

# Why did the dog not bark in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan?

The Jordanian non-participation in the Arab Spring, explained through the lenses of Social Contract and Structuration Theory.

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## Introduction

*“The strange thing about the dog is that it did not bark, my dear Watson.”*  
Sherlock Holmes, Silver Blaze

When Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December 2010, he intended to give a signal, a signal that it was enough, that he could no longer face the authoritarian oppression of the Ben Ali regime. Little might he have known, albeit he might have wished it to be, that his act of defiance would have huge consequences.

His act brought great change to his homeland, Tunisia, and also quickly to the regional giants of Egypt and Libya and later on to Yemen. It had seem that in those early four months the Middle East had finally reached the threshold of change, of shaking of the authoritarian shackles and entering into a new phase of democratic transition. A transition much praised and wanted in the, often western, media. Moreover did it seem that, in those first four months of revolution, the region would really change and many countries would follow the Tunisian example.

However, when the smoke of tear gas cleared across the region and when the real spring arrived, a very different picture emerged. Countries like Jordan, Morocco, Lebanon, Algeria, Oman, Kuwait and Iraq had experienced protest and it did have some impact. But the protests did not end in full fledged revolutions or led to any substantial democratic change.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, in the countries of Syria, Bahrain and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the revolution minded wave had been stemmed with violent oppression.

It seems that even when revolution was the word on the Arab Street, some did not chose to join the protest, they chose to stay at home. In Jordan, it seems that this choice had been made by the majority of the Jordanians. Hence my research centres around the question: why the Jordanian people have not joined the Arab Spring to such an extent that they disposed of their regime.

*Given that the people of Jordan did not join the Arab Spring to such an extent that they disposed of their regime, between the 14<sup>th</sup> of January and the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2011, can the lack of participation of the Jordanians be explained by the perception of their agency within the structure of the Jordanian Social Contract?*

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<sup>1</sup> See bibliography for further cross comparison material about the protests in other Arab countries.

The main guiding sub question for this research has been: What was the agreed exchange of political and economic rights before and during the Arab Spring, in 2010 and early 2011.<sup>2</sup>

It divided the research into three sections.

- Firstly, for the economic rights it will look at whether the rights are perceived to have been enough.
- Secondly, in case of the political rights it will be seen if they have been enjoyed equally and used effectively to as an instrument to influence the regime, without the interference of the regime.
- And thirdly, whether there had been an exchange of these rights, meaning a trade off between the economic and political rights in exchange for loyalty.

### *Academic debate Arab Spring*

In the academic debate on the Arab Spring, the focus had been mainly on why the academic world did not see it coming and why it happened at all.<sup>3</sup> However, very little attention had been placed on the question ‘why did the Arab Spring not happen in certain countries’. There were only a few authors who have focused on this question.<sup>4</sup> This is rather remarkable, because this question seems, as mentioned earlier, one of the most important questions to be answered with regards to Jordan and the Arab Spring. The core of the question pertains why did people not follow when they had the chance to do so, more precisely why did people not follow when it seemed to be the obvious thing to do at the time. The inaction in this case becomes, in my view, more important than the action. The choice not to act becomes more interesting than the choice to act.

There is only one author, Sarah Tobin, who does try to answer the question, why the Jordanians did not join the Arab Spring, specifically. She looks in her article, at the role of the emergent middle class and argues that a heightened notion of middle – class status and

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<sup>2</sup> For a further explanation on the demarcation of time see the Timeframe section.

<sup>3</sup> There are many authors who have come up with many different explanations, to reflect them all would be beyond the scope of this proposal. However, noteworthy is the article written by Gregory Gause III, who was the first one who had acknowledged the mistake of the academic world.

Gause III, F. Gregory. 2011. ‘Why Middle East studies missed the Arab Spring, the myth of authoritarian stability’, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 90 Issue 4, pp 81

<sup>4</sup> For the most important authors with regard to Jordan, see the primary sources in the bibliography section.

*'aspiring cosmopolitanism'* provides a newly significant form of social organization of young people within the city of Amman.<sup>5</sup> This middle class-ness, and aspiring cosmopolitanism, creates within these circles a new form of homogeneity and unity. Which seems to be valued positively with regard to the violent history of Jordan and the upheaval in the countries which surround Jordan. The prevalent mood of this new social class is that they are better off when things stay the same, even with an authoritarian regime, because things might easily turn much worse.<sup>6</sup>

This explanation however is, in my view, very limited and does only show a small part of the puzzle, the puzzle being the persistence of authoritarianism even during the Arab Spring. In the academic debate there has been an attempt to broaden the understanding on the persistence of authoritarianism by looking at other causes.

One theme revolves around the structural inhibitors of resistance against the incumbent regime, such as the presence of a broad based coalition that supports the ruling family,<sup>7</sup> the income of oil rents that are used to buy off dissident<sup>8</sup> and if the country itself has no oil it is supported by a foreign patron.<sup>9</sup> In case of Jordan several authors place the power to inhibit mass protest in the hands of the regime. They emphasize the way of the regime to create the illusion of democratic progress, whilst at the same time entrenching authoritarian rule.<sup>10</sup>

Another reason given, is the power and support of the armed forces. The armed forces have been, and are still, a loyal support base, obliged to defend the Hashemite monarchy against any challenges, whether this be external or internal.<sup>11</sup>

The problem with this focus on the authoritarian structural constraints, the structural inhibitors of the revolution in Jordan, is that it completely overlooks the power of agency, the agency of the Jordanian people itself. With this I mean, as said before, not the power to participate but the power not to participate when it becomes the obvious thing to do.

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<sup>5</sup> Tobin, Sarah. 2012. 'Jordan's Arab spring: The middle class and anti-revolution', Middle East Policy, Vol. XIX, No. 1, pp 96.

<sup>6</sup> Tobin, S. (2012), pp 108

<sup>7</sup> Yom, S. & Gause, G. 2012. 'Resilient Royals: How Arab Monarchies hang on', Journal of Democracy, Vol 23, No 4, pp 81-82

<sup>8</sup> Yom, S. & Gause, G. (2012), pp 83-84

<sup>9</sup> Yom, S. & Gause, G. (2012), pp 76

<sup>10</sup> Vogt, Achim. 2011. 'Jordan's Eternal Promise of Reform', Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft, pp 61-76. Pelham, Nicolas. 'Jordan's balancing act', Middle East Research and Information project, <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero022211>, accessed 21-11-2013.

<sup>11</sup> Ryan, Curtis R. 2012. 'The Armed forces and the Arab Uprisings: The Case of Jordan', Middle East Law and Governance 4, pp 161

The scholar Gregory Gause explains:

*'As paradigms fall and theories are shredded by events on the ground, it is useful to recall that the Arab revolts resulted not from policy decisions taken in Washington or any other foreign capital but from indigenous economic, political, and social factors whose dynamics were extremely hard to forecast. In the wake of such unexpected upheavals, both academics and policymakers should approach the Arab world with humility about their ability to shape its future. That is best left to Arabs themselves.'*<sup>12</sup>

Of course the inherent nature of a structuralist approach, is to only look at the structures and to place no value in the concept of agency. However, as mentioned above this will not provide us with the right questions to understand why the revolution did not reach critical mass in Jordan. Therefore I have chosen as overarching frame to use the approach of the scholar Anthony Giddens. This will be further in detail explained in the theory chapter. However in short, Giddens argues that the structures in our world exist not outside of our actions, but they exist because of our actions, whilst the structures at the same time also determine our actions.<sup>13</sup>

Exactly this understanding is what has been, in my opinion, missing in the academic story about the Arab Spring, and then especially the Jordan Arab Spring. It is the lack of insight into the power, the agency, of the people to shape their future, their lives and the structures around them.

The theoretical frame chosen, that of social contract, provides us with a tool in order to answer the following structural questions.

- How many structural constraints the people perceive there had been existing.
- Whether they had seen their own agency capable of changing these structures in place.
- To what extent they contributed themselves to the continuation of these structures.

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<sup>12</sup> Gause III, G. (2011), pp 90

<sup>13</sup> Giddens, Anthony. 1997. *The Constitution of Society; outline of the Theory of Structuration*, Cambridge, Polity Press, pp 2.

## *Method*

- **Context**

*'Contextual research is concerned with identifying what exist in the social world and the way it manifest itself.'*<sup>14</sup>

The first stage of my research had been to understand as much as possible about the context of the phenomena; the non participation of the Jordanians in the Arab Spring. This has been done through the writing two papers and a literature review, on the theory and the subject matter under investigation. Moreover my understanding of Jordan, both in the academic and in the 'real' world has been increasing since the summer of 2013 all the way to the summer of 2014, by extensively reading on Jordan, the Arab world and the Middle East region.

- **The research.**

One of the main feature of scientific research is, according to Ragin, to generate data based on incorporating large amounts of appropriate evidence, purposefully collected.<sup>15</sup>

The main aim of my research was to talk to as many Jordanians possible, from as many different backgrounds. This in order to have a more diverse picture and also a diverse answer to the research questions. The targeted groups I had wished to interview, were the activist participants to the demonstrations, the non activist participants of the demonstrations, and the non participants.

In order to actually access the people selected because of their group characteristics, I used snowball<sup>16</sup> and purposive sampling.<sup>17</sup>

Because of the fact that I did not speak Arabic, it became very quickly apparent that making contact with the 'ordinary' working class people was out of the question. I therefore resorted to first asking my existing friends for contacts, and secondly social media was used to further contact people.

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<sup>14</sup> Ritchie, Jane, Jane Lewis (eds). 2003. *Qualitative Research Practice. A Guide for Social Science Students And Researchers*, London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi, Sage Publications, pp 27

<sup>15</sup> Ragin, Charles C. 1994. *Constructing Social Research: The Unity and Diversity of Method*. Pine Forge Press, pp 23

<sup>16</sup> Snowball sampling means that the people interviewed were asked to provide new contacts, which then in turn were asked to provide further contacts.

<sup>17</sup> *'The aim is first to ensure that all the key constituencies of relevance to the subject matter are covered. The second is to ensure that, within each of the key criteria, some diversity is included so that the impact of the characteristics can be explored'*. Ritchie, Jane, Jane Lewis (eds.) (2003), pp 79

### ▪ The sample

In the end I managed to speak, between the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March and the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 2011, to eighteen Jordanian people, both from Jordanian and Palestinian<sup>18</sup> background. I talked to nine Jordanians from Jordanian background and to five from Palestinian background, one was half Spanish and Jordanian Jordanian, one was from the Circassian minority<sup>19</sup>, and one refused to self identify between Jordanian Jordanian or Palestinian Jordanian. I have spoken to thirteen men and five woman. The sample was currently between the age of twenty five and thirty five, which would make them fresh out of college and early stages of working and adult life in 2011.

All had been to university, albeit one has dropped out after the second year. They did poses knowledge of the west, albeit in varying degree, and all of them were well versed in English. They had different professions, although IT, business and the NGO sector were predominant. As far as asked, many were from different towns within Jordan, but all resided and worked in Amman at the time of the interviews.<sup>20</sup>

Thus by accident I managed to speak to a young, educated sample, of which there have been organizers of the protest, participants, and non participants. However I wish to stress that by no means I pretend to speak for all the Jordanians, or even the educated young Jordanians. I merely present a slight glance on what my sample has said, and if this can be extrapolated to a more broader segment of society is up to the reader to decide.

This even more, since, due to circumstances, I did not have the chance to ask all the interviewees the full set of questions. Especially since after analysing the first ten interviewees I made substantial changes to the questions, and managed only to re-interview a few people. However, as said before, I do not claim to know what the Jordanian people think, and in the explanation of the questions used in this thesis, I will refer with footnote how many of my sample actually answered these questions. This might leave some of the data on a very

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<sup>18</sup> In the academic world the notion of 'Transjordanians' is more used. It refers to the original tribes of the Transjordan, a British mandate territory, which existed before it became the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in 1947. Another name used is 'East Bankers' which refers to the people who lived east of the river Jordan. Whilst the Jordanians of Palestinian origin lived west of the river and are thus often referred to as 'West Bankers.' However I dismiss these notions and use, the in Jordan itself used, distinction of Jordanian Jordanians and Palestinian Jordanians. Especially since there has been, according to one interviewee, a new group emerging, those with mixed parentage. Moreover, those interviewees who were from mixed parentage have all self-identified as Jordanian Jordanian.

<sup>19</sup> 'Circassians, who came to Jordan in the early twentieth century, fleeing Russia's southward expansion into the Caucasus.', Choucair, Julia. 2006. 'Illusive Reform: Jordan's Stubborn Stability', Carnegie Papers Middle East Series, No 76, pp 4

<sup>20</sup> The intention was to speak people in other cities, but this has been proven too difficult and would in the end dilute my sample thus be of no use.

small footing, and some on more sturdier, however it is not my intention to state absolute facts, merely to provide insight in my research results.

Also in order to be fair about my sample, it is important also to know the amount of people who did not get included into the sample. Since in general it would change the generalisibility of the findings.<sup>21</sup> I have explained the research and its sensitive nature to a total of thirty three people. Also someone had send my detailed explanation to eighty of her Facebook friends. Moreover I have had three people explain it to colleagues, but I don't know how many colleagues that were.

Two people were excluded because of being out of age range, three because their husbands did not have time, three people did not have time themselves, and seven did not express any interest in politics.

My interviews with knowledgeable people consist of four interviews. During these interviews I discussed and asked their expert opinions on the findings of my previous ten interviews, of which I had transcribed seven up to that point. The people interviewed were Mustafa Tell, who is from a old political family and a writer and an activist. Heleen Saaf van der Beek, deputy head of mission at the Dutch embassy in Amman, who has been working at the embassy since 2009. Dr Lubna Byouk, political science and international relations professor at the Hashemite University. And lastly Engineer Ali Abu Rubeiha, former member of parliament and head (sheikh) of the Beni Hamideh tribe, which consists of half a million persons.

The data collected had been through semi structured in depth individual interviews, since; *'they provide an opportunity for detailed investigation of people's personal perspectives, for in-depth understanding of the personal context within which the research phenomena are located, and for very detailed subject coverage'*.<sup>22</sup>

The interviews with my sample lasted around two to two and a half hours, whereas the interviews with the four knowledgeable people lasted around an hour and a half.

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<sup>21</sup> Ritchie, Jane, Jane Lewis (eds.) (2003), pp 106

<sup>22</sup> Ritchie, Jane, Jane Lewis (eds.) (2003), pp 36

The data used for my thesis consist only of the interviews that have been carried out whilst doing field work. Due to word constraints, I have chosen not to include extra documentary material, such as blogs, articles and opinion polls, as direct sources of data. This choice was also made because of the fact that many answers of my interviewees have been also mentioned in the other documentary sources, and the same had been with the findings of this thesis. Hence the choice was to write this thesis based only on the interviews conducted.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> A recommended blog is 'the Black Iris', by the (famous) blogger Naseem Tarawnah. His most important blogs regarding the Arab Spring in Jordan have been indexed in the bibliography.

# Chapter 1: Theory

## *State of Knowledge and Academic debate.*

The main umbrella term of this research is authoritarianism. The scholar Eva Bellin indicates in her article, the different factors she thinks have been important to explain the persistence of authoritarian rule in the Arab world, pre Arab spring.

*'Scholars have focused on any number of factors to account for this phenomenon, including the weakness of civil society; the deliberate manipulation and division of opposition forces; the cooptation of social forces through the distribution of rent, cronyism, and stunted economic liberalization; the region's cultural endowment; the prevalence and peculiar logic of monarchy; the embrace of liberalized autocracy; and the effective manipulation of political institutions such as parties and electoral laws.'*<sup>24</sup>

The usage of authoritarianism is not without its implications. The problem with authoritarianism is that it implies a certain top down rule. It implies that power, as having the means to shape society, is only used by the ruler and forced upon the ruled. As earlier stated in the introduction, it focuses too much on the structures of constraint. However, I am of the opinion that this top down view overlooks the fact there is also an amount of power in the hands of the ruled, there is choice and agency in the people themselves. This is the power act and to change the rule of the incumbent ruler.

The theoretical answer to this riddle can be found in the theory of structuration by Anthony Giddens.

Firstly, Giddens explains that social practices in life are maintained through the repetition of these practices by human behavior, by the actions of the agency bearer.

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<sup>24</sup> Bellin, Eva. 2012. 'Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring', Comparative Politics, Vol. 44, No 2, pp. 128. The author refers to the work of many other scholars.

For more elaboration on the different factors and the 'schools' of thought behind them, see: Marsha Pripstein and Angrist, Michele Penner. (eds) 2005. *Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Regimes and Resistance*. (Excerpt) Boulder, CO, Lynne Rienner.

*'The basic domain of study of the social sciences, according to the theory of structuration, is neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any form of social totality, but social practices ordered across space and time. Human social activities, like some self-reproducing items in nature, are recursive. That is to say, they are not brought into being by social actors but continually recreated by them via the very means whereby they express themselves as actors. In and through their activities agents reproduce the conditions that make these activities possible.'*<sup>25</sup>

Secondly, through repetitive actions, based on memory of these 'old' social practices, the human agents create fixed and acceptable patterns or rules of behavior. A step further is that these rules 'bind' themselves into social systems, which are '*patterns of relations in groupings of all kinds, from small intimate groups to social networks, to large organizations.*'<sup>26</sup> Meaning that these rules become institutionalized, accepted and enforced not only by individuals but by the groups around them, groups such as peer groups, family, communities, institutions or even a state or a regime. The original social practices, the behavior, have become structures and they tell us what to do and how to behave. However, as much as we have made these structures constraining, we can change them, making them more enabling. Thus a family can be constraining in the behavior of the children but at the same time the children can influence the family through behavior, to make them more enabling. A state can lay down rules on society, but society can influence the state through behavior to change or even abolish these rules.

This is what Giddens means with the duality of structure.

*'Structure as medium and outcome of the conduct it recursively organizes; the structural properties of social system do not exist outside of action but are chronically implicated in its production and reproduction.'*<sup>27</sup>

The structure is a means and a result of the action of the individual agency. And the individual agent thus has the power to change the structure through its actions, through the changing of behavior. More radically maybe through the breaking of the entrenched and institutionalized patterns of behavior, thus can the agent overthrow and recreate the structures that exist in the world around him or her.

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<sup>25</sup> Giddens, A. (1997), pp 2.

<sup>26</sup> Giddens, A. (1997), pp 131.

<sup>27</sup> Giddens, A. (1997), pp 374.

To be clear, we are the agent and we have agency, meaning that *'to be an agent is to be able to deploy (chronically, in the flow of life) a range of casual powers, including that of influencing those deployed by others.'*<sup>28</sup>

But although we are, in the eyes of Giddens, knowledgeable agents, this knowledge is not all encompassing. We know what we know within our capacities, and therefore knowledge and the resulting actions can be limited or having unintended results.

Giddens definition of knowledgeability is as followed:

*'Everything which the actors know (believe) about the circumstances of their actions and that of others, drawn upon in the production and reproduction of that action, including tacit as well as discursively available knowledge.'*

To research the duality of structure, and to what extent people perceive the existence and the power of structural constraints and their agency to change these, I have chosen for the notion of Social Contract. More specifically the social contract as an idea that pertains an exchange between the economical and political rights.

Important is to understand that in case of social and political rights the state has a great input, it is the enabler or disabler to the accessibility of the rights. The state could be the strongest structure and it is important to understand whether the agents perceive ways to change the state, through the available means and through their own behaviour.

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<sup>28</sup> Giddens, A. (1997), pp 14.

## ***Social Contract: The Empirical Phenomena: Social and Economic.***

The choice to use the notion of social contract, created some problems, since social contract is not as much a theory, but more an 'old' philosophical concept that regulates the state behaviour vis a vis its citizens.

Thus it is important to actually have a clear understanding what a social contract entails, to understand the notion of social contract in a broader perspective. In order to achieve this goal, I will first have a look at the social contract notion used by several scholars in relation to Jordan, with a focus on to the theme of economic and social welfare.<sup>29</sup>

The scholar Gregory Gause III, uses the notion of the social contract as an explanation of what the agreement was in old order, before the Arab Spring. For Gause the social contract seems to have two meanings. The first pertaining the content of the contract: the trade off between basic economic security and loyalty.<sup>30</sup> The second meaning pertains the validity of the social contract; its legitimacy of existence. The social contract is a concept which is an 'old' agreement between the autocratic rulers of the Middle East and their subjects. In case of Jordan one could think of the contract that has existed before the economic reforms of the 1990s.

However, during the Arab Spring, many Arab regimes, fearing the protests, immediately sought to quell the protest by placating their citizens, this in an attempt to maintain the old agreement. This was done through rising salaries, cancelling subsidy cuts and enlarging state employment. But, as Gause explains, non oil producing states, such as Jordan, might have found it problematic to follow this path.

The second author, Achim Vogt, connects the notion of the social contract more to Jordan itself. In his explanation, he includes a reference to the historicity of the social contract, the parties involved and a more detailed description of the content.

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<sup>29</sup> The choice for the social contract which provides social and economical benefits in exchange for political acquiesce, stems from the fact that Jordan is a relatively stable developed country. It is not a failed state in which the basic security of its inhabitants are threatened. Rather than basic security, the main task of the state is to provide a decent way of living. Secondly, the choice of scholars stems from the fact that these are the only scholars that explicit mention the social contract in their articles. Other major articles on Jordan or Jordan related focus on authoritarianism, which is the umbrella theme of social contract, and do not mention the social contract.

<sup>30</sup> Gause III, F. G. (2011), pp 87, One can arguably understand here that Gause means political loyalty.

With regard to the parties involved and the content, Vogt elaborates, albeit limited, on the difference between the Trans Jordanian tribes and the Palestinian Jordanian's part in the social contract. *'The Trans Jordanians tribes would assure the monarchy of their loyalty in exchange for state services, employment opportunities, and financial support.'*<sup>31</sup> This in comparison to the Palestinian Jordanians who were not employed in the public sector and thus had to fend for themselves in the private sector.

However the main point of the author, by mentioning the social contract, seems to be to illustrate the animosities between the Trans Jordanians and the Palestinian Jordanians and the difficulties for the king to handle both groups. The social contract notion is therefore used as an illustration of the favouritism of the King to one group, more specifically the social contract is an instrument of favouritism used by the King. Hence, the social contract is not so much an agreement to provide for all, rather it is an agreement to provide social and economical benefits for a certain group of people, which have been historically the Trans Jordanians. Again with the wording traditionally, the author does not specify time, but one could argue that this was before the economic reforms of the 1990s.

Both the usage and the time frame of the notion of the social contract are backed by the author Malika Bouziane. In her article on local governance in Jordan, she explains her two ways of understanding the social contract. The first, it being an agreement between ruler and ruled to provide social and economic benefits, the second notion is where the social contract is an instrument to provide social and economic benefits to a certain group. Bouziane explains<sup>32</sup>: *'Economic reforms of the 1990s forced the Jordanian state to relinquish its 'social contract' arrangements, which typically included free provision of health and education and extensive subsidies on food and essential commodities; a social contract that had guaranteed income support in exchange for loyalty and political acquiescence.'*<sup>33</sup> *For Transjordanians, the social contract meant employment in the public sector with "attendant benefits for the entire family". Along with a steady income, these jobs provided access to health care and cheap consumer goods"*<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Vogt, A. (2011), pp 63

<sup>32</sup> Bouziane, Malika. 2010. 'The state from below: local governance practices in Jordan', Journal of economic and Social research, Vol. 12, No 1, pp 39-40.

<sup>33</sup> Bouziane (2010), pp 39-40, the author refers to the work of *Hamarneh and Salem, 2007, Alissa, 2007*

<sup>34</sup> Bouziane (2010), pp 39-40, the author refers to the work of Baylouny 2008:281.

It seems that in this case the content and thus the usage of the social contract is differentiated according to who profits from it. For the general population the state agrees to provide a basic minimum of living.<sup>35</sup> However to the Trans Jordanians the state shows favouritism by selectively providing extra social and economic benefits, which are distributed through state employment. Bouziane makes clear that Palestinian Jordanians cannot become part of this instrumental working of the social contract, since they are not employed in the public sector.

To sum up, the usage of the notion of the social contract by three of the four selected authors changes function. In the first case, the contract is an agreement of political loyalty in exchange for a social and economic basic minimum for all. In the second case, the social contract is an instrument to selectively provide social and economic benefits, beyond the basic minimum, to a specific group favoured by the ruling party.

Also about the timeframe, it seems that the social contract is seen as an agreement that has existed before the 1990s, this can be deduced from the words 'old', 'traditionally'. On the contract that exist in the current days and whether there still exist a social contract the authors are silent.

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<sup>35</sup> This working of the social contract as an agreement valid for all, is supported by the second usage of the notion of social contract by Bouziane. In a paragraph conclusion, and in her final conclusion she explains: *'the ancient social contract between the state and its subjects of domination did not disappear; instead it was streamlined.'* *'The streamlining of the former social contract implies a transformation of the relationship between the ruler and the ruled.'* Bouziane (2010), pp 41 & 56. In both cases, the author talks in the previous paragraphs about both the Trans Jordanians and the Palestinian Jordanians. Thus the social contract as an agreement to provide a basic standard of living, should be seen as valid for the whole population of Jordan.

## ***Social Contract Theory: Social and Economic benefits and Social Welfare.***

The problem encountered is, that the theoretical debate and an analytical frame or theory, on the social contract being a trade off between political loyalty and social and economic benefits, has been hard to find.<sup>36</sup>

There is no analytical frame or theory which specifically explains both the general social contract, as a trade off between social and economic benefits and political loyalty and the instrumental social contract, which selectively provides more for a particular segment of a population. The question then arises how can we theoretically analyse both versions of the social contract.

For the instrumental social contract, the answer can be partly found in rentier theory. With the rentier theory we can find an explanation on how only a segment of the population manages to profit from economic welfare. The explanation of this process is given by the scholars Peters and More. Firstly, the traditional rentier state doctrine of ‘no taxation, no representation’ does not hold out when looking at the durability of authoritarian regimes. The scholars argue that having a stable ruling coalition is a basic necessary component of authoritarian regime durability.<sup>37</sup> However, support comes at a price, as one other scholar explains: ‘*coalitions do not maintain themselves.*’<sup>38</sup> Apart from political demands, there are also material (social and economic) demands which need to be satisfied. This fact can be linked to the revisionist rentier theory, which argues that a rentier state also exist as a result of: ‘*micro level decision-making processes in the recipient, namely coalition strategies (they fulfil the demands).*’<sup>39</sup> These micro level decision making processes shape both: ‘*the demand*

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<sup>36</sup> Baylouny, Anne Marie. 2008. ‘Militarizing Welfare: Neo-liberalism and Jordanian Policy’, Middle East Journal, Vol 62, No 2, pp 280. The author Baylony argues that this politics and social security trade off is widely acknowledged. However the references she provides are not sufficient for understanding the debate. The problem with her references is that they explain distribution of social welfare, without explicitly linking it to political acquiesces. Moreover her references provide only empirical phenomena and no theoretical framework. However, one of her references to an article on the situation in Latin America might be relatively useful in understanding maybe the future development of Jordan. See: Huber, Evelyne, ‘Options for Social Policy in Latin America; Neoliberal versus Social Democratic Models’, in Gøsta Esping – Andersen. 1996. (eds). ‘*Welfare States in Transition; National Adaptations in Global Economics*’, Thousand Oaks, CA, SAGE Publications, pp 141-186.

<sup>37</sup> Peters, A.M., More, P.W. 2009. ‘Beyond Boom and Bust: External Rents, Durable Authoritarianism and Institutional Adaptation in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan’, Studies in Comparative International Development, 44, pp 258

<sup>38</sup> Yom, S, & Gause, G. (2012), pp 82

<sup>39</sup> Peters, A.M., More, P.W (2009), pp 257

*for the distribution of external rents and the nature of the distributive institutions themselves.*<sup>40</sup>

These micro level decision making processes of coalition strategies, the building and maintenance of the coalitions, are where the negotiation capacity of the regime coalition towards the regime and vice versa, lies. The revisionist rentier theory explains how it has become possible for the ruling coalitions to profit from the instrumentalisation of the social contract, to make it selectively providing for their needs. This is because they manage to be the support base of the regime and use this as a leverage tool in the micro level decision making processes to gain more social and economic benefits from the regime itself.

However, in order to understand the existence of the general social contract, meaning a basic minimum for all, I will turn to an article written by the scholar Robert Cox.<sup>41</sup> In his article, Cox describes the demise of the welfare state in Western Europe and how this demise changed not only the welfare state itself but also the thought on the principles underlying the welfare state.

Cox explains that the traditional notion of welfare had been based on the principle that social and economic benefits provided by the state to the citizens was not a privilege, it was a right. By virtue of being a citizen one was entitled to welfare if one needed it. However with the rollback and decentralisation of the welfare state this argument became invalid. Rather than having right to social welfare by law, one had to earn it by showing (often to local authorities) that one was eligible, by meeting the criteria set.<sup>42</sup> Universal (state) entitlement laid down by law became replaced by a more (local) discursive view of rights, *‘where social rights are determined by process of dialogue and contest among competing claimants, rather than by appeal to fixed principles’*.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Peters, A.M., More, P.W (2009), pp 261

<sup>41</sup> Cox, Robert Henry. 1998. ‘The Consequences of Welfare Reform: How Conceptions of Social Rights are Changing’, *International Social Politics*, 27, 1. Cambridge University Press.

<sup>42</sup> Cox (1998), pp 10. In his text the author gives the example of elderly care which had been available for the elderly on the basis of generalized law (citizenship). Everybody from a certain age had the right to a certain degree of elderly care. Moreover the distribution of elderly care was uniformly applied throughout the country making sure everybody was treated equally. However with the rollback of the welfare state the uniform procedures of eligibility and provision disappeared. Resulting that elderly care had to be balanced in different parts of the country against other social services. In time this created unequal access, distribution and differentiation of elderly care throughout the country.

<sup>43</sup> Cox (1998), pp 10

Cox states that these austerity measures, marked a departure from the will to provide the optimum, to, at the more extreme level, a notion that nothing more than a minimum should be guaranteed.<sup>44</sup> Even then, one could argue, it could dissolve into a matter of being eligible, rather than being entitled by virtue of citizenship.

This minimum could be seen as the general social contract, which provides a basic welfare for the people involved in exchange for political acquiesces. However, if the people want more than basic welfare, this cannot be demanded, as Cox explains, with a reference of legitimacy to the notion of citizenship. The citizens need to express this wish through discursive methods; a process of dialogue and, I would say, contestation. Through this dialogue it should become clear how much social welfare is acceptable and how much the people can demand from the state.

The other solution can be demand of the expansion of the instrumental social contract. But as shown before entitlement, or better say access, to the instrumental social contract comes through public employment, which is based on the demand that one has to fulfil a certain set of criteria. This criteria before the 1990's in Jordan, was being a Trans Jordanian.

The dichotomy between the general social contract and the instrumental social contract might be overcome, at least theoretically, when turning to the social contract theory of one of the most important modern writers on social contract theory, John Rawls. In his article of 1985, Rawls revisits his earlier concept of Justice as Fairness and his Two Principles of Justice.<sup>45</sup> For the theoretical understanding in this thesis, the Two Principles of Justice are the most important. They shed light on the problem of how to deal with a limited general social contract and an exclusive instrumental social contract.

#### Two Principles of Justice<sup>46</sup>

*1. Each person has an equal right to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic rights and liberties, which scheme is compatible with a similar scheme for all.*

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<sup>44</sup> Cox (1998), pp 6

<sup>45</sup> Rawls, John. 1985. 'Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 14, No 3, pp 223-251. I have chosen to use this article and not the book 'A Theory of Justice'. Since this article gives a more clearer and condensed explanation of what Rawls meant with his concept of Justice as Fairness and his Two Principles of Justice.

<sup>46</sup> Rawls (1985), pp 227

*2. Social and economic inequalities are to satisfy two conditions: first, they must be attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity; and second, they must be to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society.*

The implications of the two principles are as followed. The first category of rights are the basic liberties, which should be equal and adequate for all and free from government interference. These liberties are: political liberty, freedom of speech and assembly, liberty of conscious and thought, freedom of a person, right to hold personal property, freedom from arbitrary arrest and seizure.<sup>47</sup> In the second principle Rawls mentions the social rights, they pertain our two forms of social contract. Firstly, Rawls does agree on the fact that certain advantages can be attached to offices and positions in society. However, Rawls is of the opinion that if this is the case these offices should be open to all under the conditions of fair equality and opportunity. In case of Jordan, this would mean that also the Palestinian Jordanians (and other minorities) should be able to find employment in the public sector, especially in the military, and with this employment gain access to the benefits attached to these offices and positions.

Secondly Rawls is of the opinion that, although the distribution of wealth does not need to be equal, it does need to be to the least advantaged of all. Selective distribution as is done through the instrumental social contract would disproportionately be of disadvantage to the people not included. To apply Rawls' second principle, the instrumental social contract should not favour those who already have but those who do not have. The unequal distribution should provide for the ones who have to survive on or below a basic minimum income and not the ones who live above this level. This would make the general social contract more fair since distribution of wealth is tailored to needs of the population and not to ethnic origin or whether the receivers are the coalition partners of the regime.

In general, this thesis will use both Cox's and Rawls' ideas, in order to focus on the perception the social contract.

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<sup>47</sup> Rawls, John. 1999. *'A Theory of Justice'*, Massachusetts, Belknap Press, pp 53. Unfortunately Rawls does not provide us with a list of the important economical rights. For my research I have thus looked at the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, whilst supplementing the political rights enumerated by Rawls with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

## Chapter 2:

## Economic rights

The question addressed in the first chapter of this thesis pertains the perception of the economic rights in Jordan. These economic rights are not drawn from the social contract theory of John Rawls, since he only talks about the political rights. The choice was made to use the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights. These rights encompass the right to work, right to social security, right to adequate standard of living (right to housing, right to food), right to education, right to health, and the right to science and culture. I have chosen to not include the right of science and culture, since the lacking of these right would not, in my opinion, have people taking to the street and start a revolution.

### *The Rights and the Government*<sup>48</sup>

The first question pertained the interviewees perception whether the government of Jordan was able to ensure these economic rights in relation to what it was capable of, in 2010 and early 2011. This since the economic rights require the government to be active in providing the means to facilitate the enjoyment of these rights by its people.

The sub question for this section is as followed:

*Did people perceive the economic rights, as provided by the regime as adequate? In relation to what the government had been perceived to be capable of.*

#### ▪ **Right to Work**

In case of the right to work, the question was posed if the government had done something to address unemployment and to encourage work opportunities<sup>49</sup>. The general opinion of the interviewees<sup>50</sup> was quite bad. The majority<sup>51</sup> said that the government did not deal with the problems adequately, although the government had shown some initiatives. Such as the creation of a bureau to help unemployed people, organizing an annual work fair and

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<sup>48</sup> In this thesis the government and regime are used when the people perceived it was either the government or the regime that was responsible, however there can often be considerable overlap. Further explanation and the distinction is found in the appendix.

<sup>49</sup> Eighteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>50</sup> Sixteen interviewees.

<sup>51</sup> Fourteen interviewees.

encouraging vocational training. But these initiatives were perceived by those who mentioned them, as too little. *'They don't know the problem, they don't try to study, they do nothing. What is the problem, they do like two papers. No research, no working, no trying to find creative solution, just read two papers to know what to talk about and make a speech.'* Also two interviewees referred to the government's lack of resources to help everybody. However, it was mentioned,<sup>52</sup> that the unemployment problem was also in some way the fault of the Jordanians themselves. *'Jordanians have pride, different kind of pride, don't like to work janitors, don't do the dirty things. This kind of pride creates unemployment.'*<sup>53</sup> Refusal to accept lower salary was also cited, but one has to keep in mind that the salary of a normal job barely covers the basics of living.<sup>54</sup>

#### ▪ **Right to Social Security**

On the issue of social security the situation was slightly complicated.<sup>55</sup> In general the perception was bad.<sup>56</sup> The fact was, that social security, which still did not cover every sector, had been privatized. Resulting in the complaint that the private security company was not transparent, there existed a cloud of corruption around the dealings of the company. *'They invest our money in very big projects investment, but very ridiculous things. There is no transparency.'* This all contributed to the degrading of the social security function and the trust in the future effectiveness of the social security system.<sup>57</sup> *'Here is the trust issue, you are paying, but you are not sure you will get the money, (...) Nobody has a trust, that in 2030 they will get enough money'*. On the question whether the pension<sup>58</sup> was enough, the interviewees<sup>59</sup> asked were very negative. One example was illustrating for the general feeling: *'It is nothing. Like my mother worked for 30 years as a teacher and now what is her retirement salary, 200 to 250 JD.'* The government's failure or refusal to address the

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<sup>52</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>53</sup> A personal observation of this problem was made whilst visiting a photo exhibition at the Grand Hyatt. The government had set up free trade zones (Qualified Industrial Zones), especially in Aqaba, to encourage economic growth and employment. However as the exhibition showed, because of the low salary and poor working conditions, the people who work there were mainly poor and often illegal people from Bengal and Sri Lanka. Moreover observed was that the (illegal) cleaning staff in the gym and the domestic workers seen in Amman consisted mainly of Asian origin. A friend explained that she tried to hire Jordanian cleaning staff seven times, but they refused to work properly, thus she had to resort to hire staff from the Philippines.

<sup>54</sup> Three interviewees. I was told that a minimum wage was 180 JD a month, average government employee would have earned 350 JD and an average private sector employee up 600 JD a month. But all depends on sector, position and experience. A family with a combined income under 400 JD would be considered poor.

<sup>55</sup> Eighteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>56</sup> Twelve interviewees.

<sup>57</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>58</sup> Ten interviewees. Their experience with pension was mainly old age, because of family, one interviewee had experience because of a widows pension of sister.

<sup>59</sup> Eleven interviewees.

problems led people to 'help themselves', meaning supplementing pensions with inheritance, savings, side jobs, family income or by cashing in through the right connections. Moreover a few<sup>60</sup> of the interviewees were of the opinion that one should plan for the future to prevent future problems. *'Everyone should planning for himself what he will do for tomorrow, and the next 10 years 20 till the end'*.

#### ▪ **Right to adequate Standard of Living**

In case of the standard of living<sup>61</sup> The majority<sup>62</sup> perceived the actions of the government to help people with their problems, as inadequate. Firstly, some<sup>63</sup> interviewees perceived that the middle class in Jordan was disappearing. Illustrated by the explanation of two others that for a normal family to come by on basics, both parents had to work. Governmental help, such as cash handouts or subsidies on fuel and basic goods were only geared to the very poor.<sup>64</sup> However these initiatives were often not enough in case of cash handouts. Or measures taken, were later reversed in case of fuel and goods subsidies. Moreover two interviewees perceived that the rising of the fuel prices, through the cuts on fuel subsidies, made the prices of goods in general rise, thus leaving the government responsible. Adding to this, another interviewee stated, was the fact that although Jordan was a poor country and had been affected by the global credit crisis, the regime had not been interested in helping its people. The regime's prime interest in the last decade up to 2011, was to make money. This was done through privatization and the selling of land, especially when real estate inflation occurred because of the Iraqi refugee crisis, which started in 2005.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, the perceived prevalence of corruption in all of the above mentioned factors, made the regime profit from the problems at hand, and thus more inclined to maintain the existence of these profitable problems.

#### ▪ **Right to Education**

On the educational front<sup>66</sup> the majority<sup>67</sup> of the interviewees perceived the system as bad. One of the major issues<sup>68</sup> was the degrading of the quality, which showed in bad and outdated

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<sup>60</sup> Three interviewees.

<sup>61</sup> Standard of living includes affordable housing, food and goods

<sup>62</sup> Eleven out of nineteen interviewees. Eighteen interviewees and one other Palestinian Jordanian were asked this question. This because I did have a 'casual' conversation with him in his shop about the subject.

<sup>63</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>64</sup> Six interviewees.

<sup>65</sup> Five interviewees said inflation was because of the Iraqi refugees, one said this was a general wrong perception of the Jordanian public.

<sup>66</sup> Eighteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>67</sup> Twelve interviewees were negative, and four interviewees were positive.

<sup>68</sup> Thirteen interviewees.

curriculum. Moreover far too much lessons were taught in Arabic, and not in English and the teachers were seen<sup>69</sup> as unqualified and old fashioned authoritarian in their way of teaching. *'For example, you cannot argue a teacher in certain fact, for those who have studied here, stayed here did not have the foreigner experience, you cannot argue with them. What they say is right is right and that's it.'* Another problem identified<sup>70</sup> was the high school examination: the Tawjihi. It did not reveal the true talents. It led the best to the economic studies, leaving the worst to follow the political studies. Studies which would lead to a civil service career in government, and thus creating the leaders of tomorrow. On top of that had been the fact that the whole system was infused with corruption. One example was the practice of grade buying in high school and university.<sup>71</sup>

With regards to the government actions, the government did guarantee access to education, public education was often free or very cheap. There had been university seats reserved for children of security personnel, poor people, and for Palestinian children still living in refugee camps. However this practice of seat distribution, had also led to problems in the education system. Since some seats were then allotted on basis of merit, the Tawjihi score, and some on other criteria, the quality and motivation of students varied, which had led to an overall degrading of the quality of education. Moreover it was perceived, that the government since the late '90, had been the facilitator of the problems. Firstly<sup>72</sup> the government had used the private sector to sell university licenses, leading to an exponential growth of universities. The government also pushed the public universities to become self sufficient, which led them to sell the university seats themselves, often to rich Arab foreigners. Secondly the government was perceived<sup>73</sup> not to address the quality problem on a structural basis, especially in the public sector. Royal initiatives were taken, mostly by Queen Rania, but they did not touch the real problems.<sup>74</sup> And lastly, the unwillingness of the government to act also had to do with the pervasiveness of wasta and corruption, going as far as the Ministry of Education and the political decision making organs.<sup>75</sup> As one interviewee summarized it: *'The decay happen because of consecutive bad policies happen. When you think about continuous corruption and*

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<sup>69</sup> Five interviewees, although one other interviewee said they were actually very good.

<sup>70</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>71</sup> Grade buying could be done through literally paying the teacher for a certain grade, however more than often also the pressure of the family, tribe or community was used to make the teacher pass certain students.

<sup>72</sup> Three interviewees, although one other interviewee disagreed.

<sup>73</sup> Six interviewees.

<sup>74</sup> One interviewee mentioned that sometimes foreign 'best practices' were adopted, often from the worlds 'top' countries such as Holland, Denmark and Sweden. But it remains unclear what, after a few years, the results were of the implementation of these practices in Jordan.

<sup>75</sup> Four interviewees, although one other interviewee stated lack of resources.

*appointed ministers and managers or presidents of universities, this leads to wasta and high positions people with no vision, people who care about money. It is a natural result.'*

#### ▪ **Right to Health**

The last right revolves around the health care situation in Jordan, in 2010 and early 2011.<sup>76</sup> Most of the interviewees were very positive, many perceived it to be medium to good quality.<sup>77</sup> However, the image of the public health service was mixed.<sup>78</sup> Most interviewees<sup>79</sup> said the private sector was better, albeit quite expensive and therefore often beyond the reach of the average lower class Jordanian, let alone the very poor. The government had addressed this issue in 2010 by making public healthcare free for people over sixty and for children under five. With regards to the facilities, two interviewees stressed that almost all the medical facilities were concentrated in the capital, Amman. Therefore accessibility to medical aid in the small villages and in the country side was restricted.<sup>80</sup>

The private companies were obliged to cover their employees and the government insurance had been there to cover the rest. For those who still didn't manage to pay for treatment, the royal court functioned as a mop up institution for the faulty system.<sup>81</sup> It gave out free treatment to those poor people who asked for it. However one of the interviewees doubted its sincerity: *'So we go back to something that we have in Jordan that is very primitive, kind of bit medieval. (...) The office of the King, and you go to the office of the King and you write a letter: oh dear King, you are so merciful etc, can you pay this from your money, which is our money because he is taking taxes the MF. The Diwan (royal court) is a very successful public relations system for the King and for the royal family.'*

Regardless of the good health service, the government was perceived not to have actively pursued improvement.<sup>82</sup> They did not deal with the increased pressure on the health system. Pressure that has been rising because of the unhealthy and stressful living of the Jordanian population. Health service and government policy had been more curative oriented rather than preventive. Also another important problem identified, were the people working within the health sector and the government. They were seen as incompetent, corrupt and there was

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<sup>76</sup> Eighteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>77</sup> Thirteen interviewees.

<sup>78</sup> Four interviewees said it was good, three said it was bad.

<sup>79</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>80</sup> Albeit one interviewee explained that the government has created traveling clinics to help the Bedouin, but this, he exclaimed, is not enough.

<sup>81</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>82</sup> Three interviewees.

mismanagement, moreover procedures to get help were long and bureaucratic and to get really something done one needed *wasta*.<sup>83</sup>

In general the government was seen as not guaranteeing a good quality of the enjoyment of the economic rights, by effectively tackling the problems mentioned. The general perception was that the regime had been unwilling to provide to what it was actually capable of.

Moreover in some cases the government or more correctly the regime, was perceived to be the source of the problem. A much cited problem was the pervasiveness of corruption and the inefficiency of government conduct. Only a few cited Jordan's poor economic problems, such as debts, lack of natural resources and the international economic crises.

However still some<sup>84</sup> perceived the economic rights to have been equal given to all. Two interviewees said all people were taken care of well. *'System is fair, every system in the world has extremes. So it is natural. Even though the extremes can, you know, deal with fair treatment, you can put it back to the normal.'* And two said that all people, regardless background or location, shared the same misery of having bad economic rights.

The knowledgeable interviewees mostly concurred. Mrs Saaf van der Beek agreed about the inefficiency of the government, stating that it was too big in general. Mr Tell blamed all the above mentioned problems on the pervasiveness of corruption in the whole of Jordanian society. *'... we are facing the bad economic situation and the bad distribution of wealth because of the corruption. (...) And yes we do get international aid, lot of grants, but again if those were distributed evenly we would see a different Jordan. If the corruption was not so deep and basically in every aspect of life, the economic situation would be much much better.'* Mr Rubeiha concurred in stating that corruption was a big problem, it did hamper the effectiveness of governmental institutions, not only in addressing the needs of the poor, but in overall output. *'... there is some places where is money, and there interferes (the corruption) can have a powerful interferes, but some we have very good offices.'* Moreover there has been a lack of good structural planning by the government to deal with the problems mentioned

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<sup>83</sup> *Wasta* is mainly using connections; friends, family (cousins), to get things. The difference with normal connections is, that *wasta* can really get you things for which you might not have the right to. In employment *wasta* can get you a job regardless whether you are qualified, whilst connections can get you an interview, but not the job itself.

<sup>84</sup> Four interviewees.

above. Only Mrs Byouk pointed at the poor domestic and international economic situation in 2010 as a cause for Jordan's problems.

The image which arises on the social contract in Jordan was, that it did provide the basic minimum of economic rights to the Jordanian middle and low working class people. However, in quality this basic minimum had been too low for the middle class people I interviewed, they therefore had to resort to their own means to get the economic rights of a quality to which they were accustomed. Also, for them, the government actions to improve were considered not to be enough, in comparison to what the government was perceived to be capable of. The social contract failed to deliver on its promises to the middle class. Instead of providing an optimum it provided a minimum, which was seen as unacceptable. In the chapter 'Challenge and Change the Government' we will turn to the perceived means and methods that were there to address these wrongdoings, and more important on what claims this address was based.

### ***Channels of unequal distribution***

As explained in the theory chapter there existed in Jordan, according to the academic writers, institutions which distributed economic benefits unequally to particular segments of society. Institutions of distribution are, as explained by Rawls, in general not that much of a problem as long as they provide to the most disadvantaged in the society. In this case the unequal distribution should have provided for the ones who have had to survive on or below a basic minimum of economic rights and not to the ones who have been living above this level.

- **Military**

In the article of Baylouny it was mentioned that the Jordanian army was a distributive institution, geared towards the Jordanians of Jordanian origin. Hence firstly the interviewees<sup>85</sup> were asked if the army was an institution which gave out benefits to mainly Jordanian Jordanians, rather than Palestinian Jordanians, in 2010 and early 2011. Moreover the question was posed, as to what was given and whether the distribution within the army was equal to all of its members and attached families.

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<sup>85</sup> Sixteen interviewees were asked the military related questions.

Some<sup>86</sup> interviewees explained that the privileges for the army extended beyond the army, it encompasses the whole security sector. However the army was its strongest and most privileged component. On the question who was in the army, some<sup>87</sup> interviewees explained it was mostly Jordanian Jordanians, especially in sensitive positions.<sup>88</sup> But there were also Palestinian Jordanians, however they played a minor role. Apart from the sensitive factor, the predominance of Jordanian Jordanians in the army had also been because of the fact that most of army personal was drawn from the poorer cities and the country side, there were mostly Jordanian Jordanians live.<sup>89</sup> *‘... most of villages you will find it is Jordanian Jordanians, and these people, like if I live in village when I did Tawjihi or did not, it will be difficult for me to go to work for example here, everyday coming by car. Thus the thinking of people who live in villages when you finish study you should go to army or police, this sector. Because his father and brother like that, so he will. So it will be norm after taking villages.’* Mr Tell explains that in case of the army: *‘Palestinians don’t want to go to the army, because it is underpaid a lot of work. When you look, most people in the army are the real poor, the tribal, the ones outside of Amman, who have no other jobs. Like the African Americans in the States, what can I do to actually succeed? I can go into the army, the only way to go up.’*

On what the army and security sector got the interviewees were quite clear. Firstly the army has had its own good health service and coverage.<sup>90</sup> Moreover there were university seats reserved for the children of military personal.<sup>91</sup> But on the question whether this was all equally distributed within the security sector, some interviewees<sup>92</sup> explained a different story. Although the army had been taking care of its own, like any army in the world, there were levels. The high ranking officers had access to better benefits and higher salary, and the poor rank and file soldier stayed poor with access to only meager benefits. Sometimes to such an extent that employment within the army would not even provide benefits close to the basic minimum.

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<sup>86</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>87</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>88</sup> This goes back to the Jordanian-Palestinian confrontation of 1970–71. *‘Due to mass desertions that took place at the beginning of the conflict, the security sector in Jordan underwent a process of Jordanisation after the crisis had ended, i.e. ‘de- Palestinianisation’ and from then onwards, the security sector has been dominated by Jordanians.’* Ryan, Curtis R. (2011): ‘Identity Politics, reform and protest in Jordan’, *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*: Vol. 11, No. 3, 2011, pp 567, the scholar quotes work by the author Nawaf Tell (2004).

<sup>89</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>90</sup> Eight interviewees.

<sup>91</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>92</sup> Six interviewees.

Thus in understanding the function of the army as an instrument of selective distribution, one should understand that this might only have been geared towards the rich and important Jordanians of Jordanian background. For the poor Jordanian Jordanians, the picture was slightly more complicated. Firstly, even though they were employed in the army, they did not even manage to reach the level of economic benefits of their Palestinian counterparts in the cities. However, secondly, as explained, since the poor Jordanian Jordanians often lived in the impoverished country side, the army had been used to selectively distribute economic benefits to them. Even up to a point that the army would be the only means in order to gain any income of substance at all. Moreover the fact that employment meant also economic benefits, no matter how small, for the attached families, would make army employment preferable above self employment in the impoverished areas of Jordan.<sup>93</sup>

But within this system the main problem had been the poor Palestinian Jordanians. The impression was given that the Palestinian Jordanians would not want to work in the army since they can achieve better employment, and thus have access to better benefits. But, it would be likely that not all Palestinian Jordanians were well off, some might have been actually very poor. For them employment in the army would not have had the same benefitting function as for the Jordanian Jordanians, since employment for the Palestinian Jordanians had been restricted in numbers and only confined to lower and unimportant functions.

#### ▪ Other

Apart from the army, the question arose if the interviewees<sup>94</sup> knew any other institutions of 'unequal' distribution. Institutions which gave out benefits to particular segments of the society.

As explained briefly before, the royal court was seen<sup>95</sup> as an institution that was helping the population. Mostly it was dealing with medical problems, however it also gave out university seats and provided loans to those who needed it. *'The royal court tries to be fair to everybody, and sometimes offers help and you can write a petition and they have a department and they can consider you. (...) The royal court does that in a way because the government does not*

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<sup>93</sup> One would think of traditional agricultural employment, such as farming and herding animals. These jobs might provide income, but do not come with benefits, such as university seats for the attached family.

<sup>94</sup> Eight interviewees were asked directly, since this question was added later to the questionnaire, however five interviewees had indirectly answered this question already, pointing to institutions of distribution. And only five interviewees did not indicate any institution beyond the army and the security sector.

<sup>95</sup> Six interviewees.

*provide.*' The perception of a few interviewees<sup>96</sup> was that in case of education the royal court did help more the Jordanian Jordanians and in case of health service it helped more the Jordanians from Palestinian background.

A second form of 'unequal' distribution was achieved through government employment.<sup>97</sup> *'Ministry of improvement they have 1000 employees, 500 they are working, 500 are doing nothing. They are a government employees, it is not only in Jordan it is in all Arab countries.'*

One example mentioned, was the educational sector. The universities provided benefits for the families of the employees and reserved seats and employment opportunities for their children. The perception<sup>98</sup> was that traditionally the Jordanian Jordanians were working in the public sector, e.g. being employed by the government, and the Palestinian Jordanians had been working in the private. However two of the interviewees stated that this has changed in the last ten years, especially in the bigger cities.

In general Mrs Saaf van der Beek sees this government employment as an historical development. The people had to be served, thus government employment was used as a way to appease the public, in exchange for loyalty. Albeit some interviewees<sup>99</sup> said that this kind of state employment diminished since the end of the '90, because it became too expensive and because of the international pressure to reduce government spending.

As shown, it seems that the other institutions of distribution give a different image. The royal court did provide economic benefits to those who asked for it, regardless of background. Also the government, which had been traditionally employing only to Jordanian Jordanians, seems in 2010 and early 2011, a safe haven to all Jordanians regardless of background. However the chances of getting into public employment were seen to be declining. Moreover in the big cities there were at the same time more job opportunities in the private sector available for Jordanian Jordanians.

In general it seems that the social contract as distributing to a particular segment did hold only true for the security sector and then especially the army. In other fields of the economic rights, it seems that there had been more a free market situation, in which everyone could get access

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<sup>96</sup> This was not a direct question asked. In all the interviews only three interviewees voiced these views.

<sup>97</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>98</sup> Although this question was directly asked in all the eighteen interviews, only six interviewees did actually answer the question.

<sup>99</sup> Three interviewees.

to economic benefits, regardless his or her background. However as will be shown later in this chapter, the amounts and access chances to economic benefits did vary substantial, it had been more a patchwork than a blanket.

### ***Other Help? Equal?***

- **The Needy**

As explained before, it seemed that the government had been taking care the middle and low working class people, but only up to a basic minimum. However these economic rights were perceived to have serious issues in both quality and quantity. Moreover the addressing of the issues was quite limited, the meager government employment and the incidental help of the royal court did not fix the main problems.

The question becomes then, if any other helping actions of the government had been reaching the other people, the really poor, in 2010 and early 2011? The ones not high, middle or low working class, but the needy.

*Did people perceive that the distribution of wealth has been directed to the ones who need it the most?*<sup>100</sup>

In general, the interviewees<sup>101</sup> were negative about the distribution of wealth to those who need it the most, the poor people. These people were identified as people from small unimportant cities and people living in the suburbs of the bigger cities. Both being from Jordanian Jordanian and Palestinian Jordanian background. These people often tend to have the most problems, as explained by one interviewee, who spend time in jail himself: *'I have witnessed that, in jail are the most poor people, the most weak people, they have no wasta, no power, no money, that's why they became criminals. They are victims 100%, they did not chose that, they are struggling, they are uneducated. They are victims of violence, un education, poverty, no jobs'*.

The poor, especially outside of Amman, were in dire need of economic benefits, such as health care, education, employment, housing and social security. Their social contract often did not even reach the basic minimum, even worse these issues were perceived not to been

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<sup>100</sup> Fourteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>101</sup> Nine interviewees.

adequately addressed by the government institutions. A few interviewees<sup>102</sup> explained that the privatization of the late '90, led to an increase in both the richest and the poorest classes. The introduction of the full capitalist market made the already rich and important more richer. Moreover privatization had also increased dramatically the already pervasive corruption in the Jordanian society.<sup>103</sup> It was perceived<sup>104</sup> that it was exactly this corruption and *wasta* which hampered the attempts of the government to help the poor, the ones who needed it the most. *'... the country is very very poor. We have a lot of problems. We have no sources, at the same time there is this people who steal, and who get benefits here and there. It is too much.'* An example was an attempt to create fair job opportunities, which had failed because of the prevalence of *wasta*. Also, problematic was a housing project for the poor initiated by the King. Apart from being a disaster because of bad infrastructure, the distribution of these houses to the poor was fraught with *wasta* and corruption. So in the end it was not even beneficial to the really poor. *'There are for instance houses build in the suburbs of neighborhoods, villages, they are given for free to people they have to go through certain criteria's, those criteria's are being used wasta, they are corrupted, yes they are. Nonetheless the project exist. Is there a Public Relation distribution of money, is it efficient, no but it exist, there is an effort. But in 90% of cases it is spoiled by corruption and wasta.'*

When looking at the answers the question arises who was getting more, who did profit from the system, and how they had come to do so.<sup>105</sup>

#### ▪ **The Privileged**

In case of the distribution of the economic rights<sup>106</sup> a majority perceived<sup>107</sup> it to have been unequal. The privileges mentioned by the interviewees, did not only involve the access to the economic rights and benefits, as mention in the beginning of this chapter. The privileges also included: preferential treatment, extra investment opportunities, more *wasta*, educational opportunities especially outside Jordan, free land. And an allowance to some degree to live

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<sup>102</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>103</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>104</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>105</sup> This question is the same asked with regards to the political chapter (Fair and Equal?), but although the answers are relatively similar, I chose to maintain this separation since there is quite a distinction between the privileged people with regards to access to both the economic and the political rights.

<sup>106</sup> Eighteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>107</sup> Sixteen interviewees.

outside of the law, which had made the privileged Jordanians able to get away with corruption, smuggling, electricity and water theft.

The first privileged group were the tribes.<sup>108</sup> *'They hold it, and that's why every time things seem to be on shaky ground the King would go visit the certain tribes, and to calm things, see what they want, give what they want. Do what he can. Whatever.'* But even within and between the tribes there were differences. *'The tribes are levels even, there are some powerful tribes and some small tribes. Small tribes nobody listen to them, they are the most poor. Even inside the tribes there are powerful people and smashed people, people who are nobody. There is levels in everything.'* However, Mr Rubeiha was of the opinion that the tribes in current times did not wield that much influence anymore. *'Tribes it was before, because the regime they severed the tribes, now they lost their connections after the King Abdullah came. The new things happen, that not looking for these kind if they ask him. In fact King Hussein, he always looking to the people who help his grandfather, to make the regime, the power. King Abdullah business people, he is looking to look after, but he want to work, the people to work not to wait help.'* This was also the opinion of Mr Tell, who explained that the tribal thing was often exaggerated. *'You can be from the biggest tribe, but it is more about money. It is how you can benefit from the people at the top. That is how you became important.'*

The second group identified<sup>109</sup> were the rich people. Because of their riches they had often the power and the contacts. Highlighted by three interviewees, was the perception that these rich people were from both backgrounds. Although two other interviewees said the rich people were mainly Palestinian Jordanians. The third group was perceived<sup>110</sup> to be the important people, they had derived their importance from their political status. The fourth<sup>111</sup> group were the connected people. They were as one interviewee explained: *'People connected to sources of power, it is basically economic'*. The last distinction made<sup>112</sup> was based on geographical locations. Particular cities were privileged over others because they wielded more, often tribal, power over the central government. The north was privileged over the south in terms of development and educational facilities. Amman was privileged over the rest of the country since all business and wealth was perceived to be in Amman. And lastly, the Palestinian in the

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<sup>108</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>109</sup> Eight interviewees.

<sup>110</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>111</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>112</sup> Eight interviewees.

camps were seen as privileged over the Jordanian Jordanians in the country side and the 'poor' Palestinians in the cities, since they had through UNWRA more and better access to health and educational facilities.

Although these groups were presented as distinct, it was understood that there was considerable overlap and cross connections between groups. *'Jordan small country, one man head of this, his wife somewhere else and son connected something. And in army daughter head of something.'*

Access to these groups one gained, most of the time, through being born within the group, through marriage to a member of the group.<sup>113</sup> Or you could work your way into an important position in society, from where you would have been then included in a particular group.<sup>114</sup> Moving to a location would not automatically give you any privileges beyond what was general available for the public at that location. To be truly privileged, one had to become a member of an already privileged group, by managing the access methods as explained above.

#### ▪ **The Interviewees**

When asked whether<sup>115</sup> the interviewees themselves had any experience with these situations, one explained he got an university seat for free since his father had been in the army. But the others<sup>116</sup> explained that for their education, their family had to pay full. A few interviewees<sup>117</sup> explained that they had been from a Jordanian tribe or had a Jordanian background, which could give privileges in general, such as help in mediation with the police or with employment in the public sector. However this background could also work against them when seeking employment in the, by the Palestinian Jordanian dominated, private sector, since they might be discriminated against. One explained that she did not care about her privileges as a Jordanian Jordanian, she just wanted to be treated equal. *'To me equality is that I feel and have equal opportunity in life same as anybody in my country. I am a citizen! I am a person who is strong enough and decent enough to say I want to be equal and I don't want to have privileges because. But that's me.'* Lastly one interviewee and Mrs Byouk, explained

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<sup>113</sup> Important is to understand that marriage for a man into a tribe will not gain any 'name' advantage since he will not change his last name. However for a woman to marry a man of an important tribe, she will then have the name of her husbands tribe, and all the privileges attached to this name.

<sup>114</sup> Birth, marriage and (adult) adoption.

<sup>115</sup> Because this question was made later, six interviewees answered the question directly and three indirectly making a total of nine who answered the question

<sup>116</sup> Three interviewees.

<sup>117</sup> Three interviewees.

that their Circassian background, would have given them no advantage, since it was known that the Circassian community members didn't help each other through *wasta*.

▪ **Addressing the issue?**

On the issue of challenging the unfair and unequal distribution of economic rights,<sup>118</sup> some interviewees explained that they did challenge this personally. Two had done this through protesting and two through writing.

Also it was noted that of all the interviewees, seven worked in the NGO sector, of which three for NGOs which directly addressed the economic situation of the underprivileged in Jordan. However two interviewees explained, that also the poor cities and the poor tribes themselves had often challenged the rich with regards to the access and distribution of resources. Albeit with varied success. *'Poor tribes don't move as tribes, they do like the workers of this company ask for the raise. Or the people of this city asking for employment, they don't move as small tribes, because there is no power and no frame for them. But the big tribes do, they have a frame through the parliament.'* *'Tafileh, they are the most candid segment. Ma'ani (challenge) all the time, they are not satisfied with the tribal leaders, with the King, they are not satisfied at all. Cities from the north were more subtle, they would protest but they have more sophisticated opposition, mainly Islamic.'*

Mrs Byouk explained that in case of the demanding cities sometimes even the government had not been able to do anything about it. This problem was also identified by some interviewees.<sup>119</sup> The tribes and their cities would become some kind of state within a state. Moreover if then there was an issue, the government often had deal with very high pressure from the tribes, who controlled these cities. Cities identified by the interviewees were Karak, Tafile and Ma'an. Mrs Byouk explains *'it is like the families, tradition. Jordan is tribal, so they try to appease the big families, the important cities.'*

The majority<sup>120</sup> acknowledged that many people did not challenge the system. In many tribal issues the people did accept the power of the tribes to mediate between the people and the state and between the people themselves. Mr Rubeiha explains: *'we have a habit in the tribal village, if there is any problem we do it before we go to the government, court. We use.'* Also people themselves did use their own community to pressure for their fellow members in

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<sup>118</sup> Eight interviewees were asked this question directly and eight answered it indirectly, mainly with regard to the *wasta* issue. Making it a total of sixteen who answered the question.

<sup>119</sup> Three interviewees.

<sup>120</sup> Twelve interviewees.

trouble. This was slightly perceived as a good thing, since often the state was seen as unfair and mediation in small cases between parties was mostly preferred above punishment by the state.

However less favorable was looked upon the misuse of the system. Firstly identified was the distribution of government jobs and privileges on basis of tribal and family affiliation instead of merit. This led to nepotism. If one family member from a particular tribe or city would get into public office, he or she would then employ his or her own, often unqualified family, tribe or city, leading to extensive tribalization of particular governmental departments. *'If you go to certain office all Quarini Palestinians, other office all Jordanians from Karak. Because the guy in 1950 from Karak he had the first position.'*<sup>121</sup> The second issue was that people just wanted to be close to the source of power and to get there they would do anything. *'Many Jordanians would like, also because of the social prestige. They will strive to be part of the government, that their children have this kind access of jobs in the interior, foreign ministry.'* However the greatest 'problem' identified<sup>122</sup> in Jordan society, was the perseverance of wasta and its extensive usage by the Jordanian people. Wasta was helping people with avoiding traffic fines, speeding up document processing, passing school exams, getting driving license, gaining employment and providing access to better medical treatment.<sup>123</sup> All the interviewees explained that wasta in general was bad for the Jordanian society, but *'everybody wants to find his place in the system'*, therefore it was used and also to some extent loved by all of Jordanian society. *'Wasta is not fair, not the problem of the system problem of the people, they love it. People can call someone. Wasta, everybody can call someone.'* But contrary to this notion of everyone having everyone, the issue with wasta was that, apart from it being bad, not everybody had the same amount. It did not balance out and also some had none.<sup>124</sup> Lastly two interviewees stated that society itself made it impossible for people to do something about the unfairness. People were taught to only work not think and if necessary to steal and to cheat. *'Education in honesty?: No they are not educated no, either from the school or university or parents or street. Everyone teach you how to cheat.'*

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<sup>121</sup> There had been an attempt to prevent this by issuing a law which forbids the hiring of family members, hiring would from then on go through external contractors. However the people found a way around it by having their family become the external people, who would then become contracted.

<sup>122</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>123</sup> Two interviewees explicitly stated they had used wasta, one to get his driving license, the other to get better medical treatment

<sup>124</sup> One example heard of by the researcher are the orphans. Since they have officially no last name, they do not belong to a tribe or family, and are therefore without connections.

In general Mrs Saaf van der Beek explains that there was a way to do something about the unfairness, but the will was lacking. The general attitude was that of carelessness. The country had been running its course and in general people were quite happy having tribal and other privileges.

## *Chapter Conclusion*

The general image arises that the middle and low working class had been given a social contract with a very basic minimum of economic benefits, in 2010 and early 2011. This contract did not provide enough for the middle class, which made them resort to their own means. The attempts to address this situation had been perceived as futile, even more in various sectors, the regime itself had been the cause of the problems. The main vehicle to address all the economic rights problem, namely government employment, had been reduced in the last decade. The only government employment still running was the army, but it had been extremely limited in its distributional effect, it mainly provides up to the basic minimum and not beyond. Thus the really poor did have some economic benefits but this has not been sufficient at all, they kept on living below the very basic minimum of what the other Jordanians got.

This situation has made the Jordanian society a patchwork of different people, who hold different privileges based on different factors. Sometimes this could have been an advantage but this could have also been of disadvantage. Therefore the social contract between the different segments of the Jordanian society was very fragmented. Some segments did get benefits from the regime, and some just took benefits and some found alternative ways to get what they want. Or they had made the institutions of the state work only for them. All this preferential treatment had been a thorn in the eye of the interviewees.<sup>125</sup> This because the interviewees felt that they had to work hard, since being neglected by the regime, and then the others with whom the regime apparently did still have a working social contract, got their economic benefits for free. This is in line with the, in the theory chapter explained, revisionist rentier theory, in which the important (coalition) segments of society manage to gain and maintain access to economic benefits, either legally or illegally.

On the issue of the structural constraints, the perception of change and to what extent the Jordanians and the interviewees contribute themselves to it, I will in this chapter only look at issues mentioned in the '*Other Help? Equal?*' section. The general perception on all the economic and political structural issues will be dealt with in a separate chapter further in this thesis.

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<sup>125</sup> Explicitly mentioned was the government employment of whole tribes and families and the allocation of university seats based on origin and not on merit.

The structural constraints, meaning the institutionalized government behavior, which has been perceived to be disabling in helping the poor, had been mainly the *wasta* and to a lesser extent in this case the corruption. It is quite difficult to explain *wasta* as structural constraints, since they are seen often as random and ad hoc occurrences. But it had been the privileged people who through illegal behavior and *wasta* managed to gain and maintain access to economic benefits. The regime accepted this and more than often institutionalized this, e.g. through government employment of a whole tribe. Moreover these cycles of *wasta* had been continuing over the years if not decades, becoming solidified patterns of behavior. Thus in general the privileged people and the regime together were the ones who created and maintained the structural constraints.

On the perception of change; the addressing of the issue, it was clear that some of the interviewees did try, through writing and through action. However the main problem was the behavior of the Jordanians themselves. Many Jordanians themselves used *wasta*. It had become the accepted norm to behave and to such an extent that it would have been difficult to get anything done without *wasta*. The people thus maintained the structural constraint's of *wasta* through the use of it. The only ones who had refrained from this use had been the Circassian community. Moreover in general the people themselves had used the privileges of the group to which they belonged to, such as tribal privileges, and thereby maintained the fragmented distribution of the economic rights and benefits in Jordan.

## Chapter 3:

## Political rights

We will now look at the political rights, which were, as explained in the theory chapter, called the basic liberties by John Rawls. These rights should be equal and adequate for all and without government interference. The basic liberties are: political liberty, freedom of speech and assembly, liberty of conscious and thought, freedom of a person, right to hold personal property, freedom from arbitrary arrest and seizure.<sup>126</sup> As explained, I have adjusted these rights to fit more the framework of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, whilst at the same time maintaining their importance within the theory of the social contract, as promulgated by Rawls. The rights selected were: political participation, right of association, freedom of speech, freedom of thought, freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention. As stated earlier, the assumption of the thesis was that Jordan was a relatively stable developed country and had not been a failed state. The function of the Jordanian state had been to provide a decent way of living for its citizens, therefore the right to hold property had been left out, since it was irrelevant to the research.

The sub questions for this chapter are:

*Are these allowed rights perceived to have been guaranteed by the regime?*

*Are the allowed rights perceived as sufficient by the public, at that time?*

### ***Political participation***

The first question pertained the right of political participation in 2010<sup>127</sup> and early 2011. Whether participation had been possible active and passive. If the interviewees had participated and what their opinion was of this. However the most important question was whether they found participation meaningful, whether you would have been able to make a difference. And lastly whether this lack or presence of meaningfulness was the result of the regime or government or the people.

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<sup>126</sup> Rawls, J, (1999), pp 53.

<sup>127</sup> In 2010 there had been a general election in Jordan.

## ▪ Participation

On the possibility to participate in politics,<sup>128</sup> the interviewees were more positively at first glance than negatively.<sup>129</sup> The perceived way to participate was through elections and parties. Political participation was also seen<sup>130</sup> as being encouraged by the King and the government.

However upon a closer look things did not look that rosy. On the question whether the interviewees had participated themselves in politics,<sup>131</sup> the majority were negative.<sup>132</sup> Two had participated once and only two participated on a regular basis, one by voting and one by being an active member of a youth movement.

The majority voiced a lack of interest in politics based on various reasons. The main reason was the lack of suitable parties.<sup>133</sup> Most of them were perceived to be very weak in relation to the regime.<sup>134</sup> Mr Tell illustrated this as followed: *'government?: we are listening to all these opposition parties, nice pictures stuff, but in the end the total of them all together cannot fill a hole.'* The only well organized party was,<sup>135</sup> the Muslim Brotherhood's party, the Islamic Action Front. However this party had no appeal to some<sup>136</sup> of the interviewees, they did not identify with the extreme islamic points of the IAF.<sup>137</sup> However, some<sup>138</sup> interviewees would have liked to be part of a political party, if that party would have been representing their ideals of equality and secularism. Nevertheless there seemed to have been a lack of political activity in general. *'Here in Jordan we have, how many political communities? We have thirteen, only one is active and twelve not.'*

The second inhibitor explained<sup>139</sup> was the lack of suitable candidates. The candidates were often perceived<sup>140</sup> as corrupt business men. Men who bought their votes just to gain more money and influence for themselves, and not for the people they pretended to represent, let alone the poor. As one interviewee summarized *'... I have always wished that here in Jordan we have much more than we have right now. (...) To select people fairly, not the people who*

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<sup>128</sup> Seventeen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>129</sup> Eleven interviewees were positive and four interviewees negative.

<sup>130</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>131</sup> Seventeen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>132</sup> Thirteen interviewees.

<sup>133</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>134</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>135</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>136</sup> Six interviewees.

<sup>137</sup> This was emphasized by Mr Tell, who told that after their victory in 1989 election, the regime made them look like fools, wanting to introduce weird islamic rulings, which then alienated the party to general people up to current times.

<sup>138</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>139</sup> Six interviewees.

<sup>140</sup> Four interviewees.

would want to be ministers but the people who would be capable to be ministers.’ However one interviewee stated that if he ever got into political power, he would not hesitate to fill his own pockets. Moreover he explained, he would not be the only Jordanian to do so. *‘If I will go to this position and someone offer to me like 20 million and can you take it and just sign this, I will take it and I will sign it. (...) But do you think who will not profit here in Jordan? Who is really straight? You will not find.’*

The third obstacle explained was the SNTV<sup>141</sup> election law. Firstly it was seen by some<sup>142</sup> interviewees as unfair, it disenfranchised the Palestinian Jordanian population, which were perceived to be the majority in Jordan. But the main problem, for some interviewees,<sup>143</sup> was that they were forced to vote for a candidate in their hometown. This meaning that they had to vote for someone that they did not know, someone who did not represent their interest. Moreover the voting effects would not have been useful for the interviewees themselves, since they lived in Amman. *‘The election law structure is very old, and not give the opportunity all what you have, the old one vote, one person in one specific area.’*

Mrs Saaf van der Beek explained that the above mentioned factors, which inhibits political participation, often return in research and polls. Mr. Rubeiha agrees to the fact that the political parties had no power or role within the political process, however only in case of recent times. *‘In the past we had good parties, but because of the regime, they cut it. The last few years we have parties, but not very good and they don’t have programmes.’* Mr Tell explained that up to 1989 parties were forbidden, and then when parties were allowed they were based on tribal affiliations and without real leadership. *‘... they basically coupled the whole regime structure to this parties where basically it is these guys heads of the parties for ever, these guys are the financers of these parties. It is not based on real political understanding.’*

#### ▪ **Meaningful?**

When asked about the meaningfulness of political participation,<sup>144</sup> the majority<sup>145</sup> perceived it not to be of use. The main problem was the parliament, it was perceived<sup>146</sup> not to be

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<sup>141</sup> Single Non-Transferable Vote. *‘A single vote is cast for a particular candidate.’* Middle East/North Africa Report N°118 – *Dallying with reform in a divided Jordan*, International Crisis Group, 12 March 2012, pp 6

<sup>142</sup> Three interviewees.

<sup>143</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>144</sup> Fourteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>145</sup> Thirteen interviewees.

<sup>146</sup> Three interviewees.

transparent in their dealings. The parliament just looked after their own or foreign business and money interest. *'They are huge business people. They look to raise their fortune. They make alliances between themselves to push the government to serve their own benefits and not the peoples benefits.'* Moreover the traditional friends of the royal court and the influential tribes had more access to the government than the representatives of the people. Mr Rubeiha agrees, and adds that the parliament listened more to the government than the people. He illustrates this with personal experience as a former member of parliament. *'If I am against the government, I am member of the parliament and against the government, I don't give them the right. If I ask something, they don't agree with me, they don't make it. But the people who are very weak and listening to the government, if they need something quickly the government gives.'*

The other problem perceived by two interviewees was, that there had been no real opposition.<sup>147</sup> Although there was an official law which stated that anyone with a Jordanian citizenship could be elected into office, like parliament, the perception of practice turned out different.<sup>148</sup> If you would have wanted to join politics, meaning stand for election, you would have needed to be (financially) sponsored by either the royal court, a tribe or community or the security apparatus, in order to gain any political position or influence. Or you would have needed to be rich yourself to cover the election cost,<sup>149</sup> which would mean that you probably would not have stood up against the regime, since the regime had guaranteed your current wealth and the access to more wealth in the future. *'The one who has got money, power, those are the people who will win. Anyone in Jordan practically can address himself as, start party, collect votes and he says okay I am going down the elections and vote for me. But who will win, people with power, big families, people with influence. Regardless of being honest or not, frank or liars.'*

Also the people within the parliament, did not gain much of the favor of the interviewees. They were seen<sup>150</sup> as being corrupt business men, who got there through shady practices. *'... how did you get in to the parliament? They tell you frankly explicitly plain and simple, I got money and power, I got land I got many people who can turn of their brains start their*

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<sup>147</sup> Two interviewees accused the IAF to have been in league with the regime and it would have been therefore unwilling to be true opposition

<sup>148</sup> Because this question was made later, ten interviewees answered the question.

<sup>149</sup> Which includes the cost of buying votes. *'We have and this is a important thing, that many most of the what they call the people who want to be elected, the candidates, they pay some huge amounts of money to people in illegal way. This is the stream they pay for example 100JD for each person to get the vote, and then you can get the whole tribe the whole family by this you know, buying things.'*

<sup>150</sup> Four interviewees.

*muscles and they are gonna vote for me. Whatever it takes, whatever it is.*’ The political people in general were seen<sup>151</sup> as too old, too relaxed, too comfortable in their seats and without any fighter mentality.

▪ **Who was to blame?**

Despite the pointing to the parliament as a source of the lack of political meaningfulness. The question<sup>152</sup> was posed who was actually be to blame? Who’s fault was it that political participation was perceived as not being meaningful in 2010 and early 2011, the government and the regime or the people?

The first perception of the interviewees<sup>153</sup> was that the people in general were to blame.<sup>154</sup> Some<sup>155</sup> interviewees pointed to the stupidity of the poor and uneducated, who were easily misled by false promises. Another reason was the perception<sup>156</sup> that the people would have voted according to family, community or tribal affiliation. This was corroborated by Mr Rubeiha, who explained that people often would go to the man who was the head of the party, this because of the lack of a political program. People would easily mobilized for political participation in favor of those who were in power in their tribe, community or extended family. One of the interviewees stated: *‘I would go vote for whoever my family is voting for. It is pretty much they gave their words, promise, no money in return. So we would go and vote for that person.’* A related problem was that of vote selling. Some<sup>157</sup> interviewees perceived that people would have far too often offered their vote in exchange for money from the highest bidder.

Another problem identified was the lack of political understanding. The perception<sup>158</sup> was that the people in Jordan had not been educated in politics. *‘... people should be educated about their rights, that is the kind of relationship with the government. Now the government does this and this, but as a citizen I should also be part in the decision making process.’* Two interviewees were of the opinion that, if the people were to be educated, they would be

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<sup>151</sup> Three interviewees.

<sup>152</sup> Eleven interviewees were asked this question directly and five answered these questions indirectly, making it a total of sixteen interviewees who answered the question.

<sup>153</sup> Nine interviewees.

<sup>154</sup> Albeit, one of the interviewees mentioned that even in the most free countries 80% of the population would not be interested in politics.

<sup>155</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>156</sup> Six interviewees.

<sup>157</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>158</sup> Four interviewees.

interested in politics, since in the '60 and '70, there had been much interest in politics among the Jordanian population and the Arab region in general.

On the participation of the youth, Mrs Bayouk explains that she had seen her students often not interested or caring at all. They would not know their rights. They did not seem to understand that voting was important, that it had been their right. They made excuses; the parliament and the candidates were corrupt, it will be too busy and dirty and if they vote it was because of their family. *'They don't like involve in politics, I know the old experience but this is not a reason. We need to fix the mentality of the young people first, then we go though democracy.'*

However, it was also explained<sup>159</sup> that because of the dangers of politics in the past, people were still reluctant to get involved. *'In the '60 and '70 no political life, only movement not pursued by government was Muslim Brotherhood. No other political movements. And that is the reason, our parents who ever participated, was living in hell. They passed us to us the hate of politics.'* Regardless of the memory, political participation was still not risk free, because there were still activist blacklisted.<sup>160</sup> These activist would have had trouble in finding work after graduation and their life would have been made difficult. *'They will like, he can't breath. So all they daily processes of his life difficult... So always there is a link between freedom and your politic background and your life, and there are always comments that this person is an activist.'* Moreover you did have the chance that the regime spied on you and put you in front of the military State Security Court. In the words of one activist, who was convicted by this court: *'You can participate in politics as long as you are loyal to the King, you can get help and support. There are a lot of people like that, but if you are against the King you can't.'*

Mrs Saaf van der Beek did understand the fact that there had been still a pervasiveness of fear of politics which inhibits political participation. The history of the prohibition and repression of political parties had still a hold on people. They did not trust political parties, political processes or allowing the parliament to have had more power. She also explains that people did not really know how to do politics, there has been a lack of knowledge and education. But who was to blame, was a difficult question. Because the question was whether the government or the King had really the chance or the will to reform and create an educated political active population. Or whether there have been powers within the government, regime

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<sup>159</sup> Six interviewees.

<sup>160</sup> Three interviewees.

or society, who wanted things to stay the same. Moreover the majority of the Jordanians, did not really wanted to change to much either, they were pretty much okay with the normal relative quiet situation.

### ***Right of Association***

The next right was the right of association in 2010 and early 2011. The right of association is an important right since it makes it possible that interest groups can be formed. These groups could then advance the interest of their members towards the government.

Firstly it was asked if there was a possibility to form any group, without the government or regime interference. If then these groups would be able to influence the policy of the government or regime. Secondly, these questions were also asked with regards to the unions, (the associations), that exist in Jordan.

- **Interest groups.**

On the question<sup>161</sup> if there had been a possibility to form any group, without the government or regime interference, most of the interviewees perceived that the government or regime would have interfered in the various interest groups. First of all it was perceived by many,<sup>162</sup> that the regime would keep an eye and an ear on things. They would monitor the behaviour of the various groups closely. *'... any assembly, people who have shared values and ideologies sure the government would be listening because that can develop in a very strong movement.'* This opinion was also reinforced due to the fact that groups, regardless their activity, had to be registered by the Ministry of Interior. Some<sup>163</sup> interviewees perceived and have had experienced themselves that registration in some way, also had meant interference, since sometimes all members were screened for issues in past behaviour or political activism, or all members would be monitored for some time. Through registration the regime would have known and controlled from the start who was involved in what. Moreover groups who would be involved with religion or politics were perceived to have attracted more the attention of the regime than other groups. All the knowledgeable people agreed that the regime would closely

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<sup>161</sup> Sixteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>162</sup> Nine interviewees.

<sup>163</sup> Five interviewees.

monitor all the groups in Jordan. Mr Rubeiha explained: *'They don't like any power, any group with power. They like it to be in their order. They monitor everything.'*

A step further would have been regime intervention. Two interviewees perceived that the regime would have intervened in the groups, it considered dangerous. Some<sup>164</sup> interviewees actually expected the regime to infiltrate the groups of interest, this either through social media, during the protest or by actually planting people from the secret service in the groups themselves. Two interviewees explained that they themselves have experienced such infiltration. One explained that during demonstrations, visible secret service agents were openly taping the demonstrators, which they used later to prosecute them. The other explained: *'In the parties that we sitting, sometimes six or seven would know that this guy, we treated him normal, is from the government he is from the Mukhabarat.'*<sup>165</sup> *They are there. In 2010, when we were in the Dakhliyah circle, there were people among us that where not from us.'* All the knowledgeable people acknowledged that this could have happened. Moreover Mr Tell illustrated this point with a personal experience. *'I went for a political group, in the beginning it was very interesting very mixed audience, something new and all younger people and all concentrated on Jordan, (...) and suddenly this movement started disintegrating. People were bought and people already involved with it were part of the government.'* Lastly some<sup>166</sup> interviewees pointed to the public assembly law. Which required, before 2010, approval from the government to hold a demonstration or a public meeting. This, they said would curtail the freedom of association, since it had a deterrent effect to create a public meeting or demonstration.

#### ▪ Participation

The next question posed was whether any of the interviewees had joined any of such interest groups, since an organized group might provide someone a platform to change or to influence government policy. Of all the interviewees asked<sup>167</sup> the majority<sup>168</sup> did not participated in any of the groups, whether they be political, religious or civil society. Cited was lack of interest; two stated they did not like the protests and two did not think it of any use to participate in anything. One other important reason mentioned was that, as a woman, participation was discouraged. *'I was discouraged, I always wanted to. Discouraged by fear, I am a woman, I*

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<sup>164</sup> Six interviewees.

<sup>165</sup> Dairat al-Mukhabarat al-Ammah, General Intelligence Directorate.

<sup>166</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>167</sup> Eighteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>168</sup> Eleven interviewees.

*am not a powerful person and I will be blamed by my family. I don't want to lose my family.'*

This reason might seem at first glance to be trivial, but it might hold true for many Jordanian woman, as one other interviewee was cut off by her family, after they had discovered that she was involved in the protest and action groups.<sup>169</sup>

The interviewees<sup>170</sup> which had participated in the interest groups participated through demonstrations and the groups attached to organizing these demonstrations. However demonstrations, especially prior to 2011, focused mainly on external issues, such as Israel. The other interviewees<sup>171</sup> had involved themselves mainly in civil society organizations, predominantly on woman's rights.

#### ▪ **Meaningful?**

As hinted on before, some interviewees explained that participation in groups would have been of no use. This begs the question if, as is the intent of the right of association, the groups would have any chance to influence government or regime policy.<sup>172</sup>

Some<sup>173</sup> interviewees stated that if you would have had enough pressure and the right important people at the right places you would have been able to influence government or regime policy. But the majority of the interviewees were negative about this possibility. They<sup>174</sup> hinted at the unwillingness of the government or regime in general. *'Because it is all about politics, and politics is about contracts, agreements. So you can change, you can spend your whole lifetime but you are not gonna change 1% of what is happening in the world.'*

The non responsiveness had also been the result of the fact, that the people could not mount any pressure.<sup>175</sup> There were no public groups through which you could voice your opinion, in order to change government behavior or to make the government care. A complaint would have been remain only an individual complaint. *'There is no possibility, because there is no*

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<sup>169</sup> I have noticed in my interviews that no man ever mentioned or hinted at his family inhibiting his actions to participate in protest if he wished to do so. His father might disapprove but this would not keep him home. However the same thing I have learned does not hold true for the woman. Even some of the more liberal raised woman still felt the pressure of their family to not to get involved in politics, an advice they had no choice to not heed. Moreover disobedience would get them in greater trouble than their male counterparts. This can indicate in general that in case of protest, the discontent might be far more spread amongst the population. But that even those who want to protest do not because of convention, which could inhibit women to participate.

<sup>170</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>171</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>172</sup> This question was made after the analyzing of the first ten interviewees. Thus the question was directly posed and answered by nine. Two did answer this question in some way on their own account, because they brought it up in relation to something else. So in total of eleven interviewees did actually answer the question.

<sup>173</sup> Three interviewees.

<sup>174</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>175</sup> Six interviewees.

*frame, there is no frame for these people. The parliament is in another planet. There is no platform.*<sup>176</sup> Moreover in general the government had been aware of the inability of the Jordanian public form group pressure, and it was the government's expectation that the Jordanian people would just have accepted the situation.<sup>177</sup>

But there had been some light at the end of the tunnel, because some<sup>178</sup> believed, that only as long as you stayed within the social civil society NGO sphere of helping poor people, addressing woman's rights and did not get involved with the political, it would be possible to influence government or regime policies on those issues, albeit very limited. But it was also perceived that the NGO's had been not effective themselves in addressing the needs of their group members, or the people they were supposed to help. The foreign NGO's would push out the local, others would be corrupt, some uncoordinated and some rich people's charities would be just for show.

Of the knowledgeable people, Mr Rubeiha stated that it has been by law prohibited for NGO's or associations to influence political processes, their right was only to look after their own. Moreover according to Mrs Saaf van der Beek, there were no channels for the NGO's to talk to the government or the regime. Involving civil society in the decision making process is not a common thing in Jordan to do. However in general Mr Tell explains that both the NGO's and the associations could not pressure the government or the regime, because they were never meant to do so. They had been created to pay lip service to the foreign donors, to help on issues that were seen non threatening to the regime. Moreover, the NGO's and the people who run these have been often in an allegiance with the regime in order not to endanger their own work or existence. In general, especially the NGO's, had been a tool of the regime to keep people busy, to crowd out the real and important stuff and to play down the attention on the things that did matter.

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<sup>176</sup> An exception were the teachers. Because they were concise and started their protest before 2010, they got their union eventually in 2012.

<sup>177</sup> Two interviewees.

<sup>178</sup> Five interviewees.

▪ **Right to Union / Association and influence on Government.**

Since the right of association also involves the right to form an union,<sup>179</sup> the question was posed whether this was possible and if they could influence government or regime policy on the behalf of their members.

Of all the interviewees<sup>180</sup> only four interviewees were registered at their association. This has also been due to the fact that there had been still large sectors which did not have an association.<sup>181</sup>

On the question of influence it was perceived<sup>182</sup> that only a few associations had been powerful enough to influence or pressurize the government or the regime.<sup>183</sup> However the most powerful associations were more involved in politics than looking after the interest of their members.<sup>184</sup> *‘These groups could be powerful but the problem is recently and historically, these are controlled by the Muslim Brotherhood. Because they are very powerful, they are very organized, and they trade with religion in a professional way and they have money.’*

The fact that the Muslim Brotherhood had been well organized and could influence the government or the regime, had to do, according to Mrs Saaf van der Beek and Mr Tell, with the fact that historically they were allowed to be organized. The Muslim Brotherhood had organized often for charity work. Moreover when parties were forbidden, the associations of the Muslim Brotherhood took on the role of the parties and thus laid the groundwork for their effectiveness today. But, as stated earlier by Mr Rubeiha, it was by law forbidden for any association, as it was for NGO’s, to meddle in politics, they were only allowed to look after their own members.

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<sup>179</sup> In Jordan the unions are called associations. These associations in general provide services to their members. Examples are social security, help with employment, training and connections.

<sup>180</sup> This question was made after the analyzing of the first ten interviewees. The question was directly posed and answered by thirteen interviewees.

<sup>181</sup> One of the most stark examples were the teachers, who did not have an union before 2012, whilst they have been protesting even before the protests in Tunisia started.

<sup>182</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>183</sup> The strongest being the engineers association, followed by the doctors and lawyers association.

<sup>184</sup> Five interviewees.

## *Freedom of Speech*

The next right under investigation in this thesis is freedom of speech. Freedom of speech is considered to be a very important political right, through freedom of speech one can disseminate and acquire new ideas. The importance of this concept for this thesis is that, in the theory of structuration, as explained in the theory chapter, the assumption is made that we base our actions on our knowledge. Knowledge being all that we know, all knowledge which we have acquired, over the years, in all kinds of ways. Would freedom of speech<sup>185</sup> be curtailed, then our knowledge reception through oral and written sources would be impaired, which would make us not fully informed if we wish to be so. This lack of knowledge maybe inhibit our agency to act.<sup>186</sup>

Although freedom of press is associated with this right, the interviewees were mainly asked about the general perception of freedom of speech and whether they felt free to speak themselves and what was prohibited, what were the red lines.

### ▪ **Free to speak?**

As said the first question pertained the perception whether in 2010 and early 2011 people in general in Jordan had been free to speak on what they wanted.

Of all the interviewees<sup>187</sup> a majority perceived<sup>188</sup> that they were free to speak in general. From 2009 onward it was possible to talk about the government, the prime minister and the government policies.<sup>189</sup> *'I told you that the system hired the government to be potato bag, so that the people can curse them punch them do whatever you want.'* However some<sup>190</sup> of the interviewees explained that only in the beginning of 2011, it became possible to criticize the King and Queen or the royal court in general. This versus some<sup>191</sup> interviewees who perceived this possible even before 2011.

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<sup>185</sup> This is a very short version of a huge debate on freedom of speech and what the boundaries are. An accepted boundary is hate speech, a speech act which incites hate and violence to another group. However in this thesis the freedom of speech revolves more around the right to critically write or speak over and to the government, the regime, the King, or any political institution in Jordan. Since this will allow the voice of discontent to be heard within the society, which then, is assumed, the intuitions will address.

<sup>186</sup> Lack of knowledge can also make people act because they, for instance, would not know the dangers involved with acting. But in this thesis the lack of knowledge has a more action inhibiting rather than a action enabling function.

<sup>187</sup> Eighteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>188</sup> Fourteen interviewees.

<sup>189</sup> Eight interviewees.

<sup>190</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>191</sup> Four interviewees.

However when asked what the red lines had been, quite a few<sup>192</sup> mentioned the King and Queen, even in 2011. Further mentioned were the critical bodies and issues,<sup>193</sup> such as the security apparatus, the external policies of Jordan or politics in general. Two interviewees perceived that one could only talk about economic issues, all politics were out of the question. Mrs Saaf van der Beek agrees with this point, stating there were some issues on which there would have been no talking about in the press. One example was Jordan's participation in Afghanistan, in 2010. There was no talk or discussion on this participation, and even when a dead soldier was returned, it resulted only in a small article in a news paper.

The majority<sup>194</sup> did speak about politics themselves, but this mostly happened in an informal setting with friends, family, colleagues or fellow students. A few<sup>195</sup> had been actually writing, however the issues varied from gender and woman's right, civil society, Zionism and an idealistic vision of what Jordanian society should be. Thus all, except the one who addressed the foreign policy of Jordan towards Israel, did not touch the critical issues of politics or the royal family. Two interviewees explained that they would have loved to be part, but one was discouraged by her family not to speak and participate and one other was warned by her mother not to get involved in politics at all when she went to university.

#### ▪ **Dangers?**

As to the dangers of voicing a critical opinion, some<sup>196</sup> interviewees were quite lax about the possible restrictions even in 2010. They were of the opinion that this did not amount to anything and it would be more in the heads of the people who were probably a bit too paranoid. *'Interference government?: no, not really, I guess they weren't bothered by the small and little ones. But all my everyone around me, are like oh here he comes again. People like go stop, you gone get us into jail. I am like not you are not gonna to jail, it is over. Even before, demonstrations, I was pretty outspoken.'*

However out of the four who did actually write, three did voice their concern about what would have happened if they would have been critical. They therefore became careful about what they wrote, they applied self censorship. One interviewee knew that he, as an activist, was under state monitoring, since he had been arrested and sentenced for participating in an

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<sup>192</sup> Eight interviewees.

<sup>193</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>194</sup> Eleven interviewees.

<sup>195</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>196</sup> Five interviewees.

anti Israel demonstration. Writing something critical would have had serious consequences. *'Even for me, I can't speak about everything I want because if I do that I will definitely go to the jail for years. I even put limits for myself. It is not what I want, but I can't speak about the Kings behavior, for example, or anything related to the King.'*

It seems that in general, the people perceived themselves to be able to speak freely. But when they had reached a platform, and became a certain level of danger to the regime, they were pressured to be quiet and as a result started to apply self censorship. This has been acknowledged by Mrs Saaf van der Beek and Mr Tell. In their opinion self censorship had been widely used by the media and individual bloggers. Moreover Mrs Saaf van der Beek, Mr Tell and Mr Rubeiha stated that before 2011, it was never allowed to talk about anything political, certainly not the King and Queen. Hence they were quite surprised that the interviewees perceived it differently. Mr Tell explained that it was not really in the Arab physique to talk against your superiors, whether this be your king, leader, boss or your father. *'Tradition and religion, that thought us from the beginning, don't talk against the elders, don't talk against your leadership. It is taboo.'*<sup>197</sup> Up to 2011 Mr Tell himself had been the only one writing critically about the royal family, but this changed in 2011 when more articles and blogs appeared. There was, to the delight of Mr Tell, a short opening of press freedom to let the people blow steam. But unfortunately even then the truly critical voices did not have a real platform, they would be heard on some small tv station, however not in the main stream media. Mrs Byouk did agree on the controlling actions of the regime: *'I agree to control, if groups, if they don't use, I agree they can use the right to speak, but in the nice way. (...) I saw and read many things that make me shocked, electronic, even in the media. Sometimes when you read the media you feel that you are not in Jordan, because when you see Dakhliyah<sup>198</sup> situation, (...) on tv I was shocked and nobody stopped them.'*

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<sup>197</sup> This has been mentioned by four interviewees out of twenty two. The importance of religion in the political issues has been denied by four interviewees and has only been found important two interviewees. As one of the latter explained: *'The king, you should follow your king. And otherwise try regarding to work, religious and if he is bad the god will punish him and if he is good, god will give him. So, our religions, really what koran say something like that should follow your ... for example I am your father and you should accept what I say. If I guide you to the bad way, then the god will punish him. Because we are everyone under this king, and if he is bad the god will punish him, so don't worry about it. Know what I mean?*

*This demonstrations and human rights and democratic, it is just silly things. Silly things. Because the gods, like if king follows religious he should ask people before take decision, so I think our religion cover all little little details. Our religion talk about it, so I don't think.'*

<sup>198</sup> Duar Dakhliyah, Ministry of Interior Circle. The roundabout in front of the Ministry of Interior.

## *Freedom of Thought*

The choice to include the freedom of thought<sup>199</sup> might not be that important at first sight, since everybody would think that they would be quite free to think in their lives. However as explained, in the theory chapter and in the freedom of speech chapter, we base our actions on our knowledge. Influencing the thoughts of people is making changes to this knowledge. This can be done with the intention to actually change the perception of the agent on its own agency to act, in order to change the future behavior of the agent itself. Changes can be achieved through many, subtle and not so subtle ways.

### ▪ **Free to think?**

The possibility to think free<sup>200</sup> in 2010 and early 2011, was negatively perceived by the majority<sup>201</sup> of the interviewees. *'They are free to think, but you can't say free when there are a lot of tools affecting and attacking your brain to wash it.'* The first 'tool' identified,<sup>202</sup> which had been used by the regime to influence the thought of its citizens in order to instill loyalty to the monarchy, was the propaganda. Mrs Saaf van der Beek, agrees that there has always been a strong narrative of the Hashemites being the best care takers of the Jordanian people, thus loyalty was therefore warranted. One interviewee and Mr Tell explain that the loyalty to the country had been more portrayed as loyalty only to the King. This became visible, as Mr Tell illustrates, through the fact that there was a lack of national heroes outside the royal family.<sup>203</sup> Moreover, there were no real national songs about Jordan itself, but only about the royal family.<sup>204</sup> This image was reinforced through the use, by the regime, of traditional and modern media to disseminate nationalistic propaganda, in which Jordan has been portrayed as a good and happy Hashemite country, and the people had been believing

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<sup>199</sup> The freedom of thought also includes the freedom of conscience, this is the freedom to profess freely and change freely one's religion. Although the question was asked to twelve interviewees and Jordan is an Islamic country, I have chosen not to include the results in this thesis. The freedom of religion, in case of the interviewees, had more to do with personal identity issues in Jordan and is not seen as a tool to express discontent or to mobilize against the regime. It therefore has no prominent function to facilitate or inhibit the agency of the people, but it is a tool of the regime of identity definition, and this is not the theme of this thesis.

<sup>200</sup> Seventeen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>201</sup> Eleven interviewees agreed and five disagreed, one was not sure.

<sup>202</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>203</sup> Two other interviewees agreed, one explained. *'First that the good practices, good model we don't have. We don't have a one person that you can tell, he is the boss, he is the fighter, he is the leader, who want to be go with them. there is not fighters, we don't have leaders who can protect us, or educate us, how we can be against, how we can fight this problems.'*

<sup>204</sup> It did even permeate the private sphere according to Mr Tell. *'I actually learn it recently, why in every wedding there is a song about the King and it is by law you have to have a song. Indoctrination.'*

this. Also the foreign image of the royal family had been shoved on the Jordanians, as an argument that the royal family was the best thing for them. In this way critical voices were smothered. Mr Tell explains: *'The picture of the Queen and the family, this is the new face of the Middle East woman, and I wrote that corruption is the new face of the Middle East. It (money) is disappearing, we lost so much money and this, this.. and she and her family is accused of this. Is that what you are telling the people? And that is again, when people hear this, and she is on the front of time magazine. What can we do?'*

Moreover Mrs Saaf van der Beek explains that through the media there had been created a kind of image of a communal feeling, which has resulted in an awareness in the Jordanian Jordanians, that Jordan always has to be defended if needed. Not only physically, but also in words and in thoughts. She explains that a Jordanian Jordanian therefore would always defend Jordan, regardless whether the situation in Jordan would be good or bad. Mrs Bayouk explains in case of her husband. *'When they start the Arab Spring I told him, why don't we take the kids and we go and somewhere else, and he said I will not leave my country because it is my country. I love Jordan, even if they give me extra salary I like to stay. There is some feel, some love. A good relation between the people and the Hashemite family.'*<sup>205</sup>

As to the role of the media in the creating of this love for Jordan image some<sup>206</sup> interviewees did see through this. They saw the media as owned and operated by the regime, thus not independent at all. However this lack of good independent media, had also made people believe the many other information sources, regardless of their quality and accuracy. As one interviewee explained: *'we should have news people, that give those streams (...), to hear about other views. I don't have any medium that tells me what is happening here in my own home country, here in Jordan, because I do not believe in Al Ra'i or Ad Dustour news paper. Nor any other printed media. So what do I end up with? Rumors.'*

Also the perception<sup>207</sup> was prevalent, that the lack of education made people not think freely, it made them stupid and brain dead. *'They think they are thinking, but they are not thinking they are repeating.'* In this context, Mr Tell explains that to think you do need tools to think, such as education, press, parties, magazines, etc. He acknowledged that in Jordan these tools had not existed, since they have been destroyed by the regime. Also to access the tools to think, one has to reach the alternative, often western, media which was usually in English. *'So*

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<sup>205</sup> Of all the twenty two interviews I have done only three explicitly stated having this feeling of love, belonging for Jordan and its King. Three other interviewees explained that it exist in society at large, but that they themselves do not believe or feel it. The other interviewees did not mention it at all.

<sup>206</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>207</sup> Five interviewees.

*in 2010, there was no censorship but no tools to think. Which is a form of censorship. It is depriving people of the tools to actually think on their own, and again if you go back to the west, it happens as well. But in the west if you want you can go, there are bookshops, public library with radical things... It is there, here it is not.'*

Another 'tool' that had been employed by the regime, was to keep people too busy to think for themselves.<sup>208</sup> Occupation with life's economic difficulties, entertainment, external issues like Palestine and daily trivialities, made people not think about the real problems of Jordan, such as the lack of democratic reform, corruption, Jordan's foreign policy, etc. All the fields that were of importance to the Jordanian people but were not allowed to think about. *'You rip yourself off, in order to get the basics to keep on living a decent life, that way they can exhaust you, take out your potential, take out your time, burn out your youth. In order for you to get minimum decent life, to keep you busy, to keep you not thinking many things they don't want you to think.'*

Another issue<sup>209</sup> inhibiting free thought, revolves around the, earlier mentioned, mindset of the Jordanian or Arab peoples, not to question authority and not to get involved into politics. *'The first thing when you talk about politics in your family, your father would say lets eat first. And when you think out of the box, who defies, the family is like, oh this kid is going to get us troubles. Not speak about it in the university, please.'* Although this mindset had not been related that much to the Jordanian regime, but more to society and religion. It was understood that Jordan and other the Arab regimes, indirectly fostered and used this mindset for their own gains.

However still quite a few<sup>210</sup> interviewees were of the opinion that you were free to think whatever you want, and that there had been no regime interference. Albeit two interviewees acknowledged the existence of propaganda, they did not believe it could influence thought to such an extreme extent, *'I think everyone is free to think, every government sells propaganda.'*

#### ▪ **Interviewees.**

On the question<sup>211</sup> whether the interviewees had felt themselves free to think, they were in majority positive.<sup>212</sup> Some<sup>213</sup> explained that there had been no inhibitors to think and to speak,

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<sup>208</sup> Four interviewees and Mr Tell.

<sup>209</sup> Three interviewees.

<sup>210</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>211</sup> Sixteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>212</sup> Thirteen interviewees agreed and one disagreed and two were not sure.

and those who would have said otherwise were wrong. However some others<sup>214</sup> did explain that they had been free to think, but this would not mean anything if they had been not free to express their thoughts, which was, as mentioned earlier, the case in Jordan. *'No, when I'm not to say to say the whole truth than I am not free. But as long my thinking is only in my head I am free.'* Mr Rubeiha stated: *'To think? Everybody have the right to think, but only to think in the right way, but if they don't think in the right way they will face the government.'* Lastly, some<sup>215</sup> interviewees stated that they were personally inhibited by society, religion and family from developing their own thinking, self esteem or in general work on their own self realization as a human being.

### ***Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest and Detention, 'Freedom' of Safety***

The next question revolves around the perception of safety in Jordan, the safety from the government or the regime itself. The right to be free from arbitrary arrest and detention. This is important since it guarantees the safety of the people who might be political active, who write, think and act to advance their own or other peoples interest. Interests which might run contrary to the interest of the incumbent regime. If the freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention would not be guaranteed, people would not be free to exercise their other political rights.

#### **▪ Arrest and Detention**

In case<sup>216</sup> of the freedom from the regime in 2010 and early 2011, it was firstly mentioned that Jordan had not been like Syria, where you could easily disappear if you, in some way, managed to displease the regime.<sup>217</sup> On the contrary, in Jordan, if you would be arrested, you would have been registered and in case your family would want to know where you were and why, this information would be easily given to them. This might seem as a good action from the regime at first sight, however two interviewees and Mr Tell explained, that the regime had been also reluctant to act because of the tribal structure. Tribes protect their people against the

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<sup>213</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>214</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>215</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>216</sup> Thirteen interviewees were asked this question directly and two answered this question indirectly as response to another question.

<sup>217</sup> Five interviewees.

regime. *'If you are strong tribe, the state would not be easy to kill you and hide you, it would not be the case in Jordan. Tribes have weight, and it works both ways positive and negative. Positive that it protects people.'* Also some interviewees<sup>218</sup> did believe that it was impossible for the secret service to arrest you without a court order, and you would have been able to challenge your arrest, meaning that you could have a judge look at your case very quickly.<sup>219</sup> However a few interviewees<sup>220</sup> explained that this often had not really been necessary, since many times cases were dealt in a manner that, within in a few days, someone would stand in for you and thus you would be released. *'You are gonna be locked for a couple of days and you are gone be asked call any of your relatives or older people in order to bail you for your release, either for big amount of money, or for a assigned agreement that if that person does it again, harm people, break cars or harm public property, you (the person to stand in) are gone be charged by court and the case is gone be accepted like that.'*

In other cases, some<sup>221</sup> interviewees as well as Mr Rubeiha, knew that the secret service could arrest people without a court order and hold them without trial. These 'illegal' arrest were perceived to be happening in case of a threat to the nation, a threat to the nation occurred when there was a terrorist action, drug dealing, Salafi Jihadist extremist action, weapons smuggling, or you would participate in a protest which the regime had deemed a threat to the nation. One of the interviewees had actually been arrested by order of the secret service and not on an order of the public prosecutor. *'They plan it before, and they know for how, and what. Because someone wrote a report about me for that demonstration. When they took my ID, they took my full name, my national number and full details like there is no way to be someone else.'* However this interviewee had access to a normal court the next day of his arrest, but at the end he was tried and convicted by the State Security Court, which was a military court. Some<sup>222</sup> of the interviewees were aware of the fact that a military court had been convicting civilians and found it unjust that this had been happening in Jordan.

In case of the police it was believed,<sup>223</sup> that the police would not have been able to arrest you without a court order, and you would have been able to challenge your arrest at court.<sup>224</sup> In contrast to this Mrs Byouk explained that the police could arrest people without a court order,

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<sup>218</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>219</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>220</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>221</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>222</sup> Six interviewees.

<sup>223</sup> Seven interviewees. Roughly the same interviewees who answered same question on the secret services.

<sup>224</sup> Eight interviewees.

but only because of a just reason, like maintaining public order. Moreover the police would have let you go, in a few days, with no harm done. But these temporary arrest had been often on the grounds of administrative detention and were therefore in essence illegal. These illegal arrest were, according to Mrs Saaf van der Beek, one of Jordan's serious problems.

#### ▪ **Safety**

In case of their own safety<sup>225</sup> in relation to the regime, most of the interviewees<sup>226</sup> were positive. However safety was pretty much the case if you would have been a calm and obedient citizen. *'The ones who, like we say, walk behind the wall, doing no problems.'* If you on the other hand, would not be that obedient and protest, it was perceived<sup>227</sup> that you would get into trouble. *'The police?: If you are not protesting they are nice.'* But two interviews perceived that in case of 'wrong' behavior you would not have been arrested or tortured, rather the secret service would have made a call to you or your family to deter you from continuing.

### ***Agreed Political Rights?***

The next question revolves around the issue, whether the interviewees agreed to the allowance of political rights, in 2010 and early 2011. Meaning; were the rights in general sufficient and adequate for the population to perform their functions, for what they were made for in the first place.

*Had this allowance in the exercising of civil and political right been in perceived agreement with the people themselves?*

The main theme of the interviewees<sup>228</sup> discontent and disagreement with the government and regime, revolved around the lack of inclusion in the general political process. *'To me it all starts with a inclusive legislation process, where people start feeling ownership and belonging to this society. Because the feeling of this ownership and belonging is very sensitive feeling for people and I would say the government really need to work hard on slowly get the*

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<sup>225</sup> Ten interviewees were asked this question directly and three answered this question indirectly as response to another question.

<sup>226</sup> Eight interviewees.

<sup>227</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>228</sup> Seventeen interviewees were asked this question.

*people into this bubble of political participation, meaningful political participation, more involvement and ownership and decisions made.’ This problem included<sup>229</sup> the, earlier mentioned, election law, which kept a large part of the population out of political participation and rendered a large part of the votes meaningless. Also mentioned again was the lack of a real parliament and the overreaching powers of the King. Mr Rubeiha explained that the core of these problem had to do with bad planning and the bad execution of the plans made. ‘The problem with the government, they don’t have a program, no five years plan, ten years ... They suck at this, and if they make a plan, five years, they make the first year work and the second year they forget they are doing. This is corruption for the country, for all the country, for everybody, not only for Jordan. And some of the these current things, instead of going for this program, they go for another program for the benefit of the others.’*

Also some<sup>230</sup> pointed out to the lack of freedom of speech and freedom of press. It was understood that speech and press were the instruments of feedback, with them you could make the government known what was wrong in society. ‘The people who are not comfortable with that should say, but they are afraid about the intelligence department, so they did not say. (...) If you are Prime Minister and you make some instructions and laws, and nobody tells you if you happy. How can I know if you are scared from me.’ Also free speech was seen as an instrument to tell the government what it should actually do. ‘In 2010, I am not talking only for talking, I want change. If I am leaving fair live, good treatment, food, education, hospital, why I want freedom of speech. I don’t need it, I have no problems. I am speaking because I don’t have fair life.’ But the issue was the fact that the government had not been listening. Political rights which can be used to speak to the government, such as free speech, and the right of association, political participation, were not seen<sup>231</sup> as actually been taken serious by the government. These rights were not seen as resulting in something. Mr Tell explains: ‘there are a few political rights that are available, but we have to fight for it to get them and once you get them they don’t really help you to do anything.’

Regardless of the lack of inclusion and the bad political rights, some<sup>232</sup> interviewees stated that although political participation was not great, freedom of speech was curtailed and parties were not that strong, in general people were relatively happy with the situation how it was in 2010 and early 2011. Mrs Saaf van der Beek ads that in a relative perspective Jordan had been

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<sup>229</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>230</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>231</sup> Six interviewees.

<sup>232</sup> Four interviewees.

doing better than its regional partners, such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Syria. However Jordan was not a democracy, such as Turkey or Israel or let alone western Europe. Thus the picture was quite mixed, but overall the question remains whether there was really that much wrong.

### ***Fair and Equal?***

To whom did the government or regime listen in 2010 and early 2011, since access to the regime was not perceived to be fair and equal for everybody.<sup>233</sup> The perception<sup>234</sup> was that the regime would have been listening to the people who would have already political power. This was because of the fact that those people, from both backgrounds, had already been working in the government. Mr Rubeiha agrees. *'The people who have a power who take this, people in the government. The rich from where they come rich? Form the government because of the contracts because of the paid. Good resources. They get work, and contracts, business.'* The people already in the government worked in the different ministries, of which the workers were supplied by certain families throughout the years. This created, what many interviewees called, the political families, particular families who have been taking prime political positions over the decades of Jordan's existence. *'There is a monopoly, you would feel that there is heredity in certain positions and offices in government for certain tribes. The grandfather was there and the son and grandson.'*<sup>235</sup> This system was by one interviewee explained as not fair, but *'sometimes you will find a Christian, two to three Circassians, four Palestinians. Not all the ministers and ministries are Jordanian. Especially the interior, defense, foreign affairs, they are Jordanian. Education and tourism are always Palestinian. Even the big Palestinians are waiting for their share.'*

The second group perceived<sup>236</sup> to have political influence, were the supporters of the system. This group ranges from people who would wanted to work in the government, to the big tribes who wanted things from the government or regime, such as government employment for their members, and the powerful cities who were dependent on the government or regime.

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<sup>233</sup> Sixteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>234</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>235</sup> One example is the Prime Minister Samir Rafa'i. *'Scion of a powerful, conservative, and consummate insider family. Indeed Rafa'i became the fourth member of his family to serve as prime minister since Jordan's independence.'* Ryan, Curtis R (2010) 'Jordan's new electoral law: reform, reaction, or status quo?', in POMEPS Briefings 11, 'Arab Uprisings; Jordan, Forever on the Brink', May 9, 2012, pp 22

<sup>236</sup> Eight interviewees.

The other two groups have been firstly the rich people. *'Money is power, cash is king. No money, all you speak is nonsense, you don't have power, you cannot have things happen.'* And secondly the friends of the King, the small group of friends and businessmen who form his inner circle. *'King Abdullah has more economic people, the Kings guys, running the show. Rich corrupt, business personal interest.'*

Access to these positions and political power, was seen<sup>237</sup> to be given if you would have something that the regime wanted, such as having powerful authority, which would come if you were to be the head of a big tribe. Or you should have been well involved in the country by having lots of money and investments. Further desirable traits have been if one was well informed and educated, meaning being outstanding in your field of research. Moreover having international relations and influence, high international standing or being related to very important families outside of Jordan, would certainly bring you power. Further being well connected would give you also some leeway, knowing the right person to introduce you to other people was a must to achieve political power in Jordan.

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<sup>237</sup> Three interviewees.

## *Chapter Conclusion*

Overall the political rights in 2010 and early 2011, were perceived negatively by the interviewees. It seemed that the regime had interfered pretty much in all the rights, albeit in varied degree. From subtle 'behind the scenes pressure' to outright arresting people, to the ever presence of propaganda. There had been no right left untainted by the hands of the regime.

On the equality of the rights for all, firstly the rights themselves had been mostly accessible for all on paper, however in practice things looked different. Voting had been possible, but the SNTV law disenfranchised not only the Palestinian Jordanian people but also the Jordanian Jordanians, by making them vote not for their own geographically interest. To be elected would only be possible if you were supported by or supportive of the regime. Moreover the arrest of protesters deterred people from participating in demonstration. Not all sectors had their association, and the strong ones which did exist had been hijacked by the Muslim Brotherhood. You were free to speak but there were red lines, thus making some less free than others. You were free to think but only to think in the right way, making some restricted in their thinking. But you would be safe, very safe in Jordan, if you would have been an obedient citizen.

On the question whether this had all been meaningful and adequate, the picture looks very grim too. The main problem was the lack of inclusion of the (middle class) people in the political processes. Because it was seen that another segment of society, the elite in its many forms, did have some influence. As explained before, they apparently had managed to be the crucial political coalition partners for the regime and therefore did have access to the political process, which was denied to the rest of the Jordanian society. The regime had prevailed its political beneficiary social contract with the elite, above the one with the general population, and then especially the middle class. Although the Arab Spring had drawn the attention of the regime back to the people, it had been doubted whether this would lead to an actual change in the status quo in the long run.

The structural constraints which have been perceived, were mainly the lack of effectiveness of political representation towards the regime and the government. Parties, candidates, parliament, civil society, the election law and associations have not been able to truly help the

people. There seems to have been a link missing between the people and the regime in Jordan. This gap is usually filled by these institutions of representation, but these have all, but one, been made ineffective by the regime. This has discouraged even the ones who had been really interested in politics and really wanted to get involved, they just had nothing to hold on to.<sup>238</sup> Moreover the tools provided by the political rights to overcome this divide on peoples own accord had also been rendered ineffective. Freedom of speech and freedom of thought have been restricted and often these restrictions have become over time institutionalized. These restrictions had become tried tools which the regime had often used in times of trouble, to get people back in position. Red lines had been policed, fear and memory used to scare people and media had been flooded with propaganda crowding out the critical voices, such as occupation with daily life had crowded out the thoughts or action on anything else. Also the perception of the interviewees to change this, or to change the government was seen as having a very low chance of success.

As far as it was their own fault, it was admitted that many people did not joined the political process, whether this would have been voting, joining a party, their association, etc. They did not care, felt it would be meaningless, or the people were to stupid to even understand what politics actually was. And when people did join the political process, they had done so not to actually change things or in order to get involved, but mostly for their own gain.

The contribution to the neutralization of their tools to speak and to think, had been one of obedience. Obedience through believing the propaganda, through have family and society influence behavior, through self censorship, though not behaving the in wrong way in general. With wrong then being defined not by the people themselves, but by the incumbent regime. However this obedience was rewarded with safety. There were perceived no structural constraints to exist with regards to safety, Jordan had been very safe in comparison to its neighbors. If you were to act, speak and think in accordance with wishes of the regime, you were safe, very safe. However if you breached this safety social contract<sup>239</sup> you would not be tortured or something like that, but you could end up in front of the State Security Court.

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<sup>238</sup> The only organization who had been effective was the Muslim Brotherhood, but this organization held no appeal to the middle class interviewees.

<sup>239</sup> In the introduction I have stated that my basic assumption has been that the safety issue would not have been very important in Jordan. However I was wrong. My fault had been that I had looked only to Jordan itself, Jordan as a country in a 'black box'. But Jordan has to be seen within its region and this region is unstable. Jordan had been surrounded with dictators to whom safety was only applicable to themselves; they did with their people whatever they deemed to see fit. This makes safety a very important consideration in the eyes of the Jordanian, it will accept as will be shown in this thesis, great misconduct of the regime in exchange for safety. This argument had even gained more credit in current times, 2014. The situation in Egypt and Syria since 2011

## Chapter 4: Exchange

Since as explained in the theory chapter, an integral part of the social contract theory is the exchange between the economic and political rights. This chapter will look at this issue.

### ▪ Balance

The first question will be whether the interviewees did perceive there was a balance between the political rights and the economic rights in 2010 and early 2011. That in case one of them was seen to be lacking or insufficient as discussed above, it was complimented by the other.<sup>240</sup> *If the people perceive either of the rights, political and social, as being lacking, did they perceive there had been a balance between them.*

Some<sup>241</sup> interviewees stated that there was a balance, one interviewee explained that both economics and politics were quite good. However two interviewees explained that they were both very bad. Mrs Byouk thought that Jordan had reasonable rights, they were half economic and half politics. The lacking of full rights, had mostly to do with the small capacity of Jordan, it being hit hard by the global economic crisis in 2010 and having not that much resources. But although it was not much, there have been rights even in practice and they were clear, which was more than in any other Arab country.

Regardless this explanation, most of the interviewees perceived<sup>242</sup> there to have been a kind of unbalance. Two interviewees said the balance depended. Firstly on personal matters, if you would have good contacts you would have been able to access good political and economic rights. But secondly, for the average Jordanian: *'it was more arbitrary, no solid foundation of economic freedoms and not everybody empowered enough to economic competition. There has always monopoly, positions will be given on political basis. And recently the middle class*

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had killed all wishes for reform in any authoritarian countries, since those rulers just have to point to Egypt and especially Syria and ask their population if they would risk this happening in their country. Safety in exchange for political rights, is the new authoritarian deal.

<sup>240</sup> The problem with this question is that one cannot really compare every perception of a lacking economic right with the perception of this same person on the sufficiency of a political right. Meaning interviewee A said this economic right is lacking but this political right is good. The perception is more generalized and can not be traced back to the same person in both economic and political rights. This problem of relating the rights, has also been compounded by the fact that not all of the eighteen interviewees were asked the exchange questions. Sometimes they were perceived to be irrelevant, or due to time constraints not asked. Therefore in the exchange chapter one cannot say this person A, who said this and that in the economic and political chapters, thinks this and that in the exchange chapter. It will be of what most of the interviewees thought per exchange question, in general.

<sup>241</sup> Three interviewees out of the eleven asked.

<sup>242</sup> Eight interviewees.

*has been abolished, the small enterprises can no longer compete. In Jordan, we have two classes, the rich and the poor. Inflation, the services are expensive, health service, food and fuel.*’ It was perceived that the economic rights<sup>243</sup> were slightly more available, however to a very little extent. Mr Rubeiha explains that the variation in quality, in especially economic rights, was often due to funding problems. Jordan had been very much depending on foreign aid, which came sometimes with conditions. Also due to political issues aid could have been given, increased, but also aid could have been diminished or been cut of entirely.

However the other interviewees<sup>244</sup> said that the unbalance had more to do with the people themselves. The people tend to see their political and economic rights not as connected. The first priority of the people would be their daily bread and their income, their basic living.<sup>245</sup> *‘The majority of people don’t give a fk about education, they want to eat first. They don’t give a fk about nuclear plant, woman’s right, they want to eat. Satisfy Maslow, the first one, give me house and food, and then self actualization comes later.’* Also two interviewees explained that politics was a luxury, only people who had their basic needs satisfied would have been interested in politics. Moreover they probably had the education to actually know what political and economic rights are and what they meant. This understanding is important, because some interviewees<sup>246</sup> said, that people had not really been aware of the fact that they actually had political rights, or they might have thought of this but were not able to voice or give meaning to it. *‘They might not be able to identify them, but as soon as they are introduced these concepts they will related them to their lives.’*<sup>247</sup> Thus as soon as people would have been made aware of the connection between their political and economic rights, they might have been interested. This has been reinforced by two interviewees, who, as also mentioned earlier, saw the Jordanian people as being interested in politics, regardless their economic status.

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<sup>243</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>244</sup> Because this question was made later, three interviewees answered the question directly and nine indirectly making a total of twelve who answered the question.

<sup>245</sup> Nine interviewees.

<sup>246</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>247</sup> One interviewee came to realize during the interview that she had not been interested in politics or economic rights because she was never educated in these fields at university. Most what she had learned were opinions from her family, friends community. This she said was on one hand a good thing, for it would thwart any regime attempt to influence her mind, but at the same time her opinions were just opinions and did not have a true educated foundation.

Of the knowledgeable people, all did agree that the first priority of the average ‘poor’ Jordanians had been their basic economic rights. As Mr Rubeiha explained: *‘the middle people who think in political, the high rise people have a lot of money they don’t think, they talk about their money. The low poor people who are living for the days living, because what if you go to the street and make a problem and the police catch you, and do something. His children that time, there is no food for them.’*

#### ▪ Exchange

The next question deals with the issue of the exchange, meaning whether the interviewees perceived the people were forced to accept some rights less in exchange for other rights. This being mostly having more economic rights in exchange for less political rights. Bread in exchange for staying quiet.

Of the interviewees asked<sup>248</sup> the majority<sup>249</sup> agreed that an exchange between political and economics rights had taken place. First of all, this exchange was perceived<sup>250</sup> to be slightly voluntarily accepted by the people themselves. People did not really care about politics, if this meant they would have been able to live a normal life. For the poor this meant having some little things to eat, having the King and Queen come and address some small problems, but not the real issues. However it was perceived<sup>251</sup> in general, that this exchange had been forced upon the people, albeit in a kind manner. *‘Government is used to this, relax, you think about what you want but don’t talk about certain things and we are going to live the same as our fathers. Stable and the same.’*

On the exchange issue, Mr Tell explains that this had been tried by King Abdullah, albeit it was something that has not only been happening in Jordan. *‘It is happening everywhere and again in UK and US there is the job and job leave the politics for us, enjoy your live. But the problem is what happens here is the promises that King Abdullah came in power, he stressed the economic part. The idea was exactly if they are well off and everybody is happy economicly, they will forget about politics. Unfortunately he failed, not only we went back economicly as a country for the majority of people and that’s when he said okay it is not working at all, we are worse of economicly and definitely worse of politically.’*

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<sup>248</sup> Nine interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>249</sup> Eight interviewees.

<sup>250</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>251</sup> Three interviewees.

On the question<sup>252</sup> whether the interviewees felt they had some rights less, some<sup>253</sup> explained that they had been cheated out of their political rights, mainly the rights which had to do with, the earlier mentioned, issue of wanting to be involved in the political decision making process. *'For me because I am single, I don't have a family, maybe if I have a family and I have to feed them, I will tell you something else. But for me, I told you, you have a priority list so you look to satisfy each needs then you will think about... I don't need much.'* But as the quote illustrates, quite some<sup>254</sup> realized they themselves had been in a luxury position. As mentioned earlier, having attained a certain level of economic wealth, made it possible for them to care about politics.

Also some<sup>255</sup> felt they had their important political right, freedom of speech, albeit it was quite limited. But two interviewees did not really care about their privileged positions, they would rather have seen the economic rights of the poor addressed. *'I don't care of there is no freedom of speech, if they give poor people food, education and hospitals.'* And lastly, two interviewees did not really care about their lack of political rights, they did not believe in politics anyway.

However the exchange agreement was identified some<sup>256</sup> interviewees as being specifically fruitful between the regime and certain influential tribes. In exchange for loyalty, the tribes would have gained specific benefits, such as scholarships, government employment, water, land, tax exemptions and sometimes even monthly payment. One example given was the Ayaan, a non elected, hired, second parliament. This parliament had been approving laws whilst at the same time serving as an institution which gave out well paid jobs for old friends of the King and former loyal high rank civil servants. A second example, was help in political matters, as one interviewee explained with regards to her Circassians community. To maintain their support and keep them satisfied, the regime has helped them with acquiring places in government. This would be done by moving them on paper from one district to different districts in Amman, so that in the end they would be elected not in one but in different positions.

As for the rich population, they had been allowed to gain their riches through whatever, often corrupt, means, as long as they did not interfere with politics. *'Unless you make 5.000 JD a*

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<sup>252</sup> Because this question was made later, five interviewees answered the question directly and seven indirectly making a total of twelve who answered the question.

<sup>253</sup> Six interviewees.

<sup>254</sup> Six interviewees.

<sup>255</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>256</sup> Four interviewees.

month, and you want to spend it on drinking and women, you can do that but still stay within our framework that we have put for you.’ This has been agreed on by Mr Tell who explained that because the regime wished to co-opt the new Palestinian Jordanian business elite, they had turned a blind eye to the corruption. Even worse, to the business elite there had been presented a lot of institutionalized and alternative ways to make money in exchange for their political support. In short; they were allowed to rise within the given space of the regime. But the rich families were perceived<sup>257</sup> not to have been making much trouble, since they profited from the regime and were therefore often the supporters of the regime. Mrs Byouk agrees on this point: *‘The people before, from the old ages, King Hussein, they don’t need the change when new King come. Because they are afraid about their benefits, when they know nobody will touch their benefits, except the King.’* The rich people kept quiet in order to maintain their wealth.

Mrs Saaf van der Beek was of the opinion that it had not only been the tribes who had profited from and were therefore complicit in this deal. She explains that every tribe actually had been the Jordanian population, moreover Jordan was not such a large country. The idea was that the tribes of the Trans Jordan accept the rule from someone from Saudi Arabia, because they all profit from this bargaining. The problem started, in her opinion, when King Abdulla focused more on the elite at the beginning of his reign. He therefore lost touch with the ‘common Jordanian’ and they have felt slightly neglected ever since.

#### ▪ Fair?

The next question revolves around the perception of the fairness of the exchange and whether people had accepted this exchange.

*Had this exchange been adequate? Meaning that the exchange had been ‘fair’? Did the given political rights provide adequate social rights in return.*

Of all the interviewees asked this question,<sup>258</sup> the majority<sup>259</sup> did see the exchange as being unfair. *‘Of course it is not fair, because political rights if they have it, it will lead to a better life. It is the basic, if we have political rights it will lead to a clear country with no corruption. No dictatorship, no wasta. So if we have enough political rights to have the system we want to*

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<sup>257</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>258</sup> Nine interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>259</sup> Seven interviewees.

*live, the justice system, the system who treats everybody as the same, you don't need extra benefits if you are treated like others. If everybody treated on basis of qualifications, you don't need extra stuff. You don't get extra benefits, you don't deserve.'* It was perceived that, the economic rights in return for rescinding the political rights, especially for the poor, had been way beneath acceptance. Moreover the lack of political rights or the unawareness of these rights, made the people unable to demand more economic rights in 2010. But regardless their understanding these problems, the interviewees<sup>260</sup> explained that the people of Jordan had no other choice than to accept.

Also two interviewees explained, that sometimes people were just taken over by the propaganda, whilst at the same time they did not receive sufficient or any benefits at all. Those people, of both backgrounds and some educated, really believed the image of the King and Queen as caring people, who really had the Jordanian peoples best interest at heart. *'This is a strategy that the King and Queen are using. We are listening, speak about the most critical things, we are here, the King is Jordanian, the Queen in Palestinian. We can hug each other. But it is a tactic.'* This 'blind acceptance' had to do with the, earlier mentioned, loyalty to the royal family, which was instilled in the Jordanian psyche from very early age.<sup>261</sup> *'We were raised up with songs, that relate to how much we love the King, and how much we love the country. And the finishing line is that there is room for all Jordanians, our duty is to be loyal to the King and not to the land. So this is in our blood.'* Mrs Saaf van der Beek explains that respect for the King and the royal family was engrained in the Jordanian mind.

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<sup>260</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>261</sup> Four interviewees.

## *Chapter Conclusion*

On the issue of the exchange part of the social contract, it seems, as was also shown in the earlier chapters, that the social contract did not provide enough acceptable benefits for the parties involved, in 2010 and early 2011. The rights received were, apart from not enough, arbitrary and very unfair, especially for the poor. The received benefits were seen as in general insufficient as to the political rights the people had to relinquish. The ones who do seem to have had a working social contract with the regime were, as stated earlier, the segments of society that had been of importance to the regime. They got benefits and were allowed to make their fortunes through illegal means, but in return they had to stay within the framework of the regime, they had to stay loyal. The social contract, as explained through the lens of the revisionist rentier theory, did work for them.

On the issue of the structural constraints, the constraints perceived were mainly the unfair and uneven distribution of the benefits and the institutionalization of this distribution. Many got nothing out of the exchange, whilst some did get economic benefits in exchange for political acquiesce. More than often this favoritism and corruption had been institutionalized, made common practice.

To the question as to what extent the people themselves did contribute to the continuation of these structures, one has to say that it has been mostly ignorance. As said before we act on the basis of our knowledge. The fact that many people did not see the political and the economic connected, made them unable to see these structural constraints and break this unfair exchange. They were occupied with their daily survival, and did not realize they had rescinded their political rights for a meager piece of daily bread. Moreover many had been taken over by propaganda, and had equated the demanding of rights with being disloyal to the King. Making it also morally difficult for them to connect the economic with the political in order to demand more economic benefits in exchange for their political silence.

## Chapter 5: Challenge and Change the Government

In this chapter we will address the issue whether the interviewees perceived if there was a way to change the government.<sup>262</sup>

### *Contestation*

The first question looks at whether there was room for contestation in 2010 and early 2011. *In both economic and political rights had there been perceived room for the contestation on the allowance of these rights?*

In this case the perception of the interviewees<sup>263</sup> was slightly split.<sup>264</sup> In general in 2010, some<sup>265</sup> interviewees explained that you could have used the freedom of speech to speak or write to the government in order to demand particular changes. However the result of these demands would be questionable. However things changed with the protest. Some<sup>266</sup> explained that even before 2011 there have been protest, albeit their influences on economic policies had been limited.<sup>267</sup> But when the protests happened, in the first three months of 2011, it made the regime very quickly more attentive to the needs of the people and thus increasedg the chances to be heard.<sup>268</sup> *'We were people that saw Tunis fall. Of course we thought we thought it possible. We are the generation that witnessed the peace treaty signed with Israel, the hanging of Saddam, the collapse of Tunis. We witnessed this, so we were optimistic. Very optimistic.'*

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<sup>262</sup> This question was originally split between the economic and political rights and the exchange chapters. However due to the considerable overlap, the limited space and the quite similar answers they have been merged.

<sup>263</sup> Fourteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>264</sup> Seven interviewees in favor, six interviewees against and three interviewees said maybe.

<sup>265</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>266</sup> Three interviewees.

<sup>267</sup> One interviewee explained that these effects manifested more on political issues, such as increasing the openness of the regime in the media.

<sup>268</sup> Three interviewees.

## *Use?*

The next question<sup>269</sup> revolves around how people would have uses this perceived, albeit limited and ineffective, room for contestation. As explained in the political rights chapter, it had already become clear how the interviewees perceived political participation in general in 2010 and early 2011. However the question was put more directly, on how they saw that the room to contest the regime was being used.

The prime method to contest, was identified<sup>270</sup> to be through demonstrations. But only two interviewees actually committed to the demonstrations in 2011, both by being part of the organization of these demonstrations. Others did not participate or only once or twice.

Reasons mentioned were: because of the dangers, the fact that it would not have been effective at all or they did not identified with the goals and issues of the demonstrators.

However quite<sup>271</sup> some interviewees had been active through the means of internet, either via writing blogs, using social media or they participating online debates. They wrote about the issues of political and economic rights, the inequality, the corruption and social issues such as gender equality.

## *Responsiveness*

The next section deals with the perceived of the responsiveness of the regime or government.

*Had the regime been perceived to be responsive to the demands of the population with regards to the demands of economic and political rights.*

### ▪ **Listen?**

The first question posed, was if the government would have listened to the people in 2010 and early 2011.<sup>272</sup> In 2010, the government had not been listening. Mr Rubeiha explained very clearly: *'The government in that time they don't listen to anybody. They have something in their (head) and they doing what they like.'* The problem was mainly, as stated earlier, that

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<sup>269</sup> Thirteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>270</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>271</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>272</sup> Eighteen interviewees were asked this question.

the government did not care about its people.<sup>273</sup> *'They would listen, not necessarily react. They would listen, they monitor, they would listen bring you in, and speak and talk about it. "Do your research and papers and present it." How much of that is taken into consideration that is really tricky, it depends on what we are talking about.'* Also two interviewees stated that the corruption within the government and parliament would buy off opposition and dissenting voices. *'Government listens to violence, an act of violence more than a act of intellectual speech. Because they think they can buy people. They think people are easy to be in their side for money and positions.'*

Another way could have been through the parliament, but the results would be often very 'cosmetic' or nothing at all.<sup>274</sup> *'They try to act like they are listening, tried to say we will fix things but did never any real changes. Only cosmetic changes for the west and donors.'* Moreover it was perceived<sup>275</sup> that parliament was weak, tribal, corrupt, or were not interested to work at all. *'... the parliament could do pressure. But then again our parliament is controlled by forces that make it deviate from the set plans, they would liquidate it, they would make it pass.'*

Mrs Saaf van der Beek wondered who actually was the government, who was running the show. Because sometimes there had been a lack of political will in the parliament, whilst the government did come with legislation to address economic grievances. But then again sometimes the parliament had no political power to do anything because of the political set up. However, she acknowledged also the disinterest of the people to act, they rather complained, but then there had been some truth in this complaint because of the powerless parliament.

Another great obstacle was the ineffectiveness of the government itself.<sup>276</sup> *'Government is build like so they won't listen'*. The people working in the government were perceived as unqualified and lazy, since they obtained their position through *wasta* and not through merit. *'I sit sometimes with guys. They say we need improvement, we need and he don't go to work for government. If he is employee for government but two days he went and three days of the week he stay at home.'* This led to a very slow process of decision making. Moreover there was a lack of accountability, faulty programs would continue for years, and there would be no

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<sup>273</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>274</sup> Three interviewees.

<sup>275</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>276</sup> Four interviewees.

feedback option towards the government.<sup>277</sup> *'No, government not hear, they don't have ear to hear.'*

Apart from the unwillingness, it has also been doubtful whether the government and the regime could actually do something in the sphere of the political, and the economic rights. One interviewee explained that she had been involved in protests, civil society and campaigning groups, but all had led to nothing. *'Other people tried to pressure for the rape law and honors crimes, whatever. But you are not ever succeeding. It is a very conservative traditional power controlling the country and working together with economic strong power which is taking money and that's it.'* It was perceived by some<sup>278</sup> that the effectiveness of the government and the regime to address the demands of the people often depended on the issues, and that sometimes even the government and the regime was tied to other forces, such as other actors, traditions, dogma's and opinions, within the Jordanian society. Moreover the government and the regime would have been often tied to the control of foreign powers, donors and restraints related with regional security and Israel.<sup>279</sup> *'How can Jordan government listen to humble local people? Gathering and exchanging thoughts, to people who bring billions and billions of dollars and ammo, and weapons, heavy weapons. They are building our army for free, you see. How can we shed an eye on those kind of guys and listen to our own locals?'* Jordan as a country therefore, could have allowed influence from its people on unimportant issues, but the important issues it might not even have been able to change itself. *'If I start party, one water bottle a day, it is okay because I am not talking about essential things in the Kingdom. But if I talk about jihads or Islam, this is not allowed. Or if I am gonna change the whole structure of the Kingdom, no no.'*

#### ▪ Interviewees

The next question asked on the responsiveness of the regime or government, was if they would listen to the interviewees personally and why this would be. This because, as explained in the research question, my main point of departure was the individual agency. The perception that the individual would be an agent of change. Hence it was important to ask the interviewees how they perceived their agency in relation to the regime and government.

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<sup>277</sup> Three interviewees.

<sup>278</sup> Three interviewees.

<sup>279</sup> Five interviewees.

The great majority<sup>280</sup> said that the government would not have listened to them. Firstly, as explained before, the government had an air of: *'We know what is best, (...) we think that you don't know what is good for you and we will do the changes without you involved in it. So that is better for you.'* Actually two interviewees agreed with the government on this point, stating that in general people have no good ideas in the first place and they were stupid in general. *'Even me they will not hear me, because I am one of the people here in Jordan. And government would think that I am stupid, because the people are stupid.'*

However, most of the interviewees<sup>281</sup> stated that as an unimportant individual, they would have had no chance to be heard. But, as also mentioned earlier, if they would have been active themselves by forming a strong pressure group or party, a coalition, created a platform, attracted media attention. Or if they would become an important powerful person, such as an important journalist or political figure, they perceived an increase in their chances to have attracted the attention of the regime or government.

#### ▪ **Who's fault?**

However as mentioned briefly above, quite a few<sup>282</sup> interviewees stated out of themselves very explicitly that it had been the fault of the people themselves, that the government and the regime did not listen. People apparently do accept the situation. Jordanians were calm people, as explained by Mr Rubeiha, it was not in the Jordanian nature to shout and moreover they loved the King. Although he acknowledged that being critical against the regime was not per se against the King, but more against the government. Mrs Byouk stated that people might have been very cautious because they were aware of the dangers involved, and therefore they had been actually very smart. This argument was given some credibility, by one of the interviewees who was involved with the protest at the Dakhliyah circle and Mr Tell, with regards to the protest in 2011. Mr Tell explained that at that time the regime started to play on the sectarian fears of the Jordanian society, by telling the people that the Palestinians were bent on taking over the country again. Reigniting the old fear of Jordanian Jordanians of Jordan becoming 'the alternative homeland' for the Palestinians.<sup>283</sup> According to him, Mr

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<sup>280</sup> Fourteen out of eighteen interviewees asked

<sup>281</sup> Eleven interviewees.

<sup>282</sup> Six interviewees.

<sup>283</sup> *'The claim by many Israeli right-wing groups that the Palestinians do not have the right to establish an independent state in the West Bank and Gaza, because a Palestinian state—Jordan—already exists on the East Bank of the Jordan River. This so-called "Jordan option" was espoused by Ariel Sharon when he entered politics in 1974, and he repeatedly advocated removal of the "artificial Kingdom of Jordan" and transformation of the country into a Palestinian state.'*, Choucair, Julia, 'Illusive Reform: Jordan's Stubborn Stability', Carnegie Papers Middle East Series, No 76, December 2006. pp 5

Rubeiha and one of the interviewees, this old fear made a lot of people disengage from the protest. Moreover some<sup>284</sup> interviewees stated that that the protest were mostly for one day, a one day of anger, usually on Friday, and then everybody went home.

However in pre protest times the interviewees, as mentioned above, explained that the main reason in their eyes was, that the people just did not care. In case of the educated young population one interviewee explained: *'People really just want (to be) normal people. For guys, get the cars, go with girls, go to hooka at night and that's it. It is deterioration of our nation. People are not improving our mentality. Decreasing quality in people mind.'*

Adding to this, as observed by Mrs Saaf van der Beek, was the fact that because of Jordan's tribal character, the people were not used to demand rights from the government. Often the tribe or community was the first station to ask economic aid, or in times of desperate need the royal court and this has been encouraged by the government for a long time. The government encouragement to turn to the tribe or community has led to a lack of citizenship; the notion that everyone has a role and should contribute for the common good. This has been agreed on by two interviews, it was often me and my tribe first and the rest can wait.

#### ▪ **Educated critical?**

The question then arose how this disinterest came to be, apart from the tribal tradition. One interviewee explained: *'(...) the system knows this the system created this. By education, by media, by years, they created worshippers, simple and stupid people, that they believe and follow everything they do and everything they say.'*

When posed to other interviewees with the questions whether Jordanians were actually educated politically or to think critically at all, the majority answered negatively.<sup>285</sup> First of

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An other issue is the 'perceived' divide between the Palestinian Jordanians and the Jordanian Jordanians, which came to a stand off during the civil war between September 1970 and July 1971. However this divide is in the opinion of Mr Tell an artificial created divide. *'The whole issue of Jordanian Jordanians and Palestinian Jordanians, which ironically, did not really exist before. Even in the civil war, which al lot of people try to portray it as Palestinian Jordanians against Jordanian Jordanians. But it was most likely the regime against the PLO, the two leaders fighting to lead, Arafat and King Hussein. Yes, King Hussein, had most Jordanian Jordanians supporters, because of the army, and the PLO were mostly Palestinian Jordanians. But they (the Jordanian Regime) made it a thing. If you look at the high education they never mentioned that it was small, they kept the other explanation: we will fight each other.'*

*We had 'the divide through the civil war' effect a little bit. But in my school up to the '80 was never a question of Palestinian Jordanians or Jordanian Jordanians. What happened in 1980, we had Palestinians from refugee camp became very prominent, and a lot of the Kuwaitis came back in to Jordan in the summer and that's when it started. They started separating, and suddenly it became, who are you and who you support?*

*And then the government / regime got smarter, because the people got smarter and they started buy these things, and they found a way to actually get people occupied. But when it got dangerous, they let it down.*

<sup>284</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>285</sup> Nine out of twelve interviewees. This question was created later, and I was unable to reach six of my previous interviewees.

all, the educational system had been creating very good workers, who were excellent managers and therefore a prime export product to the Gulf countries. Moreover they were able to memorize and were in some way critical, but not on the political issues.<sup>286</sup> As explained earlier, the problem was mainly the very traditional way of education; just the marks were important.<sup>287</sup> *'I realize that 30% of the university students of the University of Jordan haven't read more than three books in their lives except curriculum books.'* Traditional education was prevalent in Jordan, unless you, as a student, were lucky enough to have an inspiring and stimulating university or educated professor,<sup>288</sup> who was often educated in a western country. The other way would be if you managed to educate yourself<sup>289</sup> beyond what was stimulated by the university. But this had been proven to be difficult and not stimulated by the system and society at large. *'The other problem with that is that as soon as you want to read another book, the first book they put in front of your face is the koran. And of course the koran has all the solutions for all of life and eternity. It is like the monks that were reading the bible over and over again.'* However Mrs Byouk illustrated that as a professor herself, she was confronted with 90% unmotivated students. Another interviewee explained that if a teacher would teach critical thought, 99% of the students would make the teacher stop, since they would doubt their own capacity to deal with it, their main concern would be just to pass. Thus non critical thinking could also have been a societal problem, as one interviewee pointed out, students come from a community, homes and the family who raised them.<sup>290</sup> It was Mrs Saaf van der Beek's and Mr Tell's opinion, that this had also been an Arab Jordanian cultural thing, which was not exclusively Jordanian or regime made, because nowhere in the Arabic world critical and political thinking had been stimulated. But in contrast, Mr Rubeiha, Mrs Byouk and one interviewee explained, that the people were critically and politically educated but the Jordanian regime did not give them space to work or express this education. Regardless this ambiguity, it was the opinion quite a few<sup>291</sup> that the uncritical mind of the Jordanian people was an intentional action of the regime. *'It is not made to question, because you are an autocratic monarchic system. You cannot question the system.'* These interviewees perceived there were forces keeping the country backwards, for sake of regional and domestic

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<sup>286</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>287</sup> Eight interviewees.

<sup>288</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>289</sup> Three interviewees.

<sup>290</sup> Societal and especially family punishment can be severe, since as explained earlier one of the interviewees had been cut off by her family when she started questioning the system. Moreover, others had explained the demotivating behavior which their families had been displaying towards them when they did refuse to comply with the pressures of society to stay obedient and quiet.

<sup>291</sup> Five of twelve interviewees.

security, easy sell of consumer products and to maintain the status quo of who had been holding power. Mr Tell agreed it was a tactic of the regime, which had been deployed within the Arab world since the mid '90. However he explained this was also the issue in the US and the UK. *'So yes it is a government happening and I think it is based on what is happening in the States. It is so easier to control the people when they are not questioning, just worry about work, make money, sports, have fun, smoke sheisha, coffee and stuff.'* However the main difference, he explained, was that if you would be interested to learn and wanted to create a critical mind, the tools in the western countries have been much more available than in Jordan.<sup>292</sup>

#### ▪ **Foundation of Claim**

The last question with regards to the responsiveness of the regime or government deals with the fact on which grounds the interviewees based their claim of mainly the economic right. Why should the government or regime take care of its people and actually listen when they demand something. As explained, in the theory chapter, by the scholar Cox, in times when economic rights are reduced, the claim of right can not easily be based on entitlement because of citizenship. Entitlement becomes based on contestation; on the fact that you have to make yourself heard, often through the use of the political rights.<sup>293</sup>

When looking at the perception on mainly the economic rights in 2010, some interviewees<sup>294</sup> came with a different foundation of entitlement. One of the main line of argument had to do with the royal court and the King giving out stuff as a gift, rather than it being his job and than it being the right of the citizen. *'And they have something as the Kings gift, they stick this in everything. Like, food, health education. Everything you get good, it is because of the King. You get this seat, health treatment because of the King, not because it is your right.'* The fact that economic rights are truly your rights, was only mentioned by two interviewees. One actually claimed that she was entitled by the virtue of being a citizen. However tied to this was<sup>295</sup> the fact that, they and other people had been paying taxes, or as earlier quoted the King

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<sup>292</sup> One interviewee explained that during her youth she had depended on a kind American lady, who had send her books to read, since the public library in her own town did not provide enough for her inquisitive mind.

<sup>293</sup> Cox (1998), pp 10

<sup>294</sup> This question was made after the analyzing of the first ten interviewees. Thus the question was directly posed and answered by seven interviewees, of which two went of topic and did not answer the question. Six interviewees, however did answer this question in some way on their own account, because they brought it up in relation to something else. So in total of eleven interviewees did actually answer the question.

<sup>295</sup> Five interviewees.

took taxes, therefore the people should get benefits in return.<sup>296</sup> *'If you want me to pay the tax, you have to give me things on time, health insurance, education, social security, infrastructure, water to drink, change to improve my ambitions, to care about my ...everything.'* Also on the issue of the parliament, some<sup>297</sup> interviewees explained that the parliament was there to speak to the government on the behalf of the rights of the people. Thus people were entitled to political representation to guarantee their rights and to get their economic benefits. *'The government exist to serve the people, if you are going to tell me that I am going to protect Jordan, I am Jordan. You know, so you have to share me your opinions and decisions, I have to be a part of this. Because at the end I am the one who pay.'* However as mentioned earlier, still two interviewees were of the opinion that the government in no circumstances had been obliged to listen to the people, because the people were stupid and had no ideas.

In 2011, the things changed. Some<sup>298</sup> interviewees pointed to the pressure mounted by protesters during the first three months of the protest in 2011. They explained that, because of the pressure and the shock of non complacent subjects, the government, and more specific the King, did address the issues demanded.<sup>299</sup> The main issue addressed had been the corruption and the firing of the unpopular the Prime Minister, al-Rafa'i.

When asked the question directly, some<sup>300</sup> pointed to the fact that the regime was just plain scared. As explained by one of the protesters, when talking about the events on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2011 on Dakhliyah circle. *'Because we were loud, and because after the Arab Spring the media was obliged to report us, so finally we had the attention. Finally the image of the peaceful Jordan in the west was being contested. And he should have done something, we thought, now we have the cameras on us, now we have the change, if we don't stand up now, they will still think the King is nice and everything is okay. No now we stand up, we contest his image and he would have to answer.'* The regime feared the consequences of what would happen if they would not listen, they feared the instability and wanted to maintain control.

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<sup>296</sup> The issue of no taxation without representation has been explained to work only for direct tax, by the scholar John Waterbury. When tax is collected indirect, through fees and value added tax, the accountability declines. However it was pointed out by three interviewees that they knew that they and other Jordanians paid indirect tax, and therefore were still entitled to political representation. For more information see Waterbury, John (1997) "From Social Contracts to Extraction Contracts: The Political Economy of Authoritarianism and Democracy," in John P. Entelis, ed., *Islam, Democracy, and the State in North Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).

<sup>297</sup> Three interviewees.

<sup>298</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>299</sup> The issues of the protest revolved mostly on the economic and social rights, the demand for transparency and for the regime to address the corruption.

<sup>300</sup> Four out of six interviewees who were asked this question directly.

*'They feared that people, politicians, would take the advantages of the popular rage and build on that very strong opposition, including grassroots from everywhere. So they, they will not let the opposition to benefit from that, especially Islamist are very good at that. So they kind of diffuse it, they are quiet, and they are wise in dealing. I think the King is wise, he succeeded by avoiding things like that, wait and see, wait and see.'*

Some<sup>301</sup> interviewees stated that because of the pressure, incidental things were fixed, but no structural changes were undertaken. *'The King know how to play his cards perfectly well, or whoever was with him, they played it perfectly. We still don't have elections, he promised when it started.'* Mr Tell explained that because of the initial shock and fear, even in 2010, the regime started to listen to the demands of addressing corruption. Moreover it promised to look into the privatisation and made moves to address the economic situation, however when the protest lost momentum the changes stopped and people were actually worse off. Moreover the perception<sup>302</sup> was that the regime had been making a show of willingness to change, but this was mainly geared to absorb the unrest and keep the calm, not to actually change things.

*'Even if the people would try to shout and scream as much as they want, the government would obey to a certain extent to keep things calm.'* This has also been the idea of Mr Rubeiha, he explained that the regime had merely agreed to changes, not to actually address the issues at hand, but to make people wait and become quiet and return to normalcy again. Mrs Saaf van der Beek found the fact that the regime did listen, an indication that the regime did seem to function when it was pressured. Mrs Bayouk thought that the regime was indeed quite scared, but they had already instigated change before the Arab Spring happened. *'I don't think the government are stupid to show the people, you see Egypt, Tunis. They are not stupid to not address this. (...) they saw the countries around and the government got a little bit scared and the people they are educated and try to change. And before the Arab spring Jordan is a country who tried to make the change, so that is one of the reason we don't have strong revolution.'*

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<sup>301</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>302</sup> Three interviewees.

## *Chapter Conclusion*

As for the social contract in 2010 and early 2011, it seems that the regime had been unwilling to listen to the input of the people. To put it more correctly, the government and regime did listen but did not address the issues of which it had been told of. The government and regime were too occupied with advancing their own interest and dealing with the forces which had been opposing these interest. Moreover it seems that the government and regime also had to maintain an (social contract) agreement with external partners, an agreement in which the regime seemed not to have been the strongest party.<sup>303</sup>

However, it seems that the government and regime did pay attention to its Jordanian social contract partners, when they started using methods of extreme contestation in 2011. It was understood that the normal methods to renegotiate the social contract did not work, thus people took to the street when the momentum presented the opportunity. Contestation often happens when, as Cox explained, entitlement by virtue of citizenship is removed, one has to resort to a process of dialog.<sup>304</sup> This dialog, the protest in early 2011, made the regime more attentive to the degraded general social contract. But again it was unclear how much adjustment there eventually had been and whether these adjustments, if any, would have been of a permanent nature.

On the structural constrains, firstly the main problem was that the government and regime did not listen. Their behavior had not been conducive to accommodate the input of society, it did not enable change to happen if the people would have deemed it necessary. This could have been because the regime was tied to structural constraints itself, such as the low work morale of government staff or the wishes of the world outside Jordan.

On the issue of whether the Jordanians and the interviewees had perceived their agency to be enough to change this behavior of the government and regime, only one of the interviewees had been very positive. He did really believe he could have made a change. It seems that there had been more like him, since Jordan did experienced some large scale protest in the beginning of the Arab Spring. Moreover five interviewees had written about various issues

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<sup>303</sup> As to more specific on this issue of foreign forces see the 'Why no Arab Spring?' section in the appendix, which explains the opinion of many interviewees, that foreign forces had prevented the Arab Spring to happen in Jordan. Intervention of foreign forces is nothing new within Jordan's history. Recommended to read is the book of Shlaim, Avi. 2008. *Lion of Jordan, the life of King Hussein in war and peace*, London, Penguin Books. In this book the author very convincingly shows that Israel had been a great (secret) supporter in various ways of Jordan and King Hussein personally over the years, and vice versa.

<sup>304</sup> Cox (1998), pp 10

which they wanted to see changed. The question of course being again, whether this would actually have influenced anything. Because the problem identified with the individual agency, was that it remained an individual agency, which would mean nothing without a strong support base or a platform. And this was, as explained earlier, exactly what had been lacking for many of the interviewees who would have been interested to get involved into politics. On the question to what extent the people themselves contributed to the 'not listening' of the government and regime, it has to be understood that only two of the interviewees did actually participated in the protest in the first four months of 2011. Others, for various reasons, did not. Their reasons might be exemplary for all the Jordanians, they included: lack of interest in politics and fear of the protest. Added to that was the factor that people were not used to ask economic and political benefits from the government and that people in general just accepted the status quo. However the other great issue was that people were unaware, they had not been politically (critical) educated.

Which leads to the second structural constraint, the fact that education does not educate people in critical political thinking. The main problem identified was the traditional way of teaching. However a few interviewees found a way around this, by educating themselves by other means, albeit this had not been that easy. But in general it seems that a big part of the blame, of the lack of critical education, could have been placed on the shoulders of the (university) students themselves. They showed lack of interest and were more concerned with just passing the tests and getting through university in time. Part of this behavior could have been explained through the 'Arab mentality' constraints which society had exerted on the people in Jordan. The constraints of not to think critically, not to question and not to rise above your station.

However, in general quite some interviewees expressed their discontent with the regime's political and economical exclusive social contract and acknowledged their right to be heard, but they knew that they had been a minority within Jordan and had therefore been unable to act.

## Conclusion

This thesis started with the question why the Jordanian people did join the protest in the early months of 2011, when this seemed to be the obvious path to follow.

One of the inhibitors could have been a working social contract, which would have provided the Jordanians with enough economic benefits so that they would forgo any political rights.

However, it had been found that, with regards to the economic side of the social contract, it was not enough. The economic rights distributed to the Jordanian population had been a basic minimum. A minimum which might have been perceived sufficient by the poor, but this had mainly been due to the fact that they did not know better. In contrast, the coalition partners of the regime, those groups and the persons whom the regime deemed to seem fit, or who managed to in some way to maintain a grip on the regime, did manage to get the better deal. They did get mainly what they wanted, albeit within the framework set by the regime. The party left out, was the party in the middle. The economic opportunities and benefits gained out of the social contract for the middle class had been a patchwork. Meaning they had access to privileges based on different background traits, but this would vary greatly depending on the sectors and geographical regions. Making living for the middle class uncertain, expensive and with the ever present danger of falling into real poverty.

On the political side of the social contract, it has been made clear that these rights have been in general, not free from regime interference. The ones who did manage to use their political rights, within the frame set by the regime, had been again the coalition partners of the regime or those whom the regime wanted to co-opt. As to the real political power in the affairs of state, it seems that an even smaller section of the elite was allowed influence. These were mainly high officials, originating from particular political families who had earned their spurs by being loyal servants to the regime over the last decades, if not since the creation of the Kingdom. The ones left out had been the lower and the middle class. They only had their safety and not much else.

The exchange function of the social contract, one can conclude, has only been working in 2010 and early 2011, for the coalition partners of the regime. They were given a working

social contract. A contract in which the coalition partners promised loyalty in exchange for economic benefits, and political influence to guarantee the continuation of these benefits.

The social contract in general paints a picture in which the poorer and the middle class are left out. It seems that the poor did not know and therefore they did not care. However most of the middle class wanted a government which included them in the political process, either to address the corruption and economic situation or to have a say in the important affairs of state. But the tools, the political rights, to effectively address the regime had been lacking, they had been rendered ineffective by the regime. Making the middle class unable to pressure the regime and government, to pay attention to their needs and to the fact that they together with the poor, had been left out of the social contract and had been treated unjust and unfair.

With regards to the structural constraints, this regime non responsiveness to the wishes of the interviewees and the Jordanian population, whether these were of political or economic nature, had been a reoccurring theme in this research.

In pre protest times, the perception of their and the Jordanian agency by the interviewees, to make the regime responsive to their just needs, had been seen as almost none existent. Since it lacked means, the effective political rights, to pressure. Thus to transcend the seemingly unworthy voice of an individual and to become the voice of the many, thus garnering meaning and influence. This perception of lack of agency, to influence the structural constraints, forced on the people by the regime, could have been the strongest inhibiting force; making people not participating in the protest, when the Arab Spring happened in Jordan. In short, the regime had never listened to us, so why should I or we act now, it will still not make a difference. Only a few used the political rights, when opportunity presented itself, and then based not on the virtue of their right as a citizen, but on the fact that they had the power to contest.

In general the social contract had been not beneficiary to the middle and lower class. However they had not seen themselves strong and capable enough to change, when the opportunity arrived. This based on their experience with a government and regime, who had almost never held their interest at heart.

However as also discovered during the research, has been the fact that this research does bear a great bias. The bias that a government should listen to its people, and that a government

which listens to its people is the best government.<sup>305</sup> In Jordan the image has shown a mixed picture, yes the government and regime should have listened and it has been deplorable that they have not done so. And no our government and regime had no need to listen, because we were not that bright and the regime did actually knew what was best for us, more than we knew. Moreover it had managed to keep us safe throughout the troubled Jordanian history and will continue to do so in the uncertain future ahead.

In terms of constraining structures, it seems that the regime had not been creating constraining structures, rather it had facilitated structures of safety, and the price people had to pay was seen by many as acceptable. Resulting the fact that the majority had not been interested in change, they had been content with the situation at that time. Hence they did not took to the streets, when opportunity presented itself. The social contract had been safety in exchange for a lack of economic and political benefits.

This brings us to the next related question, as how much blame of their lack of agency and inaction was to be placed on the Jordanian themselves, apart from the acceptance of the safety social contract. It has to be said that without the means to act; the platforms, a true voice, the education, the knowledge, the support of family and society coupled with the ever presence of fear, it had been incredibly difficult to act and work against the structural constraints which were ingrained in Jordanian and Arab society. However stacked against this were the recurring themes in this research of disinterest, carelessness, laziness and unwillingness. Moreover certain structural constraints, especially the *wasta* and corruption, have been in use and or have grown throughout Jordan's history. They have not only been maintained by the regime, but they had also been maintained by the behavior of the Jordanians themselves.

As for the theoretical implications, the social contract combined with the theory of structuration can be seen in both ways. It can be perceived as more structure oriented in which the structures had been too strong, thus inhibiting change and therefore keeping authoritarian rule entrenched. However from a more agency point of view, one would understand that the agent had not perceived their agency enough to change the structures in place, even more the structures in place exist because of the repeating actions of the agent.

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<sup>305</sup> This assumption has a very strong basis in the western way of thinking about states.

However the essence of structuration theory is, that it gives both structures and agency power. Making it in this case of Jordan unclear and very much debatable as to what really had been the most influential factor. Whether it was the structure which made acting impossible or whether the agent made it impossible for him or herself to act; to display agency.

But as stated in the introduction, in this research I adhere to the believe in the individual agency. And therefore support the point that the perception on their own 'inadequate' agency in relation to the largely self created and maintained structures of constraint, had made the Jordanian people decide not to act. This combined with the fact that I have seen in Jordan, even within the restraining structures, that there had always been room and agency to act and to change these constraining structures. I am of the opinion that the Jordanians underestimate their strength and capability to take make the choices for themselves and to actually be part of their country, whether this be in economic or political matters, without endangering the security of themselves or their country. This agency the might not be played out on a grand scale such as a revolution, which might not even be desirable, but can contribute to the wellbeing, the justice and fairness of Jordan, on a small scale in small acts in everyday life.

However it is up to the Jordanians to find means and ways to do and to act. As Gause explained, in the introduction: *'One should approach the Arab world with humility about their ability to shape its future. That is best left to the Arabs themselves.'*

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## Appendix A

### Timeframe

The timeframe that has been used in this research starts on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2011. On that day around 8.000 protesters marched peacefully, demanding the resignation of the then prime minister Samir al-Rafa'i.<sup>306</sup> The end of the timeframe was placed on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April, when, after the Fridays prayer, more than 2.000 Jordanians, half of them in Amman, protested throughout the country demanding greater political representation. Also on that day, severe clashes were reported between Salafi protesters and the government forces in the town of Zarqa.<sup>307</sup> The choice for this three months timeframe is because of the fact that after the events of April the 15<sup>th</sup> there took no any significant protest action place for over a month. The next important event took place on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June, when the motorcade of the king was attacked in Tafileh.<sup>308</sup>

In my opinion this month of inactivity killed the effectiveness of the protest and destroyed the momentum of the protest movement. Consequently, the protests carried out after June 2011 did not contain the possibility of changing the status quo. This possibility had been present when the protest took place in the three months between January the 14<sup>th</sup> and april the 15<sup>th</sup>, this timeframe had been the window of opportunity.

The most important events being the first protest on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January, the 'Day of Rage' protest on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February, which not only took place in Jordan, but all over the Middle East. And lastly, the events on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March, when protesters occupied Dakhliyah<sup>309</sup> circle in front of the ministry of interior. However on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, this group was attacked by pro government protesters, and the protest petered out. The last important event, in my view, was the self immolation of Mohammed Abdul-Karim, outside the prime ministers office on the 7<sup>th</sup> of April 2011.<sup>310</sup> However this act did not have the same effect as the self immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi, five months earlier. Rather Abdul-Karim's self immolation did not have any effect at all.

Moreover it is my opinion, that, in the early months of 2011, the emerging civil war in Syria did not yet had its deterrent effect on the people in Jordan. Although the harsh repression of the protest in Dara'a, after the 18<sup>th</sup> of March 2011, did become known to the Jordanian population, it did not yet had any influence on the protesting behavior of the Jordanians. Only in the middle of June and the beginning of July, the information of Syria plunging into a civil war and the accompanying horrors, became known to the Jordanian and the global public. This information resulted to the fact that, whatever protest from that point onwards would not mount to any real change, such as removing the King of Jordan. Because no one wanted a Syrian situation in Jordan. Change became instead of being desirable, a very dangerous thing to want.

This demarcation of time is supported by the time frame of the Jordanian protests used by the media and the academic world. The most important indicator of the media attention to the Jordanian protest is the interactive Arab Spring timeline made by the Guardian.<sup>311</sup> The first important Arab Spring event in Jordan is placed on this timeline at the 28<sup>th</sup> of January, when protesters demand political change. The last event noted in relation to the protest, took place,

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<sup>306</sup> 14 January 2011, "Jordanians protest living conditions, blame govt". Agence France-Presse.

<sup>307</sup> 15 April 2011, Clashes erupt in Jordanian town'', Aljazeera

<sup>308</sup> 13 June 2011, 'Jordan: Officials deny protesters attacked king', BBC News

<sup>309</sup> Duar Dakhliyah, Ministry of Interior Circle / roundabout.

<sup>310</sup> 7 April 2011, 'Jordanian self-immolates outside prime minister's office', The Guardian.

<sup>311</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/world/interactive/2011/mar/22/middle-east-protest-interactive-timeline>, accessed 02-02-2014

according to the timeline, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April when Mohammed Abdul-Karim set himself on fire outside the Prime Ministers office.

In the academic world the protests are seen having a slightly longer life span. However the most important references are made to the events which took place between January and April.

The author Horres explicitly states that the most important days were the ones between the 14<sup>th</sup> of January and April. Her next mention of time is October, in a reference to the dismissal of the then Prime Minister, Ma'rouf al-Bakhit.<sup>312</sup>

Ryan explains in his two articles that the protest started on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January, however the most important event, according to Ryan, took place on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March. The attacks on the protesters by pro government protesters on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, has had a 'chilling effect' on the protest, resulting in a demise of protest.<sup>313</sup> This same conclusion had been drawn by the author Vogt. He sets the beginning of the protest on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January.<sup>314</sup> He also mentions the importance of the events on the 24<sup>th</sup> and what happened on the 25<sup>th</sup>, and explains that these March 25<sup>th</sup> events caused the withdrawal of the movement for two months. The next activity he mentions in his article are in June and August.<sup>315</sup>

Sarah Tobin talks about the protest in 'early 2011', and only mentions specifically the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> as decisive dates. Also a time mentioned is mid April when government forces clash with Salafis. After this she jumps to the stoning of the kings motorcade on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June in Talifeh.<sup>316</sup> The same is done by Helfont and Helfont, who only mention the events of the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of March, and then jump to June the 15<sup>th</sup>.<sup>317</sup>

The last important source which supports my choice of timeframe, is the report written by the International Crisis Group.<sup>318</sup> In their report they place the starting date of the protest on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January, which was labeled the 'Day of Anger'. Moreover the most important events discussed in the report are placed within the months of January<sup>319</sup>, February<sup>320</sup> and March with the important date in that month being the 24<sup>th</sup>. However the events on the 25<sup>th</sup> caused polarization which temporarily undermined mobilization. Further, the ICG states that there had been no large demonstrations in the capital since 24-25<sup>th</sup> of March.<sup>321</sup> The ICG explains that the youth movement shifted their attention, because of what happened on the 25<sup>th</sup>, away from the capital.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> Horres, Caroline. 2012. 'How durable is "Durable Authoritarianism"? A comparative study of the Kingdoms of Bahrain and Jordan during the Arab Spring', in *Chrestomathy: Annual Review of Undergraduate Research*, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, School of Languages, Cultures, and World Affairs, College of Charleston, Vol. 11, pp 154

<sup>313</sup> Ryan, Curtis R. 2011. 'Identity Politics, reform and protest in Jordan', *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*: Vol. 11, No. 3, pp 574.

Ryan, Curtis R. 2011. 'Political Opposition and Reform Coalitions in Jordan', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 38:3, pp 386.

<sup>314</sup> Vogt, A. (2011), pp 65

<sup>315</sup> Vogt, A. (2011), pp 67-68

<sup>316</sup> Tobin, S. (2012), pp 101-103

<sup>317</sup> Helfont, Samuel and Helfont, Tally. 2012. 'Jordan: between the Arab Spring and the Gulf Cooperation Council', *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, pp 88

<sup>318</sup> Middle East/North Africa Report N°118 – *Dallying with reform in a divided Jordan*, International Crisis Group, 12 March 2012.

<sup>319</sup> ICG N°118 (2012), pp 2, 10

<sup>320</sup> ICG N°118 (2012), pp 3, 9

<sup>321</sup> ICG N°118 (2012), pp 23

<sup>322</sup> ICG N°118 (2012), pp 17

During the research my choice of timeframe was used and explained to all of the interviewees. The question however was not posed to the interviewees of what they thought of this timeframe. Their opinion on the choice is thus largely unknown. Only one interviewee agreed explicitly that it was a good choice and she agreed that the momentum of the protesters had died somewhere mid April. She explained that this had been reoccurring activity pattern in Jordan.

*'After the 14<sup>th</sup> of April it stopped?: that's the case here in Jordan, things have become very quiet, I discuss that in my work. And then for weeks nobody talks all about stupid stuff in social media and that's the case of Jordan. Something gets ignited, it goes viral and then in one month, like that that's politics of Jordan.'* (eman 19)

Two interviewees explained that the protests which took part in November or October of 2011, which were related to the rising bread and fuel prices, have been very important, if not the most important events in the Jordanian Arab Spring. One stated that, in his opinion, the protest of October 2011 and the reaction of the regime killed the Jordanian Arab Spring momentum.

On the deterrent factor of the civil war in Syria. One interviewee was of the opinion that the information about the Syrian governmental repression in Dara'a did reach the Jordanians in early 2011. This information had a deterrent effect and made people stay at home, since they did not want to make any troubles that could result in a Syrian situation.

Of the knowledgeable people only Mr Tell and Mrs Saaf van der Beek agreed that, if there had to be a substantial change in Jordan it would have been only possible between the 14<sup>th</sup> of February and the 14<sup>th</sup> of April. Mr Tell explains: *'I remember the first one we organized and went to, there were lots of high hopes, I went there with couple of my cousins and friends. (...) We saw 1.000 of people in front of us, and in that time in Jordan it was a lot. And we joined them and it was very nice because there was all walks of life, left to the right. Woman and men. And it was lots of high hopes, and al Rafa'i, he was the Prime Minister. So we had a lot of hopes.*

*When did hoped disappeared?: when we got beaten up on the Dakhliyah, because the state did something very smart they made a Palestinian Jordanian and Jordanian Jordanian issue. (...) And that was the beginning of the end. (...) And it got smaller and smaller, until it became a easy target, but that (Dakhliyah) was the turning point. A very smart move by the regime, and then thing happened in the countries around us, Syria, people said we don't want that. I had lots of my family in the beginning very supportive and then late we don't want to see this, shut up, sit in your home don't do anything about it.'*

However this opinion is not shared by Mr Rubeiha and Mrs Byouk. Mrs Bayouk thinks that there never had been any opportunity to change. Mainly because of the lack of plans and organization in Jordan, unlike Egypt. *'I feel in these three months is it only like acting, it is not real, it is not like in Egypt, because in Egypt they collect all the people, and they make plan, and they decide to end the regime, to end the Mubarak time.'* Contrary to Mrs Byouk's opinion, Mr Rubeiha stated there had always been room and chances to make changes to the system in Jordan. Therefore the protest were unnecessary in his opinion.

However important is to keep in mind that, as will be further explained in the theory chapter, people are products and contributors of the structural constraints which exist in society. Their past experience with the structural constraints will influence their perception of their own agency to influence these constraints in times of upheaval like the Arab Spring. Thus the choice was made to ask the interviewees on their perception of economic and political situation in 2010, since that would give an insight how they would have reacted in the early months of 2011.

Of the knowledgeable people all agreed that the structural issues, in 2010, would influence the actions of the protesters in early 2011. They mostly point to the bad economic situation in Jordan and in the world, which had its effect on the people of Jordan. This made people go to the streets, during and even before the Arab Spring, in order to have the government address these economic issues.

## Appendix B

### The Regime, the Government and the King.

During this thesis there has been often spoken about the powers that ruled Jordan. The problem was that it often had not really been clear who actually ruled. It might have been clear if one would have read the constitution of Jordan, however it should be understood that there were often more power factors in play.

To avoid having a too western bias on state institutions and the powers that rule, I have asked my interviewees to explain to me what in their opinion had been the rulers of their country.<sup>323</sup> What was the regime, what did it consist of? What was the government? And what had been the position of the King in Jordan.

On the definition of the regime, the King was seen by quite some<sup>324</sup> as being the regime, he was the only source of power in Jordan. He was the real monarch who really ruled by interfering in everything. *'Well, normally speaking it is monarchy, so theoretically the king should not be interfering with the politically and economically things that run Jordan actually. But what is happening here in Jordan is different, the people, the monarch, the monarchic system in Jordan, is involving himself in the political and religious and economical activities in Jordan.* The King was perceived to hold the power and responsibilities in the government, the military, the appointment of the Prime Minister, the senate and politics in general.

The other definition of the regime included more actors than only the King. The most mentioned and the most powerful, as seen by the interviewees,<sup>325</sup> was indeed again the King, however also the royal family, the Queen and the royal court. The category King thus did not only include himself, but the whole royal package. Secondly mentioned was the security apparatus, which included the intelligence and the army. And thirdly mentioned were the tribes. Lastly the institutions of government were mentioned, such as the government, the lower and upper house.

The government was perceived<sup>326</sup> to have had in general not that much power and influence. It comprised of the legislator, the Prime Ministers, the ministers and the parliament. It was seen as dealing mainly with internal affairs, economical issues, the judiciary and the rules and regulations of the country. It was rather a bureaucratic machine that would conduct the mediocre business of the day to day running of Jordan. But as always under the guidance of the King. *'King internal affairs included, because he is the King, he rules the country, and if he not interferes in internal affairs no need for the Kingdom.'*

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<sup>323</sup> Because this question was made later, only twelve interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>324</sup> Six interviewees.

<sup>325</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>326</sup> Four interviewees.

## Appendix C

### 2011, Springtime in Jordan

Since only two of the interviewees did actually participate in the protest in the first three months of 2011, the question<sup>327</sup> was put to the others how they perceived the protest. What the protesters demanded, what the people actually asked.

The general perception<sup>328</sup> was that the protesters asked for economic rights. Mainly issues related to the income, such as cheaper bread, fuel, lowering of the prices and employment opportunities.

*'They always ask for benefits, direct benefits. Because they are not aware of their rights they ask for benefits, like employment in municipality, but then like what, the municipality can't take everyone, you have to find other solutions. Or you have to ask for different things, they ask for money, for what till when. You can't have money for ever. They don't know what they want, they just want support, direct support.'* Also the addressing of the corruption was seen as an important demand by some interviewees.<sup>329</sup>

On the political front it was perceived that the protesters asked for the cancelation of the peace treaty with Israel<sup>330</sup> and the replacement of the monarchy.<sup>331</sup>

The interviewees<sup>332</sup> did agree with the economic demands, they saw them as justified, however the perceived political demands were seen<sup>333</sup> as stupid and dangerous. In general most interviewees<sup>334</sup> perceived the protesters to be unclear in their demands, having no vision and disorganized and without any leadership.

On the first issue the knowledgeable agreed that the prime interest of the protesters were the economical issues. On the political issues of replacing the monarchy or cancelling the peace treaty, they did not agree. As Mr Rubeiha explained: *'These things, as you said, we don't are looking for replace the King, or to cancel Wadi Araba, because this is agreement with the countries. But we are looking for job, food, business, for development of the area, we need job for our people.'*

On the issue of the protests themselves, Mrs Byouk was of the opinion that it was indeed very uncoordinated and messy, and there was a lack of vision. However, although Mrs Saaf van de Beek did agree with the lack of vision, she and Mr. Tell had been of the opinion that what happened after these months in Jordan influenced the memory of the interviewees. This because the results in Jordan, and I would say in the whole Arab region, had not been that great. These experiences of the Arab Spring after the first three months in 2011 influenced how people would look back on the beginning.

Moreover Mr Rubeiha and Mr Tell did think there was a clear vision and leadership in some areas. Mr Rubeiha states that his tribe was clearly protesting for economical issues in Madaba. Mr Tell explained that in his case through the regime's and the Muslim Brotherhood's influence, the vision of his group changed from economics to politics, which lead to the disintegration of the protest.

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<sup>327</sup> Fifteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>328</sup> Eight interviewees.

<sup>329</sup> Five interviewees.

<sup>330</sup> Three interviewees.

<sup>331</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>332</sup> Four interviewees.

<sup>333</sup> Seven interviewees.

<sup>334</sup> Five interviewees.

## Appendix D

### Why no Arab Spring in Jordan?

One of the last questions<sup>335</sup> asked to the interviewees was, why did they thought the Arab Spring had not happened in Jordan. Although there were many answers to this question I will list the five most mentioned.

The majority<sup>336</sup> and Mrs Byouk, were of the opinion that the removal of King Abdullah would bring chaos to the country. Who would rule instead, was the thought that instilled dread in Jordanians and in many of the interviewees, even the ones most skeptic of the monarchy. *'We have a King. And it is not democracy, but in Jordan the case of the society, you can not say to the King, jalla go and we want a republic. It is something hard, because we have Palestinian Jordanians and Jordanian Jordanians, and even in the Jordanian Jordanians we have from the south and north and Bedouin and from the village. If the King disappears everyone would go chaos. So jalla lets make republic and elections, and even me from the north I would not accept someone from the south, as a Jordanian Jordanians I will not accept Palestinian Jordanians as a Palestinian Jordanians I will not accept. So it is very complicated thing.'* The fear was that if the King would disappear the country would have plunged into chaos. Jordan would have succumbed to infighting between the different tribes, Palestinian Jordanians and Jordanian Jordanians, the Sunni and Shi'a factions and the south cities against the capital. This fear of fighting and division had, according to Mr Tell, been highlighted by the regime during the protests. For instance by pointing at, and maybe creating, the university violence, and saying that this would happen in Jordan society as a whole if the King would disappear. Also was that fact that, since Jordan harbors many minorities from different religions and from the countries around Jordan, the best option indeed was to have a stranger from the Hejaz to rule them all. Moreover this stranger King had been perceived not to be that bad. He was not bloody, not really lazy and did quite his best. *'The opposition was very clear, we don't want the King out. Difference between the Jordanian and other opposition, we did not say, the people want to drop the system, our phrase was to fix the system. Our Arab Spring was a bit different.'*

However Mr Rubeiha is of the opinion that if the King would have been removed, although he was the best leader, the country would not have plunged into chaos. The country still has its traditional agreements and respect amongst the different groups. *'Form the north and form the south, we will not kill each other, we don't have this habit to steal or take this money. We are living in nice time, from olden days, we respect each other. We equal, before that we are tribal, yes tribal, we know each other, my tribe is from here until here. It is not allowed to go to the other people, it is nice living. And the way of living most of them in Jordan in the past, they are Bedouins, and they have kind of living, nice kind of and they respect each other.'*

Another issue brought forward,<sup>337</sup> was that the situation had not been that bad. There was no extreme poverty such as in the neighboring country of Egypt. And to a certain extent there had been rights and freedoms, the most mentioned being religious freedom. In general people could live their lives in dignity in Jordan. *'I say to you we have fair. Syria is different, Egypt is different. It is dictator. Here we can say whatever we want. Someone stop me, I can stop him. Son of big family, son of rich man, we don't have that. I can stop him, all of us. It is fair.'*

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<sup>335</sup> Eighteen interviewees were asked this question.

<sup>336</sup> Nine interviewees.

<sup>337</sup> Eight interviewees.

*Fair system. Good King. The right to do whatever we want. Even in 2010, nobody can take our rights. You can do whatever you want, publish it in newspaper, advertise. No need for Arab Spring, even the Prime Minister can attack me, I can defend myself. Right for all the people, the culture is build by progress, natural of life. National progress, we are all the same.'* Mrs Byouk did agree: *'We have half of our rights and we are okay, so we don't need blood.'*

A third reason<sup>338</sup> of the Arab Spring not happening in Jordan was, because it was not meant to be, it was made impossible by the great powers that controlled Jordan. Countries such as the US, the UK and Israel did not want Jordan to fall, since it would destabilize the region and might become threatening to Israel. *'Jordan has longest border with Israel, if something happens in Jordan it will happen in Israel. Israel controls the world and they plan this control even before 2010.'* Thus Jordan was seen not to be allowed to have any form of Arab Spring. Mrs Bayouk did think the same at the time. *'At that time everybody around me was afraid, it will change they will remove the King, and than we have the same disaster like in Egypt. And all the time I said, USA, Israel they benefit Jordan to stay secure.'* Mr Rubeiha did also agree, but on Israel he was not sure. *'I think, something right. We feel like that, because if there anything happens we have support from UK, USA. Israel we don't know, if there is something from Israel there is secret and we don't know. And the people don't know about.'*

Also mentioned by Mr Rubeiha and one interviewee, was the issue that if things would have started to go wrong in Jordan and there would have been a civil war, there was no where for the people of Jordan to go. *'If hell broke in Jordan where would we go? Israel? I am not sure they would be capable of absorbing as much as Jordan did through all the years. Saudi Arabia? Then we are screwed if we go to the desert. There is technically no place to go to if things happen here.'*

The fourth reason mentioned, was the fact that the regime had dealt very smartly with the protest, it did not became violent, it did not repress. As Mrs Byouk explains: *'How they treat the people in the street, in Syria they were stupid to shoot some kids and then it started. In Jordan they were clever. They use the opposite.'* The regime even gave the protesters water and juices, an idea, according to Mrs Saaf van der Beek, of Queen Rania. Mr Rubeiha explained that the regime made people vent their anger, in order to move to a next stage, it absorbed the protest. If the regime would have chosen to act otherwise things might have turned out different. *'Because the King did not react violently, if he would have reacted violently we would have, there was a very favorable climate for that, but the King and the security forces resorted to wisdom, they did not kill anybody. If it would have started by violence, people would have turned in militias.'*

The last main reason given, had to do with the nature of the Jordanians themselves. They were not hot blooded, they were peaceful people. Which made them suspicious of the protests, since they saw conspiracy in them and thus decided to stay away. Moreover the love of peace made them not interested. And the fact that the Jordanian the are cautious people, made them stay rather on the safe side and not join something as dangerous as a revolution. Mr Rubeiha whole heartily agreed, stating that not the regime had been smart but that the Jordanians were smart. *'Not the smart regime, also the Jordanians are smart. We think about our country.'*

All the knowledgeable people were of the opinion that the above mentioned factors were correct. Mrs Saaf van der Beek explains that they ran apparently much deeper and were much

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<sup>338</sup> Four interviewees.

more important than any of the economical and political rights and their distribution as mentioned in this thesis.

## Appendix E

### Interview Questions

#### Question

Given that the people of Jordan did not join the Arab spring to such an extent that they disposed of their authoritarian regime, can the lack of participation of the Jordanians be explained by the social contract theory?

#### Sub questions

Main sub question: what was the agreed exchange of political and social economic rights before and during the Arab Spring.

#### Terminology:

Before we start, there are some things we need to clarify.

What is the regime in Jordan for you, who is included? Is the King part of the regime?

What is the government, who is included? Is the King part of the government?

I will use the government and regime at the same time, please let me know when there is an explicit / clear difference.

#### Economical

*Which of the social and economical rights were perceived as being granted / provided by the regime to the public?*

*(economical rights pertain the right to work, right to social security, right to adequate standard of living (right to housing, right to food), right to education, right to health, and the right to science and culture.<sup>339</sup>)*

*Did people perceive the economical rights, as provided by the regime as adequate? In relation to what the government had been perceived to be capable of.*

- Has there been unemployment in 2010 and early 2011?

Can you explain to me if and how the government / regime addressed the unemployment in 2010 and early 2011?

Did this involve you at that time? Or friends or family?

If so, what did you think of this help? Was it enough?

- Can you explain to me what is social security in Jordan? What is included?

(Included is: Old Age, disability, Survivors, Sickness, Maternity, Work Injury, Unemployment)<sup>340</sup>

Can you explain to me if and how the government / regime addressed the issue of social security (pension etc) in the country in 2010 and early 2011?

Did this involve you at that time? Or friends or family?

If so, what did you think of this help? Was it enough?

- How was the standard of living in 2010 and early 2011? (housing / food / goods prices)

Can you explain to me if and how the government / regime addressed standard of living?

Did this involve you at that time? Did this involve your family or friends?

If so, what did you think of this help? Was it enough?

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<sup>339</sup> International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

<sup>340</sup> <http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/progdesc/ssptw/2010-2011/asia/jordan.html>, acc 26/03/14

- How was the education in the country in 2010 and early 2011? Does education creates bright critical minds, really educates people? or does it makes them stupid?  
Can you explain to me if and how the government / regime addressed the education?  
Did this involve you at that time? Did this involve your family or friends?  
If so, what did you think of this help? The actions of the government / regime? Was it enough?

- How was the health situation in the country in 2010 and early 2011?  
(Did everybody get health insurance?)  
Can you explain to me if and how the government / regime addressed health situation?  
Did this involve you at that time? Did this involve family of friends?  
If so, what did you think of this help? Was it enough?

*Did the general population perceive they had any say in determining (room for contestation) the amount and importance of the economical rights? How much rights had been granted, how much attention of the government had been directed at these rights and how much money had been allocated to them?*

- Can you explain if there was a possibility to change the way the government / regime addressed these issues of unemployment, social security, standard of living, education, health situation in 2010 and early 2011?  
(For instance to change the priority of the government?)

*Had the regime been perceived to be responsive to the demands of the population with regards to the demands of social rights.*

Do you think the government / regime would (not) have listened? And why?

*On what grounds did the people base their right of contestation.*

Why should the government / regime listen to the people if they wanted to change the way the government / regime addresses these issues?

Would you think the government / regime would have listened to you? And why?

*Are the economical rights perceived as been provided equally to the public, to all segments of society.*

Do you feel that the abovementioned are equally given to all of the people, in 2010 and early 2011? (unemployment, social security, standard of living, education, health situation)

- Did certain people get more? (Palestinian – Jordanians, or Jordanian Jordanians)

*If not so, what were the criteria to gain access to this segment?*

- Then tell me, how these people who got more, got it? What did these people need to do?

What did these people need to be? Could anyone join these people?

Did you have any experience with such situations, eg you are one of these people?

*If not so, had there been room for contestation of this inclusion / exclusion.*

- Could people change these rules of inclusion exclusion? Did you wanted to change this?

What did you think about this? (fair? Unfair?)

*If not so, through which channels did people perceive the unequal distribution of economical rights had taken place. (offices, institutions).*

I know about the army (and security sector), who is in the army? Palestinian – Jordanians, or Jordanian Jordanians? What do they get? Equal for everybody?

- are there any other institutions (official bodies) other than the security sector that give out benefits and money to certain people? (*institutions of distribution*)

- Is there corruption? How much? Is there waste? How much?

*Did people perceive that the distribution of wealth has been directed to the ones who need it the most?*

Do you think the economical rights, (benefits and governmental help (if there is any), are given to the ones who need it the most, in 2010 and early 2011?

(unemployment, social security, standard of living, education, health situation)

### **Political**

*Which of the civil and political rights are perceived as been **allowed by the regime** to be exercised by the public.*

*(political liberty, freedom of speech and assembly, liberty of conscious and thought, freedom of a person, right to hold personal property, freedom from arbitrary arrest and seizure.<sup>341</sup>)*

*Are these allowed rights perceived to have been guaranteed by the regime?*

*Are the allowed rights perceived as sufficient by the public, at that time?*

(((Important: Although the rights of the individual or the people can be violated by its fellow citizen. In this research we will only deal with the violations of the rights of the individual or the people by the government / regime. But it is also the duty of the government / regime to make sure that the enjoyment of the right is guaranteed.

In case of a violation by it fellow citizen, the individual citizen can sue the government for not having done its task correctly. The individual cannot sue its fellow citizen.))))

- Was it possible to participate in politics in the Jordan, in 2010 and early 2011, (vote and hold public office)? How did people participate in politics? (demonstrations? Are they safe?) Could anybody be elected in government? (poor as well as the rich? Form unimportant family as well as important?)

Did you participate in politics in the Jordan, in 2010 and early 2011? What did you think of this?

Was participating meaningful? Did it make a difference? Could you actually influence government / regime policy, in 2010 and early 2011?

Is the not meaningfulness of political participation fault of non – functioning government / regime, or of the people? (are they lazy, stupid?)

((If not how did the government / regime addressed / guaranteed the this right of political participation in 2010 and early 2011? ))

- Can you explain to me if people could form groups, in 2010 and early 2011? Like political groups, religious groups, Is it possible to come together to meet with people of shared interest. (right of association) Without government interference?

Has it been safe to do these things? ((If not how did the government / regime addressed / guaranteed the this right of association in 2010 and early 2011? ))

Did you participated in such groups? (political / religious)? What did you think?

Had these groups been effective in influencing government / regime policy for the interest of their members, in 2010 and early 2011??

Had there been trade unions (associations) in Jordan in 2010 and early 2011? Could anybody join them? (((Did the government / regime helped / guaranteed the existence of the trade unions in 2010 and early 2011? ))

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<sup>341</sup> Rawls (1977), pp 53. See also International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Had they been they effective in influencing government / regime policy?

- Can you explain to me if people could say what they want (politics), regardless the subject, in 2010 and early 2011? Did people talk about politics in daily life freely?  
Did you speak about politics freely? With whom did you speak, and with whom not?  
About what could you speak. What could you not you speak in 2010 and early 2011? (king?)  
Has there been government interference, pressure not to talk about certain subjects?  
(((How did the government / regime guaranteed (made possible) this freedom of speech in 2010 and early 2011? )))

- Can you explain to me if people felt free to think what they want, in the country in 2010 and early 2011? Free to hold ones own opinion (on eg politics).  
Could they do this without government /regime interference (positively/negatively) in 2010 and early 2011? Did you feel free to think what you want? Hold your own opinion?  
Could you do this without government /regime interference (positively/negatively) in 2010 and early 2011?

Had people been free to believe and practice their religion (even if it is not Islam) without government /regime interference (positively/negatively) in 2010 and early 2011?  
Had people been free to change their religion? (from Islam to Christian or vice versa, or from Islam to atheist or vice versa). Without government /regime interference (positively/negatively) in 2010 and early 2011?  
Did you felt free to believe what you wanted and practice this believe? Or even change this believe in 2010 and early 2011? Without government /regime interference (positively/negatively) in 2010 and early 2011?

I have understand that security and safety, are one of the reasons that people did not protest. here in Jordan.

- Can you explain to me if people felt safe in the country in 2010 and early 2011?  
Also safe from physical attacks by the government / regime?  
Did you feel safe from the government / regime, from the security system?  
Did the government / regime oppressed the people, maybe through its security system?  
((Oppression meaning that the oppressed will not reach their potential, will not be educated, made feel worthless, will not have a chance to improve their lives, will not have control over their lives. eg what Israel does to the Palestinians ))  
Did you feel oppressed by the government / regime?  
Could the security services (intelligence, secret police) just arrest you without warrant? (rule of law).

If you would be arrested by the security services could you challenge your arrest? Would this be heard by the court? (habeas corpus)

- Can you explain me how the police have treated the population in 2010 and early 2011?  
Did they discriminate? Favor certain people (names / men over women?).  
How would they have treated you? Would they discriminate?  
Could the police just arrest you or other people without reason in 2010 and early 2011? Or did they need an arrest warrant? (rule of law).  
If you would be arrested by the police could you challenge your arrest? Would this be heard by the court? (habeas corpus)

*Had this allowance in the exercising of civil and political right been in perceived agreement with the people themselves, did they agree on which rights could be used by the population?*

- We just spoke about opportunity to participate in politics, if people could come together to meet, if people could say what they want, if people felt free to think and believe what they want, if people felt safe from the government / regime, how the police treats the population. When looking back, do you feel that some things are missing? Are there things the government / regime should have paid more attention to in 2010 / 2011? Are there rights that are given less attention by the government / regime? Or too much attention?

*Did the general population have any say in the determining of the allowed political and civil rights?* - So we just spoke about political situation. Opportunity to participate in politics, if people could come together to meet, if people could say what they want, if people felt free to think and believe what they want, if people felt safe from the government / regime, how the police treats the population.

Do you think that people agreed on how these political things worked?

Do you think there were things people wanted to change in 2010 early 2011?

*Had there been a perceived room for contestation of these rights?*

Do you think people could change this, was there a possibility? What kind of people could change this? Were there things you wanted to change in 2010 early 2011?

How did you or other people do this?

*Had the regime perceived to be responsive to the demands of the population with regards to the demands of civil and political rights.*

Did the government / regime listen to the people in 2010 early 2011?

*On what grounds did the people base their right of contestation.*

Why should the government listen to the people if they wanted to change the way things worked in 2010 early 2011?

Would the government listen to you in 2010 early 2011? And why (not)?

*Did the public perceive there were specific criteria requirements for segments of society to be granted specific civic and political rights?*

- Had there been people in Jordanian society that had more political rights in 2010 early 2011? (Palestinian – Jordanians, or Jordanian Jordanians)

Who were they? Why did they get these rights?

Do you belong to this group?

*If so, had there been room for contestation of this inclusion / exclusion.*

- Could people change these rules? Did you wanted to change this?

What did you think about this?

### ***Exchange***

*If the people perceive either of the rights, political and social, as being lacking, did they perceive there had been a balance between them.*

So we have just talked about the economical and political situation in Jordan in 2010 and early 2011. Do you think there was a balance between them, in 2010 and early 2011?

Did you think people had certain political (rights) or some economical (rights) more, in 2010 and early 2011?

*Did people perceive there had been an exchange of political and social rights?*  
Had there been an exchange between political and economical rights?  
Did you feel you had some rights less or more?

*Had this exchange been adequate? Meaning that the exchange had been 'fair'? Did the given political rights provide adequate social rights in return.*

What did people think of the exchange in 2010 and early 2011? Did they accept this exchange, was it fair? Did you think it was fair? Did you accept? What did you think?

*Did people perceive there had been room for contestation of the terms of this exchange?*

If people did not agreed, how would they change this? Was there room to change the amount of rights they had?

*Did people perceive the regime to have been responsive to their will to change the exchange between political and social rights.*

Would the government had listen to them in 2010 and early 2011? Why (not)?

*On what grounds did the people base their right of contestation.*

Why should the government listen to the people if they wanted to change the amount?

Would you think, you could change the exchanged amount of rights?

Would the government have listened to you? And why (not)?

*(((Did people perceive that certain segments of society had been favored by the exchange of political and social rights?*

Had there been people in Jordanian society that had more to say in the exchange amount of rights in 2010 early 2011? (Palestinian – Jordanians, or Jordanian Jordanians)

*If so, what were the criteria to gain access to these segments?*

Who where they? Why did they get these rights?

Do you belong to this group?

*If so, had there been room for contestation of this inclusion / exclusion.*

- Could people change these rules? Did you wanted to change this?

What did you think about this? )))))))

*If the people had perceived either the political and social rights (or both) as being lacking, do the people indicate other factors which had restored the balance.*

Had there been other factors within the exchange that would have restored the balance?

Like:

- religion
- belonging
- identity
- Love of the Royal family
- Nationalism
- Fear of PJ and JJ divide

What would be important for the people, in 2010 and early 2011?

What would have restored the balance for you?

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*End of interview question: between 14 of January and 14 April 2011.*

Why did some protest? Why others not?

What did people that protested about, what did they ask? Thought important at that time?

What do you think of this importance?

I have been talking about very western concepts, like economic and political rights.  
Did people in Jordan thought these important in 2010 early 2011?  
Did you consider them important in 2010 early 2011?

Had there been important factors in society that I have missed? That were important in 2010-2011?

Like:

- religion
- belonging
- identity
- Love of the Royal family
- Nationalism
- Fear of PJ and JJ divide

Are there other things in society that are very important, that I have missed?

Maybe odd question, but one of the things that came up that people explained Arab Spring did not happened in Jordan, is because Jordan is not so bad, safety wise (police) and level of existence. Then especially compared to Egypt and Syria before the Arab spring. Egypt being very poor and dictatorship and Syria a almost security state with no freedom at al.

What do you think about this explanation?

((Is Jordan okay in living conditions and safety and security compared to Egypt or Syria before the Arab spring?)))

What do you think is the reason the Arab Spring did not happen in Jordan?

(‘fault’ of the people or government / regime?)

((What has been important for you in 2010 early 2011? ))

Is there anything else you want to add, say?

## Appendix F

### Interview questions knowledgeable people.

These question had been put before the knowledgeable people after analysing the first ten interviewees. These questions thus give by no means an full answer of all the eighteen people interviewed.

(what do you think? not about the events themselves but about the results I tell to you.)  
Asked the people what the regime is, and what the government. Self identify. What is included for you?

#### **Timeframe:**

In 2011, the frame is 14<sup>th</sup> of feb 2011 till 14<sup>th</sup> of april 2011. 14<sup>th</sup> first demonstrations, and 14<sup>th</sup> the last, after this there was one month nothing. These three months were still positive, the window of opportunity, the true impact of Syria has been in my opinion not yet been known. What do you think of this choice?

Structural timeframe is 2010 and early 2011. because the perception on the economic and political situation, would (directly) influence in my opinion the decisions people would make in 2011. What do you think of this choice?

#### **Sample is:**

(questions are about 7 full, and some half interviews, because I still have to re interview some people.) Jordanian Jordanian or PJ (9 JJ, 5 PJ, 1 mixed JJ & PJ, 1 JJ and Spanish, 1 would not self identify between JJ and PJ, and 1 Circassian), between the age of 25 and 35

Usually university educated, knowledge of the west, English spoken. Little bit more men than women, 13/5. Different professions, but all located in Amman.

They would be the ones to act in my opinion, be the initial instigators of a revolution.

What do you think?:

#### **Economical rights**

To answer this question I have therefore used the economical rights from the International covenant of social and economical rights.

*(economical rights pertain the right to work, right to social security, right to adequate standard of living (right to housing, right to food), right to education, right to health, and the (right to science and culture.<sup>342</sup>)*

Asked them what the situation of these rights was in 2010 and early 2011.

The perception of the accessibility / distribution of these rights varies to a certain extent, albeit slightly negative. What do you think of this? Why?

Also the government is perceived to deal inadequate with the problems accessibility and distribution of these rights. Corruption, wasta, inefficient, lack of will, greed of government, inequality, preferential treatment. Or in a few cases the gov is perceived not capable, because Jordan is a poor country. What do you think of this? In your view which one would it be?

Moreover the gov is perceived as not listening to the people, in 2010 and early 2011, if they would demand things, such as economical reforms, a gov that listens, improving of

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<sup>342</sup> International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

parliament, services, or the demand that the gov at least addresses the economical issues if there is any. What do you think of this?:

Some say it is the fault of the people, they don't demand enough. Or they are lazy or stupid, therefore the government does not need to care. What do you think of this?:

Or would the gov not educate people enough on purpose. One of the questions was whether, in 2010 and early 2011, the education in Jordan creates critical bright minds.

Most say it did not, or only a few universities, and they would think this is done on purpose. What do you think of this?:

All the respondents explained to me that there was corruption, albeit more hidden in 2010, and that there was *wasta* in Jordan society, and quite a few said they used it.

What do you think of this? ((Also the corruption was perceived of hampering the distribution effort of the gov to direct wealth to the poor. What do you think of this? )))

### **Political questions**

*Which of the civil and political rights are perceived as been **allowed by the regime** to be exercised by the public.*

*(political liberty, freedom of speech and assembly, liberty of conscious and thought, freedom of a person, (right to hold personal property), freedom from arbitrary arrest and seizure.<sup>343</sup>)*

The political rights are more varied. So I will talk about the ones that are most interesting.

Political participation is perceived as possible mainly through elections and parties.

But most of the interviewees did not participate in politics. Reasons: no suitable candidate, no good parties(MBH), no interest in politics, people are stupid, parliament is tribal.

What do you think of this? Would gov know this and therefore not care?

Because besides that, participation is perceived as not meaningful, you will not be able to influence gov. policy, will listen but no action, don't care, backroom dealing.

What do you think of this?

Also in the freedom of association, some felt that interest groups would not be able to influence policy for their members. Gov would not listen or would, but this would lead to nothing. (except the engineering association). What do you think?

Even more, if the groups would be political the interviewees perceived that the gov would closely monitor these groups, or in some cases, protest groups, infiltrate. What do you think?

On the freedom of speech, almost all of the interviewees felt free to speak in 2010, 2011, although some mentioned red lines, such as the King. However the ones that actually participated in the protest felt not free and sometimes felt even government pressure to shut up or apply self censorship. What do you think?

As well all felt free to think themselves, however quite a few said that the propaganda made it difficult for people in general to think for themselves. What do you think of this?

(((Also in one case, someone explained that self censorship, would influence way of thinking, which is then not free. Also one said people think they are free, but they are not, they are subtle influenced.))

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<sup>343</sup> Rawls (1977), pp 53. See also International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

((In case of religion all perceived Jordan as being free to profess religion. Changing of religion would be more a social problem than a state problem, although some pointed out the institutional categorisation of religion on the ID card, and the impossibility to change or to have that removed. ))

All interviewees valued Jordan's safety, country is safe, police are good, discrimination is quite low and if it is agent dependent. Arrest without warrant by the security service is known to have happened, also the Security State courts, but police arrest are not without warrant and right to court is guaranteed. What do you think of this?

Also government / regime oppression is not perceived to be in Jordan, although few say it is there through the creation of bad education and depriving activist of work, blacklisting, also memory of '70 keeps people down.

In 2010, early 2011, the interviewees perceived that there were quite some things missing on the political front, one mainly the effectiveness of gov, rights of association, the not listening of gov, woman's rights, no constitutional monarchy, no meaningful politics, corruption.

What do you think of these?

And in contrast with the economical rights the gov was perceived to listen more in 2011, because of things such as build up of pressure, gov fear, want to maintain control. But also perceived not to listen because gov knew people were stupid (!much used reason), did not care. What do you think of these?

### **Exchange**

In the theory on social contract in the academic world there seems to be an understanding that when people are given enough economical benefits they would forgo political benefits.

However when posed this question it seems that there was perceived to be an unbalance, economical rights were bad, and sometimes also political rights. They were distributed quite arbitrary.

Moreover the many of the interviewees perceived that the lack of economical rights, made the people not demand political rights, but made them only focus on the economical rights.

Political is luxury, or dangerous because it can threaten economic security, so they have no choice other than to accept it. What do you think?

Even more it was the perception that people are not even aware that they have political rights, they are not educated enough, on purpose. What do you think?

In general on the distribution of economical and political rights and the exchange, there is a perception that some people get more or have more influence. Such as tribes, well connected rich / political families, supporters of the system, 'friends' of the King geographical locations (cities), not so much security sector, or special JJ or PJ. What do you think?

Also although all interviewees perceive this as unfair, they perceive themselves or others able to challenge this, but unable to change, because it is ingrained in Jordan society, and unwillingness of gov to listen, and stupidity of people. What do you think?

((also in both economical and political, the interviewees acknowledged that themselves as one person could not change or address the gov, only if they would have platform, be connected, of commit violent act they would be able to influence. And some even thought it would backfire, and one did not even realized it was possible at all. What do you think?))

The protest 14<sup>th</sup> of January and 14<sup>th</sup> of April 2011.

Why?: Protest were perceived as copy cat from Egypt, destructive, considered them dangerous, stupid, uncoordinated, no vision, one day of anger. What do you think?

The perceived demands of protest according to interviewees were: replacement of the king, cancelling of peace treaty, MBH influence. Interviewees did not agree, except one did agree with the economical demands, and some constitutional monarchy. What do you think?

**Main reasons Arab Spring did not happen in Jordan according to interviewees.**

No extreme: Jordan is not that bad, compared to Egypt and Syria. People have dignity and freedom. Fear: who will be king instead of Hashemite? People will kill each other, also fear created by propaganda.

External (Israel, US, UK) forces don't want Jordan to fall.

Regime was smart in handling situation.

Jordanians are peaceful people.

What do you think of this.

What do you think is the reason the Arab Spring did not happen in Jordan?  
(‘fault’ of the people or government / regime?)

Other factors mentioned important for me by interviewees:

- Love / loyalty for Jordan, creates control amongst people.
- Tribal male religious society.
- Cultural, commitment to community.
- Fears of the past, '70.
- Regional relations, Israel.
- King is not bad.
- Racism, JJ and PJ.

What do you consider important for me to understand Jordan?