

***Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-ʿUrdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement):
Organisation, Strategies and Significance for Social and Political Change
in Jordan**

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Abstract

This study examines *Al-Hirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement), from now on the HSU, and aims to be a first scholarly attempt at mapping the organisation, strategy, challenges, and significance of this youth-led and youth-organised social movement. Taking an interpretive approach to organisational research, this thesis has used a wide range of primary and secondary data, benefited from extensive periods of participant observation as well as interviews with a variety of people including movement participants, in order to achieve a better understanding of the HSU.

The main findings that result from this research show that the HSU is ideologically an umbrella to a variety of ideologies, from leftist or communists to Islamists, and that it chooses to organise informally and uninstitutionally in accordance with their political conviction of political parties and traditional opposition groups being a tool of social control for the regime. Politically, therefore, the movement represents a rupture with traditional politics in the country which are perceived by participants as part of a historically constructed system for exercising social control. Finally, the movement challenges traditional frames of ethnic and religious understandings of social and political subjectivities by mobilising a more inclusive discourse that tries to recover the debate on class struggle. Its political independence from other actors in the Jordanian political scene allows participant to raise more radical claims that seek regime removal as well as demands for reform, and these radical discourse within the movement greatly depend on the varying political

opportunity structure in time determined by the Jordanian regime's combination of conciliatory and repressive counter-strategies. An analysis of the strategic conversation between the regime and the HSU is key to exploring the social and political significance of movement strategies in bringing about change in the country as it determines the challenges to organisation encountered. However, relevant transformations in the culture of activism in Jordan are evident, and have the potential to transforming the future of political participation and organisation.

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Introduction study

Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī; the protagonists of the

On Thursday 24th March 2011, an assorted group of young Jordanians gathered after the noon prayer on *Duwwār Ad-Dākhiliyya*ⁱ, the roundabout of the Ministry of Interior, in the capital city of Amman. Their aim was to organise a sit-in where they could express their collective discomfort with the socio-economic situation in the country and demand political change. Moreover, they intended to gather more people on Friday, a weekend holiday for the majority in Jordan. *Duwwār Ad-Dākhiliyya* is the roundabout or junction in central Amman where the Ministry of Interior is located. In Jordan, spaces are chosen by activists to facilitate mobilisation or because of their symbolism, and among other symbolic spaces where political protests frequently take placeⁱⁱ, youth decided to mobilise outside the Ministry of Interior that day.

Three months into the Arab revolutions, these young Jordanians had been leading and organising weekly Friday protests, in different locations, since January 2011. Under the banner of '*yawm al-ghadhab*' (Day of Anger), these actions, although organisationally divided, shared this common sense of anger. March 24 was the first time that all these small 'angry' constituencies were gathering to do something together, something similar to what young people were organising in the region. In line with other regional initiatives, such as the *6th April Youth Movement*ⁱⁱⁱ in Egypt, or the *20th February Youth Movement*^{iv} in

Morocco, youth had organised this joint sit-in under the name *24th March Youth*^v. The symbolism and significance of the 24th March 2011 event have been disputed, and while many outsiders consider it the 'death' of the Arab revolutionary period in Jordan (Tarawneh, 2011), participants interviewed for this research consider it to signal the starting point of their efforts towards organised activism, an effort that later resulted in the creation of *Al-Hirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement), the focus of this research thesis.

The 24th March and the period that followed led young activists to realise the importance of organisation when facing the strength of other institutionalised parties, and the harsh environment they would have to face later. They became self-aware of their various backgrounds and of the importance of mobilising a common shared will of fighting together in order to organise into a single movement. It took them around one year to create an umbrella movement that would gather them together. For one of the activists of the movement, Seraj, during the following months 'it became obvious that there was a problem in working with the older generations; they think in a different way' (AI04-04.09.13)^{vi}. Seraj, now in his early thirties, is single and works in a bank. Although he currently lives in Amman for work, he grew up in the northern city of Irbid. He is currently part of the organising members of *I'tihād Al-Shabāb Al-Dimuqrātī* (Union of Democratic Youth), which he defines as a group of young people that have secular, leftist and nationalistic convictions, and used to be part of the Socialist Left and the Communist Party. In June 2012, these young activists' organisational efforts resulted in the creation of the HSU.

The HSU is a youth-led, youth-organised, informal, uninstitutionalized, horizontal, network-like social movement that is re-defining what dissent looks like in Jordan today. Seraj explains that it was created and is organised by young people that found it necessary to organise 'a social, youth, political framework which talks about us' (AI04-04.09.13). Politically and organisationally independent, participants of the movement call themselves *hirakis*, and some of them such as Suleyman describe themselves as 'not linked to any political party', and their movement as a 'a youth movement that is simple and spontaneous' (AI06-05.09.13). Suleyman is a teacher from Sahab, who in his early thirties is working on the organisation of HSU. Suleyman started organising the local movement of *Al-Hirāk Sahab* before he started working for HSU as a joint movement. He prefers not to be presented as being part of any specific group within the movement but to be presented as an activist of the movement. As well as being active in the HSU, Suleyman is part of the Teachers' Movement and a member of the *Hayyat Al-Markaziyeh li-Nawabat Al-Mu'alimīn* (the Central Commission for Teachers' Union). He met me at the Jordanian Writers' Association in Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman.

Seraj and Suleyman, together with other participants form part of the HSU. Participants in the HSU are from diverse ideological backgrounds. The majority of them ascribe to a leftist political ideology, including socialist and communist backgrounds, however the HSU acts as an umbrella to other political ideologies that include Islamism. Ideologically what brings them together is the fact that they all feel that the political discourse put forward by political parties does not represent them, and shared grievances around inequality and injustice in Jordan. In terms of education, the majority of

participants are university graduates who after their studies find it difficult to find a job for which they have been prepared. Therefore, they generally take on multiple jobs at the same time in order to make a living, although they share a feeling of not being motivated to grow and develop in the jobs that they undertake. Although the majority of them participate in professional unions, none of them are members of political parties or have any type of affiliation to institutional political groups for, as we will develop in this research, they consider them to be part of the political establishment that they seek to change.

Variation between participants of the HSU exists not only in terms of ideology, but also in terms of ethnicity, class or gender. Participants are ethnically diverse and come from families of Transjordanian as well as Palestinian backgrounds. Although the majority of them currently live in the capital city Amman because of work or studies, some participants of the HSU spent their childhood in other cities across Jordan which include Irbid, Aqaba, Kerak or Madaba. Moreover, some of the participants of Palestinian origin grew up in different Palestinian refugee camps including Al-Baqaa or Zarqa, where they continue taking part in different activities that aim to empower those communities in Jordan. In terms of class, we will see that participants come from very diverse backgrounds including middle and low-income families. Finally, in terms of gender, as we will see in this study, participants of the movement are in their majority male, and female participants get involved in activities of HSU in the same way as male participants do.

Seraj points to their ideological, strategic, and organisational independence as a fundamental element in their activities, asserting that 'it was

not important for us if our movement was always small in relation to them [referring to other opposition actors in Jordan], but we as youth would be able to decide whatever we wanted to' (AI04-04.09.13).

Aims and questions

This thesis takes the case of the HSU, and aims to be a first scholarly attempt at mapping the organisation, strategy, challenges, and significance of this youth-led and youth-organised social movement.

The first line of inquiry that I pursue seeks to analyse the movement's mobilising structure and ideology to answer the following overarching question: what does youth-led and youth-organised dissent look like in Jordan today? This part examines who the activists are, their motivations to participate in the movement, their aims, demands and ideology, and the type of mobilising structure that has been put into practice by movement activists. This includes an analysis of its degree of formality and institutionalisation as well as internal links inside this structure.

The second line of inquiry examines strategies pursued by the movement, and answers the following overall analytical question: what strategies do activists of the HSU put into practice? Taking this analytical question as central, the analysis examines strategic decision-making in the movement, and its strategic spectrum, conditioned by each constituency's conceptualisation of change and activists' understandings of how change

should be reached. Moreover, the analysis explores the movement's mobilising structure, the strategic framing processes put forward by movement activists, the political opportunity structure, and their relationship to the movement's strategies.

The third line of inquiry analyses regime counter-strategies to mobilisation of the HSU and answers the question: how has the regime responded to this social movement's strategies? My research suggests that the Jordanian regime has responded to HSU's strategies through a well-managed counter-strategy built on apparent conciliation and repression in the form of harassment and surveillance. These measures have increased challenges to mobilisation of the HSU lacking previous organisational experience.

Finally, the fourth line of inquiry explores the social and political significance of the movement for Jordanian politics and society. I will argue that the major significance of the movement until now has been an alteration of the forms of political action or political expression tolerated by the regime during a period of political opening. Having said this, the main limits to the movement's significance can be found in terms of social resonance or the way in which participants of the movement as well as the claims it has put forward have been accepted in the Jordanian society. As we will see, the limits to the social resonance of the activities of the HSU suggest limits to the success of its strategic framing processes.

Academic rationale

The present exploratory research on HSU seeks to contribute to knowledge at both an empirical and a conceptual level. The case study is situated within the broader body of academic literature on youth, youth organisations and their role during the Arab Spring since 2011. The experience and discourses constructed by young people in the Arab World are analytically relevant as they are the largest constituency in these societies, characterised by a 'youth bulge', and their 'experience of growing up is qualitatively different from that of their parents' (Anderson, 2015 p. 51).

Before presenting the literature on youth and social movements in the Arab Spring, it is relevant to present at this point the way in which literature has explored the construction of identities and discourses among Arab youth prior to the Arab Spring. Several key contributions provide insightful analyses. One of the main contributions to the knowledge on collective action in the Middle East until the Arab Spring has been Asef Bayat, who has undertaken leading empirical research that provides insight into forms of activism and strategies pursued mainly by urban grass-roots to defend their rights and improve their lives (2002, 2003, 2000). Until 2010, Bayat's focus was not on social movements but he was the only academic that contributed to the knowledge on forms of action and strategies in this period. Bayat has later introduced the concept of 'nonmovements' which, although briefly mentioned in former publications, he fully developed in 2010. Bayat defines social nonmovements as 'the collective endeavors of millions of noncollective actors, carried out in the

main squares, back streets, court houses, or communities' (2010 p. ix) and distinguishes them from social movements in that they 'enjoy significant, consequential elements of social movements; yet they constitute distinct entities' (2010 p. 14). Although not explicitly talking about social movements, Bayat's analysis aims to contribute, by studying the Middle East, to debates on social movements and social change (2010 p. x).

Interestingly, Bayat talks about repression, forms of practice, and strategies in social *nonmovements*. In terms of repression, this author looks at the way in which 'social and political movements keep up when authoritarian regimes exhibit a great intolerance towards organized activism' and when repression has been 'a hallmark of most Middle Eastern states' (2010 p. 2). The author explains that 'certain distinct and unconventional forms of agency and activism have emerged in the region that do not get adequate attention, because they do not fit into our prevailing categories and conceptual imaginations' and looks at some of these unconventional forms of agency and activism to 'raise a number of theoretical and methodological questions as to how to look at the notions of agency and change in the Muslim Middle East today' (2010 p. 3). In this line of argument made by Bayat for what he defines as social nonmovements, my research looks at forms of organisation of the HSU in order to analyse the way in which repressive state strategies affect strategies and organisation of social movements that challenge the political system. I do so in order to show the way in which, for example, 'surveillance and secrecy disrupt free communication and open debate within a movement, leading either to fragmentation of aims and expectations— a recipe

for discord and sedition— or to outright authoritarian tendencies and a cult of leadership’ (2010 p. 11).

Forms of practice in nonmovements are another level of analysis in which forms of collective action in the MENA have been analysed by Bayat. According to this author, practice in nonmovements tends to be ‘action-oriented rather than ideologically driven, quiet rather than audible’ since claims ‘are made largely individually rather than by united groups’. In nonmovements ‘actors directly practice what they claim, despite government sanctions’ and practices ‘are merged into [...] the *ordinary* practices of everyday life’. For Bayat, the ‘power of nonmovements rests on the *power of big numbers*, that is, the consequential effect on norms and rules in society of many people simultaneously doing similar, though contentious, things’ (2010 pp. 19-20).

In terms of strategies, Bayat presents ‘quiet encroachment’ as the main strategy in Middle Eastern societies ‘as a prevalent strategy that gives the urban grass roots some power over their own lives and influence over state policy’ (2010 p. 68). For this author, *quiet encroachment* is ‘quiet, largely atomized, and prolonged mobilization with episodic collective action— open and fleeting struggles without clear leadership, ideology, or structured organization’ (2010 p. 90). Bayat’s analysis is relevant for my research because it analyses forms of social practice in the region. However, this analysis focuses on nonmovements, leaving a clear gap of knowledge on the practices and organization of social movements in the region, which this analysis completely overlooks. The forms of quiet action and nonmovements that are the focus of Bayat correspond to a

period preceding 2011 in the MENA region during which forms of resistance to power and collective action were not outspoken as they became after 2011.

Bayat in his study situates youth together with the urban dispossessed, Muslim women, and other urban grass-roots, coming to form what this author defines as ‘the subaltern’ (2010 p. ix). For Bayat, youth is ‘a collective challenge whose central goal consists of defending and extending youth habitus—defending and extending the conditions that allow the young to assert their individuality, creativity, and lightness and free them from anxiety over the prospect of their future’ and curbing or controlling it ‘is likely to trigger youth dissent’ in different expressions and claims, which will determine if youth engages in a youth movement or in a nonmovement (2010 pp. 17-18). This author looks at youth and ‘the transforming or, in particular, democratizing effects of youth nonmovements’ that partly depend ‘on the capacity of adversarial regimes or states to accommodate youthful claims’ (2010 p. 19).

However, the focus on youth is preoccupied with ‘new social norms, religious practices, cultural codes, and values’ that the youth can bring about in youth nonmovements which are ‘characterized less by *what the young do* (networking, organizing, deploying resources, mobilizing) than by *how they are* (in behaviors, outfits, ways of speaking and walking, in private and public spaces). The identity of a youth nonmovement is based not as much on collective *doing* as on collective *being*; and the forms of their expression are less collective protest than *collective presence*’ (2010 p. 120). Although Bayat looks at youth as a social group capable of taking action and

bringing about change, this research contributes to the knowledge on youth social movements, where *what* the youth do in terms of organisation and mobilisation acquires predominance.

Another relevant contribution to the analysis of youth in Muslim majority and minority societies in the context of globalisation and modernity is the collective volume edited by Linda Herrera and Asef Bayat, *Being Young and Muslim: New Cultural Politics in the Global South and North* (2010). Through its numerous essays, this collective volume addresses the diverse forms of political socialisation among Muslim youth. The essays address first, the way in which experiences of political socialisation result in different forms of political dissent and ways in which Muslim youth aim to reclaim youthfulness in countries such as Morocco, Saudi Arabia Palestine or Egypt. As well as addressing the Politics of Dissent, essays included in this collective volume analyse the ways in which Muslim youth strive for citizenship in Muslim minority societies such as France, Germany or the Netherlands. The analyses included in these essays look at different spaces where Muslim youth actively construct their identities. Overall this volume contributes to understanding the diversity of forms of political socialisation among Muslim youth in comparative perspective.

Of particular interest within this edited volume for studies on youth social movements in the Middle East is Asef Bayat's chapter titled 'Muslim Youth and the Claim for Youthfulness' (2010). This chapter points to the problematic construction of Muslim youth's political imaginations whether as radical Islamists or democratic reformers. The second interesting discussion presented by Bayat in this chapter is the way in which a distinction should be made

between the way in which we construct the concept of 'young people' and 'youth'. For this author, the distinction should be that the former is constructed as an age category and the latter as a social category. Bayat considers that making this distinction would help realise that youth movements are not about political change but about 'claiming youthfulness', which the author defines as a social place between childhood and adulthood during which particular behavioural and cognitive dispositions come into play. Moreover, in understanding youth movements as essentially about 'claiming youthfulness', Bayat argues that their efficacy will depend on the 'capacity of adversaries – both political and moral authority– to accommodate the claims of youthfulness' (2010 p. 28). Bayat argues that 'a discussion of the experience of youth in the Muslim Middle East, where moral and political authority impose a high degree of social control over the young, can offer valuable insights into conceptualizing youth and youth movements' (2010 p. 28).

As well as Bayat's insightful contribution to the study of collective action and strategy in the MENA region prior to the Arab Spring, Ragui Assad and Farzaneh Roudi-Fahimi contribute to the discussion around youth in their article 'Youth in the Middle East and North Africa: Demographic Opportunity or Challenge?' (2009). In this work, the authors discuss the youth bulge as a challenge or an opportunity for the MENA region by including a discussion of the nature of the region's youth, which includes socio-economic indicators such as unemployment and education. Assad and Roudi-Fahimi's article concludes, already prior to 2011, that 'political, economic and social reforms that could encourage greater participation of MENA's youth in society are long overdue' (2009 p. 7).

Youth has been identified in the academic conversation on the Arab Spring as a new generation of actors in social movements and collective action. Several insightful contributions to the role of youth organisations during the Arab Spring help us situate the case of the HSU as one that is analytically situated as part of broader trans-national social dynamics in Middle Eastern societies. Several volumes have provided insightful comparative analyses on social dynamics in the region during the Arab Spring and situate youth activists and organisations at the centre of the story in academic literature. In the book *The People Want*, Gilbert Achcar provides a comprehensive analysis of the roots of the Arab Spring, particularly in relation to the political situation, but more extensively to the economic variables that have led to dramatic social consequences, including poverty, inequality, precarity, informal sector growth, and unemployment (Achcar, 2013). Throughout this analysis, Achcar identifies the actors and dynamics in the Arab Spring. These include social and political movements, new youth actors and their innovative use of communications tools, as well as states and state apparatuses and their role in determining the development of revolutions. The focus of this book is on revolutions during the Arab Spring, and focuses on these elements in the cases of Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Libya and Syria.

Marc Lynch's edited volume also engages in a multilevel examination of the Arab Spring. Throughout different chapters, contributors to *The Arab Uprisings Explained* examine a diversity of elements including counterrevolution, media, diffusion and demonstrations. Moreover, this book

explores multiple actors in the Arab Spring across the region, including the role of states, bankers, Arab militaries, Islamist movements, and labour movements. Among the arguments put forward, this volume stresses the distinctive role of youth, characterised as self-aware and self-identified actors, in shaping and driving these events (Lynch, 2014 p. 9). The analysis portrays youth activists as clear agents of the uprisings, and points to grievances that affect this mainly urban social group across the region such as underemployment.

Following the comparative approaches of the volumes of Achcar and Lynch, Fawaz Gerges in his edited volume *The New Middle East* goes a step further and aims to highlight connections between individual regional case studies and systemic conditions throughout the Middle East (Gerges, 2015). Gerges argues that ‘a psychological and epistemological rupture has occurred in the Arab Middle East that has shaken the authoritarian order to its very foundation and introduced a new language and a new era of contentious politics and revolutions’ (2015 p. 1). For Gerges, this rupture is brought about by the expression of new stories and new narratives of resistance, hope and determination that include crisis of political authority, failure of economic development, and new genres of mobilisation and activism, particularly youth movements.

Through personal stories and direct accounts from Arab youth, the book *Arab Spring Dreams* presents their experiences with the region’s laws and cultural mores, which later served for the appearance of widespread youthful dissent. This volume is a collection of individual youth voices that represent the new generation that ‘inspired bursts of nonviolent, popular uprisings’ and

'shattered stereotypes by leading dignified struggles in the face of overwhelming repression' (Ahmari and Weddady, 2012 pp. 1-2). The book is a comprehensive overview of the experiences of youth prior to the Arab Spring that describes the atmosphere that led to the Arab Spring, and places youth as the central voices of the story.

In line with Ahmari and Weddady's volume, the book *Voices of the Arab Spring* also collects the personal stories of mainly youth voices from Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen (Al-Saleh, 2015). In this work and through the selection of stories for the book, Al-Saleh places youth at the centre of the Arab Spring's social movements by asserting that 'the organising force behind this string of revolutions was primarily young Arabs who were technologically savvy, politically deprived, and unmoved by the antiquated rhetoric of their rulers masquerading as tributes to the people' (2015 p. 2). The book brings together youth's personal and collective motivations to engage in collective action and organisation against their regimes.

Finally, a group of contributions by Lisa Anderson and Holger Albrecht seek to open space for the discussion around political opposition dynamics under authoritarian settings, arguing around the importance of the repressive authoritarian nature of the political context to understanding participation in the Middle East. On one hand, Lisa Anderson's chapter 'Authoritarian Legacies and Regime Change' analyses the dimensions of resistance and rebellion in authoritarian regimes, and aims to show how dissatisfaction and unhappiness matter for the outcome of the process of political change in today's Arab world (Anderson, 2015 p. 50). Despite the diverse development of protest in each

country during the Arab Spring, Anderson highlights common themes in this development including access to information, youth empowerment, demands for citizenship or corruption (2015 pp. 51-3). Throughout her exploration of the effects of authoritarian regimes on protest and dissent, Anderson addresses the challenges posed by regimes on youth organisations during the Arab Spring. She explains that 'the authority these young rebels confronted – the knowledge they acquired and the problems they tackled in the aftermath of the uprisings – were very different from country to country; the varied legacies of different kinds of authoritarianism shaped the opportunities and challenges of change in dramatic ways' (Anderson, 2015 p. 43).

Anderson's line of argumentation follows the argument posed by Albrecht in the chapter 'The Nature of Political Participation' included in the edited volume *Political Participation in the Middle East and North Africa*. In this chapter, Albrecht argues that the concept of participation 'is *critical* to a comprehensive understanding of state-society relationships in this region' (2008 p. 15). In order to fully understand political participation in the Middle East and North Africa, this author considers that the 'regime type is an important aspect that needs to be taken into account more often in order to identify the peculiarities of sources, channels, aims, and effectiveness of political participation and the differences that distinguish one case from the other' (Albrecht, 2008 p. 29).

Furthermore, Albrecht continues building on this discussion focusing on the case of Egypt in the book *Raging Against the Machine: Political Opposition under Authoritarianism in Egypt* (2013). In this work, Albrecht seeks to

disentangle the 'empirical puzzle about the opposition's role when it comes to fully understanding authoritarianism under Mubarak' (2013 p. xviii). Through an exploration of other established opposition parties in Egypt, including political parties, and parliamentarians, human rights NGOs, a powerful Islamic movement, and a cohort of independent intellectuals, Albrecht's work provides an insightful analysis of the way in which these political groups established within an authoritarian political context determine the nature of participation in the country during the Egyptian revolution. The present research aims to contribute on this academic conversation opened by Albrecht and Anderson and to exploring the way in which the Jordanian regime has challenged the organisation of the HSU, thereby seeking to contribute to the understanding of the opportunity structure in Jordan, and moreover to enriching the literature on the structures of opportunity for these youth organisations across the Middle East.

As well as these comparative analyses on the Arab Spring, several volumes dedicated to analysing social dynamics during this period of contention in other cases provide richness to the academic conversation on youth mobilisation in the Middle East. Among them, the book edited by Bahgat Korany and Rabab El-Mahdi, *Arab Spring in Egypt*, focuses on the period of contention in Egypt as it developed around Tahrir Square to explore group dynamics and state-society relations (Korany and El-Mahdi, 2012). The overarching themes addressed in the volume, which the editors argue to be representative of regional trends, are authoritarian resilience; group dynamics in Tahrir as the

embodiment of a protest in its own right, including labour, youth, Islamist, and women's groups; and external factors that influenced the internal dynamics of the revolution. Dina Shehata's contribution to this edited volume explores the dynamics of youth movements in Egypt. In her chapter 'Youth Movements and the 25 January Revolution', Shehata examines the role of youth movements and youth activists in the unfolding of the Egyptian Revolution (Shehata, 2012). In this analysis, the role played by youth activists and youth movements is argued to be critical in creating revolutionary conditions in Egypt as they were instrumental in the emergence of new modes of mobilisation and discourses.

In line with Shehata's empirical analysis of Egyptian youth movements during the Arab Spring, further academic contributions have aimed to provide in-depth analyses on specific youth movements similar to the HSU in other countries. The article 'Moroccan Youth and the Forming of a New Generation' by Thierry Desrues provides an in-depth and empirically rich sociological exploration of organisational dynamics among Moroccan youth during the Arab Spring (2012). In this article, the author argues that 'the new generation emerging in Morocco is more than a mere product of the present historic moment' and that it is distinct from previous generations (2012 p. 23). Desrues observes discontinuities in the family sphere, in the greater education capital present in youth, in the new forms of cultural expression or socio-political activism, in the use of new information and communication technologies or in the evolving conceptions of religion (2012 p. 24). The youth movement in Morocco 'has brought together young people without activist experience and activists of diverse ideological leanings with a long trajectory of protests sparring the past decade' (2012 p. 24). The dynamics put forward in this article

for Moroccan youth allow us to situate the study of the HSU as part of greater regional youth organisation trends, particularly in terms of internal organization and structure.

Desrues explores strategies of youth in Morocco in relation to the regime and explains that the strategies of 'self-exclusion from the reform process and the incapacity of the movement to increase the size of its ranks has reduced its ability to influence change and has trapped it in a logic of protest and defiance instead of leading it towards a strategy of proposal' (Desrues, 2012 p. 35). Here once again, strategies presented for the youth movement in Morocco in relation to the state, as well as the way these strategies have affected the development of the movement into this trap of responsiveness and reaction to the regime instead of moving towards a horizontal and social strategy of mobilisation could be useful to analyse the strategies present in the HSU. Desrues' piece confirms the relevance of studying the formation of this 'sociological generation' through the study of youth social movements in other cases in the region such as the HSU.

Similarly to Desrues, Khalid Mustafa Medani explores the organisational dynamics in the Sudanese grassroots youth organization *Girifna* (We Are Fed Up) (2013). In his article 'Between Grievances and State Violence: Sudan's Youth Movement and Islamist Activism Beyond the "Arab Spring"', Medani presents the movement as one that includes the whole ideological spectrum, and that remains independent from other political opposition actors. *Girifna* is a movement that is 'distinctly averse to the promotion of a particular ideology and includes young people from across the political spectrum' (Medani, 2013). As

well as being ideologically inclusive, participants of the Sudanese youth movement have sought to 'bridge the gap between Arabised tribes and Darfurians resident in central Sudan' as they perceive that these ethnic divisions deter the development of collective action in Sudan. Moreover, Medani highlights the fact that participants of this movement do not consider the Islamist-secular divide as the greatest challenge for the movement, and try to reintroduce more pressing issues related to class and regional divides into their discourse.

As well as analysing the movement internally, Medani looks into external variables and the way in which the movement organises in a context of 'increasing repression by the state, including tightened surveillance, extrajudicial detention, sexual assault of male and female leaders, and torture'. As a result of this threatening context, movement activists concentrate on 'raising political awareness and harnessing shared grievances about state repression and socio-economic crisis'. The Sudanese youth movement *Girifna* is mindful of the weaknesses of the traditional political parties, which they see as 'factions pursuing particularistic political interests'. For Medani, the case of Sudan demonstrates that the strategic interaction between the movement and the state is in itself what determines the development of youth movement strategies and action.

Shehata, Desrues and Medani's studies on youth movements in Egypt, Morocco and Sudan allow us to situate this study the HSU as part of youth organisational efforts during the Arab Spring. Through these in-depth empirical studies we identify regional trends in youth movements, both internally and

externally, to which this study contributes. Internally in terms of organisation and ideology, we see that youth movements in the region are ideologically inclusive, shifting ideological dynamics in previous generations which build their political discourse around ethnic and identity divisions and take form in traditional political parties. Activists in these youth movements are building a new discourse for change that does not rely on traditional ethnic understandings of the way in which these societies are structures, but that try to reintroduce a discourse on class struggle and inequality.

As well as internal organisational and ideological trends in youth movements, these analyses describe a trend in the challenges that youth movements face in the region. Without forgetting the political heterogeneity in the region, and being aware of the different political characteristics in each case, these studies allow us to identify that there is a trend by which repression is being exercised in similar forms on these other movements. As well as repression, another external characteristic that appears when comparing these cases is the fact that these youth movements strategically decide to remain independent from other opposition actors, particularly political parties. There is a shared feeling among young activists who participate in these movements on the weaknesses of these parties in bringing about change, and a shared perception of political parties being part of a national struggle for particularistic political interests. These studies present the interaction between youth social movements and the contentious political context in which they organise in a way that is similar to the trends that this research explores in the case of Jordan, allowing for broader arguments on the way in which this case study is part of a wider conversation on youth movements at a regional level.

It is surprising that, while the role of youth-led and youth-organised movements has been central for many analyses of the Arab revolutions regionally, in the case of Jordan it has been greatly understudied. The experiences and discourses of youth activists in the HSU highlight several socio-political transformations that are significant to explaining national transformations. Examining and analysing these discourses in this study seeks to be an initial contribution to completing the picture provided by important academic research in the region and in Jordan. Incorporating an exhaustive and in-depth examination of the HSU will help us to point to several lines of significance that might be helpful to shed light on a changing social and political reality in the country.

Several recent insightful contributions to the study of collective action in Jordan intend to provide an overall approach to studying activism, protest and contentious politics. Notable is the work of Larzilliere on *Activism in Jordan* (2015), which provides an exploration of motivations, ideologies and careers of activists under the exclusionary Jordanian political system, both before and after the Arab Spring. Her aim is to show how opposition movements have shifted from the underground before 1989 to a heavily controlled public sphere. This publication provides insight into the importance of Jordan as a stabilizing factor in the contemporary Middle East.

As well as this volume dedicated to Jordan, other edited volumes have included chapters on Jordan that contribute to understanding contentious politics in the country. Among them we can note the contribution of Debruyne and Parker who situate protests in Jordan at the beginning of 2011 as

'responding to very real changes that had been brought about by more than a decade of rapid and dramatic neoliberal restructuring' (Debruyne and Parker, 2015 p. 437). Their exploration of these events mirroring other regional efforts traces protest dynamics back in time to the start of the 2000s to rightly present them as the result of sustained efforts at organizing undertaken by many other social actors in preceding years.

Several other academic contributions have contributed to the knowledge on contentious politics and protest in Jordan through different dimensions. Among them, Schwedler presents an insightful systematic look at protests in Jordan over the years in regard to the dimensions of law, space, and spectacle(2012b) exploring these three variables since the 1950s to present protest as a recurring dynamic in authoritarian Jordan. In another article, this author explores the political geography of protest in neoliberal Jordan Schwedler (2012a) where she presents Jordan as a case where new strategies of non-democratic governance are emerging, and explores the expanding neoliberal economic reforms to shed light on broad dynamics of protest and contention.

Analyses on Jordan during the Arab revolutions have mainly focused on the role of existing political actors 'well integrated into Jordan's political landscape' (Barany, 2012 p. 7) and the political opposition and reform coalitions they establish in this period between them (Ryan, 2011b). These major political actors include urban intellectuals, tribal elements, or the Islamic Action Front (IAF), the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood (Barany, 2012). Other contributions have explored the specific role of the Muslim Brotherhood in

Jordan during this period of contention (Bondokji, 2015) particularly analysing the internal crisis in the organisation and the need for it to reform in a changing and challenging national and regional context. Finally, other organisations that have been studied in Jordan during this period are professional associations (Larzillière, 2012), which are presented as alternative contentious arenas that appeared in this period which are characterised by having an ambivalent role between challenging and integrated positions.

Within this insightful literature on the latest period of contention and activism in Jordan, in-depth exploration of specific dynamics within movements in Jordan in this period can be found in Ababneh's contribution to understanding the role of women in the Jordanian Day-Waged Labour Movement (2016). In the same way as the Jordanian *Al-Ḥirāk Ash-Shabābī* (Youth Movement), the Jordanian Day-Waged Labour Movement (DWLM) played a central role during this period. In her article, Ababneh's contribution provides an extensive exploration of the active and leading role of women within this movement. Through the analysis of discourse and structure of this movement, her study provides important lessons about the way in which the movement understood women to be embedded within communities, prioritizing their economic needs, and about gender-inclusive political and institutional reform.

The present research follows the line of Ababneh's in-depth ethnographic research and intends to build on this academic literature providing an exhaustive exploration of the HSU as an umbrella organisation that gathered scattered youth dissent groups in the Jordanian context of activism and contentious politics. Analyses that have addressed young activists'

organisational efforts highlight their weaknesses due to their lack of experience. Jordanian youth is presented as 'politically aware, knowledgeable of their rights, Internet savvy, and unafraid to raise issues without inhibition' but with the weakness of a lack of 'political organisation' (Ottaway and Muasher, 2011 p. 10). This organisational inexperience has been said to lead youth to 'draw on the organisation and logistical experience of organised parties in order to generate public support for their demonstrations, even as they remain independent organisations' (Ryan, 2011b p. 387). Few authors, among them Yom, have actually briefly mentioned the fact that it was 'youth activists rather than formal organizations (including the Muslim Brotherhood) [who] led the charge against dictatorship' (Yom, 2013 p. 133), something that Jordan shares with other regional countries.

In this activist context, the present thesis contributes to knowledge of social movements in Jordan by exploring the HSU, the only youth-led and youth-organised movement in Jordan which 'includes some of the most active political organizers in the country' (2014e p. 74). Ideologically, the movement is an umbrella to a variety of ideologies, from leftist or communists to Islamists. Although the majority label their ideology as leftist, socialist, communist, or nationalist, there are also a few Islamists. Hassan, activist in his late twenties, who was part of *Al-Hirāk Al-Shabābī Al-Islāmī* (the Islamist Youth Movement) and then left, was part of the Jordanian Youth Parliament initiative at the time of our interview. From Amman, and living in Jabal Natheef, Hassan is a video producer who had a very important role in documenting the activities of HSU. We meet in Jadal, a Culture Centre in the neighbourhood of Jabal Lweibdeh, for a coffee at the end of September 2014. Hassan explains that Islamists in the

HSU 'are the Islamists that we can call "defectors" of the Muslim Brotherhood' (AI20-29.09.14).

In the words of activists' such as Seraj, their goals include 'social equality' (AI04-04.09.13) and Suleyman adds that they mobilise for 'a country that is free and has its own choice and fights for its decisions' (AI06-05.09.13) at an economic and at a political level. Khaled, single 22-year old activist that grew up and lives in Marka Shamaliya in Amman, meets me at Cafe de Paris in Amman's Jabal Lweibdeh neighbourhood for a beer on a warm Saturday afternoon in August 2013. Having recently completed his Master's degree in Sociology, Khaled is now part of the political group *Tandīm Al Taghīr wa Al Tahīrīr*, which translates into English as the Organisation for Change and Freedom and is part of the HSU. He has also started joining *I'tihād Al-Shabāb Al-Dimuqrātī* (Union of Democratic Youth) in some of the recent meetings and activities of HSU. According to Khaled, their motivation to act and get involved in this uprising in Jordan was mainly social, seeing that 'there is a clear social injustice' (AI02-24.08.13), to which Suleyman adds that what motivates him is a feeling that they 'have to fight for any right that has been stolen' (AI06-05.09.13). Khaled identifies this social situation of injustice 'with the capitalist economy and it is related to the tyrannical authority in this country' (AI02-24.08.13). Suleyman continues explaining that it is about regaining 'freedoms at a national level, taking back the treasures and resources of the country, recovering the will of the people, so people have will and opinion on anything that is decided' (AI06-05.09.13).

As well as the movement's ideology, this thesis will explore the movement's organisation and the type of mobilising structure chosen by movement activists —informal, non-institutional, network-like— and analyse a) the rationale behind choosing this type of structure, and b) the strengths and limits of this structure in the Jordanian context. The HSU chooses to organise informally and uninstitutionally in accordance with their political conviction of political parties and traditional opposition groups being a tool of social control for the regime.

The movement is informal and uninstitutionalized, without links with other opposition actors that have 'relations with the regime, relations with authorities', which gives them ideological, strategic, and organisational independence. As Seraj explained during his interview 'it was not important for us if our movement was always small in relation to them, but we as youth would be able to decide whatever we wanted to' (AI04-04.09.13). The movement is formed of constituencies that are loosely organised as a network. These constituencies are volatile, they frequently disappear, reappear, merge, and change name. Activists of the movement move from one constituency to another, and some of them consider themselves 'independent', or not linked to any particular constituency but to the movement as a whole.

Politically, the movement represents a rupture with traditional politics in the country, including disagreements with all political parties, from the Islamic Action Front (IAF) to the political parties of the traditional left. Activists of the HSU are 'youth who very often identify with neither the state nor its traditional opposition forces' (Ryan, 2011b p. 385). Party system and traditional political

opposition groups —of the whole ideological spectrum— are perceived as a historically constructed system for exercising social control. It is the only movement in Jordan that is independent from political parties and from the traditional opposition structure. This has made them become ‘the most controversial’ movement in the country (2014e p. 74). In the words of Suleyman:

‘We try to find a third way, different from the leftist and nationalist political parties, and the Muslim Brotherhood. This third way is under the name of ‘youth movement’, which is not in line with any of the traditional ideologies, neither leftist, nor nationalist or Islamist’ (AI06-05.09.13).

Finally, the thesis will argue that the HSU is the only movement that challenges traditional frames of ethnic and religious understandings of social and political subjectivities. In Jordan, multiple identities have been deployed historically, and reinforced through different episodes of conflict. These have resulted in current social fragmentation along several lines, including ethnical (Transjordanian/Palestinian-Jordanian), religious (Muslim, Christian, secular), urban/rural, class, or gender. Traditional political opposition parties and movements, including their ‘child’ youth movements^{vii}, are still working with these ethnic and religious frames (Jordanian-Jordanian, Palestinian-Jordanian, Islamist, tribal, etc.), however the HSU is trying to challenge these traditional frames by mobilising a more inclusive discourse.

Academic literature on this period of contention in Jordan tends to present this period in Jordan as one where claims demanded reform and did not confront the Jordanian regime. Accounts stress that regional protests were

copied in Jordan, however in the form of ‘peaceful demonstrations, marches, and rallies –starting with protests against corruption, police brutality, and high food prices’(Anderson, 2015 p. 50).In this case, episodes of collective action have been said to have escalated to calls for changes in governments (Anderson, 2015 p. 50).

While there has been a prevalence of reformist demands in Jordan, the HSU provides an exception to this picture. Indeed it forces us to rethink the claims that are being made in Jordan and the accounts of the lack of radical or revolutionary demands (Ottaway and Muasher, 2011), and that ‘no one publicly suggested abolishing the monarchy’ (Barany, 2012 p. 8). This supposed lack of radicals has been said to be due to the king’s legitimacy and social support (Ottaway and Muasher, 2011 p. 9), and to the king as the ‘thread that holds a divided country together’ (Barany, 2012 p. 10), a ‘security blanket’ (Ottaway and Muasher, 2011 p. 9), or more with a ‘fear of the alternative rather than any deep appreciation for Abdullah himself’ (Hamid and Freer, 2011 p. 4).

Youth are depicted as having ‘moderated their demands, focusing on *how* their kings should govern rather than *whether* they should rule in the first place’ (Yom and Gause, 2012 p. 80). This statement goes in line with aforementioned arguments that present Jordan as a reformist set of events, rather than a revolutionary struggle. Only one author acknowledges the existence of radical, revolutionary demands among youth in Jordan, and the subsequent repression they suffered. Yom explains that ‘by mid-2011, young protesters were defying arrest threats by calling for the regime’s downfall and

comparing King Abdullah to the recently deposed Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak' (Yom, 2013 p. 133).

The HSU is the only movement in Jordan in which we find radical voices, meaning claims that seek regime removal and not just reform. As explained by Khaled during his interview at Cafe de Paris, 'the issue is not about reforming; it's not about taking something and changing its *form*. It is about flipping the table. It is about changing from the root. It is the change so the people can live a decent life, specifically, the poor people' (AI02-24.08.13). Given its structural independence, and its complete lack of institutionalisation, movement activists are completely outside of the scope of control of the regime. This gives them the space and the ability to have radical voices and put forward radical demands. Other youth movements, such as the aforementioned 'child' youth movements linked to other traditional opposition constituencies, are controlled or partly institutionalised into the system. This mechanism of social control provided by traditional opposition parties prevents youth from radicalising. Moreover, this thesis presents trends of radicalisation and de-radicalisation of youth's demands inside the HSU. These trends of radicalisation and de-radicalisation of demands have depended on the varying political opportunity structure and the changing forms of repression and levels of threat in time, exercised through legislation, harassment, or imprisonment that activists of the youth movement were mobilising under.

Turning to the regime's counter-strategies, there has been a special focus by media and academics on conciliatory measures taken by the regime, such as constitutional amendments, government reshuffles, reform committees,

or elections (municipal and parliamentary). Few analyses have had a positive comment for measures put forward by the regime, although some portrayed them as 'a first step in the right direction' (Muasher, 2011). The majority have been cautious evaluating them as 'limited political reform' and 'nonexistent' economic reform (Ottaway and Muasher, 2011 p. 12) justified, for example, by an under-developed party system, in which 'political parties need to develop' before the king can announce that the prime minister will be elected (Ottaway and Muasher, 2011 p. 8).

Other more critical accounts describe the Jordanian regime's response to the Arab revolutions as 'insufficient' (Pelham, 2011), where 'manipulation, co-option, and minor concessions [have been] masked as major reforms' (Barany, 2012 p. 27), projecting 'willingness to compromise and carefully calibrate the actions of their coercive agencies to avoid the clumsy overreaction of some other rulers in the region' (Barany, 2012 p. 27). Furthermore, Hamid and Freer portray regime moves in Jordan as a set of 'top-down reforms' based on 'political parties and electoral laws' which according to the authors are 'increasingly beside the point'; the point for them is 'the way in which parliament is elected', and structural problems such as 'the grossly unequal distribution of power between elected institutions and those that remain unelected – the monarchy, the royal court, the prime minister, and the cabinet' (2011 pp.3-4).

Repression in regime counter-strategies to mobilisation has been recognised in short analyses of the crackdown on dissent as an overarching dynamic in Jordan (Bishop, 2014) and reports that monitor the tightening grip on activism (Su, 2013). More in-depth reporting of repressive strategies towards

activists has mainly been reported by Human Rights Watch (HRW) in short electronic articles. This repression has reportedly taken place towards youth activists as well as to leaders of other traditional opposition groups and journalists and include restricting freedom of expression (2011b, 2012a, 2013a, 2013d, 2014a, 2014b); attacks on protestors (2011c, 2014c); imprisonment of activists (2012b, 2012c, 2012f, 2013c); torturing activists in prisons (2011a, 2012d, Coogle, 2013); trials in the State Security Court (2012g, 2012e, 2013b); and under the Terrorist Law (2014d). These reports, although valuable for raising awareness about episodes of repression in general, lack deeper analysis or evaluation of who was being affected more by repression and the way in which repression varied in time.

To address the neglect, the study of the HSU will examine both strategies of repression as well as conciliation, and the way they are interlinked. It is necessary to evaluate to what extent apparent conciliatory measures were positive for the HSU, and to what extent they were actually harmful, especially in weakening the movement's social support base. By presenting itself to society as willing to reform—with no further evaluation of what these reforms resulted in or how they would change or benefit the majority's living conditions—the Jordanian regime has managed to make audiences reticent to believe and support the need to continue struggling. This was even more so in an increasingly threatening national and regional context. Furthermore, it is necessary to look further into repression and how it has been exercised in different forms and levels over time against the HSU which, because of being the most controversial movement in Jordan, has become 'a central target for anti-reformist forces in Jordan' (2014e p. 74).

Finally, academic literature has portrayed the Arab revolutionary period in Jordan as one that only lasted a few months at the beginning of 2011, and ended in mid-2011 after the March 24 events. This has been explained through the analytical framework of social fragmentation along traditional ethnic and religious fault lines. Jordanian opposition during this period has been portrayed as divided into 'two halves' (Pelham, 2011 p. 2) with different understandings of what constitutional monarchy means. These analyses refer back to the widely studied Jordanian-Palestinian divide and the way in which identity politics works in mobilization (Ryan, 2011a), a 'major divide in Jordan's fractious "opposition" movement' (Hamid and Freer, 2011 p.4) arguing that both new and old opposition use identity divisions 'to advance their reform priorities' (Yaghi and Clark, 2014 p. 250). Highlighting ethnic divisions has led analysts to argue that 'the ethnic divide effectively limited the protests because Palestinians would not join demonstrations' and that 'East Bankers, on the other hand, were not about to call for democratization that would effectively mean more political power for the Palestinian community' (Barany, 2012 p. 20). Ethno-religious differences have been singled out as 'the most decisive' (Barany, 2012 p. 23) factor of the Jordanian 'Spring'.

The HSU cuts across ethnic and religious lines, where 'youth activists have continued to organise and also to broaden their networks to engage as diverse a cross-section of Jordanian society as possible' (Ryan, 2011b p. 386). Under the name of this single movement, the HSU activists include men and women, Islamist and Christian, secular and religious, and East Jordanians, Palestinians and Circassians. They have strategically mobilised the concept of youth and a generational gap, going against the use of religious and ethnic

frames that traditional opposition has continued mobilising. As Yom points out about the significance of the 'youth' component in the movement, and the generational shift in social and political subjectivities: 'their activism suggests that opposition to the regime as currently constituted may be less religious or ethnic than generational' (Yom, 2013 p. 133). This research adds to Yom's research to further argue that the HSU has challenged traditional frames of social organisation around ethnicity and identity by trying to mobilise a fresh understanding that critically recovers the debate on class and inequality.

Conceptually, the study contributes to social movement theory in general, and particularly to the theoretical framework used for this project, Political Process Theory (PPT). It does so by extending expectations on the study of social movements in non-democratic countries, particularly in liberal autocracies. Overall, I argue that PPT is a useful framework for the study of social movements in Jordan. However, several weaknesses exist in the model when applied to non-democratic countries, in terms of the model's conceptualisation of repression, political opportunity, and success. This study will contribute at these three levels conceptually in the following way.

First, the study of the HSU contributes to explore the concept of repression further, including possible variations in the *type* of repression. According to the PPT threat-opportunity analysis of the framework, costs and benefits drive decisions of organizations (Goodwin and Jasper, 2009 pp. 12-14). PPT assumes that high-level repression might lead to the absence of mobilisation or to radicalisation. However, the study of the HSU allows us to explore different types of repression, such as low-level and high-level

repression, and their varying effects for mobilisation. Repression in Jordan could be classified as 'low-level' repression. How does this *type* of repression affect mobilisation of the HSU? Until now, this repression has led to paralysis and almost complete absence of radical voices. The case of the Jordanian *Al-Hirāk Ash-Shabābī* (Youth Movement) suggests that the relationship between repression and mobilisation is not as fixed as suggested by the framework.

Second, this study elaborates on the effects of varying forms of repression, over *time* on the HSU. Not only we explore a case where different *types* of repression exist, but moreover we perceive a changing repression in type, affected by a changing national and regional environment. How does this changing opportunity structure affect the way in which the HSU builds its short and long term strategies? In the case of the Jordanian *Al-Hirāk Ash-Shabābī* (Youth Movement), we see that the varying political opportunity structure has deeply affected the internal organisation and strategy of the movement. During periods of less repression and an opening opportunity structure, movement demands were radicalised, while during periods of greater repression and closing opportunity structure, social movement strategies have seen a de-radicalisation of demands. Overall, the changing repression in time has weakened the movement internally in terms of its capacity to make strategic decisions. This study therefore contributes to PPT's claim of repression being a deterrent for mobilisation even for cases in which repression takes place through 'low-level' strategies.

Moreover, the study of the HSU within the wider context of activism and collective action contributes to broadening the scope of political opportunity

structure to include elements that go beyond the state. PPT assumes the opportunity structure is provided by the state, and analyses focus on these opportunities at a national level. When looking at the opportunity structure in Jordan, we have to expand this concept to not only look at the national events at the level of the state, but also at the regional context, and the way they both affect regime decisions and the changing opportunity structure.

The regional context of revolutionary episodes in Tunisia and Egypt have had a positive impact in Jordan, at the level of activists (micro) and organisation (meso), but also at the macro level of the regime, that was forced to open up space for dissent, opening political opportunities, under scrutiny of international media. On the other hand, the regional events in other cases such as Egypt and Syria have had a negative repercussion, affecting the movement at the micro level (individual) and the meso level (organisational). This new understanding of the context to analyse the political opportunity structure, which expands to the regional level, could be applied to the study of repression and opportunity structures in other countries of the region.

Finally, this thesis seeks to contribute conceptually to the study of social movements is through the relationship that PPT establishes between the forms of organisation social movements adopt, and their success. PPT assumes that hierarchical, formal, institutionalised organisation structures will result in successful political outcomes (understood as institutionalisation and acceptance) because they can sustain interaction with authorities and supporters. The concept of 'success' as understood by PPT theorists^{viii}, has to

be re-thought for cases in which claimants do not seek neither acceptance nor advantages from powerholders, such as in the case of the HSU.

The mobilizing structure adopted by the HSU, —an informal, horizontal, and network-like form of organization, that operates outside the umbrella or scope of the regime, is a rationally adopted form of organisation. I argue this basing myself on the central understanding that PPT has of activists as rational actors that ‘adopt mobilizing structural forms that are known to them from direct experience’ (McCarthy, 1996 p. 148).

This research explores the way in which activists of the HSU rationally choose informal, horizontal structures of organization because of the negative perception movement activists have of a) formal and institutionalised structures and b) of hierarchical leadership, as a tools to exercise political and social control. This choice is, moreover, part of activists’ strategic approach to mobilisation, and their refusal to creating coalitions with any other formal or institutionalised actors, such as political parties. Therefore, we will see how it is problematic to assume that their aim is to be accepted by the political system or to acquire new advantages within this system^{ix}; their conceptualization of being ‘successful’ is not dependant on interacting or negotiating with authorities.

Overall, the in-depth exploration of the HSU in the context of Jordan will point to the need of reconceptualising ‘success’ as presented by PPT for the case of Jordan. This discussion will be useful not only for the case of the HSU, but also for the study of other similar marginal and informal social movements in the MENA region.

Thesis structure

Turning to the structure, this thesis has seven chapters, which are divided into two parts. Part I is dedicated to reviewing the theoretical framework, to presenting the methodology used in the research, and to contextualising social movements and dissent in Jordan. Part II contains four analytical chapters dedicated to pursuing my four lines of inquiry on the HSU: the movement's mobilising structure and ideology; the movement's strategies; the regime's counter-strategies; and the movement's social and political significance.

The first chapter, entitled **Political Process Theory (PPT) and its Applicability for the study of the *Al-Hirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement): *Mobilizing Structure, Political Opportunity, and Framing Processes***, is on Political Process Theory (PPT) and its main concepts, and aims are to present the framework as one that provides a useful toolbox for the study of the HSU. I argue that PPT is a useful framework for the study of my movement, and that it serves as a useful analytical toolbox to understand social movements in Jordan.

In chapter two, **Researching Mobilisation and Repression in the MENA**, I present the methodological approach that is used in this project, a qualitative research project within an interpretative frame. I argue that, given the fluidity of social movements, and the relevance of self-understanding to answer my analytical questions, a holistic approach is necessary, one which is built on three levels of analysis —macro (national), meso (organization), micro

(individual). In order to do so, I present the methods used to gather data, and then personally reflect on my research experience in this project.

The final chapter of part one, chapter three, **Contextualising the Case: Jordan's Liberal Autocracy in Containing Mobilisation**, seeks to analyse the way in which the relationship between the Jordanian regime and social movements has been historically constructed as it provides insights into the way in which dissent and the state converse today. I argue that, despite the existence of relatively organized dissidence during specific moments in time, the state has managed to survive until now through the implementation of a calculated counter-strategy that combines repressive and conciliatory measures which have marked the development of social movements in the country.

In the second part of the thesis, I map structure, strategy, counter-strategy, and significance across four chapters. Chapter four, **Mapping *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement): Grievances, Aims, Structure and Ideology**, analyses today's informal dissent youth movement in Jordan, the HSU and the different constituencies and activists therein. I argue that this movement represents a new form of informal, uninstitutionalized, horizontal, network-like organization that mobilizes the concept of youth bringing together multiple ideologies, and is re-defining what dissent looks like in Jordan today. At this point, I establish the HSU as my analytical object of inquiry, analysing the demographic characteristics of activists in the movement, its internal mobilization structure, its main political characteristics and its ideology.

Chapter five, **Strategy in *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement)**, analyses the development of both confrontational, conflict-oriented, and non-confrontational, consensus-oriented strategies in the movement and the events that affect this variation. The chapter argues that movement strategies are reactive and context-specific, and vary in time. Moreover, even if we are talking about a movement as a whole, there is a strategic variation between constituencies that adopt more confrontational strategies and those that prefer non-confrontational ones. Finally, strategic weaknesses or limits of the movement are a result of the challenging context and of activists' lack of previous organization experience. In this chapter, after identifying the spectrum of the movement's strategic choices in terms of confrontation and non-confrontation, strategy is analysed by drawing on the concepts of *political opportunity*, *mobilizing structure*, and *framing processes* provided by the PPT and analysing the way in which these variables determine the development of movement activists' strategic articulation.

Chapter six, **The Jordanian State's Counter-strategies: Collective Action**, explores the counter-strategies that have been put forward by the Jordanian regime in response to the HSU. I argue that the HSU has been challenged by the state's counter-strategies to mobilisation, and the varying opportunity structure, which has managed to almost completely demobilise the movement. The regime's survival until now is not due to its political legitimacy in the eyes of the population, but to a carefully calculated strategic management of collective action that combines apparent conciliatory moves with repression. I analyse the Jordanian regime's counter-strategy in two parts: first, conciliatory measures, including government reshuffles, and putting forward a roadmap to

reform that includes constitutional amendments, and reforming the parliamentary election and political party laws; second, repressive measures in terms of legislation—including those related to freedom of expression, association, and assembly—, and the way this legislative framework is arbitrarily implemented, as well as direct repressive measures towards activists that include harassment, surveillance, or imprisonment.

In the final chapter of this second part, entitled **Enduring Social, Political and Cultural Transformations: Framing Significance in *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement)**, I set out what has been framed by movement participants as the political and social significance of the HSU. I argue that while the concept of success as defined by PPT is not applicable for the case of the HSU, the movement's activities are considered as significant by participants in terms of its social and political importance and influence. Moreover I argue that major significance of the movement is framed as the following: social, the existence and organisation of an informal, noninstitutionalised movement in Jordan; and political, altering limits of political action or political expression tolerated by the regime, or the 'red-lines' of freedom of political action and expression in Jordan, and the reintroduction of national issues in the political debate. Finally, the chapter explores the way in which the movement is considered as having been important in transforming the culture of activism in Jordan, which has the potential to transform the future of political participation and organisation.

I conclude my thesis with a **Conclusion** that lays out the empirical findings of the project and summarises the main arguments that have been

developed throughout the chapters. It moreover recounts the way in which this project contributes to the academic conversation on both social movements in Jordan and in the MENA. Furthermore, it advocates for the need of carrying out similar projects to study collective action and contentious politics in the MENA that focus on alternative structures and forms of organising. This will encourage thinking about the way in which alternative discourses develop and are challenged in this region. The chapter closes indicating possible future lines of research and highlighting the insights that this type of study can make to the knowledge on transformations in societal dynamics and discourses in other cases.

Chapter 1 Political Process Theory (PPT) and its Applicability for the study of *Al-Hirāk Al-Shabābī Al-Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement): *Mobilizing Structure, Political Opportunity, and Framing Processes*

This chapter is on Political Process Theory (PPT) and its main concepts. The aim of this theoretical chapter is to present the framework as one that provides a useful toolbox for the study of the HSU by extending expectations on mobilisation in non-democratic countries. I argue that PPT is a useful framework for the study of the HSU, and that it can provide a useful analytical toolbox to understand social movements in Jordan.

In order to support this argument, I first provide an introduction to PPT theory, including how this framework was built and its focus. Second, I present the way PPT conceptualises *mobilising structure*, *political opportunity*, and *framing processes*, which are central to the framework. Finally, I evaluate strengths and limits of PPT concepts, arguments, and categories to answer my four analytical questions around organisation, social movement strategy, regime counter-strategy, and significance of the HSU.

General introduction to Political Process Theory (PPT)

In order to analyse the structure, strategies and significance of the HSU as well as its strategic interaction with Jordanian authorities, I take Social

Movement Theory, and in particular the Political Process Theory^x as my analytical frame. PPT was developed in the 1970s, mainly through the study of social movements in democratic countries, particularly in the US. PPT defines social movements as:

“A sustained series of interactions between national powerholders and persons successfully claiming to speak on behalf of a constituency lacking formal representation, in the course of which those persons make publicly-visible demands for changes in the distribution or exercise of power, and back those demands with public demonstrations of support.”
(Tilly, 1979 p. 12).

The key recognition of this theoretical framework is that “activists’ prospects for advancing particular claims, mobilizing supporters, and affecting influence are context-dependent” (Meyer, 2004 p. 126) and that “social movements cannot be isolated from contentious politics as a whole” (McAdam et al., 1997 p. 163). The model especially focuses on movements that have been “excluded from political power and legal rights” and that direct their demands to the state and to state policies (Gamson, 1975).

PPT presents activists as “eminently rational” arguing that “activists do not choose goals, strategies, and tactics in a vacuum” and that “the political context, conceptualized fairly broadly, sets the grievances around which activists mobilize” (Meyer, 2004 pp. 127-128). PPT is a framework that enables an analytical focus on the interaction between challengers of the system and the world around them, and this interaction determines the outcomes of movements as well as their development and potential influence over time

(Meyer, 2004). PPT offers a conceptual toolkit that is useful for my project, more precisely the concepts of 'mobilizing structure', 'political opportunity' and 'framing processes' are relevant for my four main research questions around the concepts of 'organization', 'social movement strategy', 'regime counter-strategy' (and 'repression') and 'significance' or in PPT language 'success' of social movements.

Conceptualisation of *mobilizing structure*, *political opportunity*, and *framing processes*

After this brief introduction of PPT, I will now present concepts used by PPT that are relevant for my research. The first central concept in PPT is that of *mobilizing structure* which is useful to answer my analytical questions on organization, social movement strategy, and political and social significance of the HSU. The concept of *mobilizing structure* has been defined by PPT as 'those collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action' (McAdam et al., 1996b p.3). The role of these structures in social movements has been to allow contentious acts to be sustained as social movements. This concept focuses on the forms of organization to which a diversity of collective settings give rise, thereby turning the focus to the organisational dynamics of social movements (McAdam et al., 1996b p. 4).

There is not a single model of movement organization (Tarrow, 2011 p. 137) and models vary according to their degree of formality, which can be measured through the variables of hierarchy and autonomy, where a greater

hierarchy in organisation would lead to greater formality, and greater autonomy derives in less formality. Examples of the least formal organization types would include 'families' and 'networks of friends' (McCarthy, 1996 p. 142). Mobilizing structures are relevant to study social movement organization in several ways. These structures are the ones that 'bring people together in the field, shape coalitions, confront opponents, and assure their own future after the exhilaration of the peak of mobilization has passed' (Tarrow, 2011 p. 123). From the central understanding that the model has of activists as rational actors, social movement participants 'adopt mobilizing structural forms that are known to them from direct experience' (McCarthy, 1996 p. 148).

Mobilizing structures are also relevant to studying social movement strategies, as the model assumes that a variation in mobilizing structures result in major variation in strategic repertoires at different levels. PPT considers possible variation in strategic repertoires, including: level of mobilization; dominant organizational form; level of outside subsidy; and alliance structures—between SMOs and political parties, unions, churches, and authorities. PPT presents strategic choices of social movements and of groups therein through three binaries related to the magnitude of goals including single v multiple demands, radical demands v demands that do not challenge the legitimacy of the constituency, or influencing v substituting elites (Gamson, 1975).

PPT assumes that the variation in mobilising structures results in a variation of forms and strategies of action. Conservative mobilising structures adopted by 'leaders who aim to work with the experience of their people, may severely constrain the range of possible choices of form' (McCarthy, 1996 p.

150). On the other hand, informal structures allow for a more direct type of activism at a grassroots level, providing 'fertile ground in which radicals can flourish and thrive'. Formal and hierarchical mobilising structures 'inhibit risky and potentially illegal behaviour' given their 'lack the flexibility and autonomy necessary for clandestine or extreme actions' (Cross and Snow, 2011 p. 119). Overall, informal, non-hierarchical mobilising structures offer a 'free space' where activists are able to build a community or a movement beyond the control of authorities.

Finally, the concept of *mobilizing structure* has been related to the 'success' of social movements for PPT. The framework defines 'success' at two levels: first, as acceptance, when 'the challenging group's existence is accepted by its antagonists', reflected in acts of consultation, negotiations, formal recognition that the challenging group represents a formally designated opposition group, and inclusion in the system; second, in the form of new advantages, when any of the objectives or demands that were being demanded by the opposition group were achieved (Gamson, 1980 p. 1043). The assumption made by the framework is that the type of organization or *mobilizing structure* adopted by the movement deeply affects the success of the movement. According to Tarrow, formal hierarchical organizations have greater capacity to sustain interaction with allies, authorities, and supporters, than hierarchies that fully internalize their base, such as grass-roots activists, which lose much of their capacity for contention. Moreover, autonomous, horizontally organized groups, where each individual is a full participant, have greater capacity for contention, at the same time as autonomous groups encourage a lack of coordination and continuity (Tarrow, 2011 p. 137).

The second central concept of PPT, *political opportunity*, is especially relevant to answer my analytical questions on social movement strategies and regime counter-strategy, which are central for the model. Political opportunity has been defined as ‘consistent – but not necessarily formal, permanent, or national – signals to social or political actors which either encourage or discourage them to use their internal resources to form social movements’ (Tarrow, 1996 p. 54). This level of analysis in social movement studies gives importance to the formal structures like institutions, and also the conflict and alliance structures that externally influence the movement. Examples of political opportunities for the framework are political shifts that occur at the level of the state, among them, unusual repression, divided political elites, or divergent interests between political and economic elites, as the most important opportunities to the appearance and development of opposition movements.

With this concept, PPT seeks to explain the ‘emergence of a particular social movement on the basis of changes in the national structure or informal power relations of a given national political system’ (McAdam et al., 1996b p. 3). However, as well as focusing on the emergence of a particular movement, the relevance of this concept could be extended to the study of the development of social movement strategies, as the model is based on the conviction ‘that social movements and revolutions are shaped by the broader set of political constraints and opportunities unique to the national context in which they are embedded’ (McAdam et al., 1996b p. 3).

Political opportunity is a useful concept to answer my analytical question on the development of social movement strategies. Conceptualizations of

strategy are generally made in terms of 'mutually independent and instrumental decisions' and are generally 'confined to actor-opponent interactions' (Downey and Rohlinger, 2008). PPT, however, establishes that 'much of the history of movement/state interaction can be read as a duet of strategy and counterstrategy between movement activists and power holders' (Tarrow, 2011 p. 8). For the model, once the social movement is created, social movement strategy and regime counter-strategy should be understood as mutually dependent and no longer independent of each other:

'After the onset of protest activity, the broader set of environmental opportunities and constraints are no longer independent of the actions of movement groups. The structure of political opportunities is now more a product of the interaction of the movement with its environment than a simple reflection of changes occurring elsewhere' (McAdam et al., 1996b p. 13).

The concept of *political opportunity* is also relevant to answer my analytical question on regime counter-strategies, which includes a variable political opportunity structure. PPT assumes that the balance between threat and opportunity or costs and benefits drive decisions of organizations (Goodwin and Jasper, 2009 pp. 12-14), and these factors are determined by varying regime counter-strategies that build the political opportunity structure. This political opportunity structure can be measured through the protesting policy, which the framework presents as 'an important barometer of political opportunities available for social movements' (Della Porta, 1996 p. 90). According to Della Porta, this protesting policy is built on 'institutional features – police organisation, the nature of the judiciary, law codes, constitutional rights,

and so forth-play an extremely important role in defining the opportunities, and the constraints, on protest policing' (Della Porta, 1996 p. 80). Among the threats for social mobilization, the model includes *repression* as 'any action by another group that raises the contenders' cost of collective action' (Tilly, 1978 p. 100). When applying PPT in non-democracies, as well as state repression, other threats include economic problems and the erosion of rights (Almeida, 2003 p. 351).

The third central concept of PPT is *framing processes* which are relevant to answer the analytical question on social movement strategies and the political and social significance of the movement. *Framing processes* have been defined by PPT as 'conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action' (McAdam et al., 1996b p. 6). *Framing* implies 'an active, processual phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction' (Benford and Snow, 2000 p.614). These *frames* are not chosen in a vacuum, and 'the political context, conceptualized fairly broadly, sets the grievances around which activists mobilize' (Meyer, 2004 pp. 127-128).

This rational and active process undertaken by social movement activists results in collective action frames, formed by 'the shared meanings and definitions that people bring to their situation' (McAdam et al., 1996b p. 5). Although *framing processes* are undertaken by social movement activists, they respond to existing conceptualizations of politics and society in a given context. As Tarrow suggests, social movements attempt to replace 'a dominant belief system that legitimizes the status quo with an alternative mobilizing belief

system that supports collective action for change,' movement leaders proffer the symbols of revolt to gain support and mark themselves off from opponents' (2011 p. 106).

The concept of *framing processes* is useful to answer my analytical question on social movement strategy. Within social movements, *framing processes* are key at three distinct moments: diagnostic framing, when the problem is identified and attributed to a particular actor; prognostic framing, when a solution to the problem is articulated by movement activists; and motivational framing, when a social movement constructs a rationale for engaging in collective action (Benford and Snow, 2000 pp. 615-617). When *framing processes* are strategized by social movement activists, they result in 'frame alignment processes' which have been defined as:

'deliberative, utilitarian, and goal directed: frames are developed and deployed to achieve a specific purpose—to recruit new members, to mobilize adherents, to acquire resources, and so forth' (Benford and Snow, 2000 p. 624).

PPT considers four main frame alignment processes: frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation (Benford and Snow, 2000 pp. 624-625). First, frame bridging is 'the linking of two or more ideological congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem', and can occur between a movement and individuals, between a movement and an un-mobilised group, or across social movements. The second type of frame alignment process is frame amplification, which is 'the idealization, embellishment, clarification, or invigoration of existing values or

beliefs'. With this strategy, social movements intend to resonate with potential constituencies by incorporating existing cultural values, beliefs or narratives. This strategy is particularly relevant for movements that rely on constituencies different from the movement beneficiaries, or for movements stigmatized due to the contradiction between their beliefs and those of the dominant culture. Third, the strategy of frame extension is when SM interests and demands extend 'beyond its primary interests to include issues and concerns that are presumed to be of importance to potential adherents'. This strategy can lead to instability in the movement when it reaches the point at which demands are broad and movement members are no longer able to identify movement demands. Finally, frame transformation is concerned with 'changing old understandings and meanings and/or generating new ones'.

The concept of *framing processes* is moreover relevant to answer my analytical question on the political and social significance of the movement in the Jordanian context. In this sense, I will refer to the related concept of 'resonance' which is 'relevant to the issue of the effectiveness or mobilizing potency of proffered framing' (Benford and Snow, 2000 p. 619). The varying effectiveness^{xi} of *framing processes* is dependent on two factors: credibility, and salience (Benford and Snow, 2000 p. 620). The credibility of a particular frame depends on three factors: the consistency between beliefs, claims and actions inside the movement; the empirical credibility of the frame in the eyes of potential adherents; and the credibility of frame articulators (SM activists) themselves. On the other hand, salience also depends on three factors: centrality, or 'how essential the beliefs, values, and ideas associated with movement frames are to the lives of the targets of mobilization'; experiential

commensurability, or resonance with personal, everyday, experiences of the targets of mobilization; and finally narrative fidelity (Benford and Snow, 2000 p. 621).

Strengths and initial limits to the application of PPT in the Jordanian case

As we have introduced in the preceding section of the chapter, the concepts of *mobilising structure*, *political opportunity*, and *framing processes* are a useful tool to answer the four analytical questions put forward in this thesis related to organisation, social movement strategy, regime counterstrategy, and social and political significance. In this following part of the chapter, I engage in evaluating the strengths and initial limits to the application of PPT in the case of the HSU.

First, the concept of *mobilizing structure* is a useful tool for the analysis of organization, and social movement strategy. In terms of organisation, analysing the chosen mobilising structure of the movement enables us to present the collective form that the movement has chosen to engage in collective action. The form adopted by activists of the movement is the structure that keeps them together, that shapes their coalitions with other groups, and that activists then utilise to confront opponents. It is necessary to analyse this collective form and look into the organisation of the movement internally. Initially, the HSU is a loosely organised, network-like structure, which has been built at a grassroots level on informal ties and operates outside the umbrella or scope of the regime.

One of the key theoretical contributions to applying social movement theory to the MENA is the one outlined by Benin and Vairel, who propose a 'relational' perspective in which 'interpersonal networks' are central to comprehending organisational structures (Benin and Vairel, 2011) through the exploration of other regional cases such as Morocco, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Tunisia . Theoretically the authors of this volume have argued for the applicability of social movement theories to the MENA region as, for them, studying social movements in the MENA allows to expand and enrich social movement theories.

Moreover, analysing the mobilising structure allows us to examine social movement strategies. For this thesis, this is particularly relevant at two levels: first, in terms of the way in which the mobilising structure defines the movement's alliance structures with other actors, particularly with other social movements and with political parties; second, the way in which the mobilising structure allows for the appearance of radical voices and demands. First, from the central PPT assumption of activists as rational actors, and analysing the mobilizing structure of the HSU as a rationally adopted form of organization, allows us to understand the overall lack of strategic alliance structures between the movement and other opposition actors, particularly social movements and political parties. Initially it seems as if the HSU has rationally chosen an informal, horizontal structure of organization because of its negative perception of traditional hierarchical leadership dynamics as a tool to exercise political and social control. Second, the informal, noninstitutional mobilising structure of the movement has allowed for the appearance of radical voices and demands, given the fact that it retains its independence from the regime's structure. The

link between the form of the movement and its strategic approach provided by PPT is therefore useful for this thesis. The case of the HSU follows the assumption of PPT, and the informal, horizontal, network-like structure allows for the flourishing of more radical political ideologies.

The concept of *mobilising structure* is therefore useful for the study of organisation and strategy of the HSU. However, initial limits to the application of the model in the Jordanian case surface when looking into the relationship between *mobilizing structure* and social and political significance of the movement. As we have presented in the previous section, PPT refers to the 'success' of a movement's outcomes as acceptance and as advantages. Initial limits for applying this concept in the case of the HSU appear at two levels. First, the concept of 'success' has to be re-constructed for cases in which claimants do not seek neither acceptance nor advantages from powerholders. In the case of the HSU, activists strategically decide the informal, non-institutional nature of the movement, and their refusal to creating coalitions with any other formal or institutionalised actors, such as political parties. This is especially so for the groups that we situate at the radical end of the reform-radical strategic spectrum, for which we cannot assume their aim to be accepted by the political system or to acquire new advantages in this system. Given the fact that these groups do not see any possibility of change with the current regime, a successful outcome that would meet these groups' demands might imply elite substitution or regime change rather than inclusion into the system at any of the two levels presented by PPT.

Second, PPT assumes that only hierarchical, institutionalised structures would be able to be successful because they can sustain interaction with authorities and supporters. However, for movements that rationally choose to work as an informal, non-institutionalized organization due to their political rejection to these institutionalized structures, again their conceptualization of being 'successful' would not come as a result of interacting with authorities. The more radical positions in the HSU would actually consider interacting with authorities as a negative result of their activism that would be interpreted as a success of the regime's strategies of co-optation. Therefore, the concept of 'success' as presented by PPT will need to be re-conceptualized for the case of Jordan, and this re-conceptualization will be useful not only for the case of the HSU, but also for the study of other youth movements in the MENA region.

Second, the concept *political opportunity* is a useful tool to answer my analytical questions on social movement strategies and regime counter-strategy. First, in terms of social movement strategies, the strength of PPT for the case of the HSU lies in its idea of strategy as dependent on regime counter-strategies. The varying political opportunity structure provided by the Jordanian regime, has resulted in difficulties for the movement to plan long-term strategies. Moreover, the radicalisation and de-radicalisation of the movement's strategy and demands has depended on the opening and closing opportunity structure provided by the regime. A greater cost and threat to mobilisation has resulted in a de-radicalisation of radical voices in the movement. In order to analyse this dynamic, the model provided by PPT is extremely valuable.

Moreover, *political opportunity* is useful to analyse regime counter-strategies in Jordan where the 'institutional or legal structure sets the conditions for the actual strategies of protest policing' (Della Porta, 1996 pp. 79-80). Although social movement strategies of the HSU have been affected by regime counter-strategies more than the other way round, the latter can also be understood as a response to the activities of the movement. In Jordan, the regime has built a counter-strategy to control social mobilisation that includes liberal democratic reform moves, such as constitutional amendments, or elections, and repression and securitization moves such as imprisonment, harassment, or a selective application of the law. PPT serves as a useful tool to analyse the regime's protesting policy towards the HSU.

Two initial limits to the model surface when analysing *repression* in Jordan. PPT assumes that threat increases the cost of action and deters protest but if groups are well organized we will expect greater collective action and resistance (Almeida, 2003p. 351). Based on this assumption, in a context in which we find repression and in which collective action entails relative high costs for activists, such as in Jordan, we would expect an absence of social movements. The presence and activities of the HSU therefore present a contradiction with the model's assumptions on the repression-mobilisation relationship.

The second limit to the theory is that it does not distinguish between different possible types of repression. In Jordan, we find a regime counter-strategy to social mobilization that combines apparent conciliatory moves with repression and securitization. The fact that the regime makes public apparent

concessions in the form of liberal democratic moves undermines the resonance of the movement's activities in society. Tripp has sought to contribute theoretically to the knowledge on social movements and action in the MENA by focusing on resistance and different forms of resistance to power in the region (2013). This author explores different forms of resistance in the region: state capture and violent resistance; resistance as a denial of authority, mainly nonviolent resistance; resistance in economic life; resistance of women through body politics; and symbolic forms of resistance in art. Throughout his analysis, Tripp is interested in looking at ways in which a system of power works over others, its principles, and the ways in which people experience this power (2013 p. 4). Overall, Tripp's contribution to knowledge revolves around the examination of the 'genealogy of resistance and its potential' (2013 p. 5), and will be key to compliment the theoretical limits that might arise when analysing repression in Jordan using PPT.

Finally, as theorised by Davenport, 'mixed transitional regimes, which combine autocracy and democracy, are the most coercive' (Davenport, 2007 p.11). The concept of repression would need further exploration, analysing variations in forms and levels of repression (low/high-level repression), and 'the use of alternative mechanisms of control' that have not been examined extensively (Davenport, 2007 p. 9). The Jordanian regime uses these alternative mechanisms of repression, what we could call low-level repression, in the form of harassment, surveillance or imprisonment. If PPT assumes that repression results in the lack of mobilisation or in radicalisation, introducing these other variants of repression is necessary to further disentangle the

'punishment puzzle' or the non consistent effects of repression on dissent in Jordan (Davenport, 2007 p. 8).

Finally, for the case of the HSU, *framing processes* are a useful analytical tool for strategies and social and political significance. Diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing by the movement, highlight its internal strategic weaknesses. Although diagnostic framing might have been relatively effective in the HSU, creating internal consensus in articulating and identifying the problem, prognostic framing, or articulating a solution to the problem, has found competing voices, mainly between the radical and the reformist camps. The multiplicities of frames in the movement, and the pluralism of conceptualizations of change involved, affect movement strategies as a whole, making it difficult to reach agreements

With existing competition between activists in terms of articulating a solution to the problem, motivational framing —third step in frame alignment processes—, is further weakened. In order to analyse the overall strategic approach to mobilization undertaken by the movement, it is relevant to look into how these three steps have occurred, what frames have been mobilized, if frames have been bridged, amplified, extended, or transformed, and how useful each of these frame alignment processes has been to strengthening social movement strategies.

The concept of 'resonance' is useful in analysing the social significance of the HSU. The degree of credibility of the HSU has been weakened by the aforementioned internal disagreements, and the weakness of their strategic

frame alignment processes. Moreover, resonance has been affected by the fact that activists themselves are young and do not have past experience in organizing. Salience among Jordanian society has not been very high because of the security-minded nature of the society, fostered by a history of surrounding regional conflicts, and their resulting rejection towards any type of ideology that is radical or revolutionary.

One of the major challenges faced by the HSU is found in their inability to effectively strategise framing processes to create a common and shared frame of understanding that would enable greater unity, less fragmentation inside the movement, and a larger horizontal reach to amplify the movement and resonate in society. Weaknesses in the effectiveness of framing processes can shed light on weaknesses at a strategic level and limits in the social significance of the movement.

In analysing the political significance of the HSU, I will focus on the impact the movement has had in bringing about change both at a social and at a political level. This focus will enable me to reinforce the argument that the main political significance of the HSU has been to alter the forms of political action or political expression tolerated by the regime. Although it is debatable the extent to which we can analyse the outcomes and evaluate the success of a movement as new as the HSU, there have been notable changes at the level of the culture of activism that may determine the future of social movements and collective action in Jordan.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have provided an overview of Political Process Theory (PPT) theoretical framework within Social Movement Theory. More specifically, I have taken this chapter to conceptualise the key concepts of *mobilising structure*, *political opportunity* and *framing processes*. By presenting the way in which these central PPT concepts link to my analytical questions, I have argued that this is a useful framework for the study of the HSU, and that it can provide a useful analytical toolbox to understand its organisation, strategy and significance, as well as its interaction with Jordanian authorities.

Chapter 2 Researching Mobilisation and Repression in the MENA

This chapter aims to set out the methodological approach that is used in this project, a qualitative research project within an interpretative frame. Moreover, it aims to serve as a personal reflection on researching social mobilisation and repression in the MENA. Given the fluidity of social movements, and the relevance of self-understanding to answer the analytical questions of this project, a holistic approach is necessary, one which is built on three levels of inquiry of the object of study —macro (national), meso (organization), micro (individual).

The first part of this methodological chapter lays out the general methodological approach of this project, and justifies the selection of an interpretative frame for this particular research. The chapter then turns on to describe the methods used to gather and analyse primary data for the project, namely participant observation, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and document analysis. As well as descriptive in nature, this section aims to justify the use of these methods and their usefulness for the purpose of collecting primary data. Finally, the chapter reflects on the experience of researching mobilisation and repression in Jordan by engaging with more context-specific issues related to research methodology such as the researcher's role as insider/outsider of the movement, as a female researcher, the importance of

creating trust networks for this type of research, and obstacles encountered on the way.

General methodological approach

This research is predominantly qualitative in nature and has adopted an interpretive approach to organisational research, which refers to a methodological procedure that takes into account hermeneutics and meaning. This approach has been presented in the field of organisational research in contraposition with a more positivist approach that are generally associated with hypothesis testing and experimental or quasi-experimental research design (Lee, 1991 p. 342). This research project therefore does not work with hypotheses and does not aim to test hypotheses which would characterise more positivist approaches to research. Instead it seeks to understand the meaning of social behaviour through a process of interpretation of the empirical reality.

The interpretative approach to organisational research is based on the idea that methodologies used in natural sciences are not applicable to the study of social reality. In social science research, the same social process or behaviour can have different meaning for different researchers. Therefore the observation of human behaviour must involve a process of interpreting the empirical reality in terms of what it means as part of the object of inquiry (Lee, 1991 p. 347). The interpretative frame has been widely used as an approach to

understanding social behaviour. One of the fields in which this approach has been taken and which is particularly relevant for this research project has been phenomenological sociology which aims to explain the role of human awareness in human action. In this field, 'scientific interpretations of the social world *can*, and for certain purposes, *must* refer to the subjective meaning of the actions of human beings from which social reality originates' (Schutz, 1973 p. 62). In this research, the interpretive approach is useful to explore the way in which the organisation and strategies of social movement collective action are framed by the subjective interpretation of participants involved. The selection of methods of primary data collection for this research follows this basic premise in the overall qualitative and interpretative methodological approach to the subject of inquiry.

Methods of data collection and analysis

In this project I adopt the participant observation research approach 'in which the major activity is characterized by a prolonged period of contact with subjects in the place in which they normally spend their time' (Bogdan, 1973 p. 303) and that relies on the 'active participation of the researcher in the social context under observation' (Ross and Ross, 1974 p. 64). Bogdan presents the aims of this research approach which are to 'develop an understanding of complex social settings and complex social relationships' and to 'understand as fully as possible the situation being studied without disturbing that situation'(1973 pp. 303-304). I adopt this approach in my research because I

agree with its proponents in that the only way to understand the complexity of social life, in the case of my research project, the complexity of the HSU and the context in which it acts, is to immerse oneself in it. Moreover, 'studies which have an entire community, organisation, or group as their unit of analysis will benefit particularly from the holistic focus of participant observation' (Ross and Ross, 1974 p. 64).

In participant observation, 'analysis is an ongoing and constant process' that can provide both 'substantive and theoretical' findings for the research (Bogdan, 1973 pp. 307-308). In my project, this research approach has enabled me to gather data on substantive findings of the HSU, providing insight into the way in which activists of the movement organise themselves or the strategies that they choose. Moreover, the approach provides theoretical findings related to my broader analytical questions on repression-mobilisation dynamics and movement/state strategic interactions in Jordan. Overall, this approach produces 'data which are either unobtainable through other techniques, prerequisite to the use of other techniques, or a reinforcement of data obtained through other methods'(Ross and Ross, 1974 p. 64).

For this project, I have carried out extensive periods of participant observation: from September 2011 until September 2012, in January 2013, in April 2013, from June to September 2013, and from May 2014 to June 2015. During my extensive fieldwork periods, I observe activists in the movement during all the activities they carry out, including informal social gatherings, events, meetings, and diverse public demonstrations such as marches and sit-ins. My participation in the movement's activities in general, especially in the

private and informal gatherings, is only possible because of the trust and friendship networks created during extensive periods of time with activists, without which this research project would find many limits to gathering data on the movement. Due to the radical position towards change that activists defend, I have encountered some challenges to the research, mainly in the form of repression and security and during demonstrations. Other times these challenges have affected my interviews, and I will develop this point in the next pages when I talk about the interviews carried out. These challenges made me decide from the start that I would, whenever possible, be accompanied by a Jordanian male friend, especially during the interviews and focus groups with activists.

The participant observation approach is normally combined to other specific research methods (Bogdan, 1973 p. 304) that also contribute to the data collection needed in the project. I use three methods in combination with the general participant observation approach: semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and document analysis.

Semi-structured interviews, sometimes called the *in-depth* or *intensive*, focus on the 'meanings that life experiences hold for the individuals being interviewed' (Warren and Karner, 2009 p. 115). They can be used to study behaviour and interaction, or as a sole method when looking at account, however combining this method with a more general political observation methodological approach provides the researcher with 'a much broader understanding and thicker description'(Warren and Karner, 2009 p. 118). Interviews, in contrast to informal conversations, require a formal structure that

enables the researcher to gather specific information needed for the project. The broad structure put forward by Warren and Karner is 'conceptualizing the topic, framing the research question, developing the specific questions, the IRB review, deciding on the interview format, sampling respondents, and planning the interview'(2009 p. 118).

Semi-structured interviews provide open answers at the same time as it guides the interview following a structure that meets the objectives of the researcher. One of the characteristics of semi-structured interviews is that they 'allow respondents the chance to be the experts and to inform the research' (Leech, 2002 p. 668). I have used this method to gather data that has enabled me to answer the research questions related to: strategies of groups and individuals in the movement, how strategic decisions are reached, and variations in strategic choices between groups; obstacles and challenges that individual activists have faced and their perceptions on the extent to which their activities are affected by the repressive context; and outcomes of the movement, as they provide data on the aims of the groups which I then am able to relate to the movement's political outcomes. Semi-structured interviews provide the an in-depth description of the individual activist's engagement in activities related to organization and strategic decision making, as well as their experiences of repression and surveillance during their activism and the ways in which they consider this has affected their organizational practices and strategic decisions.

Individual semi-structured interviews for this project have been designed to address the three levels of analysis of the research, and have been loosely

structured around the main analytical questions while allowing flexibility to respondents. As well as questions related to the main analytical questions, interviews included personal information about participants in the movement, as well as historical and context related questions that have provided insight into their interpretative stance towards the social, economic and political context in which they understand their organisational efforts and in which they strategise their activities. In order to reference the data collected through this method throughout the thesis, a coding system has been created and linked to details on interviewees for this project (see Appendix 2).

During the aforementioned periods of fieldwork, I have carried out a total of 26 semi-structured interviews: 16 to activists of the movement, 8 to Jordanian analysts in different fields —politics, sociology, social media, legislation—, one to a Jordanian journalist, and one to a Jordanian blogger. From the 16 interviews to activists of the movement that I have done until now, 9 have been done to activists that take a radical and rupturist understanding of change in the country, confronting the regime directly. The other 7 interviews were done to activists with a reformist understanding of change. The interviews done to activists are extensive and cover personal information, organisational information, ideology, strategy, challenges and obstacles, outcomes and background questions. From the 26 interviews carried out, 15 of them were done in Arabic, either in Jordanian dialect or in classical Arabic, and 11 were in English.

I have to point out at this point that during the last period of fieldwork, from May 2014 until June 2015, I encountered increased limits to carrying out

the research for this project in Jordan. I had initially planned at least 15 more interviews with activists of the movement, which had previously accepted in my 2013 field trip. However, upon arrival to Jordan and given the changing political environment in the country (and in the region), conditioned nationally with a new Anti-Terror Law being issued before the summer of 2014, and activists being increasingly harassed, and trialled under this securitization law, I was only able to interview 2 more activists this year. The other activists have refused to talk 'officially', and in an interview setting, about their activism, probably out of fear. This change has been extremely noticeable for me as a researcher, and it has made my fieldwork harder and more frustrating. However I consider that the observation and informal, non-recorded, meetings with activists during the fieldwork periods carried out since 2011, together with the interviews carried out to researchers, analysts, bloggers, and journalists, complement interviews with activists, and provide a solid empirical picture of the HSU.

The fluidity of the individual ascription of activists and constituencies in the movement makes it difficult to select interviewees for this project and to define the movement's boundaries. However, I use three ways to determine who the activists are: first, I use snowballing sampling in interviews; second, I use the boundaries established by activists in the interviews to questions on, for example, who can form part of constituencies; and finally, I use the constituencies' identity as established in their manifestos.

As I mentioned before, I have faced some challenges related to repression and security during my research. Ethical and safety issues have been of central concern for carrying out this research and for the fieldwork in

Jordan. These concerns have noticeably increased since 2013. In 2013, main challenges to carrying out interviews were the increased imprisonment of radical activists in the movement during the summer of 2013, and sometimes the activist that I was supposed to be interviewing was imprisoned hours before the interview. Despite the challenges encountered, in 2013 almost all the activists interviewed wanted their full names to appear in this project. In 2014 however, I experienced greater difficulties in carrying out interviews with activists, as mentioned before. Moreover, the two activists interviewed in this last period have made sure that their names remain anonymous. For the sake of consistency and in order to protect my interviewees in this changing political context, I have decided to keep all respondents anonymous and use pseudonyms to refer to them. For each participant, a few lines have been added on their social position and identity, including their ascription to specific groups within the movement, while retaining their anonymity in all cases. As a final note, I have never personally felt threatened while carrying out my research, although I have received varied comments from other people in the society — ranging from support, indifference, criticism or rejection, to negation of their existence— on the nature and activities of my object of inquiry, the HSU.

The second method that I use to gather data for my analysis is focus groups which compliments semi-structured individual interviews by providing insight to the interaction between research participants (Kitzinger, 1994). This method can be combined with individual interviews to promote interaction between participants, between participants and facilitators, avoiding asymmetry between interviewer and interviewee and eliminating tensions through the discussion among participants involved in the same activity, for example, in

social movement organization and collective action. Focus groups have been approached as a “transformational act”, raising consciousness and empowering participants, rupturing rather than reproducing underlying relations of exploitation and domination’ (Johnson, 1996 p. 517) with ‘the potential to promote change’ (Chiu, 2003 p. 181). In words of Johnson, the true potential for focus groups is:

‘Not to appropriate bits of tacit knowledge the better to manipulate the providers, but to blend different kinds of expert knowledge - tacit and everyday with scientific and theoretical - to empower and to foster social change. There is scope for creative experimentation in their use. Facilitating this *activity* could reconnect the critical social scientist to agents of social change’ (Johnson, 1996 p. 536).

Focus groups examine the way in which knowledge and ideas on a specific issue develop and operate in a specific context and group (Kitzinger, 1994). For this research, focus groups provide insight into the way organization and strategy is debated and decided among members of groups and between groups of the social movement under study enabling further focus on agreements and disagreements between activists, arguments and how they are developed throughout the discussion. Data gathered with this method has been analysed to answer the research questions related to strategy, mainly strategic decision-making inside the movement and variation in preferred strategies among activists. During the fieldwork periods, I carried out one focus group together with a Jordanian researcher. This focus group was done in January 2013 just after the Parliamentary Elections in Jordan in order to gather data on

the perception of non-elective actors, activists in the HSU. Participants in this focus group were activists of the movement who represented a variety of ideologies. Given the changing conditions for this research project in the country, it has been impossible to gather any small group of activists to carry out a focus group since the beginning of 2014.

Although the practice of using members who previously know each other in focus groups is generally discouraged, for the purpose of our analysis it was important that participants knew each other, if not personally at least they all recognized each other as pertaining to specific groups. This was so because of the topic that was going to be covered in a context of repressive state tactics towards protestors of movement in the form of detentions or state surveillance. This discussion could have not taken place if all participants in it were not trusted by other participants. The trust network created among participants, as well as between participants and researchers, was vital in order to gather data. The fact that participants knew each other to a greater or lesser extent was moreover positive because of their shared experiences that framed their political views and to which they referred, which further provided input to our analysis.

The third method that I used is document analysis. Documents 'inform the practical and political decisions which people make on a daily and long-term basis and may even construct a particular reading of the past social or political events' (May, 1993 p. 133). This particular method is a form of 'unobtrusive' research that does not directly involve human *subjects* (Wesley, 2010 p. 12),

but the active role of the researcher in selecting and accessing these documents should be acknowledged.

In my analysis, I use primary documents, 'materials which are written or collected by those who actually witnessed the events', and secondary documents, 'written after an event which the author had not personally witnessed' (May, 1993 p. 136), all of which are publicly available. The sources for primary documents are state representatives and movement activists. Primary documentation from state representatives includes political speeches, declarations, constitutional and legislative amendments; documents produced by activists of the movement include manifestos, speeches, pamphlets, signs, and social media publications, as well as entries in blogs and updates in social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Secondary documents are mainly published articles, in academic journals as well as on-line articles, and books. Document analysis is a method that is constantly carried out and that has been one of the ways in which I gather data since September 2011.

I analyse these documents as 'mediums through which power is expressed' (May, 1993 p. 139) and as pieces in a particular social and political context through which I 'examine the factors surrounding the *process* of its production, as well as the social *context*' (May, 1993 p. 138) which makes them interesting not only for what they contain but also for what they leave out. This document analysis helps me answer my research questions related to movement strategies and regime counter-strategies, and the relationship they have established. Combining the findings in document analysis with data collected in semi-structured interviews and focus groups through 'triangulation'

(Wesley, 2010 p. 6) allows me to corroborate the findings resulting from this method.

In order to organise the data collected through the aforementioned variety of data collection methods, and to facilitate its analysis, I have coded results using the NVivo program. The amount of unstructured data collected through my extensive observation periods, as well as through the long and detailed interviews carried out with activists, is difficult to analyse. Structuring and organising this data is necessary. NVivo provides a suitable tool to organise and ease the visualisation of large amounts of unstructured qualitative data as the one collected in this project.

Coding has been a fundamental task for this project, and NVivo has greatly facilitated this task. Coding has allowed me to group data into the different lines of analysis and arguments, greatly facilitating the visualisation of data for its analysis. The nodes that I have created in order to code data have generally been simple nodes around people, places, the four analytical questions (organisation, SM strategy, regime response, and significance), and opinions (for example, on demands, radical and reformist strategies, or repression).

The challenge of researching mobilisation in the MENA

For this project, I spent extensive periods of time living in Amman, observing the community and movement activists in the community. As a

foreign female researcher, this experience raised some issues that I deemed of vital importance to cover in this methodological reflection. Among them, the difficulty of creating a critical balance between my role as insider/outsider of the movement and the community, my role as a foreign female researcher, the importance of creating trust networks, language and its limits, and other obstacles related to security encountered in the way.

Researchers that engage in social research are faced with the challenge of balancing the researcher's insider role, that of being participant of the world that is being studied, and outsider role, where the researcher takes distance from the object of study. One of the first points of my research that I deem necessary to include in this personal reflection of my research experience during the four years in Jordan is my role as an insider and as an outsider of the movement. First, being an *insider* of the movement in my case would mean to belong to the movement, and participate as an activist. Although I was never truly an *insider* in the studied movement, I have acquaintances that are active participants and organisers of the movement. My position was not therefore as insider per se, but I was involved in some activists' life to the extent that they shared their impressions and emotions throughout the studied period.

At the same time, I have been primarily *outsider* or *nonparticipant* in the movement. Although sometimes benefits of this position are not so obvious, it 'can provide valuable perspectives on the taken-for-granted assumptions of social movement participants' (Blee and Taylor, 2002 p. 97). This position as an outsider has been positive because it has helped me to keep a certain

emotional distance from the movement, which has in turn been fundamental to remain neutral in the analysis.

The position of a foreign (Spanish) female young researcher in Jordan has overall benefited my research and for accessing activists as well as the Jordanian society. In terms of gender, being a female researcher has facilitated access to public and private spaces, and for both men and women. Because of dual access to women and men in the Middle East, foreign women researchers have sometimes been referred to as the 'third sex' (Schwedler, 2006 p. 425).

Second, being young has benefited me in the sense that activists of the HSU have found in me someone that they could share their ideas with, particularly in terms of the perception of the social and political situation in Jordan. The fact of being from Spain (and neither northern European nor British nor from the US), made my condition as 'Westerner' distant from the 'West' they consider has directly contributed to the situation of Jordan today, namely Britain and the US. Moreover, having participated for a period of time in the Spanish *Indignados* movement has allowed me to share even more with young activists of the HSU which observe increasing similarities with southern European youth and societies.

The third point that I would like to reflect upon, is the importance of creating trust networks for this type of research. This has been absolutely critical for my thesis. The long periods of fieldwork have been extremely important to establish solid relationships of trust, not only with my acquaintances but also with other movement participants that heard about me

through them. I arrived in Jordan for the first time in September 2011, when I accepted a research position at the University of Jordan. During one year, I personally met some of the youth activists that were starting to organise the HSU, which was created in mid-2012. This friendship with a few of the activists, allowed me to meet other activists in the movement. Upon my return to Jordan later on, during my fieldwork periods in 2013-2015, these activists accepted to be interviewed for the research because they already knew me and trusted me.

In highly repressive environments, trust networks are particularly important when accessing and recording the voices of radical collectivities and individuals in the movement, who would otherwise not be willing to participate in the project. Accessing radical activists is extremely difficult, and almost no research has included these radical voices in their analysis because they are unwilling to participate in any funded research, or carried out by anyone they do not personally know.

During this research, I have realised how important language is to express identity and subjectivity. There is a need to be aware of the variations of Arabic –diglossia, bilingualisms, and cultural identity–, as well as variations shaped by urbanization, education, and migration. After studying Arabic for 10 years now, in different Arabic speaking countries, I have acquired an advanced level of comprehension and speaking. More importantly for this project, during the four years spent researching, collecting data, and living in Jordan, I have become fluent in Jordanian dialect, particularly the dialect spoken in Amman among urban social clusters, but also with some of its geographical variations. This has extremely helped me during my research in having acquaintances and

friends in the community that go beyond the economic and political English-speaking elites with whom foreign immigrants generally socialise.

The majority of interviews carried out to activists of the HSU were done in Jordanian dialect, which is the day to day colloquial communicative option. Interviews to journalists or activists of the Islamist Youth Movement were normally done in classical Arabic or *fuṣḥā*, variation that transmits formality and is usually related to a religious identity. Finally, the minority of interviews were carried out in English, and this was mainly when carrying out interviews to researchers or analysts. The decision on the language was always taken by respondents (respondents moreover always chose the place where the interview would be held), and being aware of these variations shed light on social and political stances. For the majority of activists, responding to interviews in Arabic –either Jordanian dialect or classical Arabic– was a political decision. This is due to the negative conception they have of huge numbers of foreigners living and benefitting from economic development in the country, who almost have no relation with the local community, and who very frequently do not know Arabic and are not able to access the community in a natural way.

As a final note, it is important to reflect on some challenges encountered during this research period, particularly in terms of security. Research topics related to ‘security or state repression are often more politically sensitive’ than many other topics (Schwedler, 2006 p. 426). The challenges in terms of security were not from society or from activists at all. They were from authorities. The challenges that I personally experienced as a research have led me to take specific research decisions at particular points in time. An example of one of

these situations is my experience during the last protest that I attended on the 17th October 2014, the first protest after the new terrorism law was passed. Upon arrival to the protest site, I was approached by an unidentified man before the protest began, who told me to not take pictures. From his looks and from the way his following actions, it was obvious this man was from the intelligence. At that moment, I decided I would do as he said, and I stopped documenting the protest. During the hours that the protest lasted, I felt a lot of tension among activists as well as among observers. After this incident, I reflected on what had happened, and on the turn that the issue of security was taking in the country since summer 2014. Moreover, I remembered another Exeter Student, and his unfortunate experience a few months earlier. At that moment I decided that I would not attend other protests (if any were organised by the HSU), at least for a period.

Conclusion

This chapter has set out the methodological approach used in this project, which is overall a qualitative research approach that takes an interpretive frame. It has argued that the fluidity of social movements and the relevance of participants' self-understanding need the combination of the three levels of inquiry –macro, meso and micro- to provide the holistic approach needed to address the analytical questions of the project. The chapter has described the relevance and justified the selection of an interpretive approach for this particular approach, and has presented the selection of methods of data

collection as one that is based on this overall research approach. The methods of data collection for the project, namely participant observation, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and document analysis, have been explained in turn, identifying the way in which these methods have been useful when applied to this particular research project.

Finally, the chapter has allowed for a reflection on the experience of researching mobilisation and repression in Jordan by engaging with more context-specific issues related to the researcher's role as insider/outsider of the movement, as a female researcher, the importance of creating trust networks for this type of research, and obstacles encountered on the way. These elements have been discussed as being of key concern for this particular research project and its viability.

Chapter 3 Contextualising the Case: Jordan's Liberal Autocracy in Containing Social Mobilisation

The present chapter analyses the way in which the relationship between the Jordanian regime and social movements today has been historically constructed. This contextual outline provides insights into the way in which dissent and the state relate to one another in contemporary Jordan. The Jordanian regime has faced challenges to its authority since the 1950s, and has developed, since 1989 a liberal autocratic government model system of authority, which determines the regime's response to challenges in the form of movements, riots, coups, and protests. New forms of dissent thus range themselves against a regime that has consolidated a repertoire of counter-strategic measures for decades. I argue that the Jordanian regime's development into a liberal autocratic system has allowed the state to survive via a calculated counter-strategy that combines liberal democratic conciliatory measures with repression and securitisation. This system of authority has effects at a social, economic, and political level and determines expressions of social dissent and mobilisation in the country.

In order to argue this, and after presenting a working definition of 'liberal autocracy', I intentionally avoid framing the analysis in terms of the reign of the different monarchs as I consider that other events have marked this relationship to a greater extent. The analysis is therefore be structured in the following way.

First, I explore the period that preceded the 1989 April Uprising in Jordan, characterised by a brief period of contention followed by the implementation of martial law. The second analytical period starts with the 1989 April Uprising, and continues until the early 2000, period during characterised by the initial development of Jordan into a liberal autocracy after the lifting of martial law and by the realignment of state interests in society.

Third, I analyse the period since 2000, when social, economic, and political repercussions of this model became particularly evident with the rapid development of global capitalism and the engagement of Jordan in the Global War on Terror (GWOT). Finally, I look into the first months of Arab revolutionary period in Jordan until the 24th March 2011 sit-in, and the capitalisation of social mobilisation during this initial period, in order to situate the HSU in time, describing the movement's appearance in the Jordanian and regional context. This analysis is necessary to understand the current context in which the HSU acts.

The Middle East and North African region has been home for a variety of conflicts that have taken different forms and have constantly threatened human security since the end of its formal colonisation period. This period resulted in the creation of nation-states that not only supposed the physical division of the territory but, more importantly, built frontiers between its peoples and communities. More recently, the region has witnessed an increase in protest and dissident activities in the form of popular uprisings that demand dignity and political change from the established power, posing challenges to the pre-conceived idea of 'Arab Exceptionalism'.

The so-called Arab Spring, which some consider should be called the *Arab Republics' Spring* (Yom and Gause, 2012 p. 74) has managed to produce an unprecedented change in a region marked until now by a stagnant status quo and political authoritarianism. However, social dynamics in the monarchical regimes of the region have been portrayed as inexistent or as working towards authoritarian regime endurance, resulting in what Sean Yom and Gregory Gause have recently defined as 'new Monarchical Exceptionalism' (2012 p. 76).

The Jordanian regime has put forward various strategies that have marked its relationship with society and resulted in a complex relationship which could explain the regime's authoritarian resilience. Throughout the years, regime strategies have contributed to a situation of what I define elsewhere as 'tense stability' in the relationship between the state and political dissidence. I thereby agree against recent analyses that paint a solid and stable monarchy in a troubled region. In order to understand strategies and social movement organisation today, there is a need to further explore the relation between state and society through episodes of collective action and contentious politics. The aim here is to see how the current relationship between social movements and the regime are a result of decades of regime strategies.

1952-1989. Consolidating authority, silencing opposition and martial law

The Jordanian regime has faced challenges to its authority since the 50s after the first liberalised constitution and the creation of the Jordanian

Parliament in 1952, which have threatened regime survival, forcing it to develop a particular repertoire of strategic response. Although this chapter focuses on the relationship between the state and dissent in Jordan since 1989, year when the Jordanian regime started developing fully into a liberal autocratic one, it is necessary to briefly introduce the period that preceded this year in order to highlight several points of interest that are necessary to understand dissent and the state today.

During this period, the regime took several moves to consolidate its authority and weaken challenges from opposing voices. The first period of contention that we will refer to, with the protagonist role of the Jordanian National Movement, was relatively short and ended five years later with the declaration of martial law in 1957. Then we will look into the regime's strategies after the period of political turmoil in 1957 and the way in which the 1967 war, the Black September civil war in 1970 and the oil booms in the 1980s have determined the state's response to social political organisation.

The first challenge to the consolidation of the regime's rule derived from the appearance and organizational activities of the Jordanian National Movement (JNM) during the 1950s which was a major coalition of leftist political parties highly influential during this decade (Anderson, 2005 p. 4). Its major demands were against the monarchical monopoly over power and their definitions of national identity, rallying calls 'for the youth –the "new" to replace the "old" politicians of the Hashemite regime' (Anderson, 2005 p. 7). The movement's popularity and capacity to act as an umbrella under which other

groups found their place was due to the new types of collective action they propose, which took the form of a movement that gained political influence.

The goals and demands of the JNM sometimes coincided with those of other major opposition groups, the Muslim Brotherhood and the *Tahrir* (Liberation) Party (Anderson, 2005 p. 142), which on occasions demonstrated their solidarity towards the movement's demands. Although the JNM was relatively homogeneous and unified along similarities in social class among its leaders and the strategies they used to recruit supporters, 'the potential for fragmentation remained ever present' in the movement (Anderson, 2005 p. 137). This potential fragmentation was due to the incomplete unity of the movement which is sometimes described as being an 'umbrella' for different parties and groups, resulting in difficulties in unifying action when the movement became more successful. The movement's popularity and capacity to act as an umbrella under which other groups could position themselves owed to the new types of collective action they put forwards which 'proved to be the most politically influential and popular' and the 'ideological and emotional bond' provided by Arab nationalist ties (Anderson, 2005 p. 148).

The Jordanian regime's response to the JNM's organisation during the events of major political agitation in Jordan went from brief cooperation to a stronger period of state repression. For the first time in Jordan, riots, demonstrations and political protests managed to threaten and undermine the authority of the regime. At that time, even groups which were then considered loyal to the regime, such as the Islamic Action Front (IAF), engaged in political activism against the state's decisions like the Baghdad Pact which tied Jordan

to Iraq and Britain in a conservative alliance intending to buffer the region from Soviet influence (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe, 2009 p. 34).

The challenge to the consolidation of monarchical authority posed by the JNM during this period, resulted in a series of measures taken by the Jordanian regime that set it on the path toward liberal autocracy. First, this period served the monarchical regime a 'linchpin' monarchy where the 'monarch stands above and away from routine politics' (Lucas, 2004 p. 108). Two political actions illustrate this point. First, in order to assure its survival, the Jordanian regime engaged in successive changes of governments and prime ministers that were presented as conciliatory moves towards the JNM. Among these moves were the resignation of Prime Minister Hazza' Al-Majali and the subsequent dissolution of Parliament. Alongside this came the removal from office of famed British officer and Transjordan tsar Sir John Glubb 'Pasha' (Anderson, 2005 pp. 164-168).

The second conciliatory move put forward by the Jordanian regime at the time was the inclusion of movement members into the government, with King Hussein granting Sulayman Al-Nabulsi, leader of the JNM, the right to serve as Prime Minister of a leftist government in 1956. Although these moves could be interpreted as a positive direct result of the JNM activities, they could also be interpreted as a strategy by the regime to try to consolidate its authority in this model of linchpin monarchy where the government has limited powers. Both these moves proved effective in retaining the regime's power and authority later when major differences appeared between the monarch and Al-Nabulsi's

government, as this last one 'implicitly demanded that the king move into the shadows of the political stage' (Anderson, 2005 p. 180).

The second strategy that the regime adopted during this period in order to assure the consolidation of its authority was to turn to external help in face of internal political turmoil. King Hussein supported the Eisenhower Doctrine outline of Congress in January 1957 whereby the United States sought a proactive, overt and covert, intervention in securing the neighbourhood from Soviet inroads. The United States perceived threats to its regional allies and saw pro-Western rulers such as Jordan, Saudi Arabia or Iraq as vulnerable to Nasserist and Soviet influence so it considered that there was a necessity to establish a new mechanism of intervention 'to stabilise the region against Soviet threats of internal turmoil or revolution' (Hahn, 2006 p. 39).

Political turmoil in Jordan built up to two coups in 1957 (Lucas, 2005 p. 18), after which dissident activities would come to an end as a result of measures put forward by the state. The first coup, unfolding on the 2nd April 1957, during the Al-Nabulsi's cabinet, resulted in his dismissal by the King. Eleven days later, on the 13th April 1957, a second coup by Arab nationalist forces managed to challenge the state, although it was effectively stopped by the monarchy and its royal Bedouin soldiers. According to Peter Hahn, the Eisenhower Doctrine guided US policy during the political crisis in Jordan in 1957 when 'King Hussein asserted his authority by summoning thousands of allied Bedouin warriors to Amman and dismissing al-Nabulsi and Army Chief of Staff General Ali Abu Nuwar on charges of conspiracy and insubordination. U.S.

officials promptly stabilized Hussein with tens of millions of dollars in aid' (2006 p. 42).

The US has subsequently considered Jordan to be a 'critically important' state for two main US regional objectives, namely 'the containment of revolutionary Arab nationalism and the preservation of Middle East peace' (Little, 1995 p. 512). This perception will be reflected in the sustained and increasing aid for Jordan until today. Jordan has been a clear example throughout history of how 'autocracies channel aid and remittances to finance patronage by reducing their expenditures on welfare goods' (Ahmed, 2012 p. 3). This has become a determining factor that has been clearly reflected on the trends of contentious politics in the country and on the strategies put forward by the state in each period.

The political turmoil and the two coups of 1957 resulted in the state's decision to declare martial law, banning political parties and generally limiting freedoms that affected citizens' lives at all levels including freedom of expression, association, political participation, assembly, or communication.^{xii} Jordan's first 'experiment' with liberalism ended in 1957, a year that became a turning point in Jordan's political life. This was particularly a turning point for the relationship between social movements and the state, which 'would signal the end of any attempt at constitutional rule' (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe, 2009 p. 35).

The political decision made by the state of declaring martial law directly affected the JNM's activities. As argued by Anderson, in April 1957 the state

successfully destroyed the Jordanian National Movement (JNM) because ‘they were able to garner support from key components of society’ such as the ‘king’s men’, Bedouin tribesmen in the army, peasants, and merchants, and the opposition was not able to garner as much support (2005 p. 5). This contrasts with the position argued for by other authors’ arguments in studying leftist movements in the 1950s in Jordan who take as given the historical legitimacy of the Hashemite monarchy to rule the country and who consider that the political turmoil of these years solidified and legitimised their leadership.^{xiii} Anderson’s argument goes further and considers that not only did the Hashemite monarchy need to garner support from national social groups, but furthermore, the same existence of the state ‘needed new alliances of unions with the surrounding countries’ (2005 p. 171).

As well as the state’s strategies to end all forms of political opposition, particularly that represented by the JNM, internal organisational factors influenced the fall and eventual dissolution of the movement and resulted in a period of ‘restoration of the Hashemite regime’ (Anderson, 2005 p. 182-191). Despite its effective political organisation and Arab nationalism as a unifying ideology for the movement, major disunity among the movement as it included other groups in its action and the lack of resources undermined the continuity of the JNM as a major opposition movement.

Collective action during this first period had major repercussions in the relationship between the state and citizens which were reflected in the May 1958 constitutional amendments. On one hand, these amendments limited the power of the Parliament; on the other, they empowered the state in its

relationship with social movements.^{xiv} As for the increased power of the Royal Court and the limited power of the elected parliamentary representatives, the 1958 amendments introduced a clause that allowed for a government to be formed without the presence of the lower house. Moreover, a clause was introduced which enabled the monarch to dissolve the Senate.^{xv} Furthermore, after the harsh repression of 1957, the 1958 constitutional amendments made the resignation of government no longer compulsory in the event of dissolution of the Lower House, and the ministers participating in a current government were allowed to run for the next elections^{xvi}. In relation to the passing of laws, the power of the parliament and the members of this body was further limited by the amendments, since a clause was introduced stating that at least ten of its members should sign the petition to consider the drawing of new laws^{xvixviii}.

As well as limiting the Parliament's power, the 1958 constitutional amendments affected the state's relationship with the opposition. According to the 1952 Constitution, civilians could only be judged according to the Constitution and its subsidiary laws. When the 1958 amendments were passed, civilians could also be judged by other 'regulations', which implied that they could also be judged by military regulations. Another relevant amendment to understand the way in which protests in 1957 altered state-society relations from a legal perspective was that granting the King and his government the powers to issue temporary laws even during a dissolve parliament so long as they gave three justifications. Before the 1958 amendments, the King and the government's power to issue temporary laws was only provisioned for periods when parliament was not in session, but forbidden for periods when it was dissolved.

The way in which the King used its support base to retain power when faced with major opposition on the street during the 1950s has been considered a moment during which hopes for real participatory politics ended in Jordan (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe, 2009 p. 36). The monarchy limited the power of the parliament, jealously guarding the royal court's prerogatives and 'elected representatives had no real power to formulate policies' (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe, 2009 p. 36). In Betty Anderson's words, the strategies put forward by the state that resulted in its survival and in the destruction of the JNM are an example of how a 'colonialist-designed state can generate support and garner a degree of legitimacy from the population' (2005 p. 191). This networked support base will be crucial in understanding the regime's survival strategies until today.

Following the events of the late 1950s, the 1960s in Jordan were characterised by the predominance of martial law, that posed limits for dissidence and the opposition of Arab nationalists to the regime, which hindered the monarchy's consolidation of power. Two main conflicts between 1957 until 1989 illustrate this point: 1967 Arab-Israeli War, and 1970 Black September war. In order to understand these two conflicts, and their meaning for the relationship between the state and dissent in Jordan, it is necessary to introduce briefly the concept of Arab nationalism and its political implications during this period for Jordan.

The meaning of nationalism was a matter of debate among Arab leaders and states even before their accession to formal independence. The controversies resulted in major clashes and differing positions in relation to the concepts of nationalism and sovereignty in the period these states were

consolidating their rule. At a regional level, two positions emerged, which undermined the Jordanian King with the major trend of Arab nationalism headed by Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser.^{xix} King Hussein favoured the 'interpretations of Arab nationalism that were consistent with the territorial division of the Arab world and exclusivity associated with sovereignty' (Barnett, 1995 p. 480). Moreover, Arab nationalist movements were also seen as representative of 'the struggle of the Middle Eastern peoples for liberation from imperialist domination' (Galvani, 1972 p. 4) which stood in marked contrast with King Hussein's pro-Western policies. As expressed by Alan Taylor, the years before the 1967 Six-Day War against Israel were characterised by 'a somewhat contrived dispute between self-styled "revolutionary" states and the conservative regimes' (1982 p. 73), with Jordan belonging to the latter.

The first conflict that challenged the authority of the Jordanian regime during this period was the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Internal pressure from Palestinian groups inside Jordan built throughout the 1960s, which could have driven King Hussein to join Syria and Egypt in the preparations of the 1967 war against Israel. As explained by Russell Lucas, the Jordanian monarch saw defeat but decided to join the Arab coalition 'for fear that his inaction would cause a domestic revolt' (2005 p. 19). Before the 1967 Six-Day War and the subsequent defeat of Arab states in what has been termed the *Naksa* (Setback), the attitude that prevailed was that 'Palestinian interests were best served by coordinated Arab direction and not by independent action by Palestinian leadership' (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe, 2009 p. 40).^{xx}

Lucas explains that for Jordan the loss of the West Bank 'may have been worth the price, as the threat of Arab nationalism to King Hussein's survival' decreased (2005 p. 19). The decrease of Arab nationalist threat referenced by this author was coupled with an increase in the activities of the Palestinian nationalist movement in Jordan. This was a new, and so far the greatest ideological threat for the Jordanian regime's consolidation and survival. Despite the general view among Arab states of Fatah and Palestinian militias as sympathetic groups that provided relief of some popular opposition and frustration after the Six Day War's *Naksa*. Their activities were also perceived as a major obstacle to the diplomatic agreements that would enable these countries to recover territories lost during the War. In the Jordanian case, discrepancies with Fatah went beyond these obstacles towards diplomatic arrangements, and built up to the 1970 Black September skirmishes. Michael Hudson already explained two years after the war, in 1969, that 'Jordan suffers not only in human and economic terms, it also risks revolution or even extinction as a political entity' (1969 p. 301).

The second conflict that challenged the authority of the Jordanian regime before 1989 was the 1970 Black September conflict. During the 1960s but more notably since the war and throughout 1968, guerrilla groups called *Fedayeen* or 'sacrificers' multiplied and showed discomfort for the Jordanian regime. At the end of the War, *Fatah* took the decision of establishing its bases in regions outside Israeli control that met specific requirements.^{xxi} Given its proximity, East Bank of the Jordan river was an 'obvious choice' (Jabber, 1973 p. 82). By 1969, the Palestinian guerrilla movement had 'established itself as a regional actor on its own' (Sayigh, 1997 p. 20). The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

(PFLP) 'considered the Hashemite regime almost as much an enemy as Israel itself' (Hudson, 1969 p. 301) leading King Hussein to try and curb guerilla activities.

The increasing Palestinian resistance would find its highest period of tension at the beginning of the 1970s. *Fatah*, the PFLP and the Jordanian regime confronted one-another during the 1970 Black September conflict. This resulted in a forceful expulsion of Palestinian dissenting groups from Jordan by the regime. The Black September civil war was triggered by the PFLP hijacking two Western airlines and bringing the planes to Jordan. The regime responded with force, killing up to 3,400 Palestinians and eliminating *fedayeen*. By July 1971, there was no PLO military presence in Jordan (Lucas, 2005 p. 19).

Following a similar pattern as the one of 1957, constitutional amendments were passed in Jordan after the 1970-1971 Black September skirmishes. The most relevant constitutional amendment that hindered any effective citizens' political participation and empowered the state was related to elections. The 1974 constitutional amendments now established that elections could be postponed under 'exceptional circumstances'. No further specifications on the nature of characteristics of these circumstances were defined, and the constitution expressed that these 'exceptional circumstances' would be determined by the ministerial council when its members considered that holding elections was impossible. Before the 1974 constitutional amendments, elections could not be postponed.

Finally, before engaging with the development of the liberal autocratic Jordanian regime since 1989, it is necessary to briefly introduce the semi-rentier economic nature of the regime, established in the 1970s. The oil booms of 1973-74 and 1979-80 were two key moments when 'oil-dependent sectors became increasingly important sources of finance for their domestic economies' (Brynen, 1992 p. 71). During this period, Jordan consolidated itself as what Rex Brynen defines a *semi-rentier* state. This new state form had important effects on state-society relations. Among these were the rentier state's access to large amounts of externally generated economic resources that strengthened the regime's autonomy.

This meant that regime decision-makers were much less constrained by the interests of domestic actors, and could promote neo-patrimonial social structures based on family or tribal affiliations (Brynen, 1992 p. 74). The semi-rentier nature of the post-1970s Jordanian state will be relevant to understand the state's response to internal instability and towards internal opposition in the form of riots and protests in successive years. As Brynen explains, 'semi-rentiers, such as Jordan, may find their ability to support established patterns of neo-patrimonial authoritarianism increasingly constrained as external incomes decline' (Brynen, 1992 p. 76).

1989-2000s. Establishing Jordan as a 'liberalised autocracy'

The second analytical period starts with the 1989 April Uprising, and continues until the early 2000. This period was characterised by the initial development of Jordan as a liberal autocracy after the lifting of martial law and by the realignment of state interests in society. The year 1989 marked the start of the 'political re-liberalisation' (Ryan and Schwedler, 2004 p. 139) and is a clear turning point in the phases of democratisation in Jordan. As a result of the implementation of the IMF rescue package in 1988-89, the oil crisis of 1989, and given the aforementioned semi-rentier nature of the Jordanian state by the end of the 1980s, subsidies on a number of basic commodities and everyday products were removed. The removal of subsidies primarily impacted people in rural areas.^{xxii}

This sparked riots in rural areas of traditional support for the monarchy, first in the city of Ma'an, then in Kerak and Tafileh, which had been defined by Lucas as 'disorganized displays of dissatisfaction' (2005 p. 23) in April 1989. These riots came to be known in Jordan as *habet nissan* (The Uprising of April). Caused by a worsening economic situation that resulted from the oil crisis, the economic crisis turned into a political crisis when riots started and 'protesters voiced their support for the monarchy as an institution but called for returning the subsidies, new parliamentary elections, and the sacking of Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i' (Lucas, 2005 p. 27).

The 1989 uprising posed social, economic, and political challenges to the Jordanian regime. Given its weak position, and its inability to continue

subsidising loyalties given its worsening economic situation, the Jordanian regime adopted the path of liberalisation. At that time, the regime did not respond with massive force but opted to set out liberal political measures that it presented as 'the most extensive democratisation program in the region' (Ryan and Schwedler, 2004 p. 139). Without challenging its authority, these reforms would reduce internal and international pressures. It abrogated martial law, in force since 1957. This was supplemented with other measures including the restoration of parliamentary elections, legalising opposition parties and relaxing the repressive grip on civil society.

These tensions were expressing desire for a new political pact. This was achieved in April 1990 through the creation of the National Charter, established by King Hussein 'to complete and strengthen the process of Jordanian reconstruction' and 'to lay the foundations and define the methods of national public activity' (1990). A sixty-member royal commission drew up the charter with the aim of pointing 'out the way for the future, establishing general guidelines on the exercise of political pluralism in so far as it constitutes the second component of democracy. This would be accomplished in the basis of the constant tenets of the Constitution, as well as of political and national tradition. It would take cognisance of existing realities in Jordanian society in such a manner as would guarantee continued national progress and democratic change and protect them from taking adverse course'(1990).

The Charter was adopted in June 1991. Following this, the Jordanian Press and Publications Law was amended in 1993 and parliamentary elections were allowed to take place (Lucas, 2005 p. 27). Though the extent to which the

beginning of the process of political liberalisation in Jordan resulted from a genuine will to democratise is debatable, it was nevertheless a significant outcome of these protests of 1989, after its complete closure during the preceding decades (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe, 2009 p. 48). After this brief period of political opening, the 1991 Madrid peace conference was an opportunity for Jordan to become an important regional actor in the resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

This strategy won back US financial support for the Kingdom. After this, the regime put forward measures to decrease the influence of the mainly Islamist opposition, mainly Islamist opposition, including via an amendment to the electoral law. As a consequence, 1993 elections saw a reduction of the influence of the IAF, which enabled the signing of the peace treaty with Israel in 1994, resulting in further economic rewards to the regime. As explained by Curtis Ryan and Jillian Schwedler, 'since the signing of the 1994 peace treaty with Israel, the monarchy has become steadily less tolerant of the levels of pluralism, civil society and dissent that had flourished in the atmosphere of 1989-93' (2004). With the increase of foreign aid, the period following the peace treaty with Israel saw further amendments in the press law which reduced civil rights and freedom of expression (1997). The 1994 peace treaty with Israel has therefore been defined as a 'death knell' of any political liberalisation in the country (Brand, 1999, Peters and Moore, 2009)

Socio-economically, after April 1989, 'the need arose for the regime to negotiate a new social contract with society, resulting in a far-reaching process of political liberalisation and partial democratisation' (Brynen, 1992 p. 70). The

Jordanian regime had to re-construct loyalties in the country after its tribal base challenged its authority on April 1989, bringing to the surface the state's socio-economic and political weaknesses. Given the Jordanian state's weaknesses, reconstructing loyalties in the country became difficult. Already in 1971 Johan Galtung described Jordan's regime as 'militarily strong' yet 'politically and economically so weak that it cannot last long – unless artificially propped up by the US and UK, perhaps also by Israel' (Galtung, 1971 p. 197). Since the 1989 bread riots, loyalties in Jordan have not so much been built on traditional tribal links. Instead the regime has adopted a more liberal approach to loyalty that builds on the political and economic elite.

Exploring the events of 1989 is key to understand loyalty in Jordan today, and the way in which the state has embarked in reconfiguring its loyal base through a new neoliberal track within the global structure. It is key to mention these events, which were followed by Jordan's first International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan. At that moment, state interests were realigned, and loyalty was established with the military and the security apparatus, which are majority Transjordanian Jordanian, and the business elite, who were primarily Palestinian that benefitted from the development of the private sector. Since this restructuring period, loyalty can no longer be completely understood in terms of the historically constructed Transjordanian-Palestinian ethnic division.

Despite the Jordanian regime's rhetoric, political transition, democratisation, and political liberalisation since 1989, there have been no political openings and the country may even have seen a regression. The authoritarian-democratic continuum has given place to extensive terminology of

these 'hybrid regimes' and political science debates on whether they are swinging from one to another side of the spectrum at different moments in time^{xxiii}. These debates on the 'democraticness' of Arab countries has further intensified since 2011 with the Arab revolutions. The term 'liberalised autocracy' has been applied to regimes in this continuum that are characterised by having put forward a 'mixture of guided pluralism, controlled elections, and selective repression' (Brumberg, 2002 p. 56). In contrast to 'full autocracies', where there is no space for debate or for competitive politics, 'liberalised autocracies' allow for a certain degree of pluralism. These regimes are liberal in the sense that they 'not only tolerate but promote a measure of political openness in civil society, in the press, and even in the electoral system of their country', but autocratic in the sense that 'rulers always retain the upper hand' (Brumberg, 2003 p. 3). The term 'liberalised autocracy' does not only refer to the sets of strategies that authoritarian states chose to endure in time, but that they are 'a *type* of political system' (Brumberg, 2002 p. 56) that is changing the authoritarian system and defying linear models of democratisation.

Jordan is an example of this new form of non-democratic governance. The response of the Jordanian regime to social, economic, and political challenges posed by social mobilisation —regional and national— since 2011 represents 'a protracted cycle in which rulers widen or narrow the boundaries of participation and expression' (Brumberg, 2002 p. 57). Economic liberalisation, with a decreased role of the state in economic issues, combined with liberal political moves that are superficial and do not threaten the regime's authority, and a series of repressive and securitisation measures, all contribute to create Jordan's 'adaptable ecology of repression, control, and political openness'

(Brumberg, 2002 p. 57). In Jillian Schwedler's words, until today 'Jordan remains a security state, "liberal" economically but not politically' (2012a p. 259).

2000-2011: Accelerated economic liberalisation and increased securitization policies

Since the early 2000s, social, economic, and political repercussions of the liberal autocratic model have manifested themselves. This period coincided with the rapid acceleration of global capitalism, the Global War on Terror and increased securitisation policies. Moreover, in Jordan this decade coincided with King Abdullah II ascending the throne in 1999. The new King's ascension, although it greatly supposed economic and political continuation of the former King's system of authority, meant a symbolic rupture. The new King is son of King Hussein's British wife, and was educated in the West.

The process of liberalisation in Jordan since its acceleration in the 2000s, could be described as a process that followed two distinct paths and rhythms: one economic and the other political. Economic liberalisation and a marked reduction in the involvement of the state has been accelerated, with deep social implications. At the same time, liberal political measures have been superficial and have not resulted in real political pluralism or freedoms for society. The unsustainable situation that would result from this two-way process has been controlled through repression and securitisation, expanding the military and the security apparatus. Overall, economic liberalisation and securing regime

stability have taken priority over political reform. This Jordanian strategy, similar to other regional countries, prepared the ground for Arab revolutions of 2011.

Economic liberalisation in Jordan meant a decreased power of state institutions in relation to the free market, international financial agencies, or NGOs. As in other similar MENA cases, this trend intensified in the entire global south in the years preceding the financial crisis of 2007. In Jordan, economic liberalisation has continued sinking the country in further economic depression since then, resulting in socio-economic implications.

The development of economic liberalisation in Jordan in the 2000s can be exemplified at two levels. First, economic liberalisation can be understood by looking at partial reform of civil society laws and organisations. Although at first glance this move might look as more political than economical, it is important to analyse it from an economic point of view. Economic liberalisation implies a decreased power of the state in the economy, at all levels. As aforementioned, Jordan embarked in this liberalisation at a moment in which the country was suffering from a severe economic crisis, which was deriving into political conflict. The state was no longer able to provide social and health services, so it decided to adopt a series of economically liberalising moves. In this context, civil society laws and organisations were amended, encouraging the creation and empowerment of civil society organisations that would 'assume some of these tasks' (Brumberg, 2003 p. 7) that the state was no longer assuming and that were needed to provide services to the people and contain social discontent. The political level of this measure, of course, relies in the fact that

this encouragement came hand in hand with making sure to retain ultimate control over these newly created social organisations.

Second, the partial reform of economy developed in such a way that the regime pushed for the development and expansion of the private sector at a time when the country was going through the economic crisis of the 1990s; with decreased oil-revenues and rising foreign debt. The strategy of the Jordanian regime was directed 'to the business community to encourage foreign investment'. Partial economic reforms have not solved the root causes of the economic crisis, they have just attracted 'some foreign and domestic investment' (Brumberg, 2003 p. 7) to contribute to expand this private sector that benefits the loyal business elite. This type of liberal economic strategy, as I will expand on in the following paragraphs, has had deep socio-economic implications.

The main socio-economic implication of partial economic liberalisation in Jordan, particularly since the 2000s, has been growing economic inequalities between the majority of the population and political and economic elites. The development of the capital city Amman illustrates the social effects of partial economic liberalisation, which are particularly relevant for social mobilisation in Jordan. When we talk about development, we tend to think about unequal development between the city and rural areas, at least about an unequal development between the capital city and the rest of the country. In Jordan, economic liberalisation has only benefited small, sparsely populated areas of West Amman, particularly the Areas of Abdoun or Dabouq, home for the political and economic elite of the country. Amman could be described as 'two

cities in one', where East Amman is home for social, economic, and politically marginalised clusters of society, and West Amman for the national political and business elite, as well as international aid workers, or immigrants that call themselves 'expats'.

West Amman has benefitted from major investment and infrastructure, including the best schools, hospitals, supermarkets, coffee shops, wide avenues, malls, and even some sidewalks and few green areas or parks. All of this creates a safe environment in which Jordanian elites and foreigners can live. East Amman, on the other hand, is a highly populated area, home for the Jordanian working class, or Palestinian refugee camps that have been absorbed by the city. In East Amman, streets are narrow —inside refugee camps extremely narrow, not wider than a metre—, unpaved, poorly lighted, in some areas with no appropriate sewage or electricity systems; you find the UNRWA schools and hospitals that increasingly struggle to provide services to the rapidly growing population of these neighbourhoods. Socio-economic conditions in East Amman, where increasing numbers of citizens, particularly youth, are unemployed or have precarious jobs, create frustrations that frequently result in violent and conflictive neighbourhoods.

So Amman is 'two cities', but it is also *one*. Being one city means that these realities sometimes overlap. These two cities meet when workers of East Amman commute to West Amman, or when youth that live in 'East' go to the 'West' to hang out on the clean and lit, almost conflict-free streets^{xxiv}. This physical access to the developed and richer areas of the city, does not mean full access to participate in that 'other' city, where tourists, foreign 'expats' (in

their majority with 'foreigner' salaries), and elites, enjoy a cup of coffee for 3 JOD (over 4\$). This urban reality reflects a class phenomenon in which the right to the city is unequal and lies in a few hands; 'it is the poor, the underprivileged and those marginalised from political power that suffer first and foremost from this process' (Harvey, 2003). These growing inequalities affect many aspects of society, from unequal opportunities to unequal development, which creates social marginalisation and disenfranchisement and frustrations in society. This psychological situation has, moreover, great implications for social mobilisation.

At the same time as economic liberalisation accelerated, political opening stagnated and remained a façade. This 'new political formula' (Kamrava, 1998a p. 138) has resulted in a system that does not challenge the authority of the regime, nor does it benefit the majority of the population. Already in 2004 some analysts pointed to the trend of Jordan having become a 'liberalised autocracy' after the 2003 parliamentary elections, a case 'in which initial political openings mark less an advancement toward democracy than the emergence of new hybrid forms of nondemocratic rule' (Ryan and Schwedler, 2004 p. 139). The aim of the Jordanian regime, as of the rest of liberalised autocracies in the region, has been to allow greater pluralism under control, through strategies such as partial reform of parliament and electoral systems, or partial inclusion and containment of Islamist and secular dissent.

Since 1989, Jordan has been putting forward several liberal moves that include the reform of parliament or the electoral system, including the controversial electoral law, 'to attract a modicum of legitimacy and popular support' (Brumberg, 2003 p. 8). Moreover, the Jordanian regime has partially

included a plurality of opposition groups, Islamists as well as the more secular left, by allowing them 'to enter parliament as independents or as a formal political party' (Brumberg, 2003 p. 9). Both strategies are perceived as ones of regime survival in face of the increasingly plural political landscape.

Despite this limited and superficial political liberalisation, the reform process has continued being a priority in the regime's discourse. Ministers have been given instructions to advance in political reform programs and commissions have been created to start the reform process towards the political liberalisation of the regime. Moreover, different top-down initiatives were put forward such as Jordan First in 2002, the National Agenda in 2005, and We Are All Jordan initiative in 2006, all of which had little impact on political and civil rights in the country (Hamid and Freer, 2011). This situation has resulted in a series of socio-political implications that are relevant to understand social mobilisation.

The first of these implications is political stagnation or the continuation of the status quo. No substantial political reform or opening results from these superficial political moves, that only serve to assure regime survival at two levels: first, presenting the regime in society as a regime that is concerned about reform and is taking steps towards liberalisation, and second, in terms of securing foreign aid from international donors that value or measure 'democraticness' through the (liberal) variables of elections, constitutional amendments, or legal reform, at the same time as they value the role of the Jordanian regime in maintaining security in the region or its role in the peace process. However, these moves do not have a positive impact on the wellbeing

of the majority of the population. The type of institutional political moves – elections, constitutional amendments, political parties law– are of concern to similarly institutionalised political actors in order to acquire political benefits.

Moreover, liberal democratic moves divert political debates away from issues of real concern for society. Instead of tackling issues such as freedom of expression and communication, prices of basic goods, minimum wages, working conditions, the quality and provision of social services, education, or the development of marginalised communities or of excluded social clusters, debates divert into electoral law, political parties law or parliamentary quotas, of interest for political and economic elites. Liberal democratic moves are increasingly distant from what people need and demand through social mobilisation.

Finally, this develops into a perception, among the majority, that politics and political institutions are, as Hassan bluntly expresses, a ‘joke’ (AI20-29.09.14). People become uninterested in politics and end up rejecting any type of participation in political life. This in turn is beneficial for the authoritarian regime, which can easily control a generally politically uninterested and overwhelmingly politically uneducated society. Moreover, when society rejects political participation, it becomes suspicious of any grassroots social movement that tries to take action, because they generally consider that anyone trying to promote political change will end up being absorbed by the system, and it would be difficult to give them their trust.

All of these socio-political implications of liberalised autocracies result in the 'aggravation of ideological conflicts' between 'groups [that] are torn by disputes pitting Marxists, liberal secularists, Arab nationalists, Islamists, tribes, or ethnic groups against one another' (Brumberg, 2003 p. 11). According to Brumberg, the worsening of ideological conflicts is 'a by-product of a system that inhibits the growth of political society (that is, an independent realm of political parties that can mobilize constituencies that have a stake in what their leaders say and do)' (2003 p. 11). This is a particularly relevant implication for the development of social mobilisation in Jordan.

A worsening economic situation at a grassroots, together with a stagnant political opening process, creates an unsustainable social, economic, and political situation characterised by increased social grievances, frustration, and political stagnation. In order to sustain this system, liberal autocracies use securitization policies and repression to contain social mobilisation and unrest. These moves are applied selectively, especially on those that do not belong to the system, or have been socially, economically, and politically excluded; among them, uninstitutionalized opposition and dissent groups. Liberal autocracies have developed legislative models that allow for this repression and control of dissidence. I will develop this legislative framework later in the article when I analyse regime response to social mobilisation since 2011.

Before 2011 uprisings, mobilization and opposition across the region had worked under extreme police-state measures for decades. State repression included large-scale attacks on attempts of organization, unionization, or protest, and included the control of media, intellectual criticism, electoral

manipulation, and cooptation techniques that curbed any type potential of opposition. This overarching dynamic applied to almost every country in the region, including Jordan, at the same time as the economic situation continued to worsen under neoliberal policies, namely in the form of increasing inequality and poverty.

In Jordan, securitisation moves are legitimised –for national and international audiences– by different episodes of instability at a regional level, especially since the 2000 *Intifada*. As Jillian Schwedler explains, ‘since the start of the second *intifada* in late September 2000, Jordan has witnessed its most extensive and violent demonstrations since April 1989’ (Schwedler, 2003 p. 18). Examples of other regional conflicts that followed are the conflict in neighbouring Iraq in 2003, the hotel bombings in Amman in 2005, or the victory of Hamas in the 2006 elections in the Palestinian Territories. The regime’s response has been to develop and strengthen the security elite –military and security apparatus– and resisting reform processes. Among the regime’s reactions to this regional instability before 2011 are the counter-terrorism law passed by the regime in September 2006 (2006), the political party law of April 2007 (2007a), or the NGO law of July 2008 (2008a). In words of Choucair:

‘Jordan’s history shows that threatening regional scenarios undermine the reform agenda by increasing the influence of security-oriented figures in the elite and undermining reformist voices’ (Choucair, 2006 p. 12).

Since the 2000s, social mobilisation in Jordan faced a double counter-strategy from the regime. Social grassroots organisations worked under extreme repressive police measures. At the same time, the Jordanian regime approached opposition with co-optation strategies, and already was 'beginning to master techniques for adopting forms of political reform (with various new campaigns, dialogues, and laws) while retreating in matters of substance' Brown (2006 p. 3). This overarching dynamic applied to almost every country in the region, particularly to other similarly developed regional systems of liberal autocracy such as Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco or Jordan. In Jordan, while the economic situation continued to worsen under neoliberal policies since mid-2000s, three lines of sustained social mobilisation became notable before 2011: labour, students, and political opposition. First, the day-waged labourers, who started organising around wage levels and social security demands, became the most significant movement in terms of representation and continuity. Second, among students, a movement named *thabahtunā* ('you slaughtered us') emerged in 2007 in reaction to the announcement by public universities of privatisation and increased tuition fees.

Third, political opposition started organising around demands against neoliberal policies and frozen political reforms, as well as around regional issues such as the peace process and its implications for the state's stance on Israel's policies, or US policies in Iraq, Sudan, Libya or Yemen. Among these constituencies, *Jayeen* (Coming Forward) brought together different leftist activists and put forth specific demands such as the dismissal of the prime minister in late 2010. Moreover it called for a stronger presence of the state in the country's economy.

Muqati'yūn min ajal al-taghyīr (Boycotting for Change) was another movement that brought different activists, mainly leftist political parties' members and objected the election law that was bound to frame the legislative elections of 2010. Other bodies and movements such as *al-hamlat al-waṭaniyya min ajal al-khobzwa-l-dimuqratiyya* (The National Campaign for Bread and Democracy) and *naqabiyūn min ajal al-'islāḥ* (Syndicates' Members for Reform) were other platforms that enabled activists to organise. Activists found in these constituencies an alternative to act given the weakness of traditional political parties that lacked dynamism to attract new members and to carry out an influential role in local politics. This was mainly done through state surveillance and oppression. On the other hand, these movements were less formal and offered alternative organisation methods as they were formed mainly from opposition figures, and influential activists that adhered to leftist parties and organisations.

2011 and the State's Instrumentalisation of Social Mobilisation

The year 2011 marked a new era in the history of the Arab region. In Jordan, I argue the regime was able to capitalise on social mobilisation during the initial period of intense social mobilisation before the appearance of the HSU in 2012, and that it was precisely the continuity perceived in the relationship between the state and opposition in Jordan, what drove young activists to organise under an independent, informal, un-institutionalised movement, the HSU. In this final analytical part to this chapter, I situate the

appearance of the HSU in time, both economically and politically, and describe the movement's appearance in the Jordanian and regional context.

In order to contextualise the appearance of the HSU, it is relevant to describe the socioeconomic situation that characterised Jordan in 2011. After the preceding decade of accelerated economic liberalisation and increasing reliance on foreign aid, the socioeconomic situation in Jordan was characterised by a decreased economic growth that continued since 2008, high rates of youth unemployment and an important relatively new problem of job creation for young university graduates, low wages and an unequal distribution of wages between job groups, high poverty rates and an ever-expanding informal employment sector. The data presented here draws mainly from the Jordanian Department of Statistics and should be considered as approximate, given that it does not take into account large numbers of non-passport holding residents of Palestinian and Iraqi descent, nor foreign guest workers.

As we have seen in the preceding pages, Jordan's economy has been centred on foreign aid and assistance, 'in all of its diverse regional and international forms' (KAS 2014 p. 15) since its creation, but particularly since 1989 and increasingly so since the 2000s. As we have seen, 'Jordan's relative economic success has been too dependent on financial transfers from abroad, including ODA, while its local economic base is structurally not yet very strong' (UNDAF 2017 p. 1). By the year 2011, Jordan had become heavily reliant 'on revenue generated from remittances and external aid' (UNDAF 2017 p. 2) and followed a strategy for development that focused on the development of human capital and a large public sector. This development strategy enabled, on one

hand, Jordan to export educated labour to the Gulf, contributing to its reliance on remittances, while not creating sufficient jobs to retain educated workers.

Economic liberalization in Jordan has meant that economic reforms that were undertaken in the years preceding 2011 focused on trade liberalization and privatization. In the case of Jordan, 'trade liberalisation was supposed to reduce the trade deficit, but it still reaches 25% of GDP, financed primarily by worker's remittances and foreign direct investment inflows according estimates by the Central Bank of Jordan' (UNDAF 2017 p. 2) and privatization has mainly affected the telecommunications, water, transport and manufacturing sectors. Overall, growth rates were strong up until the 2008 global economic and financial crisis in Jordan, and education and literacy rates had notably increased over the past decade. However, given this heavy reliance on foreign aid, the financial crisis of 2008 which went together with decreasing aid internationally, affected Jordan's economy to a great extent. 'Jordan's main partners in global trade and foreign assistance were steadily affected, both on the regional and international levels' (KAS 2014 p. 17), and this reduction in the availability of aid, together with the uprisings and movements in the region and internally, 'have altogether triggered the economic recession in Jordan since 2010' (KAS 2014 p. 23).

In 2011 it was clear in Jordan that the economic growth that the country had experienced did not translate into a sustained and stable trend of job creation that would meet the requirements of the increasing numbers of young graduates in the country. The challenges faced by Jordan in relation to the creation of employment opportunities had resulted in the country being reported

as 'one of the lowest labour force participation rates (LFPR) globally' (ILO 2013 p. 3). By 2011, as reported by the International Labour Organisation, 'the private sector had been largely ineffective in absorbing job seekers (especially women) –something that is reflected in the declining share of private sector employment relative to that in the public sector over the past decade' (2013 p. 4).

According to the data available from the Jordanian Department of Statistics (DoS) and Jordan's National Employment Strategy 2011-2020, employment, particularly among youth, is an issue of central concern. According to the National Employment Strategy for the period 2011-2020, along with macroeconomic stability, the government should make employment its central economic policy. By 2011, a new issue of major concern in Jordan in relation to employment was the increasingly educated youth in Jordan, which would eventually seek to enter the job market, for which the country was not prepared and trend that would suppose a challenge for the economy.

According to national statistics, in 2010 Jordan had a working age population of almost 3.5 million people, which at the time was a substantial segment of the population (around 6 million people) and a result of the high percentage of youth. The challenge in 2010 was that, from those 3.5 million people, less than 1.5 million were economically active and more than 2 million were inactive, meaning that they were not actively searching for work. In 2010 the National Employment Strategy estimated that the working age population would increase from 3.4 million in 2009 to 4.4 million in 2020 and to 6 million in 2030 due to what they refer to as the 'gift' of having a very young population, therefore, 'unless enough jobs can be created for Jordanians, the "gift" can turn

into a “curse,” subjecting the country to economic, social, and political pressure’ (2010 p. 6).

This report also took Jordan’s working age population compared it with that of other countries in the region to find that, first, economic participation rate among males in Jordan was only 65%, which was low compared to other countries in the region such as Syria (88%), Morocco (85%), Tunisia (79%) or Egypt (76%). Furthermore, economic participation rate among females in Jordan was only 15%, notably low in comparison with other countries such as Syria (38%), Morocco (30%), Tunisia (31%) or Egypt (24%). In 2010, the National Employment Strategy argued that ‘this reality of an almost 60 percent inactive working age population suggests that the high rate of unemployment in Jordan is structural’ (2010 p. 7), and therefore called for developing an employment strategy that would address the situation of employment in the country in light of the predictions of increase in the working age population.

The same report points to the demographic characteristics of employed and unemployed in Jordan in 2010. First, out of the 1.2 million working Jordanians, the National Employment Strategy establishes that 84% are male and 61% have a high school education or below (2010 p. 10). According to the report, the proportion of workers with university degrees had steadily risen from 17.6% in 2000 to 23.7% in 2009, however this increase was not enough to meet the supply of Jordanians graduating from university and seeking to enter the job market. Furthermore, the report establishes that in 2010, employment was mainly in the following sectors in Jordan: public administration and defence

(25.6%), education (15.3%), manufacturing (13.8%), retail (13.5%), transport (11.2%), construction (8.8%) (2010 p. 10).

Second, the report presents the demographic characteristics of unemployed in Jordan (2010 p. 13). According to national statistics, the first notable characteristic of the unemployed in Jordan was that they were overwhelmingly young, with 49% being younger than 25, 72% below the age of 30, and 89% of unemployed being younger than 40 years old. The second characteristic of unemployment in Jordan was the fact that unemployment had risen in the preceding years among university graduates, phenomenon that was relatively new in Jordan. According to the report, this new trend in unemployment in Jordan was worrying given the 'growing mismatch between the output of educational systems and market demand, with the proportion of university graduates doubling among the unemployed between 2000 and 2010' (2010 p. 14). Finally, increasing unemployment in Jordan results in an informal employment that continues to account for a sizeable share of the labour force (approximately 44%) (ILO 2013 p. 4).

Important to understand the socioeconomic situation in Jordan in 2011 is the structure and distribution of wages among employed Jordanians. According to data presented in the National Employment Strategy, in 2009 the average wage in Jordan was JD 365 per month, and the distribution of wages reflected a very wide base of low wages, with the majority of workers making less than JD 300 per month (2010 p. 17). According to this report, wage distribution ranged in Jordan from an average of JD 1,136 for law makers and managers to an average of JD 232 for those in elementary occupations (e.g., drivers,

deliverymen, etc.). However, this distribution was unequal as, with the exception of law makers and managers, the majority of job groups make less than JD 300 per month, including technical and associate professionals, clerical workers, workers in crafts and related occupations, machine assemblers and operators, and the elementary occupations mentioned before (2010 p. 17).

This unequal distribution of wages results in a substantial proportion of Jordanians are classified as “working poor”. In Jordan, according to the National Employment Strategy, a minimum wage of JD 150 puts a family of four below the poverty line, and a family of six (two parents and four children) would need two minimum wage earners to barely reach the poverty line (2010 p. 19). Given the fact that 68% of working males earn less than JD 200 per month, a substantive sector of society is classified as “working poor”. Furthermore, the data presented in the report by the National Employment Strategy is the most recent data available for poverty in Jordan and dates back to 2010. These numbers therefore do not take into account the more recent socio-economic developments affected by the influence of Syrian and Iraqi refugees in Jordan since 2010, which have arguably continued worsening the socio-economic situation in Jordan since 2011.

The effects of youth unemployment on political marginalisation have been analysed by Ann-Helén Bay and Morten Blekesaunen in ‘Youth, Unemployment and Political Marginalisation’ (2002). In this work, the authors analyse three aspects of political marginalisation –political confidence, political interest and political extremism– and find that unemployed and socio-economically marginalised youth in a society express less confidence in the

effectiveness and representativeness of established political processes, and tent to support more frequently revolutionary political ideas (2002 p. 132).

Furthermore, in order to contextualise the appearance and activities of the HSU, it is important to describe the political context and the different political parties and groups therein. In this period, the context of various opposition groups in Jordan can be classified into official opposition and alternative opposition (Bustani, 2011a). First, official opposition groups in Jordan are those legal opposition parties and professional associations expressing 'weak reformist goals that constitute a continuation of its failed course since martial law ended in Jordan in 1989'. One of my interviewees, Omar, activist and writer in his late thirties, meets me in a new small family-run coffee shop in what has become during the last years the hip neighbourhood in Amman, Jabal Lweibdeh. He had started working together with other activists of the movement on trying to reintroduce strategy back into the political movements in Jordan through the initiative *Masār Taḥarrurī*. During our interview, Omar explains that the official opposition in Jordan is formed by: Islamists, including the Muslim Brotherhood and its political wing the Islamic Action Front (IAF); Nationalists, including the two *Ba'ṯh* parties, connected to the Iraqi and the Syrian factions; and the traditional Left, including the Jordanian Communist Party, the Popular Unity Part, or the People's Democratic Party. This official opposition has been consistently criticised since 1989 for their absorption into the regime structure and their inability to bring about substantive political and social change (AI01-31.07.13).

Second, the alternative opposition, as Hisham Bustani names it, present themselves as the option capable of filling the political void. Its main characteristics are: an “East Bank Jordanian” isolationist character; it bases itself on a post-colonial identity that does not enjoy internal consensus; it resonates with the political authority’s identity propaganda “Jordan First” and “We are all Jordan”, which are regime led campaigns to build a “Jordanian national identity”; and has close ties to the “old guard”.^{xxv} This is one of the two competing factions in the regime that has been marginalised since King Abdullah II’s ascent to the throne (Bustani, 2011a)^{xxvi}. These groups of the alternative opposition (except for the National Progressive Current, the National Committee of Military Veterans, and the Nationalists’ Progressive Current) have tried to organise and managed to form the Movement of the Jordanian People (*Al-Hirāk Al-Sha’bī Al-’Urdunī*) in September 2011, and all of them took part in the Jordanian Campaign for Change *Jayeen*. Omar continues explaining throughout our interview that the alternative opposition is seen as ‘the regime’s answer to those groups who are frustrated with the classical parties who came out and wanted to have a voice during the late 2006, 2007, 2008, when this neo-liberal economics really kicked-in in Jordan and the social manifestations started to appear’ and ‘the social arm of the old guard in a way, the political social progressive arm’ (AI01-31.07.13).

The revolutionary mobilisations in the region ignited the Jordanian opposition in all its shapes and forms, and its structure along with the state on the other side had shaped the course of organisation, protest, and mobilisation for the following two years. Ben Ali’s escape from Tunisia on Friday, January 14th, had found a charged environment in Jordan as in many other countries.

One week before that, the weekly Friday marches started in Dhiban, a remote village to the south of the Capital Amman on January 7th. Since then, many following Fridays had witnessed larger protests in the capital and in many other localities.^{xxvii}

These protests were generally spontaneous outpourings of anger. The Jordanian regime reacted quickly to social demands and popular protest movements during the Arab Spring. However, this response was seen by some as a way to buy time since the implementation of proposed reforms was being constantly delayed as a result of the perception that protests had not mobilized a critical mass (2012n).

In February 2011, a new movement named *mubadarat al-malikiya al-dusturiya* (The Initiative for Constitutional Monarchy) emerged with demands to limit the monarch's unlimited authority, and which would restore the balance of power to a situation that guarantees popular representation in governance. The Muslim Brotherhood (MB) denounced this initiative; stating from the very beginning that it aimed for reforms that respect the "Jordanian specificity" (2012m p. 11) as they often referred to it. Everyone realised the new political atmosphere that Jordan and its neighbours had entered and reacted to the MB's attempt by establishing the General Student Federation, a large left coalition that came together to classify the MB's move as an example of solidarity towards the regime and as an attempt at marginalising other active and grassroots forces within the campuses and society at large.^{xxviii}

Despite the fact that political parties had officially formed an opposition parties' coalition that brought together the MB and the major five left political parties, existing ideological polarisation in movements within universities and syndicates, as well as among campaign based movements, continued on the ground until the events of the 24th March 2011.^{xxix} The protests on March 24th marked a shift in the history of Jordanian protest groups. As we mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, during these protests polarisation between groups of young activists seemed to diffuse and collective action started being put into practice.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have analysed the way in which the relationship between the Jordanian regime and social movements has been constructed historically. I have argued here that the counter-strategies put forward by the regime towards social movements today, and in particular towards the HSU, should be understood as a result of decades of careful management of opposition. In order to argue this, I have divided the history of Jordan into distinct analytical periods that are marked by episodes of conflict between the state and society. I consider the Jordanian regime has built different strategies in response to the different threats it has faced. As we will see in further chapters, the strategic management of the HSU responds to a careful combination between repression and concession that can be understood through the exploration of these

historical events which provide insight into the articulation of both repressive and conciliatory strategies in time.

Chapter 4 Mapping *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement): Grievances, Aims, Structure and Ideology

This chapter analyses the form that dissent takes in the HSU and the different constituencies and activists therein. The aim is to explore the structure of the movement, its degree of institutionalisation and its internal organisation. Moreover, the aim is to present the activists that take part in the movement and how they construct the movement's ideology. This chapter argues that this movement is an informal, uninstitutionalized, horizontal, network-like organization. Furthermore, it argues that this movement mobilizes the concept of 'youth' and coalesces multiple ideologies. Overall, this movement contributes to re-defining what dissent looks like in Jordan today.

In order to argue this, I first establish the HSU as my analytical object of inquiry. This is done by first defining it as a social movement and then presenting its grievances and aims. I go on to provide a demographic characterisation of the activists involved, outlining their age, ethnicity, gender, and class. Thirdly, the analysis turns towards the movement's internal organisation and mobilising structure. This is followed by an analysis of the main challenges encountered by movement activists in terms of organisation. Finally, I will analyse the main ideological characteristics of the movement, and its internal radical-reformist ideological variation.

Nature of the subject of inquiry

The literature on social movements provides different definitions of this object of inquiry. I will now categorise the HSU in light of the definition provided by PPT. This theoretical framework defines a social movement as:

‘A sustained series of interactions between national powerholders and persons successfully claiming to speak on behalf of a constituency lacking formal representation, in the course of which those persons make publicly-visible demands for changes in the distribution or exercise of power, and back those demands with public demonstrations of support’ (Tilly, 1979 p. 12).

In light of this definition of social movements provided by PPT, I will now define the HSU as my analytical object of inquiry. The HSU^{xxx}, formally established in 2012, is representative of a broader new regional trend of youth-led, youth-organised, informal, uninstitutionalized, horizontal, network-like organisation whose existence redefines the look of dissent in Jordan today. Political mobilisation among several HSU activists predated their formal organisation; particularly as a result of the 2011 Arab Spring.

The HSU emerged out of a context of broader social movements; some of these have existed since the 1950s while others appeared following the aforementioned political opening of 2008. As outlined in the preceding chapter, some of these movements have retained their capacity while others have disappeared or amalgamated^{xxxi}. The consolidated, if disparate, effort of these

social movements seeking political, economic and social change in Jordan is popularly referred to as *Al-Hirāk*. The HSU has emerged as a self-cognisant impetus for youth mobilisation of social change.

The movement was created and is organised by young people that, as Seraj explained to me during his interview, found it necessary to formulate 'a social, youth, political frame which talks about us' (AI04-04.09.13), a model that Suleyman adds is necessarily 'outside any traditional frame' (AI06-05.09.13). Activists in the movement claim to speak on behalf of that part of the youth remaining without channels for official political representation. Jordan's current electoral law precludes Parliamentary membership for citizens under thirty. Beyond this political role, HSU seeks to cater to a constituency of socio-economically depressed youth. It also has a natural affinity for other social clusters with socio-economic grievances. The high proportion of young Jordanians, a trend reflected in the region, could be approached by the state as potential engines for future development. However as Khalaf and Saad Khalaf (2011a) have noted, this demographic group is often stigmatised and fearfully perceived as disruptive, parasitic forces owing to their socio-economic and political marginalisation. However, at the same time they are stigmatised and feared as disruptive, parasitic forces, so they have tended to be marginalised from political, economic and social participation.

Since the beginning of its activities, this movement has sustained public demonstrations of their political, economic and social demands that have been mainly directed towards the Jordanian regime. Movement activists agree on identifying the main socio-economic and political grievances and aims, even if,

as we will see in the following chapters, there is a variation in their preferred way of achieving these collective aims. For movement activists such as Khaled, socio-economic and political grievances are 'of equal importance' (AI02-24.08.13).



Image 1. Photograph of one of the signs used during a protest on the 14th November 2012. The sign reads: 'Bread, Freedom, Social Justice'.

Social grievances that motivate activists of the movement to engage in collective action are related to social injustice, lack of opportunities, and freedom deficit. Khaled asserts that their motivation to act and get involved in this uprising in Jordan is primarily social, seeing that 'there is a clear social injustice' (AI02-24.08.13) affecting the country as a whole, resulting in a shared feeling of hopelessness, where the majority of them face a life in which, in words of Hassan, 'there is no opportunity to do anything' (AI20-29.09.14). This feeling of social injustice and lack of opportunity is closely linked in their

interviews to a shared feeling of, as Suleyman puts it, having 'to fight for any right that has been stolen' (AI06-05.09.13). All the activists of the movement that have been interviewed or observed for this project express the feeling of having a duty to demand social justice that will result from political and economic change. The words of Suleyman clearly express this:

'There is injustice, the freedoms have been stolen, the amount of corruption that you see and feel in the country. So it was my duty as a citizen to exercise my right to demand justice, freedom, political and economic reforms; these were the main reasons for me to join' (AI06-05.09.13).

Activists of the movement such as Khaled identify this social situation of injustice 'with the capitalist economy and it is related to the tyrannical authority in this country' (AI02-24.08.13). Activists highlight the importance of the regime's liberal autocratic model as a source of their recent social mobilisation. The socio-economic problems identified are explained in relation to the country's dependency, privatization, and its social effects, particularly in terms of inequality. In words of Khaled:

'The economic problem is related to the economic system that the regime promotes in the country. An economic system that is dependent on foreign aid and the privatization and selling of national companies. This caused the economic liberalization that impoverishes the Jordanian society. This has a reflection in social classes where the rich become richer and the poor become poorer' (AI02-24.08.13).



Image 2. Photograph of an activist of the HSU during a protest on the 31st May 2012 carrying a sign against privatization. On the left, a map of Jordan with the word 'Sold' written over it. To the right, the sign a list of Jordanian companies that have been privatised. This list reads as follows: 'The Phosphate company, the Potash company, the Jordanian Communication, the Jordanian Cement company, the Dead Sea beaches, and Aqaba beaches, the port of Aqaba, the Jordanian industrial city'.

Sara, an activist of the movement in her mid-twenties, was born and raised in Amman and currently works in Advertising. Sara is currently one of the organising members of *l'tihaad Al-Shabab Al-Dimuqrati* (Union of Democratic Youth), and member of the Palestinian Youth Movement since 2007. We meet in Jabal Lweibdeh for a coffee on a Friday afternoon in September 2013. Sara explains that:

'Mainly it is the economic system, it is the privatisation that we fight so much against, the capitalist economic system in Jordan, you know

Jordan is not an independent country, it is a dependent country, so the loans of the country, the increasing prices all the time, everything going on the people basically' (AI13-13.09.13).

Second, Sara considers that although 'the economy is what has spread a lot of this' (AI13-13.09.13), since it is what affects society and creates social grievances on a daily basis, people got interested in politics once they realised that the economic situation was linked to the political system. As explained by Ibrahim, 'that connection, once it was made, it could not be separated' (AI23-04.11.14). Ibrahim is a Jordanian activist and blogger with whom I met in early November 2014 in Second Cup coffee shop in Abdoun, Amman. Ibrahim is married and has a son. Due to his brave publications in 2011 and his work for controversial media platform 7iber, he decided to leave Jordan for a year with his family, before coming back in 2013.

Political issues of concern for activists of the movement are, in words of Khaled, 'related to the formation of governments, decision-making process, the lack of freedom, in general' (AI02-24.08.13), highlighting the authoritarian nature of the regime. As Seraj explained during an interview carried out for this project, 'the problem is with the regime' (AI04-04.09.13), to which Ahmad adds that 'we are not even able to have a parliamentary government, it is still appointed by His Majesty' (AI12-13.09.13). Ahmad is an Engineering graduate and activist in his early twenties who has been part of several initiatives within the wider youth movement including the Jordanian Youth Parliament, *Le Café Politique* or *Insan*. At the time of our interview over a coffee in Jabal Lweibdeh he worked in the private sector and continued studying a Masters in Business

Administration. He was part of the organising committee of the initiative *Samsam*, an initiative that started with the aim of addressing issues of diversity and ideological differences between political groups in order to create a national frame that could improve the dialogue between them. In line with the authoritarian nature of the regime, the movement has mobilised against the imprisonment of political opposition.



Image 3. Photograph of a sign used by HSU activists during their protest on the 5th October 2012 that reads: 'The People are the source of authority'.



Image 4. Photograph of a sign used by HSU activists during their protest on the 19th October 2012 that reads: 'Freedom for Prisoners of Conscience'.

As well as agreeing on the main problems, activists unite around their main collective aims. In the words of Seraj, Sara or Suleyman, their aims include 'social equality' (AI04-04.09.13) and mobilising to change 'the economic situation' (AI13-13.09.13) and to build 'a country that is free and has its own choice and fights for its decisions' (AI06-05.09.13). Activists of the movement recurrently formulated a long term vision best expressed by Seraj as the need 'to uphold a civil power among civilians, in favour of the state of law, the civil state, [and] for social justice' (AI04-04.09.13). Sara explains that overall they claim to mobilise for 'anyone who is oppressed right now' (AI13-13.09.13), and Seraj adds that this is so in order 'to support the social powers in Jordan and working to find links between these groups, to achieve a real overarching change' (AI04-04.09.13). Khaled explained that his goal was:

'Changing the situation and seeing Jordan become a national state, in my definition of national state, that Jordan becomes disassociated from the West, related to the foreign aid from the International Monetary Fund

(IMF) and the World Bank. All the economic issues related to Israel, all of these issues make the country dependent on the imperialist power' (AI02-24.08.13).

The defining political characteristics of the HSU are that it is uniquely constricted to the national level. It also distinguishes itself from fellow opposition movements in the sense that it retains organisational and ideological independence. Seraj and Khaled, in their interviews explain that, at its heart, the movement focuses on important 'local' (AI04-04.09.13) and mainly 'national issues' (AI02-24.08.13), even if these can overlap with other regional and global issues. In his interview, Khaled acknowledged the important influence of regional and global issues at a national level, and explain that 'you cannot separate them practically, this is so hard' (AI02-24.08.13). This unique domestic focus allows HSU activists to claim that they are reintroducing submerged national socio-economic and political concerns.

As explained by Khaled during his interview, political parties and institutionalised organisations in Jordan 'are working for issues that are supra-national, above the nation' (AI02-24.08.13). As a result of the focus on the Palestinian cause, the occupation of Iraq or the Islamist *Umma*, Khaled explains that 'the situation in Jordan was, to a certain extent, overlooked' (AI02-24.08.13). Because of the movement's national focus, Suleyman explains that they do not have organisational links with other youth movements in the region, and that the relationship with them is based on specific expressions of solidarity and support. We do 'not have any links at all with other movements outside Jordan. There are solidarity links with, for example, the Egyptian revolution, with

the 6th April Youth Movement. Maybe one time the 6th April Youth Movement expressed solidarity with us' (AI06-05.09.13).

As well as having a national focus, the HSU is politically characterised as being an alternative way to do politics in Jordan that breaks with traditional forms of political participation, such as political parties. In the words of Omar, the movement is mobilised around a shared feeling among activists of being 'fed up with classical parties, fed up with ideologies' (AI01-31.07.13) which conform to the political context in the country. As expressed by all of my interviewees, and in the words of Ahmad, their political participation through 'social activism is a new way, separated from the parties' way' (AI12-13.09.13). This break with institutionalised politics is explained by Sara in terms of the stagnation of political parties and their inability to adapt to a changing socio-economic and political reality in the region and in Jordan. She considers that 'some political parties are stuck in the 1970s, and it is hard for them to move and to understand what is changing; to give the change to younger generations is hard [sic]' (AI13-13.09.13). Others explained this break with traditional political actors and political parties as they are part of the structure, and part of the system that they intend to challenge and transform. In the words of Ahmad, for movement activists, collective and direct action is the only type of political participation possible (AI12-13.09.13).

In terms of overall support for the movement, there are no definite numbers available, and even the number of participants in each constituency is generally not known by the interviewees. However, data can be presented to provide a picture of the national support of the movement. First, numbers on the

national support can be presented from weekly protest data based on participatory observation, and data from the popular uprising of November 2012. Weekly street protests were attended by a variety of followers, from small protests of around 100 participants, to protests of thousands of participants. This variation has normally depended on the theme of the protest. In November 2012 *Habat Tishrīn*, which Omar explains was the only recognizable popular uprising in Jordan until today (A101-31.07.13), attracted around 15,000 people onto the streets. Although many activists of the movement refer to this event as one that demonstrated popular support for their movement, this protest could equally be construed as a truly popular uprising, independent of any form of collective organisation and from the HSU.

Second, data on the support for the movement can be found on social media, which have become the main mean of communication of the movement. The Facebook page of the movement, *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī – Al-Ṣafḥa Al-Jdīda* (The Jordanian Youth Movement, new journal)^{xxxii} has over 33,000 *likers*, and where the Twitter page, *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī* (Jordanian Youth)^{xxxiii}, has just over 800 *followers*. I have to acknowledge at this point the limits to the validity of these numbers on the aforementioned examples of social media. Although these two pages try to bring together activists into a shared platform, the reality on social media is far more complex. Fragmentation of constituencies inside the movement is clearly graspable when one looks at the proliferation of Facebook groups and pages that are formed by movement constituencies in different localities^{xxxiv}. However, we can take these numbers to create a general picture of support for the movement, as long as we are aware of this point.

In sum, the HSU is a social movement because it brings together individual activists under a social organisation that claims to speak in the name of youth that lacks formal representation and is socio-economically marginalised. Moreover, this movement has sustained demands directed towards the Jordanian regime and has managed to mobilise social, economic, and political grievances to publicly demand a change in the distribution of power in the country.

Demographic characteristics of movement activists

After presenting the HSU as my analytical subject of inquiry, and as a social movement in light of the definition of social movement provided by the PPT framework, I will now turn to building an empirical mapping of the movement by first providing a demographic picture of movement activists along age, ethnicity, gender, and class. Seraj and Amin explain that the HSU acts as an organisational umbrella for 'every young Jordanian' (AI04-04.09.13) that 'agrees with our ideology' (AI08-08.09.13), 'without differentiating religion or ethnicity' (AI04-04.09.13). Amin, unemployed activist in his late teens who is part of the group *Ahrar Azme Amman li-l-Tagheer* (Freedom for Change in Amman) and who has not participated in any other political organisation, meets me at the Jordanian Writers' Association in Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman. Born and raised in Al-Zarqa Palestinian refugee camp, he currently lives in Abu Nser, Amman.

The fact that the movement is an organisational umbrella for young Jordanian of different ideologies has resulted to a certain extent in what Omar calls '*samak-laban-tamer hindi*' (AI01-31.07.13) (literally 'fish, yogurt and tamarind' in the sense of a hotchpotch), meaning a movement that is formed of very different individual activists. As explained by Ahmad during our interview, 'in this generation we are like a flower from each garden' (AI12-13.09.13), and, as we will analyse in this demographic characterisation of movement activists, this movement reflects this social reality.

The movement brings together both young individuals that used to be involved in political parties or other forms of participation who stopped believing in the effectiveness of this type of institutionalized participation in Jordan such as Seraj (AI04-04.09.13), and individuals that were never involved in any type of political activity before such as Amin (AI08-08.09.13). Moreover, many participants in the HSU express solidarity with other youth movements in the region, and many of them participate in parallel with the Palestinian Youth Movement, which has a transnational character (Salih et al., 2016).

The HSU presents itself in society and among other movements as a youth movement; *ṣhabābī* in Arabic translates into English as 'of youth'. In the words of Ahmad: 'it is a generation. We are looking at the country from another point of view' (AI12-13.09.13). Youth is about age, an age group or a generation, as the majority of its participants are aged below 30. Jordan is not an exception to the youth bulge that characterises the Arab region (Assad and Roudi-Fahimi, 2009 p. 1), over 75% of the Jordanian population is younger than 30 years old, and citizens aged between 15-30 years constitute over 30% of the

total population (2011b). The movement presents itself as being representative of this social group.

However, it is important to disentangle further the concept of youth and its relevance as a descriptive category. Youth is also more than age. As Ted Swedenburg asserts, youth should be better understood as a ‘socially and culturally determined category’ (2007). Youth is a complex social category which I suggest is associated with a period of life transition during which individuals shared social grievances or the feeling of belonging to a social group. Youth is about transitioning from childhood to adulthood, with all the repercussions this entails politically, economically, and socially. In the Arab world, ‘people well into their thirties may find themselves in the life stage defined as “youth,” usually meaning that they are unmarried (and not by choice), marginally employed and in a position of some dependence on parents or other elders’ (Medani, 2013). This conceptualisation of youth as a social category is important to understand the role of youth movements in the Middle East and the centrality of their claims for ‘youthfulness’, which Bayat defines as:

‘a particular habitus, behavioral and cognitive dispositions that are associated with the fact of being “young”—that is, a distinct social location between childhood and adulthood, where the youngster experiences “relative autonomy” and is neither totally dependent (on adults) nor independent, and is free from responsibility for other dependents’ (2010 p. 28).

Shared grievances create solidarity between young people which derives from a lack of economic independence, and from a feeling of social and political exclusion from the centres of power. Young people have not yet become socially independent from the older generations as they still largely influence their decisions, and they feel excluded from political decision-making processes. In the words of Naseem Tarawneh, a Jordanian activist blogger, 'youth should not be treated like some special subset to be catered to or ignored. When you represent 60% of a population you *are* the population' (Tarawneh, 2011a). Moreover, in Jordan and in other Arab countries, youth face situations in which cultural scripts, messages, and codes of various agencies of socialization are often inconsistent with their ideas and the youth social movements of the Arab Spring 'reveal the genesis of a new generation sparked by the desire for civil liberties, advocacy for human rights, and participatory democracy' (Khalaf and Saad Khalaf, 2011a p. 9).

Ethnically, the movement includes citizens of Palestinian origin as well as Transjordanian citizens. To talk about ethnicity in Jordan means to refer back to the historical construction of ethnic divisions through an identity politics strategy put forward by the regime and through warfare and refugee construction in neighbouring countries (2012n, Anderson, 2005, Brand, 1995, Taylor, 1982). Transjordanian identity finds its roots in the *'ashira* (large clan or tribe), which works as a base of affiliation and source of prestige and patronage. This community is constituted by tribes or clans that belong to the land that now forms the modern state of Jordan, making them what is popularly referred to as *'urdunī-urdunī'* ('Jordanian-Jordanian', meaning 'original' Jordanian). This origin has been a discursive legitimiser of their position as first-class citizens *vis-à-vis*

the state. On the other hand, Palestinian-Jordanians, or Jordanians of Palestinian origin, base their communal identity on an 'attachment to the village or town of origin, a sense of loss of homeland and of gross injustice at the hands of the international community, and the centrality of the notion of return' (Brand, 1995 pp. 48-49).

Understanding this historical ethnic composition of society and the way in which the regime has tried to politically fragment ethnicities helps us to understand that the HSU contradicts this ethnic historical division by strategising frames in a way that challenges the state's identity politics, as we will analyse in detail in the following chapter on social movement strategies. The struggle of youth in Jordan is a struggle of Jordanians of Palestinian origin as well as Transjordanians. Palestinian-Jordanians have refrained from any type of political participation since the Black September civil war in the 1970s. However, the participation of young Palestinian-Jordanians in the HSU points to both a renewed Palestinian political consciousness and further underlines the movement's unorthodox approach to national politics.

Moreover, Palestinian-Jordanian youth mobilisation is occurring in tandem with a newly politicised Transjordanian youth; a community that has traditionally been considered a loyal base of the regime. This again serves to underline the shifting political role of younger tribal generations in Jordan which, in the words of a Transjordanian blogger, are 'a more pragmatic, decently-educated segment of youth that (in many cases) has formed a layer beneath the advertised surface (i.e. the [elder tribal] "dinosaurs")' (Tarawneh, 2014). Contrasting with this predominant idea of the tribal communities in Jordan,

Ibrahim explains that activists of the movement that are ethnically Transjordanian, are 'young, fresh graduates, unemployed, in Tafileh, in Ma'an, [who] regardless of their ideological ties, they are economically disenfranchised, economically alienated, they are not as adherent to tribal politics as their elders are' (AI23-04.11.14).

This movement therefore challenges traditional frames of ethnic and religious understandings of social and political subjectivities in Jordan. Multiple identities have been deployed historically in the country, and reinforced through different episodes of conflict (2012n). Traditional political opposition parties and movements, including their 'child' youth movements, are still working within these ethnic and religious frames (Jordanian-Jordanian, Palestinian-Jordanian, Islamist, tribal and others), however the HSU is trying to challenge these traditional frames by mobilising a different discourse that favours ethnic, identitarian and religious unity instead of fragmentation. They do so by mobilising socio-economic grievances and issues of class division and inequality that affect the majority of Jordanian citizens, which have been socially, economically, and politically excluded. This process of exclusion has been particularly noticeable and accentuated since the beginning of the 2000s and the realignment of political loyalties with the beginning of an accelerated economic liberalisation in the country. Mustapha, an activist and researcher at the University of Jordan, explained that this reflects how Jordanian youth mobilise in a way that contradicts the ethnic Jordanian-Palestinian divide which they consider the result of strategic exploitation of identity politics by the regime (AI14-15.09.13). At the time of our interview, Mustapha was starting to work together with other activists, among them Omar, in the initiative *Masar*

Taharruri, a small group which tried to engage other activists with concepts that they considered foundational to any political movement.

Activists that participate in the movement are in their majority male. Women form a notable minority among the activists that participate in it and, as Isra explained during her interview, 'we are only around 5%' (AI11-10.09.13). Isra is an activist in her mid-40s and is part of the group *Ahrar Azme Amman li-I-Tagheer* (Freedom for Change in Amman), but states that her opinions do not represent the group as a whole given the ideological differences between individuals within the group. Isra has been married for over twenty years and is currently a housewife, mother of three. Some female activists of the movement such as Sara refer to the 'cultural limits' for women's activism and the need to 'really understand and respect the culture we are in and work within this space and try to develop on it' (AI13-13.09.13). In a similar way to the findings of the analysis conducted by Ghada Barsoum in 2010 in Egypt, in Jordan 'young females confine their economic and non-economic activities to the private domain of the household' (UNICEF, 2011 p. 30).

Moreover, in their interviews and everyday meetings, the majority of male and female activists of the movement express their rejection of including gender-specific demands towards the social and political empowerment of women, which some of them like Sara considered 'western thoughts' (AI13-13.09.13) and others such as Kareem, a 20-year old Ammani activist, who was not part of any particular group within HSU, and considered himself an independent activist in the movement, critiqued as 'liberal' (AI17-22.09.13). In general, the movement does not specifically address women's issues in their

demands. Activists such as Khaled argue that since they seek whole political and socio-economic change, any improvements for the whole would necessarily improve women's fortunes (AI02-24.08.13). This absence of gender-specific demands reproduces the trend of gender-inclusive political and institutional reform in other organisations in Jordan, as in the Day-Waged Labour Movement (DWLM) analysed by Sara Ababneh, where women became 'embedded within communities and prioritised their economic needs' (2016 p. 87).

Throughout the interviews and participant observation carried out to gather data on movement activists I have found class to be an important variable of self-identification. Activists in the youth movement belong to a working class, mainly from disenfranchised urban areas but also from middle-income urban neighbourhoods and marginalised rural localities. Young activists such as Kareem try to make a living by undertaking precarious jobs, frequently multiple jobs at a time (AI17-22.09.13), that generally do not allow them to become economically independent. This applies to youth from poorer working classes as well as to youth of middle-income areas, although there is a notable difference related to the dependency their families have on them economically. Tobin has analysed the middle and working classes in Jordan, especially in Amman, arguing that the 'heightened notion of middle-class status and "aspiring cosmopolitanism" provides a new significant form of social organisation in Amman'. This reorients the population 'away from political reform' and serves as 'a means to reinforce the status-quo' (2012 p. 96). In this situation, activists in the HSU, particularly those from middle-class, are confronting their families and environment, as well as risking their work places because, as Sara explains, 'not everyone is so accepting, it depends on your surroundings,

working in this country is pretty hard, you actually need to sacrifice' (AI13-13.09.13).

In sum, the HSU is a movement that serves as an organisational umbrella that brings together young people with shared socio-economic and political grievances and aims. Moreover, as we have explored, the movement is demographically diverse in terms of ethnicity, with Palestinian-Jordanian and Transjordanian young activists participating together. Furthermore, demographic diversity is present in the movement in terms of religion –Muslims, Christians, and atheists–, and class, as well as in terms of gender, although activists are primarily male.

Mobilising structure and organisation of *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement)

Having provided a demographic characterisation of activists in the movement, I will now turn the focus to the movement's mobilising structure and organisation. In order to build this analysis, I first map constituencies in the movement, and then explore the movement's internal leadership, participation, and membership. The HSU is formed of diverse constituencies, including individuals, groups or unions, that are loosely organised as an informal network.

Locating the movement is challenging because of the fluidity of its extremely volatile constituencies. Constituencies frequently disappear, reappear, merge, or change name^{xxxv}. During 2011, from the 24th March sit-in

until the movement was established at a national level in 2012, activists used the pre-existing social networks and connections at the level of localities, towns or neighbourhoods to start organising. Suleyman explains that these networks were based on family and friendship ties, and are crucial to understand that ‘the beginning was in our cities because our city has tribes and networks’ (AI06-05.09.13). Pre-existing social networks provided activists a safe base to start organising themselves in 2011 after the traumatic experience of the 24th March sit-in. Suleyman adds that, at that time, social networks built on friendship, family, or tribal relations provided security and trust to activists (AI06-05.09.13).

When the HSU was constituted in 2012 however, it grouped all the local organisational efforts under a national movement that extended to ‘every street, every neighbourhood, every lane, every house’^{xxxvi}. Its main activities and the majority of participants are situated in the capital city Amman, and other smaller constituencies are located outside the capital in governorates such as Madaba, Zarqa, Irbid, Ma’an, Kerak, Tafileh or Aqaba. The pre-existing social network that initially served as an important organisational base, continued playing a major role in the nation-wide network, linking all these small local constituencies together and providing a sense of security in face of challenges posed by the regime, particularly in terms of infiltration as I will develop further in chapter 7.

Internal leadership in the movement’s constituencies is non-hierarchical and leaderless, and participation is equal and democratic, therefore having similar characteristics of those radical social movements analysed by Fitzgerald and Rodgers (2000). In small constituencies, this form of internal organisation means every member has the same role and voice in terms of participation and

internal decision-making, which according to Hassan is reached through discussion and agreement of all members (AI20-29.09.14). In larger constituencies that sometimes group around 200 activists, such as the one to which Sara belongs, participants have opted to organise themselves into the different roles they undertake, or 'in terms of specialisations' (AI13-13.09.13), which include street action, communication and media, or internal organisation. This organisation into specialisations does not imply hierarchy inside these constituencies, as although roles are distributed, decision-making remains democratic and every participant has a voice. In larger constituencies, decision-making processes are not done through discussion and agreement as in smaller cases because of the larger numbers of members. In these cases, Yusef explains that decision-making is done through votes (AI10-10.09.13). Yusef is part of the group *Ahrar Azme Amman li-l-Tagheer* (Freedom for Change in Amman) and does not claim to represent any group, only himself. At the time of our interview, he was 20-years old and unemployed. He had experienced harsh repression inside as well as out of prison from the regime after some of his radical episodes of street action, and left Jordan to Turkey two days after our meeting, where he was granted political asylum from the United Nations.

HSU's non-hierarchical, horizontal organisational structure, and participatory decision-making processes reflect a double rejection of traditional politics. Firstly, the movement distances itself from hierarchical agents of socialisation, mainly formal (educational, religious, and political institutions) but also informal (family), and secondly, to the Jordanian regime's authoritarian nature. Despite different social transformations derived from modernisation and

globalisation (Moghadam and Decker, 2014), family in Jordan remains hierarchical along sex and age (Barakat, 2005), and this reality at the most fundamental unit of socialisation is reflected greatly in the way society and institutions are perceived. Sara explains that this hierarchy is perceived by activists of the movement as tools used to exercise social and ideological control of the society (AI13-13.09.13). Moreover, activists rationally choose an organisational model in which decisions are reached through a democratic participatory process because of their rejection of the non-democratic political practices of the Jordanian regime, which will be explained further in the following pages when I develop the diverse demands of the movement.

Finally, membership in the HSU is informal and based on the individual involvement of participants. Constituencies vary in numbers in different locations, with larger ones being present in Amman. The size of different constituencies varies from small ones of around 10 participants such as the one to which Khaled belongs (AI02-24.08.13) to larger constituencies that reach around 200 participants such as the one in which Seraj is one of the members of the organising committee (AI04-04.09.13). Given the informal nature of the process of joining the movement as a participant, and the lack of their formal membership, establishing clear and definite numbers of participation in each constituency is difficult. As well as activists frequently joining or leaving the movement, participants in the movement continuously move from one constituency to another, and some of them prefer to remain 'independent' such as Kareem (AI17-22.09.13), meaning not linked to any particular constituency but to the movement as a whole.

The informality of the movement's organisational structure also derives from the way in which it is funded, which at the same time responds to its aim of remaining independent from other more formal and institutionalised actors in Jordan and in the region. The movement is, in Suleyman's words, completely self-funded and they do not take donations (AI06-05.09.13). Activists strongly insisted on highlighting this point in every interview carried out for this project. As we will analyse in the following pages, funding has become one of the main challenges to the movement's organisation. Despite this challenge, self-funding was defended by all activists as their favoured way to get resources for their organisational activities given that it preserves their independence from any external influence.

Overall, the HSU is formed of diverse constituencies, including individuals, groups or unions, which are loosely organised as an informal network. This informal network is based on pre-existing tribal, family, and friendship ties, which provide safe ties for young activists to establish a trusting nexus and start mobilising at the beginning. As well as being a horizontal network organisation, internally the movement is non-hierarchical, and the internal decision-making process is democratic and participatory. Finally, the informal organisation of the movement is reflected by the lack of formal membership, where participation is based on individual involvement.

Organisational challenges for *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement)

After exploring the movement's mobilising structure and internal organisation, I will now focus the analysis on several organisational challenges that activists of the movement have faced when organising. Based on my interviews and during the participant observation for this project, it became clear that there were several organisational challenges that were of concern. Some activists, among them Omar in his interview, criticise their internal organisation as one that gives a sense of being mere 'rotating initiatives' (AI01-31.07.13), where constituencies are unstable, the organisational structure is weak, and the movement of activists between constituencies is continuous. According to him, 'organising is a problem; is *the* problem' (AI01-31.07.13).

The movement's informal organisational structure, and its internal volatility, has made it, in the opinion of some activists interviewed, increasingly vulnerable in terms of external threats. In the view of Omar, the absence of a clear hierarchical structure further weakens the internal organisation of the movement, making strategic building and collective action problematic: 'they don't want hierarchy, and this is another problem' (AI01-31.07.13). As we will explore in further chapters, an increasingly threatening context at the national and regional levels has resulted in a reconsideration of internal strategies. Frequently, a reorientation in the specific strategic approaches of individual activists within the movement results in these organisational shifts, where some constituencies disappear or reorganise under the movement's frame, or where activists of different constituencies organise together under a new constituency that results from merging the previous ones.

When asked to reflect on possible causes of organisational weakness, activists pointed to the regime and traditional political organisations' competitive advantage followed by issues of funding, time, a lack of organisational experience, managing emotions, a lack of individual dedication and commitment, and individualist personalities. I will now address each of these issues in turn. The first challenge that all activists interviewed for this project refer to is the one posed by the Jordanian regime which, in Sara's words, 'was a main obstacle for these groups so they did not have the real space to work with people' (AI13-13.09.13). More specifically, the regime has been the main obstacle for organising because, as we will further analyse in chapter 7, it has been responsible for promoting an increasingly threatening environment for the movement's activities, where activists such as Khaled were 'being threatened with arrests and being fired of work' (AI02-24.08.13). Alongside imposing a threatening posture, the regime has relied on traditional political parties to further challenge the movement. Political parties work within frames that do not challenge the regime, and given their organisational experience, are able to incorporate activists outside this system into their ranks, thereby reducing the challenge for the regime. In words of Omar:

'The oppressive nature and the organization strategies of the regime... Then... the organizations themselves, the classical parties and the shifts, they did nothing and they became part of the regime and the young people reject automatically. They do not see that we want a different kind of organization' (AI01-31.07.13).

As well as the challenge to organisation and strategic building posed by the Jordanian regime and traditional political parties, other critical challenges to

organisation have deeply affected the movement's development. These challenges are funding, time, experience, managing emotions, and individualism. First, funding has been a key challenge for young activists of the movement such as Khaled, and 'the lack of money in the organisation is a real problem' (AI02-24.08.13). Suleyman says: 'We are broke' (AI06-05.09.13). Seraj and Abed in their respective interviews explain that the 'shortage of internal funding' (AI04-04.09.13) 'is very important' (AI05-04.09.13) and has determined the type and the number of activities that they have been able to carry out. Abed, activist in his early thirties, grew up in the Palestinian refugee camp of Al-Baqaa and is currently living in Sweileh, Amman. He holds a Masters degree and currently works as a teacher at the University of Jordan. Abed prefers to present himself as an activist for the Jordanian movement as a whole, as he is working with any group that puts forward interesting and thoughtful initiatives, and is also closely working with *Abna' Al-Shatat-'Awdeh* (Sons of the Diaspora - Return), which he explains works closely with the Palestinian resistance.

Joint activities presuppose gathering individual activists in one place, for which public transportation is the less costly means^{xxxvii}. Abed explains that 'if I want to go and attend a protest in Al-Hussein^{xxxviii}, I need money to get there, and I want to attend because I am part of it, I am an activist' (AI05-04.09.13). The fact that some activists did not have economic means to be able to attend meetings underscores the extent of their challenging economic conditions. Moreover, other activities such as organising marches or sit-ins included further costs such as hiring audio material, which raised the economic cost of actions. Second, the lack of funds has deeply determined the action with other

constituencies of the movement, particularly constituencies organised outside of Amman, because of the economic inability of being able to travel to other cities and join other groups in their direct actions. Transportation between cities needed to carry out joint action further raises the economic cost of collective action.

Activists have tried to overcome this funding problem by asking for contributions of participants that enjoy a better economic situation. Other ways of solving this challenge, such as asking for grants or other types of external funding have been so far rejected by activists of the movement. As Sara explains, 'funding is one of the main obstacles as well because we do not want to apply for grants and stuff like that. We do not want anyone watching our back and telling us what to do' (AI13-13.09.13). The rejection of external funds is explained by their will to remain independent and eliminating the possibility of being influenced in any way by any external actor. Another aspect of this funding challenge is that sourcing funds from wealthier members could potentially create informal hierarchies between activists within the movement. Activists, including Amin, explain that donations by participants are 'voluntary' (AI08-08.09.13) and do not establish hierarchies within constituencies. As explained by Seraj in his interview, informal organisational leadership in the movement normally depends on individual activists' dedication in terms of time and effort (AI04-04.09.13).

Related to the challenge of funding is the challenge of the time that individual activists are able to dedicate to movement activities. As we have mentioned before, in general, activists of the HSU try to make a living by

undertaking precarious jobs, many times multiple jobs at a time, that generally do not allow them to become fully economically independent from their families. Moreover, on occasions, activists work not to become economically independent but to support their families. For some activists such as Suleyman, time actually becomes the main obstacle to organising: the 'main obstacle is the time that you can dedicate to your activism, and it varies from one individual to another, and also the financial situation, the social relations, the work conditions' (AI06-05.09.13). Multiple precarious jobs take over most of their time, limiting the time they have left to dedicate to the movement.

Another main challenge for organising expressed by Seraj has been the 'weak political experience in the youth groups' (AI04-04.09.13), which has become one of activists' main concerns. In words of Ahmad, 'Egyptians were working to reform their country and fighting the heritage of Hosni Mubarak to Gamal since 2005; the beginnings of *Kifayah* movement, as you know. So eight years [that they have been active]. We are still in the third year so we do not have a great experience' (AI12-13.09.13). This lack of previous organisational experience has made them particularly vulnerable to the increased threatening context. In words of Ibrahim:

'To learn on the job in such an atmosphere, you are going to have to expect a huge pushback, from the state, from the security apparatus, from self-interested groups, from the business elite, from the loyalists... And because they were young and inexperienced, it left such a big vacuum to be co-opted, to be manipulated, to be hijacked' (AI23-04.11.14).

Managing emotions inside the movement has also presented a challenge. In a changing political opportunity structure, and in an increasingly threatening context, Abed explains that 'the issue of security is very important; you are afraid, you might be imprisoned, and not only imprisoned but beaten' (AI05-04.09.13). As well as emotions of fear, a shifting scenario makes activists of the movement continuously re-think their strategic approach and their choices of direct action. During an extended period where the context changes, activists feel they have to continuously reconsider their strategies. As Khaled told me during his interview, 'there are people that get depressed sometimes, and get sad sometimes, they become frustrated sometimes, you need to follow up with them. The political situation affects them, and affects their work and their personal commitment' (AI02-24.08.13). This in turn has led to a lack of commitment among some activists, given that, as Sara explained during her interview, 'people hate working towards long-term' (AI13-13.09.13).

'Continuing to work with these people as well is hard, because some of them think 'if some of our demands are answered, I am satisfied now and I give up'. It is really hard to get people to work on long-term stuff. People get tired really easily and are not up to planning and let us see what happens after one year or five years' (AI13-13.09.13).

The final internal debate on organisational challenges that has been present in the movement is the one around the exacerbation of individualism as a result of consumerism and the use of social media. First, consumerism is debated among activists as being counterproductive for social organisation as, according to some like Omar, it is built on 'everyday propaganda on the individual' (AI01-31.07.13), deterring the social and communal expression of the

individual. A second contributing factor is social media 'because it magnifies the individual; everybody now has a voice, has an opinion, is a political analyst. You know, one hundred, a thousand likes; you are a big leader in your own domain' (AI01-31.07.13). Activists such as Omar consider that 'this blow-up of individualism is contradictory to organization and social extensions' (AI01-31.07.13), which in turn are vital for working on collective action.

Linked to the internal discussion around the way in which the use of social media fosters individualism among participants of the HSU is the discussion around the use that HSU does of social media as an organising tool. As we have seen, the organisation of the HSU, unlike in other cases such as Egypt, started in neighbourhoods and through the mobilisation of family and friendship networks at a local scale, that then translated into wider links between local groups to organise under the HSU. Social media and particularly mobile telephones were used mainly for communicative purposes. Internal communication between HSU participants was done mainly by mobile phone and social media platforms were used as a space for communicating their action and sharing online content, given the limited attention that these received in mainstream media, as we will see in later pages.

During my interviews, the discussion around the limitations to using social media and even mobile telephones as a tool for organisation in Jordan were highlighted by activists in several occasions. In the context of increased limits on freedom of speech, which will be addressed in further detail in later chapters, challenges related to surveillance were encountered by participants of the HSU on social media and mobile telephones. For example, Amin explains

that on one occasion, his group *Aḥrār Azme Amman li-l-Tagheer* had planned to join other groups, including *Aḥrār Kerak*, *Aḥrār Madaba* and *Ḥirāk Ḥayy Tafaileh* in Irbid, to join them in a protest for the freedom of political prisoners. This had been organised through Whatsapp and mobile telephone messages only, not through Facebook. They organised transportation jointly to Irbid, and on their way found a police control where they were stopped and forbidden from continuing their journey and return to their respective localities (AI08-08.09.13).

Another example of the way in which communication channels through social media and mobile telephones between activists might have been monitored, making them wary of their use as an organising tool, was recalled by Seraj during his interview. Seraj recalled that on a Friday in 2012, participants of the HSU had organised a protest close to Al Hussein Mosque in Downtown Amman. They had done so in their meetings and gatherings. He recalled that just a few hours before the protest, he received a message saying that the location had changed to the Ministry of Interior, so at the time that had been arranged, he went to the Ministry of Interior to be surprised by the few number of attendees. Like him, other participants received messages regarding a change in location, to either the Ministry of Interior or the Fourth Circle, both frequent protests sites in Amman. Seraj recalls that they never knew what had happened on that Friday morning, as none of the participants was behind those messages. This moment made them aware of the fact that mobile telephones were limited as a tool for organising and communicating internally, given that their communication was probably being monitored (AI04-04.09.13).

For Amin and Seraj, and for the rest of participants, these incidents pushed them towards using social media only for publishing content and communicating their activities, and towards using mobile telephones only for the minimal communication for operational purposes, despite knowing that their communication was being monitored. In the HSU, although participants have encountered these limits to the use of social media and mobile phones in organizing, they have been used for some time as a space for communicating ideas and sharing online content, helping to create awareness and publish the activities of participants that were then active on the street.

Overall, several internal debates have been recurrent among activists of the movement concerned about the challenges to organisation that they have faced. Although all activists interviewed and observed for this project consider that the main challenge for organising has been posed externally by the regime, they acknowledge the existence of internal challenges to organisation. We have analysed these internal challenges which include issues of funding, time and dedication to movement activities, the lack of organisational experience, the difficulty of managing emotions, dedication and commitment, and individualism.

Main ideological characteristic of the movement

After describing the demographic characteristics of participants, the organisational structure adopted by the movement, and the main organisational challenges faced by activists, I will now analyse the movement's ideology. This

analysis is organised into two parts. First, I present the ideologies that activists interviewed for this project ascribe to, which reflect the ideological spectrum in Jordanian youth today. Then, I analyse the movement's ideological variation and the way in which activists' position towards change is expressed as radical or reformist.

The movement serves as an umbrella to a variety of ideologies. For activists, the fact that the movement is able to provide an organisational structure under which multiple ideologies find common ground to put forward their shared activism is one of the points that gives it power. Hassan explains that the movement includes activists that are ideologically 'Islamists, leftists, some with the Syrian regime, so there was a gathering of people that *does not have a gathering* [meaning that do not have a common ideology] really. So we had everything there, and this was what gives it power' (AI20-29.09.14). Activists do not consider ideological plurality inside the movement a problem. Khaled explains that 'No. It is not a deep disagreement, just a difference in opinions, which there will always be' (AI02-24.08.13).

Although the majority label their political ideology as leftist, socialist, communist, or nationalist, Hassan explains that there are some who are Islamists: 'They are the Islamists that we can call "defectors" of the Muslim Brotherhood' (MB) (AI20-29.09.14)^{xxxix}. Activists of the movement that fall under this ideological group have all been members of the MB before. Hassan explains that his and others' decision to 'defect' from that organisation as being conditioned first by the decision-making process within the organisation, which they saw as non-democratic, where young activists would meet and debate, but

their ideas would be passed to leaders of the organisation for approval: 'the *Al-Hirāk Ash-Shabāb Al-Islāmī*, it has the shell of democracy. It is not democratic because if you are talking and talking and talking and at the end someone decides for you; this is of course not democratic' (AI20-29.09.14). Second, his decision to leave the Islamist organisation was due to the distance of debates in relation to what, in their opinion, the Jordanian society needs. Hassan –one of these so-called 'defectors' of the MB– explained that while he was part of the youth movement of the MB, 'the points of the meetings had nothing to do with what the street wants, they were what *they* wanted. So at the end they are working conditioned by the vision of the political party IAF and the Muslim Brotherhood, not thinking about the vision of the people. This was clear' (AI20-29.09.14).

As well as bringing together youth of many different ideologies under a shared frame, a second ideological characteristic of the movement is the radical-reformist spectrum therein. I will now define the concepts of 'radical' and 'reformist' and their meaning in the Jordanian political context. The term 'radical' has multiple connotations and has been defined as the complete restructuring of the system rather than incorporation into that system (Fitzgerald and Rodgers, 2000). The radical ideology in social movements is conceptualised as one that emphasises structural change, based on 'a belief that reforms cannot change the fundamental problems and instead that structural obstacles must be exposed (Fitzgerald and Rodgers, 2000 p. 581). An ideology that is flexible, builds radical networks, has a high degree of global consciousness and connections, and presents an antimilitaristic stance (Fitzgerald and Rodgers, 2000 p. 578). Overall, radical ideologies seek 'a transformation of systemic

power relations perceived to sustain ongoing injustices' (Eschle and Maiguashca, 2013 p. 13).

In defining the radical conceptualization of change in the HSU, I understand radical constituencies as those that demand a complete change in the political, economic, and social system in the country through direct confrontation and opposition to the monarchical regime itself. In line with the aforementioned theoretical conceptualisation of radical ideologies, activists in the HSU that I define as radical seek structural change. Through interviews and observation, as well as through their active presence on social media, movement activists that adhere to a radical ideology consider that the monarchical regime, and more specifically the King, is the reason for all the problems at these three levels. For them the only possible way towards change in the country inevitably starts with the removal of the regime. As the central arrogating power, the regime is seen as being beyond reform by radical activists of the movement such as Seraj:

'Radical. Why not reformist? Because the political regime that we have in Jordan, the core of it, it is not able to reform. It is not able to change. For several reasons. First, that Jordan is connected to the international economic system, and the political decisions made in agreement with the US. And our economy is linked to the IMF. So your demands are to change the regime radically and in a peaceful way. Reform will be just superficial, not from the root' (AI04-04.09.13).

The movement's aforementioned informal structure and its detachment from any formal, institutionalised political actor are characteristics that have

allowed for the existence of these radical constituencies and a radical ideology. In this sense, the movement does not contradict PPT's assumption that social movements which organise around grassroots informal structures and temporary organisations offer 'fertile ground in which radicals can flourish and thrive' (Cross and Snow, 2011 pp. 118-119).

Turning to the term 'reformist', it has been defined by PPT as an ideology that incorporates 'much needed cultural and socio-psychological components' (Fitzgerald and Rodgers, 2000 p. 576) and assumes 'that the main goal of achieving political gains for SMOs lies within the existing political structure.' (Fitzgerald and Rodgers, 2000 p. 576) According to the framework, a reformist ideology is one characterised by an 'emphasis on being a contender in the existing political system, national focus, [and] support [for] government military involvement.' (Fitzgerald and Rodgers, 2000 p. 578)

Activists of the HSU that adhere to this reformist ideological conceptualisation of change look at other regional countries to justify their orientation. For example, Abed explains during his interview that 'what happened in Egypt and Tunisia has affected us also. They achieved the overthrow of the regime, OK. And now what?' (AI05-04.09.13). They consider that, in Jordan, change cannot come in the form of a rupture because of the political context, but also because of the society's acceptance of this type of ideologies, which Ahmad explains in the following way:

'Change and development have to be gradual and step by step, and here we are not waiting for this. We want to change the conditions in one day

or one year. It is not applicable. You know the culture of change in societies; societies will not accept this in one day' (AI12-13.09.13).

Apart from this shared idea that change should be progressive and should not involve any rupture of the political system, reformist activists of the HSU do not seem to agree with what specific variables would constitute the reformist ideology. Different factors fall under activists' understanding of reform, which are related to reforming institutions, greater representation of political bodies, reforming laws or revisiting the way in which legislation is implemented. However, there is no consensus among reform activists of what specific aspect of the political system should be changed. As Ibrahim explained:

'No one agrees on what reform is. We do not know how to define it. We know that it is the safer word to use for change, as opposed to other words that start with 'R', but at the same time, we don't agree on what that means because we come from different backgrounds, we come from different interests, and most of it is self-interest of course' (AI23-04.11.14).

The radical-reformist ideological spectrum in the movement is flexible and changes in relation to the opening and closing political opportunity structure. Although these changing dynamics in time will be further analysed and developed in the following chapter on social movement strategies, it is important at this point to highlight the fact that the radical and reformist camps in the movement are not static but flexible.

Theoretically, two main characteristics define the way in which these two ideological approaches for change relate to each other. On one hand, radicals consider that 'a belief that reforms cannot change the fundamental problems and instead that structural obstacles must be exposed' (Fitzgerald and Rodgers, 2000 p. 581). On the other, reformists tend to discredit radicals (Fitzgerald and Rodgers, 2000 p. 581). In the HSU, reformists tend to criticise radical activists and constituencies, which they consider to show a lack of flexibility and are not able to adapt to the changing political context which has become increasingly threatening for political action. During his interview, Suleyman explained how:

'I am trying to ask for reform from a position that is far from radical. The idea of radicalism is related to a lack of flexibility. I have a certain idea and this idea has to be imposed. It does not accept to be revised or debated' (AI06-05.09.13).

Reformist constituencies and activists such as Sara argue that there is a need to be flexible in terms of reconsidering a more confrontational strategy at particular moments of time where the context becomes increasingly threatening:

'For me being radical is sticking to your principles no matter what. You have to change with what is happening around you, without changing your principles' (AI13-13.09.13).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented the HSU as my analytical object of inquiry. In order to do so, I have characterised it as a social movement, analysed the movement's mobilising structure, and the ideologies present therein. This chapter has outlined the HSU as a movement with an informal, uninstitutionalized, horizontal, network-like organisation. The HSU is unique in its mobilisation and of the concept of 'youth' in a country where the young people dominate the demographics. Other features of the HSU distinguish it. It has retained financial and political independence in the face of competition from larger, traditional, political parties and increasingly intolerant authorities. Its primordial focus on the domestic political scene also differentiates its politics. Despite this fresh approach the HSU faces traditional and novel organisational challenges. Its focus on national politics allows it to bring together a range of varying ideological views yet consensus is not sought, thus perhaps limiting the directionality of the movement. More basic challenges such as travel funding, internal hierarchies were also discussed by interviewees. A striking feature of discussion with activists was their apprehension of social media as tool that undermined organisational coherence through the promotion of individualism.

HSU's originality contributes to complementing the picture of dissent in Jordan. It also denotes the fundamental impact of the Arab Spring in shaping new forms and expectations particularly among an educated and transnational youth. It also denotes that fundamental limits of a self-organised movement that seeks to limit ties to traditional sources of political and social power (Mann, 2012). More broadly, this has important insights for traditional accounts of the

Arab Spring's dissent (i.e. social media) and generic literature on social organising to the extent that it does not represent a movement that was formed in united opposition or through the sponsorship of a regime or foreign actor. And in fact despite the transnational and educated views of its activists, the focus is domestic.

Chapter 5 Strategy in *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement)

This chapter analyses the development of confrontational, conflict-oriented, and non-confrontational, consensus-oriented strategies in the HSU and the events underlying these varied responses. The chapter frames activists' construction of social movement strategies through the concepts of *political opportunity*, *mobilising structure*, and *framing processes* as discussed in Political Process Theory (PPT) theoretical framework presented in the theoretical debate of this thesis. I argue that movement strategies are reactive and context-specific; they vary in time. Moreover, although the HSU is certainly a unified movement, there remains an apparent strategic variation between its constituencies that adopt more confrontational strategies and those opting for non-confrontational approaches. Finally, strategic weaknesses or limits of the movement are a result of the challenging context and of activists' lack of previous organisational experience.

In order to develop my arguments, the analysis is structured into four parts. First, I identify the spectrum of the movement's strategic choices in terms of confrontation and non-confrontation. Second, I analyse the way in which the varying political opportunity structure affects the strategic choices of the movement, in terms of increased and decreased confrontation. Third, I evaluate the way in which activists of the movement have strategically chosen the movement's mobilising structure, and the way in which this mobilising structure has resulted in the appearance of radical voices in the movement, that favour

conflict-oriented strategies. Moreover, I present the way in which the mobilising structure affects coalition-building with other opposition figures. Finally, I explore the three phases of strategic articulation and identify the moments of strategic disagreement between the movement's constituencies.

Radical-reformist variation in the movement's strategic articulation: applying the theory

The analysis of social movement strategies is central for Political Process Theory (PPT). The theory conceptualises social movement strategy as a strategic conversation with opponents, in which 'mutually independent and instrumental decisions' (Downey and Rohlinger, 2008) are generally 'confined to actor-opponent interactions' (Downey and Rohlinger, 2008). PPT considers that 'much of the history of movement/state interaction can be read as a duet of strategy and counterstrategy between movement activists and power holders' (Tarrow, 2011 p. 8). For the model, once a social movement is formed, that social movement's strategy and a regime's counter-strategy should be understood as mutually dependent and no longer independent of each other:

'After the onset of protest activity, the broader set of environmental opportunities and constraints are no longer independent of the actions of movement groups. The structure of political opportunities is now more a product of the interaction of the movement with its environment than a simple reflection of changes occurring elsewhere' (McAdam et al., 1996b p. 13).

Gamson proposes to study strategy along the following binaries: single vs. multiple demands, radical demands vs. demands that do not challenge the legitimacy of the constituency, or influencing vs. substituting elites (Gamson, 1975). PPT frames the construction of social movement strategy along these lines, which become mutually exclusive according to the model. According to this framework, these demands should necessarily be one or the other. They can either be single or multiple, radical or reformist, and either intended to influence or to substitute elites. As I will demonstrate, this framework is useful to study strategy in the HSU, although this case presents a series of characteristics that contradict the model's binary divisions for conceptualising strategy along these fixed dichotomies.

First, the strategies of the movement vary between constituencies from confrontation to non-confrontation. As explained in the preceding chapter, the HSU is ideologically a movement which demonstrates both radical and reformist voices. This ideological variation is then translated to the movement's strategic articulation; a variation cutting across a radical-reformist spectrum. The HSU has put forward both confrontational and non-confrontational strategies at different moments in time. Therefore, this movement challenges the fixed conceptualisation of strategy assumed by PPT in the sense that the movement as a whole has not chosen between confrontational and non-confrontational strategies. In one single movement, different constituencies adopt strategies that vary in terms of confrontation. Second, strategic articulation in the HSU changes over time, contributing further to challenge the fixed conceptualisation of strategy in PPT. Therefore, the analysis of the radical-reformist spectrum in the movement has to be done taking into account these trends of

confrontational and non-confrontational movement strategies which greatly depend on the context.

Before engaging with these trends of increased and decreased confrontation, it is necessary to explain these terms for the Jordanian context. Increased strategic confrontation in Jordan is defined as an escalation of demands, from economic and social to political. Demands can thereafter continue to escalate from demanding specific political reforms, for example in the executive branch by asking for the Prime Minister's removal, to outright calls for an overthrow of the regime. Using Gamson's model, this process of escalating confrontation would involve moving from dispersed and multiple demands, to more focused ones that potentially coalesce into a single demand for the overthrow of the regime. Further demands could include voice challenges to the regime's legitimacy and intend to substitute elites.

Decreased confrontational strategies in Jordan imply the opposite process. This emphasises a return to requests for political reform, on such issues as parliamentary representativeness, electoral law, or a postponement of all political demands for the sake of socio-economic and cultural issues that avoid any discussion of regime substitution. Referring back to Gamson's model, this process of decreased confrontation would again mean returning to a less focused action that involves multiple demands rather than a single cohesive one. It would also entail including demands that do not challenge the regime's legitimacy and aim at influencing rather than substituting elites.

These two tendencies in social movement strategies can be described along three main lines: first, they are related to events occurring at a particular time; second, strategic orientation is a product of the expanding/constraining political opportunity structure; and third, it is defined by decisions to increase resonance of movement demands in society. Overall, I argue that the strategies of the HSU are reactive and context-specific, and fluctuate over time, making it weak and limited in the face of regime counter-strategies.

The strategy of the HSU has been, in the words of Omar, generally 'reactive, you know, just moving around without having a target point, a strategy, an ideology' (AI01-31.07.13), although according to Seraj sometimes it is 'planned' (AI04-04.09.13). This frequent lack of strong strategic planning has been widely criticised, and activists have been considered 'brainless in the sense that they don't have [a] theory, strategy' (AI01-31.07.13). As Omar explains during his interview:

'They want to be together but they don't agree on 90% of the topics, but they want to be together because they are small and I guarantee you today that if tomorrow they want to do something they want to be together' (AI01-31.07.13).

Activists themselves acknowledge their strategic weaknesses. For example, Sara explains that 'we are not the best strategy builders so far. We did not sit and plan a strategy' (AI13-13.09.13). She relates this strategic deficiency firstly to their lack of previous experience in organising: 'it has to do with previous experiences, like get your space, work on the ground or start working on the ground, then you are going to learn some new stuff and then you can

build your strategy gradually' (AI13-13.09.13). Because of this lack of previous experience, Ahmad explains that they 'have to find new ways' (AI12-13.09.13), and in a highly politicised context, and conditioned by a shifting political opportunity structure, Ibrahim explains that 'a lot of it was trial by error' (AI23-04.11.14). According to him, trial and error in organisation and in building strategies might work 'before things were so politicised, before revolution was in the tongues of people' (AI23-04.11.14). However, as we will see in this chapter, this lack of experience has greatly conditioned their capacity to build their collective strategies.

Strategy and a varying political opportunity structure

In this second part of the chapter, I will turn my analysis to exploring the way in which the development of movement's strategy has been affected by the political opportunity structure. Strategies of the movement according to Seraj 'are affected and respond to contingency' (AI04-04.09.13) therefore Ahmad adds that strategic building becomes challenged by a context that 'differs from stage to stage' (AI12-13.09.13). The political opportunity structure provided by the regime has varied in time, impacting the strategic articulation of the movement.

A changing political opportunity structure in Jordan has resulted in a variation in social movement strategies that can be framed in terms of periods of increased and decreased confrontation. In order to present this scenario, I

first analyse the November 2012 peak of confrontation in Jordan; second, I explore activists' perceptions on the context and the political opportunity structure, and how they affect social movement strategies; third I explain the fluctuation between 'conflict' and 'consensus' oriented strategies of the movement in time; and finally I present the current process of decreased confrontation of the movement through two specific examples of two more recent initiatives put forward by movement activists.



Image 5. Sign of *habit tishrīn*. Posted on the HSU's Facebook page on the 16th November 2012.

In November 2012, confrontation and conflict-oriented strategies articulated by the HSU reached their peak after an increase in oil prices. This confrontational peak was represented in the form of an unprecedented national widespread action that came to be known as *habit tishrīn* ('The November Uprising') taking a name similar to *habit nissan* ('The 1989 April Uprising'). For a week, protestors openly called for the downfall of the regime, pointing to the

monarch himself, for the first time attracting large numbers under such a radical slogan (2012o). Slogans chanted during the November protests included: ‘*Yabitsalih al-hin, ya bi-tilhaq al-Abidine* (Either fix it now, or follow [Zine El-] Abidine [Ben Ali]’); ‘*Hatha al-urdun urdunnawa-al-khayinyab'id 'anna* [This Jordan is our Jordan, and the traitor should get away from us]’; ‘*Hurriyya, hurriyya, mish makarim malakiyyah* [Freedom, freedom, not royal handouts]’; ‘*Hurriyya min allah, ghasban 'annak Abdullah* [Freedom from God, against your will oh Abdullah]’; ‘*Al-sha 'b yurid isqat al-nizam* [The people want the fall of the regime]’; and ‘*Yasqut, yasqut hukm al-az 'ar* [Down, down with the rule of the scoundrel]’.



Image 6. Photograph taken during one of the protests that took place during *habit tishrīn*. Posted on the HSU's Facebook page on the 29th November 2012.

These slogans reflect the increased anger and frustration among activists of the movement, and among the Jordanian population as a whole, however they should not be thought of as representative of the whole HSU, neither of the

majority of mobilising forces in Jordan (Abu-Rish, 2012). The majority of activists in the movement at that time led marches and chanted the aforementioned confrontational slogans although, as Omar explains in his interview, some already refused to cross what was perceived as a 'red line'.

'It was very radicalised. These demonstrations, they demanded the removal of the king, the fall of the regime, some of them a Republic in Jordan. Many of the slogans were talking about 'no East, no West', meaning that we don't care about these divisions that the regime is promoting and so on. The funny thing is that those were the most radicalised demonstrations in Jordan since 1989, they were more radical than the 1989 Uprising in Ma'an' (AI01-31.07.13).

According to Hassan, '*Habet Tshreen* was the end of everything. It was the "final destination"' (AI20-29.09.14). Under severe and violent state repression, protests were brought down in a week. With this use of force, the Jordanian regime severely closed the political opportunity in the country, and this severely affected the strategies of the movement from that moment onwards. Although, as we will see in the following chapter regime counter-strategies overall included apparently concessive alongside repressive measures, a opportunity was clearly shut in Jordan after this peak of radicalisation in November 2012. As Sara noted:

'Sometimes you plan a strategy that you consider perfect, but you forget what you can do on the ground. So it is important to keep in mind what you are and what you can actually do within the space you have, with the members you have, with the techniques you know' (AI13-13.09.13).

The continuously varying national and regional context has affected the movement strategies given the internal decision-making process based on discussion that the movement bases its strategy on. The words of Suleyman reflect this point:

‘The national and regional situation has affected us for sure. Each issue will have a time for discussion inside the group, so of course it will affect it negatively or positively. This will result in a united vision towards a certain situation, or mixed opinions that sometimes are very polarised around certain issues’ (AI06-05.09.13).

At a national level, the closing political opportunity structure, where the regime has put forward varying responses to the contentious situation as we will develop in the following chapter, has resulted in a reactive rather than planned strategy, where movement activists decide their actions in response to a political move taken by the regime. As Suleyman said:

‘We are affected by what surrounds us and we cannot take anything positive from it. It affects us negatively. And the proof is so clear. We are dispersed’ (AI06-05.09.13).

Finally, at a regional level, the shifting regional scenario has been critical for the movement’s strategies. Regionally the opportunity structure in which social movements pursue their strategies has closed as a result of the development of violent conflicts in the region. During the first months of 2011, the regional situation was one where activists found a space to pose demands, and in this regional context activists of the HSU found their space to start organising. However, the violent repressive episodes in Syria in March 2011,

and the radicalisation of that neighbouring conflict, as well as the worsening situation in Egypt during 2012 and particularly in 2013, framed the regional situation in which the movement pursues its strategies.

The effects were twofold. First, as we will develop in the following chapter, with respect to the regime's counter-strategy or response to mobilisation; and second, in terms of internal strategic decision-making as explained by Suleyman:

'Our escape is the shared demand that we went out for in the first place. The movement is still trying to overcome this challenge. The regional situation is affecting the people a lot and this is reflected in their opinion and in the work' (AI06-05.09.13).

Activists and constituencies in the movement have moved between negotiation and confrontation strategies, and have adopted both approaches. As explained by Suleyman, their strategic choice between both depends on the time and the context, as 'circumstances are the ones that pressure you to take one or another decision' (AI06-05.09.13). For him, 'negotiation and confrontation have conditions, and with confrontation we do not mean violence. Nonviolent confrontation is always the beginning; later you will reach the negotiations under the condition that these negotiations should have a solid base' (AI06-05.09.13).

With a closing political opportunity structure, and greater levels of regime repression being exercised upon activists of the HSU by the regime, social movement strategies have overall tended towards greater negotiation rather

than confrontation, and radical voices and demands that were widespread in November 2012, have been silenced. As Khaled expressed during his interview 'At a certain moment you do not have the power to confront. So you need to work more at an organisational rather than at a political level' (AI02-24.08.13). Suleyman added that:

'The main demands of the movement are now postponed until the situation in the region becomes clear. So of course it affects the movement internally and it has demobilised us' (AI06-05.09.13).

Increased threats to mobilisation since 2013, and especially during 2014, have resulted in an almost complete absence of confrontational strategies in the movement, where initiatives have tended to postpone political demands, and shift to cultural and social issues. Before analysing the strategic shifts in detail, it is important to note that this decreased confrontation of the movement has developed differently between constituencies. Some constituencies and individuals such as Yusef have continued being confrontational (AI10-10.09.13), but have become an exception within the movement and in the country as a whole, situation that has made them less vocal. Other constituencies have followed different lines in this process of decreasing confrontation that we will see in detail in the following pages. Overall, it is important to highlight at this point the heterogeneity in the process of decreasing confrontation, as it is relevant to understand the current almost complete demobilisation of the movement.

As a result of a shifting political opportunity structure at a national and at a regional level, and to the weak strategic coordination within the movement

that resulted from its mobilising structure and challenges to strategizing frames, the movement has gone through a clear process of strategic decreased confrontation. The fact that the development of strategic reform has been different between constituencies has resulted in greater strategic disarticulation within the movement which can be classified around four main strategic approaches.

First, Khaled, Amin or Yusef are part of the constituencies and individual activists of the movement that still retain their radical stance towards the socio-economic and political situation in the country, although they have become an exception, and their action is not vocal or public (AI02-24.08.13, AI08-08.09.13, AI10-10.09.13). A second group of constituencies in the movement are those in which Abed, Suleyman, Mustapha, Basil, Hakim or Hassan participate, which have favoured a reformist strategy that adopts frames and discourses shared with other political opposition actors, including reforming electoral law, the role of institutions, the constitution or legislation (AI05-04.09.13, AI06-05.09.13, AI15-15.09.13, AI16-20.09.13, AI19-22.09.14, AI20-29.09.14). Third, several constituencies, which include those in which Seraj, Rashid or Sara participate, have opted for removing or postponing any political demand from their strategy, and returning to taking action and working at a grassroots level, including socio-economic grievances of different marginalised social clusters (AI04-04.09.13, AI07-07.09.13, AI13-13.09.13). Finally, several constituencies have identified other issues as being central for Jordanian society and culture, and now base their action on discussions centring on identity or citizenship, as explained by Ahmad and Kareem (AI12-13.09.13, AI17-22.09.13).

Given the different trajectories and paths taken by each constituency, internal strategic coordination has significantly weakened, and internal rivalries between constituencies has appeared because of the different strategies adopted. For example, Hassan explains that the decreased confrontation of the majority makes them alienate and reject those individuals and small constituencies that still believe in adopting more conflict-oriented strategies: 'Now, there is no confrontation. If there is someone who wants confrontation, he is stupid. He is opening his chest to the fire' (AI20-29.09.14). The majority's rejection of a confrontational strategic approach of some individual movement activists is explained in an interview I carried out with an activist of the movement that discussed the question of adapting to the post November 2012 political environment:

'The idea of reform can accept a definition of social equality, and this will depend on the circumstances in time and space. And because of this, dealing with your environment to put forward the idea that you believe in, will find greater acceptance through reform than radicalism. Radicalism believes that the strategy should be put forward as it is without taking into account the environment' (AI06-05.09.13).

Although some individuals and constituencies continue pushing for confrontational strategies, the majority of constituencies in the movement have gone through a process of decreased confrontation. This process by which strategies of the majority of activists have shifted from highly confrontational to non-confrontational can be analysed following two lines: first, the de-politicisation of the movement, where all conflict-oriented political demands and actions have been postponed; second, a shift to action that does not involve

neither confrontation nor visible direct action; based on discussions focussing on cultural and social issues.

The first line of analysis, the de-politicisation of the movement, has occurred in two distinct phases that have had results for the movement's strategies. First, moving from confrontational socio-economic and political demands to liberal reformist demands. Second, removing or postponing all political demands. The first phase involved diverting the movement's radical socio-economic and political demands to liberal political demands that mimic the discourse of political parties, and the way opposition groups converse with the regime. This first phase of the movement's decreased confrontation occurred right after the aforementioned confrontation peak in November 2012, and at the same time as the parliamentary elections of January 2013 were being prepared, and is marked by the creation of the Jordanian Youth Parliament in January 2013.

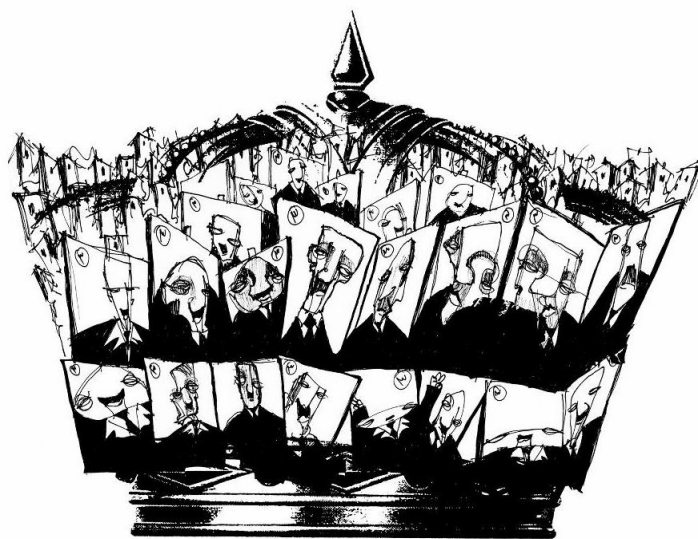


Image 7. Drawing representing the members of the Parliament in the form of a crown. Posted on the HSU's Facebook page on the 3rd January 2013.

The HSU as a whole boycotted the parliamentary elections, reflecting once again the increasing detachment from the political system of disenfranchised young participants in the movement (Banks and Ullah, 1987 p. 201). Following this boycott, this shift towards reform strategies is clearly represented in the creation of the Jordanian Youth Parliament. The Jordanian Youth Parliament presents itself as a youth initiative formed by twenty-seven members that work to develop reform programs including the vision of different social, regional, and political backgrounds.^{xl}The heterogeneity of the Jordanian Youth Parliament is reflected in its logo, which uses the national flag's seven pointed star coloured in a mosaic of different colours:



Image 8. Logo of the Jordanian Youth Parliament. Posted on the HSU's Facebook page on the 10th February 2013.

Hassan explains that this initiative by the movement started 'like a joke, a comedy of the reality that we have' (Al20-29.09.14). The initial idea was basically one of satire or mockery towards the ineffectiveness of institutions

such as the Jordanian Parliament and their limited role in bringing about change to the country. Hassan continues explaining that:

‘We announced elections, we collected money, and we created an application on Facebook that created an electronic voting system in which the same person could only vote once. We advertised this thing strongly. We worked with the media in a very nice way. So it became very popular. The time of the elections that we did, was one day before the parliamentary elections. We did this intentionally because we did not want our media echo to vanish. When the elections happen, they take all the attention from media’ (AI20-29.09.14).

Because of the attention received from media towards this initiative, something that had not happened during the previous peaks of radicalism at the end of 2012, what started as a small initiative intended at being critical of the stagnant political system became serious, and activists of the movement invested all their time in the Jordanian Youth Parliament’s meetings. In terms of organisation, the initiative became probably the single best organised action by the movement. ‘The Jordanian parliament does not have a system like ours’ (AI20-29.09.14) explains Hassan. The Jordanian Youth Parliament developed its structure to include ‘departments inside the parliament’, among them departments for education, economy, legislation, international relations, media, or students and youth (AI20-29.09.14).

As Hassan explained during his interview, the main strategy that activists sought to enact through this initiative was the creation of ‘a shadow parliament for the existing parliament’ (AI20-29.09.14), to ‘invalidate’ the work of the

Jordanian Parliament to a certain extent. In this sense, activists structure their work and discourses in the same way as the parliament: ‘we amend laws that the parliament is discussing, from our vision as youth (AI20-29.09.14).^{xli}

The procedure was to hold meetings and discuss a particular law that was being discussed at the time in Parliament, trying to reach an agreement, and finally voting on a new draft for the law. The next step, Hassan continued explaining, was to submit their proposed draft for the law to the Jordanian Parliament for consideration. According to Hassan, some of these drafts were actually taken into consideration by the formal Jordanian Parliament, such as the Law of Weapons and Armoury or ‘Law 308, the Jordanian rape marriage law’ (AI20-29.09.14).



Image 9. Photograph of some of the members of the Jordanian Youth Parliament. Posted on their Facebook page on the 9th February 2013.

The Jordanian Youth Parliament faced limits to their action at two main levels. First, ideological differences existed in the Parliament, making

cooperation difficult because, as Hassan explained, 'no one accepted to be part of something' where they worked with others, especially 'radical leftists, and the Islamists' (AI20-29.09.14). However, ideological differences were not the biggest problem for activists. The second and main challenge to this initiative, as we shall examine in the next chapter, was the regime's response (AI20-29.09.14).

This involved degrading the image of the Youth Parliament in society, offering funding to activists, and rejecting the initiative's inscription as an official association. First, Hassan explains that the regime 'started putting forward propaganda against us, because our role started being evident' (AI20-29.09.14). Second, he continued, the regime offered activists funds, which they rejected because they perceived it as a move toward institutionalising their action, they did not want to be linked with any institution.

'After the elections, the day after, the NDI (National Democratic Institute) announced that they were ready to support us with an amount of 300,000 Euros. You establish your headquarters, and work in an institutionalised way, and do this and that and the other' (AI20-29.09.14).

Finally, when activists organised the HSU, they wanted to inscribe it as an official social association. Hassan explained that their application for this process was rejected several times. He recalls that the last time they tried they were told that there was already an organisation inscribed with that same name, which they claim was created by the regime as a way of taking over their initiative (AI20-29.09.14).

The way in which activists of the movement were strategizing their action through the example of the Jordanian Youth Parliament already represented a substantial shift from the radical strategies pursued in November 2012. This initiative clearly presents a shift from the radical demands put forward through direct action on the streets to a less confrontational discourse that talked to the regime about reform. After the strong repression of November 2012, activists that took part in this initiative, among them Hassan, consider that this was the only tool available for them at that time.

‘While we express complete rejection to the existing parliamentary system, we need to fight with the tools that we have. And that was the tool that was in our hands at that time’ (A120-29.09.14).

This first phase of decreased confrontation during which activists of the movement turned to liberal political demands that mimic the discourse of political parties and the way opposition groups converse with the regime, drove the movement to move away from its socio-economic background. The movement started conversing in the same terms as other political actors, thereby starting to talk about elections, the role of parliament in political life, or the release of political prisoners. As we will see in the following chapter, this shift in the strategic approach of the movement is related to a set of seemingly conciliatory measures offered by the regime. Such measures tended to be related to liberal political moves such as calling for municipal or parliamentary elections, constitutional amendments, or legislative reforms. As Omar explained during his interview:

‘Now they have diverted our *hirak* from economic, social, whatever, to demanding the release of the arrested *hirakis*, stopping the prosecution

and state security court trials, so the *hirakis* are now diverted into another area which has less social background' (AI01-31.07.13).

As a consequence of this shift in the movement's strategies, and as a reaction to the further closing political opportunity structure in the form of further repressive laws in 2013 and particularly in 2014, several constituencies moved into the aforementioned second phase of strategic de-politicisation. In this second phase of de-politicisation, several constituencies in the movement removed or postponed political demands from their action. As Seraj explained during his interview, 'maybe you delete one or two items, and you postpone them until a future period' (AI04-04.09.13). Seraj continued explaining that:

'When you see that the regional situation gives the regime push and strength, and you feel that it is stronger than before, we understand that achieving these political demands completely is difficult. So we demand less' (AI04-04.09.13).

Seraj's group is an example of how some constituencies of the movement have decided not to work with political demands is the creation of parallel political associations or groups, to which all the political discussions are transferred, and which are the ones that hold the political responsibility (AI04-04.09.13). Transferring political discussion to other parallel groups has eliminated the political agenda and demands of these groups, making them de-politicised.

This has been useful for these constituencies at two levels. First, Seraj explains that by transferring political discussions to other groups, these

constituencies have now managed to avoid political discussions within constituencies that became extremely fragmented, particularly in relation to activists' stance towards other regional conflicts (AI04-04.09.13). Second, as Sara explains, the strategy of removing political demands from their agenda has facilitated their work with social groups or workers that became increasingly reticent to working with any organisation that gets involved in politics (AI13-13.09.13).

To a certain extent, the strategic decision of some constituencies of the movement to remove political demands in this second phase of de-politicisation can be analysed as a reaction to the political liberal turn that the movement took in the first phase of decreased confrontation. The liberal turn taken by some movement activists, particularly by those involved in the Jordanian Youth Parliament, was interpreted as a strategic move that brought these constituencies of the movement closer to the official political discourse of parties and opposition, and away from societal needs.

Activists and constituencies that held this stance then decided to strategically move away from that political discourse and back to a more social, grassroots action. This de-politicisation is explained Sara as a way of returning to the original aim of their action:

'It has to do with the economic situation and I think we have to keep on following this line in order not to develop or to change into a purely political party that forgets these demands which happen to other groups' (AI13-13.09.13).

At a regional level, as a result of the changing situation, and particularly given the growing regional instability and violence, activists such as Sara that took this strategic decision to stop working on political issues explain that, at a given moment, when the constituency became less political, this decision made 'it easier to deal with people and really answer and work on their demands' (AI13-13.09.13).

As well as this two-phase de-politicisation, the movement's decreased confrontation has involved a shift in some constituencies and among several individual activists towards action that does not adopt neither confrontational strategies nor publicly visible and vocal direct action. Constituencies that defend this shift now adopt a strategic approach that is based on discussions behind closed doors and public conferences or talks that limit themselves to social and cultural issues. Some examples of the topics covered during these recent public talks are identity and identity fragmentation, or the situation of sexual harassment and patriarchy.

This new strategy intends to promote critical debate in the Jordanian society, and is explained by Ahmad as a way of working to change the people from within: 'We are trying to change from the bottom of the pyramid, not from the top. And it is a philosophy of change' (AI12-13.09.13). For activists such as Ahmad that advocate this shift in strategy, what has become central is 'to overcome diversity and ideological differences between parties, situations and points of view to create a big national frame that can create a ground that will make dialogue about the main problems, not just politics' (AI12-13.09.13).

Activists that prefer this strategic approach, such as Hassan, explain that 'they are youth constituencies that are not political, but they are spreading awareness to the people' (A120-29.09.14). Others such as Ahmad criticise that the movement experienced a phase in 2013 where they moved away from their demands for social justice into liberal political demands, and other key problems for organising were ignored. 'We are always thinking about electoral law and constitutional amendments but we are facing many problems, like identity, citizenship' (A112-13.09.13).

With the exception of the few individual activists and small constituencies that retain their radical character, overall constituencies have shifted away from strategies of confrontation towards strategies of negotiation, moving from highly confrontational political demands that ask for elite and regime substitution, to a wide range of demands that move away from the political demands directed at substituting elites. This change in the strategic approach of the movement can be further understood through an analysis of the regime's counter-strategy towards which will be developed in the following chapter.

Strategy and mobilising structure

After defining the increased and decreased confrontational strategies in Jordan in light of the shifting political opportunity structure, I will now turn to analyse the way in which activists of the movement have articulated their strategies in light of the mobilising structure analysed in the preceding chapter.

Following the central PPT assumption regarding the rationality of social movement activists, I argue that this structure has been deliberately chosen by activists of the movement and responds to a strategy and a political and ideological position towards the context and their action.

In order to do so, I first explore how different episodes of contention initially drove activists to favour a loosely organised, network-like, structure, and the way in which they strategically chose an informal model of organisation. Then I explore the way in which this structure has in turn affected their strategic repertoire in terms of their level of mobilisation, the level of outside subsidies, and the alliance structures with other actors such as political parties, unions, religious institutions, and authorities. Finally, I present the way in which this mobilizing structure has facilitated the appearance of voices in the movement that favour confrontational and conflict-oriented strategies. The case of the HSU follows PPT's assumption on informal, horizontal, network-like structures allowing for the flourishing of more radical strategies.

The HSU's mobilising structure has been rationally chosen by activists of the movement in response to a series of contentious episodes that occurred in 2011. Two main episodes of contention drove movement activists to select their mobilising structure: the 24th March and the 15th June sit-ins. As described in the introduction to this thesis, the 24th March sit-in was dissolved through harsh regime repression, and was followed by a period of intense negotiation between Islamists and the assorted young activists, that resulted in a major disagreement with the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood (MB), who were accused of trying to take over their sit-in, and create divisions among the young activists.

Activists that moved closer to the MB later created what is considered by HSU activists as the MB's 'child' movement, *Al-Hirāk Ash-Shabāb Al-'Islāmī* (Islamist Youth Movement). This movement attracted part of the young activists that were mobilising together on the 24th March, partly because of the links to the MB which provided them an ideological base and an organisational solid frame and experience.

Despite the weakened 24th March Movement –as it came to be popularly known–, new calls for mobilisation appeared in May 2011, calling for a protest on the 15th July 2011 that would gather as many factions and groups as possible. Just as with the 24th March sit-in, the 15th July event also ended violently, and the regime decided to forbid any protest in the form of open sit-ins. This second episode of contention contributed to further divide young activists from more structured and organised opposition actors. If the 24th March event resulted in tension with the MB, the 15th July event resulted in the division between young activists and other leftist opposition groups who decided to leave the movement –still called March 24th.^{xlii}

These two episodes of contention in 2011 marked a shift in the initial structure-led strategy that young activists were trying to mobilise under. Initially, young activists tried to mobilise a more 'hybrid' structure that was inclusive for other organisations; activists favoured a pragmatic strategy through which they would benefit from the organisational experience of other groups. The words of Sara on their strategic approach to organise at that time clearly reflect this point: 'I think there was a need that was bigger than agreeing or disagreeing with the ideology... [a] need to organise and try to have much better outcome for

something that is happening right now rather than start the typical discussions about disagreeing on ideology' (AI13-13.09.13).

As a result of those two contentious episodes, activists shifted their strategy towards favouring a more informal organisation that would mark a rupture with other opposition groups and their more formal or institutionalised mobilising structures. This was a move by young activists at the time to strategically break with more institutionalised movements in Jordan with which they had been trying to build coalitions in 2011, and that had ended by absorbing other young activists into their structures, and thereby weakening their initial action. Once the informal, non-institutionalised structure was created, radical voices had space to appear in 2012 and develop until 2014.

Moreover, the deliberate process of strategically adopting an informal mobilising structure can be analysed as a clear rejection of institutionalisation and hierarchy present in other opposition groups, which activists of the movement such as Sara perceive as tools for top-down social control. 'It is the typical hierarchy... which gives everything a hard time to work' (AI13-13.09.13). Activists consider that control is exercised through hierarchical organisation in two ways. First, traditional hierarchical structures in the country limit the flexibility or freedom of action and choice within their structures, making it necessary, according to Sara, to have alternative structures 'that are in a way flexible for people to be able to move' (AI13-13.09.13). Second, this lack of flexibility, she continues, reduces the degree of democratic participation in constituencies and movements, particularly in terms of decision-making, therefore activists advocate for 'less hierarchy' (AI13-13.09.13). The horizontal,

non-hierarchical mobilising structure adopted by the movement can be understood, therefore, as part of their strategic choice, and a political and ideological position towards the context and their action.

As well as being horizontal and non-hierarchical, the mobilising structure of the HSU is informal and non-institutionalised. The degree of formality of the movement is again partly a result of their strategic choices and their political and ideological position towards the context and can be analysed with respect to their internal intra-movement relations and their external inter-movement alliances.

Internally, strategic organisation of the movement can be described along decision-making processes, internal coalition-building between constituencies, and internal communication. First, internal decision-making within constituencies of the movement is done through agreement, followed by voting in the cases of bigger constituencies. As an activist of one of the smaller constituencies in the movement explains, 'any issue or topic is discussed until we reach an agreement. We were not voting. It was about agreement. And we gave each topic enough time for discussion' (AI06-05.09.13). Overall, activists of the movement consider this decision-making process democratic as it represents the voice of each individual participant of the collective. As explained by Sara, 'you choose your representatives, you always have to give long discussions for the basic things that you agree with and disagree with for these representatives to be able to represent you much better' (AI13-13.09.13).

However, the interviews carried out for this project show that activists of the movement do reflect on the fact that this consensus approach to decision-making, despite being the most representative and democratic, has had negative effects on their action. Given that their strategies are reactive responses to specific moments of contention with other actors, mainly with the regime, and there is a lack of planned strategy, strategic decisions have to be taken in a short time.

However, their internal decision-making process based on agreement has on occasions taken a long time, becoming a challenge to their effectiveness in taking immediate action. Seraj said:

'When we choose our strategies, we make a plan to implement this strategy. And we face the fact that implementing this strategy is not easy. There are difficulties. Among them alliances, among them the overall political situation in the country, the situation of the regime at the time when we decided our strategy and at the time when we wanted to implement this strategy was a different situation' (AI04-04.09.13).

Turning to internal coalition building between constituencies inside the movement, it tends to be built at specific moments in time around isolated joint actions. These strategies of building coalitions between constituencies of the movement are not part of a planned strategy, but they respond to eventual state decisions related to, for example, imprisonment of activists or rises in the electricity and gas prices. Suleyman explained that coalitions inside the movement are coordinated through a spokesperson that acts as a link between constituencies (AI06-05.09.13). Given the lack of planning that results in the

weakness of an overall planned action strategy for constituencies of the movement, coalition-building between constituencies has been conditioned by a number of challenges. One of these has been the issue of 'trust' between constituencies has been significant for collective action. Sara explained that issues of distrust were maximised with the presence of infiltrators which, as will be developed in the following chapter, have resulted in continuous disagreements between constituencies (A113-13.09.13).

Another difficulty concerns the variety of ideologies within the movement, which has undermined coalition-building efforts, according to Hassan particularly at moments of intensified national and regional conflict (A120-29.09.14). More precisely, severe disagreements have emerged between constituencies –and arguably within constituencies– in relation to their political position regarding the events in Egypt or in Syria. A third problem that has hampered coalition building in different governorates has been the lack of funds of activists. On occasions, as Suleyman explains, they do not have the economic capacity to attend protests in other governorates and support constituencies of the movement in other areas, or to organise and attend joint meetings with other constituencies (A106-05.09.13).

Moreover, regime surveillance has been another challenge to building coalitions between constituencies. Seraj and Amin explain that surveillance, as we will analyse further in the following chapter, has been mainly done through social media and mobile phones (A104-04.09.13, A108-08.09.13), which Hassan adds are the main communication channels used by movement activists (A120-29.09.14). Internal communication within the movement has been carried out

through informal channels mainly using social media and mobile phones. Seraj explains that decisions are communicated through ‘mobile, message, Facebook, email, any available way, direct calls’ (AI04-04.09.13), and Ibrahim adds that this type of informal communication, particularly through the use of the internet, helped them initially to organise (AI23-04.11.14).

Finally, the informal, non-institutional, network-like structure of the movement results in movement strategies that are reactive rather than planned, making them vulnerable to being deeply affected by the context, national and regional, in which the movement works. The horizontal organisation model of the movement gives it greater volatility and less commitment from activists that participate in it, as well as the absence of leaders. This makes the movement more vulnerable to external threats—including the presence of infiltrators, imprisonment, threats, harassment—than more hierarchical organised structures that would have greater commitment from fixed members, established leaders, and clearer objectives. Regionally, the shifting scenario in different cases, particularly in Egypt and Syria, has affected the movement in terms of strategy and organisation.

Strategy and framing processes

In this fourth and final part of the chapter, after analysing the way in which the movement’s mobilising structure plays a role in the strategic articulation of demands put forward by movement activists, I will now turn the focus to the way in which the movement has mobilised framing processes in the

diagnostic, prognostic, and mobilisation moments of its development. In the HSU we will see that, although there is agreement among activists in the movement during the diagnostic framing phase, when the problem is identified and attributed to a particular actor, disagreement between the radical and reformist camps occurs at the moment of prognostic framing, or finding a solution to the problem and articulating it jointly. With existing competition between activists in terms of articulating a solution to the problem, motivational framing, or the third step in framing processes, is further weakened.

In order to analyse these three distinct moments of framing processes in social movement strategy, and as explained in detail in the theoretical chapter of this thesis, PPT presents four frame alignment processes –or strategic uses of framing process by social movements– that are relevant for my analysis. These frame alignment processes are frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension and frame transformation. I will now analyse what frame alignment processes have been put forward by activists of the HSU through specific examples of their discourses mobilised during the three key moments of framing processes in social movement strategy.

According to PPT, the diagnostic framing phase is where social movement activists identify the problem and attribute it to a particular actor. In the HSU, there is agreement between individual activists and constituencies of the movement, as explained in the preceding chapter, on identifying the problems as social and economic, and on attributing them to the regime which, as expressed by Ibrahim, in turn makes the problem also political (AI23-04.11.14). There is agreement in the movement that social and economic

problems are central for their action, and affect socio-economically marginalised groups that suffer from shared grievances. Two major framing processes have been articulated by social movement activists in this context.

First, activists of the HSU have put forward a ‘frame transformation’ whereby they intend to change old understandings and meaning of the way in which the Jordanian society is structured. Traditionally, social structure in Jordan is thought to be based on ethnic and identitarian fragmentation; primarily between Transjordanian/Palestinian-Jordanian ethnicities as a result of historical identity politics, as explained in detail in chapter four of this thesis. These ethnic and religious frames have been historically constructed and reinforced through state-led political processes such as the electoral system, characterised by a system of quotas, gerrymandering, and individuality, which ‘generates inequality in voting power’ and contributes to fragmenting society (Hussainy, 2014).



Image 10. Jordanian and Palestinian flags during a protest organised by the HSU. Posted on their Facebook page on the 28th November 2014.

Activists of the HSU are working together to transform these social understandings into other forms of social belonging that they consider to be more real, related to socio-economic grievances of the poor and working classes that are ethnically of both Transjordanian and Palestinian-Jordanian backgrounds. Seraj explains that activists of HSU are seeking to recover 'the debate on class, on national identity, on unity' (AI04-04.09.13). Other young activists such as Hassan explain that, with this strategy, they 'are trying to go against traditions and culture of people that have grown up with it' (AI20-29.09.14). Mustapha considers that this reflects the way in which youth mobilises in a way that contradicts the Jordanian-Palestinian divide which they consider has been promoted by the regime in its historical divisive strategy based on identity politics (AI14-15.09.13).

Putting forward this strategic framing in Jordan has been extremely difficult for the HSU because frames are devised not only by social movements, but also by their counterparts, therefore becoming a contested process during which movement leaders have to compete with authorities (Tarrow, 2011 p. 145) in developing frames that are resonant in society. As we have seen in previous chapters, in Jordan the regime has historically promoted identitarian politics that has resulted in contingent identities and constructed frames of understanding which, reinforced through different episodes of national and regional conflict, have left deep marks on communities. Trying to transform this

historically-constructed frame of ethnic fragmentation into a frame of class struggle has been a challenge for activists given the deeply rooted divisions between these two social groups in Jordanian society.



Image 11. The complete sign reads 'yawm al-'umāl' which in Arabic means 'Labour Day'. However the sign is broken and the last word (in green) reads 'māl', which means 'capital'. Posted on the HSU's Facebook page on the 1st May 2013.

Second, the HSU has put forward a strategy of 'frame bridging' with different groups of workers. Activists of the movement identified socio-economic grievances faced by workers of different companies, particularly grievances related to the ever-expanding informal job sector or the deterioration of workers' rights, to base this strategy. They have tried to direct their action towards workers that are facing a particular unfair situation in their work, but are not politically mobilised. Sara explained that:

'We work with workers of the electricity, workers of the Telecom that have actually left their work, workers who work on daily basis, the day-labourers, and agriculture with the government. We have worked with the ones that were with the water company and have left as well, workers

of the potash company, the ones who were making demands and have actually left as well' (AI13-13.09.13).

Sara explains that this strategy directed to different groups of workers 'has much more to do with meeting these people, working with them, helping them, providing them with support and showing them that we are a clean part. I am there to support you' (AI13-13.09.13). This has been particularly difficult for movement activists given the movement's political stance, which is radical at specific moments in time. Activists interviewed for this project explain that, taking the words of Sara, workers 'do not want to work with any group that has anything to do with politics. What are you representing? Who is behind you? Who is supporting you? And things like that. Because of our country, it is very hard. And you can understand this in a way' (AI13-13.09.13). Moreover, it has been difficult for activists of the movement to sustain their work with these workers in time because, as she explains, '*some of them think if some of our demands are answered, I am satisfied now and I give up.* It is really hard to get people to work on the long-term' (AI13-13.09.13).

Prognostic framing for PPT is the second phase in frame articulation at which movement activists have to find a solution to the problem previously identified, and then articulate a solution collectively. In the HSU, the variety of ideologies and a weak organisational structure have created competition between constituencies and activists of the movement. This competition has impacted their capacity to reach agreements. More precisely, it has resulted in the inability of the movement as a whole to agree to a coherent approach to addressing these grievances. This disagreement resulted in an internal

differentiation between the radical and the reformist conceptualisations of change: while some constituencies of the movement favoured a solution that involved gradual changes in policies, other constituencies, such as the one in which Yusef participates, favoured a solution that would necessarily come from more vociferous confrontation aiming at the ultimate removal of the regime (AI10-10.09.13). The strength that each of these camps inside the movement acquired at any given moment greatly depended on the national and regional context.

Finally, in terms of motivational framing, different constituencies of the movement strategically put forward nonviolent tactics to construct a rationale for engaging possible adherents in collective action. Activists of the HSU have agreed on frames of nonviolent direct action, and constituencies of the movement have engaged independently and jointly in different tactics including strikes, sit-ins, campaigns, boycotts, mass meetings, and demonstrations. In this way, 'frame amplification' is used to resonate with potential adherents in society by incorporating the existing cultural values (Benford and Snow, 2000 p. 624-625); namely, in words of Suleyman, Jordanian society's 'security-minded' standpoint that completely rejects the reproduction of any episode of national instability or violence as witnessed in the neighbourhood (AI06-05.09.13).

Moreover, movement activists put forward a strategy of 'frame extension' where their interests were extended in order to include issues and concerns of importance for society, which would potentially increase the probability of mobilising other social groups. Some examples of this strategy were the campaigns of 'Samtak bi kalfak' (your silence will cost you), which Hassan

explains took place in February 2013 after the government announced that the prices of electricity would increase (AI20-29.09.14).



Image 12. Signs used during the *Samtak bi kalfak* campaign. The sign on the left reads 'No to rising prices'; the sign on the right reads 'Your silence will cost you. Don't help the corrupt and don't pay the electricity bill'. Both signs were posted on the HSU's Facebook page on the 4th February 2013.

During these campaigns, the aim of activists of the HSU, in the words of Hassan, was to address potential adherents by addressing the rise of prices on everyday products, which would result in further economic stress for Jordanian society (AI20-29.09.14). They did so by going house to house to talk to people in different neighbourhoods, particularly in popular and working-class neighbourhoods, about the intention of the government of raising prices, and trying to convince them to join them on the street (AI20-29.09.14).



Image 13. Activists of the movement carrying signs during the *Samtak bi-kalfak* campaign. The sign to the left reads 'Expired options and possibilities', posted on the HSU's Facebook page on the 4th February 2013. The sign on the right reads 'Your silence will cost you. No to the rise of electricity prices', posted on the HSU's Facebook page on the 3rd March 2013.

However, resting the movement's foundations on these initiatives without having previously articulated a joint vision in the prognostic framing phase, led activists to fall into the trap of the 'normalisation of protest' (Meyer and Tarrow, 1998 p. 4). Their weekly organised protests during 2011, 2012 and 2013 became a recurring feature of Jordanian politics at the time. Some activists interviewed for this project explain that the high frequency of direct action, together with the great variety of claims in each action, had negative consequences for the movement at two levels.

First, it changed this direct action into a conventional political instrument in the eyes of society, making the movement 'lose its power to inspire challengers and to impress antagonists and authorities' (Meyer and Tarrow, 1998 p. 4). Second, it created disagreements among activists of the movement on whether to continue taking direct action without having articulated a joint

solution for the problem, or moving away from the streets and focusing more on organising at a grassroots level. The result was that some individual movement activists decided to avoid participating in direct action, projecting an idea to the general public, the regime, and media, of a weakening movement.

Overall, in terms of limits to the movement's strategic framing, the movement has not been able to effectively move away from the current political dynamics and strategies of other parties in Jordan and effectively convey the real ideological alternative that they represent. In a similar way to other opposition groups, their overall discourse has been framed in discussing political steps with the state, and the main political practice of the movement is still fed mostly by the historical experience characterised by state centralisation and directing demands towards the state at a political level, instead of working to achieve a greater popular representation, support, or mobilisation. In the words of Mustapha, 'even the chants, even the programs, even the Friday protests, it is always talking to the state instead of building something popular' (AI14-15.09.13).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that movement strategies are reactive and context-specific, changing over time, and that, even if we are talking about a movement as a whole, there is a strategic variation between the radical and reformist camps. I have analysed this variation and the varying set of strategies

pursued by the movement through the PPT concepts of *political opportunities*, *mobilising structures*, and *framing processes*, which have provided useful lenses for my analysis. Strategic weaknesses or limits of the movement are a result of the challenging context and of their lack of previous organisation experience.

Chapter 6 The Jordanian State's Counter-strategies: Challenges for Collective Action

Following the analysis of social movement organisation and strategies in preceding chapters, this chapter explores the counter-strategies that have been executed by the Jordanian regime, focusing on those targeting activists of the HSU. Although the movement has faced organisational and strategic challenges, which have already been analysed in preceding chapters, the main challenge encountered by the movement has been posed by the regime. Therefore this macro level of inquiry is necessary to analyse the contextual elements that have affected the movement's development. The regime's response to the HSU has been complex and has critically challenged the movement in terms of its internal organisation and its strategic articulation.

This chapter aims to explore the regime's complex response to the movement's strategies. This includes analysing what repression looks like in Jordan and how it has become the main challenge to mobilisation. I argue that the Jordanian regime has responded through balancing apparently conciliatory and repressive counter-strategies. This in turn has meant that the HSU has had to adapt to shifting landscape when it comes to political opportunity. Finally, this counter-strategy has challenged the HSU organisationally and strategically to the point that it has become a major challenge for this movement's survival. The Jordanian regime's resilience is therefore the result of a planned balancing act and a carefully calculated strategic management of collective action that combines apparent conciliation and repression.

In order to support these arguments, I first introduce the overall power imbalance between the regime and the movement, framing their strategic dialectic as one of subordination of the movement to the regime. The second half of this chapter analyses the Jordanian regime's counter-strategy in two parts. First, I look at what might be initially understood as regime conciliatory measures. These include government reshuffles, the publication of a roadmap to reform that includes constitutional amendments, and a plan for reforming elections and political party rules. However I explore the limits to these apparently conciliatory moves in meeting the movement's demands, as well as the success of some of these measures towards weakening the movement's organisation and strategy.

The second part of this chapter looks at specific repressive measures put forward by the regime to target activists of the HSU, which defined the overall closing political opportunity structure. In this part, as well as talking about direct repression in terms of surveillance, arrests and harassment, I include an analysis of the selective application of law to activists of the HSU, and the legal umbrella and specific legislative amendments that have marked the closure of the opportunity structure and the increased threatening environment under which constituencies of the movement have been pushed to reassess their initial strategic approach.

The Jordanian regime and the *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement): an imbalanced strategic conversation

Analyses of social movement strategies and regime counter-strategies are central to the PPT approach, and are approached by the framework as an 'actor-opponent' (Downey and Rohlinger, 2008) conversation, or as a 'duet' (Tarrow, 2011 p. 8) where both variables are mutually dependent (McAdam et al., 1996b p. 13). This theoretical approach to strategy and counter-strategy is relevant to the study of the HSU as these two variables affect each other becoming, as Ahmad explains, 'a circle or sequence' (AI12-13.09.13). For the sake of organisation of this thesis, I have presented social movement strategies and regime counterstrategies in two separate chapters; however these two levels of analysis converse and mutually affect each other.

In introducing this analytical chapter on regime counter-strategies, it is necessary to present two initial considerations to this conversation and the analytical limits posed by the PPT framework for the Jordanian case study. First, the relationship between social movement strategy and regime counter-strategy in the case of the HSU has to be understood as one conditioned by a power imbalance between the regime and the movement. As Omar explained, 'it is an over-statement to say that there is dialectic between social movements and the regime; there is subordination' (AI01-31.07.13). This strategic conversation between the two actors has to be necessarily understood while taking this imbalance into account; not as a dialectic between equals as presupposed by PPT. This can be explained through the way in which the framework relates strategy to organisation. In the preceding chapters we have analysed the organisation and strategic articulation of the HSU. In this chapter,

when talking about regime counter-strategies, it is relevant to mention its relation to the organisation of the regime and its high level of centralisation. Looking at the internal organisation of parties in this dialectic –the HSU on one side and the Jordanian regime on the other– will help us present the power imbalance in their strategic dialogue. As Asaf Bayat explains:

‘The political agency of youth movements, their transformative and democratising potential, depends on the capacity of the adversaries, the moral and political authorities, to accommodate and contain youthful claims.’ (Bayat, 2011 p. 107)

Despite having embarked on a process of political liberalisation as presented in chapter four of this thesis, the Jordanian regime’s process of democratisation and power sharing has been limited, and it remains an authoritarian state with a highly centralised and hierarchical power structure^{xliii}.

The Jordanian regime has historically depended on a balancing act between authoritarian centralisation and localisation or distribution of power which has been effective in absorbing institutions and political actors, leaving no space for independent dissent. In its strategic conversation with the HSU, Omar explains that ‘the regime is the one playing all the cards and the most powerful of all the elements. And it worked. You know, to reach this position it worked hard’ (AI01-31.07.13). This centralised power structure, and the regime’s historical experience in managing episodes of national and regional turmoil, as analysed in chapter four of this thesis, has been determinant for the regime’s

strength and effectiveness in putting forward counter-strategies during this period of contention.

As analysed in the preceding chapters, the HSU has been marked by its informal structure when articulating its strategy, fragmenting it and making it vulnerable to the shifting conditions of a fluctuating political opportunity structure. In contrast, the regime has been greatly unified during this period of contention and in responding to grassroots pressures engendered by HSU. Its hierarchical and centralised organisation has helped it to formulate a complex and effective counter-strategy that has helped it survive and has arguably even strengthened its foundations by instrumentalising on the movement's existence. Overall, it is key to acknowledge this power imbalance between the movement and the regime when analysing their strategic conversation.

Second, it is important to remember that the overall political opportunity structure and regime counter-strategies in Jordan are not only framed at a national level, but have also been greatly determined by the evolution of other episodes of contention and conflict in the region. The PPT framework conceptualises the political opportunity structure as the series of constraints and opportunities posed by the state, thereby limiting its scope of analysis to the 'national context' (McAdam et al., 1996b p. 3). Although this chapter will focus on the Jordanian regime's counter-strategies with inevitable discussion of the national landscape, it is necessary to analyse these counter-strategies by taking into account the development of other regional conflicts.

National trends of opportunity and threat are strongly related to regional events, which in turn affect the amount of international support the Jordanian regime receives to ensure its stability, as was analysed in depth in chapter four. It is therefore important to take into account this level of regional analysis in this chapter on regime counter-strategies at a national level. As pointed out by Lina Khatib and Ellen Lust:

‘The geopolitical dimension is playing a far larger role in shaping outcomes of the Arab Spring than in previous waves of regional transformation in other geographic settings. To this effect, the range of external interventions into domestic political struggles has varied greatly. In the most benign instances, institutional actors, such as the monarchies of Morocco and Jordan, leveraged their support from Western powers like the United States and France to bolster their perceived standing.’
(2014 p. xi)

Regime counter-strategies: between conciliation and repression

The regime has developed a very carefully calculated strategy of contention which can be analysed as a combination of repressive and apparently conciliatory moves. Overall, as explained by Khatib and Lust, ‘the regime’s response to such demands has been timid and lukewarm, characterized more by frantic cabinet shuffles and superficial constitutional amendments than an authentic process to build a new political order’ (2014 p. x). Several elements have contributed to facilitating this response in Jordan,

which are at the same time part of the reason for the aforementioned asymmetry of power. As explained by Ibrahim:

‘The agenda has always been to be one step ahead. That is relatively easier to do in a country like this where there is relative stability, there is a huge population that works for the government or the state, roughly 40% of the employed population works for the state, which is similar to other countries in the region, like Egypt for example, and that usually creates a situation where you are unlikely to rebel against your employer’ (AI23-04.11.14).

The analysis that I will provide now looks at regime counter-strategies since the 24th March 2011. The analysis will continue until 2014, a year that was marked by the approval of ambiguous laws, among them reforms to the anti-terror legislation, and when the Jordanian regime had managed to close the window of opportunity significantly. As expressed by Anderson, ‘the relative alacrity of the responses of the kings of Jordan, Morocco, and Oman in sacking their cabinets and promising further reforms seemed to have staved off, and possibly diffused altogether, more serious calls for the downfall of the regime’ (2015 p. 54). Although the structure of the movement exists until today, the movement’s mobilisation in terms of strategic articulation and direct action has been practically suspended since 2014 given increased fear and threats from the regime. The appearance of *Daesh* (also known as the Islamic State in Iraq and *Bilād Ash-Shām*, or ISIS) in the regional context since 2014, as we will see, has been used to legitimise greater securitization policies in Jordan, and, given the ambiguity of the new anti-terrorism law and its selective application, movement activists are now considering the costs of action as too high in Jordan.

Although apparently conciliatory moves have been put forward together with direct and targeted repression against movement activists, at times simultaneously, the overall counter-strategy of the regime has provided a political opportunity structure that has moved from an initial period of political opening due to the international focus on the region during the initial months of the Arab Spring, to one of closure. In other words, in Jordan the political opportunity structure has transitioned from a period of closure before the Arab Spring, to a period of greater opportunity during 2011 and 2012, to a period of increased threats and closure of the opportunity structure since the end of 2013 and most noticeably in 2014.

PPT assumes that 'a political environment that transitions from political opportunity to threat will likely initially throw the entire social movement sector off guard' (Almeida, 2003 p. 351). As we have already seen, this shifting political opportunity structure has deeply affected the movement organisationally and strategically, as after 'investing time and resources in organisational founding, membership recruitment, and strategies consonant with a liberalising authoritarian state, challengers facing a transition to a threatening environment find that the old ways of organising and seeking political influence are inadequate' (Almeida, 2003 p. 351). This chapter analyses the specific measures put forward by the regime that have marked this shift in the political opportunity structure in Jordan and that have affected the HSU internally.

Overall, the Jordanian regime's counter-strategy revives the strategy of 'controlled political liberalisation' (Kramer, 1992 p. 2) in response to growing

demands for social justice, economic development, and political reform put forward at the end of the 1980s in response to the April 1989 uprisings in Jordan. As Ibrahim explained, ‘there is this unspoken policy, and we see it manifesting many times, in which social rage builds up and the state is smart enough to deal with it as a pressure cooker’ (AI23-04.11.14). This strategy of controlled political liberalisation, characteristic of liberal autocracies in the region, is explained in four phases: accumulation of socioeconomic tension over time; irruption of urban riots; threat to regime legitimacy and survival; regime responds with promises of more political freedom, respect for human rights, elections, and greater participation in decision-making (Kramer, 1992). In this way, the Jordanian regime has become the main player, as Omar expresses, ‘that can calm everything down and can absorb the entire scene’ (AI01-31.07.13).

These overall strategies of controlled political liberalisation have been key for the Jordanian regime’s survival since the 1980s, and have continued framing the regime’s counter-strategies since 2011. Liberalisation does not affect the pillars of state control over society or the economy, and its main purpose has been argued to be system maintenance in a situation of socioeconomic crisis (Kramer, 1992). As we will see in the following pages, this strategy has been used by the regime to co-opt wider circles of the political public, directing political and religious organisations into controllable channels, and excluding all those outside the ‘national consensus’ defined by the regime. The HSU has been one of the few organisations in the opposition that has been excluded from this national consensus^{xliv}, remaining independent from other opposition actors in the country.

Since the 24th March 2011, the Jordanian regime has tried to remain one step ahead, which in words of Ibrahim 'is relatively easier to do in a population of 6 million people where you employ half' (Al23-04.11.14). Given the regional period of turmoil and the focus of international media on the region's contentious events, the Jordanian regime put forward a set of moves after the 24th March 2011 sit-in that were intended to help portray the regime as one with conciliatory intentions and as one capable and willing to meet the demands of protestors (2012n, 2011d). This initial move provided activists of the movement the political opportunity to organise in a low-risk environment.

The regime put forward a roadmap for reform that included several initiatives created with the aim of managing reforms to satisfy the official opposition's demands. These initiatives are in line with previous ones, such as the 2002 Jordan First policy, the 2005 National Agenda, and the 2006 We Are All Jordan campaign, which, as analysed in chapter four of this thesis, were put forward since the beginning of King Abdullah II's reign with the intent of establishing a top-down controlled political liberalisation in the country. Moreover, as part of this reform and liberalisation strategy, the Jordanian regime has promoted the organisation of civil society within the limits deemed acceptable in the political discussion in Jordan. Maha Abdel Rahman has provided a critique within the contemporary development debate in the Middle East around the concept of civil society. Abdel Rahman sheds light on the complexity of civil society in Egypt and the way in which civil society organisations can also repress interests of other groups in the same arena (2002 p. 22).

Conciliatory moves put forward by the Jordanian regime have been defined by some as a 'first step in the right direction' (Muasher, 2011b), at the same time as they are seen by others as a way of buying time, given that their implementation is constantly delayed as a result of the perception that protests have not mobilised a critical mass (2012n). Among apparently conciliatory moves, the regime has consistently forced government reshuffles through the repeated destitution of Prime Ministers. In the words of Ibrahim: 'that is what a Prime Minister is, a scapegoat' (AI23-04.11.14). Moreover, it has put forward a roadmap for reform that includes the formation of reform committees as well as constitutional amendments, creating a constitutional court, reforming the state security court, or calling for elections. Overall, all these reforms have been limited and their implementation has been superficial, reflecting 'neither the priorities of political forces, nor those of the masses' (Khorma, 2014 p. 1).

The National Dialogue Commission (charged with drafting new legislation for elections and political parties), and the Royal Commission for Constitutional Amendments, were created with the aim of institutionalising the state's plan for managed reforms that intended to satisfy the opposition's demands. As it is true for other liberal political measures, reform committees have had limited effects in achieving further political openness or democracy in the country. These two examples illustrate this point.

First, the National Dialogue Commission (NDC), led by Taher Masri, was constituted in March 2011 to gather former and current government officials, opposition members, entrepreneurs, and religious leaders. Its mission was to draft proposals for new electoral and political parties' laws (2012n). The

commission had two main problems, namely that the main opposition group with most popular support, the Islamic Action Front (IAF), refused to participate, and that its role was only advisory. Some of the young activists that were organising independent, un-institutionalised social movements at the time, were drafted into this commission.

One of them explained how they sacrifice otherwise ideologically rigorous opposition in favour of pragmatism, in the hope that it might be a way to achieve their aims and demands. The words of Seraj for this project present this experience:

'When the situation reached a real conflict between the regime and the people, the regime decided to calm the situation down with this National Dialogue. We were part of calming the situation down. I thought that the National Dialogue could result in something good, but I made myself forget that it is not possible for the regime to make concessions for the people. It would continue pressuring the people without any discussion. Unfortunately it has been proved that this was right' (AI04-04.09.13).

The other constituted commission, the Royal Commission, created in April 2011 and formed by ten senior officials, aimed at reviewing Jordan's Constitution (2012n). A somewhat fundamental lacuna of this committee was that it did not include any political opposition or civil society representatives. In the summer of 2011, the state published the proposed reforms via the Royal Commission, the Cabinet, and the Royal Court.

Several groups from the traditional opposition parties, as well as young activists that had initiated their organisational efforts in early 2011, announced their rejection of these reforms, claiming that they did not meet the basic demands voiced in demonstrations. Both the National Dialogue and Royal Commission's proposals have been criticised by sectors of Jordanian youth. Their criticism has mainly been directed towards the implementation of the proposed amendments. These initiatives have been particularly spurned because of a perception that there is a lack of real representation for popular voices, and youth representatives such as the leaders and organisers of grassroots social movements such as the HSU since 2011 (Tarawneh, 2011a).

Despite this criticism, the Royal Commission's proposals were enacted as constitutional amendments in 2011. Among these amendments, in 2011 all the clauses related to the dissolution of parliament, in force since 1974, were deleted. Currently, it is not possible for the country to be ruled without the existence of the parliament. Probably of greater relevance for activism and social mobilisation, the 2011 constitutional amendments introduced a clause ruling that no civilian can be judged by a court not entirely composed of civilians, thus outlawing mixed courts with military judges. However, this clause comes with three major exceptions: grand treason, terrorism, and espionage. As we will explain later, the ambiguity and selective application of laws related to freedom of expression or terrorism have resulted in a situation in which activists are being judged through the State Security Court, also introduced in 2011, under the 'grand treason' exception. Amal, activist and legal researcher at Tiber in Jabal Amman, whom I interviewed for this project to talk about the legal

framework in which activism exists in Jordan, particularly in relation to laws governing freedom of expression and freedom of the press, explained that:

‘The most interesting part about the State Security changes is that they keep telling you that civilians will no longer be trialled under a Military judge, under a Military system in the State Security Court. However the changes say that you can have a civilian judge that is determined and identified by the Military institution while the lawyer that defends the government side can still be Military and it is only two out of three judges in the trial who can be civilian, and even these people are even decided by the Military institute on its own. So it is still very militarised while they try to tell people that it is otherwise’ (AI22-20.10.14).

The 2011 constitutional amendments furthermore introduced a constitutional court while dissolving the country’s previous highest court. This constitutional court, explains Amal, is intended to be a space where ‘you can question the constitutionality of certain laws’ (AI22-20.10.14). However, she continues, ‘the entities that can question the constitutionality of different laws are already entities that have been selected by the king’ (AI22-20.10.14). Citizens are not entitled to access this court and question the constitutionality of laws; ‘you cannot use it as a citizen’ (AI22-20.10.14).

This liberal move, that apparently intends to advance the ‘democraticness’ of the country, does not reduce the power of the regime. Nor does it increase possibilities for participation in any way. In words of Aida, colleague of Amal at Ziber with whom I meet before lunch at Ziber in Jabal Amman to talk about the legal framework in which activism exists in Jordan:

‘Creating a constitutional court, for example, with a lack of democracy, I think was actually very harmful rather than beneficial. In the past individual judges were able to say that this law is unconstitutional, obviously in particular cases. Now only specific people have the authority to send it to the constitutional court, so individual judges no longer can say that. The constitutional court, like the higher court of justice, is not independent’ (AI21-09.10.14).

As part of the set of liberal political moves from the Jordanian regime, the Jordanian Constitution was ‘written to ensure that the president or king has ultimate power’ (Brumberg, 2003 p. 8). Constitutional amendments are the continuation of this initial aim of constitutions in liberal autocracies; amending the constitution in these states will only provide a superficial reform, without substantially changing the core authority of the regime. Blogger Naseem Tarawneh posted in his *The Black Iris* website that ‘much of the praise over these amendments are akin to a hungry dog being given a bone; convincing him it’s a steak isn’t much of a problem’ (Tarawneh, 2011b). As we have seen with the 2011 constitutional amendments, the Jordanian regime has continued with its long-term strategy.

In response to the 2011 constitutional amendments, activists of the HSU launched an online petition against what they considered ‘constitutional patches’, rejecting them for being ‘superficial’ and ‘cosmetic’^{xiv}. Through this initiative, activists demanded more substantial reforms in the Constitution that would result in a completely elected parliament, in an elected parliamentary government, and guarantees of public freedom^{xvi}. This initiative by the HSU had

a positive response in society. Only two hours after being launched, the campaign managed to collect 142 signatures. According to movement activists, soon after being launched, the website created for this online petition suffered disruption attempts (2011h).

As well as the aforementioned reforms, conciliatory moves by the Jordanian regime have included holding elections, both municipal and parliamentary. The call for elections at specific moments of time can be analysed as part of this overall controlled political liberalisation strategy, and have had negative effects in weakening the HSU's collective organisation and strategy. These political moves by the Jordanian regime are a matter of divide and rule, where formal electoral processes drive activists to shift the national focus of their activism. Before the end of 2011, the Jordanian regime called for municipal (in mid-2011) elections, a move that had severe organisational and strategic repercussions in the formation period of the HSU. Municipal elections had a negative impact on the national character of collective action that was gaining strength during the first months of 2011, and managed to temporarily localise collective action into municipalities.

They were proposed as a way of introducing a decentralisation of power deemed necessary to cluster the country regionally and introduce matching economic development plans that were often the state's official plans throughout the 2000s. At the same time as municipal elections were called for, the state introduced a plan that was widely seen as a move intended to disperse activists into local groups that were easier to manage and less prone to widespread national mobilisation that would pressure the state. This plan

evolved around the fact that the law allowed new municipal detachments. Around thirty-five new municipalities were introduced, pushing local groups to organise as a way to defend their regions' rights and public spending allocations.

Balancing centralised authoritarianism with the decentralisation and localisation of power has been a balancing act put forward by the Jordanian regime since the 1980s (Abu Shair, 1997, Al Oudat and Alshboul, 2010, Doan and Adas, 2001). This strategy, whereby power was localised through tribes in different municipalities, in conjunction with a method that co-opts tribal leaders to become pillars of support for the centralised regime has been critical to preventing local groups, particularly with tribal adherence, from turning against centralised power during periods of national and regional turmoil. As well as through the creation of municipal detachments and holding municipal elections, other specific examples of local policies as part of this strategy have included local development plans, among which the most recent ones put forward since 2011 have been the As-Samra Wastewater Treatment Plant (WTP) in Az-Zarqā' or the improvement of Treatment Plants in Al-Karak and Al-Shobak (OECD, 2014).

Due to the effectiveness of the call for municipal elections in localising the national struggle, and activists focus on mobilising to secure their localities' resources, the start of 2012 was marked by political polarization, local mobilisations, increasing and decreasing coordination of activity, and the state's initial success in co-opting the Muslim Brotherhood and independent figures known for the tribal base or influence through favouring openness for a

negotiated reform. The state at that point responded through a new wave of neoliberal policies and legislations, as a continuation of the controlled liberalisation strategies. This had become a characteristic state strategy since 1989, which relates to budget, restructuring the public sector, and drafting new laws on taxation and social security. During the first half of 2012, activists took their position on the laws that were being introduced.^{xlvii} Escalating mass mobilisations took place around the decisions of structuring the public sector. The teachers' movement for unionisation actively mobilised around negotiations to draft the legislation and regulatory code for their newly established union. They managed to mobilise densely against restructuring decisions on the 14th February 2012 attracting around 10,000 demonstrators to the door of the Prime Minister's office.^{xlviii}

Further sector-based mobilisations continued throughout the spring.^{xlix} These mobilisations became more influential at a local level where more successful mobilisations took place due to the increasing politicisation of activists who positioned themselves against the aforementioned liberal moves. After a period of localisation that followed the municipal elections, and in response to the liberal moves put forward by the regime, activists reacted by starting to come together on calls for reforms, anti-corruption, against cuts, and neoliberal designs for price increases in gas, electricity, and food items. At this point, in spring 2012, the HSU was organised as the umbrella for these young activists who had been organising since the 24th March 2011. Regime counter-strategies continued following similar dynamics of reform, considered superficial and ineffective by activists of the HSU. Discontent built up to the peak of

radicalisation in the episodes of *habit tshrīn* in November 2012 analysed in the preceding chapter.

The peak of radicalisation of November 2012 has been considered, as Omar puts it in his interview, 'a true popular uprising' (AI01-31.07.13). Although for the movement *habit tshrīn* 2012 reminds them of the wide-spread protests of 1989 analysed in chapter four of this thesis, the conciliatory moves put forward by the regime in response have been more limited. In words of Omar:

'When you compare what happened in 1989 and these benefits I told you about, with November 2012, when nothing happened, not a single concession was given, this gives you an idea about the strength that the regime saw in the '89 Uprising as compared to the proposed or prospected strength in the November 2012' (AI01-31.07.13).

The apparently conciliatory moves that the regime has proposed, framed under this controlled political liberalisation, have been possible through the use of other actors included in the aforementioned 'national consensus', particularly political parties and other traditional opposition groups. As asserted by Albrecht, it is important to recognise that:

'in the authoritarian Middle East, these institutions exist, often as part of, and an expression of, a larger landscape of societal challenge and opposition... however the objectives and functions of these institutions are not as significant an influence on political participation in these regimes as they are in democracies... the majority of citizens in the Middle East do not express themselves politically through these institutions of political participation...

[as] they play a very limited role in political participation compared to democratic countries' (2008, p. 22).

After the 24th March 2011 sit-in, organised by young activists independent of political parties, these groups managed to move the initial demands of social justice, dignity, freedom of expression, and the end of economic and political corruption in the country, to liberal political moves that would not threaten the economic or political power of the regime. In the words of Omar, the trend in Jordan was one where you saw 'elites trying to win over, or trying to create street or to create popular protests for their own opportunistic benefits' (AI01-31.07.13).

As well as being useful to divert initial demands forcing young activists to reconsider their claims and strategy, using the card of political parties was useful to absorb part of the youth that had participated in the 24th March 2011 sit-in. A clear example of this strategy is the Muslim Brotherhood organisation, a traditional opposition organisation in Jordan that has been part of this national consensus since the 1980s (Larzillière, 2012). The MB played a key role in absorbing part of the unorganised, independent, and unaffiliated youth that mobilised on the 24th March sit-in into the MB structure in the form of what activists among them Hassan call a 'child' movement (AI20-29.09.14), the *Al-Hirāk Al-Shabāb Al-Islāmī* (Islamist Youth Movement). The creation of this 'child' movement has been widely seen as a top-down move to control youth. As expressed by Bondokji, 'it took effort and wisdom from MB leaders to control the youth and clarify that what happened in Tunisia and Egypt could not be attempted and would not be appropriate in Jordan' (2015 p. 8).

This strategy put forward by the Jordanian regime through the use of traditional opposition parties resulted in a win-win situation for both the regime and the Muslim Brotherhood. On one hand, the regime was able to divide youth along religious and ethnic divisions, mobilising once again its identity politics strategy analysed in chapter four of this thesis, which ‘precludes the articulation of a universal vision for social change’ (Bernstein, 2005 p. 51). As expressed by Khaled during the interview carried out for this project, ‘the regime has succeeded, to a certain degree, in creating a feeling of hatred, and in dividing, the people on the streets through the traditional and classical political parties’ (AI02-24.08.13). On the other hand, as explained by Hakim and Hassan, the MB managed to preserve its social support base gaining legitimacy by ‘including’ youth into their structure, and found the opportunity to divert part of the youth towards putting forward demands that would benefit them politically (AI20-29.09.14, AI19-22.09.14). I meet Hakim at the Muslim Brotherhood Association Headquarters in Jabal Hussein in Amman, an evening in September 2014. Hakim, university graduate and Journalist in his early twenties at the time of our interview, had started organising the *Hirāk Al-Shabābī* in Kerak at the beginning of 2011, before moving later to Amman to become one of the organising members and spokesperson of *Al-Hirāk Al-Shabāb Al-Islāmī* (the Islamist Youth Movement).

Young activists that resisted this move and organised under the HSU expressed their belief in the impossibility of creating coalitions with these other youth movements, considered ‘child’ movements compromised by their relations to ‘controlled’ political parties. As explained by Seraj, ‘youth groups that are related to political elites, organizationally they depend on the political

leaders, so maybe this can be difficult for our relationship with them... Some of them, they have to inform their leaders and tell them that we will do an activity with this group' (AI04-04.09.13). These alternative youth movements created during this period have managed to absorb part of the youth that initially participated in the March 24th events. This could be due to several factors, including: these movements' organisational experience; the institutional character they provide as 'mother' institutions; and their resonance in society that results from their strategic use of ethnic and religious frames for mobilisation, which still have huge resonance in Jordanian society. As explained by Ibrahim, 'because they were young and inexperienced, it left such a big vacuum to be co-opted, to be manipulated, to be hijacked' (AI23-04.11.14).

As well as in terms of notably reducing the HSU's participants, this strategy by the regime resulted in reducing the radical positions among young activists. Although the example I have presented here of the MB's child movement is the most significant in this sense since 2011, the strategy of trying to absorb radical elements outside the scope of the regime by using political parties of all the ideological spectrum already existed before 2011. As explained by Omar during his interview for this project:

'The last time that I was arrested was in 2002, a long time ago, I have been harassed and arrested by the regime. But during those times of arrestment, all the time interrogators were telling me: "why the hell aren't you in one of the leftist parties?" They were kind of encouraging me, in a way, to join kind of the classical leftist parties in Jordan because it is obvious that then the hierarchy of the party, the infiltration, being itself

part of the regime's framework, it is much better for the regime to control these elements' (AI01-31.07.13).



Image 14. Photograph of a clothes-shop's showcase on popular Rainbow street in central Amman. Taken by the researcher on the 16th July 2013.

Apparently conciliatory moves by the regime have been coupled with repressive ones towards activists of the movement which can be classified into two lines: through legislation and through direct harassment, surveillance, and arrests. In this last part of the chapter, I will now turn my analysis towards these repressive moves and the overall closing of the political opportunity structure in Jordan since 2013, particularly during 2014. As Suleyman explained, 'the challenge is the challenge of the regime, it is the strongest, repressing through laws, and arrests, threatening workers, threats of arrests' (AI06-05.09.13).

This closing opportunity structure has meant increasing threats to activists of the HSU, to the extent that the regime has become the main challenge to mobilisation today. In words of Ibrahim:

'In that window of opportunity as many of us see it, you have people driving home their ideals, and protests are here, and people write very brave articles, etc. And then slowly that window closes. There is always this conscious realisation that the window will eventually close, and with that comes this unconscious fear of what happens when that window closes. And usually that means arrests, usually that means rounding people up, detaining people, coming up with new legislation to address new contexts and find new ways, and that was something else that they did' (AI23-04.11.14).

It is necessary to frame this second part of our analysis on the Jordanian regime's counterstrategies towards the HSU's action in a regional context of intensified conflicts, particularly in Egypt and Syria, and as part of an intentional use of the discourse of instability that has been utilised by Arab regimes, including Jordan, as a justification for closing the grip on political activism. Throughout the extensive periods of participant observation carried out for this project, it became obvious that securitisation was legitimised in mid-2011, when the conflict in neighbouring Syria started escalating to eventually become the current civil war. The conflict brought about a huge influx of refugees into Jordan through the northern border, posing a potential destabilising threat to an already internally unstable country. With the intent of stabilising the country, there has been an increase of foreign aid to Jordan (Obeidat, 2011), and the King has added over \$1 billion to the subsidy bill (Pelham, 2011).

The foreign aid that Jordan receives comes not only from the US and the EU, but so too from the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, a bloc of countries that has become an important donor in its objective of consolidating the stability of its neighbourhood (Kamrava, 2012). Jordan has asked for Saudi Arabian support to push the development of a free trade agreement between Jordan and the GCC, intended to boost investment ties between Jordan and the Arab Gulf monarchies, especially with Saudi Arabia (Obeidat, 2012b). Moreover, the invitation of the GCC to Jordan and Morocco is seen as a Saudi initiative aimed at stabilising the region (2012a), and including these two Arab monarchies in the council would create a sort of 'club of Arab monarchies' (Razoux, 2011).

This foreign aid has served to further develop the security apparatus and the military in Jordan during this period as a policy of further securitisation. This increased aid towards Jordan could have resulted in an increased awareness and presence of the (already massive) security forces which is reflected in the creation of 21,000 new security positions, only in the first months of 2011 (Vogt, 2011). Security in Jordan mainly depends on the General Intelligence Department (GID), commonly referred to as the *mukhabarat*.¹ As Ibrahim explained: 'they are dealing with millions, they are dealing with so many people that they employ that are everywhere. It is not a centralised thing, it is everywhere' (AI23-04.11.14).

Leen Kayyaht, activist of the HSU who is also a human rights lawyer, explains that 'authorities use instability to justify a "security mentality" in Jordan' (Su, 2013). This national discourse is strengthened during periods where

regional conflicts are intensified and radicalised. Since the radicalisation of the conflict in neighbouring Syria, Jordan has seen an influx of high numbers of Syrian refugees which have worsened the economic pressures in the country, and these refugees and revolutionary processes have been used to justify further securitisation policies in Jordan. This has been particularly the case of the new anti-terrorism law approved in June 2014 which we will analyse in the following pages. Kayyaht explains that ‘they say, “Do you want security or freedom of expression? Do you want to see your house safe from bombing or do you want freedom of assembly?” When you construct a choice like this, people start to feel fear”’ (Su, 2013).

Repressive moves put forward by the regime towards activists of the movement have firstly been possible through legislation. The application of the law in Jordan is, as explained by Amal, ‘selective’, but ‘rigorous’ ‘when it is the government wanting to limit or constrain certain groups because they have not been abiding by the law’ (AI22-20.10.14). This dichotomy is made possible through the ambiguous language used in drafting laws. As described by Aida, this is one of the ‘well established practices in Jordan, where the law is vague and the implementation is arbitrary’ (AI21-09.10.14). The theme of arbitrary law and selective application of legislation towards activists of the movement is a recurrent one in the interviews to activists carried out for this project. In the words of Ibrahim:

‘So many international eyes were on Jordan and the rest of the Arab world, that instead of just doing things kind of arbitrarily, they found ways to do it through legislation, through Press and Publications Law, and amending the constitution through the latest one which is the Anti-Terror

Law, and now they are rounding up people who are posting things' (AI23-04.11.14).

In Jordan, two laws passed since 2011 have been particularly harmful and repressive for the organisation and the strategic articulation of the HSU: the new Press and Publications Law passed in August 2012; and the new Anti-Terrorism Law, approved on the 1st June 2014. These two laws are intended to regulate, control, and limit freedom of speech in the country, guaranteeing 'freedom of speech but not freedom *after* speech' (Brumberg, 2003 p. 8). Offering greater freedom of expression, particularly of the press, and removing some restrictions on freedom of association are among the steps in classical mechanisms of contention ascribed to processes of controlled political liberalisation (Kramer, 1992). However these freedoms are accompanied by limits to the laws which include taboo topics and limiting the scope of legitimate political expression and action. The Jordanian New Press and Publications Law approved in August 2012 is a clear example of this.

During her interview, Aida explains that the new Press and Publications Law of August 2012 intends to regulate 'speech', understood as speech through any medium, this is from newspapers and publications (as in the name of the law), to 'screaming it in public' or expressing yourself online. From the beginning we see that the application of the law is ample and ambiguous; it is: 'overreaching. You don't know how this will be applied' (AI21-09.10.14). Moreover, Amal adds that it is used to regulate public and private speech through any channel, by leaving loop holes and open areas. The law, she continues, has been developed to regulate was described by one interviewee

as the 'seven sins of speech' (AI22-20.10.14), namely criticising the King or his family, calling for an overhaul of the governing system, criticising the military institution, criticising public morals and religion, disrupting the relationship with other countries, disrupting public conduct, and expressing support for terrorism. Let us disentangle the ambiguities of the law, particularly through how it can affect social mobilisation.

Overall, the major problematic presented in the law is the ambiguous language used in it. The first 'sin' of speech, criticising the King and his family, is presented literally as *insulting* the king and his family (*lèse majesté*), without further specification of what this includes. This ambiguity affects the sin of 'changing the system of governance', crime that activists have frequently been charged for and that has been passed to the State Security Court, as we will see later. Criticising the military, again, can be applied to anything that harms 'national security', without any further definition of what 'national security' means.

Amal explains that the law also protects areas of public morals and religion that have public and national support, 'using the national religious agreement in order to give yourself more authority to control other aspects of speech and information' (AI22-20.10.14), which is characteristic of liberal autocracies as we mentioned before. Finally, expressing support for terrorism is another of the criminalised sins of speech. This clause of course finds the ambiguity of what terrorism means and what can be considered a terrorist organisation. This ambiguity is not clarified neither in the Penal Code nor in the Terrorism Law that we will look into now. The result in words of Amal is that 'you

never know when you will be trialled based on this Terrorism Law in a Military State Court or in a Civil Court' (AI22-20.10.14).

We have briefly looked into the ambiguities and loop holes of the 2012 Press and Publications Law, and its dissuading effects on social mobilisation. However, the regulation of freedom of expression in Jordan cannot be understood without taking into account the Anti-Terrorism Law and the way it is applied. Several 'crimes' that would have to be regulated through the Press and Publications Law, such as changing the system of governance, criticising the military institution, criticising religion or public morals, or disrupting the relationship with other countries, have been sometimes trialled by the State Security Court. For example, many of the activists that were demonstrating since 2011 were not charged based on the Press and Publications Law, but through the State Security court, specialised on terrorism.

The new Anti-Terrorism Law was approved on the 1st June 2014 as an amendment to the original law n°55 of 2006 (2006). It has been denounced that these amendments 'are not in line with international Human Rights standards and treaties ratified by the Hashemite Kingdom' (2014d). Activists of the HSU and other young activists such as Hakim consider it a 'customised Terrorism Law, a law of the security services, and a law that can trial you for the simplest thing, just for thinking' (AI19-22.09.14). The first problematic point about the law is its broad definition of terrorism which 'criminalises facts unrelated to violent actions such as "disturbing public order", harming "the environment" or just presenting an "economic risk"' (2014d). In words of Hakim, 'the law came under

pressure from the security services and is specific for five situations, but it has huge ambiguities, and it can be used for many other things' (AI19-22.09.14).

As in the case of the Press and Publications Law, this ambiguous language allows authorities to bring perpetrators of alleged violations, before the State Security Court, with an extraordinary jurisdiction. This court lacks independence as it is directly linked to the executive branch and its members. Overall, this law has been perceived as a strategy from the Jordanian regime 'to offer a window for the government for criminalising and repressing any political opposition under the pretext of fighting terrorism' (2014d). Since its approval in 2014, activists of the HSU have been consistently trialled through the anti-terrorism law, and in the State Security Court. As expressed by Omar, 'whoever is outside the scope is arrested, sent to the state security court' (AI01-31.07.13).

'Labelling speech 'terrorism' doesn't hide the reality that Jordan is still intent on muzzling its citizens who speak freely. Jordan claimed credit for limiting the jurisdiction of its State Security Court, but in reality it left gaping loopholes for authorities to carry on business as usual' (2014a)

Legislative amendments and the selective application of the law have increased threats, becoming major contextual challenges for the organisation and strategic articulation of the HSU. Legislation is frequently presented by movement activists like Seraj as one of the 'substantive problems' (AI04-04.09.13), to which Suleyman adds that laws determine 'to what extent you were allowed to express your opinion and make demands that in your opinion are fair' (AI06-05.09.13). As well as increasing threats for activists of the

movement, Seraj explains that they pose threats for their families and for potential adherents of the movement:

‘There is a set of laws and there is a security apparatus that can put pressure on you in the work as activist, or puts pressure on your family, in the rights in general, at different levels’ (AI04-04.09.13).

As well as through an ambiguous legislation and a selective application of the law, the Jordanian regime has used infiltration, surveillance through social media and mobile telephones, street repression, and imprisonment to repress activists of the HSU. The Jordanian regime accepts the existence of individual radical voices as an approach that is used to show the increasing political openness of the regime. However, the way in which the regime has repressed activists of the HSU signals that individual radical activists become a problem when they became organised. In words of Omar:

‘There are radical individuals. And the Jordanian regime is tolerant of radical individuals, along its history, because they are a good source of saying “look at the democracy” [but] once the radical individual starts to organise, then it is hard line repression’ (AI01-31.07.13).

The first repressive move the Jordanian regime has promoted toward activists of the HSU has been infiltration. As explained by Ibrahim, ‘these groups are eventually infiltrated, they are co-opted, and those that are not, that remain the minority, are rounded up’ (AI23-04.11.14). Infiltration in the movement has aimed to first, divide the movement by creating clashes between activists to result in the movement’s internal fragmentation, and second, inform the regime about movement participants, their organisation, ideology or

strategies. Infiltration in the movement has been possible due to its informal internal organisation, and the fact that belonging to the movement is based on participation and not on a formalised membership process. Suleyman explains that 'it was easy for them to infiltrate the groups because of the lack of formal membership. So it was easy for anyone to access groups and create rumours about others. They made people doubt about the honesty of these activists' (AI06-05.09.13).

As well as gathering information on activists and on the movement's strategies through infiltration, a second mechanism of control was put forward by the regime through the surveillance. The internal communication of the movement was monitored, particularly on online media and mobile telephones, which, as expressed by Amin, were the main communicative channels used by activists (AI08-08.09.13). Social media and mobile telephones have been also used by the regime to create fear among activists and their families, thereby increasing threats to mobilisation. Activists have been frequently harassed and threatened for their action, and the majority of times these threats have been carried out by anonymous individuals who openly express their loyalty to the regime.

Although activists consider that they do not have proof to ascribe these surveillance and harassment moves to particular actors, some of them, such as Amin, do recall having received threats 'in the name of the King' (AI08-08.09.13). Furthermore, as Hakim expressed during his interview:

'Activists receive threats through their wives, their mothers, their children, through SMS, Facebook, Whatsapp, threats related to death, kidnapping,

beating, some activists received bullets to their houses. Social media pages of the regime threaten the activists and misinform about them, say lies about them, they fabricate videos, full of lies, fake and not true to put pressure on activists' (AI19-22.09.14).

Another strategy of repression put forward by the Jordanian regime to target activists of the movement has been repression on the street. Open attacks on protestors and harsh street repression has not been a strategy consistently adopted by the Jordanian regime; however, it has been put forward at particular moments in time.



Image 15. Street repression against movement activists on the 15th July 2011 in Downtown, Amman. Photo published on the HSU's Facebook page.

As well as through the use of anti-riot police, public repression on the street has been mainly exercised indirectly through the use of thugs or *balṭajjiyya*. Thugs have become well known among activists of the movement, and their presence and action has become a factor that has further increased the costs of mobilisation, as, in the words of Hassan, 'they follow protestors and break their cars, beat them, insult them' (AI20-29.09.14).

'The *mukhabarat* is the one who moves them [...] they already have shops in the Downtown. All of a sudden they gather all together and they start beating protestors. The first time when protestors were beaten in the Downtown, it was by these groups. They are known. They are known in the media. They are known by the police. They were standing with the police, normal. And everyone sees them [...] One time they followed me because I took a video of what they were doing. I was taking a video while they were hitting people, so they started following me because I took a video of them. I went to the police, and the police told me it was not their problem. As simple as that. And then I started running. We hid in a coffee shop' (AI20-29.09.14).

However, several incidents of repression on the street have been directly perpetrated by the security forces. An example of this direct repression during a nonviolent action undertaken by the HSU took place on the 30th March 2012. In a statement issued by activists of the movement the day after the events (2012p), the movement organised a peaceful sit-in in front of the prime minister's office to demand the release of political prisoners who were being trialled in the State Security Court. This action was framed in the same way as previous ones organised by the movement, however during 2012 the use of force against activists of the movement was becoming a 'norm', and as soon as the protest started 'a Public Security Official addressed the protesters through a speaker warning them not to cross redlines' (2012p). A participant recalled that:

'After about thirty minutes, a field official signalled the Gendarme and suddenly the protesters were raided and fiercely attacked, injuring five and arresting twenty-seven, all of which was documented by the cameras

of the press members that were present. The attacks were not meant to only dismantle the protest, but rather to humiliate and terrorise participants. The activists arrested were transferred to the centre police station in al Abdali Area, where a group of people later that night gathered in solidarity. For the second time that day, police forces suddenly attacked the group, brutally beating two members of the JYM before arresting them' (2012p).

Finally, the Jordanian regime has exercised repression through waves of imprisonment of activists. Hakim explains that it affected 'a huge number of activists, we are talking about more than 400-500 activists that were arrested' (AI19-22.09.14). This move further increased the cost of mobilisation by creating fear among social movement participants, their families, and in society in general. Ahmad explains in his interview that these waves of imprisonment are interpreted by activists of the HSU as 'a tool of pressure from the regime' (AI12-13.09.13) which is 'the best way to press and to squeeze the movement' (AI12-13.09.13).

Hassan explains that authorities 'identify the most vocal activists in the movement and directly imprison them. They charge them for asking for the fall of the regime, the head of state' (AI20-29.09.14). Furthermore, activists of the movement, their lawyers, and human rights organisations have condemned the mistreatment they received in prison. Activists in retention suffered from 'death threats, keeping them in solitary confinement, and forcing them to consume epilepsy medication' (Al-Samadi, 2012).

Imprisonment and bad treatment in prisons have on occasions made activists more convinced of the need to continue organising and taking action in Jordan. As one of the activists of the movement publicly stated, 'my detention, which has now surpassed thirty days, has made me more convinced that our demands for freedom and equality within a safe community are just' (Al-Samadi, 2012). During the interviews carried out with individual activists of the HSU, I was able to get a closer understanding of their experiences during their periods of imprisonment.

Although I could include many additional references to bad treatment in prisons in line with what I have described before, I have chosen the following account from Yusef's interview where he narrates the way in which his actions conditioned his life, his experience during that period, and the way in which it framed his activism afterwards:

'In two days in prison I saw death over 20 times, just because I burnt the photo of the king'. Yusef describes that during his arrest he asked to see one of the heads of the *mukhabarat* to tell him that: 'because of you I do not have a life, I do not have a job, I do not have education, I do not have family, I do not have anything'. In response he explains that he was beaten 'in the name of the King' and told that they are unable to control the way in which he has been 'rejected by the society'. After describing this episode of physical and psychological violence, he expressed: 'I do not care about my life because someone else took it and now I have decided to fight back' because this 'jungle' has 'made me an extremist' (A110-10.09.13).

Despite this account, generally the aforementioned repressive moves by the regime have been effective in creating a general feeling of uncertainty and fear among activists of the movement. Hassan explains that being imprisoned, 'this is something that one is scared of [...] the family might say [things], the people might gossip about you. Maybe you will not be able to find another job, maybe, maybe, too many things' (AI20-29.09.14).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that the HSU has been challenged by the state's counter-strategies to mobilisation, and the varying timescales of political opportunity structures, which has managed to almost completely demobilise the movement. Regime counter-strategy, as well as regional instability, have had an effect on the collectivities that had a more network-like less hierarchical organisation. Repression and violence on the HSU has resulted in wide-spread demobilisation and partial de-radicalisation of constituencies therein.

Chapter 7 Enduring Social, Political and Cultural Transformations: Framing Significance in *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement)

In this chapter I analyse the way in which HSU participants frame the political, social and cultural significance that the movement has had until now. I argue that HSU participants frame the significance of the movement mainly in the social arena concerns the creation and organisation of an informal, noninstitutionalised movement in Jordan and that it has altered the limits or 'red-lines' of political action or political expression tolerated by the Jordanian regime. Moreover, participants of the movement consider that it has been key in reintroducing national issues in the political debate. Finally, for participants of the HSU, their organisational efforts have been important in transforming the culture of activism in Jordan, which for them has the potential to transform the future of political participation and organisation. Despite these achievements, participants of the movement consider that there remain limits to the significance of this movement that result from various contextual factors which are important to point to in this analysis.

In order to support these arguments, this chapter is structured in the following way. I start by arguing against the static conceptualisation of 'success' offered by the PPT framework, and explain why it is not a useful term to study the case of the HSU. I then define social and political significance, and explain how this conceptualisation is more useful than PPT's concept of success for the

case of the HSU and for analysing the way in which individual participants frame this significance as part of their motivation. I follow with an analysis of the perceived strengths by HSU participants in terms of the political, social and cultural transformation that their action is perceived to have brought about, and then move to presenting the perceived its limits with respect to all three.

Rethinking *Success* in the *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement)

In this first part of the chapter, I will now present the concept of 'success' as defined by the PPT framework, and argue that the working definition conceptualised by PPT has a limited applicability for evaluating the success of the HSU. Furthermore, this first part argues for the use of the concept of 'significance' to study this particular case, defined through the PPT concept of 'resonance', which allows for a greater analytical focus on culture as a key element for any consideration of a social movement's outcomes.

Examining success is central to the study of social movements and their effects. PPT provides a definition of social movement success as the unfolding of 'a set of outcomes' (Gamson, 1975 p. 28) which can be of two types: acceptance and new advantages. First, success as acceptance is presented by the framework as the acceptance by its antagonists of the challenging group's existence. According to the PPT model, acceptance can be measured in terms of: consultation; negotiations; formal recognition or recognising that the challenging group is representative of a formally designated opposition group;

and inclusion, when the challenging group is included in the system (Gamson, 1975 p. 28). Second, success for PPT is defined as a set of new advantages when any of the demands that are put forward by the opposition group are achieved (Gamson, 1980 p. 1043).

The way in which social movement success is conceptualised by PPT is rigid, fixed and limited to the state, and that limits its applicability to the case of the HSU in three ways. The first limit to the application of this concept for my case is related to the timeframe. Given that the movement is relatively new and, although weakened, its structure still exists, it is still not possible to analyse concrete outcomes of its action. Given that success is defined in PPT as a set of outcomes, and is evaluated through the analysis of these outcomes, it is not possible to apply this concept of success in the analysis of the HSU.

The second and third limits to applying this concept for the case study are related to the goals of the movement. The second limit to using 'success' in the analysis of the HSU lies in the fact that this movement does not demand 'acceptance' as defined by PPT from its dominating antagonist, the Jordanian regime. Therefore, acts of consultation, negotiation, formal recognition, and inclusion in the system, would not be considered by activists of the movement to be a successful outcome of their activism. Finally, the third limit to applying this concept in my study is that the movement does not demand political 'advantages' in the system; movement activists seek systemic change either via reform or wholesale substitution.

Due to these limits to PPT evaluations of a social movement's 'success', in this study of the HSU, I prefer to evaluate the significance of the movement at the social, political and cultural levels. With the concept of 'significance' I refer to the quality of being important, and to the quality of having notable worth or influence (Meyer and Kretschmer, 2007 p. 541). More precisely, when evaluating the significance of a movement, we have to measure the capacity of the movement in bringing about change.

Although the concept of 'success' provided by PPT is limited in its application to the present analysis, the framework does also provide the concept of 'resonance' which is related to 'success' and is useful for analysing the significance of the HSU. The concept of 'resonance' is 'relevant to the issue of the effectiveness or mobilizing potency of proffered framing' (Benford and Snow, 2000 p. 619). For PPT, the varying effectiveness^{li} of *framing processes* is defined in terms of two factors: credibility, and salience (Benford and Snow, 2000 p. 620). Although, as aforementioned, I will not be engaging with the concepts of success or effectiveness of the movement due to the limits of their applicability in the Jordanian case, the concept of 'resonance', defined through the factors of 'credibility' and 'salience' are useful and will be applied throughout this chapter to evaluate the HSU's significance at a social, political and cultural levels.

I will now turn to breaking down the concept of 'resonance' which will be useful for the analysis of the HSU's significance. A movement's 'resonance', in other words, its effectiveness or mobilising potential, is measured in terms of credibility and salience of the movement's frames. First, the 'credibility' of a

particular frame is presented by PPT as dependent on three factors: the consistency between beliefs, claims and actions inside the movement; the empirical credibility of the movement's political framing in the eyes of potential adherents; and the personal credibility of frame articulators (social movement activists) themselves. On the other hand, salience also depends on three factors: centrality, or 'how essential the beliefs, values, and ideas associated with movement frames are to the lives of the targets of mobilization'; experiential commensurability, or resonance with personal, everyday, experiences of the targets of mobilization; and finally narrative fidelity (Benford and Snow, 2000 p. 621).

Overall, using the concept of 'significance' defined around the aforementioned PPT concept of resonance, that examined the variables of credibility and salience, is more appropriate for my analysis because it allows me to incorporate a wider set of social, political and cultural factors that are relevant to understand the way in which HSU participants frame the significance of their action in the Jordanian context. As we will see in the following pages, multiple and varied factors, particularly cultural, are key to answer the question on the way in which significance of the HSU is framed by movement participants, and it is relevant to broaden the analysis to include issues such as: social-psychological changes in values, beliefs, and opinions; cultural as a set of signs and the meaning of those signs; and cultural as the framing of a worldview and a social situation (Tarrow, 2011 p. 231).

Framing Social Significance in *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement)

I shall begin by exploring the way in which HSU participants have framed the social significance or the social resonance of the movement. I argue that overall, movement participants frame their action as having been socially significant in terms of managing to create, organise and sustain an informal, noninstitutionalised movement in Jordan. However, certain perceived limits in terms of the movement's social significance remain in relation to the resonance that it has managed to have in the Jordanian society, which has owed a great deal to the movement's political and social operating context. In order to put forward this argument, the analysis incorporates the perceived strengths and limits of the movement's social significance, i.e, its resonance, by exploring its credibility and salience in Jordanian society.

Movement participants frame the HSU's main strengths in terms of social significance have been the social compliance with a different type of politics, the perception of having revived the political debates in society, and mobilising demands that were central to large social clusters. First, the existence of the movement as an informal, non-institutionalised organisation is perceived to have given hope to many people in Jordanian society that did not believe in politics anymore. This refers back to the resonance of the movement in terms of their credibility in the eyes of potential adherents. A worsening economic situation and the inability of existing formal political organisations to solve everyday social and economic grievances of the majority, led other people in the society to realise the need for other forms of politics to exist. Despite the weakness in terms of support that we will examine in the following pages, the

presence of alternative forms of politics was initially supported by society as a necessity to promote solutions to domestic socio-economic issues. In words of Suleyman:

‘With time, most of the people started to accept the idea... with the bad economic situation, people started to understand that there is a social movement that has to carry out its role even if it was weak or people joining it or accepting the idea of it was weak’ (AI06-05.09.13).

Alongside this perceived resonating and socially-compliant message that promoted a different vision for politics that would address everyday social and economic grievances, the second way in which HSU participants framed the movement’s social significance has been marked by what they see as the reinvigoration of national social, economic, and political debates within the Jordanian society. For participants, this has resulted in a society that has expressed increasingly vocal demands at particular periods; according to Khaled, this is a reflection of the HSU’s efficiency in ‘creating a situation of refusal and nonconformity which now exists in the country’s social and political reality’ (AI02-24.08.13).

Moreover, although the limits created by the increased threats to mobilisation have had a great effect on the mobilisation of particular social clusters, to be further examined below, the movement’s activities are seen by movement participants to have created spaces for dissent even among un-mobilised individuals with critical views of the system, especially in terms of

socio-economic grievances and among economically disenfranchised social clusters. As Ahmad explained:

'It gave the space for people to talk against stuff in general. People used to be scared or they used to not mention anything for example that has to do with the King or whatever the Government itself. And now people have this space. Everyone talks. Whoever... if you walk on the street or get into a cab or sit beside someone in a restaurant, everyone talks now. It gave people the space' (AI12-13.09.13).

Finally, resonance was perceived to have been partly achieved by the movement through mobilising demands that were central to large social clusters, and congruent with personal everyday experiences. Participants consider that the HSU managed to be socially significant and resonated with society because of its salient strategy of highlighting demands that were essential and resonated with everyday experiences of Jordanian society. For them, this was particularly so with topics related to social equality or justice, central for the movement. In words of Seraj, who presents himself as secular, social resonance 'depends on the topic. They might not accept or support you if you have a particular religious opinion, but they would agree with you on the topic of social equality' (AI04-04.09.13). Overall, movement activists consider that one of the key ways in which their social significance could be evaluated would be the consideration that their message directly addressed the people; that their demands included issues that affect people's everyday lives.

Hassan, referring to such campaigns as the *Samtak Bikalfak*, analysed in chapter five on movement strategies, explains that 'what inspired me to continue for some time was the response of the people to the ideas that we had' (AI20-29.09.14). This 'inspiration existed for a period, and then it disappeared' (AI20-29.09.14). During the *Samtak Bikalfak* campaign, he explains, 'people cooperated with us, cooperated with us in a strong way. During protests, you felt that you reached what the people need. They collaborated and started joining you on the street' (AI20-29.09.14). Activists interviewed for this project strongly feel that, because they conceive their activism as being directed to the people, the periods when people responded positively to their action, particularly when recognising their work as one that talked about them and that was close to them, were the ones that inspired to continue.

Although the movement has been socially significant at these three levels, Suleyman explains that 'the main challenge was talking to the people' (AI06-05.09.13). As narrated by HSU participants in the interviews carried out for this project, their perception is that the movement has particularly encountered limits to its ability to resonate in society which are key to understand its current situation. Sara explains that sometimes, 'people are not that accepting; it is not because of them, but it is because of the whole regime and how the system was built. So they do not give you a space to be able to work in freely' (AI13-13.09.13). Although the movement's mobilisation has been clearly determined by the threatening and adverse conditions imposed by the Jordanian regime in the last period, as analysed in the preceding chapter, an analysis of the perceived social significance and resonance of the movement

should also incorporate an analysis of the concept of credibility at three levels: frame consistency, empirical credibility, and credibility of frame articulators.

The first limit perceived by participants to the movement's social significance is related to frame consistency, which greatly determines the movement's resonance and credibility in society. The strategic framing processes within the HSU, as analysed in the chapter on social movement strategy, is characterised by an inconsistency of frames, and a weak articulation between beliefs, claims, and actions in the three-step strategic framing process (diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational). This weak strategic framing process has been perceived by HSU participants as one of the conditions that has affected the consistency of frames articulated by the movement, weakening the credibility of the movement and their capabilities for taking effective action in the eyes of the society. As Suleyman explained:

'We might have succeeded in building a good speech that includes people's demands, but our direction keeps finding obstacles because of the regional situation' (A106-05.09.13).

The second main perceived limit to the movement's strategic framing that has negatively affected the movement's social significance is related to its empirical credibility. In this sense, HSU participants consider that the presence of radical voices in the movement, together with the regime's use of the legacy media in order to portray the whole movement as exclusively radical, have hampered efforts at building resonance with the Jordanian society, which Ibrahim defines

already as 'a security-minded and stability-minded population' (AI23-04.11.14).

Sara explained that:

'In a similar way as when you refer to the American dream, we have the Jordanian one which is stability and security. So if you are trying to go away with whatever small line [sic] they are going to be against you and people are going to be against you because they are scared. And you cannot blame the people but rather you do blame the regime for this. And as you know the regime is always trying to prove that no, these people are trying to make whatever troubles in the country and stuff like that. So people become against you in general' (AI13-13.09.13).

This security-minded and stability-minded population is largely a result of the historically ongoing conflictive situation, where Jordan stands as a relatively safe-haven in comparison to other neighbouring countries. Ahmad explains that, to a great extent, 'to have a very radical thought for change is not accepted by the society' (AI12-13.09.13) and until today, 'the culture of the society it is a main block' (AI12-13.09.13). Despite the aggravating socio-economic grievances that the majority of the Jordanian society faces today, engaging in activism or in any type of social movement for change is generally discouraged in the Jordanian context. As Ahmad explained:

'Many Jordanian youth they were raised in a culture and by their parents' who do not agree with being politically active and participating in politics. Many young activists actually hide from their parents and never tell them

that they are participating in protests or in any social movement; 'it is a red area, do not enter it. Stay away from it' (AI12-13.09.13).

This cultural factor in Jordanian society is pushed to its limits at times of regional and national instability, when the regime acts, in words of Hakim, as a 'scarecrow for the people' (AI19-22.09.14), 'putting them in a scenario that has two sides: you are either on the side where you accept the existing corruption, or you will go to an unknown scenario like in Syria or Egypt or others where there is bloodshed' (AI19-22.09.14). The rejection of any type of radical position, and of any type of action that might be perceived as a factor of instability, is stronger during periods of contention; as has been the case for the HSU. Ahmad explains that 'people thought if I am political I will not work in the public sector, in the Army, the GID [military intelligence] will follow me, and they may call me for investigations. They may threaten me' (AI12-13.09.13).

An increasingly threatening national and regional environment, both politically and economically, since mid-2011, but more noticeable since 2013 and 2014, is perceived by HSU participants as one of the reasons resulting in a reduced the empirical credibility of the movement's actions over time. As Suleyman explained:

'We are in a society that until this moment rejects any informal politics, and this starts from your family. The family does not want to see you [thrown] out of the main political institutions. This is the main challenge. The society, the environment, the family, as we are living in a society

where familial links are strong, the tribal alliances exist until now' (AI06-05.09.13).

Given this widespread perception in society on political activism and social organisation as factors that could potentially destabilise the political situation in the country, an open engagement with the movement's activities has generally affected individual activists negatively. As Seraj explained: 'political activism affects your personal life in a clear way, including your relationship with your family, with your work, it affects you financially, it pressures you financially, even emotionally' (AI04-04.09.13).

The third and final limit to the movement's social significance that has been perceived by HSU participants as key and has occupied much of their discussion is related to the credibility of frame articulators; young activists themselves. This point is also related to culture and to traditional understandings of social structure and hierarchies. The Jordanian society, as in other MENA societies, is hierarchically structured, from the smaller scale family unit to the larger national societal unit, around gender and age (Barakat, 2005). Youth are perceived in Jordanian society as weak claim-makers that 'do not know what they do or what they want' because of this generational hierarchy in society. Because of this, the organisation of a movement by youth in this context necessarily 'entails the definition of a constituency as a meaningful group and the redefinition of that group's characteristics in opposition to dominant culture's definition of the group' (Whittier, 2002 p. 302). Throughout the extensive periods of participant observation carried out for this project it has become clear that this generational hierarchy is still a strong element in

Jordanian society and is perceived by HSU participants as an element that affects the way in which society receives their message. This element, coupled with the HSU activists' weak experience as frame articulators and the short-lived organisation they represent have been framed by HSU participants as limits the social significance of their activities in the Jordanian society.

***Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement) and Framing Political Significance**

Turning to the way in which HSU participants frame their political significance, I will explore the debate around three important contributions that they consider their actions have had with respect to: first, altering the forms of political action and political expression tolerated by the regime; second, reintroducing national politics into the political discussions in Jordan; and third, changing the culture of political activism for the future. The movement's activities have been framed by participants as having been politically significant at these three levels, which represent key elements and transformations for the study of Jordanian politics in the future.

The first factor to analyse in terms of the way in which the movement's political significance has been framed is the way in which it has been perceived to have shifted the 'red-lines' of freedom of political expression in Jordan; the way it is considered to have altered the forms of tolerated organised political action and expression. As expressed by Suleyman, 'there was a huge barrier that we broke' (AI06-05.09.13). The HSU was able to organise politically and

put forward radical demands at specific moments in time, and this occurred in the context of other regional revolutionary efforts. Omar explains that 'not everybody but a large number of people are talking about the King in ways that were unimaginable five years ago' (AI01-31.07.13).

Although the increasingly threatening national and regional context is perceived to have had a negative effect on the type of demands and the overall organisation of the movement, as we have seen in the preceding analysis, it is necessary to acknowledge the fact that movement participants consider that their action was able to alter, if only during a specific period in time, the limits of freedom of political expression in the country. As Suleyman explained:

The 'freedom that people have taken by their hand, and the freedom that they have exercised regionally; my right is to talk about whatever I want without harming anyone of course. The amount of freedom that people took; maybe this is the biggest success that I see until now, that individuals are able to talk, that they moved from whispering to talking' (AI06-05.09.13).

As well as altering the 'red-lines' in terms of freedom of political expression, HSU participants consider that the discourse put forward, mainly of national focus, was able to reintroduce national politics in the political debate in Jordan. Before 2011 Ibrahim explains that 'Palestinian politics were safe; they would talk about the peace process, anything outside. But local politics, it was not only fear, it was disinterest. No one was interested in it' (AI23-04.11.14). Political actors that were part of the opposition in Jordan before 2011 mainly criticised

the policies of the Jordanian regime in relation to its foreign policies towards Israel, its peace treaty with Israel, and on occasion the economic and political agreements with the US and its policies in the region. According to HSU participants, national politics were not discussed, and issues of passed conflicts, such as the 1970 Black September, or the identitarian divisions in politics and society were just part of the knowledge acquired from your family.

As Ibrahim put it:

‘All of this is not taught in schools. You know, 1970, the Civil War. This is not in our history books. It’s absent completely. It’s all inherited politics, a father telling his son his version of history. It’s just inherited politics. And that has created that identity crisis’ (A123-04.11.14).

The action of the HSU is considered by participants to have expanded this political discourse to necessarily include national socio-economic grievances derived from a deficient political system, thereby aiming to resonate in society by incorporating everyday life grievances in Jordanian society. Moreover, as analysed in the chapter on social movement strategy, movement activists themselves put forward an effort to re-frame identity politics, and to bring back national political issues key to understand the resulting social divisions.

The third and final key factor that contributes to understanding the way in which participants have framed the movement’s political significance is the fact that movement’s activities sustained during this period are perceived to have changed the culture of activism in terms of the transformation of individual participants and forging an organisational experience and culture. As we have

seen, PPT tends to narrow down the study of culture to frames, which is often considered a 'limited and distorted means of studying culture' (Meyer, 1999 p. 80). Moreover, PPT considers that the study of culture in social movements is opposed to structure, and this conceptualisation results in a 'narrow view of (political) structures as noncultural' (Polletta, 1999 p. 64). The way in which PPT studies culture in social movements has been criticised as 'structures *are* cultural' (Polletta, 1999 p. 64) and there is a need to analysing 'meaning as constitutive of structure' (Armstrong and Bernstein, 2008 p. 83).

The way in which PPT approaches the study of culture as above is limited for the analysis of the HSU and the framing of its significance in transforming the culture of activism in Jordan. Therefore it is necessary to study the 'culture within movements' (Meyer, 1999 p. 85) and explore the cultural effects of movements, which remains analytically 'underdeveloped' (Meyer and Kretschmer, 2007 p. 548). As we have seen in this chapter, HSU participants consider that the movement has faced challenges to its significance and resonance at the (macro) social and political levels. In order to complete the analysis of the framing of movement's significance, it is important to incorporate this final reflection on significance in terms of organisational culture which is key because 'symbols, meanings, and practices forged in the cauldron of social protest often outlive the movements that created them' (Meyer and Kretschmer, 2007 p.547).

Despite the organisational challenges that activists have faced, the symbols and meaning created during the analysed periods of contention endure until today, therefore this analysis of cultural significance of movements has to

necessarily be built on the micro and meso levels of inquiry (Staggenborg, 2002). First, a micro level of inquiry that focuses on the perceived transformation of individual activists that participated in the movement. Second, a meso level of inquiry where the analysis focuses on the way in which the activities of a particular movement are perceived to have built organisational experience that can be mobilised in the future. These two levels of cultural significance will shed light on the perceived deep cultural transformations that define the culture of dissent and resistance in Jordan today.

The transformation of individual participants is a key feature to explore in order to analyse the movement's significance in terms of building a culture of activism. In the words of Meyer and Kretschmer, 'someone who has forged a sense of self and values through collective action and tried to exercise political power through membership in a community of struggle will not readily submit to being acted on by distant authorities in the future' (2007 p. 548). Despite the limits to organisation or strategic building in an increasingly threatening context, and a decrease in organised collective action, activists continue interpreting 'their experiences in political terms and politicize their actions in both movement contexts and everyday life' (Meyer and Kretschmer, 2007 p. 548), changing the way in which they live.

As Ahmad explained, HSU participants consider that 'the change in the culture of activists in Jordan was a revolution' (A112-13.09.13). Despite the challenges to organisation and building strategies, which were posed mainly by the Jordanian regime but also by the society and imposed consequent limits to the movement's social and political significance and resonance, activists of the

HSU do not give up their struggle. As explained by Suleyman, 'the only option is to continue putting forward our demands and talking to authorities about our demands. We continue to talk with citizens about their rights, we have to continue' (AI06-05.09.13). Their individual motivations to continue being involved in their activities today is expressed by Hassan in terms of 'passion; it is the only thing that will move you' (AI20-29.09.14) and by Seraj as 'hope for a political path that I believe in' (AI04-04.09.13). The words of Suleyman and Ibrahim rightly capture a shared feeling among movement activists for whom a shared inspiration after their collective struggle is the endurance 'pain and suffering' (AI06-05.09.13) of 'people stretched to the max' (AI23-04.11.14) in the community and their 'massive' dissatisfaction (AI23-04.11.14).

Finally, HSU participants consider that their activities have been significant in changing the culture of activism in the country by building organisational experience that can be mobilised in the future. In threatening contexts in which mobilisation decreases as a result of the existence of repression, 'newly available organizational infrastructures can be used to sustain reformist contention in the near term as well as be radicalized to launch more disruptive and violent protest campaigns when opportunities recede and the political environment transitions to one characterized by mounting threats' (Almeida, 2003 p. 345). Despite decreased public and collective activities, movement activists share memories of their collective action, and the activities of movements 'seed mainstream politics and society with activists, organizations, and issues that animate change in the future' (Meyer and Kretschmer, 2007 p. 548).

In Jordan, activists of the HSU have managed to organise during the period of regional political opening that supposed the Arab uprisings and started in 2011. In the current period of political closure, although almost completely demobilised, the organisational structure endures. This organisational structure is not maintained by action in itself, but by the memories of collective action and suffering to which activists of the movement continuously refer to throughout the observation periods. For movement participants, the movement has therefore managed to provide a lasting organisational infrastructure and an organisational memory that can be mobilised in a future period of greater opening in the political opportunity structure. The words of Suleyman reflect this: 'I hope that maybe this generation of youth will achieve something real; even if it was a start, they will open a way for future generations' (AI06-05.09.13).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued first, that the concept of success as defined by PPT is not applicable for the case of the HSU, and that it is more appropriate to talk about significance. I have analysed the way in which HSU participants have framed significance at a social and political level and argued that movement participants have framed the significance of their action in the following ways: socially, the existence and organisation of an informal, noninstitutionalised movement in Jordan; and politically, altering limits of political action or political expression tolerated by the regime, or the 'red-lines' of freedom of political

action and expression in Jordan, and the reintroduction of national issues in the political debate.

Conclusion

This research has focussed on the HSU. It has examined its organisation, ideology and approach to collective action, as well as the strategies it uses to acquire significance in society and push for social and political change in Jordan. The project has sought to illuminate the new actors, new forms of organisation, and new strategies in this movement, as well as the challenges to organisation and the limits to bringing about change that participants encounter today.

This chapter outlines the project's empirical findings and summarises the main arguments that have been developed throughout the preceding chapters. It further affirms the way in which this project contributes to the academic conversation on both social movements in Jordan and in the MENA. Furthermore, it advocates the need for similar projects to study collective action and contentious politics in the MENA that focus on alternative structures and forms of organising. This will encourage thinking about the way in which alternative discourses develop and challenge dominant structures in this region. The chapter closes by indicating possible future lines of research and highlighting the insights that this type of study can make to the knowledge on transformations in societal dynamics and discourses in other cases.

Empirical findings in the *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement)

This thesis has presented the empirical findings about the HSU that have resulted from extensive periods of observation, over 30 months in total, starting in 2011. The empirical findings and arguments that have resulted from this research contribute to the conversation on social movements in Jordan. The in-depth exploration of the HSU has contributed to delineating part of the space that a more radical discourse for change occupies in social movements in Jordan. The dynamics and developments of the Arab Spring in Jordan have been subjected to academic scrutiny in recent years. Although they have received notably less attention than in other regional cases, there have been a series of important academic contributions that have told a story of what the Arab revolutions have meant for Jordan and its prospects for change. With the data collected for the project, this research aims to contribute to this conversation by providing the first comprehensive account that maps the organisation, strategies and significance of this youth-led and youth-organised movement in Jordan.

Empirically this thesis aims to be an initial exploratory analysis of the HSU at three distinct levels of inquiry: micro, meso, and macro. The aim of analytically combining these three levels of inquiry has been to provide 'greater clarity in the empirical case' (Staggenborg, 2002 p. 127). First, at a micro level, this thesis has focused on the analysis of individual enthusiasms and emotions. Throughout the different analytical chapters, the project has provided an analysis of individual participants in the movement, which includes their

demographic profile as well as the motivations and grievances that led them to become part of the organisation.

The empirical contribution of this thesis at a micro level adds to the literature on activism in Jordan, particularly to the contribution of Pénélope Larzillière on *Activism in Jordan* (2015), which provides an exploration of motivations, ideologies and careers of activists under the exclusionary Jordanian political system, both before and after the Arab Spring. Her aim in this volume has been to show how opposition movements have shifted from the underground before 1989 to a heavily controlled public sphere. This publication provides insight into the importance of Jordan as a stabilising factor in the contemporary Middle East through the perspective of controlling activism in the public sphere.

In this line, the thesis has found that, in the HSU, participants of the movement are demographically young, politically conscious, ideologically diverse, and ethnically plural. Male in their majority, participants include a minority of women that prioritise their economic needs instead of furthering gender-specific demands. We have seen how class is an important variable of self-identification among participants of the movement, who are working class, mainly from disenfranchised urban areas as well as from middle-income urban neighbourhoods and marginalised rural localities.

In terms of grievances of individual participants that motivate them to engage in collective action, we have presented them at two levels. Grievances are social and related to social injustice, lack of opportunities, and a lack of

freedom. These social grievances are linked to socio-economic problems identified by individual activists, which are explained in relation to the country's dependency, privatisation, and its social effects, particularly in terms of inequality. The socio-economic problems are related to political issues of concern for activists of the movement, related to the formation of governments, decision-making processes, and the lack of freedom, highlighting the authoritarian nature of the regime.

At a meso level of inquiry, this thesis has focused on analysing framing mobilising structures and activists' connections and networks. It has contributed to exploring the way in which the movement is organised, the structure that the movement has adopted, as well as the way in which strategies and action are put forward by the movement at different moments in time. Through this meso level of inquiry we have contributed to understanding that the HSU is formed of diverse constituencies —individuals, groups or unions—, which are loosely organised as an informal network. This informal network is based on pre-existing tribal, family, and friendship ties, which provided safety for young activists to establish their trust network and start mobilising at the beginning. As well as being a network-like organisation, internally the movement is non-hierarchical, and the internal decision-making process is democratic and participatory. Finally, the informal organisation of the movement is reflected by the lack of formal membership, where participation is based on individual involvement.

The empirical findings at this meso level of inquiry that looks at social movement organisation and strategy in Jordan adds to the conversation on

organisational dynamics in Jordan during the Arab revolutions, which has mainly focused on the role of existing political actors 'well integrated into Jordan's political landscape' (Barany, 2012 p. 7) and the political opposition and reform coalitions they establish in this period between them (Ryan, 2011b). Particular attention has been dedicated to major political actors including urban intellectuals, tribal elements, or the Islamic Action Front (IAF), the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood (Barany, 2012). Other contributions have explored the specific role of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in Jordan during this period of contention (Bondokji, 2015) particularly analysing the internal crisis in the organisation and the need for it to reform in a changing and challenging national and regional context. Finally, other organisations that have been studied in Jordan during this period are professional associations (Larzillière, 2012), which are presented as alternative contentious arenas that appeared in this period characterised by their ambivalent role between challenging and integrated positions.

Within this insightful literature on the latest period of contention and activism in Jordan, in-depth exploration of specific dynamics within movements in Jordan in this period can be found in Sara Ababneh's excellent contribution to understanding the role of women in the Jordanian Day-Waged Labour Movement (2016). In the same way as the HSU, the Day-Waged Labour Movement (DWLM) played a central role during this period. In her article, Ababneh's contribution provides an extensive exploration of the active and leading role of women within this movement. Through the analysis of discourse and structure of this movement, her study provides important lessons about the way in which the movement understood women to be embedded within

communities, prioritising their economic needs, and about gender-inclusive political and institutional reform.

Finally, from a macro level of inquiry, the thesis has focused on political opportunities and culture and their effects on the collective action of the HSU. The research has contributed to understand the movement, first, in relation to the political context and the Jordanian regime through analysing the way in which movement strategies and regime counter-strategies converse. Through the analysis, we have contributed to understanding that movement strategies are reactive and context-specific, and vary in time. Moreover, even if we are talking about a movement as a whole, there is a strategic variation between constituencies that adopt more confrontational strategies and those that prefer non-confrontational ones. Second, the macro level of inquiry contributes to understanding the movement in its social and cultural context, in relation to the Jordanian society. This macro level of analysis has especially contributed to identifying patterns and trends in the way in which the movement has been significant at a political, social and cultural level.

At this macro level of inquiry, the empirical findings of this project contribute to the academic conversation on the Arab Spring and collective action in Jordan in several edited volumes which have included chapters dedicated to this case study. Among them we can note the contribution of Pascal Debruyne and Christopher Parker, who situate protests in Jordan at the beginning of 2011 as 'responding to very real changes that had been brought about by more than a decade of rapid and dramatic neoliberal restructuring' (2015 p. 437). Their exploration of these events as mirroring regional efforts,

traces the protest dynamics back to the start of the 2000s to justifiably present them as the result of sustained efforts at organising efforts of many other social actors in preceding years.

Academic contributions have also aimed to advance the knowledge on contentious politics and protest in Jordan through different dimensions. Among them, Jillian Schwedler's research presents an insightful systematic examination of protests in Jordan over the years in regard to the dimensions of law, space, and spectacle (2012b); exploring these three variables since the 1950s to present protest as a recurring dynamic in authoritarian Jordan. In another article, this author explores the political geography of protest in neoliberal Jordan (Schwedler, 2012a) where she presents Jordan as a case where new strategies of non-democratic governance are emerging, and explores the expanding neoliberal economic reforms to shed light on broad dynamics of protest and contention.

This research builds on Schwedler's research by analysing the element of change in the structure of governance itself that the HSU builds its discourse around. This analysis shows that this movement is not exclusively about economic grievances or about different political ideologies, but that proposes a discourse of a shift in governance that could give people a chance to address these other issues. This analysis is in distinction to Schwedler's focus because it takes a bottom-up approach to the analysis by examining the organisation and elaboration of popularly organised youth demands in contrast to examining local responses to top-down 'neoliberal' policies put forward by the regime and the security apparatus.

Overall, combining the three levels of inquiry has been critical in this project in two different ways. First, the meso-micro link has helped to explore how characteristics of movement communities influence individual commitment and how meso structures are altered by leaders and activists. In this sense, it has been key to understand that the horizontal, non-hierarchical, organisational structure, and the democratic participatory decision-making processes in the movement, reflect the rejection of individual movement participants to hierarchical agents of socialisation, mainly formal (educational, religious, and political institutions) but also informal (family), and to the authoritarian nature of the Jordanian regime.

The meso-macro link has allowed us to examine the ability of different mobilising structures to exploit, and sometimes create, political opportunities and large-scale changes, as well as the ways in which large-scale changes alter mobilising structures. In this sense, we have analysed organisational and strategic weaknesses or limits of the movement in light of the challenging context of repression and conflict, and of activists' lack of previous organisation experience related to the limited freedoms of assembly or communication that characterise the opportunity structure in Jordan.

Reviewing the Arguments

Moving to summarise the arguments made throughout the thesis, this part is organised around the four analytical chapters that explore ideology and

organisation of the movement, movement strategies, regime counter-strategies, and significance of the movement. Moreover, it reviews the theoretical contributions made throughout the project.

In contextualising the study of the HSU in the Jordanian political context, the third chapter of this thesis, entitled 'Contextualising the Case: Jordan's Liberal Autocracy in Containing Social Mobilisation', has analysed the way in which the relationship between the Jordanian regime and social movements today has been historically constructed in Jordan. In this chapter I argued that the Jordanian regime has faced challenges to its authority since the 1950s, and that its development into a liberal autocratic system of authority since 1989 determines the way social movements organise and build their strategies, as well as the way in which the regime responds to challenges posed by social movements.

This chapter aims to analyse the context in which the HSU appeared, politically ruled by a regime that has consolidated a repertoire of counter-strategic measures for decades. Throughout the chapter I argued that the development of authority into a liberal autocratic system in Jordan has allowed the state to survive until today through the implementation of a calculated counter-strategy that combines liberal democratic conciliatory measures with repression and securitisation moves. This system of authority has effects at a social, economic, and political level and has historically determined expressions of social dissent and mobilisation in the country. Moreover, I argued that analysing this context is key to understand the way in which participants of the

HSU organised, built their ideology, and the significance of their activities for Jordanian society.

In order to elaborate this argument, the chapter provided a working definition of 'liberal autocracy' in the theory, and characterised the case of Jordan as one that corresponds with this theoretical definition of authority. This chapter then briefly introduced the period that preceded 1989 in Jordan, characterised by a brief period of contention followed by the implementation of martial law. The second analytical period considered in this fourth chapter of the thesis analyses the period between the 1989 April Uprising, and the early 2000s. This period has been presented as the beginning of the development of Jordan as a liberal autocracy after the lifting of martial law and by the realignment of state interests in society. Finally, this chapter turned to analyse the period since the year 2000, when social, economic, and political repercussions of this model became particularly evident with the rapid development of global capitalism and the engagement of Jordan in the Global War On Terror (GWOT).

We will now summarise the arguments outlined along the four axes of inquiry. This thesis has contributed to understanding the organisational characteristics of the HSU to find that it is an alternative form of political and social organisation in Jordan that extends the formalised organisational forms and therefore has the flexibility to try to transform social and political subjectivities. The HSU is the only youth-led and youth-organised movement in Jordan which 'includes some of the most active political organisers in the country' (2014e p. 74). This thesis has pursued four lines of inquiry around this

social movement in Jordan, around organisation, strategy, counter-strategy and significance, and has put forward the following arguments.

In chapter four of this thesis, titled 'Mapping *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement): Grievances, Aims, Structure and Ideology' the analysis has turned to the form that dissent takes in the HSU and the different constituencies and activists therein. The aim has been to explore the structure of the movement, its degree of institutionalisation and its internal organisation. Moreover, the chapter has characterised the activists that take part in the movement and how they construct the movement's ideology. This chapter has argued that movement participants have taken on an informal, non-institutional, and network-like form of organisation. This form of mobilising structure has been rationally chosen by participants, and has allowed internal ideological flexibility.

The HSU is an ideologically diverse movement that serves as an organisational umbrella that brings together individual young people with shared socio-economic and political grievances and aims. For participants, the fact that the movement is able to provide an organisational structure under which multiple ideologies find common ground to put forward their shared activism is one of the characteristics that give it power. Although different, there is some common ground as the majority of activists in the movement label their political ideology as leftist, socialist, communist, or nationalist, but that the ideological plurality allows for the participation of activists that are former Muslim Brotherhood (MB) members.

This research has also contributed to the discussion on the role that ethnicity plays in social organisation in Jordan. Social fragmentation and traditional ethnic fault lines have been at the centre of the conversation, presenting social dynamics and discourses as divided into 'two halves' (Pelham, 2011 p. 2). The centrality of identity politics in mobilisation (Ryan, 2011) had continued being central in the academic debate. The conversation has presented Jordan as a case in which both new and old opposition use identitarian divisions 'to advance their reform priorities' (Yaghi and Clark, 2014 p. 250), and where ethnic differences are 'the most decisive' (Barany, 2012 p. 23) factor. The detailed empirical exploration of the HSU outlined here contributes to the academic dialogue by incorporating different discourses in grassroots organisations in Jordan that do not mimic the top-down identitarian discourse. This case shows how discourses on class struggle and social justice are becoming more present in organisations that are able to remain independent from institutional actors in the country, aiming to critically recover the debate on class and inequality.

As well as bringing together youth of many different ideologies under a shared frame, another ideological characteristic of the movement that the research revealed is the existence of a radical-reformist spectrum within the movement. In this sense, the movement's informal structure and its detachment from institutionalised political actors have allowed for the existence of these radical constituencies and a radical ideology. This is due to the fact that it has managed to break with other politically institutionalised bodies, in the form of parties and movements, that have tended to encourage youth to demand further reform instead of more radical change. The analysis of this ideological spectrum

has moreover shown that it is flexible and changes in relation to the opening and closing political opportunity structure.

The research has argued that the way in which these two conceptualisations of change within the movement relate to each other is described by two main characteristics. We have come to understand that reformist activists and constituencies argue for the need to be flexible in terms of reconsidering a more confrontational strategy at moments of time where the context becomes increasingly threatening. We have tried to contribute to understanding the way in which individual participants with a radical approach to change perceive reformist activists; an approach based on convictions that reforms are unable to change the systemic problems and instead suggest that structural challenges must be addressed.

The literature has stressed the peaceful nature of social action and the centrality of calls for change at the governmental level (Anderson, 2015 p. 50). In keeping with this view, accounts have told a story of the Jordanian Arab Spring where there was an absence of radical or revolutionary demands due to the King's legitimacy and social support (Ottaway and Muasher, 2011 p. 9) and where 'no one publicly suggested abolishing the monarchy' (Barany, 2012 p. 8). These arguments have been supported in the literature by presenting the King as the 'thread that holds a divided country together' (Barany, 2012 p. 10), and have discussed the way in which this absence of radical discourses could be related to a 'fear of the alternative rather than any deep appreciation for [King] Abdullah himself' (Hamid and Freer, 2011 p. 4). Within this context of social movements, youth activists are presented in the academic conversation as

participants that 'moderated their demands' (Yom and Gause, 2012 p. 80) without questioning the position of the monarch. The in-depth exploration of the HSU in this thesis has contributed to this conversation around the existence of radical alternative discourses in social organisations in Jordan.

Perhaps most importantly, this research has foregrounded existing internal debates which have been recurrent among movement activists. These debates are mainly concerned with the challenges to organisation that they have faced. As we have seen throughout the thesis, although all activists interviewed and observed for this project consider that the main challenges for organising are posed externally by the regime, they acknowledge the existence of other internal challenges to organisation, including issues of funding, time and dedication to movement activities, the lack of organisational experience, the difficulty of managing emotions, dedication and commitment, and individualism.

This chapter has presented key features of the HSU that distinguish it. It has retained financial and political independence in the face of competition from larger, traditional, political parties and increasingly intolerant authorities. Its primordial focus on the domestic political scene also differentiates its politics. Despite this fresh approach, the HSU faces traditional and novel organisational challenges. Its focus on national politics allows it to bring together a range of varying ideological views yet consensus is not sought, thus perhaps limiting the directionality of the movement. More basic challenges such as travel funding and internal hierarchies were also discussed by interviewees. A striking feature of discussion with activists was their apprehension of social media as tool that undermined organisational coherence through the promotion of individualism.

This chapter has set out the way in which HSU's originality contributes to complementing the picture of dissent in Jordan. It also demonstrates the fundamental impact of the Arab Spring in shaping new forms and expectations particularly among an educated and transnational youth. It also denotes that fundamental limits of a self-organised movement that seeks to limit ties to traditional sources of political and social power (Mann, 2012). More broadly, this has important insights for traditional accounts of the Arab Spring's dissent; particularly those stressing exogenous factors such as Western-imported social media. It challenges generic literature that assumes hierarchical roots to social organising by demonstrating a movement that was not formed through homogeneous opposition or via the sponsorship of a regime or foreign actor. In fact, despite the transnational and educated views of its activists, their focus is almost wholly domestic.

Turning to the collective action strategy, chapter five of this thesis entitled 'Strategy in *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement)' has argued that the articulation of social movement strategy in Jordan must be understood as a dyadic relationship with regime counter-strategies. HSU's strategy has been analysed through the development of confrontational, conflict-oriented, and non-confrontational, consensus-oriented strategies therein, as well as the events that have affected this variation. The thesis argues that movement strategies are reactive and context-specific, and vary in time. Moreover, even if we are talking about a movement as a whole, there is a strategic variation between constituencies that adopt more confrontational strategies and those that prefer non-confrontational ones. Strategic weaknesses

or limits of the movement have been found to be a result of the challenging context and of activists' lack of previous organisational experience.

The analysis of social movement strategy has been carried out using three key concepts in Political Process Theory: political opportunity, mobilising structure, and framing processes. Analysing social movement strategy through these PPT concepts has allowed this project to present the following arguments. Taking into account political opportunity and the way in which it determines the strategies of a social movement allows an exploration of how a changing political opportunity structure in Jordan has resulted in a variation in the strategy of the HSU. Therefore, its strategies can be framed in terms of periods of increased and decreased confrontation.

Taking the timeframe from January 2011 until summer 2014, the analysis of social movement strategies points out to the way in which distinct episodes of harassment, waves of imprisonment or legislative amendments have contributed to a shifting and increasingly threatening operating environment for collective action and mobilisation to develop. This research, in turn, establishes a correlation between this closing political opportunity structure and the shifts in the strategies put forward by the HSU. The analysis is key to understand not only the way in which increased threats deter Jordanian mobilisation, but moreover to see the way in which a shifting context pushes activists to necessarily continuously rethink and reframe their strategies in light on the context; with the effect of driving protestors to exhaustion, de-motivation and stagnation.

Analysing social movement strategy in light of the movement's mobilising structure has contributed to understanding that, in the HSU, mobilising structure has been deliberately chosen by activists of the movement and responds to a strategy and a shifting political and ideological position aware of the political context and their scope of action. In order to present social movement strategy in this way, the thesis has explored the way in which different episodes of contention initially drove activists to favour a loosely organised, network-like, structure, and the way in which they strategically chose an informal model of organisation.

Moreover, the research has contributed to understand the way in which this structure has in turn affected activists' strategic repertoire in terms of their level of mobilisation, the level of external subsidies, and the alliance structures with other actors such as political parties, unions, religious institutions, and authorities. Finally, this project has argued that this mobilising structure has facilitated the appearance of voices in the movement that favour confrontational and conflict-oriented strategies. Overall, through the study of the HSU this research has shown that the case follows the theoretical assumption on informal, horizontal, network-like structures allowing for the flourishing of more radical strategies.

Finally, social movement strategy has been analysed in relation to framing processes to contribute to an understanding of the movement's strategies at the diagnostic, prognostic and motivational phases. Through this analysis we have argued that, in this movement, there is clear agreement among activists during the diagnostic framing phase. However, when the

problem is identified and attributed to a particular actor, disagreement between the radical and reformist camps occurs at the moment of prognostic framing, or finding a solution to the problem and articulating it jointly. Moreover, this part of the analysis has shown that, with existing competition between activists in terms of articulating a solution to the problem, motivational framing, or the third step in framing processes, is further weakened.

In the HSU, there is agreement between individual activists and constituencies of the movement when identifying the problems as being social and economic in nature, and when attributing them to the regime, which in turn makes the problem also political. There is agreement in the movement that social and economic problems are central for their action, and particularly affect socio-economically marginalised groups that suffer from shared grievances. This agreement has resulted in two different strategic framing processes.

Frame transformation, whereby activists intend to change old understandings and meaning of the way in which the Jordanian society is structured, is done through the incorporation of a debate around class structure and inequality as a fundamental variable in defining society. At this diagnostic phase, a second strategy used is frame bridging with different groups of workers, where activists incorporate socio-economic grievances of workers of different companies into their claims, particularly grievances related to the ever-expanding informal job sector and the deterioration of workers' rights.

Arguments around social movement strategy have been developed in conversation with the Jordanian state's counter-strategies to mobilisation, the

third line of analytical inquiry in this project. In chapter six of this thesis, entitled 'The Jordanian State's Counter-strategies and the Challenges to Collective Action', the counter-strategies put forward by the Jordanian regime have been analysed, focusing on those targeting activists of the HSU. Although the movement has faced organisational and strategic challenges, the main challenge encountered by the movement has been posed by the regime. This makes a macro level of inquiry necessary to analyse the contextual elements that have affected the movement's development. The regime's response to the HSU has been complex, and has critically challenged the movement in terms of its internal organisation and its strategic articulation.

This chapter has explored the regime's complex response to the movement's strategies, analysing what repression looks like in Jordan and how it has become the main challenge to mobilisation. I argued that the Jordanian regime has responded through balancing apparently conciliatory and repressive counter-strategies. This in turn has meant that the HSU has had to adapt to a shifting political opportunity landscape. This counter-strategy has challenged the HSU organisationally and strategically to the point that it has become a major challenge to its survival. The Jordanian regime's resilience is therefore the result of a planned balancing act and a carefully calculated strategic management of collective action that combines apparent conciliation and repression.

In order to support these arguments, the chapter introduced the overall power imbalance between the regime and the movement, framing their strategic dialectic as one of subordination of the movement to the regime. The Jordanian

regime's counter-strategy is then analysed in two parts. The exploration starts with what could, at first glance, look like conciliatory measures. These have taken the form of government reshuffles, and putting forward a roadmap to reform that includes constitutional amendments, and reforming the elections and political party laws. Moreover I explored the limits to these apparent conciliatory moves in meeting the movement's demands, as well as the effects of some of these moves towards weakening the movement's organisation and strategy.

In this line, the research carried out for this project also contributes to the conversation on the Jordanian regime's response to social movements. Academic focus has been put on conciliatory measures taken by the regime, such as constitutional amendments, government reshuffles, reform committees, or elections, presented as 'a first step in the right direction' (Muasher, 2011). Academic conversation has generally been cautious in evaluating this response positively, describing them as 'limited political reform' and 'nonexistent' economic reform (Ottaway and Muasher, 2011 p. 12). Critical accounts have described the state's response as 'insufficient' (Pelham, 2011); a set of 'top-down reforms' which are not targeting structural problems such as 'the grossly unequal distribution of power between elected institutions and those that remain unelected' (Hamid and Freer, 2011 pp.3-4).

The chapter then explored specific repressive measures put forward by the regime to target activists of the HSU, which define the overall closing political opportunity structure. Repressive regime counter-strategies to mobilisation has been recognised in short analyses of the crackdown on dissent

as an overarching dynamic in Jordan (Bishop, 2014) and reports that monitor the tightening grip on activism (Su, 2013). More in-depth reporting of repressive strategies towards activists have mainly been reported by Human Rights Watch (HRW) in short electronic articles that focus on freedom of expression (2011b, 2012a, 2013a, 2013d, 2014a, 2014b); attacks on protestors (2011c, 2014c); imprisonment of activists (2012b, 2012c, 2012f, 2013c); torturing activists in prisons (2011a, 2012d, Coogle, 2013); trials in the State Security Court (2012g, 2012e, 2013b); and under the Terrorist Law (2014d). In this part, as well as talking about direct repression in terms of surveillance, arrests and harassment, the analysis takes into account the selective application of law to activists of the HSU, and the legal umbrella and specific legislative amendments that have marked the closure of the opportunity structure and the increasingly threatening environment under which constituencies of the movement have been pushed to reassess their initial strategic approach.

Through an in-depth evaluation of top-down regime measures, both repressive and conciliatory, the thesis has argued that these were harmful and managed to weaken the movement's organisation and strategic articulation, preventing it from creating a social support base. Conciliatory measures have helped to present the regime to society as a regime that is willing to reform and is reforming, with no further evaluation of what these reforms resulted in or how they would change or benefit the majority's living conditions. This made audiences reticent to believe and support the need for participants of the movement to continue organising. Repression has been argued to be a practice that extends to other actors beyond the regime, increasing its complexity as it is exercised in different forms and levels over time. Studying repression exercised

on HSU, who have become 'a central target for anti-reformist forces in Jordan' (2014e p. 74) due to the controversial and confrontational discourses in the movement, has been key to explore and present these dynamics, as it is the most politically controversial movement of the last period in Jordan, and has therefore become a central target for status quo defendants.

The significance of the movement, the final line of inquiry, has been analysed at both a social and a political level in chapter seven, entitled 'Enduring Social, Political and Cultural Transformations: Framing Significance in *Al-Hirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī* (the Jordanian Youth Movement)'. The analysis of the way in which HSU participants frame social significance has covered both the strengths and limits to the perceived resonance of the movement's activities in the Jordanian society. The perceived strengths of the movement in terms of social significance are the social compliance with a different type of politics, the revival of political debates in society, and the mobilisation of demands that were central to large social clusters. The activities of the movement have been framed by HSU participants as significant in terms of social acceptance among Jordanians of different ways of doing politics in the country. Despite having lost part of the social support and acceptance later on, due to different elements mainly related to the way in which the Jordanian regime managed to shape the discourse to the movement's detriment, initially society perceived the movement as a necessary actor that could potentially be able to put forward their concerns through more confrontational, direct action.

The HSU has also been framed as significant in reactivating the national social, economic, and political debates in the society. This has mainly been

analysed in relation to the creation of a generalised situation of nonconformity which now exists in society, and that in an increasingly threatening national and regional situation, is currently only manifested in private circles. Participants considered that resonance was partly achieved by the movement through mobilising demands that were central to large social clusters, and congruent with personal everyday experiences. Throughout the thesis we have argued that the way in which this was achieved was through the mobilisation of widespread grievances related to social equality or justice.

Weaknesses of the movement's activities owing to its social significance have been perceived as outweighing its strengths. This is due to the movement's weak strategic framing process, the limits to the movement's empirical credibility in society, and the weak credibility of frame articulators. The weak strategic framing process has been perceived as one of the elements that have affected the consistency of frames articulated by the movement, weakening the credibility of the movement and their capabilities for taking effective action in the eyes of the society. The strategic framing processes within the HSU is characterised by an inconsistency of frames, and a weak articulation between beliefs, claims, and actions in the three-step strategic framing process. This inconsistency of frames has been considered to have negatively affected the social significance and resonance of movement activities in the Jordanian society, particularly in an increasingly threatening scenario.

The weak empirical credibility of the movement has negatively affected and posed a limit to the movement's strategic framing. In this sense this thesis has argued that the presence of radical voices in the movement, together with

the regime's use of media in order to portray the whole movement as radical, have been considered as limits to building resonance in the Jordanian society. Together with this, the way in which participants have perceived the credibility of frame articulators, young activists themselves, has been analysed in relation to culture and to traditional understandings of social structure and hierarchies. This thesis has argued that, right up to the present day, youth are perceived in Jordanian society as weak claim-makers that 'do not know what they do or what they want' because of this generational hierarchy in society, but also due to their weak experience as frame articulators, and the short-lived organisation they represent.

The way in which participants have framed the political significance of the HSU's activities is related to the alternation of the forms of political action and political expression tolerated by the Jordanian regime, the reintroduction of national politics into the political discussions in Jordan today, and the ability to foster a change in the culture of political activism for the future. Participants consider that, during particular moments in time, the movement has managed to alter the forms of political action and political expression tolerated by the regime. It was able to organise politically and put forward radical demands, and this necessarily in the context of other regional revolutionary efforts. The fact that this movement was able to alter, if only during specific periods of political opportunity, the limits of freedom of political expression in the country has been perceived to be one of its variables of political significance.

Activists have also framed the political significance of HSU action around the way they consider it has managed to reintroduce national politics into the

political discussions in Jordan. Before 2011, political debates in Jordan rarely addressed national and local politics and policies, and they were focused mainly on Palestinian politics and Jordanian foreign politics, particularly towards Israel. According to participants, the HSU has pushed other actors in the Jordanian political scene to address national and local political issues particularly related to national socio-economic grievances derived from a deficient political system. Political significance of the movement's activities has been moreover framed in relation to the change in the culture of political activism in the country. This change has depended on two factors: the transformation of individual participants in the movement and the organisational experience and culture. These elements, we have argued, might define the development of future Jordanian political participation.

Turning to my theoretical conclusions, several conceptual and theoretical arguments have been made throughout the research, contributing to social movement theory in general, and particularly to the theoretical framework used for this project, Political Process Theory (PPT). Expectations on mobilisation in non-democratic countries have been extended, particularly in liberal autocracies. Overall, the thesis has argued that PPT is a useful framework for the study of social movements in Jordan, and have pointed out to several weaknesses for its application in non-democratic countries, particularly in terms of the model's conceptualisation of repression, political opportunity, and success.

The relationship between repression and mobilisation, particularly in terms of different types of repression and in terms of repression that varies over

time, has been addressed contributing to disentangle the concept of repression further. PPT's threat-opportunity analysis assumes that costs and benefits drive decisions of organisations (Goodwin and Jasper, 2009 pp. 12-14) and that high-level repression might lead to the absence of mobilisation or to radicalisation. Studying the HSU allows us to understand other types of repression, particularly low-level repression in the form of surveillance, imprisonment and an arbitrary application of law, and its varying effects for mobilisation of the movement in Jordan. Repression in Jordan, which we have classified in these terms, has led to paralysis and almost complete absence of radical voices. The case of the HSU has shown that the relationship between repression and mobilisation is not as fixed as suggested by the PPT framework.

This study has expanded on the effects of varying repression or a changing opportunity structure *in time*. The varying political opportunity structure has deeply impacted the internal organisation and strategy of the movement by forcing activists to continuously re-strategise, rethink, and reconsider their action in relation to ever-changing contexts. During periods of more muted repression and an opening opportunity structure, movement demands were radicalised, while during periods of greater repression and a closing opportunity structure, social movement strategies have seen a de-radicalisation of demands. Overall, the changing repression in time has weakened the movement internally in terms of its capacity to make strategic decisions.

The project has contributed to understanding of the concept political opportunity structure. The PPT framework assumes that the opportunity

structure is provided by the state, and focuses on opportunities at a national level. This research has contributed to understanding political opportunity structure as a more complex concept where other factors as well as the state come into play. In Jordan we have seen that it is necessary to include the regional context, and the way in which it affects the changing opportunity structure. This conceptual contribution by which we have proposed a new understanding of political opportunity structure that expands to the regional level, could be applied to the study of mobilisation, repression and opportunity structures in other countries of the region.

Contribution has been made towards understanding the relationship between mobilising structure and success of social movement outcomes. PPT assumes that hierarchical, formal, institutionalised organisation structures will result in successful political outcomes (understood as institutionalisation and acceptance) because they can sustain interaction with authorities and supporters. In this respect, this thesis has contributed to understanding that the concept of 'success' as presented by PPT theorists, has to be re-thought for cases in which claimants do not seek neither acceptance nor advantages from powerholders.¹ This is the case of the HSU where activists strategically decided the informal, non-institutional nature of the movement, and refused to create coalitions with any other formal or institutionalised actors, such as political parties. This case, therefore, leads us to understand that conceptually, we cannot assume that the aim of this movement is to be accepted by the political

¹ a) as acceptance, when 'the challenging group's existence is accepted by its antagonists', reflected in acts of consultation, negotiations, formal recognition that the challenging group represents a formally designated opposition group, and inclusion in the system; b) in the form of new advantages, when any of the objectives or demands that were being demanded by the opposition group were achieved

system or to acquire new advantages in this system: activists' idea of being successful would not come as a result of interacting with authorities.

If this contribution to the theory has been key for understanding the significance of this movement in the case of Jordan, a broader and more flexible conceptualisation of success would be necessary for the study of other similar social movement organisations in the region and beyond. It is key to incorporate into this conceptual definition of success other social and cultural variables in order to provide a more accurate analysis of the significance of social movements. Overall this thesis has contributed to building on the assumptions made by the PPT framework to expand its applicability to this case and facilitate its application in similar studies in other regional cases.

Significance for Social Movements in the MENA

The study presented in this thesis on the HSU not only contributes to the academic conversation on social movements and organisation in Jordan, but also to the study of social movements, particularly youth movements, in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). In general, it contributes to the academic discussion that places youth at the centre of accounts on the Arab Spring from a comparative perspective, highlighting the distinctive role of youth, characterised as self-aware and self-identified actors, in shaping and driving these events (Lynch, 2014 p. 9).

The findings of this project moreover contribute to the examination of the roots of the Arab Spring and overarching dynamics in other cases, particularly in relation to the political situation, but more extensively to the economic variables (Achcar, 2013) and the systemic conditions throughout the Middle East (Gerges, 2015). It does so by providing an account on motivations for Jordanian youth in the HSU, including factors related to social justice, including poverty, inequality, precarity, the growth of the informal sector, and unemployment. Moreover, this project contributes to the academic conversation that compares other regional cases by presenting the new narratives and discourses in the HSU as part of the new stories and new narratives of resistance, hope and determination that include crisis of political authority, failure of economic development, and new genres of mobilisation and activism analysed particularly in Fawaz Gerges' volume.

Moreover, this project has contributed to the academic conversation that brings personal stories and direct accounts from Arab youth (Ahmari and Weddady 2012, Al-Saleh 2015). By including the direct account from participants in the HSU from a micro level of analysis, this thesis contributes to placing and representing the voice of youth in Jordan as having similar concerns to other youth actors during the Arab Spring. Individual accounts are presented therefore as part of a wider regional reality that has led to similar collective action efforts in other regional cases. In this sense, accounts on the experiences of participants in the HSU are similar to those experiences and the atmosphere that led other youth organisations in other cases to mobilise.

As well as contributing to the academic dialogue at a micro level through these accounts, this project contributes to understanding the relevance of the dimensions of resistance and rebellion in authoritarian regimes (Anderson, 2015 p. 50). In particular, this research has aimed to contribute to the questions raised by Lisa Anderson and to exploring the way in which the Jordanian regime has challenged the organisation of the HSU, thereby seeking to contribute to the understanding of the opportunity structure in Jordan, as well as to enriching the literature on the structures of opportunity for these youth organisations across the Middle East.

Finally, the findings of this research aim to add to the in-depth empirical accounts on other regional youth movements examined in the academic literature, such as youth movements in Egypt (Shehata, 2012), Moroccan youth movements (Desrues 2012), or the Sudanese grassroots youth organisation *Grifna* (Medani 2013). This research contributes to the academic conversation on other youth movements in the region and reinforces the idea of shared transnational social and collective action dynamics. This is the case according to several lines of argument. Most notably, transnational arguments to which this thesis has contributed we find the one presented by Dina Shehata related to youth as critical in constructing revolutionary alternative discourses in the region. This research has shown how HSU has been the organisation in Jordan in which similar rupturist discourses have emerged to those that have been presented in the case of Egyptian youth movements.

Moreover, this research contributes to the conversation on youth movements as being distinctive from previous generations, as argued by

Thierry Desrues for the Moroccan youth movement, for which discontinuities in relation to family, education, or cultural and political expression are highlighted. It is worth to note the way in which, in a similar way to the Moroccan youth movement, the HSU has remained independent from other institutional opposition organisations in the country. The strategy of both movements *vis-à-vis* the state has been similar and in line to the strategy of other youth movements such as *Girifna* in Sudan (Medani2013).

In relation to this case, and as argued by Khalid Mustafa Medani for the case of *Girifna*, we can point to the way in which the case of the HSU can be situated as part of regional trends in terms of internal organisation and strategy, as the Moroccan youth movement also brings together youth from different ideological and activist backgrounds around the mobilisation of the concept of youth as a distinctive social category. As well as a regional trend of ideologically inclusive youth movements, this project has contributed to pointing to the existence of a shared strategy by which youth counters top-down discourses on ethnic divisions, such as Arabised tribes and Darfunians in Sudan, or in the case of Jordan, Transjordanian and Palestinian Jordanian ethnic divisions. Youth movements in the MENA region claim that these divisive discourses deter the development of collective action and try to reintroduce more pressing issues related to class and inequality into their discourse.

Suggestions for future research

This study does not claim to have provided a complete and unchallengeable picture of the HSU. It merely aims to be an initial, though comprehensive, effort to contribute to the empirical and conceptual analysis of social movements in Jordan and in the broader MENA region. It is because of this that there are several issues that are worthy of study in future research.

The organisation of other youth-led movements in the region, as well as the development of their discourses and strategies in face of different state responses is worth studying both in comparative perspective and individually. It would be worthy to explore the way in which the organisation and development of these discourses and strategies have fed from the experiences of other similar groups through regional and international levels transnational networks. Bringing into the story of organisations and social movements in the MENA different grassroots dynamics and discourses following a similar in-depth empirical approach could contribute to understanding the potential for change in non-institutional groups.

Linked to the former, a second line of research that could follow concerns cultural transformations that similar movements have brought about in the region, particularly in terms of transforming the culture of activism, dissent and resistance in the MENA. The role of individual activists that were engaged in youth movements during the Arab Spring has been key to the ongoing cultural transformation in Jordan and in other countries of the MENA that will possibly determine the way in which individuals perceive and participate in social movements and in political life in general. Research should look into the way in

which activism in an increasingly threatening context has transitioned from a political to a cultural focus.

The study of alternative discourses and organisations such as the one embraced by the HSU in the face of adversity should provide an insight into the conditions of emergence and repression of truly transformative discourses according to a particular opportunity structure. The extensive empirical evidence discussed here suggests a need for PPT approaches to reconsider the shifting possibilities for outlining and enacting political change at individual (micro), group (meso) and (inter)national (macro) levels. The HSU's appearance and hindrance is fundamentally tied to its nature as a loose, horizontal structure that framed political dissent in Jordan through social justice and mundane concerns alongside traditional Islamist, familial and politicised confrontation.

By shifting public awareness to Jordanian peoples' elemental needs while capitalising on the political opportunity structure of the Arab Spring, this movement was able to highlight the deep difference between state and society in unprecedented ways. Such a candid and non-hierarchical approach to organising social demands was seen a threat to the regime without parallel in more rhetorically rooted and identifiable protest movements. The extent of quite successful pressure put on this youth movement evidences how a PPT framework and considerations of political opportunity must approach social movements from locally-rooted, grassroots examinations that can reduce a reliance on structurally-fixed actors in a particular political landscape.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Transliteration Chart

ENGLISH TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM											
CONSONANTS											
Column Headings: A = Arabic, P = Persian, OT = Ottoman Turkish, MT = Modern Turkish											
A	P	OT	MT	A	P	OT	MT	A	P	OT	MT
ع	'	'	—	ژ	—	zh	j	گ	—	g	g
ب	b	b	b or p	س	s	s	s	ل	l	l	l
پ	p	p	p	ش	sh	sh	ş	م	m	m	m
ت	t	t	t	ص	ş	ş	ş	ن	n	n	n
ث	th	s	s	ذ	z	z	z	ه	h	h	h ³
ج	j	c	c	ط	t	t	t	و	w	v or u	v
ح	—	ch	ç	ظ	z	z	z	ی	y	y	y
خ	h	h	h	ع	'	'	—	ا	-a ¹		
ك	kh	h	h	غ	gh	g or ğ	g or ğ	ال	-a ²		
د	d	d	d	ف	f	f	f				
ذ	dh	z	z	ق	q	k	k				
ر	r	r	r	ك	k	k or g	k or n				
ز	z	z	z			or y	or y				
						or ğ	or ğ				

¹ (-at in construct state)
² (article) al- and l-
³ (when not final)

VOWELS

ARABIC AND PERSIAN	OTTOMAN TURKISH	MODERN TURKISH
<i>Long</i> ا or آ ā و ū ي ī	ā { words of Arabic ū { and Persian ī { origin only	ā ū ī
<i>Doubled</i> ع iy (final form ī) و uw (final form ū), etc.	iy (final form ī) uvv	iy (final form ī) uvv
<i>Diphthongs</i> و au or aw ي ai or ay	ev ey	ev ey
<i>Short</i> ا a و u ي i	a or e u or ū o or ö i or i	a or e u or ū o or ö i or i

For Ottoman Turkish, authors may either transliterate or use the modern Turkish orthography.

Appendix 2. Referencing codes for interviews and focus group

	Interviewee	Pseudonym	Language	Date	Time	Place	Code
1	Anonymous activist	Omar	English	31st July 2013	16.00hrs	Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman, Jordan	AI01-31.07.13
2	Anonymous activist	Khaled	Arabic (dialect)	24th August 2013	18.00hrs	Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman, Jordan	AI02-24.08.13
3	Anonymous activist	Mahmoud	English	1st September 2013	21.00hrs	Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman, Jordan	AI03-01.09.13
4	Anonymous activist	Seraj	Arabic (dialect)	4th September 2013	15.00hrs	Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman, Jordan	AI04-04.09.13
5	Anonymous activist	Abed	Arabic (dialect)	4th September 2013	18.00hrs	Jubeiha, Amman, Jordan	AI05-04.09.13
6	Anonymous activist	Suleyman	Arabic (dialect)	5th September 2013	18.00hrs	Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman, Jordan	AI06-05.09.13
7	Anonymous activist	Rashid	Arabic (dialect)	7th September 2013	19.00hrs	Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman, Jordan	AI07-07.09.13
8	Anonymous activist	Amin	Arabic (dialect)	8th September 2013	18.00hrs	Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman, Jordan	AI08-08.09.13
9	Anonymous journalist	Mohammad	Arabic (classical)	9th September 2013	17.00hrs	Jabal Amman, Amman, Jordan	AI09-09.09.13
10	Anonymous activist	Yusef	Arabic (dialect)	10th September 2013	18.00hrs	Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman, Jordan	AI10-10.09.13
11	Anonymous activist	Isra	Arabic (dialect)	10th September 2013	18.00hrs	Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman, Jordan	AI11-10.09.13
12	Anonymous activist	Ahmad	English	13th September 2013	12.00hrs	Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman, Jordan	AI12-13.09.13
13	Anonymous activist	Sara	English	13th September 2013	18.00hrs	Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman, Jordan	AI13-13.09.13
14	Anonymous researcher	Mustapha	English	15th September 2013	16.00hrs	Jabal Amman, Amman, Jordan	AI14-15.09.13
15	Anonymous activist	Akram	Arabic (classical)	15th September 2013	19.00hrs	Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman, Jordan	AI15-15.09.13
16	Anonymous activist	Basil	Arabic (dialect)	20th September 2013	18.00hrs	Sweifiyeh, Amman, Jordan	AI16-20.09.13
17	Anonymous activist	Kareem	Arabic (dialect)	22nd September 2013	18.00hrs	Jabal Lweibdeh, Amman, Jordan	AI17-22.09.13
18	Anonymous activist	Faris	Arabic (dialect)	25th September 2013	12.00hrs	Abdali, Amman, Jordan	AI18-25.09.13
19	Anonymous activist	Hakim	Arabic (dialect)	22nd September 2014	19.00hrs	Abdali, Amman, Jordan	AI19-22.09.14
20	Anonymous activist	Hassan	Arabic (dialect)	29th September 2014	18.00hrs	Downtown, Amman, Jordan	AI20-29.09.14
21	Anonymous researcher	Aida	English	9th October 2014	12.00hrs	Jabal Amman, Amman, Jordan	AI21-09.10.14
22	Anonymous researcher	Amal	English	20th October 2014	12.00hrs	Jabal Amman, Amman, Jordan	AI22-20.10.14
23	Anonymous activist	Ibrahim	English	4th November 2014	13.00hrs	Abdoun, Amman, Jordan	AI23-04.11.14
24	Focus Group	-	Arabic (dialect)	3rd February 2013	17.00hrs	Downtown, Amman, Jordan	FG01-03.02.13

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ⁱ This thesis uses the English Transliteration System for terms in Arabic (see Appendix 1).

ⁱⁱ These spaces include Al-Husseini mosque in Downtown, the parliament, the prime ministry, the Israeli embassy, the US embassy, or the road to the King Hussein Bridge connecting Jordan and Israel.

ⁱⁱⁱ6th of April Youth Movement - حركة شباب 6 إبريل (*ḥarakatshabāb 6 'ibrīl*). Facebook page available at: <https://www.facebook.com/shabab6april?ref=ts>

^{iv}Mouvement 20 février – حركة 20 فبراير (*ḥarakat 20 fibrāir*). Facebook page available at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AdminGroupMoov20Feb/>

^vأذار 24 شباب (*Shabāb 24 'Adhār*). Facebook page available at: <https://www.facebook.com/shbab.march.24?ref=ts&fref=ts>

^{vi}Anonymous interviewee. In chapter 2 of this thesis I have included details of the codes with which I reference each of the personal interviews and focus group carried out for this research project.

^{vii}As part of the Jordanian regime's strategy to divide and rule over the Jordanian Youth Movement which will be analysed in detail in chapter six of this thesis, activists of the movement assert that political parties created what they call 'child' movements. An example of this is the alleged 'child' of the MB, *Al-Hirāk Ash-Shabāb Al-'Islāmī*(Islamist Youth Movement).

^{viii} a) as acceptance, when 'the challenging group's existence is accepted by its antagonists', reflected in acts of consultation, negotiations, formal recognition that the challenging group represents a formally designated opposition group, and inclusion in the system; b) in the form of new advantages, when any of the objectives or demands that were being demanded by the opposition group were achieved

^{ix} Some radical constituencies do not see any possibility of change with the current regime, therefore a result that would meet these groups' demands might imply elite substitution or regime change. These activists would actually consider interacting with authorities as a negative result of their activism that would be interpreted as a success of the regime's counter-strategies of co-optation.

^x Also called the 'political process model' (ALMEIDA, P. D. 2003. Opportunity Organizations and Threat-Induced Contention: Protest Waves in Authoritarian Settings. *American Journal of Sociology*, 109, 345-400.

^{xi} I will not be using the concept of 'effectiveness' as used by PPT, nevertheless, the concept of 'resonance' is useful for examining the social and political significance of the Jordanian Youth Movement.

^{xii} Political parties were banned for over thirty years, until martial law was lifted in 1989 and the new Political Parties' Law was passed in 1992.

^{xiii} She refers to studies by Uriel Dann, Clinton Bailey, Benjamin Schwadran, Amnon Cohen or Kaman Salibi.

^{xiv} In Jordan, the Parliament is formed by the Lower House and the Senate.

^{xv} Before these amendments, according to the 1952 Constitution, the Senate had to resign. The time in office for the members of the Senate was of 8 years. Every 4 years, half of the members of the Senate changed. With the 1958 amendments, the time in office for members of the Senate was reduced to 4 years and after this time all the members changed.

^{xvi} Before the 1958 Constitutional amendments, in the case of the dissolution of the Lower House, the government was forced to resign within a timeframe of two weeks. After the resignation of government, a transitional government would be assigned until the next elections were held. None of the ministers participating in the transitional government were able to run for the next elections.

^{xvii} Before the 1958 amendments, according to the 1952 Constitution, any member of the Parliament (Lower House or Senate) could suggest the creation of a law on his own. Only one signature was needed to consider a draft law to be passed.

^{xviii} Other amendments related to the Parliament included clauses related to the king's power to extend the term of the Lower House, changing the duration of parliamentary sessions, or changing the representation of members from the Lower House and the Senate during joint sessions.

^{xix} The main trend of Arab nationalists, of which Nasser was major representative, claimed that the authority of the Arab state's authority derived from the larger Arab nation that transcended the state borders drawn with the Sykes-Picot agreements; defended closer economic, cultural,

and security ties among Arab states; rejected territorial and political segmentation; and demanded the elimination of borders and divisions. Major opposition groups to the Hashemite rule inside Jordan were close to this Arab nationalist ideology headed by Abdel Nasser.

^{xx} *Naksain* Arabic means 'setback'. Together with the *Nakba*, the *Naksais* considered one of the major Arab defeats in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

^{xxi} These requirements, addressed by Jabber, were the following: areas under the total control of the resistance; near enemy territory to easy military operations; in areas populated by large numbers of Palestinians; and in locations at a safe distance from the cease-fire lines.

^{xxii} After the Black September civil war, Jordanians of Palestinian origin, mainly living in urban areas such as Amman or Zarqa, had seen a decrease in their jobs for the state and had mainly worked in the private sector. East-Bank Jordanians had been favoured by the state in a move to further consolidate its support base by the regime and had worked in state jobs and for the Army.

^{xxiii} See for example BRYNEN, R. 1992. Economic Crisis and Post-Rentier Democratization in the Arab World: The Case of Jordan. *Canadian Journal of Political Science-Revue Canadienne De Science Politique*, 25, 69-97, MILTON-EDWARDS, B. J. P. 1993. Facade Democracy and Jordan. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 20, 191-203, SADIKI, L. 2000. Popular Uprisings and Arab Democratization. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 32, 71-95, CAROTHERS, T. 2002. The End of the Transition Paradigm. *Journal of Democracy*, 13, 5-21, OTTAWAY, M. & CAROTHERS, T. 2004. Think Again: Middle East Democracy. *Foreign Policy*, RYAN, C. R. & SCHWEDLER, J. 2004. Return to democratization or new hybrid regime?: The 2003 elections in Jordan. *Middle East Policy*, 11, 138-151, YOM, S. L. 2005. Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World. *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 9, 14-33, ANDERSON, L. 2006. Searching where the light shines: Studying democratization in the Middle East. *Annual Review of Political Science*, HINNEBUSCH, R. 2006. Authoritarian persistence, democratization theory and the Middle East: An overview and critique. *Democratization*, 13, 373-395, CAROTHERS, T. 2007. The "Sequencing" Fallacy. *Journal of Democracy*, 18, HAMID, S. 2009. Jordan. The Myth of the Democratizing Monarchy. In: BROWN, N. J. & SHAHIN, E. E.-D. (eds.) *The Struggle over Democracy in the Middle East: regional politics and external policies*. UCLA Center for Middle East Development, BROWNLEE, J. 2011. Executive Elections in the Arab World: When and How Do They Matter? *Comparative Political Studies*, 44, 807-828, GILBERT, L. & MOHSENI, P. 2011. Beyond Authoritarianism: The Conceptualization of Hybrid Regimes. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 46, 270-297.

^{xxiv} People living in West Amman hardly visit East Amman, except few cases of people who work or volunteer there, particularly in the NGOs based in the poorer areas of the city.

^{xxv} When we talk about the "old guard" in Jordan we refer to the people who ruled, the ruling elite, during King Hussein's reign, and lost their power when the new king and his new men came into power. Those people are very influential in the *mukhabarat* (security services) and in the Army, especially in the groups of old veterans and among in the retired veterans.

^{xxvi} The main constituents of the alternative opposition are: Jordanian Social Left Movement, Jordanian National Initiative, National Progressive Current, National Committee of Military Veterans, Jordanian Writers Association, Nationalists' Progressive Current, Philosophy Society, Socialist Thought Forum, Assembly of Circassian Youth, Association Against Zionism and Racism

^{xxvii} January 16th, February 2nd, 9th, 18th, 22nd, and 25th.

^{xxviii} March 13th, 2011: the announcement against the MB's move was signed by 15 groups, overlapping leftist parties, *thabhtouna*, and the trajectory *rashad*, a platform for democratic Jordanian youth, and other student bodies well versed in the left by definition and practice.

^{xxix} The Jordanian Communist Party, Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party, Arab Ba'ath Progressive Party, The Jordanian Popular Unity Party, The Jordanian People's Democratic Party.

^{xxx} Before presenting the movement's structure and participants, and in terms of analysing the nature of my subject of inquiry, I want to point out to the problematic use of the work *ḥirāk* in Arabic in the Jordanian context. The Jordanian Youth Movement is called in Arabic *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī*. Initially, there seems to be nothing to note about the translation into English of *Shabābī* (youth) and *'Urdunī* (Jordanian). However it is important to talk about the word *Ḥirāk* in terms of its translation into English due to its ambiguous meaning in Arabic. The translation of the word *ḥirāk* has been debated when talking about the movement in the Jordanian context. 'Movement' in Arabic is *ḥaraka*, so the word *ḥirāk* stems from the same linguistic root (*ḥ/r/k*) as 'movement', but takes a different form which is ambiguous in Arabic but has been said to mean something like 'mobilisation' or 'the act of moving' instead of a more organised movement, as the work *ḥaraka* would suggest. However, the term *ḥirāk* has been consistently translated as 'movement', and this translation is commonly accepted in Jordan and in the literature. This is why I will be translating *ḥirāk* as 'movement' in this analysis.

^{xxxi} Among those created before 2011, the Islamist movement, the Salafi movement, the Teacher's union, *Naqabyūn min ajal al-'islāḥ* (Syndicates' Members for Reform), *Al-hamlat al-waṭaniya min ajal al-khubzwa al-dimūqratiyya* (The National Campaign for Bread and Democracy), *Muqati'oun min ajal al-taghyīr* (Boycotting for Change), *Jayyīn* (Coming Forward). Since 2011, *Mubadarat al-malakiya al-dusturiyya* (The Initiative for Constitutional Monarchy), 24th March Movement, *Al-tajmou' al-sha'bī li-'islāḥ* (The Popular Gathering for Reform), *Al-ḥirāk al-sha'bi al-'urdunī* (The Jordanian Popular Movement), *Ḥarkat abna' al-a'shā'ir li-'islāḥ* (The movement of the sons of tribes for Reform), *le'tilaf al-a'shā'ir al-'urduniyya* (The Coalition of the Jordanian Tribes), *le'tilaf al-taghyīr al-ṭulābī* (The Students' Change Coalition), *al-lajna al-waṭaniyyali-isqāṭ majlis al-nuwāb al-'urdunī* (the National Committee to overthrow the Jordanian House of Representatives), *haya't al-difa' 'an mu'ataqlī al-ṭafilawa al-rabī'a* (the Committee for Defending the Prisoners of Al-Tafieleh and the 4th Roundabout), and *al-ḥirak al-shabābī wa al-sh'abī* (the Youth and Popular Movement)

^{xxxii} *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī Al-'Urdunī – Al-Ṣafḥa Al-Jadīda* (The Jordanian Youth Movement, new page). Facebook page. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/7erak>

^{xxxiii} *Al-Ḥirāk Al-Shabābī* (Jordanian Youth) <https://twitter.com/jo7erak>

^{xxxiv} Some examples of this are the page of the youth group in Kerak [<https://www.facebook.com/groups/7erak.al.krarak/>], in Balqa' [<https://www.facebook.com/groups/140864002654276/>], in Madaba [<https://www.facebook.com/groups/229607420412798/>], other group in Ajloun [<https://www.facebook.com/7erak.ajlun/>].

^{xxxv} Some of the most notable constituencies in the movement in terms of size and activity have been *Aḥrār' Ammān Li-l-Taghīr*, *Aḥrār Irbid*, *Aḥrār Madaba*, *Aḥrār Kerak*, *Aḥrār Zarqa*, *Ḥirāk Hayy Tafaileh*, *Aḥrār Hayy Dībān*, *Ḥirāk al-Shabāb fi Ma'an*, *Ḥirāk Al-Jerash*, *I'tihād Al-Shabāb Al-Dimuqrātī* (Union of Democratic Youth) and *Tandīm Al-Taghīr wa Al-Tahrīr*.

^{xxxvi} In Arabic: 'كل شارع وحي وحارة وبيت' (transcription: "kul shāri' wa ḥayy wa ḥāra wa bayt"). This is their 'location' as stated in their Facebook page [available at: <https://www.facebook.com/7erak/?fref=ts>].

^{xxxvii} Taking a service (shared taxi) inside Amman costs 0.35JOD (around 0.37 GBP) and a bus ticket costs 0.50 JOD (around 0.53 GBP).

^{xxxviii} Mosque located in Downtown Amman, where numerous protests were organised.

^{xxxix} It is necessary to clarify at this point that only part of the youth activists that started protests in 2011, were the ones that created, led, and organised the Jordanian Youth Movement in 2012. This movement does not include youth that was absorbed into the 'child' youth movements of other institutionalised opposition groups during 2011, as in the case of youth activists that joined the aforementioned *Al-Ḥirāk Ash-Shabāb Al-Islāmī* (Movement of Islamist Youth) affiliated to the Muslim Brotherhood. The creation of these 'child' movements organisationally and strategically linked to political parties will be analysed in chapter seven of this thesis as part of the regime's counter-strategy.

^{xl} البرلمان الشبابي الأردني (al-barlamān al-shabābī al-'urdunī) The Jordanian Youth Parliament. Available on Facebook [<https://www.facebook.com/YouthParliament.jo>] and Twitter [<https://twitter.com/YouthJo>]

^{xli} In this sense, this initiative also served as a way to reclaim the space for the voice of youth in politics. According to Jordanian Legislation, no one aged less than 30 years old is able to go in a list for parliament.

^{xlii} These leftist groups were closer to the traditional left in the country, and include *Jayeen*, the Movement of the Social Left, and figures associated with the Union of Jordanian Writers.

^{xliii} See for example SINGH, R. 2001. *Liberalisation or democratisation? The limits of political reform and civil society in Jordan*, *ibid.*, WIKTOROWICZ, Q. *Ibid. Embedded Authoritarianism: Bureaucratic Power and the Limits to Non-Governmental Organisations in Jordan*, WIKTOROWICZ, Q. 1999. *The limits of democracy in the Middle East: The case of Jordan. Middle East Journal*, 53, 606-620, ADAMS, L. S. 1996. *Political liberalization in Jordan: An analysis of the state's relationship with the Muslim brotherhood. Journal of Church and State*, 38, 507-528, BRAND, L. A. 1999. *The Effects of the Peace Process on Political Liberalization in Jordan. Journal of Palestine Studies*, 28, 52-67, FREIJ, H. Y. & ROBINSON, L. C. 1996. *Liberalization, the Islamists, and the Stability of the Arab State: Jordan as a Case-Study. Muslim World*, 86, 1-32, HOURANI, H. & ABU RUMMAN, H. 1996. *The democratic process in Jordan... Where to? Democratic Process in Jordan - Realities and Prospects*. Amman: Al-Urdun Al-Jadid Research Center

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^{xiv} Other organisations that have been excluded from this national consensus have been mainly radical organisations such as the Jordanian Salafis.

^{xlv} Online petition launched available at [www.7erakjo.org].

^{xlvi} In Jordan until today half of the parliament, the government, and the Prime Minister are still appointed directly by the King.

^{xlvii} About 10 local strikes in Amman, Ma'an, Al-Mafraq, Al-Karak, and coordinated cross-governorate strikes, occurred around February in objection to the Landlords and Tenants Law, which brought into demonstrations new social groups of merchants who considered the new law an attack on their livelihoods as tenants as they were expected to adhere to renewed rent contracts which took into account the inflation waves since the 1980s.

^{xlviii} It is understood that the MB had significant influence among the teachers' cadres during their lobbying for the law with government, and managed to produce a law deemed favourable to their organization method, allowing them a swift success in the upcoming first elections of the union. This mobilization seemed a mark of the MB taking a step towards the new mobilization dynamic around public sector restructure, distancing itself from the government that other groups considered friendly to the MB.

^{xlix} To name some of the recorded ones as they appeared on the media: municipalities; doctors; university professors; agriculture and day-waged labourers; department of statistics; water department of Madaba; public sector nurses; the authority of Petra; ministry of education directorate in al-Tafieleh and Ajloun; artists syndicate; unionists for accountants; directorates of income and sales tax; directorate of land registration; retirees on social security; and retirees of the phosphate company. Moreover, a growing labour movement was establishing its new independent unions that the state still does not recognize despite getting into negotiations whenever they managed to organize successful strikes.

^lGID, General Intelligence Department. Also known as the *mukhabarat*. It is one of the five main agencies engaged with policing protests. As well as the GID, protests and social mobilization are controlled by the Royal Guard, the Riot Police (*darak*), the General Security (*amn al-'ām*), and the Army. SCHWEDLER, J. 2012a. The Political Geography of Protest in Neoliberal Jordan. *Middle East Critique*, 21, 259-270.

^{li} I will not be using the concept of 'effectiveness' as used by PPT, nevertheless, the concept of 'resonance' is useful for examining the social and political significance of the Jordanian Youth Movement.