and authoritarian bases; and does not fully account for how domestic and local circumstances shape movements' trajectories in the first place. This is important because nations and their respective regimes are relatively "new" within the Middle East given long legacies of colonial rule throughout the region. Moreover, we know that activists during the Arab Spring framed their demands differently even though they were all mobilizing in the same region and in authoritarian contexts. In Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen and Syria, for example, protestors targeted the heads of regimes and called for their removal, with the very popular slogan "Ash-sha'b yureed isqā ṭan-nizam "the people want to bring down the regime." Yet, other protests in Morocco, Jordan, Bahrain and Lebanon, called for "Islah an-nizam" "reform of the regime". This variation highlights that more research is needed to explain why these protest groups vary in their framing strategies and other elements of their trajectories beyond the national and regional levels. After all, we know from accounts of social movements in other contexts and time periods that local circumstances such as access to local resources and local public sentiment mattered to protest groups' trajectories; and explain variation at the intra-state level. In the U.S. civil rights movement, for example, access to safe, organizing spaces (churches) were important for the group to recruit membership and develop effective strategies to move towards their intended goals; and also how they framed their platform (Goodwin, Jasperm and Polletta 2000). During the Velvet Revolution in Prague, student activists were effective because they had access to local spaces such as theaters to organize in the city (Glenn 1999).

1.1 Research Question

In order to more fully explain the Arab Spring developments in Jordan, this project examines the trajectories of three protest groups in the Kingdom that mobilized during the Arab Spring era: The Free Assembly, the Liberation National Social Group, and Sadaqa. I define protest group trajectory as the culmination of actions that a protest group uses to try to achieve its intended goals. These actions also

include reactions to, or negotiations of, unexpected events or changes in relations within the group or with external actors. Trajectory as a term captures the fact that the direction an object—or in this case a protest group—is based on the ever-changing relationship and interaction between the object's external environment and the object's internal structure and composition within that environment.

A group's trajectory is shaped by the following factors: a groups' resources, organizational development, group membership, framing, public support, mandate and ideology, assessment of political opportunity, relationships with regime ranks, and regime responses to the group. Based on recurring themes from preliminary exploratory research for this project, I specifically consider four of these explanatory factors in how they shaped the trajectories of the three different protest groups: resources, regime links, framing, and assessment of political opportunity. The following chart provides an overview how these explanatory factors are conceptualized and measured in this study.

Table 1. Overview of Explanatory Factors[1]

Explanatory Factors to Understand Trajectory	Measuring the Explanatory Factors
Resources	• Monetary (Strong/Weak) • Human Resources (Strong/Weak) • Organization (Strong/Weak)
Regime Links	• Leadership/Royal Court • Security Apparatus • Ministries • Parliament
Framing	• Public (Inclusive/Semi-Inclusive/Exclusive) • Regime (Critical/Semi-C/Not Critical)
Assessment of Political Opportunity	• Events-Regional (Strong Influence, Semi, No Influence) • Events-Domestic/Local (Strong, Semi, None)

While I find that the regional events related to the Arab Spring relate and shape these groups' trajectories in terms of these explanatory factors (i.e. a group's framing and assessment of political opportunity), I find this regional dynamic only partially explains and relates to the trajectories of these groups. Rather, the trajectories of protests groups in Jordan vary because they are also embedded and

---

[1] These factors are described in more depth in the conceptual framework section

tied to local circumstances, namely: local socioeconomic class hierarchies, tensions between urban and local populations, and the contentious history of Palestinian-Jordanians in the country. The Free Assembly, for example, described itself as aligned and inspired from the Arab Spring protest movements throughout the region, but also strategically used an inclusive platform targeting all Jordanians to appeal to Jordanians from Palestinian origins who have been absent from political life given their contentious history as refugee citizens in the country. Yet, socioeconomic class hierarchies and tensions between urban and rural populations in the country ultimately bred mistrust within the group, contributing to the FA's "resource curse," its dismantlement, and successful regime cooptation tactics. In the case of the Liberation National Social Group (LNSG), the group considered the Arab Spring an opportunity to expand their activities, but actually had been previously active with Jordan's nationalist movement and used this experience to mobilize public support and more members for their group accordingly. Their ties with military veterans and the regime's intelligence from this previous activism within Jordan shaped how they assessed political opportunity and moved towards their goals of social change during the Arab Spring. Moreover, and perhaps ironically, their *lack of* resources was positioned as a resource because it framed the group as connected to the struggles of Jordanians, particularly outside of the capital. However, their lack of resources also gave the regime a way to repress the group through tactics that threatened members' livelihoods and families. In the case of Sadaqa, the group's initial resources were from a foreign funder directly in response to the Arab Spring. Yet, because of the founding members' high socioeconomic status and assets in Jordan, Sadaqa has been able to self-sustain their activities in times when funding fluctuated.

By accounting for how these latter local circumstances play a role in shaping protest group trajectories, this project helps to more fully explain protest group developments in the authoritarian context in Jordan during the Arab Spring era. These findings suggest that analyses of the Arab Spring in Jordan, and perhaps in the Middle East more generally, should more fully contextualize local circumstances as central, explanatory variables in shaping protest group developments.

This dissertation subsequently makes the following key contributions. First, this study provides unique, rich, empirical qualitative data from in-depth interviews and participant observations with

protest groups that is extremely difficult and risky to access to enrich understandings of the Arab Spring in Jordan. The Kingdom has a long history of quelling political opposition and criticisms of the Hashemite leadership; and has been reluctant to allow research specifically that would highlight criticism of the regime as well. This project diverges from other studies on the Arab Spring given that I collected data about political activism in real time during the height of the protests in Jordan through participant observations. I also used key activist informants to learn more about the three groups' trajectories during and after the height of the Arab Spring protests.

Second, this study elaborates understandings of the role of local circumstances in shaping protest group trajectories within Jordan. While most research on social movements or political change in the MENA region generally focuses on state-to-state comparative models, this research moves beyond the nation-state scalar level to examine diversity among and between social protest groups within the same authoritarian context. Shifting the focus in this manner allows this research to not only capture variation in social movement trajectories and authoritarian contexts that have not yet been fully examined through cross-national frameworks; but also serves as a way to highlight the multiple local actors and dynamics involved in shaping the Jordanian political environment. My qualitative approach was critical in capturing the latter, given that national datasets and information about social protest in Jordan are tainted and censored by the government. The approach in this study could be subsequently applied in other Arab Spring countries to study the role of local circumstances in shaping protest group trajectories; to complement studies that account for how regional factors shaped movements during this era.

Third, these findings further highlight that protest group-regime relations are complex and vary in how they shape trajectories. LNSG, for example, used its connections with the regime's intelligence branch insiders to determine when to organize public demonstrations—and when to also stay off the streets. In the case of the Free Assembly, the groups' founders previous experience working as ministers and high level bureaucrats gave them insights into how to frame their platform in a way that could win public support *without* provoking the regime. Future analyses of regime-protest group interactions within authoritarian contexts in Jordan or in the Middle East broadly should subsequently think about

this relationship in more nuanced terms; and consider the regime as a culmination of actors rather than a single actor.

1.2 Outline of Dissertation

The following section of this introduction describes how social movement and democratization studies scholars account for political change during the Arab Spring in Jordan and in the region more generally. As this section will show, resource mobilization, political process models, and framing theories have been the main ways in which scholars have sought to explain social movement developments. In democratization studies, studies focus on the regime and authoritarian diffusion and resilience to explain the Arab Spring. This section also notes, however, that pre-Arab Spring research on social movements in the MENA region is more limited prior to 2011 in both sets of literature. This uneven scholarship production on political change in the region may partially be a result of the fact that scholars largely have considered MENA regimes within the lens of exceptionalism, dismissing and in turn foregoing research on prospects of democratic transitions or revolutions.

The following section then provides an overview of the methodology used for this research. In this study, I use a qualitative approach. I conducted participant observations and conducted interviews with protest group members both during the Arab Spring period as well as in the post-Arab spring period for this project. This data collection approach is rather unique given that access to this kind of information is extremely difficult in authoritarian contexts like Jordan where such research is risky and monitored by the government. I provide a discussion of my research design and data collection process in this section; including justification for choosing Jordan as a case to study. I then conclude with a discussion regarding the significance of this research.

Chapters two, three and four, then provide detailed analyses of three Jordanian protest groups' trajectories: the Free Assembly, the Liberation National Social Group (LNSG), and Sadaqa. These chapters highlight variations of protest groups trajectories within the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as a way to (1) apply and ground theories and arguments of social movements to a particular case and (2) suggest the opportunities and limitations of using current theoretical approaches to understand social

movements particularly and political change more broadly, within the scope of the post-2011 MENA context. I specifically examine how four explanatory factors shape groups' trajectories: resources, regime links, framing, and assessment of political opportunity. At the end of each chapter, I summarize, compare, and contrast the trajectories of the three movements in terms of these explanatory factors. More specifically, this latter discussion highlights how groups vary in their trajectories due to multiple local circumstances that are only sometimes and partially related to national or regional level events and phenomena. Specifically, these local circumstances include: local socioeconomic class hierarchies, tensions between urban and local populations, and the contentious history of Palestinian-Jordanians in the country. These local circumstances shape and are embedded in the explanatory factors included in this study.

The final chapter reiterates the main findings and arguments of this research and briefly discusses protest group activities in the Kingdom today. This chapter ends with brief suggestions on ways in which this research can be extended upon in future projects that seek to assess social movement dynamics and political change more broadly within the MENA context and beyond.

1. 3 Literature Review: Explanations of Social Change in Jordan and the Middle East

Comparative authoritarianism often served as the default lens of analysis to examine political and social dynamics within Jordan and the Middle Eastern context broadly before the Arab Spring. The bulk of this research focused on regime strategies for preserving and maintaining status quo power differentials (Bellin 2012; Collier and Levitsky 1997; Hanafi 2012; Lust-Okar and Jamal 2002; Ottaway 2013; Smith 2004). This pre-2011 regime-focused research was often driven by the fact that scholars have often dismissed—perhaps prematurely—the potential for democratic transition or reform in the region due to "deeply rooted" authoritarianism (Korany 2010: 7-8; Lewis 1996). This is not to say that no scholarship existed on social movements in the region prior to the Arab Uprisings. The limited work on this topic, however, tends to focus particularly on Islamic political parties such as the Muslim Brotherhood, or the IAF in the case of Jordan specifically (Beinin and Vairel 2013; Hamid 2014; Menoret 2011). This limits

the scope of theoretical understandings of such mobilization within the region to a select set of movement groups that fit into political party categories accordingly. Movements that are not categorized as such were often unacknowledged in the literature.

However, this all changed to a notable extent in early 2011 with the onset of the Arab Spring. The widespread protests sparked fresh attention among scholars regarding the limitations of their exceptionalism claims and analytical lenses. Scholars shifted their focus to consider the various factors that contributed to the successful development as well as the failures of social mobilization activities in different Middle Eastern country contexts, including both Islamic and non-Islamic movements (Abdelrahman 2011; Baylouny 2011; Beinin and Vairel 2013; Bogaert and Emperador 2011; Bonnefoy and Poirier 2013; Menoret 2011; Ryan 2011a).

However, and to this day, scholars still are debating what constitutes "success" and "failure" in terms of the effects of the Arab Spring regionally; and at the national level in countries such as Tunisia and Egypt. For example, scholars argue that success includes breaking the barrier of fear between the public and the regime, and raising political and social awareness among the public (Bellin 2012; Salamey and Pearson 2012). Yet, the success of the Islamic movement in Egypt to democratically elect Morsi as a president was considered both a success and failure among scholars and political figures due to its Islamic identity. Ennahda, on the other hand, which is also an Islamic party and was part of the Tunisian social movement, is widely considered a success in achieving political change when the party stepped down from power (Marks 2015). In the case of Jordan, many scholars predicted that the Kingdom would witness major protest and reforms similar to those in Egypt and Tunisia. Yet, only months later, scholars reversed their claims, and began calling the events in Jordan part of an Arab Winter; a period of successive failures (Lynch 2014; Salamey 2015; Yom and Gause 2012).

While scholars might agree that success is broadly defined as achieving political or social change, it is clear that how this is interpreted in the Middle East context varies. Success and failure are themselves often considered problematic terms in measuring or studying social change developments in the Middle East or elsewhere for that matter (Amenta and Young 1999; Giugni 1998; Jenkins and Form 2005; also see Lynch 2014). This limited consensus on how to make sense of the effects of the

Arab Spring may also be a reflection of disjunctures between theoretical camps used to analyze these protest events: namely social movement literature and democratization studies. While both camps are tentative to explain how and why these protests took the forms they did and their subsequent effects, these literatures use different concepts and questions as their points of departure. Without considering them both together, we cannot even begin to fully understand the scope of actors and factors shaping the development and effects of these protest events, particularly at the local level.

1.3.1. Social Movement Theory Approaches to the Arab Spring

1.3.1a. Resource Mobilization Theory and Political Process Models

Combinations of Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT) and Political Process Model (PPT) have been the predominant lenses of analyses used to examine Arab Spring social movement phenomena. RMT explanations consider resource distribution and the organizational structure of social movements as the key drivers of social movement outcomes and developments. Like collective behavior and collective choice theories[2] that focus on the role of relative deprivation and grievances to explain social change, RMT acknowledges these factors as important for explaining mobilization of a social movement. However, RMT scholarship suggests that deprivation and grievance by themselves are incomplete explanatory factors (McCarthy and Zald 1977; also see Edwards and McCarthy 2004; Jenkins 1983; Klandermans 1984).

RMT explains social movements' trajectories as linked to a SMs' mobilization of resources (McCarthy and Zald 1977). Resources can include a range of material resources (such as money, physical spaces and avenues, or services) and nonmaterial ones (emotions, morale, trust, skills, identity, or leadership). In summary, it can be said that resources assume three major forms: monetary resources

---

[2]The "theory of collective behavior," which largely dominated social movement scholarship in the mid-twentieth century, represents one of the first initial frameworks to account for social and structural conditions shaping the formation and outcomes of mass mobilization and protest (Smelser 1962; Turner and Killian 1987). In this framework, protestors are seen as irrational actors since they are driven by their emotions when the level of frustration is high and when their expectations do not meet their realities (Blumer 1986; Melucci 1996; also see Aminzade and McAdam 2002). This classical approach emphasizes that relative deprivation, shared grievances and common beliefs are the main determinants of participation in protests and crowd actions. In the "Collective Choice" theoretical approach, scholars frame individuals as profit-maximizing rational actors who engage in collective action (or refuse to engage in collective action) based on their calculation of costs and benefits.

(money), human resources (people), and organizational resources. Monetary, or material resources, refers to financial and physical capital, including monetary resources, offices, equipment, and supplies. Financial resources have been identified in several ways including the general economic wellbeing of a population (Fetner and Kush 2008, Soule and King 2008), the resources within the aggrieved group (Olzak and Ryo 2007), access to grants and government funds (Larson and Soule 2009), organizational budgets and fundraising (McCammon et al. 2001, Andrews et al. 2010), and above all, the economic wellbeing and wealth of social movement members. Such financial resources have been linked to outcomes and goals of movement organizations (Olzak and Ryo, 2007), the level of media coverage received by an organization (Barker-Plummer 2002), and the likelihood of a movement achieving desired outcomes (McCammon et al. 2001) will most likely rely to a great extent of the financial resources of a movement.

Human resources include everything from the size of population that can be mobilized (Fetner and Kush 2008), members of the social movement (Olzak and Ryo, 2007), pre-existing networks and connections that members of a movement have (Edwards and McCarthy 2004, Kane 2013), as well as the presence of those who can take on active leadership roles (Andrews et al., 2010). Human resources include labor, experience, skills, expertise, and leadership. In other words, human resources refer to individuals rather than organizational or cultural structures of a social movement. A movement's capacity to expand, reach out to the public, and achieve its goals is largely determined by the capacities individuals have and their willingness to achieve change. It is about how much individuals are willing to prioritize their movement and dedicate their time and effort for that purpose.

Voluntary participation of social movement members is also an important human resource for movements of all kinds regardless of any particular skills participants may also possess. People and individuals of a movement are seen as human capital that brings in skills, experience and dedication (Becker 1964). It is also important to take into consideration the diversity of this human capital with in a social movement. For example, a young fierce activist may bring in new energy to a group, while an expert economist who previously held senior public offices brings expertise and well-detailed economic

plans. Social movements need this kind of diversity; they often require expertise of varying kinds to carry out different activities at different stages of the group's trajectory.

The organizational structure of social movements is also considered a resource and refers to the organizational dynamics that shape groups' activities and actions, and therefore visibility and outcomes. How a social movement is organized, is a critical indicator of social movements' ability to reach its goal(s), achieve change more broadly, or in some cases preserve the status quo (Gamson 1992; McCarthy and Zald 1977; Tilly 1978).

Mobilization is defined by RMT frameworks as how a social movement group uses and invests these resources for the pursuit of its goals. Social movements can manage conflict with opponents and they can pursue change through the management and allocation of resources in order to achieve the goals they have in mind. Relatedly, RMT argues that social movements with knowledge and experience in organizing tend to have high levels of coordination that are able to carry out effective protests.

What encourages people to participate in social movements, according to RMT, is a variety of factors, including: mobilized and available resources; the linkages and networks of social movements with other groups; the dependence of movements upon external support for success; and the tactics used by authorities to control or incorporate movements (McCarthy and Zald 1977).

Political Process Models (PPT) are considered a corrective to RMT (McAdam 1982; Tarrow 1994). While RMT analyzes the rise and decline of social movements through a focus on resources and organizational aspects, PPT looks holistically at the movement within its internal and external environment. Stated differently, PPT does not overlook resources or organizational aspects, but rather considers how these factors fit within patterns and trends in the political and institutional environment that exists within the social movement internally and externally. For example, Skocpol (1979) and others argued that scholars need to "bring the state back in": Social movements must be situated within the context of political capacities and crises that create revolutionary situations and outcomes that largely determine the nature of political reform (Skowronek 1982).

Second, and unlike RMT, PPT accounts for how political context and the situation of a movement change over time and from one place to another. The center proposition of this argument is that changes and fluctuations in political structures lead to the emergence (or non- emergence) of social movements (Kitschelt 1986; Tarrow 1996). The political system—and change within it—is what shapes the level of confrontation by its challengers (Tilly 1984). In other words, Skocpol's original call to "bring the state back in" is reemphasized in PPT's emphasis on change over time and place, including contextual factors such as the political environment, performance, and the structure of formal institutions (1979).

The main variables the political process approach accounts for are: common grievances within the movement (common interest and common belief); level of organization within a movement (similar to RMT); and political opportunity for the movement (for example, the vulnerability of the political system, lack of the legitimacy of the regime, or weak state institutions) (Tilly 1978). Once these factors reach a designated threshold within any given movement, PPT posits that the social movement will conduct actions based on rational evaluations of (a) its opponents and (b) the social structure in which the movement is operating within (Tarrow 1994). Therefore, PPT argues that social movements' actions are always rational and carefully chosen based on the surrounding structural variables.

However, one prevalent gap to note about PPT analyses is the tendency to privilege political structures over other structural factors that shape collective actions; and often perceives social movements as independent from the state (Tarrow 1994). Yet, as the following cases in this dissertation show, protest groups' links to the state in Jordan are an important explanatory factor related to their trajectories. Moreover, PPT does not fully—if at all—account for constructivist variables such as identity, collective memory, emotions, culture and history (Goldstone and McAdam 2001). Yet, these factors played a critical role in mobilizing the masses in Jordan as well as in the Middle East more broadly during the Arab Spring. Moreover, these factors shaped how Jordanian activists articulated their platform in order to win the support of certain local populations; to appeal to a variety of constituencies. Thus, what "political opportunity" actually means may be too vaguely defined to capture

the full range of trends that shape the rise and fall of social movements (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001).

1.3.1b. Framing Approaches

Elements of framing theory have also been used to explain the events of the Arab Spring. Framing theory is a constructivist approach to explain social movement phenomena (Gamson et al. 1982; Snow et al. 1986; Snow and Benford 1988). It gained traction among scholars who felt RMT and PPT could not fully explain social movements in the post-industrial era (Goldstone and McAdams 2001; McAdam et al. 1996; Ferree et al. 2003). Framing theory builds upon PPT's and RMT's structural foundations, but moves to more explicitly incorporate cultural and identity related variables within its analytical framework. Framing Theory emphasizes the importance of social movements' abilities to "create frames" that form collective solidarity based on the cultural context and the identity of mobilizing populations (Snow and Benford 1992). In other words, framing is a strategy that funnels individual complaints into collective action through reviving or creating a collective identity that is socially accepted and praised. Through this approach, emotions and ideologies are recognized. Collective identity and the ability for a movement to "frame" in such manner brings meaning to behaviors, where it bridges between 'objective' realities and 'subjective' motives, between 'structure' and 'agency' (Melucci 1996). This means that the idea of framing helps people to analyze and organize their experiences within the context of the world and their interpretation of history around them (Goffman 1974). Frames further shape how people respond to the perceived realities around them, including their participation and action within the context of a social movement (Benford and Snow 2000). Even opportunities and resources are subject to this framing approach because resources and political opportunities are also subject to perceptions and constructions of members of the movement (Gamson and Mayer 1996).

Benford and Snow (2000) outlines how movements use framing as a strategy at different stages of the social movement's development. They posit three "phases" of framing: "diagnostic framing" (problem identification and attributions), "prognostic framing" (articulation of solutions and alternative scenarios, and identifying strategies of confrontation) and "motivational framing" (calling for collective

action by highlighting reasons why people should act). These frames are seen as necessary to create the foundation that establishes and solidifies the identity and understanding of a movement. Only after these phases are completed do Benford and Snow suggest that people will mobilize (1988: 198). While these three phases may seem rather rigid, framing theory acknowledges that social movements vary in how they use and adapt framing strategies (Benford and Snow 2000: 614). Strategies of collective action, for example, differ from one task to another based on the interpretation of resources and political opportunities. Furthermore, the concepts of "success" and "failure" vary based on the interpretation of the movement frames. A movement may have better chances of "succeeding" as well if it frames its goals as relevant to a larger audience, demonstrating how its ideas and claims resonate in the hearts and minds of the public (Benford and Snow 2000).

While Framing Theory has been touted for bridging the objective-subjective and structure versus agency debates, it has also been criticized—perhaps ironically—for its dominant foundation on interpretative criteria and social constructivism. For example, Framing Theory highlights that realities are constructed based on people's acknowledgement of their own experiences within social and political contexts that are historically rooted. However, because interpretations of realities are constructed—and in turn differ from one group to another—"success" and "failure" are also socially constructed. The latter can be problematic in terms of (1) comparing movements if different social groups interpret success and failure or related categories and terminologies in multiple ways and (2) developing analytical categories to explain social movement developments across time and in different locations. The fact that scholars switched their diagnosis of the protest events in the MENA region from a positive, influential "Arab Spring" to an "Arab Winter" of successive failures in only a few months' time suggests that more in-depth assessments of protest group trajectories within the region are needed to more fully gauge the effects of these protests at the local, national, and regional level.

Moreover, Framing Theory may not always account for different motivations within and among individuals who participate in the same social movement. For example, those individuals who may participate for purely practical and objective reasons may tend to choose models of action even within frames of action. This means that some might not share in the collective identity but they seek to gain

their aspiration through collective action. This is particularly important to note in Jordan, where the case of the Free Assembly highlights the seemingly mixed motivations among its members and how these mixed motivations affected the group's trajectory: their strategies and actions for reaching their intended goals.

Framing Theory further seems to essentialize the context of social movement development to a democratic state model through its underlying assumption of collective action as an independent development from the state. "Actions" such as political participation, political party formation, or labor union formation are understood and given meaning as they would be perceived through the lens of the democratic state model. How authoritarian contexts may construct alternative forms of "political participation," labor union formation and even the meaning of "collective action" is not accounted for in full within the Framing Theory framework. This is important to consider, and as the findings from my research shows, because political parties and unions are often considered vehicles for personal agendas or to advance the regime status quo, rather than institutions that promote legitimate social and political reforms. How this in turn shapes framing strategies— including regimes' roles in constructing personal perceptions of "realities," historical narratives, and even collective actions themselves—are largely overlooked and require more consideration.

1.3.1c. Other issues about SM Theory approaches in the case of Jordan's Arab Spring

SM theories are useful in explaining many elements of the Arab Spring protests in Jordan and in the region, generally. However, several issues should be noted in terms of the limitations of these approaches in explaining the Arab Spring events in Jordan.

First, Social Movement literature—whether the Classical, RMT, PPT or Framing—tend to focus on the Life Cycle of movements, understood as stages of development: emergence (also referred to as inception or geneses); coalesce; bureaucratization; and decline (Diani and Della Porta 2005; Mauss 1975; Tilly 1978). Scholars have largely agreed on these four main stages even though they may refer

to them in different ways.[3] The final stage of a social movement is often described as "decline" or "institutionalization" (Blumer 1969). Scholars have suggested that this stage can take the form of five different paths: repression, co-optation, success, failure, or establishment with mainstream (Miller 1999; Mueller 1992). However, many scholars assume that institutionalization is a form of success (Diani and Della Porta 2005; Mauss 1975; Tilly 1978).[4] Yet, in authoritarian contexts like Jordan, institutionalization of a social movement could be a form of failure as it incorporates the social movement into the bureaucratic and institutional structure of the state that is fully controlled by the regime. This will force the institutionalized movement to abide by the rules, regulations and status quo power of the regime accordingly.

Second, when this literature has been used to explain the Arab Spring, it tends to be applied at the cross-national level to compare outcomes between different countries within the region. This framing, while useful in answering important questions regarding social movement outcomes in the MENA context or elsewhere, may not always capture how different movements within the same authoritarian context vary in their trajectories; or use "varying configurations of [routines learned from previous social movement experience] to [approach] different kinds of problems" within their activities (Swidler 1986). Movements may act differently even if they experience similar conditions and based on indicators such as resources that seem comparable. In Jordan, for example, street protests were a

---

[3] For example, Blumer (1969) was one of the earliest scholars to study social movement through a stages lens, where he suggested movements as moving through four main stages: "social ferment," "popular excitement," "formalization" and "institutionalization."

[4] In the emergence stage, social movements are seen as simple, underdeveloped and there is little to no organization (Diani and Della Porta 2005). Therefore, this stage can be seen as the widespread expression of discontent and grievance that is yet to be organized and unified (Mueller 1992). The second stage is when discontent, and the factors and actors driving or responsible for this discontent, becomes clearly defined and expressed openly (Christiansen 2009). It is in this second stage where characteristics of a social movement and organized collective action start to appear. This may include modest organization, identifying strategies, and leader identification. The third stage of social movement development is bureaucratization or "formalization," (Blumer, 1969; Diani and Della Porta 2005). During this stage, a movement manages to develop more sophisticated and advanced organizational strategies. his stage further requires more effort and dedication by volunteers from within the movement to ensure this development proceeds accordingly. This is the stage when the momentum of the movement may be maintained and steered by the movement organization. It is also at this stage in which the strength of the organization is truly tested. At this point, a social movement can move in several directions: First, it may achieve the change and success initially outlined in its objectives. Second, it could fail, fragment, or be co-opted by its opponents, usually the state. It could further be repressed by opponents. This last scenario is considered most likely to take place in authoritarian structures, where higher levels of oppression is most likely to appear at this point in the movement's life cycle.

central tactic that the Liberation National Social Group used to gain public support and negotiate its relationship with regime actors. Yet, the Free Assembly on the other hand *did not* engage in street protests in order to negotiate its relationship with the same regime actors. Factors such as group members' local socioeconomic class hierarchies played a role in these strategies, highlighting the necessity to account for local and domestic factors in shaping protest group trajectories during the Arab Spring. This variation also highlights that protest leaders may strategically avoid actions that maximize public exposure in authoritarian contexts; in order to move towards their intended goals and prevent regime repression. This contradicts some literature that suggests protest leaders will choose strategies to maximize their public exposure in order to increase their chances of success in achieving their goals (Lipsky 1968).

Third, the relationship between "the regime" and "the movements" is also and often binary and rigid in these studies of the Arab Spring (Bank 2012; Belkeziz 2012; Hamid and Freer 2011; Josua and Edel 2015; Lynch 2014; Magen 2012; Vairel 2011; Volpi 2013). It is not always clear in these studies how different actors within the regime, or different members of the protest groups matter and shape how the regime collectively interacts with protest groups and vice versa. We also do not know how these interactions shape movements' strategies, and how they might change over time. In Jordan, for example, all three group in this present study interacted and had connections with members of the regime; albeit at different levels. These relationships were formed as a result of individual members' activities and professions before the Arab Spring, but also through the groups' interactions with the regime during the Arab Spring. Relatedly, LNSG often organized street demonstrations based on information from their regime insiders; but it was also these public demonstrations that led other regime actors to imprison LNSG members and repress the group through other tactics. This repression subsequently reshaped LNSG's trajectory, but also became a way for the group to use the regime's visible repression of the group to gain more public support. This aligns with what McAdam (1983) argued that repression gives groups the opportunity to create a public spectacle to challenge the regime's legitimacy and authority; leading to a "chess-like sequence of tactical interactions between states and insurgents" (Moss 2014: 262). Or as Lichbach (1987) argues, instead of thinking about how repression

deters or encourages protest, it is important to think about how it shapes and forces movements to change their tactics (also see Moss 2014). Repression, cooptation, must be subsequently contextualized within the groups' trajectory; and may not always mean the group has failed in the long run.

Relatedly, social movement frameworks in theory may be attentive to how internal dynamics of individual social movements or between movements shape mobilization trajectories. However, in MENA authoritarian contexts, we know little about these dynamics because current studies do not fully account for (1) the composition and variation among the members of protest groups as well as in the regime and (2) the groups that did not gain visibility at the national level or engage in visible public activities (i.e. street protests). Members of the Royal Court in Jordan, for example, considered the Free Assembly as a major threat to its power because leaders of the group had previous experience working with many high officials in the regime and knew a lot about the corruption and problems among the regime leadership. The group also had the financial resources to sustain its activities given the members' local land and financial assets; and also the support of the public because many notable former public officials were part of the group. Yet, the group was not always publicly visible at the national level— and never at the regional or global level. This is in part because the group did not "appear" as a typical Arab Spring protest group: it did not participate in street demonstrations like those witnessed in Egypt or Tunisia, and was comprised of both young and old members that did not collectively map onto images of the Arab Spring as youth-driven. However, it is also because internal power dynamics among the groups' members—what Schwartz (1988) describes as internal oligarchies—led to divided allegiances, lack of information-sharing, and mistrust that undermined the groups' cohesion and led to its overall dismantlement.

What a scholar might call success or failure at the national or regional level may not necessarily capture the multiple factors within protest groups and their environments that led to these visible manifestations of their actions as a result. Concepts like 'nation,' 'class' and even 'Islam' that are used to study social protests during the Arab Spring and in the MENA region generally also "have no 'objective' existence or transhistorical essence...they are inherently problematic and should always be disaggregated, localized and contextualized" (Beinin and Vairel 2013: 9; also see Alini and Bijan 2012;

Baylouny 2011; Marteu 2009; Pearlman 2011). Arab Spring protest groups' perceived impact—or lack thereof—subsequently requires more consideration and elaboration beyond national and regional level analyses; and beyond visible indicators such as street protests and maintenance of status quo leadership. Relatedly, the overall lack of clarity and consensus among scholars on what constitutes success or failure during the Arab Spring suggests that an alternative metric or concept would be more useful to analyze protest dynamics both during and beyond the stated Arab Spring period of 2011-2013. As Lipsky (1968) argued, protest is a political *process,* suggesting that actions from the Arab Spring period are informed by pre-Arab Spring events and relations that still affect and shape politics today.

The culmination of the latter issues represent some of the main shortcomings of contemporary social movement scholarship generally. Social movement theories are often critiqued for falling short of explaining political and social change (McAdam et al. 1996). Success and failure are ambiguous, stretched out concepts throughout this literature; and what is perceived as success for one group could be perceived as failure to another. William Gamson in his book Strategy of Social Protest (1990) attempted to remedy these shortcomings by comprehensively identifying successful social movements from unsuccessful ones through studying movements in the U.S. between the years 1800-1945. He argued that successful social movements are more likely to succeed if they pursue single issues, know when and how to use disruptive actions, and develop a high level of organization and homogeneity at the appropriate time. However, this approach focuses mainly on internal variables, and perceives movements as if they are excluded from the surrounding political and social environments.

McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001) in their book *Dynamics of Contention* discuss a more complicated model to study collective action. They argued that "similar mechanisms and processes operate across the whole range of contentious politics" and explain that using a comparative approach to look at fifteen cases of political contention, ranging from the French revolution to the collapse of the Soviet Union, is one way to more fully account for causal mechanisms and processes that shape social movement outcomes. While this work is an attempt to elaborate how events and episodes within social movements may relate across movements that otherwise may not seem comparable, they bring radical and moderate movements under the same umbrella and use the same approach to analyze them in ways

that do not fully account for the nuance between these movements and how it shapes our understandings and definitions of movements' success and failure. More work is needed to elaborate this project by discussing these micro-variables and episodes, but in ways that more fully take into consideration how movements function and decline given their context (and relations within that context as this project strives to achieve). For example, related scholarly work calls for studying the level of fit of the demands of a movement with the structure of the bureaucratic apparatus/regime, or when bureaucrats see a movement's goals as in line with their own goals (Amenta and Young 1999; Wisler and Giugni 1996).[5]

Applying RMT, PPT and Framing to study protest groups' trajectories within the same authoritarian context in the present study subsequently enriches these studies and frameworks in ways that could contribute to better definitions of these success and failure concepts. At the same time, how these frameworks expose or vary in explaining how intra-state phenomena versus cross-national phenomena shape protest group trajectories highlights important new indicators that should be considered and incorporated into understandings of "resources," "political opportunity," or "framing," to name a few. In this study, for example, I find that local circumstances, namely local socioeconomic class hierarchies, tensions between urban and local populations, and the contentious history of Palestinian-Jordanians in the country matter and shape groups' resources, regime links, framing, and assessment of political opportunity. Overall, applying these frameworks at the local level highlights that the role of the regime is complex and not always uniform; reframing the regime as comprised of multiple actors that interact in comparable, but also diverging ways with protest groups.

1.3.2. Assessing Jordan's Arab Spring through Democratization Studies Frameworks

Theoretical approaches and frameworks from comparative authoritarianism and democratization studies have also been used to explain social change developments in Jordan and in the Middle East both during and prior to the Arab Spring in the region.

---

[5] For example, McCammon et al. (2001) finds that successful outcomes are likely to be achieved when elites perceive movement demands as legitimate due to changing social or political environments.

Like SM approaches, the Middle East was long thought of in authoritarian exceptionalism terms. While regimes fell and began to implement democratic reforms in places like Latin America and the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the Middle East regimes largely remained status quo. Huntington describes the Middle East as missing what he calls this third wave of democracy: "a group of transitions from nondemocratic to democratic regimes that occur within a specified period of time and that significantly outnumber transitions in the opposite directions during that period of time" (1991: 15). One of his central claims was that Islam in the region undergirds and has legitimized authoritarian rule; part of the reason that the region "missed" this third wave. Others have argued that oil wealth has prevented social change and the maintenance of authoritarian rule because it "provides rulers with revenue that does not depend on the consent of the population (Ross 2001 ctd. from Haggard and Kaufman 2016). However, the Arab Spring brought new attention to the region and exposed the limits of these explanations; as scholars tried to make sense of the massive protest events in what they saw were relatively powerful regime contexts.

Scholars often point to high rates of unemployment, the youth bulge, and the role of social media as factors that motivated individuals to go to the streets in countries like Egypt and Tunisia (Al-Shammari and Willoughby 2018; also see Costello, Jenkins and Aly 2015). As Przeworski et al. (2000) posits, bad economic situations will threaten leadership in both authoritarian and non-authoritarian contexts. This argument has been used to explain why developments in Egypt "worked" (i.e. the youth bulge, high unemployment) in terms of putting pressure on the government to replace Mubarak. This body of research suggests that the Arab Spring had a positive impact—at least initially and at the regional level. Some scholars even posited that the Arab Spring represents a new "wave" of democratization (Gunitsky 2018).

Others, however, are less optimistic about the effects of the Arab Spring on the region. Most of this research considers the ways in which regimes were able to maintain power and prevent the protests from changing the political status quo. In these studies, scholars approach the Arab Spring as a case of authoritarian learning. They focus on the authoritarian tactics to preserve stability during times of "contentious politics" along with ways in which these tactics and their associated policy developments

have "diffused" across borders between regimes accordingly (Della Porta and Tarrow 2011; Franklin 2009; Geddes et al. 2014; Heydeman and Leenders 2011; Josua and Edel 2015; Lynch 2014; McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2011; Tilly and Tarrow 2007; Weyland 2010). This model of diffusion situates authoritarian learning as a regional rather than a global process. Authoritarian responses to the Arab Spring are understood as "temporally and spatially clustered" from this perspective (Haggard and Kaufmann 2016: 136). However, because this research focuses on the regional level to assess authoritarian responses to the Arab Spring, it does not always account for how variations between regimes in the region also contribute to particular responses to protests. This literature also tends to focus on the cases of Tunisia and Egypt as representative of the Arab Spring's impact regionally (for an important exception see, Brownlee, Masoud, and Reynolds 2015).

Research that does begin to account for regime variation in MENA acknowledges how different regime structures (in terms of variables related to the regime such as the role and independence of the military; if the regime is considered "hybrid") led to different leadership and institutional outcomes at the national level (i.e. leadership change, policy reforms) as a result of Arab Spring events (Brownlee et al. 2015). However, in these models, the regime is often framed as a monolithic actor. It is not clear how protest groups interacted with different groups within the regime apparatus and how these interactions shaped regime responses to protestors' demands. Relatedly, protest groups are considered as one collective group in these approaches. We know little about the different groups of protestors within the same authoritarian context; and how or why regime actors interacted differently with these groups. Yet, as this present study shows, protest groups within the same country experienced different trajectories because of how local circumstances such as socioeconomic hierarchies and urban-rural population tensions shaped their interactions with regime actors.

We also do not know much from these models about the protest groups that did *not* engage in public demonstrations and how their interactions with the regime shaped their trajectories. Rather, the Arab Spring is largely thought to be driven from "the streets," even though scholars of democratization studies have longed discussed the role of elites in driving democratic change (Przeworski et al. 2000; O'Donnell et al. 1986) . The FA, for example, did not engage in street protests, but still elicited regime

responses given that the group's leaders formerly held important positions within the regime and offered a vision for a future democratic political scene in Jordan that was considered a viable alternative to the current political leadership. More attention is subsequently needed to account for these sometimes invisible developments off the streets in how they shaped protest group-regime interactions during the Arab Spring. More attention is relatedly needed to how and why protest groups within the same authoritarian context vary in their trajectories at the local level to more fully understand the various effects of the Arab Spring at the national or regional level.

What is meant by "democracy" and the factors that contribute to its development in authoritarian contexts has also been a central debate in studies of the Arab Spring and in the field of democratization studies more broadly. Definitions that describe democracy as the presence of elections and legislatures are increasingly critiqued given that such mechanisms in authoritarian contexts can be used to maintain the authoritarian rule status quo. The role of international actors has largely been thought to positively influence and promote democratic transitions in authoritarian contexts. Yet, scholars also highlight how democratic countries and "international influences can push democracy along," but can also "impede it" (Haggard and Kaufman 2016: 137; also see Boix 2011). These arguments are particularly important to think about in authoritarian contexts like Jordan during the Arab Spring where (1) the regime used elections and short-term legislative policy change to appear as open to reform to appeal to citizens as well as the international community; and (2) where bilateral and multilateral aid—notably from Western democracies—was used to prop up the country's civil society in ways that encouraged the regime status quo. In this study, for example, Sadaqa, was funded by an international donor to pursue a social change goal in light of the Arab Spring. However, the group had to frame its platform in a way that appealed to the donor (single issue and something that could be "achievable" in one year's time under the present regime). These developments highlight how activists must navigate a particular ambiguous political landscape influenced by actors at multiple levels (local, national and international) to pursue goals of social change. Western actors' involvement during the Arab Spring in Jordan is critical to consider in how it shaped social movement trajectories, civil society development, and regime power as well.

These studies further tend to look at the period of the Arab Spring between 2011-2013. These studies do not necessarily think about how protest groups' trajectories during this period continue to have effects for political organizing today.

1.3.3 Conclusion: Researching Jordanian and MENA political change moving forward

The culmination of this scholarship has contributed to more elaborate understandings of social change in the Middle East and has encouraged studies to rethink previous authoritarian exceptionalism claims. However, throughout this literature, the regime is still considered the "game changer" who controls the protest activities. The regime is ultimately thought to win whether through repression of protest activities, or by making the masses believe that it is creating democratic progress by delivering partial cosmetic reforms (Vogt 2011). The perspective of these analyses only shifts to that of "the movement" within the context of cross-national analyses to compare regime strategies accordingly (one movement in country X in relation to another movement in country Y due to similar authoritarian or political contexts, for example). Protest groups in turn are reduced to how they affect or relates to regime responses, and we know little about how regime actors may vary in their interactions over time and with different protest groups within the same authoritarian context. In turn, current scholarship and explanations of the Arab Spring may not fully grasp the multitude of local circumstances that shape protest trajectories, including interactions with regime actors. As this study shows, local circumstances such as socioeconomic hierarchies, tensions between urban and local populations, and the contentious history of Palestinian-Jordanians in the country shape protests groups' trajectory in terms of resources, regime links, framing, and assessment of political opportunity.

1.4 Research Methodology

1.4.1 Guiding Research Question

This project focuses on the following research question: What factors explain variation among protest groups' trajectories, who advocate for social and policy change within the same authoritarian context? I specifically examine what factors explain variation between three different protest groups' trajectories who advocate for social and policy change in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The explanatory

factors I study are: resources, regime links, framing, and assessment of political opportunity. The three groups I study are the Free Assembly (FA), the Liberation National Social Group (LNSG), and Sadaqa.

1.4.2. Theoretical Framework

In this study, I test the extent to which SM theories—namely RMT, PPT, and Framing models—are useful to explain protest group trajectories (and variation thereof) within the same authoritarian context of Jordan. I specifically incorporate resources, framing, and assessment of political opportunity as explanatory factors in this study based on these theories. I combine this with democratization studies' attentiveness to the role of the regime in affecting social protest in authoritarian contexts. I include regime links as the fourth explanatory factor that shapes protest group trajectories in this study. I draw upon this combination of theoretical approaches in this study for several reasons.

First, RMT and PPT models have largely been used to examine Arab Spring phenomena in the Middle East context, but this literature tends to employ these frameworks at the cross-national level to compare outcomes between different countries within the region. Applying RMT, PPT and Framing to account for intra-state dynamics of protest groups may subsequently enrich these important studies and contribute to more articulate understandings of why and how Arab Spring protests manifested in the ways they did. At the same time, how these frameworks expose or vary in explaining intra-state phenomena versus cross-national phenomena may highlight important new indicators that should be considered and incorporated into understandings of resources, framing and assessments of political opportunity. In this study, I find that local circumstances critically shape groups' trajectories; how they can mobilize resources and why they frame their platforms in particular ways. Specifically, local socioeconomic class hierarchies, tensions between urban and local populations, and the contentious history of Palestinian-Jordanians in the country are connected and embedded within all four explanatory factors of this study.

Because the regime is considered to play a critical role in preventing political change in authoritarian contexts in the democratization studies literature, I also incorporate "regime links" as an explanatory factor in this study. I keep in mind arguments from this scholarship that highlights how

regimes may be internally divided; and how elite relations shape political reform and democratic transitions (McAdam 1996; Tarrow 1998 ctd. from McCammon et al. 2001). I specifically consider how protest groups' linkages with different groups within the regime matter to their overall trajectories. I incorporate this explanatory factor alongside explanatory factors such as resources and framing to situate the role of the regime in a way that does not prematurely overestimate its power in determining protest group trajectories. As the previous literature review highlights, the power of the regime is often the starting point of analysis for studies of the Arab Spring in democratization studies. Little attention is given to relations within the regime; and how regime actors may interact differently over time and with different protest groups in the same authoritarian context. Incorporating regime links as an explanatory factor alongside groups' resources, framing and assessments of political opportunity is also a way to see how these factors themselves interact and shape one another (i.e. framing strategies affected by regime relations or by resources).

Considering the applicability of these frameworks within localized contexts can subsequently complement previous work on the Arab Spring and may help to determine the extent to which SMT and democratization studies' theories need to be reconfigured to more fully account for the role of local dynamics in shaping protest group trajectories. (See figure 1 regarding the theoretical model designed for purposes of this research)
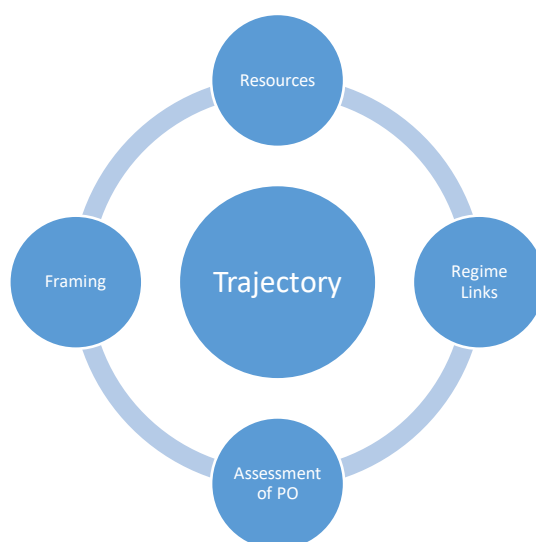
Figure 1. Theoretical Model[6]

1.4.3 Conceptual Framework

Numerous studies of social movements include and discuss the concept of trajectory (As examples, see Giugni 1998; Earl 2000; Burstein and Linton 2002; Meyer 2004; Giugni 2008). Scholars seem to be in a general agreement that social movements can have a wide range of trajectories that should not be reduced to the simple terms of "success" and "failure," as such terms are broad, ambiguous and hard to define (Amenta and Young 1999; Giugni 1998; Jenkins and Form 2005).

I define and use the concept of trajectory in this study to account for the culmination of actions that protest groups use to try to achieve their intended goals. These actions also include reactions to, or negotiations of, unexpected events or changes in relations within the group or with external actors. Protest groups' trajectories are products of relations and interactions that can change over time and are shaped by a groups' resources, organizational development, group membership, framing, public support, mandate and ideology, assessment of political opportunity, relationships with regime ranks, and regime responses to the group. Based on recurring themes from preliminary exploratory research for this project, I focus on four of these factors to explain protest groups' trajectories in Jordan in this

---

[6] Concepts used in this model are further explained in the Conceptual Framework section

study. I specifically consider how resources, regime links, framing, and assessment of political opportunity shaped the trajectories of the FA, LNSG, and Sadaqa.

Trajectory has the potential to serve as an important analytic concept to more fully understand protest group dynamics at the sub- national, national, regional, and even global levels. When we consider how the term trajectory is used in other fields, or by its definition linguistically, for example, the term captures the fact that an object's movement through space—it's path—is shaped by the object's external environment in relation to the object itself. However, the object's structure may shape, and be shaped by its interaction with the external environment as well. For example, a paper plane will fly in a certain path based on how it is built, but also based on the air—and changes within the air space (that can also affect the structure of the plane)—around it. In the case of a protest group, its internal composition is relational to its external environment; and their interaction or relation shapes the path the group takes to achieve its intended goals. External-internal relations between the object—or in this case the protest group—and its environment are not always binary and distinct from one another; and are ever-changing through their interactions over time.

Like the concept of career in studies of intergenerational mobility, the concept of trajectories is to describe protest groups actions as sequential and relational. Career is used as a concept to describe and account for the sequence of jobs persons hold over their working lives (Kalleberg and Mouw 2018: 287). Careers are situational and often involve both upward and downward mobility at different points of one's working life. These points of mobility are not always consistent or predictable ("they differ in their orderliness"); and can vary within groups that may look demographically similar or hold comparable skill sets. Moreover, scholars consider both structural and individual factors as shaping careers. Likewise, trajectories as a concept allows us to think about protest group decisions as sequences of actions that are situational, and informed by both internal group factors as well as the structures in which the group operates.

In this way, we can account for variation between groups at the intra-state level; and begin to assess what other explanatory factors may need to be incorporated (or how present explanatory factors

may need revised) to more fully assess why and how protest groups are able to reach (or not) their intended goals in authoritarian contexts and perhaps other contexts more generally as well.

My four explanatory factors related to protest groups' trajectories in this study are measured in the following ways:

Resources: I base my definition on how resources is defined by SM scholars in the literature review section. In this study, I account for how groups' monetary, human resources, and organization resources shape groups' trajectories. I consider how each of these three elements of resources are "strong" (abundant, easy to access) or "weak" (lacking, not easy to access).

Regime links: In this study, I account for how groups interact with different actors that are part of the regime covertly (secret or private meetings or message exchanges) and publicly (regime repression, statements about the group or regime). I consider how each group interacts with the following sub-groups of the regime: the royal court, the security apparatus the ministries, and the parliament. (See figure 1)
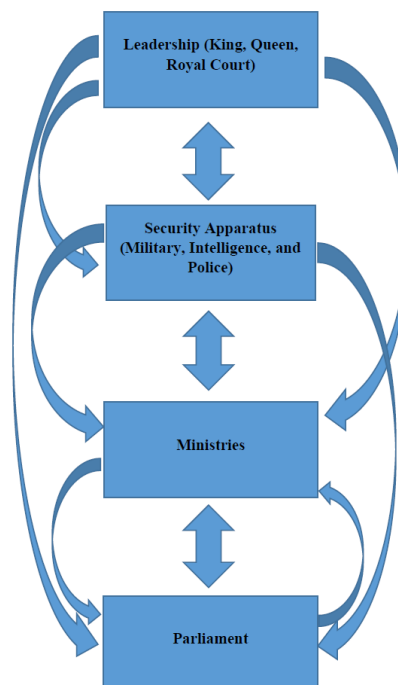
Figure 2. Regime Layers in Jordan

Framing: I look at groups' stated platforms and goals to assess their framing strategy based on definitions of framing from SM literature. I assess whether the group employs a platform that is inclusive (appealing to all Jordanians), semi-inclusive (appealing to most Jordanians); or exclusive (specifically targeting a certain group of Jordanians as their support base). I also assess how they describe the regime as part of their public framing strategy (critical, semi-critical, and not critical). Assessment of political opportunity: I look at how groups explain why they formed and engaged in particular actions to reach their intended goals. I look at how they point to international or regional events like the Arab Spring (strongly influencing, partly influencing or having no influence) to explain their actions as well as domestic or local events.

As this study shows, local circumstances related to socioeconomic hierarchies, urban-rural population divides, the tenuous history of Palestinians in the country affect all of these factors: the ways in which groups approach and negotiate how they can use their resources; how and why they interact with particular regime actors at some points versus others; why they frame their platform to appeal to different local groups; and why they choose to engage in public protest actions at different times versus others.

1.4.4. Research Design

This study uses a qualitative approach to study the trajectories of the FA, LNSG and Sadaqa. I draw upon process-tracing methodology to guide my data collection and to answer my research question.

The process tracing approach encourages case study methods as a way to explore causal mechanisms of political phenomena in an in-depth manner; to subsequently strengthen how causal relationships between variables are understood generally (Bennett and Checkel 2014; Bennett and George 1997). While there are certain technical pitfalls to its application, one of the best-developed interpretations of this approach that fits complex authoritarian contexts is Oisín Tansey's (2007), 'Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for Non-probability Sampling.' Tanseys' adaptation of the process-tracing approach argues that non-probability sampling, and more specifically targeted, key informant interviews, are important to include in any study that uses process-tracing, given the fact that the latter approach is designed to "incorporate attention to the causal processes at work in political

life....examining the operation of causal mechanisms in detail [...] in order to gather rich detail about the thoughts and attitudes of key elites concerning the central issues of the research project" (3-4; 6). As Tansey notes, "The aim with process tracing is not to draw a representative sample of a larger population of political actors that can be used as the basis to make generalization about the full population, but to draw a sample that includes the most important political players that have participated in the political events being studied" (2). Tansey specifically calls for non-probability sampling within process tracing to: (1) corroborate what has been established from other sources; (2) establish what a set of people think; (3) make inferences about a larger populations' characteristics/decisions; and (4) reconstruct an event or set of events.

This is particularly important for the case of protest group trajectories within authoritarian contexts. While document analysis is central to process-tracing (and is also included in this project), using documents as the only source of information to achieve the four latter goals within Jordan is problematic—as Tansey expects—for many reasons. First, public speech, the media, and publications of all sorts are censored and monitored by the government; this includes the country's archives (and access to thereof). Second and relatedly, government datasets are sometimes tainted (often due to limited resources to collect the data or due to political interests). As Tansey suggests,

> "One of the strongest advantages of elite interviews is that they enable researchers to interview first-hand participants of the processes under investigation, allowing for researchers to obtain accounts from direct witnesses to the events in question. While documents and other sources may provide detailed accounts, there is often no substitute for talking directly with those involved and gaining insights from key participants. The nature of interviewing also allows interviewers to probe their subjects, and thus move beyond written accounts that may often represent an official version of events, and gather information about the underlying context and build up to the actions that took place" (2007:8).

This study therefore and primarily draws upon interviews and ethnographic data to understand protest group trajectories in Jordan. Document analysis is also included, which provides a way for this study to consider how and why conceptualizations of protest group trajectories may converge or diverge

among group members and official or public accounts. Furthermore, this process tracing approach allows this project to account for people's beliefs and attitudes and how they inform individuals' interpretations—and responses to or involvement with—protest groups in Jordan.

Because limited theoretical and empirical work has addressed the variation between social movement trajectories within the Middle East, and at the intra-state level more particularly, this research is designed to be open and exploratory to account for multiple factors that may relate or shape groups' trajectories; and the variations they experience in achieving their stated goals.

In order to examine the variations of the groups' trajectories, the researcher collected ethnographic data as a member of one of the groups. I also conducted semi-structured interviews with members of the groups in Jordan. The researcher conducted 43 interviews in total (12 interviews with members of Sadaqa, 13 interviews with members of the FA, and 18 interviews with members of the LNSG). The researcher combined this ethnographic and interview data with publications from the three groups. Specifically, the researcher consulted the groups' "manifestos," or the document that articulates the group's main platform and goals, and several documents and reports highlighting their visions and demands. These documents, along with the interview and ethnographic data were used to examine the trajectories of the three groups. This research contributes critical, unique qualitative data that is extremely difficult to retrieve in authoritarian contexts like Jordan where the regime has been reluctant to allow such in-depth research on these protests. I provide details regarding the data collection process and subsequent analysis in the following sections.

1.4.4a. Semi-structured interviews

The researcher's sample group for this project includes individuals who are or were active in three protest groups. The researcher used personal connections and key informants to establish relationships with members of these groups. The key informants were selected by the researcher based on their public and activist roles within protest groups because of their role in negotiating with the protest group or with the regime. As Tansey notes, "By interviewing key participants in the political process, analysts can gain data about the political debates and deliberations that preceded decision making and action

taking, and supplement official accounts with first-hand testimony" (7). This is particularly important in order to account for the trajectory of these groups in the most comprehensive way possible.

Interviews were conducted in Arabic. They took place at a location of the participant's choice. Interviews lasted approximately one to two hours, and the researcher used both audio and handwritten notes to record the interview. However, there were many cases in which the interviewee did not want any record of the meeting, so the researcher recorded the notes following the end of the interview. Throughout the interview process, the researcher took into consideration of how members of protest groups discussed resources, the group's goals and platform, and the group's relationship with the regime. During the interviews, the researcher was also attune to the ways that the individual interpreted the group's trajectory through their verbal comments as well (i.e. their direct descriptions or activities of the group's path towards achieving their goal), but also through the ways they talk about their own actions, responses to, and relations with protest groups, regime actors, other groups within and beyond Jordan, to name a few. Moreover, evidence of thematic repetition within the interview data informs how the researcher reports factors that shape the group's trajectory beyond resources, the goal and platform, and the group's relation with the regime.

1.4.4b. Ethnography

As a political activist who was involved in one of the three groups that is part of this study (the FA), I use my own personal observations and records in part to complement the data gathered from the semi-structured interviews. I collected this data between 2011 to 2013. I am aware that my own involvement within the movement has both pros and cons in terms of identifying the factors shaping the group's overall trajectory (i.e. able to know how the group worked internally, but perhaps also bias given my own personal investment in the group as well). However, I find that this data is particularly helpful in accounting for the factors that shape the variation between the three groups' trajectory; and is also helpful in accounting for the regime's interaction with protest groups (given that public data on this is limited, if not virtually absent).

1.4.4c. Document Analysis

I also collected and analyzed documents related to the protest groups, or their respective members, from the following sources: national newspapers, online news sources and blogs, personal blogs (from the protest group members or from others writing about the group), personal Facebook and Twitter pages (discussing the groups), the group's manifestos (their public platform and goals), and the group's other documents and public statements. I also consulted reports published in Jordan-based think tank venues (such as Centre for Strategic Studies, Phenix Center, and Identity Center), as well as the King's discussion papers that talk about political and social reform in Jordan.

The groups' manifestos and reports were particularly helpful and useful for triangulating the findings generated from the semi-structured interviews (as a way to examine the reliability and replicability of the interview data). While individual interviews allow the researcher to probe individual perceptions of protest group trajectories, content analysis of these documents allow the researcher to explore how these individual perceptions may be reflected (or not) within these group platforms and agendas; and how this may also reflect tensions, key relations, or other factors that need to be accounted for in analyses of the group's trajectory generally.

1.4.4d. Data Analysis

After collecting data for this project, I transcribed my interview data, ethnographic observations and related notes from the documents. I then conducted a content analysis of this data to begin to account for the factors shaping the trajectories of the three protest groups. I specifically looked for at least three themes when I first started my coding, namely: discussion(s) of resources; the group's goals and platform; and discussions or evidence of the group's relationship with regime actors. Because process-tracing also strives to encourage researchers to find their information and these from the field as well, I also coded for themes that were increasingly and evidently repetitive throughout the data. For example, in the case of FA, I found that group members' often talked about joining the group in ways that seemed to suggest that their motivations to join the group was in part because they felt "left out" of political life; not always because of the group's stated manifesto for political and social change. I was also sensitive in this process to how narratives between interviewees varied in private versus public settings

(and how this compared to the public document data as well). Chapters two, three and four of this dissertation highlight some of the findings from this data collection; including a discussion on how the groups' trajectories compare, but also diverge, as a result of these factors.

1.4.4e. Why study Jordan? Justification for Case Selection

Jordan provides a fruitful case study to examine protest group trajectories for several key reasons. First, and like other MENA countries during the Arab Spring, Jordan was expected to experience major uprisings and political change given its high unemployment and rising levels of poverty. Yet, the country experienced minimal levels of protest in comparison to neighboring countries; and even the most radical groups in the country called for reform, rather than a complete change of power. Yet, we would expect that Jordanians would engage in more protest group activities for a number of reasons both during the Arab Spring as well as in the present day.

First, while not always captured in scholarship, Jordanians have a strong history of protest, even under martial law and in an authoritarian state that has led to changes in economic policies and labor laws, as just a few examples. From the national level, the civil society appears to be robust; and heavily funded by international actors that promote democratic transitions and related ideologies. Relatedly, economic and demographic conditions are comparable to the countries in the region— such as Tunisia and Egypt—that witnessed major uprisings: Jordan's unofficial unemployment rate is around 30 percent, the country's youth population (under 30) is around 70 percent. Understanding the trajectories of protest group's within the Jordan context may subsequently provide important insights into how intra-state dynamics link, if at all, to national and regional outcomes; or how SMT can be reconfigured to more fully account for how certain factors shape protest movements in the first place. The following paragraphs provide more information about this particular case study of Jordan.

1.4.4e.1. Jordan Pre-Arab Spring

Only months after its independence from the British occupation in 1946, Jordan entered what could be described as two "difficult" decades politically, socially and even economically. First, Jordan was engaged alongside other Arab countries in the 1948 and 1967 wars against Israel (Massad 2012: 11).

The fighting itself was not the only "difficult" part for Jordan: overnight, Jordan's population more than doubled with displaced Palestinians fleeing for sanctuary. Even today, Palestinians constitute 50 percent or more of the Jordanian population. In response to this drastic demographic change as a result of the Six Day War in 1967, Jordan's leadership declared a state of emergency. This in effect banned political parties and limited freedom of speech and other public freedoms. Many activists were behind bars in days. This state of emergency was in effect for 22 year until it finally ended in 1989. This was largely due to Habbet Nisan—the April Uprising. Starting in the south of Jordan, thousands of people took to the streets across the Kingdom mainly in response to the hike in prices on fuel due to a deal between Jordan and the International Monetary Fund to reschedule the Kingdom's debt. The government used force against the people and scores of activists were killed, injured and imprisoned during clashes with the regime forces. What started out as a call for economic reform developed into calls for political reform as well, including the abolishment of the state of emergency, expansion of public freedoms and the sacking of the government (i.e. a council of ministers appointed by the Hashemite regime leadership). In order to maintain power status quo in the country, the then- Hashemite leader King Hussein conceded to Habbet Nisan's political reform demands (Ryan 1998, 54). However, the limited effect of these reforms on the economic situation among the Jordanian public led to another iteration of the April Uprising in 1996 called Thawratu Al- Khubz, "The Bread Revolution" (Andoni and Schwedler 1996: 41). Again, Hashemite leadership used political reforms (i.e. sacking the government by a royal decree) in an attempt to quell the opposition movements and maintain the political status quo in the country.

Several mini movements occurred in the early 2000s as well, notable for the fact that movement organizers began linking and politicizing these aforementioned economic grievances vis-a-vis critiques and publicly questioning of the legitimacy of the Hashemite leadership in Jordan. While most of these movements—often led by port workers, teachers and military retirees—were largely contained by the regime, several gained momentum, particularly in 2006 and later in 2009, establishing the roots of a protest culture in Jordan and paving the way for more protest and organized movements in the Arab spring era. For example, Since King Abdullah II came to power in 1999, he and his appointed

governments have adapted neoliberal economic approaches (Yom 2014: 231). Privatization has been a major component of these approaches, causing fear among Jordanians particularly those in the public sector about their future employment and well-being (not to mention how these privatization approaches also reminded the public of the 1989 IMF reforms that led to economic hardship among the masses). In 2006, the daily workers of the Ministry of Agriculture were the first group to call for a protest when the ministry denied them permanent contracts. This initial movement gained momentum, culminating into larger protests in 2009 in the Port of Al-Aqaba (Tell 2015: 6). Riot police violently cracked down on the peaceful protestors, which heightened public sympathy towards the workers' demands and motivated more groups to engage in similar protests and call for economic reforms. In another related example, teachers went on strike in 2010 in order to pressure the government to grant them more job security, and to allow them to have a syndicate (Vogt 2011: 62). The schools in Jordan were paralyzed and the regime was forced to submit to most of their demands.

It is also important to note that throughout its rule that regime leadership in Jordan (the Hashemites) has fashioned itself as the patron and the guardian of its society. One critical component that has allowed the Hashemite rule to leverage—and legitimize—this claim among the public is through distinctions between "official" government-sanctioned histories of the country's independence, and alternative, oral historical accounts of the people and developments within the territory. According to Hashemite accounts of Jordan, there is no Jordan without the Hashemites (Oudat and Alshboul 2010). Pre-Hashemite history is omitted from most official records, including everything from government documents to student textbooks. The official history of Jordan focuses on the contemporary; and repeatedly describes the ruling regime as the founders, builders and developers of Jordan. For example, government history describes independence in terms of liberating the people of Jordan without accounting for the multiple waves of resistance and opposition towards Hashemite rule (see Alon 2006). Yet, in the north of Jordan, Jordanian tribes led by Shiekh Klaib Al-Shraydeh defied and fought then-Hashemite ruler Emir Abdulla I in the revolution of Al-Koura in 1921 and then again in 1923. In another case, protests and resistance erupted in Jordan's Balqa region in 1923. The British Air Force, who supported the Hashemites' rule, quelled these movements and forced many of the opposition fighters

to sign truces or agree to alliances with the Hashemites (Alon 2006, 7-10). However, accounts of these movements are omitted—and in some cases even banned—from circulation within the Kingdom today (For example, see Faqir 1997). Banning these narratives has in turn allowed Hashemite leadership to reinforce and legitimize Jordan's history of one that is collectively tied to their rule (Oudat and Alshboul 2010). The absence of a unifying national identity has led to a great level of confusion among the people in their sense of identity and belonging.

It is challenging for activists to subsequently mobilize the masses based on ideas related to what it means to be Jordanian when the concept of Jordanian itself is not clear among the activists. This is also connected to the fact that the relationship and history between the Jordanian and Palestinian people is also contested and used by the regime to maintain power, and has discouraged Palestinian Jordanians (i.e. those Palestinians who were displaced either in 1948 or 1967 but now have Jordanian citizenship) from participating in political activism. The regime in part has historically orchestrated this divide between Palestinian Jordanians and native Jordanians through electoral law representation that favors native Jordanians, public sector job opportunities exclusively reserved for native Jordanians, and tribal fronts (i.e. land grants) and government handouts also exclusively for native Jordanians (See Massad 2012 for a discussion of this). As a result and despite so-called Jordanian "citizenship," many Palestinian Jordanians still consider themselves as refugees and long to go back to their original homeland. For them, Jordan is a transition country—not a home—and thus they do not feel obligated to be involved in political life in the country despite living in the country for decades.

The events of Black September in 1970—when the Jordanian Army brutally cracked down on Palestinian guerilla organizations—is also still vivid in the minds of both Palestinians and Jordanians (See Gallets 2015). Jordan, once again, feels far from a "home" for many of the Palestinian Jordanians (not to mention that if they participate in protest movements, they may be easily labeled as unpatriotic or seeking to infiltrate and destroy Jordan by covert means due to this history of Black September).

1.5 Significance of Research

This research offers new insights into Jordan's Arab Spring period. Specifically, Jordan was predicted to undergo major reforms and political change during the Arab Spring era, but the regime maintained—and even increased—its power in the country. To explain the latter, this study examined the trajectories of three protest groups in the country during the Arab Spring. It exposes how protest groups are similar, but also diverge in their trajectories when assessed at the intra-state level. While these variations are explained by the four factors measured in this study (resources, regime links, framing, and assessments of political opportunity), it is clear that local circumstances relate and shape these four explanatory factors.

This study is significant for the following reasons. First, it demonstrates how critical it is to consider local circumstances in future assessments of the Arab Spring in Jordan, and perhaps in other MENA contexts as well. Research on the Arab Spring generally focuses on state-to-state comparative models in both social movement theoretical approaches and in democratization studies. Because this study moves beyond the nation-state scalar level to examine diversity among and between social protest groups within the same authoritarian context, it captures the variation in social movement trajectories within authoritarian contexts that have not yet been fully examined through cross-national frameworks. This study suggests that incorporating variables related to the local context as explanatory factors of Arab Spring developments is critical in future research. This study's approach could be subsequently applied to study the role of local circumstances in shaping protest group trajectories in other Arab Spring countries.

Controlling for the state further allows this research to more carefully trace protest groups' relations with the regime. This is important to move away from conceptualizations of the regime as an all-encompassing actor; and rather see how specific interactions between regime and protest group actors relate to protest group trajectories within authoritarian contexts. Future analyses in both SM and democratization studies research should subsequently think about regime-protest group interactions and

relations in more nuanced terms in Jordan or in MENA authoritarian contexts more broadly; and consider the regime as a culmination of actors rather than a single actor.

Empirically, this research also elaborates current understandings of protest group dynamics within the Middle East through thorough and detailed fieldwork with three protest groups in the context of Jordan. This study provides unique, rich, empirical qualitative data from in-depth interviews and participant observations with protest groups that is extremely difficult and risky to access. Unlike other studies on the Arab Spring, this research is based on data that actually traces and interacts with the protest group members over a long and continuous period of time. I collected data about political activism in real time during the height of the protests in Jordan through participant observations. I also used key activist informants to learn more about the three groups' trajectories during and after the height of the Arab Spring protests. My qualitative approach is further critical given that what we know about Jordan from national datasets or public news and information about social protest in Jordan are tainted and censored by the government. This research can subsequently complement and elaborate present analyses with this unique data.

2. Chapter Two: Failure to Launch: The Story of the Free Assembly, a Political Reform Group in Jordan

2. 1. Chapter Summary

This chapter focuses on the factors and processes that affected the trajectory of a reformative political group in Jordan called The Free Assembly (FA). The group's main goal was to establish a political party to promote comprehensive reform in the Kingdom. The FA was considered one of the most well-resourced protest groups to emerge during the Arab Spring in Jordan. It had strong financial assets, established social networks throughout the Kingdom, and members with knowledge and experience working within Jordanian bureaucracies and regime structures. Despite these assets, and what looked like a promising start to achieving their goal of establishing a political party, the FA was dismantled in one year's time. So what explains why the FA fell short of its goal, and ultimately "failed to launch"?

Through my data collection, I find that the group was co-opted by regime actors: Several key founding members of the group were offered high appointments in the government and related ministries in order to quell the development of the group. However, the FA's cooptation cannot be fully explained by regime strategies alone. Rather the FA's "resource curse"—its strong monetary, human, and organizational resources and regime links—allowed the FA to build its membership base quite fast. Yet, these resources that allowed the group to initially flourish in its establishment and recruitment phase also created pockets of mistrust among members, leading to disorganization and tensions internally. Specifically, issues of local socioeconomic class distinctions and tensions between urban and rural members were central to these problems. Some FA members felt elite leadership was out of touch with the Jordanian public; and the concentration of work and meetings in the capital of Amman bred frustration and divisions among members. This trust-distrust pendulum significantly affected

the cohesion and organization internally among the members. This suggests that the relationship between FA's external resources and its effects on its internal group dynamics is significant to analyze in how it informed the FA's trajectory and more specifically its interactions with the regime. This relationship shaped how the regime was able to implement various strategies to target different factions of the group; to exploit these pockets of mistrust and dismantle the FA accordingly.

The case of FA is important because it allows us to more fully unpack regime actions and relations with social movements in authoritarian contexts at the intra-country level, and move beyond explanations of regime actions as uniform or uni-directional. Relatedly, while one might expect strong external resources to lead to more positive trajectories of political groups, the case of the FA is indicative of how such resources may also prove to create unexpected challenges for groups given in part their positions locally. Moreover, the case of FA shows how such resources may even position political groups to be more vulnerable to regime interactions and cooptation in authoritarian contexts. However, and while the case of the FA suggests that both the FA and the regime are responsible for the group's ultimate "failure to launch," one must question whether or not the FA truly was intended to pursue political change in the first place. Focusing on the relation between groups' external resources and internal practices and cohesion allows us to more fully understand how and why the regime was able to co-opt the group in the manners that it did. Stated differently, taking this relation into consideration helps to explain how pockets of mistrust developed in the first place; in ways that the regime could exploit in order to dismantle the FA overall.

The first part of this chapter provides a brief background on the creation and establishment of the FA. I then present research and information regarding the FA's initial recruitment phases and development as a political group, specifically discussing how the role of the group's external resources served as a signal of trust for many new members to join. The

following section then discusses the tensions that surfaced within the FA: how "resources" ultimately became a curse that created gossip, tension, mistrust and disorganization in the FA's meeting spaces that were often articulated along class lines. These tensions also affected the group's communication and outreach strategies as well as their overall platform and goals. I then show through interviews with key members, along with personal ethnographic notes and experience as a rapporteur for the FA's political and economic committees, how this trust-mistrust pendulum provided key ways for the regime to intervene into the FA to dismantle the group and end its efforts to establish a political party. In the post-FA period, related data confirms these trends, but also shows the ways in which the FA served as a platform for other needs among the former members; namely to feel a sense of belonging within Jordan's political sphere. I then conclude with how the case of the FA shows how local circumstances related to socioeconomic class distinctions and tensions between urban and rural populations shaped the group's trajectory.

2.2. Who Is the FA?

On December 27, 2011 three well-dressed middle aged men stood on a podium in one of Amman's five star hotels to announce the launch of what they described as a new political group called "The Free Assembly": A group, they said, that would "advocate for establishing a civil state, social, economic and political changes in the Kingdom for Jordanians from various walks of life" (Interview HDH).[7] With memos on the group's platform already distributed to the audience, and reporters scribbling notes and flashing cameras, these "Free Assembly" founders presented the group's vision for reform throughout the Kingdom, supported by numerous well-known figures from Jordan's political, economic, social, and cultural scenes.

---

[7] The researcher coded all interviewees' identities in order to protect the confidentiality and privacy of the respondents and the individuals they mention in their quotations.

Their strategic vision tackled political, economic and social issues.[8] The political vision of the FA was to give power to the people in order to make Jordan a civil state, and to lay the basis for citizenship premised upon the constitution and the rule of law. The group called for the activation of political pluralism and the promotion of partisan action and public freedoms, in addition to the formation of government based on the results of general and fair elections. They also stressed the need for opposition parties as a key element in the national fabric and for local political life; and positioned citizens as the managers of the state and overseers of the peaceful transfer of power.

On the economic front, the group called for strengthening the foundations of the market economy in which the public and private sectors contribute together to production processes that protect the consumer and the product; and abide by established rules of integrity, transparency and good governance. The group rejected schools of thought that called for weakening the role of the state and leaving matters to the invisible hand to correct the economy according to special interests and imported intellectual agendas. Rather, the group called for a return to the strong state system with its anti-monopoly laws and monitoring structure. FA further called for building the state's capacity to protect the national consumer; pointing to the need to restructure the government administration, rationalize public spending, and control public debt.

On the social front, the FA representatives stressed the importance of promoting the values of enlightenment: free thought; freedom of expression; and empowering youth through fair access to education. In terms of the latter, the group specifically pointed out (1) the need to reform the education system in a way that better matches market needs, and (2) eliminate university seat privileges in the current system.

---

[8] Extracted from the speeches of FA members during the launch ceremony on 27 December 2011

While the presentation of such a comprehensive agenda for reform in Jordan was something new in the Jordanian political scene, the men delivering FA's message were not. In fact, and perhaps ironically given their calls for political reform, all three men were well known public figures given their work and relations with the ruling regime: One was a former minister and ambassador; another was the head of several state economic committees and an economic advisor to the king; and the third comes from a family close to the regime and he himself was appointed as a senator by a royal decree. The following paragraphs provide more detail about the FA's platform and its founding membership; and how such leadership and their associated resources ultimately became a double-edged sword that both benefitted—but also undermined—the group's ability to achieve its desired goals.

2.2.1. The FA Platform

The Free Assembly was a reformative, "progressive group with a social democratic ideology" as the members prefer to describe it. The group was a multi-causal movement that advocated for the ideas of establishing a civil state where every Jordanian is equal before the law; they called for freedom, justice and equality. They outlined reform agendas that included everything from "comprehensive reform in the country" and "changing the stagnant political environment," to redistributing the wealth in a fair manner, and combating corruption at the national level. The FA had a manifesto that included 92 objectives that were divided into categories of: policy change (i.e. comprehensive legislation reform, including amending the constitution and changing the electoral law), economic change (i.e. notably tax laws, advocating for protectionism practices), and social change (i.e. social justice, rights for the individual).

The group was striving to achieve a system similar to Western democracies and parliament structures, but also took into consideration local context and aspects such as questions associated with religion and gender; namely:

- Questions related to Palestinian state and Palestinian Jordanians

- FA was supportive of legislative change to allow Jordanian women to pass the Jordanian citizenship to their children

- They did not alienate religious ideologies even though they are secular.

The group wanted to achieve these goals through a political party so they could work within the system. This goal was the same throughout the short life time of the group.

The platform of the FA made a particular emphasis on inclusivity, embracing diversity, and providing an alternative nationalist narrative where all Jordanians are perceived as equals. This emphasis was a way for the FA to signal to Palestinian-Jordanians that they would be welcomed in the group. Given that Jordanians of Palestinian origin comprise an estimated 55 to 70 percent of the country's population, their inclusion in political reform movements—and the FA who was aiming to establish a political party—was critical. Palestinian-Jordanians have largely been excluded from the political life of the country both voluntarily and involuntarily due to their general exclusion from certain public sector positions, military roles and related decision-making processes (for more information also see Ramahi 2015)[9]; something that was done intentionally by the Jordanian regime in order to maintain its power. Some factions of Jordanian society have also been hostile to Palestinian-Jordanians in response to these regime-created narratives; and also because of domestic events such as Black September.

Like many other protest groups in the country, this group further called for reducing the power of the king, although it was not mentioned directly in the group's manifesto.

---

[9] Speculation over the ratio of native Jordanians to Palestinian-Jordanians is a sensitive domestic issue. The Jordanian government tends to skew data of national census and does not reveal the true numbers of the two groups. Until now, it is unclear whether or not the government maintains such statistics.

However, it is also important to note that because FA believed in reforming the system from within, they considered participating in street protests and collective demonstrations as useless exercises that would not move them closer to their goals. The FA failed to establish a political party and were dismantled by June 2013.

2.2.2. The FA's Founding Members

Initially, The FA was comprised of many "elite" members from the upper classes of Jordanian society. "Elite" encompasses many meanings in the Jordan context. First, many of FA's founding members were elite in terms of their economic wealth: access to monetary resources and owners of big offices and villas in some of the most expensive areas of the country's capital. Their elite status was also derived from their high level positions in their respective lines of work (lawyers, politicians, business leaders) and in their families (i.e. their tribal affiliations). Many of them graduated from universities in the United Kingdom and from the United States, another key marker of status in Jordan that often reflects one's financial position as well as political ties to the ruling regime.

While the group originally had limited youth involvement (Interview HDH), the numbers of this latter group expanded significantly in the early months of 2012. Unlike the elite backgrounds of many of the founding members, FA's youth membership represented a wide array of class and social status backgrounds. By the time the FA submitted its application to become a political party in March 2013, the group consisted of over 500 members, representative of various demographic backgrounds from all twelve governorates of the Kingdom. However, because of the group's original elite leadership and the members' associated personal resources, the FA from its start was considered one of the most well-resourced protest groups to emerge during the Arab Spring era in Jordan.

2.3. Decision to Establish the FA

The backdrop of the Arab Spring, along with statements from the regime that were publicly supportive—even if only cosmetically—of political change in Jordan,[10] seemed to indicate that the space and time was ripe for a political party to serve as a mechanism of political change. The culmination of the FA's external resources, and its members' experience working within Jordan's bureaucratic and regime structures, further suggested that FA's goal of creating political reform in Jordan through the establishment of a political party would be plausible (especially in light of these regime statements that were supportive of reform). After all, the founding members had established, strong social networks in all the governorates, economic resources to recruit elite supporters through special events and meetings, and office spaces and materials at their immediate disposal to produce literature about the group and actively connect with the public almost instantly. While FA members initially debated whether to establish a formal body and whether they should distinguish themselves as a civil society or a political party group, they considered these key event developments (the Arab Spring, the regime's public support of reform) indicative that (1) they could use their personal experiences and resources to establish a formal body for their work in a manner that would not be challenged or undermined by regime actors and (2) a political party—rather than a civil society group—

---

[10] For example, the government under the pressure of Jordanian protests led the regime to establish a national dialogue committee and a constitutional reform committee (Hamid and Freer 2011: 3). The national dialogue committee worked on amending major laws, particularly, the electoral law, and the political parties law. Both laws were slightly amended, but no notable change has developed within the political environment in Jordan. Relatedly, the government's constitutional committee delivered 42 constitutional amendments (Muasher 2011), and the regime started to address some of the most well-known corruption cases (even when the corrupt figures are known to be close and loyal to the regime). For example, Khalid Shaheen, a well-known business tycoon for example, was convicted by the State Security Court of bribery in the high-profile $1.2 billion contract scandal to expand the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Co. (JPRC), the kingdom's only oil refinery. Shaheen was sentenced for three years after being found guilty of embezzlement and bribery in the JPRC case along with three other JPRC officials. The Shaheen case was then followed by the trial of prominent security, political, and economic figures, including a trial against the former head of General Intelligence Department (GID), Mohammad Dahabi (Ryan 2011b). However, these cases now appear exceptional, and most activists and reformists point out that these amendments and corruption cases have not reduced the power of the king or security apparatus; and have not moved the Kingdom any closer to democratic structures. However, what is interesting about these dynamics is that the regime even up until today still feels the need to keep promising that these issues are on its agenda and that is serious about reform.

would be considered among the public as a more legitimate and powerful vehicle to achieve major policy changes.

2.3.1. Building the FA: Social Networks and Reputation Resources

In order to achieve their goal of establishing a political party, the FA used its extensive social networks, economic resources, and the reputation of its founding members to implement a comprehensive recruitment process to build its base throughout the country and to reach the necessary 500 member political party registration threshold within fourteen months. Starting in January 2012, the FA used three main strategies to recruit members: person-to-person meetings, governorate visits, and special "get to know the FA" events.

Person-to-Person Meetings

Early members of the group first used personal connections with friends and colleagues to recruit individuals sympathetic to the FA platform in order to build "FA's CV" and move the FA platform forward (Interview HUD). Members would meet with individuals who were already politically interested in pursuing change and reform within the Jordan context. Specifically, members would invite these potential recruits into private spaces such as their personal homes and their offices to ask them about their vision for Jordan and how the FA might be a platform for them to elaborate their vision. After one meeting or so like this, the potential recruit would then be invited by the member to meet with one of the original core members of the FA (one of the original 33 signatories from the FA launch ceremony announcement) in their homes and offices to answer any of their questions or concerns about the group.

The FA used this two-meeting, person-to-person strategy for two strategic and intertwined reasons. First, meeting with potential FA recruits in one-on-one formats and in private, personal spaces signaled to recruits that the FA was committed to developing dialogue and trust between and among its members. Meeting with potential recruits on one-on-one,

conversational bases further showed that the FA wanted to hear their ideas for the party as well; counteracting images of the FA as elitist and demonstrating that the group was a space for everyone's vision of change to be realized. Inviting recruits into personal spaces relatedly signaled that the FA trusted them as individuals and would subsequently trust their roles and contributions within the FA as well. As one former FA remember recalled about his recruitment,

> "The leadership said all the right things a liberal democrat [like me] would want to hear. We will work together to develop the party's platform. The arrangement will be bottom up based; and we will be guided by our constituents. There will be no ultimate leadership, and there will be peaceful transfer of power through internal elections. The whole shebang! It was all music to my ears, and decided to stick around to see if they would walk the walk as well" (Interview LRI).

As this quote suggests, the FA already knew what to say to brand themselves as an inclusive group for the collective good, but their elite status was definitely a factor of skepticism that made some recruits wonder if they could "walk the walk" as well. This one-on-one recruitment strategy was subsequently crucial for the FA to use to counteract any assumptions that the founding members' elite status would shape their approach to reform; and even how they operated as a group internally. By listening to recruits' interests in collective spaces and on equal terms, the FA members could really show they were "bottom up based" with "no ultimate leadership."

Take the story of MLS and his friends, for another example. MLS and his colleagues wanted to develop their own group for social change in Jordan. Facing many obstacles in establishing their own group in the north of the country, they reached out to other groups to see who might share their vision for Jordan. They learned about the FA through a journalist friend who knew one of the founding members of the group (a well-known blogger and lawyer at that

time—known throughout Jordan for his op-eds in one of the biggest newspapers in the country). As MLS recalls,

> "We thought the FA might be the best option to have an impact...we met with the leader, our contact person and several other people. There was no hierarchy, no official leader, but you could tell he was the leader based on his character" (Interview MLS).

As MLS's story suggests, this one-on-one recruitment, was a way for the FA members to show their genuine commitment and passion to political reform in a way that would be impressionable to potential recruits from various demographic backgrounds; and particularly among groups that shared similar visions for social change but came from different socioeconomic strata of Jordanian society.

However, branding the FA as having "no hierarchy" was not always an easy task given the status of the founding members and something that was a constant and present challenge for the group. As another early member recalled,

> "When I first heard about the FA, I was skeptical as I am usually wary of political parties and political activism. In a country like Jordan, such endeavors are either superficial and created to massage the ego of the founder, a front to support an agenda set by the deep state or based on religion. However, after hearing about FA more and seeing the enthusiasm of those who spoke about it (and knowing they had no personal gain in saying what they say) I was tempted to look deeper" (Interview DRF).

This quote highlights the cruciality of FA's recruitment strategy not only given the founding members' elite status, but also how this was in combination with the general, longstanding perception of political parties in Jordan as cosmetic associations to further alternative agendas. To build trust with recruits, the FA founding members had to really show that, they too wanted

to build a political party as a way to make political changes for the benefit of society and not for personal or alternative interests.

What is interesting, however, is that interviewees also noted that the FA founding members' elite status, expertise related to political, economic and social affairs, and their former occupations in high level public office positions (or even during their membership with the FA) were appealing factors that drew them into the group in the first place. As frustration grew among the public, particularly young people who wanted to change the status quo in the country quickly, FA's resources and experience were considered desirable to achieve these ends. Thus, the FA highly appealed to the new recruits:

> "We knew that [because of the people that were in the group, their connections, experience, etc], we could move faster. After a few meetings, we knew we wanted to be a part of the FA, and then collectively build a strategy. We became part of the FA's founding members" (Interview IDO).

In this way, we can see how the FA had to strategically highlight—but also hide—its elite roots to recruit members. The FA's reputation resources can be understood as both a resource, but only if and when the group framed their elite status in terms of expediency and efficiency in navigating Jordan's bureaucracy. However, as the culmination of these examples show, it was not always clear in these one-on-one recruitment meetings how individuals contextualized this elite status among the FA's founding membership, something that would subsequently fuel mistrust among members at a later stage.

The second major reason why the FA used recruitment meetings in one-on-one formats was to build its active membership who would keep the momentum of the FA going day-by-day. The FA wanted to build on its initial trust-building efforts in order to target a diverse group of individuals who would be committed, influential and active in expanding FA's networks geographically throughout the kingdom and among groups of different professional and class

backgrounds. FA managed to recruit key young people who worked with experts in strategizing and producing policy papers that coincide with their vision of change. The FA's recruitment strategy further created strong networks in all twelve governorates of Jordan; at least one contact person in each governorate that was the face of the group. For example, DST was the FAs' focal point in the Tafileh governorate in the south. He was very popular in his area, as he was the governor there, and the locals liked him and trusted him. He was much respected and was able to organize several activities in his area. [11]

One-on-one meetings where individuals were asked if they would like to be one of these active members made recruits feel important and subsequently accountable to the establishment and outcomes of the FA. These personalized meetings framed their active role as critical to whether or not the group could achieve its goal through this process. It also showed that the FA was willing to go to great lengths for its members (i.e. meeting them at places and times convenient for them) for both the benefit of the group and the individual simultaneously. This was also critical to encourage more individuals to join the FA later on; and also meet political party registration policies that require 500 members, seven governorates represented, and ten percent female membership.[12]

The FA also directed its recruitment strategies towards sympathizers, who for one reason or another did not want to be fully involved with political actions, but would be willing to write a public article about the FA's efforts.

---

[11] DST was one of the members who were coopted by the regime. Shortly after dismantling the FA he was appointed as Minister of agriculture. He served as minister in several governments.

[12] According to the Jordanian Political Parties Law 2012, a group of individuals that wanted to establish a political party had to have at least 500 members that represented at least seven governorates with a minimum of five percent of founding members coming from each of the seven governorates. The current political party law has been revised so that groups can register parties more easily (the required number of members has been reduced for example). However, very few groups have registered political parties under this new law.

2.3.2. Governorate Recruitment Visits

While most members at this point lived and worked in Amman, members would use their own social connections with individuals residing outside of Jordan's capital to organize targeted governorate recruitment visits. This was a critical recruitment tactic for the FA given that political parties law in Jordan at that time (2012) required representation of at least seven governorates in the country (i.e. at least five percent representation of at least seven governorates was needed to register a political party). The FA specifically would organize and hold Public Information Sessions in these areas outside of the capital with open question and answer sessions. It is important to note that the FA members would design the information sessions and question and answer portions based on recommendations and guidance from their contact from that governorate. For example, as one interviewee noted:

> "Local connections and contacts knew how to orchestrate it. They knew their areas and governorates very well. The attendance was usually good, and the meetings would take place in Madthafat (the tribal guest houses), cultural centers, or people's personal offices. Having meetings in these spaces was intentional in order to raise the credibility of the group through the FA member from that area" (Interview HID).

In order to ultimately help the FA gain more recruits, the group realized that its local informants would be important in creating spaces that could achieve that goal; to make conversations productive and comfortable within the given demographic context. The local connection would usually open the meeting, and several well-spoken and well-known members from the FA would also attend to share information about the group. These sessions were intentionally public to frame the FA as an open and inclusive group. However, in some cases, and based on the local informants' advice, these governorate visits were also designed to showcase to the audience FA's involvement of influential, elite figures. This is because the public perception in many areas throughout Jordan based the FA's legitimacy as a political vehicle for social

change on its familiarity and experience working within the regime structures. In this case, the FA's elite connections signaled power and trust to the public; and an ability to influence and change current political, economic and social structures in the country.

Like one-on-one recruitment strategies, governorate visits were also critical given historically-rooted skepticism around political parties in Jordan for decades. As one FA member from a northern governorate recalled:

"When I first heard about the Free Assembly, I thought to myself, this is going to be just like any other party in the country. It is not going to be built the right way. It is not going to accomplish anything. At the insistence of some of my friends, I went to a "recruitment" meeting, and realized it was not just like any other political party. At least the rhetoric was not. The message of the FA was a secular one, focused on giving political agency back to the people through a true constitutional democracy and creating economic policies that would help the country to get out of its economic woes. The people behind the FA had their weight (social and financial), political experience and the technical knowhow in their respective fields. In the atmosphere of change brought by the Arab Spring, this seemed like the way forward to me. I was in" (Interview LRI).

As this quote suggests, the founding members' resources—associated with their elite status—was positioned as a "resource" for the development of FA: to show new recruits that it had the necessary assets to actually back its fresh agenda for political change. Yet, it was the timing of the FA's outreach—during the Arab Spring—that was also central to why their elite status was received by the public as a resource and source of legitimation, rather than an indicator of a cosmetic group hiding alternative agendas. FA's resources worked because "the atmosphere of change brought by the Arab Spring," but it is also because the FA recognized how to

strategically use the regional events in relation to its elite status to counteract historical domestic skepticism and resistance to political parties as vehicles for social change generally.

"Get to Know the FA" Events

In addition to the governorate visits and one-on-one meetings, The FA also organized a few "get to know the FA" events to reach out to groups beyond the members' immediate circles. These events primarily were held in Amman on weekdays after working hours or on weekends. The FA would reserve venues within some of the highest-rated hotels in the country's capital for these outreach events: conference spaces and halls fully stocked with juices and snacks for attendees as well. At these events, current members of the FA would present the overall vision and platform of the group, and provide justification for its intended goal to establish a political party. The floor would then be opened for questions from the audience. Members were responsible for spreading the word about these events through their mailing lists and other public outreach they considered suitable. While journalists were invited in their personal capacities, the media was not invited to cover these events. This outreach was considered a closed event.

Hundreds of people attended these events, and they were considered effective spaces for recruiting members to the FA. This was because they often served as a pre-step to, or facilitated, subsequent one-on-one meetings between FA members and interested individuals outside of the members' close circles. In some cases, interested individuals would also attend FA meetings to see how things "worked" in the group (Interview HUD). However, the timing and location of these outreach events also shaped who would be recruited: individuals living or able to travel to Amman; and individuals without work or personal obligations in evening and weekend hours. The venue of this outreach (well-known hotels) was also indicative of the group's elite resources, which simultaneously encouraged and discouraged individuals to attend these sessions. After all, this was interpreted as both a strength of the group (it has the resources

to mobilize in a big way), but also a point of skepticism (to what extent is the elite leadership considering the needs of the people throughout Jordan).

As these recruitment strategies suggest, the FA consistently had to struggle and strategically think about how to use its "reputational resources": to brand itself somewhere between elite and not elite and always committed to the well-being of all of Jordan. Given that elite groups in Jordan tend to have close connections with the government and ruling regime, the FA's elite status signaled to activists from a variety of backgrounds that the FA had the capability, connections and power to succeed in establishing a political party in the Jordanian context and achieve change. With capable leaders and well established networks, activist as rational actors believed that political change is more achievable. Yet, and at the same time, historical skepticism of political parties as a vehicle for achieving social change, and Jordan's stark social and economic stratification positioned the FA's intentions as a group to truly change the political, economic and social status quo questionable.

Internal Organization within the FA

The FA's recruitment tactics were strategically connected to developing and ensuring a strong internal organizational structure that would be simultaneously inclusive of "active members" who could move the FA platform forward and a broad base of less active members who would participate in major meetings and votes. "Active members" were those members who self-selected (through encouragement in one-on-one meetings as discussed earlier in this chapter) to develop the FA's platform through committees that focused on the political, social and culture, economic, and media positions of the group. The committees were responsible "for shaping the general ideas in various areas —political, economical, and social—into more detailed agendas that would give the public a clear understanding of the FA's stance on various topics" (Interview DRF). This included research on Jordanian policies and the development of

literature related to FA's vision for the country's economic and political system. As one member recalled in his experience working in the economic committee:

> "Our literature started coming together. We did not stop at the surface. We dove deep into the policies impacting people's daily lives. We looked at, almost, every government policy, and proposed a counter policy. Just as if we were a shadow government, in opposition" (Interview LRI).

The thoroughness of this research demonstrated that the FA was committed to real reform; not cosmetic changes. This research exercise was more specifically a way to build trust among members internally to show that the FA was working hard in a manner that would challenge the government status quo by proposing "counter policies"; and not produce the structures that the elite founding members were familiar with. Moreover, it also was a way for the FA to show that new knowledge was valued and would be used to further the group's platform (i.e. the elite leadership was no longer the only source of expertise or knowledge within the group).

This literature was also and often circulated internally among the group and used to recruit more members to the FA. The head of each of these committees was an FA founding member, who would be responsible for sharing this literature and the general progress of the committee with the other committees, the FA general assembly, and the steering committee (Interview DRT). The steering committee was responsible for oversight of all the committees and FA activities and progress overall. Like the heads of the other committees, the steering committee was mostly comprised of the group's founding members. However, it is important to note that this was not a policy: any member could be part of the steering committee or the head of one of the other committees. However, many non-founding FA members who were considered "active" did not pursue these particular positions of leadership in the group.

Active members describe their participation and work in the committees as something that was "surprisingly" productive given the diverse array of members represented in the group.

For example, one member said he initially "feared" that working in the committees would be a one-way process in terms of decision-making, but found the "atmosphere to be quite cooperative" (Interview DRF). Or as another member recalled,

> "The composition of the party's committees was quite diverse. We had it all from old statesmen who spent most of their lives as part of the deep state, to young professionals who lived parts of their lives outside the country. We still managed to find the middle ground, and built consensuses within....We always identified ourselves as sitting in the first square to the left of center, when it came to our ideological stand....it was easy to agree on what that actually meant for the individuals" (Interview LRI).

We can see in this way how the FA used self-selection strategies to harness the capacities of its membership base (one component of its social resources) in a way that would move the group's agenda forward, while also providing a mechanism and process for members to feel that their positions and ideas were included in the FA platform. Like the one-on-one recruitment strategy, the latter process was a way to demonstrate to members that the FA was truly a space for change and collaboration; one in which their views and contributions would be trusted and taken seriously. This self-selection arrangement also signaled to the greater FA assembly membership that the FA was striving to be representative of all Jordanians and their interests, despite the group's elite roots. Plus, having "active members" who had the capacity to move the FA's agenda forward was critical to show that the FA could and would act on the rhetoric it presented in the recruitment phase.

The FA only organized a few in-person general assembly meetings or events given that members were spread throughout the Kingdom. However, email and online communication was used so that every member of the FA could participate and vote on decisions and items related to the group. The group constantly communicated through Whats App and email where

information about the group's platform was shared. There was always constant feedback in order to develop or vote on documents or suggest ideas that would become part of FA's platform. The FA was also quite articulate in compiling emails and contact details for all members in order to send the committee meeting notes and documents to everyone even if they could not attend meetings in person. This was important in demonstrating that the FA was committed to collective decision-making processes despite geographical distances (and other factors such as working hours, family commitments, etc.). For example, literature produced about the FA's platform on the country's economy would be circulated to all members for feedback and approval.

Formal, public statements followed a similar decision-making pattern. In response to select national legislation (such as rising petroleum prices and subsidy policy changes) and regional events (attacks in Gaza for example), the FA would issue position papers for publication in the country's top newspapers. While these papers were often if not all written by members of the steering committee, all members had to approve the paper before it would be published. All members also had the right and the channels through the email communication to introduce potential topics for these papers. Having all members participate in releasing these position papers strengthened the FA's "reputational resource" publicly as well. Not only was the group releasing statements about important issues affecting Jordanian citizens' everyday lives, but they were also formulating these statements through collective and collaborative processes based on the experiences, feelings, and opinions of a wide array of Jordanians themselves.

These internal dynamics and FA's subsequent public presence and image generated from these internal processes suggest that the FA was successful in distancing itself from negative perceptions that might be associated with its elite roots in terms of exclusivity and out of touch with Jordanian public. Yet, it is important to note that these strong internal structural

arrangements and processes were also made possible through the groups'—especially the founders—"elite" economic and social resources as well. For example, committees were able to meet on a weekly or bi-weekly basis in the office spaces of some of the FA members to hold these collective meetings. Take DFH, who was the unofficial leader of the group: his office –a very prestigious law firm with a lot of space on meeting rooms- was used for recruitment purposes and for the group's weekly meetings. Another example was REN: FA members had access to everything inside REN's office space as he owned one of the biggest architecture and design firms in the country. Furthermore, the office was located in Shmeisani in the central part of Amman which made it accessible to many members coming from different parts of the city. REN even instructed his firm to have workers available to serve tea, coffee and refreshments to FA members who were using his offices so the FA could focus on developing content (policy papers for example) and strategies for the group to achieve its goals. His firm was the main space where all of FA committees usually held their meetings. They also had access to all the resources in in the offices such as computers, printers, and visual aids. Materials and supplies that would be needed for developing literature for the group or position papers for the public were subsequently never an issue as committees could use these same offices' resources (printing, paper, internet, etc.).

Members of FA even used their personal money to reserve hotel venues (ballrooms) for the "Get to know FA" outreach events. This increased their visibility throughout the Kingdom and was a way to provide opportunities for the Jordanian people to meet the members: a key way for the group to build trust with the public. The availability of these resources also was important in allowing the group to conduct these outreach activities outside the capital: they traveled intensively to many regions throughout the country to hold advocacy and recruitment gatherings. Transportation was also not an issue because many of the members had their own cars.

In addition to its weekly meetings and outreach activities, FA members financed team-building activities so that members could get to know other. For example, members would be invited to a dinner at one of the members' villas and the host would invite twenty or thirty FA members. The hosts would serve food, sweets, and refreshments and they would bear the costs from their own pockets. Other team building activities included participating in members' personal and family occasions such as going to weddings, Jahas[13], and funerals. The group would prepare a delegation to participate in these personal events. This is important because having these elite FA members coming to the other members' personal events also built the reputation and social prestige of the member in that community (and thus FA too. It increased the number of FA sympathizers or potential recruits).

Moreover, some FA members' senior leadership positions in their respective professions also ensured that their time at work was flexible to the extent they could meet during the evenings or on weekends without issue. These positions further equipped them with strong connections and experience with the media, the government, businesses, and legal communities. The latter was important to ensure that the FA had channels at its disposal to distribute items such as its position papers to newspapers; or navigate the Jordanian bureaucracy so that their group meetings would not be interrupted by government officials or intelligence officers (a common practice in other similar gatherings and meetings).

The FA's economic resources, social networks, along with many members' experience in navigating Jordan's bureaucracy, were important elements that guided how the FA organized this internal structure (i.e. meetings with active members, voting procedures with the general group, production of literature). These resources further facilitated a faster timeline for reaching the goal of establishing a political party. Within a collective atmosphere in which

---

[13] "Jaha" is a tribal tradition practiced in Jordan that is derived from honor and prestige. It takes the shape of a group of men representing a family or a tribe going to another tribe in order to resolve disputes or ask for a girl's hand in marriage. Jahas have been practiced in Jordan for decades although now it is more of a ritual to maintain traditions.

many of the active members were diligent and committed to "working fast" to achieve the group's goal, the FA was able to release what the group called its "Manifesto," ten months after the group announced itself to the public in December 2011. The manifesto was a document that synthesized the FA's platform related to the areas represented by the committees (political, economic, social and culture and media), and was intended to be the starting block for the political party's agenda upon registration acceptance. The Manifesto was well-received by the public—and without regime interference thus far—suggesting that the FA would succeed in establishing a political party in the near future.

2.4. Dismantling the FA: Internal Challenges and Regime Co-optation

By spring of 2013, the Free Assembly managed to reach and exceed the threshold of the 500 quota needed for establishing the political party. The total number of members was 538, and the steering committee began the registration process to become a political party. Having reached this targeted number and with the public release and strong reception of the group's manifesto both within the FA and publicly, it would appear that the FA was more than on track to achieve its goal. The FA submitted its initial application in March 2013, to the Ministry of Interior for approval. However, the response from the ministry was significantly delayed and then rejected on the grounds that the FA did not meet the 500 member threshold. The ministry stated that 130 names needed to be corrected in terms of their residency and related demographic and record information. The FA amended the application as requested and submitted the new version within the ministry's requested time frame. The corrected list was submitted in late May with 538 names and sent to the final round for approval.

However, the FA did not receive a response from the ministry for three weeks, a period of significant length given other political groups' registration experiences at that time. During this period, at least 40 people allegedly withdrew their names as members of the FA from the Ministry, placing the overall membership at 498, two people short of the required 500.

However, when political party applications are submitted to the ministry, it is not legal to allow withdrawals from membership under Jordanian law. Yet, in the case of the FA, the Ministry seems to have allowed—and encouraged—this: It delayed processing the FA's application so regime actors could target different FA members to submit their resignations to the ministry directly and without FA's knowledge in order to dwindle the groups' numbers below the 500 member requirement (Interview IDO, DRD, NDH). The list of those who resigned, after all, included many of the original founding members of the group (Interview LRI).

When asked why the members resigned, many FA members I interviewed suggested that the regime co-opted members through political positions and promises, particularly the influential founding figures who previously held high positions in the government (Interview HID). For example, members resigned in exchange for promised posts or jobs abroad, or in response to direct threats regarding their work, family, or possible imprisonment (Interview HUD). As one member highlighted,

> "Having the 'former' deep statesmen immensely helped the FA in navigating established policies. But then, it became a hurdle! The regime began to realize what I realized early on. This is not like all the other political parties in the country. This group of enthusiasts are actually building a 'real' political party that has a political platform that is not religion driven, and is putting forward a policy agenda that is based on scientific situational analysis. Suddenly, the Free Assembly became a risk the deep state could not take, given the turbulent uncertainties surrounding the country" (Interview LRI).

As this quote suggests, the regime was thought to "fear" the establishment of a "real" political party that would challenge its power. The FA was considered "different" than other parties because of its secular agenda that was premised on thorough analyses and documentation regarding the state of the country. Such information, along with membership that had the

experience and capacity to produce and disseminate this information, were considered threatening aspects of the FA to the ruling regime. However, FA's leadership's previous connections to positions of power within the regime provided easy avenues for the regime to negotiate with individuals on a one-on-one basis in order to dismantle the group completely.

Many members, however, did not necessarily know for certain why and how different individuals resigned, but would say, "I don't know, but I heard they were talking with the regime," especially when discussing the FA's "elite" and the group's publicly influential member even before the application was submitted to the ministry (Interview NDH). While one could argue that the regime response was effective given their delay tactics and exploitation of the registration process to co-opt the FA, the latter quote is telling of how internal tensions present within the FA even before the registration process was initiated also contributed and informed the regime's approach to dismantling the group. Members already felt divided somehow, and the FA's external economic and social resources created pockets of fluctuating trust and distrust within the group that the regime could subsequently capitalize on to ensure the FA's termination.

2.4.1. Internal Tensions

Tensions within the group centered primarily around two topics: division of the workload and leadership. Several "active members" felt that not all of their co-committee members contributed equally in terms of their work in drafting and producing the literature for the FA's platform. As one former FA member recalled, "The committees' production was high, but at the same time, the members who were doing most of the work were upset that there were many members were not doing anything" (Interview HDH). Others discussed how this resentment surfaced in committee debates "on the finer details" of topics, slowing the overall production of the group at some points as a result (Interview DRF). In response to this debate, members who were criticized for their limited contributions despite their self-selection to serve in

"active" roles noted how their day jobs' workloads prevented them from taking on more work for the FA during some months versus others (Interview DRF). From these grievances related to the division of labor within the FA, it was clear that many members felt they were carrying the burden of the entire group; often without recognition for their efforts. Yet, how individuals reacted to these claims of free-riding—by citing their job roles—shows how local socioeconomic class issues played a critical role as well. After all, individuals who could not be as active in the FA as they wanted noted their commitments to day jobs as non-negotiable because of their salary needs or because their subordinate positions prevented them from negotiating their hours and work in the workplace as a result.

Moreover, because most of the committee work took place in Amman in founding members' offices, it was also difficult to be an "active" FA member if living and working outside the capital. While the group had an extensive archiving system of previous meetings and used emails and What's App to share information about the group's development, the FA would prepare forthcoming meeting agendas during the meeting itself (i.e. new agenda would always be set in advance). This made meetings efficient and productive (at least in their initial designs), but also meant that those who could not attend would not be able to initially contribute to the agenda for the following meeting.

The FA also established several specialized committees within the organization to produce specialized policy papers and literature (one political committee, one economic committee, legal committee, media committee, and so on). Again, due to the availability of spatial, financial and time-related resources, members of each committee held separate additional meetings to discuss agendas and produce policy documents that represented the group's goals and platform. The FA was able to hold these committee meetings on a weekly basis, divide and distribute tasks on specific issues through these committees, and use general meetings to present these committee-based products and progress to the steering committee and

other committees (i.e. the entire FA). Yet again, being a part of these committees meant that one would have to be off work and living in or nearby the capital of Amman.

This created resentment among those who could not feasibly participate in the committees and general meetings given their proximity. This led to lengthier debates and disagreements among the general assembly about the FA's platform and "demands to return the literature to the drawing board" (Interview DRF). Looking at these interactions is telling of how the groups' concentration of social and economic resources that allowed the FA to generate literature and progress toward its goal at a rather rapid rate—something that was initially appealing to recruits—also created pockets of distrust between and among committee members and the general FA assembly based on where members claimed residency in the Kingdom. Who could—and could not—"work" for the FA given the group's organizational structure of the FA therefore seems to reflect (and maybe even reified) divisions between the Jordanian population not only in terms of socioeconomic class, but also based on geographic location as well.

Significant debates and tension also arose among FA members regarding leadership within the committees and within the group overall. Debates over the workload in committees, and particularly the writing of the future bylaws for the group, for example, were largely intertwined with committee members' perceptions that certain members were trying to "control" the FA (Interview HDH, DRT, SIH). Specifically, certain committee members would ask for more rounds of revisions to the bylaws that outlined "how the president of the party would be elected in the future, the role of the secretary general, and how FA branches would look like [in operation] in the governorates" as a way to contest what they saw as certain members trying to take over the direction of the group (Interview HDH).

Tension within committees about the topic of leadership was also reflected in whisperings among members that "X talked more than Y" during meetings (Interview HDH).

Assessing meeting dynamics and arguments is subsequently telling of how and why dismantling was possible. Because people already were frustrated about their participation (or lack thereof) given their work obligations or geographical location outside of Amman, or feeling unrecognized for their work contributions, the FA was ripe for the regime to easily use these in-house grievances as one way to dismantle the group. At the same time, these grievances alone (with or without regime interference) were powerful enough to undercut the momentum of the group too.

For example, members became increasingly frustrated during governorate outreach visits because certain founding members tended to talk more than others, making the FA look like a one (or two)-man show. Others described certain group members' leading roles in the visits as also problematic due to their inability to "connect" with the average Jordanian; reinforcing their elite status and jeopardized the FA's appeal to the Jordanian public overall. As one founding member recalled,

> "[Some of the founding FA members] did not know how to speak to people from other social classes. We confronted them about this and asked them to step down from visiting governorates and leave it to others who are better suited to speak on popular platforms [...] one of the FA members...he is a very influential man, very representable, but he is not a strategic planner. He does not know how to speak with the people, because he is repulsive and he looks down at people, always referring to himself as a former minister, and a son of a former minister" (Interview DRT).

As this quote highlights, and even if unintentional, perceptions of class remained a central sticking point within the group on various occasions. Even though the founding members in the FA seem committed to pursue a democratic collective approach, their presence, and how they tried to implement collective action often highlighted, and in some cases accentuated, the local socioeconomic hierarchies among the Jordanian population.

As these leadership struggles development and mistrust began to build, certain members also began to hold secret sub-meetings with other members to ensure they would all collectively vote together on any and all issues and debates that were surfacing in the group (Interview DRT, DRD). For example, some members were invited to specific founding members' homes without the knowledge of the group to discuss and agree on future leadership policies that the group planned to enact once it became a political party. Potential recruits' responses to FA's outreach is also telling of how these leadership struggles or "status battles" among some members started to shape the FA's reputation publicly: the FA was no longer called the FA, but rather referred to as "X's or Y's group" (Interview NDH). These subgroups even started to invite potential recruits to their small meetings rather than the general FA ones as a way to demonstrate to these recruits—but also the other FA members—that they were leading the direction and platform of the FA.

The culmination of these disagreements and tensions eventually encouraged several influential founding members to leave the group or resign from their committee roles even before the group's manifesto was written and the application was submitted to become a political party. As one member recalled,

> "Right before a main event where the FA's agenda was set to be presented to the members, one of the founding members of the FA quit suddenly and no proper explanation was given. This was a shock as he was (in my opinion) a strong advocate of the FA. I feared that this may be the beginning of a conflict that would see the FA splinter before it strikes root" (Interview DRF).

Seeing founding members, who put so much effort to establish the group in the first place, resign subsequently exacerbated distrust and skepticism beyond the committee and among the general FA assembly and Jordanian public as well. As one potential recruit described the departure of some of the founding members prior to the submission of the application:

"It is something I could not understand, it seemed like the FA would jeopardize their own interests because of who they were, part of the regime at some point. Their privilege made some people suspicious, which, in turn, would jeopardize the recruitment process. Even I was always suspicious. They are former ministers, filthy rich, and have massive connections and networks within the regime connections, yet they decided to challenge the regime! Maybe they were looking for power? Since they were left out of the regime, maybe they needed another outlet where they can feel powerful again" (Interview NDH).

As this quote suggest, the FA was unique in that individuals benefitting from the regime structure somehow and also wanted to challenge its basis. Yet, at the same time, perhaps the creation of the FA was not necessarily a true movement for political change per se; but a way for the group's leading members to send a signal to the regime: that they can be powerful and challenge the status quo as a way to pressure the regime into bringing them back into its structures of power.

Through these examples, we can see how what otherwise might just be considered organizational procedures—creating bylaws, organizing speaker lists for governorate visits, and holding closed meetings—were embedded and reflective of power struggles and tension among FA members internally; creating an environment of fluctuating trust and distrust that permeated into the group's public reputation, particularly among potential recruits as well. Moreover, FA's external resources ultimately seemed to be a "curse" for the group as well. Its reputational resource of members' familiarity and expertise in negotiating Jordanian bureaucracy and regime structures, along with its elite roots, were sources of distrust and problems among FA members that undermined the group's ability to reach its goal of establishing a political party (despite them originally being sources of trust and "good" signals to potential recruits during the early months of the group's formation). While such resources

allowed the group to develop its platform quickly, recruit members from a diverse array of backgrounds, and build trust among its membership base, these resources also contributed to shaping internal organization dynamics and processes that bred distrust and tension among members as well. The publicity of this distrust through actions such as key members leaving the group subsequently signaled to various actors, including the regime, that the FA was perhaps more fragile and susceptible to co-optation tactics than perhaps was originally thought.

2.4.2. More to the Story? The End of the FA

For many FA members, the ministry's rejection of the group's political party registration application signaled the end of the group. After all, it took over a year to build the FA and recruit a membership base that exceeded 500 and many members were tired and burnt by that time (Interview IDO). Moreover, the 2013 political parties law that was in effect at the time of the rejection required groups seeking to establish political parties to wait six months before resubmitting a rejected application (and also the group would have to change its name). This means that that FA would have to maintain its momentum and sustain its appeal and public presence in the interim.

However, some members were keen to try again and started strategizing in small meetings how to re-launch the FA. Approximately three small follow-up meetings were held in one of the founding member's office. The meetings included some of the elite members of the group as well as active young members. The purpose of these meetings was not only to strategize ways forward, but also served as a space for FA members to express their frustration and emotions related to the rejection. Supportive media coverage from journalists who were sympathetic to the FA as well as public support provided sparks of hope for the FA, encouraging them to reorganize and continue pursuing their goal of establishing a political party. After these three initial meetings, however, no clear strategy was emerging on how to move forward, discouraging many of the FA members from continuing with the group. As one

member described: "It appeared to be difficult to re-brand [the FA]. And people were tired, burned out. The rejection was a complete surprise for everyone" (Interview IDO). Due to such circumstances, the group was ultimately and officially dismantled. No further FA meetings took place. That was the end of the Free Assembly.

2.5. The FA Today

Today, some former FA members still meet around once a week in formats described as "political salons." One former founding member holds these meeting in his personal home where individuals come together to discuss national and regional politics. Another former FA member is the head of another official political salon that is registered and affiliated with the regime with a focus on youth in Jordan. Neither group has sought to pursue similar goals to the FA (i.e. establishing a political party) or take an active role in politics beyond these weekly discussions. The case of the regime-affiliated salon is one instance often highlighted by former FA members as evidence of cooptation. Sometimes members also point to instances like this as suggestive that FA members were using their involvement in the group as a bargaining chip with the regime: to improve their positions in the country politically and economically. As one former member suggested, "[Founding member name] was focusing on repositioning himself in the government. I believe he already opened channels of communication with them" (Interview DRT). While many former founding FA members came from elite backgrounds, this claim seems justified as some of the former FA members did indeed "improve" their positions and status politically with the regime after the FA was dismantled: one was appointed president of a top public university in the Kingdom, another was appointed as a Senator, one became the head of the national social and economic council, and at least three were appointed as ministers.

These dynamics therefore bring to question the motivations and goals of the FA that perhaps were unrealized during its existence. While establishing a political party was the

group's explicit goal, it seems that members, particularly the founding elite ones, also wanted to create the FA as an outlet or space to achieve at least two related objectives. First, they wanted to use the FA platform to garner personal attention from the regime; to remind the ruling elite of their importance and power in the country. Secondly, the FA provided a space of belonging and feeling needed politically, socially and economically at a period when many of these elite were "falling off the radar" of regime leadership (Interview HUD). These dynamics highlight the need to consider the function of political groups like the FA beyond their stated goals and actions. Perhaps the FA should be reassessed as to whether or not it even would be considered a political reform group in general.

While a political party was the goal, these post-FA dynamics, the group's internal organizational structures, and the major points of tensions between members, suggest that many members of the FA perhaps just wanted to feel a place of belonging within a political, social and economic system that had excluded them in one or more ways; to feel important again and to be able to voice their opinions to others in a manner where they would be heard.

2.6. Findings: Explaining FA's Trajectory as a Resource Curse

The story of the FA highlights how external resources can affect the trajectory of protest groups both positively and negatively. The Free Assembly had abundant resources, namely monetary and experience with regime. However, the FA experienced a "resource curse": its strong social networks, economic assets, and experience with the regime allowed the group to successfully recruit members and move quickly towards its goal of establishing a political party. However, these resources also created fluctuating pockets of trust and distrust among members in terms of how they shaped the group's internal dynamics and organizational structure. These tensions left the FA ripe for regime actors to exploit with cooptation strategies accordingly; and also led to disorganization internally. This section highlights how the four explanatory factors in this study contribute to FA's trajectory, and its resource curse fate.

While FA's resource curse might be unique in comparison to the other two groups included in this research, it is embedded and reflective of local circumstances related to socioeconomic hierarchies and tensions between urban and rural populations that also shape the trajectories of the other groups.

Table 2. Trajectory of the Free Assembly

Protest Group	Resources	Regime Links	Framing	P.O. Assessment	Findings
FA	M[14]: Strong H: Strong O: Strong	Mostly links with Ministries and parliament, little royal court links, and little security links	Public: Inclusive, Regime: Semi-Critical	Regional: Strong Domestic: Mediocre	**"Resource curse"** -Socioeconomic Class Divides -Previous Links with Regime -Lack of Confrontation with Regime -Dismantling through Cooptation

2.6.1. Resources of The Free Assembly (FA): Strong Monetary Resources, Strong Human Resources, and Strong Organization Resources

The Free Assembly had abundant resources across all three types: monetary, human resources, and organization. The FA was self-funded in all of its activities through its wealthy members. The FA's monetary resources allowed the group to meet regularly and organize many team-building, outreach, and recruitment events. This increased their visibility throughout the Kingdom and was a way to provide opportunities for the Jordanian people to meet the members: a key way for the group to build trust with the public as well as internally among the members. The availability of these resources also was important in allowing the group to conduct outreach outside the capital; aligning with their inclusive platform related to social change for all Jordanians.

---

[14] M: Monetary Resources, H: Human Resources, and O: Organization Resources

In terms of human resources, the FA leadership all had intensive expertise in several fields such as economic, political, social, and legal affairs. Several founding members of FA were and still are considered some of top experts on these topics in the context of Jordan. Many of them also held or are currently holding high level positions in the government or other regime institutions such as the royal court. The expertise of FA members and their high level positions facilitated their networks with regime members in the ministries and the royal court.

Members' professional positions and expertise meant that they knew how to articulate themselves in writing, public statements, and speeches as well. They knew how to connect with people one-on-one, but also in public capacities. Having high level, professional positions also meant that FA members had financial stability and work schedules that allowed them time to work on the group while not at work (i.e. 9 to 5 jobs and not in positions where they would need to take on extra jobs). Even some of them would work on the group at work because they *were* the bosses and managers of their own law firms, businesses, and related organizations. Beyond the leadership, The FA had a committed group of active members that had the energy and time to develop the group's platform in the evening hours following their work as well. These members were quite dedicated in developing policy papers and FA literature within clear timelines.

And, as one might expect, many of groups' members have managed and are still managing people either through these high level public offices and positions. Furthermore, their lines of work meant that they had experience in public outreach so were well-equipped to bring this skill set to the FA.

In terms of the group's organizational resources, the group's use of social media allowed them to maintain open communication among members, at least in the beginning. The FA was also strong in terms of organizing meetings to be productive and keeping a thorough record of each meeting's minutes.

One would subsequently assume that the likelihood of the FA in achieving their goals is high and plausible. This would be the case if only resources are taken into account at their face value.

However, it is important to consider how FA members and the public interpreted these resources within the context of what they signified for change. As this chapter highlights, FA's resources proved to be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it allowed them to mobilize quickly, conduct extensive outreach, and work on developing their platform. At the same time, their resources were interpreted by some as indication that some leading elite members of the group were part of the group in order to benefit from certain regime arrangements (i.e. be reinserted into regime structures by holding high public offices). Furthermore, due to the founding members' elite status, they were seen as not in touch with needs of public; another iteration of local socioeconomic class hierarchies and power and interests concentrated in the country's capital. These factors undermined trust within the group and in the public which ultimately contributed to the dismantling of the group.

2.6.2 Regime Links of the FA: Links with Ministries and Parliament, and Little Links with the Royal Court and the Security Apparatus

Many of the founding members of the FA were also former members of the regime. They drew on this experience to plan their actions and framing of their platform. They mostly knew how the regime worked at high ministerial levels, parliament and to a small extent at the royal court level. Specifically, the founding members' regime relations were a signal to the public that they knew the know-how of how to navigate the system and therefore could be effective in actually creating change through channels like a political party (which was their goal).

At the same time, the public was skeptic of these former regime actors because when they were in the system previously, they did not try to influence it in the ways that they were now advocating for. Jordanians were wary of their intentions. However, their justification was

that the system was "broken" so they came up with documentation and an agenda to "fix" the system through a political party. The literature they generated was a way for them to legitimize their platform, but also legitimize their former and present relations with the ruling regime.

However, these previous regime ties among the founding members led to several strains within the group. First, since its onset, the group was split as to whether a political party was the best route to make change in the Jordanian political system. Many were worried to challenge their former regime colleagues in this way. This led to several key founding members leaving the group early on. This was interpreted among members as a signal that these key members wanted to return to their regime roles. It became unclear among members over time the extent to which the FA founding members were truly committed to the platform they had established or if they would follow their former member and also return to the regime. Regime relations were subsequently both a positive and negative aspect of the group that affected their recruitment and their internal dynamics.

The regime was subsequently able to exploit these pockets of mistrust and was able to implement co-optation and small levels of repression to contribute to FA's dismantlement. This was for several reasons:

The documents and literature that the FA produced were well written and of high quality. These documents represented the visions and objectives of the group that would provide a viable political alternative for change that was not previously imagined possible in the regime-orchestrated, two-way system (in which the Jordanian public had to choose between siding with the regime or siding with the Islamists).

Because of the FA's previous relations with these top regime actors, there was some sort of unwritten respect between the regime and the members that meant that regime actors did not want to publicly embarrass or humiliate them through repression tactics (as it could also make the regime look bad if they were turning on their former colleagues as well).

To publicly repress one of these public figures, who is advocating for reform and was well-respected in many cases among the Jordanian public, would create more tension and problems for the regime; and question their legitimacy at a time where the national and regional context meant their authority was already in a fragile state.

These co-optation strategies were only targeted at the founding members; not at the group as a whole (and not at members of the general assembly). Coopting these key founding members means that the regime could recycle their expertise in a way that would serve the regime again.

The only repression tactics that were used against the group was when the group submitted its application to register as a political party. At this time, some people in the general assembly received threats and pressure from their families (who were incited by the regime through intelligence officials) to remove their names from the member list. These tactics reduced the number of signatures included in FA's application. This meant that the group no longer met the required number of signatures to register as a party under law.

Most of the regime's interaction with the FA was at the ministerial level. The FA never criticized the king directly (FA never linked the king with corruption cases for example), and the group never clashed with members of the intelligence department.

These examples show that the regime relations are important to think about not just in terms of the scope of how the regime was able to quell the group; but also how knowledge and previous relations with the regime among the members shaped how members interacted with one another, why they joined in the group in the first place, and why the FA was able to mobilize (and not) in the ways it did. The regime was part of the story from day one, including the development and mobilization of the group, as well as its dismantling.

While FA's impact among the Jordanian public may be perceived as limited, it is clear from its story that the regime recognized their activities as potentially challenging in an

unprecedented way. The regime in this regard chose to co-opt FA actors as through offering them government positions and other high level positions in order to dismantle the movement and its potential impact overall.

2.6.3. The Free Assembly's Framing Approach: Inclusive, and Semi-Critical of the Regime

The group was a multi-causal movement that advocated for the ideas of establishing a civil state where every Jordanian is equal before the law; they called for freedom, justice and equality. They promoted an inclusive platform and were only semi-critical of the King. This framing approach allowed the group to gain public support and negotiate its complex relationship with the regime and the public. The FA's framing strategy can be explained by the following:

Regime Relations: FA had previous experience within the regime; and members of the group had an unwritten code of respect among them and regime members. Therefore, the group did not want the platform to criticize the leadership directly so it did not alienate its relations to a certain extent. At the same time, the group used its previous experience working with the regime to justify and legitimize its goals and platforms. Members of FA emphasized that have the knowledge and experience in the system to know how to go about changing a broken system.

- *Social status of FA:* The social status of FA through its members was appealing to a general Jordanian audience given that, while the founding members were elites, many of the FA members were from a variety of demographic backgrounds. Therefore, the group wanted its platform to appeal to a wide array of Jordanians accordingly; both in terms of class, as well as nationality (i.e. Jordanian-Jordanians and Palestinian-Jordanians).

- *Resources:* The Free Assembly had the time and labor to develop a comprehensive manifesto with 92 points that they could present and disseminate to the public. They also had the time

to develop literature (i.e. policy papers) that legitimized their manifesto and goals, in addition to elaborating more on their project of how they want Jordan to be.

- *The Arab Spring:* The FA did indeed use frames in relation to the Arab Spring around dignity, freedom, and social justice. However, the group mostly focused on a national "Jordan" framing where the emphasis was placed on the individuals of Jordan. In their manifesto, they highlighted that the wanted to achieve the well-being of *Jordanian* individuals in their development and enlightenment. Therefore, it was evident that the group's ideas were framed around the individual at the national level; and they contextualized social groups (families and tribes) as supporting the individual's freedom and pursuit of their goals.

- As mentioned before, the FA also explicitly called for reform and constitutional amendments that would decrease the power of the king, but the framing and the language they used was respectful to the regime and not confrontational. The FA thought that it was not wise to criticize the King directly in their platform if they too aspired to items he outlined in his discussion papers.

- FA's framing made it clear to the Jordanian public that it was a "different" political alternative than the public was familiar with. For decades, the Jordanian people only had two options: either you are with the regime (so individuals would focused on building their personal connections, privileges and reputation with the regime), or you are with the Islamists (so individuals would focus on developing themselves as religious individuals committed to the larger Islamic community). The FA presented a third option that saw all people as equals under law within the Jordanian state; and in a secular way. They presented ideas that appealed to individuals in a way that the regime and the Islamists had not offered before.

2.6.4. FA's assessment of political opportunity: Strong Regional Influence, and Mediocre Domestic Influence

The FA's founding members were inspired and encouraged by the protests in the region calling for democratization and reform. The members of FA wanted to be part of the regional movement and they wanted to change the situation in Jordan and push it toward democratization. They then decided to officially announce the Free Assembly, and then tried to turn it into a political party. The regional situation created a political opportunity to activists across the region and encouraged the members of FA to act as well.

Another political opportunity that encouraged the establishment of the group was sensed in the local scene of Jordan. With regimes collapsing in the region, the regime in Jordan feared it too might have its power challenged; so it gave indicators to the public that it was willing to allow change to occur (given these regional dynamics). Examples include the King's discussion papers, the King's public statements and the regime's establishment of national dialogue committees to facilitate political reform.

However, the government's latter position changed over time—also because of regional dynamics. Especially when the region witnessed civil wars in Libya, Iraq, and neighboring Syria, and the return of a repressive military regime in Egypt, the regime in Jordan shifted from a stance of openness to political change as a way to maintain stability, to strategies of quelling protest groups as a way to maintain stability. In fact, many reforms were reversed and the king maintained--and even gained--more power.

Members of FA thought about reorganizing again after they failed to register as a political party, but they never did that in part because of these regional dynamics, but it was also because intra-group dynamics were tense and people were tired and in despair.

It is not clear if the FA would have formulated if it was not for the Arab Spring. This is different from other groups that were active years before the uprisings (but was not officially

established until the time of the Arab Spring as a group specifically). FA members before the Arab spring never tried to formulate any sort of collective effort that would change the status quo in the country.

3. Chapter 3: Repressed and Dismantled? The Story of the Liberation National Social Group in Jordan

3. 1. Chapter Summary

This chapter focuses on The Liberation National Social Group (LNSG), a political group comprised of activists that emerged onto the Jordanian public scene as part of the nationalist movement in 2007. However, it was with the start of the Arab Spring that the group of activists decided to organize themselves into the LNSG officially with a platform premised upon comprehensive political reform throughout the Kingdom. LNSG advocated for saving the Jordanian nation, a key framing strategy that helped it to win the support of various demographic groups throughout Jordan. LNSG specifically called for strengthening the Jordanian state to better respond to the public interest and the needs of the Jordanian people. To achieve this, the group's goal was to establish a political party that would be able to pursue change from within the system and expand the nationalist movement's presence and activities throughout the Kingdom.

Already comprised of some of the most experienced activists in the country by 2011, the group's development during the Arab Spring era soared to new heights in terms of successful protest actions, building their social networks throughout the Kingdom, and challenging the ruling regime's power and legitimacy. Equipped with protest experience, strong allies, and networks among other activist groups in the Kingdom, and the necessary technical expertise to organize and develop a platform for social change, LNSG seemed well-positioned to reach its goal of establishing a political party even with a controversial platform that directly criticized and challenged the King within a repressive, authoritarian regime context. Yet, LNSG did not achieve the goal it initially sought out: to establish a political party to pursue political change. This chapter explains the unexpected trajectory of this well-

experienced—and well-connected—group. LNSG was comprised of seasoned activists who had experience and familiarity with regime actors in this context, and managed to organize some of the largest protests the Kingdom witnessed since 1996. Yet, LNSG was dismantled in less than a year through regime repression tactics. Yet, regime repression tactics are only part of the story. From interviews with former members and other allies to the former LNSG, this chapter shows how other factors related to the group's resources and local socioeconomic positions within the Kingdom, are related and intertwined with the regime's repression tactics. Accounting for these local class hierarchies are critical to simultaneously understand how LNSG was able to mobilize and win the hearts of the public; but also why LNSG's momentum and fast development deteriorated in just a few months' time.

LNSG considered the Arab Spring events in the region as a ripe opportunity for the group to increase its public visibility and expand its platform for the Jordanian nation. However, and at the same time, Jordanian regime actors approached the Arab Spring with a similar perception: as an opportunity to expand their rule—and repression tactics—under the same saving the nation rhetoric. The strategies that the regime and LNSG employed to frame themselves in this way show how national and regional politics overlap and inform sub-national and national strategies to combat—or encourage—social change in ways that may be unrealized if "national" is examined as distinct and autonomous from the regional and local. More specifically, the case of LNSG shows how regional politics inform how protest groups and regime actors strategically use the romanticized view of the national homeland to justify actions in different locations throughout the country and within Jordan accordingly. The story of the Liberation National Social Group (LNSG) highlights how pre-Arab Spring factors—such as country-based labor movements and public tensions over nationwide neoliberal reforms—played a major role in shaping the trajectories of protest and social change in the Kingdom in the post-2011 era.

By studying the process of LNSG's development and the multi-level—and sometimes unaligned—regime repression strategies in response, it is clear that overlapping relationships between protest groups, the public, and national institutions in Jordan are key routes, but also constraining factors that affect not only protest group outcomes, but also the ways in which protest groups arrive at the bargaining table in the first place.

Lastly, the continued impact of LNSG and the continuing role of its former members in the Jordanian political scene suggest that analyses of protest groups' trajectories may need to be expanded to more fully account for social change developments that stem from protest groups after groups cease to exist. The case of LNSG suggests that to fully understand social protest in authoritarians contexts, opposition groups versus the regime may actually be a false dichotomy, and the variation and fusion between and among these groups require further attention.

3.2. Building the LNSG: A Case of Social Resources

In order to establish itself on the Jordanian political scene as an official and distinct group within the social left, LNSG's founding members utilized their strong record of protest experience as well as their extensive social networks to recruit and convince Jordanians from various regions and demographic backgrounds to join their group and support their platform "for the Jordanian nation." As the following section highlights, LNSG was able to specifically leverage and effectively use their experience and social network resources to win the support of the public given the national and regional environment as well.

3.2.1. LNSG's Experience Resources from the Pre-Arab Spring Era

Many of the founding members of LNSG trace the start of their activism in the national context to 2007 as part of the Jordanian social left and nationalist movement. In response to extensive neoliberal reforms that swept the Kingdom under King Abdullah II's rule starting in the early 2000s, the national movement increased its support and work with a variety of groups—particularly the working class—to combat these policies and challenge global capitalism more broadly. In fact, the social left decided to specifically form the "Left-wing Anti-capitalist Globalization Group"[15] (LwAcG) in 2007, a subsidiary

---

[15] Jordan's national movement aims to: (1) redistribute the wealth in the country, within the framework of a tax system that excludes the popular and middle classes, and imposes a progressive income tax on wealth groups, sudden profits, major real estate and service activities, On sales towards abolition of popular goods and services and multiplying them on goods and services directed at capitalists; (2) the re-establishment of the Ministries of Supply and Housing, the provision of serious support for basic goods and services, as well as support for agricultural production, livestock, crafts, small projects and popular housing; (3) the suspension of privatization of education and free quality education for all secondary and university; (4) Restructuring, developing and strengthening public health services, and achieving an efficient comprehensive health insurance system; and (5)

of the broader nationalist movement that became the main engine of support and organization for the major labor protest movements throughout the country (such as the day laborers, teachers, and the port workers in Al-Aqaba). LwAcG provided logistical, media, and organizational support to these protests, seeing these actions as key opportunities to expose how the government's neoliberal reforms had direct effects on the everyday lives of Jordanians. Two of the first major protests to gain visibility and national attention were supported by the LwAcG: Zain employees, a telecommunications company, and the port workers employed in Aqaba. Drawing upon legacies of nationalist movement actions from previous decades, and best practices from other anti-globalization campaigns from around the world, the LwAcG was able to collaborate with these workers to design strategic protest actions and media messaging that simultaneously attracted the attention of the Jordanian public, other social justice activists and groups, and even the Hashemite leadership.

For example, in the case of the Zain telecommunication workers' campaign in which the company was cutting staff without benefits, LwAcG utilized partnerships and global campaign strategies to develop effective protest actions:

"A labor protest took place in Amman when a group of employees were fired from Zain (Telecom Company). So we undertook a protest campaign to support them and get their rights. It was one of the protests that took a different approach than the traditional Jordanian protests. We used global, international strategies. We reached out to the Anarchists in Jordan for help, and they used anarchist approaches to destroy the idea of the company [Zain]…Zain became hysterical, and the general manager of Zain invited leading members of the campaign for a retreat in one of the hotels at the Dead Sea. He asked them to stop the protest campaign and he will fulfill the protest demands. The fired employees were given only six salaries when they were laid off, we managed to get them 36 salaries and life time health insurances" (Interview ILN).

Supporting the labor, rural, student and professional sectors in their protest movements in defense of their legitimate interests.

Or in the case of the daily wage workers:

> "The protests expanded to include daily wage laborers from other ministries [besides agriculture].... everyone was surprised, including the political elite, since laborers marched to the royal court, it was the first protest to be held just outside the royal court. They said, 'We are going to the house of all Jordanians.' This was in 2007. Nahed [a member of the social left] asked us to form a support group to the laborers based on our political experience. The work of the support group included reorganizing the ranks of protesters in accordance with our organization expertise. We formed a committee that included a president, a spokesperson for the protesters, rapporteur, and others. We connected the protesters with media. They did not know anything about media, we connected them with all the media outlets in the country. We established a Facebook page for them to document their daily struggles. We held advocacy campaigns to bring national figures, parliamentarians, tribal leaders to support the protesters. This way we created a social framework to protect these protesters. And of course we provided the usual daily logistical support, such as providing them with food, water, and banners, in which these details increases the steadfastness of the protesters. They held several sit-ins in front of the royal court" (Interview ILN).

Both of the campaigns were victorious in terms of achieving most of their demands. These successes subsequently rewarded LwAcG and Jordan's social left broadly with (1) a positive national reputation among the Jordanian public of steering successful social justice campaigns in an era where major protests had not occurred for nearly a decade, (2) interest and solidarity with other labor movements who wanted to work with LwAcG to achieve their demands, (3) increased attention and monitoring under the regime, and (4) new networks with other activists and groups sympathetic to their platform and supportive of the working-class. LNSG was subsequently well-positioned to draw upon this strategy and history of successful activism to brand—or perhaps remind—the Jordanian public of its founders' connections to this earlier period.

3.2.2. Experience to Social Networks: Mutually Reinforcing Resources

The widespread appeal and memories of these movements among various factions of Jordanian society positioned LNSG to develop strong cross-cutting social networks that transcended and overlapped various demographics. Rather than contemporary demonstrations of competency and coalition building, the history of these movements and their association and romanticization of solidarity during a time of economic hardship, proved to also be one of the key resources that allowed LNSG to launch its presence officially in the Jordanian political scene in February 2012. Stated differently, LNSG's experience in these movements and the technical knowledge of how to go about organizing protests and supporting campaigns gave them more legitimacy among the Jordanian public.

LNSG subsequently used this romanticization of past movements as a resource to begin to build the credibility for its platform in 2012 and convince the public that establishing a political party and working within the system for reform was a desirable goal. While this platform of working within the system might initially seem contradictory to its work with labor movements, organizing strikes, and other actions that disrupted the political and economic systems, LNSG was able to build credibility for this approach by drawing upon this history of experience. LNSG members could legitimately claim they knew how to read and navigate the political environment to create effective social change. As one founding member shared with the researcher, LNSG felt the timing and political atmosphere would foster reformative change, including legislation that would make working through official political party platforms suitable and effective in addressing the needs of the public (Interview RFA). LNSG also used this rationale of experience to further substantiate its decision to organize street protests as a strategy to achieve this goal and pursue social change. These decisions are important to highlight because they suggest that trajectories of past protest groups continue to influence the trajectories and strategies of contemporary ones: not only in how they develop and legitimize their platform, but also how they assess political opportunity and mobilize the public accordingly.

3.3. Outreach Strategies to Establish LNSG

While LNSG's past experience itself convinced many Jordanians to support their platform, the group still engaged in several outreach strategies to convince the public of its message and its platform. LNSG conducted personal outreach to social networks in Jordan's rural areas, rekindled relations with co-activists from labor movements, reconnected with its regime insiders, and conducted strategic media messaging about the group's goals and intentions.

3.3.1 Rural Networks

LNSG specifically sought to outreach to its already strong and established networks in rural areas of Jordan as one of its initial recruitment strategies. LNSG was already well-positioned to mobilize support and interact with these communities given the group's platform and promotion of working class interests. In Jordan, rural areas are often considered working class whereas the capital center of Amman is thought of as the hub of private sector and elite interests among the public. This distinction was exacerbated in the minds of the public following the King's neoliberal policy reforms. For example, many Jordanians outside of the capital worked in state-owned entities such as the Potash and Phosphate companies that were privatized under these reforms. It should also be noted that many Jordanians living in non-urban locations who were not employed in these type of entities but in government or military positions also were affected by the neoliberal reforms that initially cut military veterans' benefits for example. Rural areas subsequently felt materially and symbolically "forgotten" under Abdullah II's leadership. While the government would later make some policy shifts to mitigate the effects of these transformations on Jordan's working class, the effects of this economic hardship is still prevalent in the everyday lives of many Jordanians in these regions.

Many of LNSG's founding members also claimed rural Jordanian roots, or identified with these populations based on socioeconomic class, shared or similar experiences under the neoliberal policy shifts, or shared ethnic or tribal backgrounds (i.e. native Jordanians that do not have Palestinian origins). Even beyond their reputation of representing working class interests or based on their

association with leftist movements, these particular connections with the Jordanian public further heightened the appeal of LNSG in rural areas.

In order to mobilize this already strong support for their goal to establish a political party, LNSG conducted personal small group meetings with key community leaders in all twelve governorates during the first few months of its establishment in order to recruit the necessary support to form a political party at that time (based on the law at that time, LNSG needed 250 members to officially register as a political party)[16]. LNSG also held many of its general meetings outside of the capital of Amman, in part due to financial constraints (discussed later in this section), but also as a strategy to recruit and signal support and solidarity with rural Jordanians as key contributors to the group's platform and decision-making processes. LNSG' *process* of outreach to these areas (i.e. holding decision-making meetings and personal one-on-one conversations in the rural communities and based on previous activism or kinship ties) was subsequently just as important as the act of outreach itself for LNSG as it branded the group—and signaled to rural Jordanians—that LNSG was credible and sincerely invested in the interests of the entire Jordanian nation.

3.3.2 Labor Coalition Networks

LNSG also devoted its recruitment efforts to rekindling and reviving its strong networks and alliances it built as part of the labor protests between 2007 and 2010. LNSG specifically pursued developing and strengthening its alliances with the military veterans who already had an organization called the National Committee for Retired Servicemen (NCRS) during this period. NCRS became politically active in response to the neoliberal reforms that cut veterans' welfare benefits and sought to restructure the country's armed forces. The founding members of LNSG were already in communication with many members of this group prior to the group's official establishment given their work together in supporting the Aqaba port workers. Many members of LNSG, for example, were also regular attendees of the NCRS' weekly political salons, forums designated to discuss national and regional politics in an open and informal space. The veterans were a critical ally to LNSG given the fact that they appealed to

---

[16] Note that the law for registering as a political party was different during the time of LNSG versus the Free Assembly discussed in the previous chapter of this thesis.

Jordanians with various political sentiments, had strong and strategic connections to the regime, and connected LNSG to a wider age and governorate demographic. The veterans' extensive experience operating both within the Jordanian political system and outside (with their support and participation in labor strikes, for example) further validated LNSG's platform and goal to establish a political party. It demonstrated that the group would be well-equipped to combat tentative regime efforts to stop them from reaching their goal.

As one LNSG member reflected to me about the group's connections with the veterans, when security forces brutally cracked down the protest in the Aqaba port, the protesters took refuge in the Military hospital in the area. The military commander of the area issued a clear threat to the security forces and said "the military will defend the protesters" (Interview ILN, 4 October 2017). This example highlights the strength and political importance of these veterans to LNSG. On one hand, they are connected to the regime, given their military affiliations. At the same time, their position as veterans is respected by the regime and the public, which gives the veterans the political space and legitimacy to challenge political and economic conditions in the Kingdom (in this case, the security forces). Having the veterans as allies gave LNSG the political weight it needed to be taken seriously by regime actors, and also by the Jordanian public.

3.3.3. Regime Networks

LNSG's founding members were also well-connected with regime insiders directly: from street-level bureaucrats, to ministry workers and leadership, to members of the intelligence department and royal court. Many of these regime insiders were sympathetic to the nationalist movement broadly given its support of working class interests, its platform in promoting the preservation of the Jordanian homeland, and its interests in promoting native Jordanian interests in an era where neoliberal reforms were conflated with the upward mobility of Palestinian Jordanians (given their strong presence in the private sector) and the downward mobility of native Jordanians (who were concentrated in the public sector). These public sector workers were subsequently ready to work and ally with LNSG and their platform; although not publicly. Rather, they showed their sympathy and support by consistently providing or leaking inside information about the regime to the group. These streams of information were critical

resources for the group that shaped how LNSG strategized its recruitment strategies, public platform, and media messaging.

In fact, it was from the founding members' personal contacts in the regime that the group decided to establish itself as an autonomous branch of the social left with the goal of establishing a political party given information about growing internal divisions in the regime leadership among conservatives and neoliberals.[17] For example, regime insiders were key sources that provided the information to LNSG about corruption within the regime, even at the highest levels of the King. LNSG used this information to launch a public mass media humiliation of the government's connections with these actions. Due to naming and shaming corrupt figures, the regime was subsequently forced to to address some of the most well-known corruption cases (even those closest and loyal to the regime). The case of Khalid Shaheen is illustrative: He was a well-known business tycoon close to the King who was convicted by the State Security Court for bribery in the high-profile $1.2 billion contract scandal to expand the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Co. (JPRC), the kingdom's only oil refinery. Shaheen was sentenced for three years after being found guilty of embezzlement and bribery in the JPRC case along with three other JPRC officials. The Shaheen case was then followed by the trial of prominent security, political, and economic figures, including a trial against the former head of General Intelligence Department (GID), Mohammad Dahabi (Ryan 2011b; Also see Garaa News 2016). LNSG's ability to expose, respond and challenge regime actions subsequently earned the group the respect and support from an even wider array of the Jordanian public—even beyond its immediate networks; showing that they could build on their historical record of challenging regime rule and policies in the contemporary era.

This massive popular support, their ability to expose regime corruption, and the group's radical agenda that criticized the King directly, increased the visibility of LNSG to regime actors to a new extent. The regime began to see LNSG as an agent promoting a culture of criticizing the king and his

---

[17] This divide between the "palace" (i.e. the neoliberals) and some national institutions (predominantly conservative), mainly the department of general intelligence, became apparent in the spring of 2010. Building on their regime connections, LNSG was able to expand and exploit this division to attract more supporters from the various levels of the regime, such as former prime ministers, military commanders, and the high ranking officers from the department of intelligence.

family particularly among classes, groups, and regions of the country that previously were sympathetic to the regime's rule. LNSG was now on the regime's radar; and the regime was ready to act against the movement to ensure its power would not be undermined. This was particularly important because LNSG's actions (criticizing the king, exposing corruption) garnered more public sympathy. LNSG was considered at the forefront of confronting the regime despite the high prices and the consequences it would suffer from exposing corruption and regime mismanagement of the country. The public became more vocal as a result of LNSG's lead, suggesting that the group played a major role in breaking the fear barrier among the public to feel able to challenge the political status quo publicly. This was especially true among groups that was traditionally supportive of the regime.

3.4. Framing LNSG as an advocate for the Jordanian Nation: Media Strategies

The founding members of LNSG strategically used media resources to spread awareness about their establishment and increase support for their platform among the Jordanian public. LNSG was able to effectively use media as a strategy not only given their technical know-how, skills, networks, and experience in the country's media sector, but also because of the select narratives they included in their outreach that played upon the public's perceptions of the Jordanian nation and the Arab Spring.

LNSG's media messaging leveraged perceptions of "the Jordanian nation" and the Arab Spring to promote and build credibility for LNSG's platform. Beyond the publication of the group's manifesto, LNSG also drew upon writings from prominent Jordanian writers and activists and others that romanticize Jordan's nationalist past before decades of neoliberal reforms swept the country.

For example, the group relied on the reputation and writings of Nahed Hattar, a Jordanian activist, to advocate for the LNSG's platform and frame the group as for the people of Jordan. Nahed was one of the most prolific writers on Jordanian politics at the time of LNSG's establishment. In the public eye, Nahed was the face of the nationalist social left, as one of the early and first activists to challenge the King and his power directly only a few years after martial law was ended in the Kingdom. He was considered controversial by some, but was admired by many for his charisma and willingness to challenge authority for social justice. Nahed's writing was also considered an art of sorts: effectively

conveying and capturing the sentiments and feelings of a diverse array of Jordanians through his articles on politics, economic reforms and other social changes affecting the country. While not an official founding member of LNSG, Hattar published multiple pieces in the early days of LNSG's formation supporting their platform and their mission to establish a political party. Many of LNSG's founding members were also former "apprentices" to Hattar; having learned how to persuasively articulate political ideas to the public under his guidance and "be social justice activists" (Interview MAS). Some of the members were also journalist columnists by profession in some very popular online news outlets, such as *All of Jordan*, which allowed the group to utilize online and social media to expand its visibility and therefore expand its platform. LNSG members therefore knew not only what and where to write, but how to write and present the LNSG platform to the public in an effective and strategic manner.

Even on a more technical level, this saving the Jordanian nation framing allowed the group to harness and fuse what might otherwise be considered mixed messaging, goals, and resources related to LNSG's platform. After all, LNSG wanted to challenge the system, but yet work within it through a political party. The group wanted to preserve the sanctity of national institutions, yet also restructure the power of the king. The group wanted to improve economic stability and resources for Jordanians, but also challenge the limited structures of economic capital and revenue in the country as well.

In order to do this, the group revived and "resurrected" (as they say) symbols like the late former Prime Minister Wasfi Al-Tal, who is considered a war hero remembered as an official who was "clean from corruption." The group also incorporated symbols that romanticized Jordanians' previous work and reputation in agriculture as part of the Jordanian identity. Drawing on these historical images was a way for LNSG to situate its platform with symbols of success and prosperity. Appealing to a unified, all-encompassing Jordanian nation, and a past premised on shared prosperity, created a critical way to rationalize and legitimize what may be perceived as contradictions in LNSG's approach to political reform.

The group also strategically used perceptions of the Arab Spring to expand their activities and support for their platform. With public perceptions that the Middle East region, including Jordan, would be more open to political expression and actions, LNSG decided to organize weekly public activities

94

such as speeches, demonstrations, conferences, and public gatherings to advocate for reform. Perhaps in another time or period, these sessions would have limited numbers of participants given previous laws preventing political activities in the Kingdom in years past. However, LNSG encountered the opposite, finding that ideas of the Arab Spring as opening routes for social change, and even the King's acknowledgement of the transformations in Tunisia and Egypt publicly (and his engagement with some limited political reforms nationally), encouraged more members of the Jordanian public to attend these events. In this way, LNSG was able to connect to an even greater network of Jordanians, earning an image of dedication and credibility among the Jordanian public, even when their numbers were small at the early stages of the group's establishment.

3.5. LNSG's Early Challenges

One area in which LNSG faced hardship during the initial phase of its establishment was in terms of monetary resources. While the group had strong experience as activists and organizers, lack of financial resources significantly shaped and sometimes challenged the group's organization and internal structure as well as their public outreach and actions. Many of the founding members, for example, paid from their own pockets to organize actions and outreach for the group (such as arranging transportation to protest locations, and conducting outreach visits). However, many of these members were already suffering financially, so this support was also limited. Coming from working class backgrounds, and in a context where the Jordanian economy was weak, meant that LNSG members possessed limited access and opportunities to funding and material support in terms of patrons, office places to work or other related possibilities. Many of them were in service or labor jobs, and many of them faced periods of unemployment during their time with LNSG as well.

Many of the founding members also described how they were working "double shifts": their day jobs (or even two), and the work for the group since they could not afford to hire or pay someone to do the work on the group's behalf. This also meant that a very concentrated group was responsible in developing and generating the documents and manifesto of the group in the initial days of its establishment; a point that at a later date would present an issue in terms of regime repression strategies

(discussed in the next section) **(Interview AIT)**. This also affected where and how they met: while the group most frequently met in Amman, the members would also and often meet in areas outside of the capital where they lived (such as Fuhais and Salt) to cut down on transportation costs; or they would communicate via phone and social media to coordinate and organize their activities.

Yet, this lack of monetary resources ironically became a resource for the group in some ways: having little money increased the acceptance of the group especially in rural areas, because they were seen as "equals" and "clean" from fundings from entities with "agendas" (Interview AIT). They were considered in touch and like their fellow Jordanians who experienced economic hardship on a daily basis; it made the public think that LNSG is "more like them". How this lack of resources became a resource for LNSG's legitimacy and ability to mobilize the public is important to highlight because SMT might normally think about resource deprivation as a challenge that undermines a group's trajectory; but in this case it was the opposite. The domestic environment shaped how LNSG assessed its political opportunity to frame and leverage its lack of monetary resources in a way that moved it closer to its goal and achieve public support.

3.6 Fast Success? LNSG and the Jordan Spring

By November 2012, a mere six months after its founding, LNSG was *the* political "Jordan Spring" group making national—and even international—headlines about its protest actions and agenda for social change. Some of the largest public street demonstrations since the 1996 bread riots took place throughout the Kingdom, largely orchestrated by LNSG and their allies. LNSG not only directed and partnered with other groups to organize these massive street protests, but was also writing and publishing articles promoting social change in Jordan; and even challenging the regime in public speeches and other social media outlets. The fact that such massive demonstrations occurred in the first place and even the broader public sympathy towards these protests would seem that LNSG had succeeded at least in its first phase in garnering the support of the Jordanian public to promote its platform and its mission to establish a political party. Yet, as founding members recalled, the LNSG's political party application had already been rejected two months prior to these demonstrations based on

technical reasons (the Ministry of Interior responsible for approving registration said they did not have the necessary amount of members to qualify for party status). At the same time, several prominent LNSG members were being held in prison for their street protest activity or their political writings, suggesting that LNSG's momentum might be coming to a close. So what explains why LNSG was still proceeding with a business-as-usual approach despite what would appear as setbacks to building the group?

According to founding members, the rejection of the party application was not truly even considered a setback given their growing popularity and support among the public and their goal to work within the system through a political party *or* an alternative channel. In other words, the goal to establish a political party was just one way to operationalize their approach to work within the system to make change. For them, other options were still on the table.

This suggests that in studies of social movements, it may be short-sighted to assess a group's success or failure simply based on their platform; or what they say they want to accomplish publicly. After all, it seems in the case of LNSG, the group was using a platform as a strategy to (1) be able to operate in an authoritarian environment (i.e. frame themselves as willing to work within the system) and (2) win the public support (i.e. presenting their platform in a way that the public could understand and envision happening, and also not fear repression if they publicly supported LNSG). The people of Jordan have long been unable to conceptualize a viable alternative to the King, but framing social change as happening through a political party—rather than an overthrow—was a way for LNSG to make its platform understandable and desirable to the public.

In terms of members' imprisonment, LNSG also used this as a resource to increase their appeal and support among the Jordanian public: visualizing regime repression of social change to illustrate their dedication and support to "the Jordanian nation." For example, articles were written in response to images and documentation recording the members' imprisonment that highlighted LNSG's dedication and hard work for the Jordanian people. The members of the group were labeled as "brave" because they were oppressed a lot by the regime and their persistent dedication to achieving their demands of comprehensive reform in the country despite these challenges. In this way, imprisonment

or regime repression tactics more broadly fueled the development and strength of LNSG, rather than quell the group's upward trajectory. LNSG was subsequently able to leverage constructs of suffering as individual members that were reflective of the larger Jordanian nation's political, economic and social suffering to advance its platform even in contexts and in response to actions that would suggest otherwise.

As the culmination of these examples illustrate, LNSG was able to use its resources—and its lack or resources—to expand the accessibility and support for its platform, increase its legitimation and acceptance among the Jordanian public, increase its political weight in the eyes of the regime, and frame itself as a credible, dedicated group to achieving political and social change for the entire Jordanian nation.

3.7 Dismantling the LNSG: Repression and Regional Divisions

While the first six months of LNSG's existence on the Jordanian political scene seemed overall promising, multi-level repression strategies and internal divisions within LNSG regarding the group's relationship with the regime quickly undercut the rapid development of LNSG. The political and socioeconomic context both nationally and regionally shaped LNSG's interactions with regime figures; and also affected decision-making processes within the group that scattered the group and its agenda within a year's time. This process of decline is telling of how protest group and regime relations are often intertwined; even mirroring each other's strategies in some contexts as well.

3.7.1. Regime Repression Strategies

While the climax of LNSG's existence largely coincides with the November 2012 uprisings (according to former LNSG members, but could also be argued in terms of public support and visible presence in the Jordanian political scene), LNSG members were already being targeted by regime actors looking to dismantle the group through repression tactics. Specifically, regime actors used several approaches: phone threats, threats to their jobs and livelihoods (i.e. firing), public slander, state security court cases, and imprisonment. LNSG members were also censored (subject to surveillance and monitoring), and even faced violence at the hands of thugs during public demonstrations that were allegedly mobilized

by the government as well (Interview RFA). The group was also denied from forming their desired political party not only for technical reasons; but also with the stipulation that "if they continue with their party activities after rejecting their application they can be accused of 'unlawful assembly'" (Interview RFA). These repression tactics were orchestrated by different branches of the government; not solely the general intelligence department. The Minister or Interior can issue restrictions on the group in this case, or even governors in the different cities of Jordan have the power to arrest people administratively without indicating any reasons which happened to members of LNSG on different occasions.

These efforts also targeted specific key members and prominent figures of LNSG, not necessarily the group in general. For example, one founding member, Rakan, of LNSG received multiple untraceable phone calls from intelligence officials threatening him and his family for his political activities and public writing. He continued his political work nonetheless. However, the calls continued and his employer, a well-known news outlet in the Kingdom, abruptly told him that he would have to "let him go." Rakan later found out that his employer was also threatened directly by the regime as well if he did not fire him, and regime insiders also made calls to other news outlets to ensure that they did not hire the now-jobless Rakan. Coming from a relatively humble background, with children to support, and difficulty finding work, Rakan had to sell many of his assets, including his car. At a later date and through separate channels initiated by judicial figures associated with the regime, Rakan was even taken to trial in the state security court (a martial court that put civilians on trial) for "inciting revolution and slandering the king." Rakan then began to miss meetings with colleagues and friends. According to one individual who was supposed to meet with Rakan for his work, "Meeting Rakan as part of my political report. We had an appointment. But then I could not reach him. I was supposed to meet him on the 26th of March, two days after major street demonstrations. A week later I managed to reach him and we met, but he told me he had to disappear for some days as the security agencies were after him" (Interview AIS). Given some of his own personal social networks with activists and sympathizers operating both in and outside of Jordan, Rakan eventually managed to flee the country in the fall of 2013 and received asylum in a European country.

Rakan's story is just one of many from LNSG like this: Many of the activists in the group were sent to state security courts and charged with the following (all or some): Subverting the system of government, Lese Majeste (insulting the king), participation in unlawful assembly or gathering, and vandalism of property **(**Interview RBT**)**. Several members were also imprisoned both before and after the November 2012 uprising for their political activities (with some cases still pending today). Many LNSG members who previously faced trial or jail time reported to the researcher that it continues to be difficult for them to find work and employers willing to hire them based on their records and previous political activities. As one member recalled to the researcher,

"Yes, I was arrested in the November uprising of 2012. I was in jail for over a month. They [the regime] just wanted to break my spirit and moral, and set an example for other activists. It was tough, and it is still is, since they never closed my case. They just want to break our dignity and pride. There were partially successful to be honest, many of us left the group or left the country" **(**Interview SDS**).**

Until this point, it is important to note that most of these regime repression tactics were covert and targeted as individuals; not LNSG as a group or its platform. At a point when Arab Spring politics and the international community were placing pressure on regimes like Jordan and Morocco to "entertain" reform prospects, the government as a rational actor wanted to appear that it was not completely intolerant of change. King Abdullah's public statements to combat corruption and the establishment of a National Dialogue Committee at this time to discuss change in the country are illustrative of this. One could argue that even the fact that the regime allowed public demonstrations to take place without massive crackdowns is also indicative of how the regime was positioning itself publicly as "open" to change; albeit employing repression tactics against individual activists beyond the public gaze. The country's stance—and even bragging—about "not having political prisoners, nor blood on its hand (when compared to the regimes in Egypt and Syria)" at this time highlights this public positioning, but it was not for long that the regime could maintain this facade while simultaneously repressing activists with strong social networks among not only the Jordanian public, but also within the regime itself.

In fact, the ways in which the regime responded and repressed LNSG highlight the group's connections to key members in the regime, but also the fractured nature of the regime. As one member recalled: "There was a group [within the ranks of the regime] that provided us with information and cover, security and political cover. And there was another group in the regime repressing us…meaning violence" (Interview ILN). To consider the regime as autonomous and fully behind the repression of LNSG therefore seems short-sighted. Looking at the fractures within the regime may be more telling of how and why repression strategies initially took the covert form that they did against LNSG and other activists at this time.

The growing public visibility—and sympathy for—imprisoned activists both during and after the November 2012 uprisings also highlight this tension within the regime leadership on how to orchestrate "successful" repression: how to coordinate a unified stance of "openness" but disrupt and dismantle threats to the political status quo. After all, allowing public demonstrations, or partial political activities, strengthened the credibility of the regime and its actions at a time when regimes throughout the Middle East were subject to increased public scrutiny both nationally and internationally (Moss 2014). At the same time, imprisonment tactics to quell opposition was undermining this credibility; making the regime look hostile to social change and political assembly. LNSG played on the latter, in fact "visibilizing" imprisonment of its members as a way to challenge the regime and earn credibility and more sympathy among the Jordanian public accordingly. For example, as one LNSG member recalled, the group leveraged and brought attention to its imprisoned members as part of LNSG's strategic messaging to the public to demonstrate that the group was "suffering" with the Jordanian public in their efforts to work hard for social justice and political change in the Kingdom (Interview NRH, 18 September 2017). One member was even called "brave" in news and online forums for his imprisonment as a result of his work "for the Jordanian nation" (Interview NNT, 6 October 2017). These examples highlight how repression, while intended to dismantle social protest groups, can also be leveraged as a resource by political groups to earn credibility, sympathy and more support for their platform and actions accordingly. These examples further highlight the necessity to consider when and

why covert versus public repression tactics are used and who benefits from them (whether intended or unintended) when assessing the trajectories of social protest.

The regime in turn responded to this group coercively, dismantling the overall movement through force tactics (armed police breaking up protests) and intelligence interventions (untraceable phone call threats to LNSG members related to work and family, blackmail messages, etc.) (Interview RHR). As one interviewee noted:

> "We protested in the streets, we were beaten by our brothers from the gendarmerie, we went on hunger strikes, and we supported labor movements. We thought that as brave activists we can change the country. But not enough we needed more than that" (Interview IDD).

Realizing that usual repression strategies might be limited in quelling LNSG's development and growing public support, even with the government's decision to deny their political party application, the King of Jordan decided to hold a personal meeting with the leadership figures of the group following the November 2012 uprisings. As this next section shows, this meeting served as another way to dismantle LNSG through cooptation rather than repression strategies.

3.7.2. LNSG Meets with the King

In December 2012, the King arranged to meet with the leadership of LNSG at the home of a minister who was considered a long-time nationalist and well-connected with both LNSG and the King. According to LNSG members present at the meeting, the King started the conversation by introducing himself as a "fellow leftist" in terms of health and education, but a "rightists when it comes to the Army and a centrist when it comes to politics" (Interview RFA, 10 January 2018). He also expressed concern for the nation, given the pressure he was facing political pressure from Gulf countries and Turkey on the Syrian crisis and from Egypt in terms of Islamists and gas related matters. He even, to the surprise of LNSG, expressed resentment in terms of how the security agencies of the regime repressed protestors, and even promised to resolve the outstanding court cases of the LNSG members present in the meeting.

However, the King's main goal for holding the meeting in the first place was to convince LNSG to participate in upcoming parliamentary elections as a strategy to quell the rise of Islamists in the

country. Similar to the rise of political Islam in other countries in the region, the Arab Spring period in Jordan was marked with rising support for various factions of Islamist movements in Jordan ranging from the Islamic Action Front (IAF) to the Salafists. By allying with the regime vis-a-vis participating in elections, LNSG and the regime would be able to collectively stem the development of a mutual enemy, the Islamists.

Regime leadership in Jordan used the regional crisis to maintain the status quo and even gain more power. For example, in the meeting with LNSG, but also through public media outlets, the king and other regime leaders emphasized the regional bloodshed and violence in neighboring countries such as Syria and Iraq as a reason to support the regime, and refrain from political activism and major change at that time. Yet, it was not only the regime that began advocating for stability over democracy in Jordan at this time. Activists, including LNSG, began to to halt and reduce their activities. Jordanian activists realized that their impact would be minimal during a state of domestic and regional chaos. They could be framed as fueling more chaos; or lacking concern for how neighboring conflicts could affect the domestic scene as well.

3.7.3 Participation in Elections

Following the meeting with the King, and after meetings with other LNSG members, the group decided to participate in the elections—even without political party status given that Jordanian law allows registered blocs to put forth candidates to participate. In conjunction with activists from other groups, LNSG established the *Abnaa Al-Harratheen* Bloc within a week from their meeting with the king. The elections were to take place at the end of January 2013. The Harratheen list of individuals running for election included nine men and one woman. The men were from native Jordanian backgrounds, and the woman was strategically selected as a Palestinian-Jordanian to broaden the bloc's support base among the Jordanian public.

However, the group's participation in the elections had mixed results. On one hand it was unsuccessful, with none of the ten candidates winning a seat despite regime promises. On the other hand, the elections were considered legitimate in terms of voter participation, thus undermining the

Islamists objectives from boycotting the elections (Interview ILN). Some members and observers of the elections argued that the group's lack of material and financial resources to support the campaign played a major role in undercutting their efforts to win seats as they did not have offices and funding to sponsor campaign activities, despite some small donations from sympathizers to their platform. Yet, LNSG's ability to effectively reach out to the public and develop support for its platform prior to its decision to participate in the elections suggests that more factors were involved in shaping this mixed outcome.

For example, LNSG members shared with the researcher that the decision to participate in the elections in the first place was a point of debate within the group. This was for several reasons. First, many members considered participation as a sign that would legitimize what they considered an unfair and unrepresentative electoral law that was instituted in 2013. Participation would therefore signal that this regime-led cosmetic legal reform was indeed legitimate as even some of the strongest opposition groups to the regime were willing to participate in elections under this new legal framework (Interview AIT). Second, allying with the regime even in the face of Islamists and participating in the elections was a way for the regime to control—and ultimately suppress and coopt—LNSG from developing further activities outside the framework of an election-related campaign. These internal tensions subsequently and arguably contributed to uneven, and often fluctuating efforts, to support and develop the Abnaa Al-Harratheen Bloc's campaign. As one member recalled,

> "We wanted the elections to be successful, so the Islamist do not succeed in failing them. Based on understandings we reached with the regime, we were somehow convinced that our list will get two seats in parliament…[some LNSG members] wanted a list that included candidates from the nationalist spectrum…from LNSG, the veterans (our main ally), and from Jordanian bureaucrats …. That's when the divides started to appear [among LNSG members] and the latter two groups also withdrew from the meetings and each group formed its own electoral list" (Interview RYT).

This is important to highlight because it shows that the group was just as concerned as the regime of the Islamists gaining power in Jordan, to the extent that it was willing to change its original plans and strategies to achieve its goals related to political and social change. At the same time, the decision to

participate in the elections seems to be something that not all LNSG members agreed upon; leading to divisions within the group. How different members understood their dedication of the group's nationalist ideology in relation to the regime led to major divides internally that would ultimately undercut the group's cohesion and forward trajectory accordingly.

3.7.4. Regional Divisions and Post-Election Decline

What is interesting to consider is why and how LNSG arrived at the bargaining table in the first place and what processes ultimately shaped their decision to participate in the elections. After all, agreeing to ally with the King after the meeting, and the meeting itself, could be considered one of the many repression tactics the regime used to dismantle LNSG. The meeting, and the effects of the meeting on LNSG's trajectory highlight how the following factors shaped the group's trajectory thereafter: LNSG's charismatic leadership and the national and regional environments.

3.7.4a. Nahed Hattar: The Charismatic Leadership of LNSG's Unofficial Leader

Nahed Hattar, while not directly a "leader" of the group per se, was a major influencer in terms of guiding this decision-making process for LNSG to meet with the King. First, he was invited and joined LNSG members at the meeting with the King given his reputation as one of the major leaders of the Social Left. Following the meeting, he also wrote an article that was shared with LNSG members and the broader Jordanian public that was quite sympathetic to the regime in the context of combatting the rise of Islamists. Hattar's articles had previously been key sources of LNSG's media messaging to develop their platform in previous months, and was once again received by the public from a similar perspective. This is important because Hattar was considered one of the most outspoken critics of the King's leadership; having even faced jail time and exile as a result in previous years. Yet, here was a prominent activist with a record of successful protest actions that was ironically siding with the regime at this moment. In Hattar's words:

> "In late 2012, the national movement and the popular movement in the governorates reached
>
> the following conclusion: the entity [state of Jordan] is in danger .. Let us postpone the battle
>
> of change so that the homeland will not fall into chaos and the control of violent religious

forces. The political kitchen [regime] did not understand this; it believed that the Jordanian movement was dead. It thought that it was possible to reverse the gains achieved by the movement! […] The national identity file, which was at the heart of the popular movement…The wall that prevented the Muslim Brotherhood from taking control of the people's movement was underestimated in an unprecedented manner, and the Jordanian national, political, media and cultural feelings were ignored and rejected. There is a dark road and a mysterious future [ahead] in terms of their state, entity and identity….Our country is now at a very dangerous juncture; while the terrorist threats, which can not be repressed without popular national mobilization, are colliding, official policies in all areas collide with the interests of the Jordanian national social forces that have lost confidence, feel deception and despair and will not hesitate to return to the field of protest which is what happened in 2011. Now, before we go to the unknown, a bold and decisive political decision has to be made to form a government of poles (composed of former prime ministers and national leaders) with the full powers of the general mandate to manage the accumulated and cross-strained crises. This government will serve as a permanent dialogue table, reach a national consensus formula on the constitution, election law, decentralization, investment fund, address the public debt crisis, liquidate corruption files, restore the basic role of the governorates development fund, etc., and confirm the national identity and the final position of international projects…" (Hattar 2016).

Aligning with the regime was considered a strategic way to save the Jordanian nation as outlined under LNSG's platform. But the regime was also using similar saving the Jordanian nation from Islamists rhetoric to recruit—and repress—LNSG from acting outside the framework of the elections. In this way, we can see how political protest groups and regime counterparts drew upon similar romanticized images of a Jordanian nation in need of saving as a strategy to substantiate not only their platforms and existence, but to justify controversial decisions, contradictory messaging and adherence to the status quo.

Even beyond the threat of Islamists, LNSG's decision to participate in the election also highlights how political environment factors sub-nationally, nationally, and regionally informed how they chose to act; and how they perceived their decision as a rational choice. For example, the growing crisis in Syria at that time was considered a major political and economic threat to Jordan among protestors, the regime and the public. As refugees began entering the country en masse (even Zaatari refugee camp was still relatively new at this time), LNSG members felt there was little political space and social appetite to fight for national political reforms on the streets amidst a massive humanitarian crisis with serious security implications for the country. Participating in an election, or working through established, and "quieter" channels (in lieu of their usual street protests) seemed more suitable given the political climate.

What is ironic, however, is that this regional climate of the Arab Spring, including the rise of Islamists in countries like Egypt and the subsequent Syrian revolution, was initially considered ripe and hospitable for social change in places like Jordan. Protestors, political groups became more prevalent and active in demanding political reforms and assembling in the streets; and the government at first was responsive, feeling the pressure from Jordanians and the international community alike. Yet, at the same time, this regional climate was then used by the regime to substantiate and validate its repressive actions and decisions to disengage with political reform efforts in the name of security of the country in an "unstable" region.

LNSG's activities subsequently dwindled significantly following the failed elections and the rising tide of the Syrian crisis. While some activists still took to the streets in smaller numbers, members of the intelligence often quelled their activities easily through phone threats, interrogation tactics and thugs. The failed elections also left many members of LNSG financially, socially and politically exhausted. Meetings and communication among the leadership became more ad-hoc. However, they did continue their social and traditional media presence and critique, but it became more directed to regional politics than Jordan specifically.

While LNSG's founding member activists still retained strong reputations among the Jordanian public, and still showed interest among their close allies and networks that they would continue to be active within the social left and nationalist movement more broadly, it was clear by mid-2013 that LNSG as a political group had been ultimately dismantled and would no longer return to the Jordanian politics scene.

3.8 More to the Story: The End of the LNSG?

While LNSG was dismantled by the middle of 2013, the group's impact within Jordanian society is still evident. A significant number of Jordanian youth continue to credit and point to LNSG and its allies as inspiration for their current involvement in political salons and related informal discussions about national politics and social justice. These youth refer to themselves as part of the nationalist social left, have adopted LNSG's manifesto in guiding their agendas, and use similar titles to LNSG to refer to their group.

More recently, they have been more active beyond political salons: organizing campaigns within their governorates and universities. In 2018, for example, the Nashama Bloc (meaning "the Jordanian" Bloc, a term that is often used to describe the Jordanian in terms of "the nation") comprised of these youth activists won university elections at the University of Jordan; the largest and most prestigious university in the country. Winning university elections are considered significant in Jordan as reflective of the political, social and economic climate in the Kingdom beyond the walls of the university. Youth organizing has long been repressed in the country, especially on university campuses, which means many youth enter the political scene with little to no experience in organizing actions and campaigns for social change. With this win, the Nashama Bloc youth have a critical opportunity to acquire these skills and knowledge on how to organize campaigns and related political activities.

The founding members of LNSG also remain active in the political scene, but in different forms. Overall, former LNSG members have scaled their work to focus on either local, municipality or governorate level politics or single-issue campaigns (such as the teachers' union and the daily wage workers). However, within the past year, national-level protests were organized in response to the U.S.

embassy move to Jerusalem, tax hikes on basic needs (such as water, electricity and bread), and political prisoners. Protests took place nationwide and were especially large in the governorates outside the capital. These protests, which occurred daily for several months, received media coverage, even on the international level in areas such as Salt and Madaba. What is interesting to note, however, is that the government fluctuated in its response to these demonstrations: cracking down on groups protesting national politics, but allowing demonstrations in terms of Jerusalem for example. Like we saw with the regime's interaction with LNSG during its tenure, Hashemite leadership wants to maintain its power, legitimacy and political status quo and thus "preserve the Jordanian nation." It was actually supportive of protests related to Jerusalem since the Jordanian leadership obtains parts of its religious legitimacy as leaders of the country through its role as custodian of religious sites in Jerusalem, the regime was supportive of Jordanians' protests in the streets on this issue. However, when Jordanians took to the streets to "save the nation" from increased taxes, the regime was more repressive; even violently cracking down on the demonstrations with the force of the gendarmerie and arresting many protesting individuals.

These recent developments suggest that new momentum may be building among the social left and related allies of the former LNSG, but that relations with the regime remain complicated in terms of how these actors will have to position themselves to succeed in achieving their goals for social change. After all, the social left and the regime continue to share and leverage platforms related to saving the Jordanian nation in ways that overlap, but also diverge in their narratives and strategies; a point that could both fuel or undermine nationalists' efforts to encourage social change and reform in the country. For example, some former LNSG members shared with the researcher that they are working informally to develop social programs related to education and health that they can introduce as part of a platform for elections that will be held in 2020. Yet, other former LNSG members showed little interest in participating in elections given their previous unsuccessful attempts in 2013 and how it might signal their relation with the regime to the public. Other LNSG members did not even know about these developments. The culmination of these actions and responses subsequently suggest that the

dismantling of LNSG has taken a significant toll on the organizational structures and lines of communication between the former members, allies and the social left more broadly.

Many of LNSG's members continue to feel the effects directly or indirectly of repression tactics from the regime based on their political activities. In addition to members who still struggle to find employers willing to hire them (Interview DNT, 9 January 2018), others continue to face direct phone threats from the intelligence, cannot always leave the house given threats to imprisonment, and remain under surveillance of the regime. As one interviewee told the researcher over the phone, "I unfortunately cannot meet with you today or anytime soon. The intelligence has been watching me closely for the past few weeks. I do not want to put myself or the protestors that work with me or you at threat which will happen if we meet." Like many other former members, this interviewee faced jail time on multiple occasions and still had open cases against him as of early 2018. In other words, the cost of political activism is high during a group's existence; but also in the afterword as well.

Even some former LNSG members living outside of the country are still dealing with the effects from regime repression tactics during their time with the group. For example, one member now living in the United Arab Emirates with his family struggles to find employment. This is because Jordan and the UAE, like other countries, hold an agreement between their intelligence departments that require tentative employees to obtain a document vouching for their "good behavior and reputation" (*Husn Al-Seera wa Al-Solouk*) before they will be hired. As one former member of LNSG told the researcher, "Sami in UAE cannot find any jobs these days…his wife has been the breadwinner for the past few years. He cannot obtain the certificate from intelligence to get a clearance for a job, just like the problem he faced here in Jordan" (Interview RBT). One LNSG member who claimed asylum in Europe even had a case brought against him while he was in the asylum process, in which the Jordanian government hired lawyers to extradite him back to the Kingdom in order to maintain their reputation as one of the "more liberal" authoritarian regimes in the Middle East (Interview AIH). The regime was ultimately unsuccessful in this attempt, and the former LNSG member now holds refugee status. This shows that the effects—and regime repression—of participating in political activism in Jordan transcend national

borders quite literally, even though individuals' actions and experiences are rooted in Jordanian-specific protest actions.

These developments since the dismantling of LNSG in mid-2013 suggest that perhaps there is more to the story of how and why political group trajectories interact or inform related social change processes both directly and indirectly and at different periods of time. The effects of LNSG on Jordanian youth, for example is clear: students are taking to the streets and the halls of their universities directly citing and using LNSG's strategies and platforms to promote social change. Yet how lingering repression strategies continue to shape and inform other elements of Jordanian society, such as contemporary regime tactics or former LNSG members' calculations of political participation may require more thoughtful consideration.

3.9. Findings: LNSG's Lack of Resources as a Resource

Unlike the FA, LNSG had little material resources given the members' local socioeconomic class backgrounds. However, and at the same time, members of the group had protest experience, strong networks, and strong alliances throughout the Kingdom; in part because their class status allowed them to connect with a wider group of Jordanians (particularly those in rural areas). While FA may have had more financial resources, what is interesting about LNSG is that it was *the lack of* financial resources that was a resource for the group to garner widespread support across the Kingdom. However, it was also this lack of monetary resources that also shaped regime responses to the group. This section reviews how this lack of resources relates to LNSG's trajectory. It highlights how the group particularly turned its lack of monetary resources into a strength and "resource" itself; to pose a threat to the regime's legitimacy and power in various ways. However, this section also summarizes how this lack of monetary resources was a way for the regime to infiltrate the group through repression and cooptation strategies.

Table 3. Trajectory of the Liberation National Social Group

Protest Group	Resources	Regime Links	Framing	P.O. Assessment	Findings
LNSG	M: Weak H: Strong O: Strong	Mostly with Security, Royal Court Insiders, and little ministries	Public-Exclusive Regime-Critical	Regional: Semi Domestic: Strong	**"Lack of resources was a resource"** -Threatened the regime legitimacy -Repressed and dismantled

3.9.1. LNSG's Resources: Weak Monetary Resources, Strong Human Resources, and Strong Organization

LNSG's monetary resources were limited because many members held jobs that provide only small wages for them and their families to live on (teachers, freelance Journalists, factory workers, daily wage labors). This caused challenges in terms of recruitment (i.e. traveling around to all of the governorates, being able to meet with people one-on-one) and holding regular meetings (space reservations and commute). Members of the group contributed material support when they could and LNSG's supporters also provided some financial support. Nahed Hattar was a major benefactor for the group for a bit, but this support ended shortly after the elections of 2013.[18] Some individuals who were part of the group or sympathizers of the group also gave small donations that helped the group to run for elections in November 2013. Yet, even with this support, LNSGs campaign was not financed adequately which contributed in part to why they were not able to win any seats in the parliament. Due to the lack of these monetary resources, the group members relied more on technology for coordination, recruitment, and mobilization. This affected their organization strategies as a result.

In terms of the group's human resources, LNSG's affiliation(s) with key nationalist figures, other protest groups, and previous experience in activism in Jordan meant the group was well-equipped in this regard. Nahed Hattar, for example, was one of these key nationalist figures that gave the group political weight for regime actors and among the public. Hattar, after all, was one of the first Jordanian opposition

---

[18] This was the case because Hattar had personal problems with some of the key members in the group; and as some interviewees said: "he felt betrayed by some of the key members" especially at the time when they met with King, and when some of the group allies turned their back on LNSG due to disagreements regarding the elections and forming national lists. In addition to that, the Syrian crisis redirected Hattar's attention: he wanted to fight for a bigger regional case in line with his Pan-Arabism ideology. Furthermore, he had personal financial troubles that made him unable to continue supporting the group.

figures to criticize the king and the royal court explicitly in different occasions and he supported different nationalist groups throughout his life till he was shot dead by and Islamic extremist in October 2016. These figures also served as middle men between LNSG and the regime. For example, it was a key nationalist figure that hosted the negotiations between the King and the group in his personal home.

The group's work, alliances, and even leadership positions with other organizations and protest groups such as teachers, daily wage laborers, and military veterans was also an important people resource for the group. With these allies, LNSG organized one of the biggest strikes in Jordan in 2012, the teachers' strike, which was focused on demands related to establishing a teachers union, the betterment of work conditions, and increase in teachers salaries. While this was a teacher-focused action, it was one way for LNSG to build its credibility in the eyes of the public and regime so that it would be able to successfully mobilize large numbers people in different parts of the country in future actions. Even though they started with a small number of members, LNSG was considered a "credible" representation of the people of Jordan through these alliances, subsequently attracting many members and sympathizers—especially among native Jordanians.

The group's appeal to native Jordanians was also because many members of the group were from native Jordanian backgrounds, rural upbringings, and working class status. They were perceived in such areas with respect as they were seen as people who shared similar struggles with working class and rural area populations. Through these connections, LNSG was able to organize protests successfully throughout country, not just in the capital.

The group also had a strong media arm and connections with online and public news outlets which allowed the group to utilize online and social media to expand its visibility. However, the regime passed increased censorship laws related to the media in 2013; suggesting that LNSG's successful use of the media to communicate with the public may in part relate to these reforms.

The organization of LNSG was structured around making visible protest actions. This in turn affected how they worked internally and how they made decisions. For LNSG, there was not a luxury of time, as the members organized around opportunities to protest. This meant that the internal organization

fluctuated; not as consistent as FA. For example, the group organized situational protests related to an issue or a legislation that was passed. Alternatively, they would organize a sit-in if a member of the group was arrested. Thus, members of the groups were more into organizing protest actions in order to keep a good level of momentum in the streets and keep the pressure on the regime. The major strength the LNSG had was its ability to organize and sustain these protest activities. Therefore, the group seemed to be reactive to opportunities to protest. The group had a platform and an organizational structure, but because its main strength was public activism from their previous experiences, its organization structure was mostly designed around this matter. In this way, previous protest group trajectories and members' previous activism are critical to consider in how they shaped the way resources were organized and mobilized in the case of LNSG.

Similar to FA, LNSG had communication between and among members through internet; and social media outlets such as WhatsApp. However, this was in part because LNSG did not have access to offices in the way that the FA did (or major patrons to sponsor their activities, their election campaigns, or political party registration) or members with enough free time to regularly meet. LNSG's decision-making processes involved only a small handful of members and meeting were often concentrated in the capital or in cities nearby (Fuhais and Salt) where these members lived. This created internal tensions because members started to feel left-out of these important decision-making processes. This tension was particularly heightened when LNSG decided to participate in the elections following the meeting with the King. Many members considered the specific decision to participate in the election as an unwise move (a decision that was made by only a small number of members in the group). Because the group originally and publicly criticized the electoral law in place in 2013 as unfair and not representative, many members saw the decision to participate in the elections as undermining LNSG's platform and legitimizing a law they initially saw as problematic to their goals as a group.

3.9.2. The LNSG Regime Links: Links with the Security Apparatus, Links with Royal Court Insiders, and little Links with Ministries

LNSG's relationship with regime insiders is important to highlight as it was central to the trajectory of the group; and why the group engaged in particular decisions and actions at different times of its

existence. Through regime insiders, LNSG members knew that there were going to be some openings in the parliament because it knew there was legislation being developed to change the political parties' law so that more groups—like LNSG—could have a seat at the table. Regime insiders also provided the information that allowed LNSG to expose the corruption cases within the regime. This was important in strengthening the popularity and trust of the group among the public.

The group also had support of military veterans, who by themselves had connections inside the military institution. This was important for gaining information as well, and making power plays against the regime (in terms of political support within the regime itself), and garnering public support because the military is highly respected among the Jordanian public. Regime leadership subsequently felt vulnerable because they realized that these insiders not only provided classified information to the group; but they were also playing key roles in mobilizing public support for LNSG against the regime.

These regime insider relations are important to highlight because it shows that LNSG did not assess political opportunity purely in response to the Arab Spring. While perhaps a factor, it was how the Arab Spring related to other domestic factors—like these insider connections—that explain why and when LNSG was able to emerge and develop its platform and strategies in the manner it did.

These relations allowed the group to move quickly and garner the support and sympathies of LNSG members' working class counterparts throughout Jordan. This massive popular support, along with LNSG's radical agenda that criticized the King directly framed LNSG as an agent promoting a culture of criticizing the king and his family particularly among classes, groups and regions of the country that previously were sympathetic to the regime's rule.

So while the LNSG was on good terms with some regime actors, others were ready to actively repressing the group. These factions within the regime responded to the group coercively and through cooptation. In terms of the former, these actions (arrests, phone threats, defamation campaigns) contributed to the group's dismantlement. In the short term, however, LNSG used regime repression to strengthen their popularity and mobilize more sympathizers. In terms of the latter, LNSG's meeting with the King in 2012 can be understood as a cooptation strategy. The regime proposed this meeting

because it felt threatened by two groups: the popular Jordanian movement (where LNSG is a leading faction) and the Islamists. The regime wanted to eliminate the threat of one of the groups so it sought to create an alliance with LNSG activists and others. The regime also did not want to lose its legitimacy because of the growing unpopularity in the public eye of their repression tactics against LNSG. The king even personally promised opening the system up and releasing political prisoners, and closing cases against activists. However, many of these promises remain unfulfilled to this day. Relatedly, because only a select number of members were present for this meeting, regime interactions bred mistrust and tensions within the group that undermined the group's internal organization and communication as well.

Working class status and the group's monetary resource deprivation was also a key way that the regime was able to intervene in their activities through different repression tactics such as: threatening their livelihoods; stopping their work; and imprisoning them. Members couldn't hire good lawyers to defend them in court due to the lack of money when the regime tried them in courts. Repression was a feasible tactic that the regime used because it was not just a story of them being more outwardly critical of the government than other groups, but the members' economic status meant that the regime could use this vulnerability as a way to challenge the group's development.

The case of LNSG shows that domestic and regional factors both and co-jointly shape regime interactions with protest groups; and that regimes act in multiple ways to dismantle groups. Repression and cooptation tactics were informed by regional factors (the growing rise of Islamists), but also intra-state factors (class divisions, growing resentment among Jordanian public of regime's repression tactics). At the same time, the case of LNSG shows how the regime is fractured and shaped the group's trajectory in complex ways (both facilitating and undermining their actions towards achieving their goals). Like FA, regime links were critical for LNSG to mobilize in the manners it did, but also was a central factor in why it was dismantled as well.

3.9.3 LNSG's Framing: Exclusive, and Critical of the Regime

LNSG called for comprehensive political and economic reform through a multi-cause platform. This was similar to the FA, but LNSG's manifesto was perhaps less developed (i.e. they did not have 92 goals articulated in a document). Unlike FA, LNSG's platform was more explicitly focused on Jordan-specific issues than general political change and also was more critical of the regime. The group called for specific changes related to intra-state dynamics such as:

> Restoring the Jordanian nation (i.e. Jordan before neoliberal reforms)
>
> Purging neoliberal interests from the regime and government
>
> Legalizing the disengagement with the West Bank in order to protect the national Jordanian identity, and to support the establishment of a Palestinian state.

LNSG members framed their group "for the Jordanian nation" and called for a "clean" government that served the nation in direct criticism of what they saw as a present system of officials working for personal or regime benefits rather than the people. LNSG's goal to legalize the disengagement with the West Bank further highlights how local identity politics between Jordanians from native backgrounds versus Palestinian origins affect protest groups' framing strategies in Jordan. Specifically, some members of Jordanian society perceive that legalizing the West Bank's disengagement would threaten Jordanians from Palestinian origins 'citizenship status; or they would somehow be considered less Jordanian than native Jordanian citizens. At the same time, native Jordanians feel that neoliberal reforms have unfairly allocated more economic resources to the private sector where more Palestinian-Jordanians are employed. Unlike FA who framed their platform as inclusive for all Jordanians regardless of background, LNSG used this case of the West Bank to promote a more exclusive platform in order to capitalize on their strong networks among native Jordanians.

Although LNSG literatures and actions were confrontational in their approach, they did not call for the removal of the king; but rather called for a curb to his power. At the same time, they also framed the King as responsible for problems in the kingdom (this is unlike the other groups), and sometimes they linked him with the corruption in the country. LNSG, however, also called for a political party as a vehicle to implement their agenda; suggesting they wanted to work within the system to make change.

In order to make sense of what may seem as these latter contradictions (criticizing the government, then wanting to be part of it) In LNSG's framing strategy, it is important to consider the following:

Regime relations: LNSG's Intelligence insiders told the group about legislative change that was planned so that they knew there was a chance that they could form a political party as a way to make change. Furthermore, LNSG was on good terms with military as well so it meant that they needed to show that it did not want to dismantle or be confrontational to the whole system and challenge the positions of their allies. By moving towards establishing a political party, LNSG showed their good intentions and willingness to work within the system. The group's military and intelligence informants and supporters gave them political weight within the context of Jordan so they were taken seriously by the regime; which legitimized their platform (the group's calls for change taken seriously). The regime perceived this as a serious threat that could not be co-opted.

However, and at the same time, LNSG was not on good terms with regime leadership (i.e. high ministers, the royal court, and the King) because of the neoliberal reforms that affected its supporters. So they were okay to criticize the King in certain ways linking him or the royal court to corruption cases, and criticizing the lavish life style of the king and his immediate family, particularly the queen (who members of LNSG referred to as "Marie Antoinette"- the last Queen of France). This portrayed a classical image of class struggle.

Local socioeconomic class status: LNSG emphasized their working class identities and goals to win the support of the public. Their local socioeconomic status was central to how they framed their agenda for change (not as prevalent in FA and Sadaqa). As members of the working class, they wanted to abolish privatization of national assets such as the Potash Company, Phosphate Company, and the telecommunication sector to name a few. Their point of view was that these assets belong to the people, and so, the state should have control over these means of production and not the private sector. They stressed on this point by emphasizing the "glory days" of Jordan before neoliberal reforms [privatization policies].

Resources: As highlighted in this chapter, social networks were key resources for group members of LNSG to:

> Design its platform (they had the social networks and regime insiders which shaped why and how they called for reform at the time and manner they did)
>
> Implement activities to spread awareness about their goals and explain their platform (through media outlets, protests, and outreach activities)

Lack of resources in terms of money showed that LNSG really wanted to work for the interests of the working class in Jordan. They appeared as if they are risking a lot.

Arab Spring: While the Arab Spring provided an opportunity for LNSG to enhance their activities, it do not really incorporate this into the framing of their platform or goals. The case of LNSG highlights that the Arab Spring was only important to the extent it provided a space for the group to increase its public activities without immediate repression. LNSG focused on Jordan and intra-Jordan politics (namely the gaps between the rich and poor; the rural and urban). Using such frames provided the group with dedicated supporters who maintained presence and momentum in the streets to achieve change. And while LNSG had similar goals and demands to FA, it had very different ways and motivations to frame its goals and demands in the manners that it did (i.e. resources, social status, and relation with the regime). Unlike the FA, members of the LNSG also focused on mobilizing in the street through various protest actions. This highlights the importance of protest actions—despite expansions of technology—the street still matters. After all, it was not only the group's regime insiders that posed a threat to the regime, but it was LNSG's physical presence in the street that also threatened regime authority and power as well.

3.9.4 LNSG's assessment of political opportunity: Weak Regional Influence, and Strong Domestic Influence

LNSG based its assessment of political opportunity largely on the information provided by regime insiders who provided the group with information and leaks about major corruption cases. LNSG also used these insider connections to determine when *not* to go to the streets as well; and to anticipate

regime repression against members in part. The Arab Spring was only part of this equation; and was considered among LNSG more as a way to escalate their activities that were already ongoing (i.e. they were not starting new ones) and to enhance their efforts in a more public way.

Specifically, LNSG's exposure of one big corruption case led to massive protests throughout the country, ultimately leading to key leadership resignations within the regime (including the Prime Minister, who was considered a godfather of the neoliberal reforms in the country). Changes in government indicated to LNSG that the public was ready to embrace social change—and for LNSG to increase its public and active presence to new extents. This happened in mid-January 2011, just before the major Arab Spring events started in Egypt for example. This reaffirms that the political opportunity that the group took was linked to local phenomena as much, and in fact more, than the broader Arab Spring dynamics in the region.

4. Chapter 4: Advocating for Women Rights under Authoritarian Regimes: The Case of Sadaqa, A Women's Group in Jordan

4.1. Chapter Summary

This chapter focuses on the factors and processes that affected the trajectory of a women's rights group in Jordan named Sadaqa. Sadaqa, meaning (friendship), first started as a single-issue campaign to promote the implementation of a daycare law for women workers during the Arab Spring. Today, it is considered one of the main players and official groups advocating for women's rights both nationally and in the Middle East region more broadly. Sadaqa is even well-known internationally for their pro-women platform and record of success in achieving legislative reforms within the Kingdom. This chapter traces the trajectory of Sadaqa.

The case of Sadaqa highlights how political opportunity can be imposed in some ways by outside interests that determine what events constitute political opportunity in different countries or locales (i.e. outside funders decided that the Arab Spring was a good opportunity for women's rights in Jordan, not necessarily the Jordanian people at first themselves). However, the group's resources, framing strategy, and regime links are locally-informed; and reflective of how local socioeconomic class hierarchies shape protest group trajectories. Specifically, class hierarchies shaped tensions both within and around the group related to its goals, and also its branding as a "liberal women's group"; suggesting that more attention is needed to how class and gender intersect in protest group trajectories in the Middle East as well.

Moreover, I find that what the group advocates for, and how they go about advocating for it, is strategic and particular to their position as a women's group within an authoritarian context. Specifically, Sadaqa focused its women's rights campaign on economic issues; namely women's economic participation. The group at its start strategically framed its campaign in terms of the betterment of the Jordanian economy and traditional notions of the family. While they challenged the status quo in some ways in terms of legal policy, they did so in a way that did not challenge the regime.

Moreover, focusing on a single issue or demand as a starting point, and aligning their goals and demands at least partly with the vision of the regime also were key elements that allowed Sadaqa to operate effectively in an authoritarian context.

These dynamics may suggest and relate at least in part to why more significant reforms for women's rights have yet to be implemented. While women activists were at the forefront of popular movements that challenged authoritarian rule and demanded political change during the Arab Spring in Jordan (Ababneh 2016), women rights issues including those advocated for by Sadaqa have been used by these same regimes to increase their legitimacy and legitimation internationally. (Mama 2013; Tripp 2013: 521-527; Tripp 2012; Salhi 2010; Adams 2007; Soothill 2007: 71-102; Zheng 2005). Sadaqa may subsequently reify rather than challenge regime legitimacy and the policy status quo since they help the regime to brand itself as open on the international level. Groups like Sadaqa also reify traditional notions of the family and gender through framing strategies that use traditional roles of the woman as the caretaker and homemaker as their point of departure to call for social change.

In the following paragraphs, I share the story of Sadaqa from its beginning in 2011 and reflect on these factors that have led to the group's trajectory and continued relevance in the present period.

4.2 Women Groups in Jordan: A General Overview

Studies of women social movements since the start of the Arab Spring in 2011 have been increasingly prolific, focusing on women participation in protests for political change (Alami 2013; Al-Ali 2012; Bertrand 2013; Coleman 2012; Santini 2011). However, attention to the role of women movements in terms of promoting social change in Middle Eastern authoritarian contexts in an in-depth manner and throughout history has been even more limited before the spark of the Arab Spring (see Charrad 2011 for a discussion of this; also see Ababneh 2016, Fleischmann 2003). This is particularly true in Jordan where limited work has examined the role of women in protest, let alone women groups more generally. Scholars have traditionally argued that women in Middle Eastern authoritarian countries such as Jordan have been forced to succumb to a manly-patriarchal culture that favors the power and discretion of men in all aspects of social, economic, and political lives; with women's participation in protests is

subsequently framed as a surprise or exotic or reduced to their gender exclusively (Ababneh 2016; also see Clark and Schwedler 2003).

This image of Middle Eastern contexts, however, fails to recognize the power that women have exerted in both the *private* and the *public spheres* through collective organizing for decades. For example, as Ababneh (2016) recently highlights in her study of labor movements in Jordan, women were central players to mobilizing support in hard-to-reach areas, acting as liaisons among different networks (work, communities, NGOs, etc.), and building up the image of the groups through unexpected protests and sit-ins at the Royal court. Throughout the rule of an authoritarian regime and with the existence of deteriorating economic and political situations (Schwedler 2012; Gause III 2011; Heydemann and Leenders 2011; Diamond 2010), women in Jordan refused to silently accept to sit and watch while men made decisions that affect their livelihoods directly.

We can see this with the present case of Sadaqa, a women's group that initially started as a campaign to promote women in the workplace that was supported by U.S. funding in response to the Arab Spring. While international attention and support to Jordanian groups in response to the Arab Spring has dwindled, Sadaqa continued to grow to become one of the most well-recognized groups advocating for women's rights and social change both within and beyond the borders of the Hashemite Kingdom.

4.3 Early Days of Sadaqa 2011-2012: Formation and Establishment

In response to the events of the Arab Spring, international donors and organizations based in Europe and North America launched multiple programs, funding schemes and new project platforms to support civil society development and social change throughout the region. In Jordan, this support often took the form of capacity-building trainings, workshops and new programs targeting local leaders and organizations to support them in addressing human rights and socioeconomic issues throughout the country. While political issues, such as freedom of the press, were addressed in part through these new programs and funds, most projects and international support focused on more neutral issues in the eyes of the regime. This was to allow Western donors to maintain their relationship with the ruling regime

while also signaling support for so-called democratic values. The birth of Sadaqa is part of this latter story.

An American organization called Vital Voices, a non-profit group committed to supporting women leaders in the areas of economic empowerment, women's political participation, and human rights, organized a workshop in a five-star hotel in the heart of the country's capital in 2011. Local women leaders from Jordan and other Arab countries participated in multi-day sessions related to leadership and capacity-building. The participants included legal professionals, journalists, community leaders, artists, and program managers in the private and non-profit sectors. During the final sessions of the workshop, the organizers asked the participants to form teams based on their nationality and to develop a campaign that they would like to implement in their home countries to promote women's rights and social change.

At the Jordanian table sat the founding members of the future Sadaqa. For many of them, this was one of the first times they collectively sat together. As one former member recalls: "We were 'new' to each other….we came from different classes, different mentalities….the rich, elite with dual citizenship and others [like me]" (Interview ANM). While these Jordanian women might come from different backgrounds and places, the five of them were collectively committed and could agree on the fact that they wanted to work on an issue that was affecting women throughout Jordan. The idea to campaign on the rights of women in the workplace though the activation of Article 72 was then decided as a suitable and focused way to address women's rights in Jordan as a starting point for a larger campaign for women's rights.

4.3.1. The Birth of Sadaqa and the Decision to Pursue the Article 72 Campaign"

With the promise of a year's worth of funding from Vital Voices to support their selected campaign, the women who participated in the workshop decided to form what we now know as "Sadaqa," or its long name "Sadaqa: towards a friendly work environment for women," in 2011, to advance women's participation in the Jordanian economy through nationwide compliance with Article 72 of the Labor Law.

Article 72 of the Jordanian labor law states: "The employer who employs a minimum of twenty female employees should provide a suitable place under the custody of a qualified caregiver to care for the employees' children of less than four years of age provided that the number of children is not less than ten" (Article 72 of Jordan's Labor Law cf. Shomali 2016). With only 13.3 percent of Jordanian women active in the country's workforce, representing one of the lowest percentages of women workforce participation globally, and with a soaring national debt of nearly 37 billion U.S. dollars in 2017, the founding members of Sadaqa saw a critical opportunity to use the state of Jordan's economy and women's workforce participation to launch a broader campaign for women's rights, albeit framed around the single-issue of activating and enforcing Article 72 for daycare spaces in the workplace.

As one Sadaqa member noted while reflecting on the group's decision to choose Article 72 as their campaign issue:

> "Alia and Abeer were in a workshop organized by Vital Voices. In the workshop they divided the participants into groups and each group was supposed to come up with a specific idea that they can really implement. So they were talking about working mothers and if they could find a solution to improve their work environment. A member of the group who is a lawyer stated that 'you don't know that there is an article in the labor law that states that business owners should provide proper spaces (daycares) if they have 20 women employees who have 10 children below 4 years old?'… so they started thinking of what to do about this article, and that they did not know it existed even though they are educated women! Imagine people who are not involved! Alia is a gender specialist and she did not even know about the article. So they decided to raise awareness about this issue" (Interview MNA).[19]

As this latter quote suggests, focusing on Article 72, was considered a strategic starting point to address women's rights issues in Jordan for multiple reasons. First, the campaign idea was appealing to international donors, in this case Vital Voices, who would be funding the first year of the campaign:

---

[19] All names have been changed to protect the identities of the participants in this research. A confidential coding scheme is also used to cite the data and information I collected from interviewees on the topic of Sadaqa, FA and LNSG.

They wanted to see action on a *specific* issue. This suggests that from day one, Sadaqa's goals were not necessarily or fully informed by the needs in the country, or in consideration of the domestic audience. It was also based on the source of their funding: They needed to brand the group as pursuing a measurable goal considered worthy for the international audience to continue supporting.

Second, framing the campaign around the issue of women and mothers in the workplace represents an issue that cross-cuts different communities in Jordan (whether urban or rural based) and among different sectors of work (law, business, telecommunications, etc.) which would allow the founding members to begin to develop a nation-wide base for women's issues; not just a particular sector or group for example. They could frame themselves initially as pursuing a single campaign, but could build the networks needed in this process to expand their platform for women's rights broadly.

Third, focusing on a single issue that was already supposed to be enforced vis-a-vis law positioned the Sadaqa campaign to promote social change for women in a way that did not challenge the political leadership or status quo; but in fact could strengthen their relationship with them. They focused on an issue that would be good for the Jordanian economy; more workers could make the economy stronger. In addition to that, and in the beginning, they were not asking for any law to be created since the law is already on the books. Sadaqa just wanted it to be enforced.

4.3.2. Launching the Article 72 Campaign

According to Sadaqa's website, their initial goals for the Article 72 campaign were the following:

> to raise the level of awareness of Article 72 amongst working women and employers and on the importance of friendly work environment for women in general,
>
> to assist the Ministry of Labor in its enforcement measures and issue specific guidelines for daycares at the workplace,
>
> to pressure companies and share knowledge on the importance of daycares and provide technical assistance to facilitate the establishment of daycares in Jordanian private sector institutions.

In order to achieve these goals, the Sadaqa founders strategically mobilized their personal monetary and non-monetary resources, strengthened and developed their social networks with government, private sector and international organization leadership, and established a key partnership with a national NGO. The following paragraphs detail these activities and why and how Sadaqa members engaged in these activities in particular manners.

4.3.3. Mobilizing Personal Resources

Sadaqa's founding members' monetary and non-monetary resources are critical to consider to understand the launch of the Article 72 campaign and the overall trajectory of Sadaqa.[20]

First, meet Alia. Alia is from Amman and was in her late thirties when the Article 72 campaign was launched. She is married with children and comes from a family considered extremely respectable in the Jordanian context given her family name and the area they come from. While Alia's work today is fully invested in Sadaqa, and she is often considered "the face" of Sadaqa, she previously worked in the Queen's office. This latter position, at least in part, ensured that Sadaqa at its early phases would not be scrutinized—and in fact even endorsed—by the regime, who considered the campaign a way to frame and brand Jordan as a "liberal" authoritarian context supportive of women's rights to international actors (a point of heated debate within and about Sadaqa that I will discuss in a later part of this chapter). Alia's husband also has related prominent connections as a well-known lawyer in the country who was described to me more than once as "rich and well connected...with the government and private sector," as well as embassies and international NGOs (Interview TMS).

Also meet Abeer and Amal. Abeer is a former journalist who worked for two of Jordan's main media outlets before working full-time for Sadaqa. Like Abeer, she is also married and living in Amman and coming from a wealthy background both socially and economically. Abeer is Christian, with family roots in Irbid, the country's main city in the north, ensuring the Sadaqa campaign would have the ears and attention of Jordanians' Christian minority as well as populations in the north more broadly. This

---

[20] Interviewees during my data collection report that five individuals attended the VV workshop, but only three of them were really involved in launching the campaign after the workshop concluded; and today, only two of them still are part of the Sadaqa group.

is critical to consider given that outside of Amman, Jordan's northern governorates are home to a significant portion of the Kingdom's population, industries and educational institutions.[21] Her work with the media community further ensured that the Article 72 and Sadaqa's subsequent activities would be on the radar of various groups throughout the Kingdom.

Unlike Abeer and Alia, Amal comes from the South with more humble roots economically. While her family name is well-respected throughout the Kingdom, particularly among native Jordanians and members of the government bureaucracy, her social networks significantly differ from Alia and Abeer. While she may not have social connections with the royal leadership directly or with the north and religious minority communities based on her "family roots" or economic position, she is well-acquainted with community-based organizations and leaders in rural and hard-to-reach areas of the Kingdom through her profession and work as a lawyer with local political development organizations. Through these founding members' stories, we can see how group's resources are derived through multiple processes in Jordan: family names and networks, economic power, religious identity, professions, and daily work routines and experiences. So while Vital Voices provided the startup support for the group, Sadaqa members' local socioeconomic statuses are also important to consider in terms of understanding the group's trajectory.

4.3.4. Expanding Social Networks and Partnerships

The combination of these members' economic and social resources ensured the Article 72 campaign would be launched in a promising manner in a way that would ensure the campaign would be well-received by Jordanians throughout the kingdom, as well as public and private sector leadership; including regime actors. However, Sadaqa membership realized that simply possessing connections and financial support would not be enough. They needed to actively reach out and partner with organizations and groups throughout the Kingdom in order for the campaign to be a success.

---

[21] For example, Abeer's governorate alone is considered the governorate with the highest population density, has three qualified industrial zones, and is home to over a dozen colleges and universities.

Through Amal's connections with local organizations throughout the Kingdom, for example, the members were able to house their campaign at local civil society organizations, most notably the national NGO called Hayat Civil Society Center and Women Union branches in the Kingdom's governorates. Hayat was happy to host Sadaqa in its main offices, and gave the campaign members space and access to their networks. Sadaqa would hold regular weekly meetings at Hayat's offices to develop their agenda, plan public demonstrations for the campaign, and related work to the campaign. Even Hayat's employees worked on behalf of the campaign if needed, and the Women's Unions would offer their services free of charge to spread awareness to their communities about Article 72 (awareness sessions, local meetings, etc.). Association with Hayat allowed Sadaqa to devote its economic resources to other parts of the campaign accordingly, and subsequently served as an initial way to brand Sadaqa as a nationwide initiative.

Sadaqa's connections with Hayat and the Women's Unions played a critical role in framing the campaign—and group—as a nationwide initiative. Through Hayat's networks, Sadaqa was able to bring a critical mass to march in the country's capital to "create a buzz" to promote the activation and enforcement of Article 72. People from all of Jordan's twelve governorates repeatedly came to Amman to support Sadaqa activities, specifically responding to Hayat's invitation. Hayat would reach out to its networks, including two key nationwide women associations, through phone calls, in-person meetings and emails, networks on behalf of Sadaqa for their campaign events. Hayat's history and record of achievements throughout Jordan ensured that Sadaqa would be supported by a widespread demographic of the Jordanian public at this early phase.

On the legislative side, Hayat also helped to foster Sadaqa's networks, advocacy, and lobbying activities directed towards the government at the municipality, district, and parliamentary levels. According to Omar, one of the coordinators and employees of Hayat:

"In addition to the logistical support provided by Hayat, the center also provided support with regard to developing the legal framework of the ideas of Sadaqa. This was done through

building a number of lobbies inside the parliament (the sixteenth and seventeenth parliaments), and creating alliances with members of the parliament." (Interview OHN).

Sadaqa, with Hayat's support and previous campaign experience, conducted advocacy campaigns targeting the private and public sectors that included brochure distribution, sharing of Article 72 success stories, international experiences related to women in the workplace, and discussions of the the potential impact of Sadaqa on developing Jordanian society. The main public sector administrative units targeted included the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Justice and the Legislation and Opinion Bureau, the latter who is responsible for rewriting laws and submitting them to parliament. Drawing upon Hayat's previous experience lobbying and working with government ministries, Sadaqa with Hayat's support developed a two-tier strategy at an early phase of the campaign to ensure their goal to spread awareness about Article 72 would be achieved:

> "Working with the ministry of labor was done in two folds. The first fold was working directly with the ministry, and the second was working with the departments of the ministry in the governorates. In the governorates, the work with department of the ministry was done through the local partners of Sadaqa such as women organizations and civil society organizations. As for communicating and working directly with the ministry, this was done between Hayat Center and the secretary general of the ministry who believed in the idea of Sadaqa" (Interview OHN).

Not only Hayat's networks, but their proven record of experience *using these networks* to meet their social change goals was critical for Sadaqa to draw upon—and learn from—at an early phase of the campaign to ensure their sustainability as an initiative in the future. This suggest that networks, but perhaps more importantly *the ability for Sadaqa to mobilize* networks in a quick and efficient manner, mattered to its trajectory and take-off.

4.3.4b. National Networks: Establishing Networks with Government Ministries

In addition to Sadaqa's connections with Hayat through Amal, Alia's relationship with the Ministry of Labor further ensured that these public demonstrations and lobbying efforts to create a buzz about

Article 72 would be approved and supported—and not quelled—by the government. The Ministry of Labor even supported a march organized by Sadaqa publicly, comprised of what they described as "volunteers"—not protesters—from the governorates to support the activation of Article 72 (Interview AAN).

It is interesting to note that the members were called volunteers rather than protestors, suggestive of Sadaqa's close and supportive relationship with the government. It seems in fact from this statement that Sadaqa's activities are understood as assisting government law enforcement (they are "volunteers" at the march for Article 72), rather than challengers (i.e. protestors) of the political status quo. In this early stage, it is clear that Sadaqa is framed as an "economic" campaign, not a political one. Such framing subsequently allows Sadaqa to develop and grow in an authoritarian context, but it also depoliticizes and delinks their agenda and economic issues broadly from political leadership and decisions.

4.3.4c. Moving from National to International Networks: Media and Embassy Connections

Moreover, Abeer's network with the media, and Alia's connections with the embassies and the private sector, ensured that these initial campaign efforts were covered in the newspapers and television channels and supported verbally and financially at the national and international level by private and public sector actors. For example, the major national TV channels and international press reporters covered Sadaqa's first march in the capital, and the Norwegian Embassy was one of the first entities to reach out to Sadaqa to discuss further funding for their future activities (Interview ABA, AAN, ANM). Relatedly, Zain and Orange, Jordan's two major communication networks, were early supporters of the Article 72 campaign, largely as a result of Alia's connections with the company's leadership. Abeer was also actively developing Sadaqa's online presence based on her expertise in social and traditional media to ensure that the campaign would be able to independently direct their messages as well.

Collectively, the founding members were constantly meeting with women workers from a variety of sectors and professions based on networks from their own professional backgrounds:

"Our outreach process was through conducting individual meetings with business owners, women and government officials and giving them numbers, facts and studies on the number of institutions that apply the daycare law… We used to tell business owners about the advantages of having daycares. When women are comfortable at their workplace, their productivity increases […] We [also] conducted meetings with women, focus groups, and a surveys through which we found out that women do not know about article 72. They did not know that it existed. A small number of companies provide daycare spaces for their employees and they claim that they provide them as a privilege for the employees, and if the employees are not committed to their work, employers threaten them of removing such service" (Interview AAN).

Outreach strategies with these groups at an early phase of the campaign positioned Sadaqa to develop more targeted activities and with particular groups and networks in later phases of their initiative. Mobilizing networks was therefore critical for Sadaqa's start *and* their ability to expand their campaign into a larger movement for women's right at a later stage. As one interviewee who connected with the movement at a later phase saw as the founding members' original "lack of experience" in social change initiatives:

"They are people who do not have experience, and in order to change policies you should have evidence based policies. So they relied a bottom-up approach, and they started with people based on their competencies, they had people who work in media, so they managed to reach radio stations, and TV stations" (Interview TMS).

The culmination of these connections and ability to effectively mobilize them (underlined by founding members' economic and social resources and professional backgrounds) therefore positioned Sadaqa and the Article 72 campaign on a pathway to: (1) operate effectively in an authoritarian context where other campaigns had failed; (2) expand Sadaqa's scope and reach from a campaign to a more

132

institutionalized organization; and (3) garner both national and international support and appeal for their agenda and platform.

4.3.5. The Effects of the Article 72 Campaign in Jordan

After over a dozen marches, and many months of meetings with government officials, women workers, private sector actors, media officers, and international donors, Sadaqa's efforts to spread awareness about Article 72 to the Jordanian public was largely achieved. Article 72 was once again on the radar of the Jordanian leadership and the public. More than 90 businesses enforced the article vis-a-vis daycare developments in response. Sadaqa was able to develop manuals and standard operating procedures (SOPs) to help companies enforce the law, and government ministries are now conducting inspections related to Article 72 enforcement.

Workers and communities who were previously unaware about Article 72 are also now aware of their rights; and some started to even volunteer with and participate in Sadaqa's campaign activities. Sadaqa's webpage, Twitter, and Facebook account are still up and running with hundreds of followers. Media outlets in Jordan, regionally, and even internationally, reported (and continue to) on the campaign's activities in multiple languages. This online presence, as well as their campaign events in Jordan, allowed Sadaqa to also foster key partnerships with the International Labor Organization (ILO) and embassies who would be important in supporting their future work.

This is not to say that the group did not face major challenges or bumps along the way in this campaign. The founding members repeatedly reported the following challenges during my interviews with them: convincing the private sector of the cost-benefits of Article 72, dealing with "bullying" and male-dominant ministry staff, and communication and coordination among the Sadaqa members.

4.3.5a. Overcoming "The Cost-Benefit" Argument

Many private sector leaders were convinced that Article 72 would *cost* their company more than benefit it (Interview ANM). After all, *paying* for a daycare would seem to cut into a company's profits. Sadaqa had to subsequently conduct many focus groups, evaluations, access studies, and organize meetings with these leaders to (1) demonstrate the cost efficiency and effectiveness of

enforcing Article 72 for business interests, (2) provide research to support this position, (3) learn about other private sector concerns in relation to this law, and (4) mitigate the effects of the Article 72 campaign related to *discouraging* companies from hiring women (in fear they would have to "bear the costs" of Article 72 enforcement). Sadaqa recruited a top notch researcher to do a research on this cost benefit argument where he studied the major two telecommunication companies in the country, Zain and Orange. His findings showed how having daycares increased the productivity and security of women and subsequently the companies' profits. This study became an important way for Sadaqa to convince private sector leaders to enforce Article 72 (Shomali 2016).

4.3.5b. Overcoming Male-Dominated Ministry Bullying

As a female-led group and campaign, and albeit the members' good connections with the government, Sadaqa found that they were often "bullied" when they would go to the government ministries for the campaign or hold meetings with bureaucrat officials (Interview MNA). Namely, all three of Sadaqa's active founding members at this campaign stage reported that the male-dominated and patriarchal nature of the government meant that officials often did not take them seriously or would make them wait for hours after their scheduled appointments before meeting with the members in the ministries. As Alia, one of the founding members of Sadaqa commented, and shifting into a strong Jordanian accent, "After all the work we do… then a stupid employee at the ministry refers to us as 'These Niswan.'" Niswan, is a slang term in Jordan Arabic that refers to women in a demeaning and derogatory way. It is critical to highlight this example, and that the interviewee switched her language tone when she shared this story with me, speaking in a Jordanian dialect that is prevalent in rural areas known to be inhabited by lower socioeconomic classes. This is important because it again shows how the divides socioeconomically in Jordan shape Sadaqa's trajectory, are linked to issues of gender, and subsequently shaped Sadaqa's networks and challenges engaging with ministry workers (who are predominantly from these areas of the country) during the start of the campaign.

4.3.5c. Internal Communication Challenges and Domestic Reception

Sadaqa's internal communication also represented a key challenge for the group. First, one of the group's main members was outside of Jordan for five months during the campaign due to personal health reasons. This distance created major strains on communication and coordination among the team and she only talked to some members of the team but not others, which one could argue affected the team dynamic and led to the divisions among the members as well.

Second, and despite Sadaqa's connections with local organizations like Hayat and the Jordan women's unions, the campaign itself faced public criticism as an "elite" initiative. As one of my interviewees who was involved in the campaign at the early stage mentioned:

> "The persons who run Sadaqa are not accepted in certain places. They are accepted in the capital, but they are not accepted in the governorates, because their mentality is totally different from women in the governorates...this even includes women in East Amman. The priorities of women working on Sadaqa are different from the priorities of Jordanian women in general. This affects the level of acceptance of women to the idea of Sadaqa. I recall that there was a problem with a lady in [a rural Jordanian town called] Tafileh , who did not accept a founding member [of Sadaqa]. The Tafileh woman said, 'you are coming to us wearing a skirt, in an air-conditioned car, and then you preach to us about daycares! You are not like us and therefore you don't have the right to preach to us.' This produce a divide between Sadaqa and the target audience." (Interview OHN)

As this quote suggests, not only the "target audience" framed Sadaqa as an elite initiative, but even some people involved in Sadaqa at this early stage felt that some members of the group were disconnected from the average Jordanian woman—and is "of a different mentality"—based on their socioeconomic class identities. This issue of being perceived as an "elite" initiative created divides within and around the campaign at an early phase, and continues to represent a major challenge that Sadaqa works to address until this day.

The issue of socioeconomic class distinctions is also embedded in criticisms of Sadaqa's focus on women workers in the private sector exclusively. Many Jordanians—and even participants in the march and early stages of the campaign—called for Sadaqa to expand their focus to include women workers in the public sector as well, specifically because the latter tends to have significantly lower salaries in comparison to the private sector. Omar, who participated in the campaign in the early days of Sadaqa, stressed this point by saying:

> "For example, establishing daycare spaces in public schools...was totally absent from Sadaqas' agenda. This is a proof that the project was class oriented, taking into consideration the more than 60 percent of working women in Jordan are school teachers. The biggest bulk of working women is under the Ministry of Education which was absolutely absent from the scope of Sadaqa […] 'The real women' of the society and not 'the elitist women' are the ones that are in the periphery...in the governorates...not only the capital, such as these school teachers. The [women] in the private sector are also part of [women in society], but only focusing on them is one of the negatives of Sadaqa. Members of Sadaqa could have used their efforts to work on both, the private and the public sectors." (Interview OHN)

These examples suggest and highlight that despite it being received as a successful campaign at the national and international level, the rights of women, even within the context of Article 72, are partial at the intra-state level. More work is needed to expand Sadaqa's work to the public sector as one way to better represent the various socioeconomic classes and experiences of women and their families in Jordan.

4.4. Calling it Quits or Moving Forward: Divisions Among the Founding Members

The combination of Sadaqa's achievements and challenges made it immediately evident that the group was now at a point where it needed to develop its strategy to move beyond raising awareness to new stages of advocacy for women's rights in the Kingdom; to further develop its social reach and legitimacy throughout Jordan as well. However, internal communication within Sadaqa—or the lack thereof—meant that this transition process would take a particular form that would exclude some of the group's original leadership.

By the end of the campaign, some sort of power conflict happened. According to one of the founding members, one of her co-founders stopped attending their collective group meetings (Interview ANM). At the same time, this absent co-founder allegedly started communicating privately with Vital Voices about renewing the funding and support for the campaign and dictating the funding in the name of two—rather than all three—co-founders. Two of the three co-founders also began processes to register the campaign as a non-profit organization under Jordanian law. Again, the third co-founder was not included in these discussions or process. As one might expect, this third member then left the group, leaving the two co-founders to continue to develop Sadaqa and its associated campaigns to their present forms.

What is interesting to note in this turning point of the group is how the three co-founders describe the transition from Sadaqa the campaign to Sadaqa the organization. While all three acknowledge the conference in Amman as the birthplace of Sadaqa, only one out of the three acknowledges the role of Hayat as central to the development of the campaign, with the other two mostly focusing on their own "personal hard work" and "personal resources" to transform the group from a campaign to an organization (Interview AAN). This suggests that the *story itself* of Sadaqa is one that was not yet one hundred percent clear or agreed upon, but also represented a valuable resource to frame Sadaqa in a way that could appeal to their targeted audiences, networks and funding sources.

4.5. Moving Beyond the Article 72 Campaign: Sadaqa 2012 and Beyond

After a year of campaigning for Article 72, the founding members along with the campaign's sponsor, Vital Voices, organized a closing ceremony event in Amman to celebrate the achievements the group had made over the course of 2011-2012. Tensions among the members culminated into an official break at this event, with one of the three members leaving the campaign all together and with Sadaqa registering itself as an autonomous group separate from Hayat.

This break represented a significant turn in the Sadaqa campaign in terms of membership, campaign strategy and networking. Specifically, the two remaining original founding members of the group recruited what many have described as "like-minded" and "elite" women from the capital of Jordan to join the team. Sadaqa also shifted from a campaign to an organization, and began to expand its focus from Article 72 to women's economic rights more broadly. The group's source of financial support also changed during this phase. The group further increased its networking efforts not only with the original groups from the first year of the campaign (i.e. private sector, the government, etc.), but also with other social change groups at the national and international levels.

4.5.1. Strategic Transitions: Membership Shift and Registering Sadaqa as an Organization

Alia and Abeer, the remaining two original members of the group, were determined to expand the scope, reach, and impact of Sadaqa by expanding its membership base and registering the group as an official organization in the Kingdom. Specifically, the two women started to "headhunt" other women leaders in Jordan's capital who were well-connected with media outlets, international organizations, and other local social change groups in the country. While Alia's and Abeer's own social and economic resources ensured that Sadaqa was already well-positioned in these networks nationally, the two founders saw an opportunity to expand the reach of Sadaqa further by recruiting new members in these fields. They ended up recruiting seven more members who they viewed as "like-minded," more or less representing a similar demographic background (socioeconomic class, residency in Amman, etc.). These new recruits also had employment situations—and personal economic stability—that allowed them to devote significant time to the Sadaqa campaign, a point of major significance to Sadaqa's trajectory. As one

member stated, "I have not had a full-time job since 2012...because if you want a full-time job, you cannot do the work we do in Sadaqa" (Interview AAN).

Two individuals were specifically recruited for this latter reason, along with their networks with organizations based in the country's capital. First, meet Rola. Rola is a journalist who used to work as an editor with Jordan's top business magazine, and who is also known to have good connections with international organizations and local movements on the ground (such as Boycott Divesments Sanctions (BDS) Movement, My mother is Jordanian and her nationality is my right (MJNR) campaign, etc.). It is also important to note that Rola's family includes personal friendships with members of the royal family.

Also meet Maram: Maram works for the International Labor Organization (ILO) in Jordan. Because of her work with ILO, Maram is also well-connected with embassies' staff in the capital. Because of Maram, ILO pays for Sadaqa's office space (in exchange for letting ILO operate some of its activities in conjunction with Sadaqa) and Sadaqa also received support starting in 2012 from the Norwegian Embassy for its activities.

By registering Sadaqa as an organization, Alia and Abeer signaled their commitment and intent to potential recruits—and funders—that Sadaqa would be a long-lasting group to campaign for women's economic issues in the Kingdom. By registering Sadaqa as an organization, this further allowed the group to apply for funding from more sources (i.e. international organizations, embassies, etc.) to support their campaigns and initiatives and related day-to-day activities.

4.5.2. Strategic Recruitment and Institutionalization to Gain Regime Support

These actions—targeted membership recruitment and registration of Sadaqa—suggest several critical items worth highlighting in terms of how Sadaqa positioned its social change activities within an authoritarian regime context. First, the new members that were recruited—namely Rola and Maram—also had strong ties to political leadership. This is important because it ensured regime leadership would support the campaign. It framed the campaign as friendly rather than enemies to the ruling leadership. It signaled that Sadaqa was not looking to do anything really radical to change the political and domestic

status quo. This would also allow Sadaqa to draw upon regime resources to expand their campaign and presence and reception in the Kingdom.

Second; by using official channels to register the group as an organization, Sadaqa members signal—at least partly—to other levels of the regime (i.e. the bureaucrats) that they are willing to abide by already established laws and procedures as well. They are not challenging the overall system per se. At this point, Sadaqa shows that they want to work *within* the system. Even their decision to advocate for the enforcement of an article that was already present in the law frames Sadaqa as aligned, rather than challenging, the basic pillars of the political system in Jordan.

Third, by registering the organization, they consent to give the regime oversight of their activities and sources of funding as well. While this in fact may limit the scope of their activities and strategies to promote women's economic rights, it also provides them a way to operate and negotiate the authoritarian context to implement at least partial reforms without interference.

Their targeted membership recruitment—mainly of women leaders based in the capital city of Amman—is also telling of how the proximity or *the location* of economic and social resources matters for the group to operate effectively in an authoritarian context. For Sadaqa, making sure they expanded and developed strong networks with key actors in the capital—such as media headquarter leaders, embassies, and international organizations—was critical. Not only do these connections provide economic resources (such as funding support) for the group, but are also key in branding the organization in a positive light that would appeal to regime leadership. Specifically, Sadaqa's connections with international actors and how they equate their work with international "standards" or "best practices" (i.e. vis-a-vis their connections with the International Labor Organization for example), is useful for the regime. Political leadership can "use" the existence of Sadaqa as a resource for itself to brand the Kingdom as a liberal monarchy, supportive of women and human rights generally. This is particularly important in an authoritarian context like Jordan where bilateral and multilateral aid—from Western democracies supportive of human rights agendas—are critical components of the country's economic infrastructure. This was also particularly important during the Arab Spring when regimes' authority and legitimacy were questioned regionally.

At the same time, Sadaqa received a new wave of criticism from its national base, specifically in areas outside of the capital that saw the groups' restructuring (i.e. recruiting other elite members and partnering with international organizations and embassies for funding) as highlighting—and in fact exacerbating—the image of Sadaqa as an elitist women's group out of touch with Jordanian society. As one interviewee suggested, "Sadaqa members do not suffer from the lack of Article 72 enforcement…they are not at all like Jordanian working women….[one of the members] has a 220 CL Mercedes...and was able to quit work when she gave birth....*and* she has a maid."

This quote shows that the tensions domestically around Sadaqa are not based on the content of their campaign. Rather, notions of Sadaqa as an "elite" movement are because of the identities of the founding members who are considered to represent the upper, elite class of Jordan. This is important to note as it suggests that the members, rather than the content of the campaign are as, if not more important, to understanding the reception of Sadaqa at the local level, and the subsequent strategies of transition they used to develop themselves into a women's rights group.

Interviews with Sadaqa's founding members who were the targets of criticism from the public as "elites" suggest that they were aware of how this restructuring affected their position and image outside the capital personally and engaged in at least two practices—whether intentionally or unintentionally—to mitigate this response. First, the members consistently emphasized that they were "pulling their funds" together and "working really hard" to keep the Article 72 campaign going after VV's funding support ended (Interviews AAN, MAM). As one member stated,

"We are a group of mothers, we were mobilized by personal struggles, and we knew that there is an article in the law that states that there should be daycares at workplaces. Our struggle stories were all similar that some of us had to leave their work and some of us had to postpone giving birth and some of us exhausted all their energy to the level where they had to go to hospital. These are stories of silent struggles [that] every working mother lives [with], and unfortunately nobody is shedding the light on such issues […] we were a group of mothers

participating in a small workshop and we were working on women-related issues. But all of us had similar stories…that is we had to leave our job for a period of time or totally due to giving birth, pregnancy, or taking care of our children, we knew about an article in the law, article 72, that says that there should be daycares for working mothers, so we took on the responsibility of activating this article and we put a work plan and started as a small team" (Interview AAN).

Whether or not they actually did "struggle" is not necessarily clear; but it *is clear* that the members elaborate this particular image and narrative at this time in response to criticisms of their elite stature. Framing Sadaqa as representative of "similar stories" suggests a collective struggle—as well as collective collaboration to keep Sadaqa going.

Second, we see at this time that members began to re-activate their connections with women organizations based in rural areas. While some of these connections were developed through their experience with Hayat, they also used their connections through international organizations and embassies that had partnerships with local women organizations to develop stronger rapport with these groups and frame Sadaqa as interested in *all* Jordanian women throughout the country regardless of location, class, or social background. Specifically, the group incorporated specific strategies to recruit local representatives in these areas who knew the particularities of their local communities in order to win the hearts and minds of these Jordanians from lower socioeconomic classes. This shows how intra-state class differences were the motivating factor underlying these strategies that contribute to the overall trajectory of the group.

With stable funding support from embassies, Sadaqa was able to further officially partner with community-based organizations (CBOs) in the twelve governorates. This is because as a registered organization, it could receive funding support and project grants from embassies and other international entities providing support to civil society in Jordan. This was a critical move, perhaps ironically, for Sadaqa in its attempt to distance itself from an "elitist" label: with embassy funding, Sadaqa could work

with the CBOs to deliver the groups' campaigns and messages. While embassy and international organization connections were perceived by the Jordanian public in some locales as distancing Sadaqa from the real lives of Jordanian women, this money allows Sadaqa to work with the CBOs who *are* perceived by Jordanians as representative of the socioeconomic and related backgrounds of the communities where they are based. Institutionalizing Sadaqa as an organization proved to be a resource in terms of Sadaqa's ability to reach lower socioeconomic groups outside the capital, and more legitimately brand itself as a nationwide group.

4.5.3. Strategic Transitions: Expanding Networks, Campaign Strategies

Sadaqa sought to strengthen its previous relationships with government and private sector actors by targeting new ministries and new businesses to move from an awareness campaign to implementation and enforcement of Article 72. In order to make this shift possible, Sadaqa members mobilized their personal networks—as well as their husbands' personal networks—to achieve this goal. Sadaqa also sought to strengthen and elaborate its reach within governorates through the aforementioned partnerships with CBOs and by targeting women leaders connected to local organizations to ensure women's economic rights were addressed throughout the Kingdom. This network mobilization strategy, and shift from an awareness campaign to an implementation phase, positioned Sadaqa to subsequently expand its platform from a single-issue group to a broader agenda for women's economic rights (the latter theme I discuss more in depth in later sections of this chapter).

4.5.3a. Relations with the Government

In terms of the government, Sadaqa expanded its relationship with the Ministry of Labor, and also began to foster connections with the Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Public Works, and the Higher Council for Family Affairs. With MoL, Sadaqa was able to work with the leadership to re-establish and activate a women directorate in the ministry. This directorate was responsible for women's economic empowerment and raising awareness on issues related to women in

the workforce[22]. However, oversight of day cares, perhaps ironically, does not fall under the jurisdiction of MoL, but rather under the Ministry of Social Development. To ensure the enforcement of Article 72, Sadaqa therefore had to develop its relationships with the government outside of MoL. Health and Public Works also play roles in inspecting daycares, which is why Sadaqa targeted them as well. The Higher Council for Family Affairs was also interested in developing a similar, aligned campaign to Sadaqa's Article 72 one. Building relations with them was therefore strategic to ensure that they had sympathetic partners working within the bureaucracy on the same issue. While the group faced significant "bullying" during the early days of the campaign when engaging with ministries, the development of the women's directorate in the Ministry of Labor—made possible in part by key network connections with former ministry leaders—and their now established public image from successful early campaign activities, shifted the relationship from one of tension and bullying to one of cooperation. Namely, successes for Sadaqa simultaneously became successes for the ministries (and in particular the women's directorate). As one interviewee stated:

> "The ministry of labor created a women's section, and they felt what Sadaqa is advocating for
> is important for them so they can get credit and reputation for the section that they do effective
> and important work. They participated actively in our events and activities" (Interview ANM).

The enforcement of Article 72 transformed the image of the ministries as slow, inefficient, bureaucratic, and corrupt to effective and transparent institutions, responsive to the needs of the people. In this way, we can also see how Sadaqa—perhaps ironically—was positioned to encourage social change that strengthened the regime's power and image as a liberal and representative monarchy through its relations with the bureaucracy.

4.5.3b. Relations with the Private Sector

Upholding their strong relations with Zain and Orange, two companies that are well-respected in Jordan, Sadaqa was also able to expand its networks in the private sector. Sadaqa members would meet with

---

[22] According to the Ministry's website, a women unit was established in 2006, then renamed in 2008. In 2011, it was restructured and turned into a directorate that would report directly to assistant of the secretary general in the ministry.

workers, CEOs, and other managerial staff to emphasize how adopting and enforcing Article 72 would improve their businesses and overall profits. What is interesting to note in this outreach was the private sectors' response: like the early days, many businesses worried that enforcing Article 72 would be costly for their organizations, leading to a reduction in profits. As one interviewee noted, "We faced many difficulties with business owners, it was like carving rocks…[and] when we discussed the law in the parliament, one parliamentarian said that the law is a burden on business owners" (Interview TMS).

Zain and Orange as models were not always positive signalers to the companies either, who often told Sadaqa members that the latter two were exceptional cases because of their wide, established business base and already high profit margins. The issue of bureaucratic registration procedures was only voiced as a secondary concern. What *did sell* the idea to them was Sadaqa's ability to mobilize their personal connections—especially in terms of their husbands' work and clients—already working in top leadership positions in the organizations to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) guidelines on how to implement Article 72, streamlining the bureaucratic registration procedures for the businesses to register the daycares with the government, and providing the businesses with research and studies that prove the cost-effectiveness of adapting Article 72 in practice.

Sadaqa also provided trainings for the workers who would operate the day cares. The expansion of the latter activities was further critical to ensure that Sadaqa's activities to encourage women in the workplace would not backfire and in fact discourage private sector actors to forego hiring women as to not have to abide by Article 72.

4.5.3c. Relations with the Rural Jordanian Public

With the break with Hayat, Sadaqa also had to ensure that it maintained, developed and strengthened its relationships with communities outside of Amman throughout the country's twelve governorates. While their networks might be weaker outside of the capital, Sadaqa was able to recruit at least twelve key women leaders, at least one in each governorate, to act as a "local coordinator" on behalf of Sadaqa. The local coordinators were responsible to spread awareness about Article 72 and Sadaqa as a campaign generally and worked in conjunction with Sadaqa's CBO partners. The coordinators would reach out to

local private sector organizations and government officials through the CBOs to implement and enforce Article 72 in practice. The coordinators would also distribute Sadaqa's documents and materials (i.e. the SoPs) that served as aids for organizations in establishing day care centers and navigating the bureaucratic registration procedures.

4.5.3d. Relations with the International Community

While Sadaqa focused on strengthening and expanding its networks within Jordanian communities, it was also able to simultaneously expand its international networks through these partnerships and outreach. For example, Sadaqa was able to connect with social activists throughout the region and in the U.S. through their participation in trainings in Jordan through the Ahel group.

Ahel is in organization based in Amman that works on providing trainings on community organizing and leadership[23]. Ahel further provides coaching and support for social change campaigns that align with any cause related to justice, equality or freedom. This connection had two significant effects on the trajectory of Sadaqa. First, Sadaqa members claim that this training was a major factor in shifting their internal coordination and communication strategy. For example, they say they adopted a horizontal strategy in terms of organizing the team; no single person was the assumed leader in the group (Interview NJD). The members further credit this organizational change as a way that allowed Sadaqa to act more effectively and efficiently to implement the group's campaign and agenda.

Connections that the members made through Ahel also equipped Sadaqa with allies transnationally, particularly in the region. Sadaqa developed a network to exchange best practices and effective strategies to promote social change with other activists. Connections made through Ahel with other groups in Lebanon and Palestine, for example, further promoted Sadaqa's image and campaign to a regional audience supportive of women's rights. Sadaqa further used Ahel's associations with internationally-recognized institutions like Harvard University and activists like Marshall Ganz to

---

[23] According to Ahel website [http://ahel.org/en]: "Our community organizing framework provides people with tools to take leadership and transform their resources into power to achieve concrete changes in the world. Our public narrate approach motivates action and call on people to join. Popular education programs moves the base to evolve their political and social understanding in conversation with each other."

bolster its image as a group committed—and equipped—to promoting social change not only nationally and regionally, but also globally.

By expanding and developing its networks through these processes, Sadaqa now had access, resources—and credibility—to conduct trainings with workers and related actors to implement and enforce Article 72, launch public media campaigns about their work and women's rights generally, and begin shifting the Sadaqa image from "the day care women" to the group committed to women's economic rights more broadly.

4.5.4 Sadaqa's Continuing Challenges

Since its official registration as an organization in 2012, Sadaqa has been successful in convincing over 90 companies to implement and enforce Article 72 in practice. Dozens of articles have been written about Sadaqa over the past year alone in both English and Arabic news outlets, and the group continues to work and collaborate with multiple campaigns throughout the Kingdom to promote women's economic rights. Sadaqa members are also increasingly acting as consultants in conjunction with these campaigns. For example, Sadaqa provides consultation services to the German development branch, GIZ, on their projects related to women and the economy in the Kingdom. The government's Higher Council for Family Affairs is using Sadaqa's materials related to Article 72 to train and develop SoPs for future daycares throughout the Kingdom (Interview TMS).

In addition to these new roles, Sadaqa continues its own work related to Article 72 specifically by training workers to operate the day care centers. Legislatively, Sadaqa is now trying to get the law changed all together: They want the law to be shifted towards "regardless of gender" versus "women" in determining the number of employees that are required for the implementation and enforcement of the articles. Members reported to me during my fieldwork that "The law has been approved, but it is still in the drawer (or on the shelf)," which means that the group has been successful in passing the largest hurdle in terms of parliamentary reform in Jordan: moving a law from the discussion rooms to the parliament floor for approval (Interviews MAM, TMS). However, the law change has still not been activated, and it is not yet clear if and when this will happen. In some cases, laws stay "in the drawer"

147

or "on the shelf" for consecutive months or years before they are activated. It is this issue that Sadaqa continues to work on until the present day accordingly.

4.6 Findings: Sadaqa's trajectory as Western-driven, but also locally informed

By 2013, Sadaqa was on the radar of many groups and communities in Jordan. People from the north, the south, the capital, working in the public sector, private sector, Royal Court, and with other social change campaigns, among others, would often describe Sadaqa as the "day care women worker initiative." Sadaqa—and the continuing existence of Sadaqa—subsequently affirms the main tenants of resource mobilization theory. It is important to note that these resources were derived from a number of different sources—including from the members' local assets. Perceptions of these members' elite socioeconomic status in Jordan subsequently shaped how Sadaqa framed and interacted with regime actors and the public accordingly. The following paragraphs explain and analyze Sadaqa's trajectory more in-depth.

Table 4. Trajectory of Sadaqa

Protest Group	Resources	Regime Links	Framing	P.O. Assessment	Findings
Sadaqa	M: Strong H: Strong O: Strong	-Royal Court (Queen), -Ministries -Parliament.	Public-Semi-Inc Regime-Not Critical	Regional: Strong Domestic: Semi	**"Case of RMT"** -Framing issue as economic and women related -Regime Support -Local class hierarchy challenges

4.6.1 Sadaqa's Resources: Strong Monetary Resources, Strong Human Resources, and Strong Organization Resources

Unlike the FA and the LNSG, Sadaqa's resources were a result of both domestic and international connections. While the group initially lacked organizational and protest experience, the group's easy

access to monetary resources were used to improve these organizational skills and expand the networks of Sadaqa locally and internationally.

Since members of Sadaqa are mostly from Jordan's upper middle class and upper class, they could afford in some cases to not work given their stable financial positions; instead dedicating their full time to the group.

Sadaqa also had financial support from international organizations since day one: first Vital Voices, and then Western embassies started to support their work as well. This financial stability meant that they could finance outreach strategies such as marches, conferences, and public statements. Moreover, Sadaqa had the financial capacity to rent offices and cover the running costs of these offices. Since they had the money, the group was able to hire legal experts, gender experts, researchers and lawyers to support their agenda. They also used these financial resources to develop their own webpage and increase their public presence through media, online resources, and social media (Twitter page, and a Facebook page). Stable financial resources also meant that the group was able to work on achieving its goals of the despite being a small group in number.

Sadaqa's leadership is well-educated (lawyers, journalists, and gender experts) and because of their monetary resources, now trained on how to do community-organizing in an effective manner. Their previous leadership positions in their former organizations and work places also equipped them with the necessary leadership skills to manage people and manage campaigns.

Monetary resource also allowed Sadaqa to institutionalize so that it could more effectively establish local community networks. Institutionalization of the group made it look legitimate in the eyes of the public so it was better positioned to partner with local unions and organizations, such as the women union branches in the governorates.

Unlike the FA and the LNSG, Sadaqa has official government status as a non-profit civil society organization; FA and LNSG failed to the reach their goal to institutionalize and register as political parties. While the group started as a single-issue campaign, institutionalization was important that

allowed Sadaqa to apply for funding to support the group's outreach; expand its agenda to increase women's participation in the Jordanian economy broadly; and reach local communities in rural areas.

Sadaqa now has a very clear—and well-funded—organizational structure to accomplish its goals. Full-time employees run the day-to-day business of the organization. However, it is critical to note that this is not just because of their civil society status per se, but also because of the members' personal economic wealth and continued financial support from Western embassies to pay for the staff's salaries as well.

As mentioned in the previous section, the founding members of Sadaqa also have good contacts and experience in applying for grants and acquiring funding from embassies, international organizations and the private sector, which continues to aid their efforts in establishing and organizing themselves as a non-profit entity.

4.6.2. Sadaqa's Regime Links: Links with the Royal Court (The Queen), Links with Ministries and parliament, And No Links with The Security Apparatus

Members of Sadaqa are further well-connected with several national decision-making agencies such as the parliament, the ministry of labor and even the royal court (The queen's office). The former minister of labor, and the former secretary general of the ministries are considered "friends" of Sadaqa. In the parliament, Sadaqa through its lobbying efforts, managed to influence the parliamentary committees on women and labor to advocate for their goals in the parliament. As for the royal court, the leading founder of Sadaqa used to work in the queen's office and known to have a good relationship with her. The queen is very powerful in Jordan and is the face for several public portfolios such as education and women rights.

Sadaqa's favorable relationship with various ranks within the regime was also possible because members of the group already had relations with the royal court, the queen's office in particular, prior to their establishment; and with ministries because of its members' former work positions or even family connections. Sadaqa's networks with international bodies were also important in facilitating its good relationship with the regime.

However, it is important to note that Sadaqa members also mentioned that its members clashed with lower levels of the regime (i.e. ministry bureaucrats), especially in the early phases of the Article 72 campaign. So while regime relations at the top levels were on good terms with the group, lower levels of the regime (the street level bureaucrats) were not originally supportive of Sadaqa. Similar to the case of LNSG, Sadaqa's multiple relations with regime actors show how the regime may be fractured; or at least reflective of multiple actors' interest in how they deal with activism in the country.

Relatedly, Sadaqa strategically used its positive relations with the regime leadership to recruit elite support for their campaigns (i.e. politicians, businessmen, international organizations, UN organizations, etc.) and to gain popularity in the international arena. The latter support was also important in terms of monetary resources for the group.

Today, Sadaqa is supported *and even promoted* by the regime, suggesting that Sadaqa's success is not constructed as a threat to the regime's power. In fact, Sadaqa is one of the tools that contribute to the legitimation of the regime internationally.

The Jordanian regime relies heavily on foreign aid from the international community (for more information on Jordan relying on aid, see Ryan 2014). Thus, the monarchy consistently tries to reflect a positive, democratic image of Jordan to the international community that suggests it is a moderate, liberal and modern country especially among western actors. Supporting Sadaqa's vision that calls for the expansion of women's rights economically, politically and socially is particularly useful for the regime in the context of the latter, specifically aligning with its desire to be understood as a progressive regime that wants to move away from the male dominant culture by empowering Jordanian women. This led to strengthening the relations between the group and top levels of the regime.

The regime is also still supportive of Sadaqa to this day because the group also never had it in mind or as part of its platform to clash or to challenge the regime leadership in the first place. The group was more interested in pursuing policy change; but changes they framed as making the overall economy better for Jordan. Sadaqa specifically pursued policy change targeting socioeconomic rights; not

political rights. This allowed (and continues to allow) them to work rather freely in the authoritarian context since it was not challenging the politics of the regime.

4.6.3. Sadaqa's Framing of its Platform and Goals: Semi-Inclusive, and Not Critical of the Regime

Sadaqa originally was a single-issue campaign related to the implementation of article 72 of the labor law. Therefore, members of Sadaqa had very specific, well-defined goals and benchmarks on how to achieve its goal. The group had clear plans and clear timelines. Sadaqa believed that pursuing this goal would contribute to achieving economic rights for women and would be a way to begin improving the overall Jordanian economy.

Today, While Sadaqa is a multi-issue group that also provides support to several regional and women-related campaigns. Their multi-issue platform includes policy change related to women's incorporation into the economy; and does not call for structural change within the government or the regime to facilitate this agenda. Sadaqa also and only supports social change groups that—like Sadaqa—have the "approval" of the regime; or blessing we can say in terms of letting them operate and organize in the country without major oversight or interference.

Sadaqa has never used language that is critical of the regime or government ministries. Instead, Sadaqa uses language of partnership, rather than confrontation with the regime. Sadaqa's platform and goals made it clear from its onset that the group was willing to negotiate its agenda to align with the interests of the regime as both single and multi-issue campaigns. Why Sadaqa has engaged in these particular framing strategies is explained by the following:

Regime Relations: Founding members of Sadaqa previously worked in the regime or had good relations with regime actors. The group did (and does) not want to undermine these relationships if they wanted to prosper and work effectively in the Jordan context. In fact, Sadaqa wanted the regime's support for their cause. The regime initially helped to escalate support for the Article 72 campaign given that: (1) the issue did not criticize the regimes' power, but rather lower level bureaucrats' failure to implement policy and (2) advocating for women's rights in the Middle East brands the regime as seeking modernity and change. The latter, as mentioned earlier, is often used in authoritarian regimes to increase rulers'

legitimization, especially in the eyes of the international community. Regime allowance of political campaigns further reaffirms that social change groups should not always be viewed as in contestation with the regime, but in fact they may be mechanisms to strengthen regime rule and political status quo.

Local socioeconomic class hierarchies: Members of Sadaqa focused on being "women", "mothers" and "families" collectively. The group downplayed economic differences between classes of Jordanians, while highlighting economic differences between genders. Sadaqa members purposely used women and families' labels and frames to avoid questions related to class. After all, class and location in Jordan are big indicators as to women's economic participation. By framing it as "all women," Sadaqa was able to avoid questions or considerations of economic class divides between factions of Jordanian population, at least in part. This was also particularly important given that Sadaqa's founding members mostly represented upper class groups from Amman.

Appealing to International versus Local Audiences: How Sadaqa presents itself to groups and actors they consider "international" versus "national" is also reflected in their framing; and represents another tension in solidifying its public image as a movement for women's economic rights. Interviewees report that Sadaqa brands itself to embassies, international organizations and donors operating both in and outside the Kingdom as a group of cosmopolitan women championing women's rights to work and gender equity more broadly. Questions or concerns about how the current economic state of Jordan links to authoritarian leadership are mute; the members frame themselves in solidarity with *global* efforts to support social change for women. Yet, how Sadaqa members frame the group to national actors takes on a slightly different tone: the members emphasize collective struggle in a hard national economy, as nationals helping other nationals. In fact, they may even minimize their international connections, which may be conveyed as classed and elitist by some groups as well, to signal or suggest collective suffering and collective solutions.

Resources: In the Sadaqa case, Vital Voices is the reason that they chose to (1) pursue a single issue campaign as a start and (2) the issue it chose was something that could be measurable (we know what success or progress would look like: the policy is implemented or not). Members of Sadaqa also had the networks in public and private spheres to make achieving this goal possible. Their social networks also

allowed them to align their campaign with other campaigns promoting women's rights in the Kingdom, among other related issues.

Sadaqa transformed from a campaign to a civil society organization to also increase its resources: namely support from international donors. This subsequently allowed Sadaqa to expand its platform beyond the Article 72 campaign and have resources to provide space and in-kind support to other aligned movements and campaigns.

4.6.4. Sadaqa's Assessment of Political Opportunity: Strong Regional Influence, and Mediocre Domestic Influence

Vital Voices' decision to initiate and sponsor several projects in the MENA region, including the Sadaqa project, is the political opportunity story of Sadaqa. Vital Voices provided an opportunity to members of Sadaqa to carry out a project for social change, but it had to be related to women and one that met its criteria. The founding members of Sadaqa were invited to participate in the Vital Voices' training because of their active status in their professional and civil society roles in Jordan, but none of them had previously thought to do work on Article 72. So in fact, it was really Vital Voices imposing a political opportunity within the Jordan context. The women collectively thought of this as a chance to use these available resources to work on an issue accordingly, but only came up with this agenda through their participation in the workshop. Ideas to work on an Article 72 campaign prior to this workshop were a non-issue.

However, Sadaqa's decision to move from a single issue campaign (Article 72) to a more general group for women's economic rights was because (1) they had more resources and support from the international community; (2) success of Article 72 increased their reputation within the Kingdom and their networks both within and outside of the capital; and (3) their experiences working on the Article 72 campaign connected them with issues and initiatives that they felt personally deserved and needed more attention in order to advance their goals of promoting women's economic rights.

5. Chapter 5: Conclusion

It has been 8 years since the eruption of the protest waves of the Arab Spring. Like other neighboring countries at this time, Jordan experienced massive protests particularly in 2011 and 2012. However, Jordan did not undergo the political reforms and leadership changes that many scholars and public figures predicted. In order to better understand these developments, this dissertation explored the trajectories of three protest groups in the authoritarian context of Jordan during the Arab Spring era. This study specifically examined protest groups within the same authoritarian context to complement cross-national and regional studies related to the effects of the Arab Spring; and enrich understandings of protest group developments in authoritarian contexts in the MENA region. Through the cases of the FA, LNSG, and Sadaqa, it is clear that resources, regime links, framing, and assessments of political opportunity are all factors that contribute to each group's respective trajectory in ways the converge, but also diverge from one another. However, one unifying element across the three cases—which are embedded in these explanatory factors—is the role of local circumstances in shaping groups' trajectories. Local circumstances related to socioeconomic class hierarchies, tensions between urban and rural populations in Jordan, and the tenuous history of Palestinian Jordanians in the country shape elements of each group's trajectory.

In the case of the FA, the group experienced a "resource curse," where its strong social networks, economic assets, and experience with the regime allowed the group to successfully recruit members and move quickly towards its goal of establishing a political party. However, these resources also created fluctuating pockets of trust and distrust among members who saw the founding members' elite status and class backgrounds as contradictory in some cases to the group's inclusive platform for all Jordanians. These tensions left the FA ripe for regime actors to exploit the group with cooptation strategies accordingly. However, this internal mistrust that led to the group's dismantlement particularly in terms of the effectiveness and coordination of

their outreach strategies in rural areas and its internal organization structure.   In the case of LNSG, the group lacked monetary resources, but used this lack of resources as a resource to win public support for its somewhat controversial agenda that criticized the regime and the King more specifically in some case. LNSG was able to leverage its local working class status to win the sympathy and support of the Jordanian public. It also drew upon the issue of the West Bank to cultivate and ensure support among native Jordanians; particularly in rural areas where group members had strong, established social networks.

What is interesting in the case of LNSG is also how the group was able to use regime insiders to mobilize public and plan protest actions against the regime leadership. At the same time, the regime was able to dismantle many elements of the group through repression and cooptation tactics that targeted the founding members individually and covertly because of the members' vulnerable economic positions as well.

The story of Sadaqa highlights the ways in which social change groups' networks, resources, and framing processes are critically contingent and related to the authoritarian context setting in which it operates, but that authoritarianism is not the sole factor shaping groups' trajectories. Like the FA and LNSG, local class and social status are simultaneously intertwined with the processes that shaped Sadaqa's trajectory, but also the challenges that the group has faced (and continues to face) within the authoritarian context of Jordan. Sadaqa members' economic class and social status backgrounds played critical roles in terms of accessing strong social networks and financial resources at the national and international levels; including its relationship with the regime, international organizations, local CBOs throughout the Kingdom, and embassies in the capital. Sadaqa's economic and social resources and proximity to the capital where these key networks are largely based were critical in allowing the group to *mobilize* these networks for their cause.

Sadaqa's decision to register as an institutionalized organization was also a strategy to combat criticisms of the group as an elitist entity at the local level. Sadaqa was able to effectively collaborate and connect with Jordanians representing a variety of demographic and class backgrounds, including those critical of the members' cosmopolitan, Amman backgrounds, because institutionalization allowed them to partner with local CBOs throughout the Kingdom. Institutionalization in this way subsequently proved to be a resource for Sadaqa to reach lower socioeconomic groups outside the capital and brand itself as a nationwide group. The case of Sadaqa also shows that political opportunity is not always organic, but can also be imposed in authoritarian contexts through international actors and donors.

These three cases also highlight several other important issues to be considered in future analyses of protest groups in Jordan or in the Middle East more generally.

Regime Relations are Multi-Faceted and Interactive: First, the diverging trajectories between the three groups emphasizes how regime-political group relations may not always be so binary and clear-cut at the local level. The FA, LNSG, and Sadaqa all had established relationships with the regime prior to their development. However, each group was connected with different ranks or levels of the regime. These particular relations and interactions with different parts of the regime shaped the trajectories of the three groups in different ways.

The regime did not act on or towards a group in a unidirectional manner. Rather, individuals from the group were in some form of communication, interaction or negotiation with particular individuals within the regime. Rarely were regime interactions with the group as a collective (rather it was between individuals). Furthermore, regime relations cannot be understood as a one-time act (of repression or cooptation for example). Regime-protest group interactions were continuous processes; and the regime in Jordan is comprised of multiple actors and is sometimes fractured in its interactions with protest groups. Hence, visible repression, cooptation, or mixes of both were results of multiple interactions, and conversations

between the regime actors and the group members. In other words, the regime relations changed and varied among and with protest groups over time, which is why we see the regime as supportive of groups in some cases, but not in others. This subsequently suggests that cooptation strategies require more detailed analyses to fully understand how regime actions relate or are informed by different members and elements of political reform groups that may go unrealized if "political groups" and "the regime" are approached as two autonomous and distinct entities.

How each group framed or leverage their relationship with the regime at various points in their trajectory also highlights important issues related to protest group-regime relations. In the case of LNSG for example, the group used regime repression tactics as a resource to strengthen the group's credibility among the public as true fighters for the Jordanian people. This suggests that certain approaches and types of repression tactics may actually fuel, rather than quell protest groups in ways that are not intended. Relatedly, Sadaqa's decision to frame itself as an economic—and not a political—campaign to navigate the Jordanian authoritarian context also suggests that protest groups may undermine their own efforts to promote their platforms—in this case, women's rights in Jordan—because they *depoliticize* the country's economic conditions; perhaps increasing class and gender inequalities accordingly.

Sadaqa's relationship with other social change groups, and Jordan leadership's allowance of political campaigns (like BDS), further reaffirms that social change groups may be mechanisms to strengthen regime rule and political status quo. This observation therefore highlights the need to analyze relationships *between people* within and between social change groups in addition to relations with the regime to more fully understand social movement trajectories within authoritarian contexts.

The Role of the Arab Spring, but also Other Regional Developments:

The way in which the regional politics shaped, and continue to shape protest group trajectories in Jordan further brings attention to the interconnectedness between regional, national, and local politics in shaping protest group agendas and outcomes at the national and sub-national level. While the Arab Spring may have provided an important political opportunity for protest groups to challenge regime power in the Kingdom, the regime also used the effects of the Arab Spring in neighboring countries to expand its power and quell the opposition. Specifically, the Syrian crisis and the rise of Islamists in Egypt provided a critical space for the regime to expand its powers in the Kingdom in the name of security and stability. Jordan's high poverty rates and a weak economy were ironically assets for the regime to maintain rule in this context. First, it provided a mechanism for Jordan's leadership to appeal for more aid and external funding (to deal with the effects of the Syrian crisis and refugee population in Jordan). In fact, the international community has often commended and praised Jordanian officials for their policies and responses to the Syrian population despite its poor economy and limited and strained resources. Second, the regime is able to leverage the language of security and state of emergency language in conjunction with its funding appeals to the international community. These two factors combined provide a way for the regime to justify the status quo power arrangements and limit political space for opposition voices and reforms. The language of emergency, along with international support of the regime in the case of the Syrian crisis, in turn further shaped the ways in which protest groups could frame their goals and demands to the public both domestically and even internationally. How regional factors shape and inform regime and protest group strategies alike, and in similar ways, suggests that regime and social movements may not be as distinct analytically in some ways than previously thought.

The "end" of a protest group's trajectory: Accounting for the post-phases, or periods after protest groups are dismantled, may also provide further insight into how protests groups, particular in authoritarian contexts, may serve alternative functions and roles for various actors

beyond their stated goals or their assumed functions as political groups. The continued effects of these three protest groups in the contemporary era suggest that more work is needed that accounts for post-protest group effects. A rethinking of what a protest group' trajectory includes could be useful to more fully account for the effects of groups like LNSG in building momentum and action for political reform in authoritarian contexts. Relatedly, it is not clear if and when a group creates social change. In the case of Sadaqa, one might see its work on Article 72 as evidence of social change, but someone else might argue that the group's silence on the relationship between politics and women's economic situation suggests nothing more than a group of women preserving the political and social status quo. Another person may argue that the visibility of Sadaqa's impact on Jordanian society is still yet to be determined and needs more time to be realized. These mixed results and perceptions, and this latter element of timing, highlight that we need to understand and approach analyses of groups' abilities to create social change as fluid processes, rather than static issues, activities, and outcomes. In other words, how Sadaqa members organize, and connect with different communities, stakeholders and related actors on a day-to-day basis and at different points of its trajectory in themselves may challenge the social status quo in ways that may be unrealized if analyses only focus on Sadaqa's and the other two groups' reported achievements, challenges, resources and networks. Lastly, and while protest groups like Sadaqa may appear to strengthen the regime in an immediate time frame through its campaigns and initiatives, it is not yet clear how the processes and strategies Sadaqa employs to engage with these stakeholders may challenge not only regime rule, but broader social, political and economic structures of stratification in Jordan in the long term.

5.1. Significance of Research Revisited

Tracing the trajectories of the three groups allowed this dissertation to have both empirical and theoretical contributions to understandings of protest groups in authoritarian contexts in the

MENA region. Empirically, my research adds to the literature on the Arab uprisings in Jordan through rich, qualitative data directly from the activists in the movement. Theoretically, I apply a combination of SM and democratization studies theories to the Jordan case to empirically test their applicability to explain protest group trajectories within MENA authoritarian contexts. I consider these SM theories' applicability within the same authoritarian context within the MENA region to also account for variation at the local, intra-state level; to hopefully contribute to better and more nuanced understandings of the Arab Spring throughout the region. The following paragraphs summarize these contributions.

Better understandings of Protest groups in Jordan during the Arab Spring

Expand Empirical Understandings of MENA context: In this research I provide greater detail about social movements in the MENA region based on participation observations and interviews with the protest groups and their respective activist members. Until now, we know mostly about other countries like Egypt and Tunisia as representative of the region; or rely on cross-national studies to understand the effects of the Arab Spring in Jordan and the region generally. Studies of the Arab Spring tend to focus at this cross-national level without paying attention to in-depth and intra-state cases. Furthermore, most studies in the region have focused on Islamic movements before the Arab Spring and frame Islam as an exceptional feature to protest group formation in MENA. I contribute accounts of protest groups that are secular and move beyond this limited framing to understand political and social change in the region.

Nuanced Understandings of Regime: Studies of the MENA have also given great attention to the regimes, but tend to frame the regime as all-encompassing. In this research, I show how the regime is a multi-faceted actor comprised of multiple levels and branches that work in parallel, but also conflict in their interactions and relationships with protest groups as well. Furthermore, I show that protest groups might have favorable relations with some levels of the regime and not others, and are actually able to use and leverage these relations to achieve their

goals and even challenge the regime leadership as well. I also show and do not assume regime-protest group relations as separate: these actors often overlap and are in continuous interaction and negotiation within one another and at different levels of the regime.

Expand Understandings of Resources: The research contributes to a better theoretical understanding of how domestic resources shape protest group trajectories. I do this by accounting for how resources are both positive and negative in shaping trajectories. The case of the FA shows how domestic resources allowed the group to mobilize quickly, but also created and led to distrust among members as well. The case of LNSG highlights how lack of resources becomes a resource and framing device to mobilize public support: LNSG used its lack of resources to ratify its working class identity and seriousness in achieving reform for the people of the Jordanian nation. Furthermore, I show how domestic resources interact and relate to international factors as well; such as understandings of political opportunity in the case of Sadaqa with Vital Voices.

The role of local dynamics: This study complicates explanations of the Arab Spring as the driving factor for political mobilization in Jordan by accounting for intra-state relations and histories that also matter to why groups assessed political opportunity in the manners they did; and how they framed their group and goals accordingly. FA, for example found and opening through the Arab Spring, but their subsequent support and trajectory is also related to the fact that they had relations with elite regime members and were experienced working within regime structures. Unlike the FA, LNSG perceived the Arab Spring as a regional cover to expand its already established activities. The group already was known and had a history of protest. Due to the confrontational manner of the group and its history of protest, the regime used repression tactics to dismantle the group, especially when it was able to frame stability and quelling protests as desirable amidst growing regional turmoil. As for Sadaqa, the group continues to

162

prosper today, in part because of its relations with regime ranks that were established prior to the Arab Spring.

Applications of SMT and democratization studies in the Jordan Authoritarian Context

A single theory of social movements cannot fully explain the trajectories of the three protest groups. However, a mix of the three approaches (Resource Mobilization, Political Opportunity, and Framing), along with democratization studies' attention to the regime as an explanatory factor, helps to explain protest group trajectories in Jordan.

Resource mobilization, for example, appeared to be applicable for both the FA and Sadaqa, where both groups had abundant resources that helped them develop and be effective. Resources in the case of FA was crucial in shaping the amount of literature they were able to produce and disseminate for their platform. For Sadaqa, the resources helped the group to maintain and expand its campaign to cover more issues and support other groups and campaigns in Jordan. On the other hand, the theory barely applies to the LNSG case, a group that had little material resources but the members managed to turn the lack of resources into a resource since they were perceived as genuine activists who were risking more.

Political Opportunity theory works to some extent to explain the three groups' trajectories, but at different levels. The FA and Sadaqa were products of the Arab Spring as political opportunity. The FA was a clear example, as members of the group were explicitly inspired by the regional events and framed their efforts as a decision to tag along to these regional developments. Sadaqa was also a case of political opportunity related to the Arab Spring, an opportunity that was somehow imposed on the group by an international organization. Vital Voices saw the Arab Spring as an opportunity to advance its agenda in the region, so they chose Sadaqa and funded it to promote women's rights. Finally, LNSG did find an opportunity through the Arab Spring events, but the group considered it as a way to expand and increase its activities; not start new ones. It is worth noting that the regime also reacts to

163

what it considers groups' political opportunities. For example, the Jordan regime gave promises of reform and planned on giving concessions, especially after seeing the chaos in neighboring countries and the toppling or regimes in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen. Meanwhile, it regained and expanded its power when protests dwelled down and when stability became a favorable stance over democracy.

Finally, framing theory is a crucial way to explain the trajectory of the three groups. The FA framed itself as a moderate reformative group that is seeking the rights of individuals and achieving a civil state. Through this framing, the FA was inviting to all members of the Jordanian society, especially Palestinian Jordanians who were previously and largely absent from the protest and political activism scene. Because the FA framed itself in this way as a group for comprehensive change, it represented a viable third option and alternative way of thinking of Jordan politics as the regime versus the Islamists to the public. This framing made the FA appear as a threat that would challenge the power of the regime. Similarly, LNSG was seen as a challenger to the authority of the regime because it framed itself as "for the nation (homeland)" group which allowed it to gain the support of the country's working class and rural areas. Sadaqa's framing was also key and contributes to its continuing existence today. Sadaqa has framed itself as a group that is seeking economic changes rather than political. In this way, it has been easy for the group to get support from the regime and business actors in the country as well.

In terms of democratization studies attention to the regime, the three cases show how the regime does indeed shape each group's trajectory, but in ways that are not always the same or predictable. This is because the regime is comprised of multiple actors, is fractured in its approach and relations with protest groups.

This study complicates these literatures by highlighting the complex relationships between protest groups and regime actors within authoritarian contexts; and also shows how

these relations are often reflective and embedded in local dynamics related to socioeconomic class, identity politics (related to Palestinian Jordanians), and divisions between rural and urban populations in Jordan.

Trajectory as a concept to understand protest group actions

This dissertation offers an effort to define and use "trajectory" as a concept in order to help us better understand social movements. This concept allows us to account for group's intentional and reactive actions to events that shape how it pursues its intended goals. Using trajectory as an analytic tool may also help to better define analytic categories and concepts such as success and failure; and further contextualize them in the SM context in which they develop.

5.2. Protest group activism in Jordan today

Many Jordanian activists were very disappointed after their respective groups were dismantled, and fell into states of despair. Many of them gave up after their initial reform efforts failed (especially as the regime maintained and even increased its power). The activists were primarily frustrated with the fact that policies and the structure of the state remained the same; or were restructured to increase the power of the King. This suggests that the regime "won" while activists "failed" to make real change; and many activists are still facing the effects of regime repression. Many, for example, still have outstanding cases in court and are unable to secure employment because of their political activities). The latter is particularly true of former LNSG members who live both in and outside of the Kingdom. These effects explain why some groups are not able to reformulate at least in part. This suggests that analyses of protest group trajectories need to more fully account for the effects of protest group movement participation not just during group duration but also during the post-group period.

On the other hand, some former activists are now even working with the regime (former FA members for instance); suggesting that we might need to rethink why activists join and engage in protest group activities in the first place. The motives of such members were not, it

seems, to achieve reform. It seems that some of them wanted to remind the regime of their power (by showing the regime that they could pose a threat since they knew how the regime structure worked) as a way to be reinserted into this regime system again. They liked—and perhaps missed—working within regime ranks for the power, privileges and prestige that came with it. Participating in a protest group provided that feeling for them again; and was a way for them to signal that they wanted to be included in the regime once more.

Despite the fact that the regime's power increased since the Arab Spring, hopeful activists remained and continued to encourage their peers to meet to discuss ways to make political change going forward. They remained hopeful for reform despite the frustration and stagnation. Their subsequent actions have taken two forms. Some, for example, just want a platform to keep expressing their political ideologies and ideas in a collective space. They have formed or joined political salons (many former FA members for example) that discuss local and regional politics. Political salons have created a space for former group members to feel a sense of community with likeminded people who they can vent to and talk about reform with. However, these groups engage in less efforts to actually push for political and social change. The fact that former activists are content with this post-protest group setup suggests that the appeal or motivation to participate in protests groups like the FA may have simply been to have a sense of community that these individuals could not find or had in other aspects of their life.

However, and on the other hand, other activists continue to re-evaluate the political environment in order to act accordingly. Many former LNSG members fall into this category. These activists are working on producing literature to try to form new groups (i.e. new versions of LNSG), but in smaller ways at the moment. For example, they focus on single issues like labor rights rather than a comprehensive multi-causal platform like those from LNSG or the FA. These activists have also aligned or are now working with other movements, suggesting that, in some ways, it is hard to define LNSG's and the FA's (and of course Sadaqa's) trajectory

166

as distinct from other protest groups. Stated differently, protest group's trajectories are intertwined and overlap with one another; highlighting the importance of conceptualizing protest group trajectories in relation to other groups. For example, young members and LNSG sympathizers were inspired by the activities of this group and have recently formed their own related version of the group. They also recently won the campus elections of University of Jordan; suggesting that the impact and trajectory of the LNSG continues in new forms despite the group's official dismantling.

These activists have also served as catalysts that are helping to break the barrier of fear among the public to question the country's political and economic systems. They helped—and continue to help—create a new culture in which protest and criticism is considered necessary and important exercise of citizens' rights in Jordan. The culmination of these factors and developments suggest that analyses of protest groups need to perhaps consider "post-group" developments as part of the trajectory of the group itself.

5.3. Directions Going Forward

Economic strife, social deprivation, and political grievances continue to persist throughout Jordan. This is exacerbated by unemployment in the double digits, a youth population of 65 percent, and high numbers of refugees from neighboring countries. This latter situation continues to divert attention away from the momentum of protests in Jordan and the Arab Spring movements at the international scale. This contributes to the difficulty in assessing and measuring Jordan's protest groups and popular movement impact at the national and international levels, but also within certain locales and groups within the country. The continuing regional refugee crisis also provides a cover for the regime to continue using state of emergency rhetoric to justify the maintenance and expansion of regime rule for the sake of stability.

In some ways, the Kingdom seems to moving away from political reform more than ever. First, the media is under heightened monitoring and control of the government since 2013. This means that groups, like LNSG, who rely on media messaging in lieu of strong financial resources to win the hearts and minds of the Jordanian pubic and spread awareness about their platforms no longer have key routes of networking and communication available to them. Second, the regime retracted almost all of the political and legal reforms that were introduced during the early days of the Arab Spring and rather increased the King's Power in orders that were introduced in April 2016. These changes have subsequently shrunk the permissible space under law for political opposition groups or any form of community organizing to new extents; making it even more difficult to coordinate any form of public meeting or activity related to politics or political reform.

While protest groups and activists in Jordan have sought reform, the regime has yet to express seriousness and willingness to these demands when we consider the regime's responses collectively since the start of the Arab Spring.

Yet, it is important to highlight that protest groups have collectively disrupted the barrier of "fear" of criticizing the regime. Previously, Jordanians feared the consequences of criticizing the regime and its institutions. Breaking this barrier has been a critical first step in the development of protest culture within the country. The regime in Jordan is trying to quell this culture by producing policies that limit the freedoms of people in response; namely freedom of speech.

More research could begin to account for these effects: examining how protest groups' activities in Jordan or in MENA countries during the Arab Spring, but also in previous eras, continue to shape and effect perceptions of activism, activist activities, and regime positions and responses. The researcher specifically intends to consider these factors in a future project that accounts for the role of location and cities' histories in how they shape regime and protest

group interactions and strategies at the intra-state level; with implications for national outcomes as well. Specifically, the researcher intends to build on this dissertation to investigate how historical memory of protest and rebellion both under Hashemite and colonial rule within specific locations of Jordan shape why and how regime and protest groups interact in the present day with one another in the manners that they do. It is the hope that this future research along with this current study will contribute to broader understandings of how intra-state histories and dynamics within the Middle East shape national level politics. Namely, how and why places of protests in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan shape regime and social movement interactions and practices.

References:

"Protests in Jordan After Spike in Fuel Prices," Al Jazeera and Agencies, 14 November 2012. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/11/2012111464145140480.html>. (Accessed 17 August 2016).

 "Dahabi: A Secret will go with me to my Grave. And this is the story of Shaheen and how my Son is linked to it," Garaa News Agency, 04 April 2016. <http://goo.gl/ax4qJl >. (Accessed 27 May 2016).01259846> (7 September 2018).

Ababneh, Sara. (2016). "Troubling the Political: Women in the Jordanian Day-Waged Labor Movement." *International Journal of Middle East Studies 48*(1): 87-112.

Abdelrahman, Maha. (2011). "The Transnational and the Local: Egyptian Activists and Transnational Protest Networks." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 38(3): 407-424.

Adams, Melinda. (2007). 'National Machineries' and Authoritarian Politics, in: International Feminist Journal of Politics, 9, 2, 176–197, online: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/146167407

Al-Ali, Nadje. (2012). "Gendering the Arab Spring 1." *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication 5*(1): 26-31.

Alami, Aida. (2013). "Women Face Fight to Keep Their Rights in Tunisia." New York Times, February 20. Accessed 20 January 2018 from: <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/21/world/middleeast/women-face-fight-to-keep-their-rights-in-tunisia.html.>.

Alini, Mohsen and Maryam Bijan. (2012). "A Review on Causes and Factors Affecting on the Power Structure of Rural Culture in Iranian Society of Post-Islamic Revolution." *Life Sci Journal 9*(4):4251-4259.

Alon, Yaov. (2006). "Tribes and State-Formation in Mandatory Transjordan." Civil Wars 8(1): 66-82.

Al-Shammari, Nayef, & John Willoughby. (2018). Determinants of political instability across Arab Spring countries. *Mediterranean Politics*, 1-22.

Amenta, Edwin, and Michael P. Young. (1999). "Making an impact: Conceptual and methodological implications of the collective goods criterion." in Giugni, M., McAdam, D., & Tilly, C. (Eds.). (1999). *How Social Movements Matter* (Vol. 10). Minneapolis: U of Minnesota Press. 22-41.

Aminzade, Ron, and Doug McAdam. (2002). "Emotions and contentious politics." *Mobilization: An International Quarterly 7*(2): 107-109.

Andoni, Lamis and Jillian Schwedler. (1996). Bread riots in Jordan. *Middle East Report*, 40-42.

Andrews, Kenneth T., and Neal Caren.(2010) "Making the news movement organizations, media attention, and the public agenda." *American Sociological Review* 75.6: 841-866.

Bank, André. (2012). "Jordan and Morocco: Pacification through constitutional reform." *Protest, Revolt and Regime Change in the Arab World.* Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 31-33.

Barker-Plummer, Bernadette. (2002). Producing public voice: Resource mobilization and media access in the National Organization for Women. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *79*(1), 188-205.

Baylouny, Ann Marie. (2011) "Hizbullah's Women: Internal Transformation in a Social Movement and a Militia." in Beinen, J. and Vairel, F., eds. (2013). *Social movements, mobilization and contestation in the Middle East and North Africa.* Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press. 86-104.

Becker, Gary. (1964)"Human Capital (New York: National Bu-reau of Economic Research, 1964)." *BeckerHuman Capital1964*.

Beinin, Joel, and Frédéric Vairel (eds.). (2013). *Social movements, Mobilization and Contestation in the Middle East and North Africa.* Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Belkeziz, Abdelilah. (2012). "Morocco and Democratic Transition: A Reading of the Constitutional Amendments-Their Context and Result." *Contemporary Arab Affairs* 5(1): 27-53.

170

Bellin, Eva. (2012). '"Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring."*Comparative Politics* 44(2): 127-149.

Benford, Robert D., and David A. Snow. (2000). "Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment." *Annual Review of Sociology:* 611-639.

Bennett, Andrew, and Alexander L. George. (1997). *Process tracing in case study research*. Washington, DC: MacArthur Program on Case Studies.

Bennett, Andrew, and Jeffrey T. Checkel (Eds.). (2014). *Process tracing: From metaphor to analytic tool*. Cambridge University Press

Bertrand, E. (2013). Political and social rights: women after the Arab spring. The Voice of Russia, March 25. Accessed 20 January 2018 https://sputniknews.com/voiceofrussia/2013_03_25/Political-and-social-rights-women-after-the-Arab-Spring-203/.

Blumer, Herbert. (1969). "Fashion: From class differentiation to collective selection."*The Sociological Quarterly 10*(3): 275-291.

Blumer, Herbert. (1986). *Symbolic interactionism: Perspective and method*. Berkeley: Univ of California Press.

Bogaert, Koenraad, and Montserrat Emperador. (2011) "Imagining the State through Social Protest: State Reformation and the Mobilizations of Unemployed Graduates in Morocco," *Mediterranean Politics* 16(2): 241-259.

Boix, Carles. (2011). Democracy, development, and the international system. *American Political Science Review*, *105*(4), 809-828.

Bonnefoy, Laurent, and Marine Poirier. (2013) "Dynamics of the Yemeni Revolution: Contextualizing Mobilizations."in Beinen, J. and Vairel, F., eds. (2013). *Social movements, mobilization and contestation in the Middle East and North Africa.* Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press. 228-246.

Brownlee, Jason, Tarek E. Masoud, and Andrew Reynolds. (2015). *The Arab Spring: Pathways of repression and reform*. Oxford University Press, USA.

Burstein, Paul, and April Linton. (2002). The impact of political parties, interest groups, and social movement organizations on public policy: Some recent evidence and theoretical concerns. *Social Forces*, *81*(2), 380-408.

Charrad, Mounira M. (2011). Gender in the Middle East: Islam, state, agency. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *37*, 417-437.

Christiansen, Jonathan. (2009). "Four stages of social movements." *EBSCO Research Starters*, 1-7.

CIA World Factbook (2018) Country Profile: Jordan. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html> (Accessed 17 June 2018).

Clark, Janine Astrid, and Jillian Schwedler. (2003).Who opened the window? Women's activism in Islamist parties. *Comparative Politics*: 293-312.

Coleman, I., E. Husain, and M. Willis. (2012). "Islam and Politics." Symposium, Oxford, UK, March 30. Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed from 15 January 2016: <http://www.cfr.org/religion-andpolitics/islam-politics/p27837>.

Collier, David, and Steven Levitsky. (1997). "Democracy with adjectives: Conceptual innovation in comparative research." *World politics 49*(3): 430-451.

Costello, Matthew, J. Craig Jenkins, and Hassan Aly. (2015). Bread, justice, or opportunity? The determinants of the Arab awakening protests. *World Development*, *67*, 90-100.

Della, Porta Donatella and Sidney Tarrow. (2011) "Interactive Diffusion: The Coevolution of Police and Protest Behavior with an application to Transnational Contention." *Comparative Political Studies* 4(1): 119-152.

Diamond, Larry. (2010). "Why are there no arab democracies?," Journal of Democracy 21(1): 93-112.

Diani, Mario and Donatella Della Porta. (2005). *Social movements: An introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Earl, Jennifer. (2000).. "Methods, movements, and outcomes." *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change 22*: 3-25.

Edwards, Bob, and John D. McCarthy. (2004)." Resources and Social Movement Mobilization." in Snow, D. A., Soule, S. A., & Kriesi, H. (Eds.). (2008). *The Blackwell companion to social movements*. John Wiley & Sons. 116-152.

Faqir, Fadia. (1997). *Pillars of salt: A novel*. Frankfurt: Interlink Publishing Group Incorporated.

Ferree, Myra Marx, et al. (2003). *Rethinking social movements: Structure, meaning, and emotion*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Fetner, Tina, and Kristin Kush. (2008) "Lesbian and gay activism in high schools: The emergence of gay-straight alliances." *Youth & Society* 40: 114-40.

Fleischmann, Ellen. (2003). The Nation and Its "New" Women: The Palestinian Women's Movement, 1920–1948. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Franklin, James C. (2009). "Contentious Challenges and Government Responses in Latin America." *Political Research Quarterly* 62(4): 700-714.

Gallets, Barbara. (2015). "Black September and Identity Construction in Jordan." *Journal of Georgetown University-Qatar Middle Eastern Studies Student Association*, 12.

Gamson, W., and Meyer, D. (1996). "Framing Political Opportunity." in McAdam D., McCarthy J., Zald M. (Eds.) *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gamson, William A. (1990). The strategy of Social protest. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. 2nd ed.

Gamson, William A. (1992). *Talking politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.

Gamson, William A., Bruce Fireman, and Steven Rytina. (1982). *Encounters with unjust authority*. Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press.

Gause III, F. G. (2011). "Why Middle East Studies missed the Arab spring: The myth of authoritarian stability," Foreign Affairs: 81-90.

Geddes Barbara, Joseph Wright and Erica Frantz. (2014). Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set. *Perspectives on Politics* 12(2): 313-331.

Giugni, Marco. (1998). The outcomes of social movements: a review of the literature. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *24*, 371-393.

Giugni, Marco. (2008). Political, biographical, and cultural consequences of social movements. *Sociology Compass*, *2*(5), 1582-1600.

Glenn, John K. (1999). Competing challengers and contested outcomes to state breakdown: the velvet revolution in Czechoslovakia. *Social Forces*, *78*(1), 187-211.

Goffman, Erving. (1974). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Goldstone, Jack, and Doug McAdam. (2001). "Contention in demographic and life-course context." *Aminzade, R.; Goldstone, J.; McAdam, D*, 195-221.

Goodwin, Jeff, James Jasper, and Francesca Polletta. (2000). "The return of the repressed: The fall and rise of emotions in social movement theory." *Mobilization: An International Quarterly 5*(1): 65-83.

Gunitsky, Seva. (2018). Democratic Waves in Historical Perspective. *Perspectives on Politics*, *16*(3), 634-651.

Haggard, Stephan, and Robert R. Kaufman. (2016). Democratization during the third wave. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *19*, 125-144.

Hamid, Shadi and Courtney Freer. (2011). How Stable is Jordan? King Abdullah's Half-Hearted Reforms and the Challenge of the Arab Spring. Policy Briefing, Doha: Brookings Institution. 1-11.

Hamid, Shadi. (2014). *Temptations of power: Islamists and illiberal democracy in a new Middle East*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hanafi, Sari. (2012). The Arab revolutions; the emergence of a new political subjectivity.

Contemporary Arab Affairs 5(2): 198-213.

Hattar, Nahed. (2016, June 24). Government of Poles. Watana News. Retrieved on 23 February 2018 from https://goo.gl/W8Q4Wg

Heydemann, Steven and Reinoud Leenders. (2011). Authoritarian Learning and Authoritarian Resilience: Regime Responses to the 'Arab Awakening.' *Globalizations* 8(5): 647-53. Internazionali.

Huntington, Samuel P. (1991). *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman: Univ. Oklahoma Press.

Jenkins, J. Craig. (1983). Resource mobilization theory and the study of social movements. *Annual review of sociology:* 527-553.

Jenkins, J. Craig and William H. Form. (2005). "Social Movements and Social Change," pp. 331-49 in Thomas Janoski, Robert R. Alford, Alexander M. Hicks and Mildred A. Schwartz eds., *Handbook of Political Sociology: States, Civil Society and Globalization*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

Josua, Maria, and Mirjam Edel. (2015). To repress or not to repress—regime survival strategies in the Arab spring. *Terrorism and Political Violence 27*(2): 289-309.

Kalleberg, Arne L. and Ted Mouw. (2018). Occupations, Organizations, and Intragenerational Career Mobility. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *44*, pp.283-303.

Kane, Melinda. (2013). LGBT Religious Activism: Predicting State Variations in the Number of Metropolitan Community Churches, 1974–2000. *Sociological Forum*. Vol. 28. No. 1.

Kitschelt, Herbert P. (1986). "Political opportunity structures and political protest: Anti-nuclear movements in four democracies." *British Journal of Political Science*, *16*(1): 57-85

Klandermans, Bert. (1984). "Mobilization and participation: Social-psychological expansions of resource mobilization theory." *American Sociological Review:* 583-600.

Korany, Bahgat. (Ed.). (2010). *The Changing Middle East: A New Look at Regional Dynamics*. Cairo: American Univ in Cairo Press.

Larson, Jeff, and Sarah Soule. (2009) "Sector-Level Dynamics and Collective Action in the United States, 1965-1975." *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 14.3: 293-314.

Lewis, Bernard. (1996). "A historical overview." *Journal of Democracy 7*(2): 52-63.

Lichbach, Mark Irving. (1987). Deterrence or escalation? The puzzle of aggregate studies of repression and dissent. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *31*(2), 266-297.

Lipsky, Michael. (1968). Protest as a political resource. *American political science review*, *62*(4), pp.1144-1158.

Lust-Okar, Ellen, and Amaney Ahmad Jamal. (2002). "Rulers and Rules Reassessing the Influence of Regime Type on Electoral Law Formation." *Comparative Political Studies 35*(3): 337-366.

Lynch, Marc, (ed.). (2014).*The Arab Uprisings Explained: New Contentious Politics in the Middle East.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Magen, Amichai. (2012). "On political order and the 'Arab Spring.'" *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs 6*(1): 9-21.

Mama, Amina (2013), Women in politics, in: David Anderson, Nicolas Cheeseman and Andrea Scheibler (eds.), Routledge Handbook of African Politics, Routledge, New York, 147–162.

Marks, Monica. (2015). "Tunisia's nnahda: Rethinking Islamism in the context of ISIS and the Egyptian coup." *Washington: Brookings Institution*.

Marteu, Elisabeth(ed.). (2009)*Civil Organizations and Protest Movements in Israel: Mobilization Around the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Massad, Joseph A. (2012). *Colonial effects: The making of national identity in Jordan*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Mauss, Armand L. (1975). *Social problems as social movements*. Philadelphia: Lippincott.

McAdam, Doug and Sidney Tarrow. (2011). "Introduction: Dynamics of Contention Ten Years On." *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 16(1): 1-10.

McAdam, Doug, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald. (1996). Introduction: Opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes—toward a synthetic, comparative perspective on social movements. *Comparative perspectives on social movements: Political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framings*, 1-20.

McAdam, Doug, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly. (2001). *Dynamics of Contention.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

McAdam, Doug, and Yang Su. (2002). The war at home: Antiwar protests and congressional voting, 1965 to 1973. *American sociological review*, 696-721.

McAdam, Doug. (1982). *Political process and the development of black insurgency, 1930-1970.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

McCammon, Holly J., et al. (2001). How movements win: Gendered opportunity structures and US women's suffrage movements, 1866 to 1919. *American Sociological Review*, 49-70.

McCarthy, John D., and Mayer N. Zald. (1977). "Resource mobilization and social movements: A partial theory." *American Journal of Sociology:* 1212-1241.

Melucci, Alberto. (1996). *Challenging codes: Collective action in the information age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Menoret, Pascal. (2011). "Leaving Islamic Activism Behind: Ambiguous Disengagement in Saudi Arabia." in Beinen, J. and Vairel, F., (eds.) (2013) *Social Movements, Mobilization and Contestation in the Middle East and North Africa.* Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press. 68-85.

Meyer, David S. (2004). Protest and political opportunities. *Annu. Rev. Sociol., 30*, 125-145.

Miller, Frederick D. (1999). The end of SDS and the emergence of weatherman: Demise through success. *Waves of protest: Social movements since the Sixties:* 303-324.

Moss, Dana (2014). "Repression, Response, and Contained Escalation Under" Liberalized" Authoritarianism in Jordan". Mobilization: An International Quarterly, 19(3), 261-286.

Muasher, Marwan. (2011) "A Decade of Struggling Reform Efforts in Jordan: The Resilience of the Rentier System."The Carnegie Papers, Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. 1-32.<http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/jordan_reform.pdf>.

Mueller, Carol M. (1992). "Building social movement theory." *Frontiers in social movement theory*: 3-25.

O'Donnell, Guillermo, et al., eds. (1986). *Transitions from authoritarian rule: Southern Europe*. Vol. 1. JHU Press

Olzak, Susan, and Emily Ryo. (2007). Organizational diversity, vitality and outcomes in the civil rights movement. *Social Forces* 85.4: 1561-1591.

Ottaway, Marina. (2013). *Democracy challenged: The rise of semi-authoritarianism*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Oudat, Mohammed Ali, and Ayman Alshboul. (2010). 'Jordan First:' Tribalism, Nationalism and Legitimacy of Power in Jordan. *Intellectual Discourse 18*(1): 65.

Pearlman, Wendy. (2011). *Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Przeworski, Adam, et al. (2000). *Democracy and development: political institutions and well-being in the world, 1950-1990* (Vol. 3). Cambridge University Press.

Ramahi, Sawsan. (2015) Palestinians and Jordanian Citizenship. Middle East Monitor: Special Report. London: Memo Publishers.

Ross, Michael L. (2001). Does oil hinder democracy? *World Politics* 53:325–61

Ryan, Curtis R. (1998). Peace, bread and riots: Jordan and the international monetary fund. *Middle East Policy*, 6(2), 54.

Ryan, Curtis R. (2011a) "Identity politics, reform, and protest in Jordan." *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 11(3): 564-578.

Ryan, Curtis R. (2011b) "The Armed forces and the Arab Uprisings: The Case of Jordan." *Middle East Law and Governance 4.*

Ryan, Curtis R. (2014). Jordanian Foreign Policy and the Arab Spring. *Middle East Policy*, *21*(1), 144-153.

Salamey, Imad, and Fredric Pearson. (2012). "The Collapse of Middle Eastern Authoritarianism: breaking the barriers of fear and power." *Third World Quarterly 33*(5): 931-948.

Salamey, Imad. (2015). Post-Arab Spring: changes and challenges. *Third world quarterly*, *36*(1), 111-129.

Salhi, Zahia Smail (2010), Gender and Diversity in the Middle East and North Africa, Routledge, Oxon.
sampling." *PS: Political Science & Politics 40(4)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.765-772.

Santini, Ruth. (2011). "What Women's Rights Tell Us About the Arab Spring." The Brookings Institution, November 10. Accessed 20 January 2018 from:
<https://www.brookings.edu/research/what-womens-rights-tell-us-about-the-arab-spring/>.

Schwartz, Michael. (1988). *Radical protest and social structure: the Southern Farmers' Alliance and cotton tenancy, 1880-1890*. University of Chicago Press.

Schwedler, Jillian. (2005). Cop rock: protest, identity, and dancing riot police in Jordan. *Social Movement Studies*, *4*(2), pp.155-175.

Schwedler, Jillian. (2012). "The political geography of protest in neoliberal Jordan," Middle East Critique 21(3): 259-270.

Shomali, Yakoub. (2016). Value of Daycare Services at the Workplace. *Sadaqa Publication*.

Skocpol, Theda. (1979). *States and social revolutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Skowronek, Stephen. (1982). *Building a new American state: The expansion of national administrative capacities, 1877-1920*. Cambridge University Press.

Smelser, Neil J. (1962). *Theory of Collective Behavior*. New Orleans: Quid Pro Books.

Smith, Benjamin. (2004). "Oil wealth and regime survival in the developing world, 1960–1999." *American Journal of Political Science 48*(2): 232-246.

Snow, David A., and Robert D. Benford. (1988). Ideology, frame resonance, and participant mobilization. *International social movement research 1*(1): 197-217.

Snow, David A., & Robert D. Benford. (1992). Master frames and cycles of protest. *Frontiers in social movement theory*, *133*, 155

Snow, David A., et al. (1986). Frame alignment processes, micromobilization, and movement participation. *American Sociological Review:* 464-481.

Soothill, Jane, E. (2007), Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power: Charismatic Christianity in Ghana, Brill NV, Leiden.

Soule, Sarah, and Brayden King. (2008). Competition and Resource Partitioning in Three Social Movement Industries1. *American Journal of Sociology* 113.6: 1568-1610.

Swidler, Ann. (1986). Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies. *American Sociological Review:* 273-286.

Tansey, Oisín.(2007). Process tracing and elite interviewing: a case for non-probability sampling. *PS: Political Science & Politics*40.4: 765-772.

Tarrow, Sidney. (1994). *Power in movement: Social movements, collective action and mass politics in the modern state*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tarrow, Sidney. (1996). Social movements in contentious politics: A review article. *American Political Science Review 90*(4): 874-883.

Tarrow, Sidney. (1998). *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. Cambridge University Press.

Tell, Tariq. (2015). Early Spring in Jordan: The Revolt of the Military Veterans. *Carnegie Middle East Center*. Nov 4.

Tilly, Charles and Sidney Tarrow. (2007). *Contentious Politics*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Tilly, Charles. (1978). *From mobilization to revolution*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Tilly, Charles. (1984). *Big structures, large processes, huge comparisons*. New York: Russell Sage

Foundation.

Tripp, Aili Mari (2012), Why Do Authoritarian Regimes Adopt Quotas: Lessons from African Cases, online:< https://web.law.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/microsites/gender-sexuality/Tripp%20Why%20Do%20Authoritarian%20Regimes%20Adopt%20.pdf > (7 September 2018.

Tripp, Aili Mari (2013), Political Systems and Gender, in: Waylen, Georgina, Karen Celis, Johanna Kantola and S. Laurel Welden (eds.) (2013), The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Politics, Oxford University Press, New York, 521–527.

Turner, Ralph H., and Lewis M. Killian. (1987). *Collective behavior.* Oxford: Prentice-Hall.

Vairel, Frédéric. (2011). Protesting in authoritarian situations: Egypt and Morocco in comparative perspective, in Beinen, J. and Vairel, F., (eds.) (2013) *Social Movements, Mobilization and Contestation in the Middle East and North Africa.* Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press 27-42.

Vogt, Achim. (2011). Jordan's Eternal Promise of Reform. *International Politics and Society* 4*:* 61-76.

Volpi, Frédéric. (2013). Explaining (and Re-Explaining) Political Change in the Middle East during the Arab Spring: Trajectories of Democratization and of Authoritarianism in the Maghreb. *Democratization* 20(6): 969-90.

Weyland, Kurt. (2010). The Diffusion of Regime Contention in European Democratization, 1839-1940. *Comparative Political Studies* 43(8-9): 1148-76.

Wisler, Dominique, and Marco G. Giugni. (1996). Social movements and institutional selectivity. *Sociological Perspectives*, *39*(1): 85-109.

Yom, Sean L. (2014). Tribal politics in contemporary Jordan: the case of the Hirak movement. *The Middle East Journal*, *68*(2): 229-247.

Yom, Sean L. and F. Gregory Gause III. (2012). Resilient Royals: How Arab Monarchies Hang On?" *Journal of Democracy* 23(4): 74-88.

Zheng, Wang (2005), "State Feminism"? Gender and Socialist State Formation in Maoist China, in: Feminist Studies, 31, 3, 519–551, online: <www.jstor.org/stable/20459044> (2 September 2018.

Interviews

1. Interview with MAS, 25 February 2018. Amman, Jordan.
2. Interview with AIH, 23 February 2018. Karak, Jordan.
3. Interview with AIS, 22 February 2018. Amman, Jordan.
4. Interview with RAY, 22 February 2018. Amman, Jordan.
5. Interview with DBB, 22 February 2018. Amman, Jordan.
6. Interview with DRT, 20 February 2018. Amman, Jordan.
7. Interview with SIH, 18 February 2018. Amman, Jordan.
8. Interview with HUD, 18 January 2018. Amman, Jordan.
9. Interview with LRI, 17 January 2018. Amman, Jordan.
10. Interview with RYT, 12 January 2018. Irbid, Jordan.
11. Interview with YDY, 12 January 2018. Irbid, Jordan.
12. Interview with RFA, 10 January 2018. Amman, Jordan.
13. Interview with DNT, 9 January 2018. Amman, Jordan.
14. Interview with DRD, 28 November 2017. Amman, Jordan.
15. Interview with DRF, 14 November 2017. Amman, Jordan.
16. Interview with MAM, 30 October 2017. Amman, Jordan.
17. Interview with NJD, 29 October 2017. Amman, Jordan.
18. Interview with RAA, 23 October 2017. Amman, Jordan.
19. Interview with RDH, 21 October 2017. Amman, Jordan.
20. Interview with TMS, 18 October 2017. Amman, Jordan.
21. Interview with DIH, 16 October 2017. Amman, Jordan.
22. Interview with OHN, 16 October 2017. Amman, Jordan.
23. Interview with NNT, 6 October 2017. Mafraq, Jordan.
24. Interview with ILN, 4 October 2017. Amman, Jordan.
25. Interview with RBT, 3 October 2017. Irbid, Jordan.
26. Interview with DFH, 1 October 2017. Amman, Jordan.
27. Interview with HDH, 1 October 2017. Amman, Jordan.
28. Interview with ANM, 26 September 2017. Amman, Jordan.
29. Interview with AAN, 20 September 2017. Amman, Jordan.
30. Interview with MNA, 20 September 2017. Amman, Jordan.
31. Interview with NRH, 18 September 2017. Amman, Jordan.
32. Interview with AID, 17 September 2016. Amman, Jordan.
33. Interview with NDS, 14 September 2016. Amman, Jordan.
34. Interview with IDD, 13 September 2016. Amman, Jordan.
35. Interview with RON, 12 September 2016. Amman, Jordan.
36. Interview with IDO, 4 September 2016. Amman, Jordan.
37. Interview with HID, 3 September 2016. Amman, Jordan.
38. Interview with NDH, 2 September 2016. Amman, Jordan.
39. Interview with RHR, 2 September 2016. Amman, Jordan.
40. Interview with AIT, 29 August 2016. Amman, Jordan.
41. Interview with SDS, 29 August 2016. Amman, Jordan.
42. Interview with MLS, 28 August 2016. Amman, Jordan.
43. Interview with SNM, 25 August 2016. Amman, Jordan.

Other Documents

Manifestos of Groups:

The Free Assembly. (2011). Movement Manifesto. Document retrieved by author from the Free Assembly members in Amman, Jordan. September 2016.

The Liberation National Social Group. (2011). Movement Manifesto. Document retrieved by author from the Liberation National Social Groups members in Amman, Jordan. September 2016.

Sadaqa. (2011). Movement Manifesto. Document Available at: <
http://www.sadaqajo.org/content/%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%86%D8%AD%D9%86>
(Accessed 7 September 2016).

King Discussion Papers:

King Abdullah II. (2012) "Our Journey to Forge Our Path Towards Democracy," First Discussion
Paper. Available at <http://kingabdullah.jo/index.php/en_US/pages/view/id/247.html>
(Accessed 19 October 2016).

King Abdullah II. (2013) "Making Our Democratic System Work for All Jordanians," Second
Discussion Paper. Available at <
http://kingabdullah.jo/index.php/en_US/pages/view/id/248.html> (Accessed 19 October
2016).

King Abdullah II. (2013) "Each Playing Our Part in a New Democracy," Third Discussion Paper.
Available at < http://kingabdullah.jo/index.php/en_US/pages/view/id/249.html> (Accessed 19
October 2016).

King Abdullah II. (2013) "Towards Democratic Empowerment and 'Active Citizenship," Fourth
Discussion Paper. Available at <
http://kingabdullah.jo/index.php/en_US/pages/view/id/253.html> (Accessed 19 October
2016).

King Abdullah II. (2014) "Goals, Achievements and Conventions: Pillars for Deepening Our
Democratic Transition," Fifth Discussion Paper. Available at <
http://kingabdullah.jo/index.php/en_US/pages/view/id/254.html> (Accessed 19 October
2016).

King Abdullah II. (2016) "Rule of Law and Civil State," Sixth Discussion Paper. Available at <
http://kingabdullah.jo/index.php/en_US/pages/view/id/259.html> (Accessed 19 October
2016).