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*Ich widme diese Diplomarbeit meinen Eltern .
Vielen Dank für eure Liebe, Unterstützung und eure Geduld!*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The world today knows 13 autocratic monarchies of which eight are located in the Middle East. With the accumulation of Bahrain, Jordan, Qatar, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Saudi- Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) the Middle East is unique in its concentration of autocratic rules,¹ and in the past they were even more: Monarchies were overthrown in 1952 in Egypt, in 1958 in Iraq, in 1962 in North Yemen, in 1969 in Libya and in 1979 in Iran. The events of the Arab spring renewed the interest in Arab resilience. With the exception of Qatar and the United Arab Emirates all Arab monarchies² experienced protests, ranging from small to „larger“ scales. Compared to the uprisings in Syria, Egypt or Libya they all have to be classified as small. It raises the question why the Arab spring as an „Ereignis von welthistorischer Bedeutung“³ has not ended the social contracts in any of the monarchies? Does that mean that people in Arab monarchies don't care that much about their political participation, as claimed by cultural argumentation? I remember my former boss and head of a well-known German research foundation in Amman replying to the topic of my thesis something like „Isn't it all about the money?“ Well, no. Life is not that simple. Although financial wealth plays a crucial part in Arab politics, it would be too one dimensional to reduce it all to money. Such an approach would ignore history and actors involved. The following thesis will try to answer the question why the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have survived the Arab spring. Besides subjective preferences of the author regarding the choices of the kingdoms there are „objective“ reasons as well. Both kingdoms couldn't be more different economically, structurally and with regard to their attitudes. Yet both have survived the Arab spring. Although, this thesis is not comparative by nature words about comparisons are necessary:

¹ The other four autocratic monarchies worldwide are Bhutan, Brunei, Swaziland and Tonga.

² For an explanation about the disparities between all Arab monarchies' answers to the Arab spring see Barany, Zoltan (2012): *The "Arab Spring" in the kingdoms*. In: Research Paper of the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies.

³ Beck, Martin; Hüser, Simone (2013): *Politischer Wandel im Nahen Osten. Versuch einer Analyse des „Arabischen Frühlings“*. In: Jünemann Anette.; Zorob, Anja (ed.): *Arabellions. Politik und Gesellschaft des Nahen Ostens*, Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien, p. 196.

“The great French interpreter of American democracy, Alex de Touqueville, while on his ravelis in America in the 1830s, wrote to a friend about how his ideas about French institutions and culture entered into the writing of *Democracy in America*. Tocqueville wrote: „Although I very rarely spoke of France in my book, I did not write one page of it without having her, so to speak, before my eyes.“ On a more general note about the comparative method, he offered this comment: „Without comparisons to make, the mind does not know how to proceed.“⁴

Comparisons are fundamental for human understanding and, although we’re not always aware of it, they help us to shape and understand our world and those of others. For the matter of this thesis, comparisons are important for two more reasons: The first reason anticipates why both kingdoms survived the Arab spring. By observing the events in other countries, Jordanians and Saudis alike lost, to a great extend, interest in overthrowing their rulers. If chaos or civil war might be the expected result, the own position won’t look that bad anymore. Everything is better than civil war. The third reason takes us back into the past. Comparisons are not only drawn between countries, but also over time. “To understand the last 100 years, one need to engage in an „unending dialogue between the present and the past“⁵ Or for the matter of this thesis: To understand the present, one need to engage in an unending dialogue between the past and the present.

1.1 Hypothesis

The following thesis is based on two hypothesis:

1. There is not just one explanation for monarchical resilience. Several causes have interacted to explain Jordan’s and Saudi Arabia’s survival.

⁴ Almond, Gabriel A. et. al (2004): *Comparative politics today. A world view.*, 7th edition, New York: Pearson Longman p. 31.

⁵ Al- Rasheed, Madawi (2002): *A history of Saudi Arabia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 13

2. Cultural explanations are no decisive factors. Rather, political, social and economical structures determine the decisions of monarchs and their populations.

1.2 Structure and method

The thesis will answer the question why Jordan and Saudi Arabia have survived the Arab spring. It is conducted from a systemic angle with its core concepts deriving from David Easton's political system theory. The main part of the thesis consists of three chapters. Chapter two will identify decisive elements for the explanation of monarchical resilience. Since the main interest lies in autocratic reproduction mechanisms the elements are mainly taken from literature dealing specifically with authoritarianism. Chapter three and four consist of the two case studies which will apply the aforementioned variables according to their validity. Chapter five will sum up the main arguments.

To live up to the qualitative claim of the two case studies and the chapter about monarchical authoritarianism, the thesis is conducted on the basis of a vast amount of literature from books and from the internet. Given the timely proximity to the events of the Arab spring, most literature is taken from online research magazines.

1.3 Theoretical foundation

The following chapter deals with the theoretical basis of this thesis. The first part gives a brief overview over general systemic concepts relevant for the understanding of its political arm, the political system theory.

1.3.1 Systemic thinking - some general thoughts

“Eine systemische Forschung ist vom Anspruch her **keine aufdeckende** Forschung, sondern eine **rekonstruierende** Forschung. Ihre Zielrichtung ist nicht, die Dinge so zu beschreiben, wie diese „objektiv“ gegeben sind, sondern die Wirkungen der Verschränkung von Perspektiven nachzuspüren.“⁶

System thinking is best described as a certain kind of analytical perspective which contradicts the traditional understanding of knowledge which was based on an inadequate linear cause-effect model and which analysed phenomena in isolation. In contrast, system thinking identifies phenomena in its complex interconnection and interdependence with its environment. Reality is rather a complex network than a linear constellation and an analyses of an isolated part does not do justice to reality.⁷ Two conclusions can be drawn from a systemic approach: First, targeted manipulation of a complex network is not possible from outside since it would set in motion a chain of unpredictable consequences which might still appear years later. Second, due to the complexity of reality and the vast amount of information, neutral observations are not possible. Information has to be filtered for one to cope with reality. Observer such as social scientists choose information, contexts and interconnections while excluding the rest. Interconnections are more important than “the whole truth“. Consequently, it is not only impossible for one to cover all relevant factors but also is a neutral observer impossible.⁸

“Objektivität ist die Selbsttäuschung eines Subjekts, dass es Beobachten ohne ein Subjekt geben könnte. Die Berufung auf Objektivität ist die Verweigerung der Verantwortung - daher auch ihre Beliebtheit.“⁹

⁶ Arnold, Rolf (2010): *Was ist systemische Forschung?* In: http://www.systemisch-forschen.de/was_ist_systemische_forschung (02.03.2014)

⁷ Willke, Helmut (2006): *Systemtheorie I: Grundlagen*. Stuttgart: Lucius & Lucius, p. 132.

⁸ *ibid.*, p. 169.

⁹ Herwig-Lempp, Johannes (2010/2014): *Was ist systemische Forschung?* In: http://www.systemisch-forschen.de/was_ist_systemische_forschung (02.03.2014)

Objectivity as self- deception coincides with the concept of second order cybernetics, which declares the neutral observer an illusion, since the observer and the observed are interconnected through the act of observing. The observer as a cybernetic system is trying to construct a model of another cybernetic system. In contrast, its predecessor first order cybernetics assumed that the observer would be neutral and that the system could be shaped and manipulated:¹⁰

“Constructivism says that we can only think according to our pictures and views of the world, which are necessarily models of the world itself. My point is now that the **systems thinking requires the consciousness of the fact that we are dealing with models of our reality and not with the reality itself.**“¹¹

Or in the words of Heinz von Foerster: “Die Umwelt, die wir wahrnehmen, ist unsere Erfindung“¹²

A very important concept of system thinking is the self-reproducing approach of autopoiesis:

“Die Grundidee der Theorie der Autopoiesis besagt, dass komplexe Systeme sich in ihrer Einheit, ihren Strukturen und Elementen kontinuierlich und in einem operativ geschlossenen Prozess mit Hilfe der Elemente reproduzieren, aus denen sie bestehen.“¹³

Originally, autopoiesis comes from biology where the decisive experiment concerning the colour perception of pigeons was conducted by the Chilean biologist Humberto R. Maturana and his colleagues Samy Frenk and Gabriela Uribe. The term autopoiesis first appeared three years later in a paper of Francisco J. Varela in which he formulated the central paradigm that “das

¹⁰ Willke, Helmut (2006), p. 161.

¹¹ Ossimitz, Günther (1997): *The development of systems thinking skills using system dynamics modelling tools*. In: <http://webdoc.gwdg.de/ebook/e/gdm/1996/ossimitz.pdf>, p.99. (19.02.1014). (emphasised S.B.)

¹² von Foerster cf in Herwig-Lempp, Johannes (2010/2014)

¹³ Willke, Helmut (2006), p. 10.

Nervensystem ein geschlossenes System ist, das nicht in der Lage ist, aus gegebenen Anlass seine Wirklichkeit zu entwerfen. In diesem Paradigma wird das, was als objektive Erfahrung gilt, zu einer subjektiven oder systemischen Konstruktion.“¹⁴ In biology, autopoiesis distinguishes living organisms from non-living organisms. Living organisms are autopoietically organised and reproduce themselves through the same material. In the field of sociology, systems are also reproducing themselves but not by means of the same. “Es werden gerade nicht aus den schon bestehenden Elementen der Sinnkette neue angefertigt, sondern zu seiner Fortsetzung tastet das System seine Sinnumgebung ab und selektiert neu anschließbaren Sinn aus der Beobachtung seiner Sinnwelt (!). Allerdings sucht sich das Sinnsystem Elemente derselben Art (Sinn); daher immer noch Reproduktion. Neu heißt: Durch neue Anschlüsse wird Vorausgehendes neu interpretiert und verändert, jeder Anschluss verändert das System.“¹⁵ Social systems are not reproducing themselves in the strict sense of the meaning. Rather they reproduce themselves differently, which makes the new system distinguishable from the old one. This concept is crucial for the understanding of autocratic systems such as Jordan and Saudi Arabia since a reproduction of every complex system can only be based on several variables. (hypothesis 1) It is also crucial for other “intervening“ disciplines such as development or democracy-building which seek to obtain a transformation. External actors might not understand the inner logic of the system and might misunderstand their importance for regime stability.

System thinking does not analyse systems in isolation but in connection to its environment.

The approach is therefore not limited to certain objects but rather constitutes a certain kind of analytical point of view which could be applied to basically everything. It is important to emphasise that systemic thinking means thinking in circular interconnections. ¹⁶

¹⁴ Cruse, Holk; Krohn, Wolfgang (2005): *Das Prinzip der Autopoiesis*. In: Baecker, Dirk (ed.): *Schlüsselwerke der Systemtheorie*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften. p. 282. (281-290)

¹⁵ Emlein, Günther (2010): *Zum Systembegriff in der systemischen Praxis*. In: Staubach, Maria L. (ed.): *Systemische Geschichten für Praktiker. Denken über Grenzen: Handlungsspielräume für eine qualifizierte Praxis*. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. p. 42.

¹⁶ Milowitz, Walter (2009): *Was ist systemische Forschung?* In: http://www.systemisch-forschen.de/was_ist_systemische_forschung (02.03.2014)

Even if everything can be analysed from a systemic perspective, not everything can be categorised as a system. This brings us to the question what constitutes a system?¹⁷

1. A system consists of **definable elements**
2. „Between these elements there exist **(mostly functional) interrelations**. A system is more than a mere accumulation of elements; there has to be certain structure of **relations** among these elements.“¹⁸
3. The system contains **boundaries** which are the interface between the system and its environment. **The identity of a system is determined at its borders** which are more or less permeable. Boundaries are important because they determine what comes in and what comes out, respectively what is allowed to enter the system and what is allowed to leave the system. Sometimes borders are physical such as a skin, or borders are immaterial such as a membership.
4. Systems are characterised by a **dynamic behaviour of self- preservation**. It depends on the system and its aim, but, for instance biological, living systems preserve themselves via homeostasis.
5. Systems consist of individual elements but at the same time, systems are part of a **larger system**. Therefore, all elements and systems are arranged in **hierarchies**.

1.3.2 Political system theory

The following part will give a brief overview over the most important concepts of political system theory. I focus on the theory of David Easton whose main concern was the creation of “an empirically oriented theory that will help guide research about the way in which any and all political systems operate.”¹⁹ Neither makes this sub-chapter claims to completeness nor is it possible to cover political system theory in its complexity. Especially a critical review of Easton’s political theory can

¹⁷ The listing is based on Ossimitz, Günther (1997), pp. 96. (emphasised S.B.)

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p.

¹⁹ Easton, David (1990): *The Analysis of Political Structure*. London, New York: Routledge, p. ix.

not be undertaken here.²⁰ Rather the main goal is to outline its basic concepts that contribute to a better understanding of the case studies.

David Easton defined political system “as all those interactions through which values are allocated authoritatively for a society.”²¹ In conformity with general systemic thinking, a political system consists of individual parts, which Easton refers to as *lower order structure*²². These structures are the basis of our classifying a system as, for example, democratic or authoritarian and include all *observable* institutions such as the legislative, the executive and the judiciary as well as parties and the administration, etc. “To put it slightly differently, the political system is a set of institutions, such as parliaments, bureaucracies, and courts, that formulate and implement the collective goals of a society or of groups within it.”²³ Their *interplay* forms an important part of this thesis. At the same time a political system is greater than the sum of its parts. This refers to the question why some countries are democratic, some totalitarian and others are dictatorial? Furthermore, why did some assume a parliamentary structure while others assumed a presidential structure? The answer for Easton lies in the *higher order structures*, which are not observable and therefore much harder to analyse.²⁴ However, the whole can never be fully analysed which is referred to as *emergence*.²⁵ What makes the political system thinking useful for current analysis is its goal to capture the “angestrebte und oftmals umstrittene *Autonomie* (der modernen Politik)²⁶ gegenüber dem Rest der Gesellschaft, und zwar in doppelter Hinsicht: Autonomie als selbstständige Entscheidungsinstanz, aber auch als Verständigung gegenüber politikfremden Erwartungen und Ansprüchen, was

²⁰ see for instance Miller, E.F. (1971): *David Easton's political theory*. In: http://www.mmsi.org/pr/01_01/miller.pdf. (01.03.2014) and David Easton's answer: Easton, David (1973): *System analysis and its classical critics*. In: http://www.mmsi.org/pr/03_01/easton.pdf (01.03.2014)

²¹ Easton, David (1990), p. ix.

²² *ibid.*, pp. 62.

²³ Almond, Gabriel A. et. al (2004), p. 11.

²⁴ Easton, David (1990), pp. 241.

²⁵ in German „Emergenz“; Hellmann, Kai- Uwe (2011): *System*. In: Göhler, Gerhard; Iser, Matthias; Kerner, Ina (ed.): *Politische Theorie. 25 umkämpfte Begriffe zur Einführung*. 2., aktualisierte und erweiterte Auflage. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

²⁶ note by S.B.

bisweilen zu gravierenden Verständigungsproblemen führen kann.“²⁷ The interconnections between system and environment constitutes another important basis for this thesis. The political system organises itself via input, output, conversion and feedback loop. The input-output interaction is crucial for every system, since it guarantees its support. However, government's failure to produce positive outputs over the long run might result in demands of change.²⁸ David Easton identified two different types of input which are causing the system's dynamic character: demands and support. It is difficult to classify demands in an appropriate manner since they could stem from a wide range of demands. Generally said, demands arise “(o)nly where wants require some special organized efforts on the part of society to settle them authoritatively.”²⁹ Demands arise either internally, as part of the system (internal demands) or externally, as part of the environment (external demands)³⁰ For instance, Jordanian demands for greater political participation can be classified as external demand since they are overwhelmingly demanded from outside of the political system. Economic liberalisation could be classified as internal demands. Although, not every issue finds the way into the political sphere, demands are important sources of change “since as the environment fluctuates it generates new types of demand-inputs for the system. (...) Both the statics and historical dynamics of a political system depend upon a detailed understanding of demands, particularly of the impact of the setting on them.”³¹ Demands are complemented by the second category of input, the support. Easton defines it as the „Energy in the form of actions or orientations promoting and resisting a political system, the demands arising in it, and the decisions issuing from it.“³² Support consists of two forms: on the one hand, a person can be supportive if he or she supports the goals or interests of another person. On the other hand, support consists of an internal state of minds and attitudes. „If the members of a political system are deeply attached to a

²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 372.

²⁸ Easton, David (1957): *An approach to the analysis of political system*. In: *World Politics*, Vol. 9, No. 3, p. 397.

²⁹ Easton, David (1957), p. 387.

³⁰ *ibid.*, p 389.

³¹ *ibid.*, p. 390.

³² *ibid.*, p. 390.

system or its ideals, the likelihood of their participating in either domestic or foreign politics in such a way as to undermine the system is reduced by a large factor. Presumably, even in the face of a considerable provocation, ingrained supportive feelings of loyalty may be expected to prevail.”³³ Input may come from the society, the political elite and from the international environment. Output generates support via political decisions that satisfy some parts of society. They meet their demands but it is important to emphasise that “to obtain the support of the members of a system through positive incentives, a government need not meet all the demands of even its most influential and ardent supporters. Most governments, or groups such as political parties that seek to control governments, succeed in building up a reserve of support.”³⁴ This reserve of support allows the government not to meet all or some of the demands of its members. Only those demands of the most influential members should be met. This point is important for the analysis of Jordan and Saudi Arabia, since it helps to explain their resilience despite of unrest. The crucial question remains how long this reserve lasts and if and how the regimes can extend it. Policy outputs are not only supported by positive inducements but also by negative ones. Depending on the system, coercion and sanctions are more or less dominant. Furthermore, socialisation supports the system since people learn what behaviour gets rewarded and which gets sanctioned. However, acting against the system’s policy may not always lead to uprisings. Instead, it has contributed to the world’s development and it will always be an important source of change which no government can prevent.³⁵ The transformation of input into output and its transformation into „authoritative decisions“ is referred to as the *conversion process*. Outputs as the result of the conversion process cause new and changed inputs which will inevitably return to affect the political system. Through feedback loops the system learns from its mistakes and changes itself to adapt to new circumstances. This process is called *social maturation*. By the same amount the environment reacts to the system, the system answers to demands and support in four steps:³⁶

³³ *ibid.*, p 391.

³⁴ *ibid.*, p. 396.

³⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 395.

³⁶ feedback loop is based on Fuhse, Jan (2005): *Theorien des politischen Systems. David Easton und Niklas Luhmann. Eine Einführung*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, pp. 47.

1. The first phase deals with the question *how* political decisions affect the environment. In an *circumstantial feedback stimuli* the system reacts to social phenomena and changes indirectly the circumstances for support and demand. The *perceived feedback stimuli* describes if and how political changes are perceived by the people. For politicians it could be more important that their decisions are perceived as better than their actual results.
2. The people once again have to turn the *feedback response* into new demands and supports. Crucial is the perception of political outputs and the expectations of society regarding politics. Expectations are shaped by socialisation.
3. The information of the feedback response have to reach the political authorities via gatekeepers, such as media, parties, individual contact, interest groups or opinion polls. The time factor is crucial here. If politicians respond too late, they will disappoint the population. If they respond too fast, they probably won't have enough time to consider all aspects.
4. The end is at the same time a new beginning: new outputs are created according to the interests of the political authorities. If they coincide with those of the environment depends on the fact how strongly the political authorities depend on public support.

The following thesis will focus on the monarchical systems of Jordan and Saudi Arabia. In accordance with systemic thinking it will focus on the interplay and the interconnections between the political institutions and the environment. Thereby, it will be necessary to deal with the economic and the international system, too. The interplay between the identified variables will create a network of the country's reality which will explain monarchical resilience over time. In this regard, it is a matter of concern to me to remind the reader once again that

“Systeme sind keine Dinge, sondern eine Funktion unseres Geistes, ein Ergebnis unseres (Nach-)Denkens, Entscheidens, Handelns: „System“ bedeutet in diesem Zusammenhang nicht ein Ding, sondern eine Liste von Variablen. Diese Liste kann variiert werden, und die allgemeinste Aufgabe des Experimentators ist es, die Liste zu variieren („andere Variablen zu berücksichtigen“), bis er schließlich eine Gruppe von

Variablen ausfindig gemacht hat, die die gewünschte Eindeutigkeit ergibt“.³⁷

2. MONARCHICAL AUTHORITARIANISM

2.1 Modernisation paradigm

Having been regarded an anachronism³⁸ to the modern world, monarchies, for a long time, did not receive a lot of attention. Despite the dominance of Middle Eastern autocratic monarchies, the neglect of the importance of these regimes for the Middle East and North Africa by the majority of scientists were “also partly attributable to the largely unspoken consensus among political scientists that monarchy is passé.”³⁹ During the 1950s and 1960s a small group of scientists started the first systematic research of autocratic postcolonial monarchies and the conditions for their survival and breakdown. Being influenced by the dominant paradigm of that time, their research was guided by the dichotomy tradition vs. modernisation. The industrialised economies of the West were the ultimate goal which third world countries were suppose to reach following Walt Whitman Rostow ‘s five *stages of economic growth*⁴⁰ with the help of international capital.⁴¹ According to Alex Inkeles, modernisation was a Western cultural attribute which the traditional people still had to learn.⁴² The notion that men in developing

³⁷ Lempp- Herwig, Johannes (2010/2014)

³⁸ Hudson, Michael C. (1977): *Arab Politics. The Search for Legitimacy*. New Haven, London: Yale University Press, p. 166.

³⁹ Anderson, Lisa (1991): *Absolutism and the resilience of monarchy in the Middle East*. In: *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 106, No.1, p.1.

⁴⁰ Rostow, Walt Whitman (1960): *Die fünf Wachstumsstadien- eine Zusammenfassung (1960)*. In: Fischer, Karin; Hödl, Gerald; Sievers, Wiebke (ed.): *Klassiker der Entwicklungstheorie. Von Modernisierung bis Post- Development*. 2. Auflage 2010, Wien: Mandelbaum Verlag, p. 39-52.

⁴¹ Rosenstein- Rodan, Paul N. (1944): *Die internationale Entwicklung rückständiger Gebiete (1944)*. In: n: Fischer, Karin; Hödl, Gerald; Sievers, Wiebke (ed.): *Klassiker der Entwicklungstheorie. Von Modernisierung bis Post- Development*. 2. Auflage 2010, Wien: Mandelbaum Verlag, p. 26-38.

⁴² Inkeles, Alex (1969): *Making men modern: On the cause and consequences of individual change in six developing countries*. In *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 75, no. 2.; Inkeles, Alex (1966): *Die Modernisierung des Menschen*. In: Fischer, Karin; Hödl, Gerald; Sievers, Wiebke (ed.): *Klassiker der Entwicklungstheorie. Von Modernisierung bis Post- Development*. 2. Auflage 2010, Wien: Mandelbaum Verlag, p. 53-69.

countries were primarily traditional was widespread among modernisation theorists. Michael Halpern concluded a similar observation for the Arab countries:

“By now, however, the issue is no longer Westernization from outside but locally- rooted „modernization.“ Before the modern age began, it was possible to arm, and become more prosperous and more powerful than any neighbour, without changing one’s mind about anything one’s ancestors held dear. Today, the price of knowledge, status, and power for Middle Eastern countries is conversion to an entirely new outlook. It is not feasible to buy the weapons and learn the techniques of modern warfare, and yet preserve ancient traditions. (...)The conflict now takes place among and within Middle Easterners themselves, and until they have dealt with the roots of their problem, change in their region will continue to be frequent, sudden, discontinuous, and violent.”⁴³

For modernisation theorists, hope remained for developing countries to catch up with the West. For Arab monarchies though, prospects were regarded to be bleak.

2.2 The King’s Dilemma.

In *Political order in changing societies* Samuel Huntington observed the monarchies to be in a fundamental dilemma, which involved the relationship between traditional and modern authority. “On the one hand, centralization of power in the monarchy was necessary to promote social, cultural and economic reform. On the other hand, this centralization made difficult or impossible the expansion of the power of traditional polity and the assimilation into it of the new groups produced by modernization.”⁴⁴ For Huntington, political participation of the new middle class is necessary to modernise, yet it is impossible for autocratic monarchs to achieve it. Therefore, Huntington continues with three possible

⁴³ Halpern, Michael (1963): *The politics of social change in the Middle East and North Africa. A Report Prepared for the United States Air Force Project Rand*. In: <http://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R0417.html> (30.08.2013), p. [B]

⁴⁴ Huntington, Samuel (1986): *Political order in changing societies*. New Haven: Yale University Press, p.177.

strategies open to the monarchs: First, the monarch could end his rule to reign in a modern constitutional monarchy. However, Huntington mentions that no transformation of that kind ever happened peacefully but needed time or revolution. Due to the paternalistic attitude of many centralised monarchs, Huntington regards such a voluntary and peaceful transformation to be highly unlikely. Second, he asks whether it is possible to combine monarchical rule and a party government. Since the relationship between both parties would always be an uneasy one, which led in many countries to constitutional crises or the dissolution of parliament, a coexistence is also unlikely. Thirdly, the monarch has to find ways to keep his power during the inevitable modernisation processes. Initially, the monarch has to appoint modern men to the bureaucracy to reduce his dependence on traditional elite. However, as modernisation progresses, the relationship between monarch, modernisers and traditionalists gets complicated, leaving the king with the possibility to choose side, to stop modernisation or to rely heavily on force. Due to the newly emerging middle class, which opposes the concept of monarchism, neither way would lead to the survival of monarchies.⁴⁵ Huntington's king's dilemma can only claim limited explanation for Middle Eastern monarchies. While it can explain the breakdown of those monarchies examined by Huntington, such as Iran or Egypt, his argumentation fails to explain institutional flexibility attributed to monarchies. Nevertheless, until the early 1990s, research was dominated by Samuel Huntington's *king's dilemma*. Where Arab monarchies received attention beyond it, their resilience was mainly explained with the scientifically unsatisfactory yet very persistent argument of inherent *cultural values* which are supposed to make monarchies more durable.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 177.

2.3 Cultural determinism

“Ruling monarchs are nearly extinct outside the Arab world, but within this region their remarkable persistence suggests that the legitimacy formula that they embody exhibits greater congruence with socio- cultural values than observers have thought.”⁴⁶

The conventional argument about Arab authoritarianism derives from the fact that the Middle East lacks any democracies, while authoritarian republican and monarchical rulers likewise cling to power. The easiest way, therefore, is to look for an explanation unique to the region. The answer for many scholars lies in the cultural values which shape regional lives. The myths of an Arab exceptionalism was born. The well- known Orientalist Bernhard Lewis for instance raised the question “What went wrong?”. What went wrong with the Arab world which was once a great and advanced civilisation? What went wrong that the Arab countries are now stuck in a “spiral of hate and spite, rage and self-pity, poverty and oppression”⁴⁷? For him, as a Western observer, the answer lies in the “lack of freedom - freedom of the mind from constraint and indoctrination, to question and inquire and speak; freedom of the economy from corrupt and pervasive mismanagement; freedom of women from male oppression; freedom of citizens from tyranny- that underlies so many of the troubles of the Muslim world.”⁴⁸ Freedom, for Lewis, seems to be a distinctive attribute of Western civilisation which is absent to the Arabic world. In another article⁴⁹, Lewis identifies Western secularism and modernism and its worldwide expansion as sources of Arab hate and anger towards the West. His argumentation inspired Huntington’s most famous “Clash of civilisations” where he projects future conflicts to be along

⁴⁶ Hudson, Michael C. (1977), p. 25.

⁴⁷ Bernard, Lewis (2002): *What went wrong?* In: *The Atlantic*: <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2002/01/what-went-wrong/302387/> <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2002/01/what-went-wrong/302387/> (02.01.2014), p. 45

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, p. 45

⁴⁹ Lewis, Bernard (1990): *The roots of Muslim rage. Why so many Muslims deeply resent the West, and their bitterness will not easily be mollified.* In: *The Atlantic*. <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1990/09/the-roots-of-muslim-rage/304643/> (04.01.2014).

cultural lines.⁵⁰ However, culture is the main explanation ignores historical developments and actors involved. Since the cold war, the term Culture Talk appeared on the scientific landscape. It picks up the cultural argument and adds a political dimension, as explained by Mahmoud Mamdani: “Culture talk assumes that every culture has a tangible essence that defines it, and it then explains politics as a consequence of that essence.”⁵¹ It is necessary to distinguish between two contrasting narratives of Culture Talk. „One thinks of premodern peoples as those who are not yet modern, who are lagging behind or have yet to embark on the road to modernity. The other depicts the pre-modern as also the anti-modern.⁵²“ While the first one contains the modernistic thinking that development is possible, the second narrative denies this potential and insists on invariable cultural values and by extension, cultural differences. In the context of terrorism, these narratives led to the distinction between *good Muslims and bad Muslims*. While the one side of culture talk became highly politicised, the cultural argument regarding Arab resilience seems more peaceful, yet not less inaccurate.

Referring to Arab monarchs, the more prominent line of cultural argumentation ascribes the Arab rulers an exceptional legitimacy and natural authority. Whereas presidents have to regain their legitimacy in elections, monarchs reign with natural authority granted to them by Islamic values, tribal traditions and hereditary principles that resonate within their societies. In other words, Arab monarchies are the logical consequence of Arab norms and values, which make them the perfect and “natural” form of government for Arab people. Victor Menaldo, for instance, argues that “MENA monarchs have “invented” a political culture⁵³, based on Islamic values, that keeps their regimes stable. Furthermore, he blames tribal structures and climatic conditions to be an important factor, which facilitated monarchical takeover in the first place. Due to extreme aridity , agriculture

⁵⁰ Huntington, Samuel P. (1993): *The clash of civilizations?* In: *The Atlantic*. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/48950/samuel-p-huntington/the-clash-of-civilizations> (10.12.2013)

⁵¹ Mamdani, Mahmood (2004): *Culture Talk; or, How Not to Talk About Islam and Politics*. In: Mamdani, Mahmood: *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim. America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror*. New York: Doubleday, p. 17

⁵² *ibid.*, p. 18.

⁵³ Menaldo, Victor. (2012): *The Middle East and North Africa’s Resilient Monarchs*. In: *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 74, No. 3, pp. 709.

remained underdeveloped in regions today known as Bahrain, UAE, Abu Dhabi, Kuwait or Oman , where nomadic tribes and clans dominated (long distance) trade.⁵⁴ Soon, one family in each region became the political hegemon, and with the help of the British eventually became royals. He does not ignore the fact that it was the British who introduced the monarchies. Nonetheless, he states that the people were used to following the commands of one family and therefore, had no problems adapting to monarchical principals. According to Menaldo, monarchies are the extension of tribal structures.: “(...) in MENA countries where settled agriculture has historically been difficult, if not impossible, tribal social structures have been more likely to survive. By extension, so have monarchies.”⁵⁵

Cultural arguments do not hold up under scrutiny. Cultural legitimacy confirms the Orientalist stereotype that Arabs, due to Islamic values and tribal traditions, are predisposed to despotism and absolute rule. It ignores the fact that not all Arabs are of tribal descent or even Muslims. It also ignores the democratic transitions of many Muslim yet not Arabic countries in sub- Saharan Africa and South East Asia.⁵⁶

It is true that Arab monarchs spend time and resources portraying their rule as compatible with Islamic values and traditions. But one has to be very careful judging it as anything different than that: political constructions meant to convince the people that “their rule is the natural result of history and culture.”⁵⁷ As Lisa Anderson pointed out, the monarchy in the Middle East “is no more indigenous than liberal democracy.”⁵⁸ Most of the monarchies are the product of British and French colonial rule. Without their help the dominant tribes could not have imposed their rules upon the other tribes. Moreover, if the Arab monarchies rest on cultural legitimacy, how does one explain the fall of the monarchies in Egypt (1952), Tunisia (1957), Iraq (1958), North Yemen (1962), and Libya (1969)? And

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 716.; On the contrary, countries with a semi- arid environment and fertile plains such as Algeria, Lebanon, Turkey, Syria and Southwest Iran produced an agricultural surplus and therefore replaced tribalism with centralised states.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p. 709.

⁵⁶ Gause III, Gregory; Yom, Sean L. (2012): *Resilient royals: How Arab monarchies hang on*. In: *Journal of democracy*, Vol. 23, No. 4, October 2012, p. 77 f.;

⁵⁷ Gause III, Gregory F. (2013): *Kings for all seasons: How the Middle East’s monarchies survived the arab spring*. In: *Brookings Doha Center Analysis Paper*, No. 8, p.9.

⁵⁸ Anderson, Lisa (1991), p.3.

even if monarchies in the Middle East were traditional regime types, their alleged historical authenticity fails to explain the apparent monarchical flexibility in dealing with modern- social and political change. Furthermore, why does no Arab people engaging in the Arab spring demand the reintroduction of monarchy? At a time of institutional change in the Arab world, Arabs are not choosing monarchy as their preferred regime type.⁵⁹

Whereas, especially the cultural argument is resilient until today, the dominance of Huntington's *king's dilemma* has been overcome in the 1990s when research broadened its analytical basis. To a varying degree, four new perspectives have been dominating the research about Arab monarchies. Of course, none of these perspectives separately is sufficient. Instead, they present only pieces of the puzzle. Furthermore, not every perspective is applicable to all monarchical countries. However, these four perspectives present a group of arguments that make the resilience of Arab monarchies more comprehensive. The four perspectives concern:

- 1.) Legitimacy: religion, tradition, myths and divide- and rule
- 2.) Political- economy: oil monarchies and rentierism
- 3.) Institutionalism: Michael Herb's "All in the family"
- 4.) Geostrategy: external support

2.4 Legitimacy: religion, tradition, myths

Legitimacy, as an analytical category describes the relationship between ruler and the ruled which is influenced in reciprocal ways. Weber identified three types of legitimate rule, based on legality (*legale Herrschaft*), tradition (*traditionale Herrschaft*) and exemplary behaviour and heroism (*charismatische Herrschaft*). None of these types exists in pure form.⁶⁰ While tradition is considered the primordial and ubiquitous form of order, a newly created order has to be agreed upon by the parties involved according to their interests, or has to be forced upon

⁵⁹ Gause III, Gregory (2013), p. 11; Gause III, Gregory; Yom, Sean L. (2012), p. 78.

⁶⁰ Weber, Max(1964): *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Grundrisse der verstehenden Soziologie*. Studienausgabe herausgegeben von Johannes Winckelmann. Erster Halbband. Köln, Berlin: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, pp. 159.

people, who eventually go along with the new order. (Oktroyierung). "In aller Regel ist Fügsamkeit in Ordnungen außer durch Interessenlagen der allerverschiedensten Art durch eine Mischung von Traditionsgebundenheit und Legalitätsvorstellung bedingt, soweit es sich nicht um ganz neue Satzungen handelt. In sehr vielen Fällen ist den fügsam Handelnden dabei natürlich nicht einmal bewußt, ob es sich um Sitte, Konvention oder Recht handelt."⁶¹ The "most favourable" goal for a ruler is "Legitimitätsglaube", i.e. "Fügsamkeit gegenüber formal korrekt und in der üblichen Form zustandegekommenen Satzungen."⁶² However, legitimacy is one of the most difficult concepts in social sciences, because it varies over time and space.⁶³ It is also very difficult to determine and measure necessary features of legitimacy. How does one know that a regime is legitimate in the eyes of the population who are not just bending to a stronger monarchs will? Is the absence of uprisings sufficient to justify legitimacy claims?⁶⁴ However, no regime, irrespective of its nature, can survive without the support of certain parts of society. While democratic leaders renew their legitimisation in elections on a regular basis, non- democratic rulers have to seek support by other means. In case of Arab monarchies, legitimisation strategies were even more important because most monarchs were implemented in previously non-existent states by the French and British.⁶⁵ Since national sentiments, as well as national borders were unknown to them, the monarchies had to provide their populations with compelling explanations to engender obedience without relying on force. As already mentioned above, cultural values are not explaining the longevity of Arab monarchies. Instead, rulers choose strategies based on their *religious noble lineage* and *traditional values*: "Monarchies portray themselves as modern-day connections to the past in ways that are more reassuring to the masses.

⁶¹ ibip., p. 27.

⁶² ibid., p. 27.

⁶³ Schlumberger, Oliver (2010): *Opening old bottles in search of new wine: on non-democratic legitimacy in the Middle East*. In: *Middle East Critique*, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 234.

⁶⁴ Gause III, Gregory F. (2013), pp. 9.

⁶⁵ The only exception are the Omani and Moroccan ruling families which are in power since the 18th century.

Monarchies invent traditions and create “powerful myths” regarding their origins, in an attempt to connect their families with past achievements.”⁶⁶

While these strategies were especially important during the first years of the monarchies, they were by no means sufficient to explain their monarchical survival over time. Instead, like other authoritarian rulers before them, Arab monarchs relied on *divide - and- rule* strategies.

2.4.1 Divide- and- rule

Lisa Anderson, one of the first scholars to address monarchical persistence in the Middle East, claimed centralisation processes to be the decisive stabilising factor. She argued that Arab monarchies represent a stage of state building similar to nation building in absolutist Europe.⁶⁷ However, whereas processes of centralisation might explain monarchical stability in its initial phase, where social, political and economic transformations had to be achieved in a short period of time, it can not explain its survival over the long run. On the contrary, monarchical resilience in monarchies such as Jordan and Morocco is rather explained by social and political pluralism that underlies divide - and - rule strategies.⁶⁸ Power structures in monarchies are fundamentally different than those in one-party states.⁶⁹ Monarchs in Jordan or Morocco present themselves as political arbitrators who do not participate in everyday politics but try to keep the parties balanced: “Because the king is responsible for such balance, this system promotes the monarch’s power. Parties now look to the king to maintain a balance, and without him, their role in the system seems in jeopardy. Competing elites cannot expect a system of proportional representation to ensure their

⁶⁶ Ezrow, Natasha M.; Frantz, Erica (2011): *Dictators and dictatorships: understanding authoritarian regimes and their leaders*. New York: The continuum international publishing group, p.247.

⁶⁷ Anderson, Lisa (1991): p.4.

⁶⁸ Frisch, Hillel (2011): *Why monarchies persist: balancing between internal and external vulnerability*. In: *Review of Internal Studies*, 37, pp. 173.

⁶⁹ Jamal, Amaney Ahmad; Lust- Okar, Ellen (2002): *Rulers and rules. Reassessing the influence of regime type on electoral law formation*. In: *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 35, no 3, pp. 351. Presidents of one-party states prefer electoral systems that support their parties claim to rule while weakening its opponents.

political strength. Rather, all count on the king to ensure their participation in government.“⁷⁰

Whether political parties can participate in the formal political sphere depends on the institutions created by the monarch: *undivided structures of contestation* describe the monarch's procedure to either include or exclude opposition forces uniformly, while *divided structures of contestation* describe the inclusion of some opposition groups while others are excluded. Additionally, the monarch also uses informal mechanisms to balance opposition groups and to avoid them from getting too strong. Again, the monarch can choose either to fragment the oppositional groups with moderate yet opposing political forces or the monarch can strengthen ideologically more radical forces to create a threat to the moderate forces.⁷¹ Due to their position as arbitrators and their ability to manipulate the political participation of opponents, monarchical regimes are less threatened by liberalisation requests than other regimes. Even more importantly, monarchies in Jordan and Morocco are able to use liberalisation processes as a survival strategy. Kings can use social and political pluralism to choose and strengthen new coalition partners from a wide range of social and political forces, while preventing others from becoming too powerful and influential. The individual opposition groups will be just one among many to choose from. Besides this re-calibration of social and political representation, the most beneficial aspect of political liberalisation however, is the possibility to blame a scapegoat, mainly the parliament, for politically unpopular policies, such as economic structural adjustment programs. People's anger will not be directed against the king, but against the parliament and the parties. Furthermore, if the political opening went too far, it can easily be manipulated if not reversed. The suspension of parliament, changes of electoral laws or constitutional changes can all be considered part of monarchical survival strategies.⁷² The monarch's ability to manipulate social and political pluralism in his favour hinders the country's democratic transition. Moreover, liberalisation

⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p. 356.

⁷¹ Lust-Okar, Ellen (2007): *The management of opposition. Formal structures of contestation and informal political manipulation in Egypt, Jordan and Morocco*. In: Schlumberger, Oliver (ed.): *Debating Arab authoritarianism: dynamics and durability in nondemocratic regimes*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp.40.

⁷² Lucas, Russel E. (2004): *Monarchical authoritarianism: survival and political liberalisation in a Middle Eastern regime type*. In: *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 36, pp. 113.

processes in combination with fights for the king's attention reinforce the stability of the regime. Competition is generally directed against the other parties, which makes it difficult to enter into coalitions and, by extension, to unify for a collective uprising. Structures of contestation highly influence the potential of parties to mobilise and therefore contribute significantly to explain the political dynamics of the Arab spring.

When analysing domestic politics it is important to keep in mind that regional politics has its influence as well. The most prominent examples are Arab politics during the "Arab Cold War" when Arab nationalism dominated the political scene.⁷³

2.5 Political economy: oil monarchies and rentierism

The concept of a rentier state was first introduced by Hossein Mahdavy. He defined rentier states as "those countries that receive on a regular basis substantial amounts of external rent."⁷⁴ Rents are payments without any work performance or investment on part of the recipient. "The input requirements of the oil industry from the local economies - at least for the inputs that have an opportunity cost- are so insignificant that for all practical purposes one can consider the oil revenues almost as a free gift of nature or as a grant from foreign sources."⁷⁵ With regard to Arab states rents result from the export of oil and natural gas. Mahdavy's approach was further developed by Hazem Beblawi and Giacomo Luciani. It was not specifically designed to explain Arab authoritarianism but came into existence after observing the success of Arab oil exporting countries. The rentier approach consists of two main hypothesis: *states with high rents feature economically weak structures and , therefore, contain politically authoritarian structures.*⁷⁶ Since rents do not require manpower or any investment on part of the recipient it is generally free money for the state. As a consequence, socio- economic structures remain weak and underdeveloped. Instead of investing

⁷³ Bank, André; Valbjorn, Morten (2010): *Bringing the Arab regional level back in... - Jordan in the New Arab Cold War*. In: *Middle East Critique*, Vol. 19, No. 3, , p. 307.

⁷⁴ Mahdavy, Hossein (1970): *The patterns and problems of economic development in rentier states: the case of Iran*. In: M.A. Cook (ed.): *Studies in the economic history of the Middle East: from the rise of Islam to the present day*. London: Oxford University Press, p. 428.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p. 429.

⁷⁶ Beck, Martin (2006): *Probleme des Rentier- Ansatzes in vergleichender Perspektive*. GIGA working paper 26, p. 8

the money, rents are used to guarantee the survival of the ruling class or the regime, which leads to authoritarian structures. Since the state does not levy taxes on the population, there is no control mechanism on part of the population and government actions are less constrained by public pressures.⁷⁷ The distribution of rents becomes the state's main function and loyalty of recipients stands above criteria such as responsibility or transparency. "A social contract evolves in which the citizens make relatively few political demands upon the government as long as the state provides many services without levying taxes."⁷⁸ Besides economical rents, there are also political rents, commonly referred to as *Petrodollars*. Petrodollars are intra- state payments, which help regimes of other states to stay in power and which guarantee the stability of the region as well as a conservative orientation. Remittances from migrants are also rents.

According to Luciani, to classify a state as a rentier state requires a state budget of at least 40% of rents. Accordingly, there are three different types of rentier states:⁷⁹

1. "Rentiers starker Ausprägung": their budget consists at least of 40-50% of rents. This is the case in the oil exporting gulf states. One considers the hypothesis of the rentier states to be realised.
2. "Rentiers mittlerer Ausprägung": their budget consists at least of 30-40% of rents, which was the case in Jordan and Algeria during the 1970s. In order to pay all its bills the government need to levy some taxes, which leads to the necessity of limited economical and political liberalisation.
3. "Rentiers schwacher Ausprägung": their budget consists of less than 20% of rents, which was the case in Jordan and Egypt in the 1980s. Such a low percentage might lead to the introduction of reforms, which could result in (unintended) transformation processes.

As Matthew Gray argues convincingly, the rentier state theory (RST), as it was composed during the 1980s and early 1990s, is no longer sufficient to explain the

⁷⁷ Beck, Martin (2006), pp. 7.

⁷⁸ Losman, Donald L. (2010): *The rentier state and national oil companies: an economic and political perspective*. In: Middle East Journal, Vol. 64, No.3, p. 429.

⁷⁹ Beck, Martin (2006), pp. 9.

complex changes of the past two decades.⁸⁰ Therefore, Gray proposes to analyse current Gulf states from a *late rentierism* perspective „in which the fundamentals of RST remain core to understand the Gulf states’ politics, but only in term of a feature of their political dynamics.“⁸¹ The fundamental characteristics are authoritarian political continuity and the continued allocative state function.⁸² The following seven features characterise the *late rentierism* approach:⁸³

1. The neo-patrimonial Gulf state is not autonomous from society but has to be **responsive** to constant threats from unemployment, Islamism or globalisation. This responsiveness, however, will not lead into political reform
2. Arab Gulf states do not remain isolated, as suggested by classical RST. Instead, they go through significant change while slowly and cautiously opening up to globalisation.
3. The Gulf states original economic strategy of simply distributing external rents within its societies have long been expanded by an economic policy encompassing a fiscal and monetary policy, a trade policy and a labour market policy. Economic development in all countries is different and forces especially resource- poor countries such as Dubai to look for alternatives. Gray notes that “the Gulf states (...) are not Islamic in their economic policies.”⁸⁴
4. The Gulf states changed from an “energy- centric“ economy (1960-1980) to an “energy-driven“ economic policy which promotes economic diversification.
5. The states have pursued an active economic policy “leaning towards an “entrepreneurial“ and “new“ state capitalism“⁸⁵ which is characterised by efficiently profit-maximising management. Nevertheless, the derived income is still used for distributive purposes and key sectors of the economy are state-owned and not to be challenged by common free trade and investment zones.
6. The Gulf states learned from the low oil prices of the mid 1980s until around 2000 and adopted long-term strategies.

⁸⁰ Gray, Matthew (2011): *A theory of “late rentierism“ in the Arab states of the Gulf*. In: *CIRS Occasional Paper No. 7*.

⁸¹ *ibid.*, p. 18.

⁸² *ibid.*, p. 23.

⁸³ *ibid.*, pp. 23.

⁸⁴ *ibid.*, p. 30. note: Zakat is the only “Islamic“ financial “policy“.

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, p. 32.

7. The Gulf states seek active foreign relations, partly to compensation of their small sizes but mainly for strategic reasons which include access to weapons and training, etc.

Martin Beck's analysis confirms Gray's argument that non-rent factors such as history, the type of rents, or security issues are important for rentier state analysis. Israel, South Korea and Taiwan received at some stage high amounts of political rents and have made its transformation from third world countries to modern industrial states. Moreover, Israel and Venezuela, the only case of a "Rentier starker Ausprägung", have consolidated more or less successful democracies. These exceptions can be explained by three interfering variables:⁸⁶ 1.) The dominant democratic tendencies present in Israel and Venezuela were of utmost importance. 2.) Israel, Taiwan and South Korea received political rents bound to the condition of democratisation. A possibility not feasible for economic rents. 3.) Israel, South Korea and Taiwan share another commonality: Their volatile security situation made the governments even more accountable to increase their own defence potential. It is important to emphasise that rents in Beck's examples, with the exception of Venezuela, are mainly political rents, not oil related rents. However, his analysis confirms the importance of context and the inclusion of above mentioned seven characteristics of *late rentierism*.

While many scientists use the (classical) rentier approach for analysing Arab Gulf states, there are only a few scientists who deal with the national oil companies (NOC)⁸⁷ or state owned enterprises (SOE)⁸⁸ which are decisive for the failure or success of the rentier states. It is important to highlight the fact that national oil companies have distinct objectives than privately- owned oil companies. "They are flagship enterprises for their countries, sources of national pride and employment, and often providers of public services like education, roads, airports and communications systems. They can also serve as instruments of foreign policy."⁸⁹ Accordingly, national oil companies rather reflect government aims and wishes

⁸⁶ Beck, Martin (2006), pp.22.

⁸⁷ term after Donald L. Losman (2010)

⁸⁸ term after Hertog, Steffen (2012): *Defying the resource curse. Explaining successful state-owned enterprises in rentier states*. In: *World Politics*, Vol. 62, No. 2, April 2010.

⁸⁹ Losman, Donald L. (2010), p. 433.

than profit maximising behaviour. The government's interference in business matters influences the companies performance and subsequently also the profit pool, which is generally far lower than those of privately owned companies. Extensive subsidies, artificially low gas prizes, hiring of (mostly inexperienced) personnel, highly bureaucratic company structures, corruption, subsidised retail sales for foreign policy purposes as well as governmental looting to content family and friends add to the pool's lowering. Consequently, the system rewards rent-seeking more than productive activities.⁹⁰ These institutionalised behaviour patterns summarised above contradict the two necessary, yet not sufficient preconditions, identified by Steffen Hertog, which state-owned enterprises need to fulfil in order to be successful.⁹¹ Hertog stresses the importance of a *non-populist environment* as well as a substantial *autonomy in economic decision making* to avoid "that too many cooks spoil the broth." He derives his preconditions from the comparison between Saudi Arabia's Aramco, which is far more centralised and profit oriented than most other Arab oil companies and therefore, far more successful, and Venezuela's SOEs, which suffer from exactly the two deficits. Economic populism, which characterises Venezuela's SOEs, is defined as the "*political use of economic resources to mobilize support from (...) marginalized classes, newly recruited as a support base of the regime.*"⁹² Economic populism is often tied to patronage, egalitarian rhetoric and anti-elite bias, which eventually led to target conflicts and compromised managerial autonomy. The manipulation of prices, welfare tasks and over-employment make it impossible to focus on profit. Furthermore, distributional goals restrict the operational autonomy of managers, are reflected in wages above market level and extensive social services as well as an egalitarian pay scheme. Class empowerment, including worker unions, is prioritised to a stable management. All this leads to inefficiency and soft budget constraints and in the end to the "failure" of SOEs. According to Hertog, populist economics are more important in determining success or failure than import substitution industrialisation (ISI) or state ownership. More precisely, ISI in combination with populist economics lead to SOE failure. But a non-populist movement alone is not sufficient as long as managers are caught up in fighting

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 433.

⁹¹ Hertog, Steffen (2012), p. 289.

⁹² *ibid.*, p. 278.

between governments, parliaments, interest groups and the public. Therefore, economic decision autonomy is another precondition which decides over failure or success. Managers can focus on profit while they only have to report to the respected ruler alone.⁹³

The rentier state theory is one of the most dominant theories about monarchical authoritarianism in the gulf states. Although Jordan profits from political rents, the rentier state approach has only limited validity. Interestingly, there is another famous approach to the topic of monarchical resilience, which is directed *against* the one- dimensional approach of the classical rentier state and applies primarily to the gulf states. For Michael Herb, rents only explain that oil monarchies will not democratise, not that they will survive over time.⁹⁴ He came up with another very well cited explanation.

2.6 Institutionalism: Michael Herb's "All in the family"

"Thirty years ago, a group of six books on ruling monarchies would have been considered the last testaments of an endangered anachronism."⁹⁵

With these words started Russell E. Lucas his article about monarchical survival, referring, amongst others,⁹⁶ to Michael Herb's book "All in the family." He emphasised their importance in overcoming the long-lasting argument that Arab monarchs survived because of the persistence of traditional Islam. Instead, „these six books draw the Middle East back into a debate within the social sciences about the legacies of political institutions and regime types.“⁹⁷ According to Herb, monarchical resilience is best understood if taking into account the structural

⁹³ *ibid.*, pp. 278.

⁹⁴ Herb, Michael (1999): *All in the family. Absolutism, revolution, and democracy in the Middle Eastern monarchies*. Albany: State University of New York Press, pp. 255.

⁹⁵ Lucas, Russel E. (2004), p. 103.

⁹⁶ the other books are: Fandy, Mamoun (1999): *Saudi Arabia and the politics of dissent*. New York: Palgrave.; Kechichian, Joseph A. (2001): *Succession in Saudi Arabia*. New York: Palgrave.; Kostiner, Joseph (ed.) (2000): *The challenge of modernity*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.; Massad, Joseph A. (2001): *Colonial effects. The making of national identity in Jordan*. New York: Columbia University Press.; Tétreault, Mary Ann (2000): *Stories of democracy: politics and society in contemporary Kuwait*. New York: Columbia University Press.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 103.

peculiarities of royal families. Monarchies are a subtype of authoritarian rule,⁹⁸ in which “ a person of royal descent has inherited the position of head of state in accordance with accepted practice or the constitution.”⁹⁹ Within the general definition of monarchy, Herb defines further subtypes: dynastic monarchies and non-dynastic.¹⁰⁰

In *dynastic monarchies* the family forms a stable ruling institution placing family members in all important state offices, from the highest to the lowest. Furthermore, the royal family invented mechanisms to regulate family conflicts internally, which guarantees that no family member is able to threaten the family's dominance. Dynastic monarchy developed first in 1938 in Kuwait by the Al Sabah, but is now to be found in almost all Arab oil monarchies.¹⁰¹

In non- dynastic monarchies, on the other hand, monarchs rule alone, without an extensive family throughout the state apparatus. Though non- dynastic kings have more personal power, their regimes are less stable.¹⁰²

Being a dynastic or non- dynastic monarch is a decisive element in explaining the monarchical reactions to the protests of the Arab spring. Because of the institutional advantages their non-dynastic systems granted the individual monarchies, Jordan and Morocco, the possibility to divert their people's anger in a way dynastic monarchies could not. Both kings kept ultimate power in their hands, while introducing limited democratic reforms. Dynastic monarchies on the other hand, could not follow their example that easily. While king Abdullah II were able to fire four prime ministers, “firing the prime minister in Saudi Arabia would mean the king firing himself. In Bahrain, it would mean the king firing his uncle; in Qatar, the emir firing his cousin; and in Kuwait¹⁰³ , the emir firing his nephew.”¹⁰⁴ It is also no

⁹⁸ Lucas, Russel E. (2004), p. 108.

⁹⁹ Ezrow, Natasha M.; Franz, Erica (2011): *Dictators and dictatorship: understanding authoritarian regimes and their leaders*. New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group. p.242

¹⁰⁰ Herb, Michael (1999), pp. 2

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁰² *ibid.*, p. 9; pp. 209.

¹⁰³ The emir fired his nephew after a year to replace him with another family member.

¹⁰⁴ Gause III, Gregory F. (2013), p. 18.

option for dynastic monarchs to appoint a commoner as prime minister only because he holds the support of Parliament. Such a political move would restrict the monarchical control over a strategically important position. In short, the structural political reforms available to the non-dynastic monarchs were not available to the dynastic monarchs, because changing their governments would have challenged their right to rule. In part, this restriction explains the brutal responses of primarily Arab gulf monarchies to the uprisings.

While all the above mentioned perspectives describe mainly domestic factors, Hillel Frisch emphasised the importance of a “two-level game of omnibalancing”¹⁰⁵ between domestic and international levels for regime survival.

2.7 Geostrategy: external support

During the 19th and early 20th century the French and the British were engaged in a struggle over dominance in the Middle East. The Cold War brought the United States and the Soviet Union into the game but left the United States as winner. “What is now happening, and it is definitely a new phase, is the sense that the United States is there alone will not welcome anyone else from without.”¹⁰⁶ Today, the United States is the only external power which has any substantial influence on the region but also substantial interests. It is therefore, that the literature on Middle Eastern geopolitics emphasises primarily the relations to the United States. Analyses on inter-Arab states are an exception, partly due to the lack of useful concepts.¹⁰⁷ Forms of co-operation are numerous: “They provide each other with ideational (sic!) and material support; They protect each other on the international level- for example, through vetoes in the UN Security Council; They help each other in military- and security- related issues; They learn from each other in how to deal with opposition and how to build a solid political party; They exchange ideas

¹⁰⁵ Frisch, Hillel (2011), abstract.

¹⁰⁶ Falk cf. in Baghdat, Gawdat (1994): *The Middle East. The American connection*. In: *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 17, p. 89.

¹⁰⁷ Erdmann, Gero; Bank, André; Hoffmann, Bert; Richter, Thomas (2013): *International cooperation of authoritarian regimes; towards a conceptual framework*. In: *GIGA Working paper* no. 229.

on the design of development strategies; And they provide each other with direct personal advice on how to cope with insurgent forces and how to control internet usage."¹⁰⁸ Some attempts have already been undertaken to put more emphasise on inter Arab relations. An excellent example is Laurie A. Brand's study of Jordan's inter-Arab relations which links Jordan's alliance shifts to its economic situation. Rachel Vanderhill's¹⁰⁹ and Erdmann, Bank, Hoffmann and Richter's¹¹⁰ analysis are two more examples. They provide us with some mechanisms how to analyse authoritarian co-operation.¹¹¹ Such analysis are especially important in light of Huntington's observation that demonstration effects during the third wave were "strongest among countries that were geographically proximate and culturally similar."¹¹² If there is not a single democracy in the Middle East demonstration effects will not come into existence. Unfortunately, also this thesis will mainly focus on the alliance of Jordan and Saudi Arabia with the United States and can only touch inter- Arab relations on the very surface.

2.8 Further explanations

While the above mentioned causes for monarchical resilience dominate the scientific literature, there are certainly more factors, such as the following:

2.8.1 The Military

"No institution matters more to a state's survival than its military, and no revolution within a state can succeed without the support or at least the acquiescence of its armed forces."¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ *ibid*, p. 5.

¹⁰⁹ Vanderhill, Rachel (2012): *Learning to be bad: how autocratic leaders adopt strategies from abroad to maintain power*. New Orleans. online access: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2108791 (10.01.2014)

¹¹⁰ Erdmann, et. al (2013), pp. 229.

¹¹¹ Vanderhill identifies *demonstration effects, purposive and collaborative action by external „change agents,“ and pressure*; Erdman et al. identify *learning/ lessen drawing, competition, emulation/ mimicry, legal coercion, conditionality, persuasion and socialisation*.

¹¹² Huntington, Samuel (1991): *The third wave: democratization in the late twentieth century*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, p. 102

¹¹³ Barany. Zoltan (2011): *Comparing the Arab Revolts. The Role of the Military*. In: *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 22, No. 4, p., 28.

No one would doubt the role of the military for the success or the failure of a revolution. The question is therefore not if the military plays any role but under which circumstances does the military intervene on which side? Zoltan Barany analysed the militaries' reactions to the uprisings and concluded that the countries can be grouped into three categories: 1.) The military backed the revolts in Tunisia and Egypt. 2.) The military split over the protests in Libya and Yemen. 3.) The military opened fire against the protesters in Syria and Bahrain.¹¹⁴ The different reactions can partly be explained by the changing role of the military over the past few decades which has changed from an active political force to important and powerful actor in the background. The 1970s ended the direct political involvement of most armies which also ended the period of coup d'état. "The regime's taming of the monster"¹¹⁵ was caused by three aspects which led to closer ties between the military and the regime.¹¹⁶ 1.) Military expenditure in the Middle East is higher than in other world regions and the military always lobbies for more. Oil- related rents, international aid, and the psychological element of having the best military equipment to enhance national prestige are just three reasons which explain this development. 2.) Most armies began to invest highly in the civilian sector and became successful businessmen making use of their comparative advantages such as cheap labour or easy access to technology. 3.) A "military society"¹¹⁷ evolved over time which enjoys extra benefits and privileges such as extra residential areas, access to better health care, education and cheaper goods, etc. Generally speaking, the better the regime promotes the armed forces the better the chances that they will back up the regime. Likewise, a military which has used extensive force against civil society will rather defend the regime. Furthermore, external variables such as the calculation about an international intervention might also determine the military's reaction.¹¹⁸ "There is no substitute for detailed, particular knowledge of a country and its armed forces."¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 30.

¹¹⁵ Droz- Vincent, Philippe (2007): *From political to economic actors. The changing role of Middle Eastern Armies*. In: Schlumberger, Oliver (ed.): *Debating Arab authoritarianism: dynamics and durability in nondemocratic regimes*. Stanford: Stanford University Press , p. 197 (195-211)

¹¹⁶ the following three points are based on *ibid.*, pp. 199.

¹¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 203

¹¹⁸ Barany. Zoltan (2011), p. 29.

¹¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 30.

2.8.2 The *majlis* system

There is a long tradition of consultation between ruler and ruled in the countries of the Gulf which takes place in *majalis*¹²⁰. Originally, it was a public meeting held by amirs, shayks or the king himself where issues were discussed, allegiances renewed and, most importantly, wealth and power were displayed since “(p)ower had to be represented and visualised in order for the populace to fear and respect it.”¹²¹ There were different kind of majlis but those open to the public were an impressive demonstration of the not yet visible Saudi state. While in theory the majlis was open to everyone, it was usually attended by those who had to do business. The king initiated the discussion which not seldom ended in a royal monologue. The present audience was quiet unless not addressed directly by the king. Defeated notables were present as a proof of the king’s generosity and forgiveness. From time to time the king and his sons travelled through the desert holding majlis for the bedouin tribes. With the consolidation of the Saudi state the magnitude of power display gradually vanished but the majlis exist until today. According to Herb, the majlis connect the ruling family and the Saudi population to a degree otherwise not possible. This guarantees some stability but not enough as to explain their survival.¹²² The Al- Saud family uses the many princes and shayks, who act as intermediaries, to extend the *majlis* system over the whole country. In an effort to institutionalise this form of consultation, most Gulf countries introduced the *majlis al-shura*, a more formal version held by individual princes. Nevertheless, they are not granted legislative powers and its members, all appointed by the rulers, meet behind closed doors. Their importance is therefore largely symbolic. Although, it is every citizens right to complain to the *majlis*, it is said to be very difficult for ordinary citizens to get access and that Saudis “must go on bended knee to the majlis of a prince.”¹²³

¹²⁰ majlis is singular while majalis is plural

¹²¹ Al- Rasheed, Madawi (2002), p. 80.

¹²² Herb, Michael (1999), pp. 40.

¹²³ *ibid.*, p. 45.

2.9 Conclusion

The Arab spring has not changed much in the debate about Arab monarchical resilience. What has changed is the general awareness that the Arab world is not as stable as had been assumed. The more interesting question concerns the classification as necessary or sufficient variables. Bank, Richter and Sunik undertook a comparative-historical analysis of all the monarchies since 1945 using a fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA) and “contend that there is **no single sufficient condition** for monarchical survival- be it rent income, family participation or legitimation. When it comes to monarchical breakdown in the Middle East, our findings reveal the complexity underlying the revolutionary events (...) and highlight important **case-specific pathways** rather than overarching trends.”¹²⁴ One could claim that the support of the populations may present the only necessary factor. However, such a claim is impossible to make since their support is closely connected to other factors such as living conditions or safety. It should be obvious from the first two chapters that monarchical resilience and the Jordanian and Saudi survival of the Arab spring can not be ascribed to one factor, let alone cultural ones. Instead, it is the interplay of many factors which grew over time.

¹²⁴ Bank, André; Richter, Thomas; Sunik, Anna (2013): *Long term monarchical survival in the Middle East: a configurational comparison, 1945-2012*. In: *GIGA Working Paper*, No. 215, p.7. (emphasised by S.B.)

3. THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

3.1 Jordan's Arab spring

Jordan's encounter with the Arab spring has not been as fierce and violent as those in other countries, yet the kingdom experienced protests at a moderate scale. Already in 2010, unnoticed by the world public, workers, teachers and students protested for better living conditions.¹²⁵ In the same year, government was shocked by the manifesto of the "National Committee of Military Veterans" in which they admonished the government to withdraw Palestinians their full Jordanian citizenship. Those who would be unable to return to Palestine would be considered Jordanian until their return is possible. Those who are able to return should be granted Palestinian citizenship or valid Palestinian Authority travel papers. Furthermore, they urged the government "to "constitutionalize" the 1988 renunciation of Jordan's claim to the West Bank."¹²⁶ Jordan's protest movements gained new wind with the Arab spring. In 2011 protests took place all over the country on a weekly basis, mostly organised by the Muslim Brotherhood's International Action Front (IAF) or the Transjordanian *Jayeen* movement. The first non-partisan youth movement which was mainly organised via social media, united more than 3000 protesters from all social and political strata in the biggest sit-in demonstrations on March 24./25. A lot of protesters joined because they felt not represented by the existing parties and hoped for an alternative. Demonstrators called for „an elected, parliamentary government; an elected senate, an independent judiciary; accountability for corruption; civil and media liberties; free education and health care; economic reforms; and an end to security apparatus interference in public life.“¹²⁷ While the first day ended peacefully, some demands of the second day caused violent clashes, leading to one death and more than 100 injured:

¹²⁵ Labor Watch (2012): *Labor protests in Jordan 2010*. In: http://www.labor-watch.net/en/files/2010/pdf/Labor_protests_in_Jordan_2010.pdf (30.01.2014)

¹²⁶ Curtis, Ryan (2010): "We are all Jordan"...But who is we? In: <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero071310> ()

¹²⁷ International Crisis Group (2012): *Popular protest in North Africa and the Middle East (IX): Dallying with reform in a divided Jordan*. In: *Middle East/ North Africa Report* No. 118, p. 16.

“The Muslim Brotherhood youth made the mistake of declaring slogans that were not agreed upon. Our demand was a return to the 1952 constitution, but on that Friday [25 March] the Islamists took over the demonstration and called for demography- based electoral law and the fall of the *mukhabarat* director, whom they called by name. There were lots of East Bankers in the 24th march movement. For us these demands were too divisive, as they suggested support for the idea that the regime should fall.”¹²⁸

The next day, Premier Ma'rouf Al- Bakhit warned the Muslim Brotherhood not to instigate but to return to constructive dialogues. He also asked protesters to speak their mind without affecting traffic, a move which was suppose to divert attention from the actual demands.¹²⁹ By that time it was already to late for the movement. Despite several counter-statements by the organisers, the protests were regarded to be dominated by Islamists who would rally for the end of the monarchy. The following demonstrations in Amman could not attract more than a few hundred protesters. What was suppose to be the next major demonstration on July 15, 2011 was prevented by a massive police presence which prevented others from joining.¹³⁰

It was neither the frequency of protests nor the number of protesters that alarmed the government. It was its composition. It already started with the National Committee of Military Veterans and continued with the first Arab spring protests in rural areas which were organised by frustrated and angry Transjordanians, the main supporters of the Hashemite rule. When the *Jayeen* movement called for the “Day of Anger“ in many Jordanian towns and villages on January 14, the king reacted immediately and implemented a JD 160 million emergency plan cutting fuel taxes and capping food prices. “To be clear, the problem is not simply rising prices. It is fundamentally about the inability of the general public to meet their

¹²⁸ Khaled Kalaldehy, a Jayeen memeber cf in: *ibid.*, p. 17.

¹²⁹ Bouziane, Malika; Lenner, Katharina (2013): *Jenseits „monarchischer Stabilität“. Jordanien in Bewegung*. In: Jünemann Anette.; Zorob, Anja (ed.): *Arabellions. Politik und Gesellschaft des Nahen Ostens*, Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien, p. 113.

¹³⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 112.

basic needs at these or even lower prices."¹³¹ Protests continued. People called for the dismissal of Prime Minister Samir al- Rifai and the king obeyed and replaced him with Marouf al- Bakhit, already Prime Minister from 2005-2007. For a short while, it looked like the king's fast reactions calmed the demonstrators. But with the release of a statement signed by 36 prominent East Bankers who accused Queen Rania of corruption, protests gained new momentum. "She is building power centres for her interest that go against what Jordanians and Hashemites have agreed on in governing and is a danger to the nation and the structure of the state and the political structure and the institution of the throne."¹³² Several corruption scandals contributed to the growing anger of Jordanians. It is important to mention that, despite them openly criticising the regime to the extend that some blamed the king to be the head of corruption, no voices have been raised to end the monarchy.¹³³ However, despite common political and social issues, the deep running cleavages prevented a united front against the regime. To understand this cleavage, one need to understand the "hard word" the Hashemite rulers inceded into creating a united *Hashemite* kingdom.

3.2 Religion, tradition and myths

With the end of the Great Arab Revolt came the greatest betrayal for the Arabs. Although no one really knew what to do with the area today known as Jordan, the British did not keep their promise of an independent united Arabia. At the end, they decided to give Abdullah a chance and introduced him as amir.

With the help of the British Abdullah began to build up the nation, starting with the physical infrastructure including roads, schools, telephone lines, and a bureaucratic system. The physical infrastructure was complemented by the creation of a national narrative. In the early 1920, the population was about 225,000 predominantly Arab and Sunni Muslims, with some Circassians and Christians. While 54% was settled in villages and a few towns, the rest belonged

¹³¹ Abu- Rish, Ziad (2011): *Jordan's "Day of Anger"* In: <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/460/jordans-day-of-anger> (13.02.2014)

¹³² Al-Khalidi, Suleiman (2011): *Jordan's tribes criticize queen's role, Palestinian heritage*. In: <http://www.jmcc.org/news.aspx?id=2350> (30.01.2014).

¹³³ Bouziane, Malika; Lenner, Katharina (2013), p. 122;

to four main tribal nomadic groups.¹³⁴ The area already contained many identities yet no Hashemite one. The new narrative had to create a unifying identity which would not only made the people accept the new borders but made them accept the new Hashemite rule. As descendent of the Prophet Muhammad, the Hashemite family could already rely on a solid religious legitimacy which had been the main reason for their rule over the two holy places of Islam, Mecca and Medina. However, they ruled in cooperation with the Ottoman sultans, without which it would have not been possible. The Hijaz was an economically weak area and the Ottomans had to send troops and money to keep the tribes from raiding pilgrims. The Sharifian appointed to rule over the Hijaz was raised and educated in Istanbul under Ottoman supervision. When send to Mecca it was usually the first time for him to come to the area. He was expected to rule the tribes who in return were expected to follow their lead. Bribes and coercion were well-established, necessary means to pacify the different tribal confederations and to guarantee the Sharifian rule on behalf of the Ottoman sultans. Religious legitimacy has always been central to the Hashemite rule, yet never enough. Therefore, the national narrative of the new Transjordanian emirate had to go beyond, if bribe and coercion were not suppose to be the dominant means of pacification and unity. In an attempt to comprehend those narrative constructions, Betty S. Anderson analysed Jordanian textbooks until 1975 in which the Hashemites presented their own „personal history as synonymous wit the national history - both Jordanian and Arab.“¹³⁵ Using the language of modernity, they emphasise the important role of Sheik Husayn Sharif before and during the Great Arab Revolt. „Throughout the textbooks, Sharif Husayn´s fight to protect and expand the rights of the Arabs is reiterated, (...) By 1959, the textbooks started to focus on the idea, that Sharif Husayn had made contact with and was welcomed by the Arab secret societies of Damascus when he recognized the oppression of the local Ottoman governor and the overall tyranny of the Young Turk government in Istanbul. As “leader of the Arab rebirth“ he called on the Arabs to „Come to the Jihad, Come to the Jihad.““¹³⁶ A similar description of Sharif Husayn can be found on the official government website of King Abdullah II:

¹³⁴ *ibid.*, p. 220.

¹³⁵ Anderson, Betty S. (2001): *Writing the nation: Thextbooks of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*. Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East, Volume 21, Number 1&2, p. 13.

¹³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 10.

“Sharif Hussein Bin Ali, well known as the leader of the Great Arab Revolt and the Sharif of Mecca, (...) earned support among Arabs by opposing Istanbul's totalistic policies in the Hijaz. Some historians say that, even then, he was preparing for Arab independence. **Indeed, the idea that the Arabic-speaking people were a nation, deserving of independent recognition, is often thought to have originated with Sharif Hussein.** In 1916, Sharif Hussein allied the Arabs with British forces, leading, along with his sons, Abdullah and Faisal, numerous tribes from the Hijaz in a revolt that liberated the Levant from Ottoman control.”¹³⁷

Due to Husayn's importance for the revolution, the Hashemites claim to be the true leaders of the Arab nationalist movement, which is based on the idea „that the Arabs are a people linked by special bonds of language and history (and many would add, religion)“¹³⁸. Through their Hashemite rulers, the Transjordanian citizens were part of the Arab world. Furthermore, the Hashemites brought modernity to the region for which the students should be grateful and obedient.¹³⁹ However, the Hashemites could not ignore the many, mainly tribal identities existing in the region, which is why the king presented himself as modern leader in form of a father figure:

“The etiquette of respect and exchange is the manner „sons“ (the Jordanian tribes) should adopt in the presence of their „father“ (the Hashemite monarch), and the observance of this etiquette turns certain historical topics and modes of expression into evidence of disrespect.”¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷King Abdullah: The Hashemites In: http://kingabdullah.jo/index.php/en_US/pages/view/id/157.html (emphasised by S.B.) (12.12.2013)

¹³⁸ Khalidi, Rashid (1991): The origins of Arab nationalism: introduction. In: Khalidi, Rashid et al (ed.): The origins of Arab nationalism. New York, Oxford: Columbia University Press, p. VII.

¹³⁹ Anderson (2001), p. 9.

¹⁴⁰ cf Shyrock in ibid., p. 9.

This familial allegiance between the population and the Hashemites became “inherent” to that degree that no Jordanian wondered about king Hussein’s answer when he was asked about the kingdom’s stability while he was treated for cancer:

“There is life and there is an end to life, this is the way with everyone. But rest assured, I am not over and done with, I am in good shape and fighting fit, and doing my best on my side. I have the best medical care in the world, and the doctor’s assurance is great. We will get over this illness soon.”¹⁴¹

Jordanian textbooks present the Hashemites as the only relevant actors in history, downgrading all the other actors, including Britain, to mere supporting actors. Not only Sharif Husayn, but every king is praised for his passionate fight for Jordan. In accordance with Arab nationalist sentiments¹⁴², the Hashemites portray themselves as protectors of the Palestinians and as fighters for their cause. In some textbooks, Palestinian refugees are even presented as a fourth group of Jordanian inhabitants.¹⁴³

Since king Hussein defeated the Jordanian National Movement, schoolbooks “take on the form of hagiography”¹⁴⁴ History writing in the Hashemite kingdom tends towards embellishments which reveals more about the personal interests and goals than about the actual historical facts. Despite his central role in the „symbolic touchstone of Arab nationalism”¹⁴⁵, (the Great Arab Revolt), it was neither Husayn who initiated Arab independence, nor was there any united Arab nationalism at eve of the revolt. Moreover, not everyone was convinced of Arab independence. And yet, for no other reason than legitimacy, this interpretation was necessary for the Hashemite family.

¹⁴¹ Shryock, Andrew (2000): *Dynastic modernism and its contradictions: testing the limits of pluralism, tribalism, and king Hussein’s example in Hashemite Jordan*. In: *Arab Studies Quarterly* Vol.22, No. 3 p. 61

¹⁴² Bank, André; Valbjorn, Morten (2011): *The New Arab Cold War: rediscovering the Arab dimension of Middle Eastern regional politics*. In: *Review of International Studies*, p. 9.

¹⁴³ Anderson, Betty S. (2001), p. 9.

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁴⁵ Wilson, Mary C. (1991): The Hashemites, the Arab Revolt and Arab nationalism. In: Khalidi, Rashid et al (ed.): *The origins of Arab nationalism*. New York, Oxford: Columbia University Press, p. 204.

During the Ottoman Empire, Arab nationalism was inspired by 19th century perception of inferiority of Islam to the West.¹⁴⁶ It remained a minority movement during the Arab revolt, until the defeat of the Ottoman left no other choice to Arabism. Most pre-1914 nationalists were not necessarily advocates of Arab independence, rather Arab nationalism started as a minority movement of a small elite fighting for greater Arab rights and higher political offices. They were not fighting against the Young Turks, but against a system much older. Ottomanism and Arab nationalism in its infancy were no antagonisms. Indeed, the majority of post-nationalists were pre- 1914 loyal Ottomanists.¹⁴⁷

“The nationalist movement was led by the urban aristocracy and moulded in their image: the change did not begin until after 1945. These notables, including Husayn, did not expect or want full independence from Istanbul but an improvement in their status through a shift of power from the centre to the localities.”¹⁴⁸

It was not until the war that appeals to the Arabic population were based on Islamic legitimacy and solidarity.¹⁴⁹ Arab nationalism was formulated in Damascus, Beirut and Egypt. When the Great Arab Revolt was declared on June 10, 1916 the Hijaz „was not at all nationalistic, and the first leader of the revolt, Sharif Husayn, was a very late recruit to the cause of Arab nationalism.”¹⁵⁰ The Hijaz was economically poor, had little agriculture, few natural resources, they paid very little taxes and provided no troops for the armed forces. In fact, the Ottomans send money, food and soldiers. Revenues came from pilgrims and governmental power was shared between Istanbul and the amir of Mecca, who was chosen by the sultan among the descendent of prophet Muhammad. Consequently, the amirs

¹⁴⁶ Dawn, Ernest C. (1991): The origins of Arab nationalism in the Hijaz, 1882-1914. In: Khalidi, Rashid et al (ed.): Th origins of Arab nationalism. New York, Oxford: Columbia University Press, pp. 4.

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 16.

¹⁴⁸ Fieldhouse (2006), p. 29. ????

¹⁴⁹ *ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁵⁰ Ochsenswald, William (1991): Ironie origins: Arab nationalism in the Hijaz, 1882-1914. Khalidi, Rashid et al (ed.): Th origins of Arab nationalism. New York, Oxford: Columbia University Press, p. 190.

were not interested in fostering Arab nationalism. Husayn was a loyal Ottomanist but neither was he an Arab nor an Ottoman nationalist. His interests lay in an autonomous Hijaz and he opposed centralisation from Istanbul, especially the Hijaz railroad. According to Wilson, Sharif was „in a position similar to that of the Arab urban notables in the Fertile Crescent, whose loss of power after 1908 led to the coalescence of the ideology of Arabism.“¹⁵¹ Even before the war began Husayn knew he had to find a new alliance. All of a sudden, an independent Arab state under Hashemite rule seemed appealing.¹⁵² With Britain being on the horizon, Sharif had the chance to trade Hijazi loyalty for either its independence under British protection or for an Arab state, which would be legitimised by Arab nationalism. This ambiguity found its expression in the different roles Husayn's sons played. While Faysal's military activities took him outside of the Hijaz following nationalist sentiments, Abdullah stayed in the interior Arabia, where he defended Hashemite authority. Abdullah was primarily interested in a kingdom of south Arabia, which included Asir and Yemen. This brought him further away from nationalism and closer to the sphere of interest of Ibn Sa'ud.¹⁵³ The Hashemite's position concerning a war against the Ottomans went was not a linear process. „Thus Husayn's entry into the war was not the result of his conversion to the concept of Arab identity but of his and his son Abdullah's assessment of how the situation could best be turned to the advantage of the Hashemites.“¹⁵⁴ Despite weak nationalist sentiments, the Arab revolt only succeeded with the help of the Hijazi population. They supported Husayn because they wanted to keep their privileges and they wanted to keep the Hijaz autonomous from Ottoman centralisation. „Sharif Husayn and his sons demonstrated considerable skill in leading the Hijazis toward independence; their personal abilities, prestige, rank, and courage were major ingredients in bringing about the success of the revolt.“¹⁵⁵ Despite their leadership skills it was neither Sharif Husayn who initiated nationalism, nor was his primary concern an independent Arab state.

¹⁵¹ Wilson, Marc : (1991): p. 207.

¹⁵² Ochsenwald, William (1991), pp. 192.

¹⁵³ Wilson, Mary C. (1991), pp. 214.

¹⁵⁴ Fieldhouse pp. 28

¹⁵⁵ Ochsenwald, William (1991), pp. 201.

3.3 Divide and rule

“...the tribes of Jordan have always been at the centre of our confidence, a source of our pride and a target of our attention since the very beginning. The tribes of Jordan are our kinsmen who have served the kingdom under the most adverse conditions and circumstances, always performing their duty to the nation. The tribes had supported the Great Arab Revolt since the start and helped the late King Abdullah found the Kingdom, offering great sacrifices to attain his objective.”¹⁵⁶

Many scholars attribute Jordan a high degree of flexibility which has provided the kingdom with necessary strategies to survive into the 21st century and beyond. This flexibility rests on well-known divide-and-rule strategies which Jordan has not invented but brought to perfection. A tribal elite as the state's backbone, a voting system designed to balance the party landscape, soft bureaucratic coercion and time- winning measures are its core elements. To a great extent, the resilience of Jordan's monarchy rests on the deep division of Jordan's population along national lines which is reinforced by an economic division. It was this division that prevented a nationwide protest movement against the king and the regime despite the common political, social and economic concerns.

Jordan's population is divided along ethnic lines between East Bank Jordanians, or Transjordanians, and Jordanians of Palestinian origin. East Bank Jordanians already lived in the area before the Arab- Israeli war of 1948 which brought numerous Palestinian refugees into Jordan. Especially under king Hussein patronage networks flourished granting the tribal population benefits in return for their loyalty, such as access to health care for the whole family¹⁵⁷, retirement benefits and access to subsidised goods beyond those for the populace. Today, East Bankers dominate the state bureaucracy, the armed forces, the police and the secret service. State benefits did not necessarily make them rich but was a

¹⁵⁶ King Hussein cf in Shyrock p. 63.

¹⁵⁷ Social and health security covers the whole family of a male employee. For women, it is obligatory to proof their status as head of the household to receive the same benefit. In: Baylouny, Anne Marie (2008): Militarizing welfare: neo.liberalism and Jordanian policy. In: Middle East Journal, vol. 62, no. 2, pp. 287.

guarantee for a stable income and additional benefits.¹⁵⁸ Since the 1960s, one of the largest employers for East Bankers has been the military, making them „a subgroup of East Bankers“. ¹⁵⁹ In times of economic crisis, the Jordanian regime relied heavily on the military and security services. In 1992, Jordan changed from a compulsory military service to a volunteer army which allowed them to keep it under Transjordanian control.¹⁶⁰ Besides general Transjordanian benefits, the soldiers are allowed to retire at the age of 30 which gives them the opportunity to look for another job while receiving a pension.¹⁶¹ During structural adjustment programs the military was the only sector growing and armed forces continued to receive their privileges. Military budget steadily increased and new economic enterprises emerged. In a country that hardly spends money on R&D, the *King Abdullah II Design and Development Bureau* sticks out and provides military training, equipment and research with the aim to become the leading producer for the Middle East.¹⁶²

Palestinians, on the other hand, are institutionally excluded from state offices and the military, thus leaving them the private sector. Remittances from family members working in the Gulf states increased their wealth which reinforced the ethnic division by an economic gap. Historical events such as king Abdullah I being murdered by a Palestinian, or Palestinian guerillas fighting against the Jordanian army during the *Black September* crisis, intensified distrust. Some brief speculations arose that the regime would choose the Palestinians as its support base. However, such a change would require a new definition of the national identity. ¹⁶³ A task unthinkable given previous efforts of the Hashemite regime and the entailed instability such an effort would create. Instead, after the Black September crisis, Palestinians were encouraged to work abroad which “removed” them from the public sector. “Jordan “solved” its domestic integration problem

¹⁵⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 278

¹⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p. 301.

¹⁶⁰ Rynan, Curtis a (2010).

¹⁶¹ Baylouny, Anne Marie (2008), pp. 287.

¹⁶² *ibid.*, p 302.

¹⁶³ *ibid.*, p. 281.

through the export of primarily Palestinian labour“¹⁶⁴ with the aim of the public sector’s “Jordanization“.¹⁶⁵

The economic crisis of the 1980s and Jordan’s position in the Gulf war led to the decrease of foreign aid which began to challenge the country’s stability. Before the economic crisis in 1989 Jordan received up to \$1.3 billion from Gulf countries. In 1990 payments dropped to \$ 393 million and in 1991 it was only \$164 million.¹⁶⁶ Living costs increased forcing the government to subsidize more and more products such as wheat, sugar and petroleum, bread, meat, cheese, soda, rice, pasta, coffee, tea and powdered milk. These measures put heavy fiscal burden on the state. To keep up government spending Jordan turned to the International Monetary Fund for help. Structural adjustment plans including the removal of subsidies, privatisation and the elimination of customs duties were the consequences. The situation was aggravated by the approximately 300,000 Palestinians fleeing from the Gulf War (back) to Jordan. Consequently, remittances dropped from more than \$ 1 billion before 1987 to \$623 million in the year of the uprisings. The Gulf War of 1990/91 lowered remittances to \$500 million in the first year and to \$ 450 million in the second year.¹⁶⁷ Prices increased between 30 % and 50% for fuel, cigarettes, phone bills, water, fertilisers while the removal of subsidies were planned.¹⁶⁸ Because many Jordanians depended on government subsidies their removal caused mayor riots all over the country in 1989. The regime saw no other chance but to introduce, what Robin Glenn termed “defensive democratization“: „Defensive democratization, even in the absence of democratizing social pressure, is a state strategy to maintain the dominant political order in the face of severe state fiscal crisis.“¹⁶⁹ Such strategies allow the king to keep control and should be seen as means to strengthen the

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*, p. 290.

¹⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p. 289.

¹⁶⁶ Glenn, Robinson E. (1998): Defensive democratization in Jordan. In: *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 3, p. 390.

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p. 390.

¹⁶⁸ Anne marie. 291.

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p. 389.

regime's position, not as a mere reaction out of fear or insecurity.¹⁷⁰ The political opening led to another possibility to include regime loyal East Bankers while excluding Palestinians and the Muslim Brotherhood. At the same time, liberalisation politics threatened the livelihood of the Transjordanians, leaving many angry and frustrated.

After the Islamists and leftist gained 44 out of 80 seats in the first elections following the political opening, the government introduced the controversial „*single non transferable vote*“ system (SNTV), which only finds use in Afghanistan, Vanuatu and Jordan. Its implementation has to be perceived in the global context of Israeli- Palestinian peace negotiations in Oslo and the subsequent Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty in 1994. With the peace treaty on its way, Islamist criticism had to be minimised which could best be achieved through the electoral system.¹⁷¹ In the old “block vote” system, a voter could cast as many votes as there were seats in the district. This allowed them to vote for some candidates on the basis of tribal affiliation as well as on the basis of party ideology or party program.¹⁷² The SNTV on the other hand, allows Jordanians to vote for only one candidate in multimember districts of disproportional size. The Jordanian electoral landscape consists of 45 multimember districts. In 2010, the government divided those multimember districts in subdistricts equaling its total seat allocation and forcing candidates to be more localized. Voters can cast their vote in any subdistrict they want, while candidates compete in one subdistrict. By the time they declare their candidacy they are not suppose to know against whom they compete. At least theoretically. As Ellen Lust and Sami Hourani point out: „This system puts a premium on insider information. (...) Rather than being placed on one list (...) the top „teams“ (candidates) are spread around to be sure that each succeeds (...).“¹⁷³ This mechanism provides the Ministry of Interior with the means to manipulate the list of candidates behind closed doors and to get rid of unpleasant adversaries. This guarantees the government the parliament they want: “loyalist, royalist, tribal

¹⁷⁰ *ibid.* p. 391.

¹⁷¹ Bank, André (2010): Wahlen in Jordanien: Islamistischer Boykott und autoritäre Kontinuität. In: GIGA Focus Nahost, no. 12, p. 2.

¹⁷² International Crisis Group (2012), p. 6.

¹⁷³ Hourani, Sami; Lust, Ellen (2011): Jordan votes: election or selection. In: Journal of Democracy, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 123.

and mostly Transjordanian.¹⁷⁴ Tribal dominance in parliament is guaranteed through a higher ratio of seats-to-voters in rural districts than in urban - Palestinian dominated - districts. Elections in Jordan are neither a positive step towards democracy nor do they create public confidence in the government. Parliament's legislative power is severely limited to suggesting, amending, approving and rejecting suggestions initiated by the cabinet, which is appointed by the king. Consequently, parliament is viewed by the population and by many observer as "an arena in which MPs and their constituents seek privileged access to state resources."¹⁷⁵ Many MPs are therefore referred to as "service MPs"¹⁷⁶ and the parliament as "Dienstleistungs-parlament"¹⁷⁷ However, André Bank argues not to dispose elections as "pseudo-demokratisches Reformtheater für die eigene Bevölkerung und die westlichen Geberländer"¹⁷⁸ because access to parliament is highly competitive. Instead of democratic concerns, economic self-interests and the wish to legitimise one's status as *wasta* promote competition. Personal motivations aside, the system itself influences the candidate's behaviour towards "the desired behaviour."¹⁷⁹ It forces the candidates to pursue a certain kind of election campaign to win. Usually, electoral campaigns start with the candidate seeking approval from his tribe and activating his whole family and friends as support. Many of the larger tribes hold family meetings to decide who they would set up as candidate. Campaign events usually have a festive character where people don't wanna hear speeches but show their support while they eat and drink. Consequently, these events are rather closed events, though nominally open for everyone.¹⁸⁰ Particularly low electoral thresholds encourage candidates to compete in the first place, and small districts with orientation on a single candidate in combination with a proportional system encourage patronage networks. Since voters can only cast one vote, candidates need half the votes they

¹⁷⁴ Curtis, Ryan b (2010): *Déjà vu all over again? Jordan's 2010 elections*. In: http://mideastafrica.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/11/15/jordanians_go_to_the_polls (01.12.2013)

¹⁷⁵ Hourani, Sami; Lust, Ellen (2011), p. 120.

¹⁷⁶ *ibid.*, p. 120.

¹⁷⁷ Bank, André (2010), p. 2.

¹⁷⁸ *ibid.*, p 2.

¹⁷⁹ Barwig, Andrew (2012): *The "new palace guards:" Elections and elites in Morocco and Jordan*. In: *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 66, No. 3, p. 429.

¹⁸⁰ Hourani, Sami; Lust, Ellen (2011), p. 121.

needed in the previous electoral process to win. The system grants too many benefits as to oppose to its rules.¹⁸¹ However, even the system can not help a candidate if the government don't want him or her to be in parliament. It simply needs to choose a stronger opponent with a bigger tribal background for the unwanted candidate to loose. The system of controlled pluralism¹⁸² goes beyond the voting system, preferring soft coercion over physical repression. Since 2002, state employees have not been allowed to join parties. While in the past every registered party had to name 50 founding members from at least five of the twelve Jordanian provinces, they now have to provide 500 names. As a consequence, in 2008 22 of 36 members failed to meet the standards. Public gatherings have to seek state approval beforehand, making sure only non-sensitive topics such as denouncing terrorism, eliminating honour crimes, protests against Israel are allowed. Demonstrations with an open end are not allowed. If rallies are cleared out previously the police will not need to crack down harshly on the citizens.¹⁸³ Furthermore, soft coercion shows Western observers a picture of a vibrant civil society in a country striving hard for democratic reforms, while in fact the status quo remains untouched. There is hardly any brutal crackdown which is stuck in people's minds, such as Homs in Syria. This doesn't mean that violence never occurs. In fact, during the course of the Arab spring the Egyptian phenomenon of *baltagiya* (slugger) increased who attacked demonstrators without the police intervening. Another sit-in Tafileh in 2012 which was announced to have an open end was brutally dispersed by the police.¹⁸⁴

On the surface, it seems that the government takes people's concerns seriously and is constantly affirming its support for political reform: the government created committees, such as the National Dialogue Committee (NDC) in 2011, which was charged with the provision of proposals for constitutional amendments.¹⁸⁵ It was

¹⁸¹ Barwig, Andrew (2012), pp. 434.

¹⁸² Yom, Sean L. (2009): *Jordan: ten years of autocracy*. In: *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 151.

¹⁸³ *ibid.* pp. 157.

¹⁸⁴ Bouziane, Malika; Lenner, Katharina (2013), pp. 124.

¹⁸⁵ At first the NDC was only charged with providing proposals without constitutional review. Since many opposition groups, headed by the IAF, refused to join the committee, its agenda was widened to include constitutional reviews as well. However, the IAF still refused to join. In: International Crisis Group (2012), p.21.

designed as strictly advisory which reduced its credibility.¹⁸⁶ Already in 2005, the king charged another committee, the National Agenda, with the similar aim to draft a plan reordering the country's political and economic development. Recommendations suggested the universalisation of health insurance and a new proportional, party- list voting system.¹⁸⁷ Despite similar questions and answers the initiatives have one more thing in common, namely the fact that it „was dead on arrival, shelved just as soon as it was completed.“¹⁸⁸ Initiatives such as „Jordan First“ and „We are Jordan“ take their side along numerous „sloganeering initiatives“¹⁸⁹ with the aim of winning time as well as enhancing the king's image abroad as a convinced reformer. Another favoured move of king Abdullah is the dismissal of prime ministers in times of crisis and the cabinet reshuffle. Since king Abdullah took over power from his father in 1999, he appointed nine prime ministers, three during the Arab spring (many of whom served twice). Responding to the first protests, king Abdullan replaced Rifai, for many the personification of the corrupt private sector with Marouf al-Bakhit, a former general of the prominent East Bank Abbadi tribe. Bakhit was replaced with Awn Shawkar Al-Khasawneh who was replaced by Fayez al Tarawneh. The current prime minister is Abdullah Ensour. Prime Ministers as well as individual ministers serve as a buffer between the monarch and the public.¹⁹⁰ Sarah Tobin explains the frequent changes in government positions with an „aspiring cosmopolitanism“¹⁹¹ of a new middle-class which is about to reorganise social life in Amman. While the traditional centre was the family, the new cosmopolitan middle class in Amman prefers to spend its free time in shopping malls and coffee shops. Jordan has a long history of protest, yet the new middle class seems less interested in politics. Tobin argues that the government's response needs to be understood as a „series of consumerist political moves designed to distract middle-class Jordanians and aspiring cosmopolitans from issues that substantially threaten to undermine the stability of

¹⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p.21.

¹⁸⁷ Yom, Sean L. (2009), p. 161.

¹⁸⁸ Marwan Muasher cf. in International Crisis Group (2012), p.21.

¹⁸⁹ Yom, Sean L. (2009), 162.

¹⁹⁰ Yom, Sean L. (2009), p. 20.

¹⁹¹ Tobin, Sarah A. (2012): Jordan's Arab spring: the middle class and anti- revolution. In: Middle East Policy, Vol. 19, No. 1, p. 96.

the country.”¹⁹² Governmental responses to the protests are not suppose to achieve any substantial changes but to distract the middle class via increased spending capacity, new elections and new prime ministers. “Replacing the prime minister is enacted with the same penstroke as increasing salaries and food subsidies. Enhanced purchasing power by the middle class brings forth both new governments and new goods.”¹⁹³ While Tobins analyse is based on a Palestinian-Jordanian middle class, those active in politics with much to loose don’t remain apolitically. Instead, they get angry:

„In 1989, honestly, the state was not interested in real political and economic reform. Nothing came out of it. If the king had been genuinely interested and had the political will to do it, he would have done it, and we would have s constitutional monarchy today. It was in King Hussein’s interest that the National Charter process not produce meaningful change. But 2011 is not 1989. If King Abdullah doesn’t realise that, if he doesn’t open the system but keeps playing games, there will be problems with the masses in the streets, and he will loose it all.”¹⁹⁴

Despite East Banker’s preferential treatment the economic gap between East Bankers and Palestinians have widened consistently since the political opening in 1989. Structural adjustment programs resulted in austerity, which disadvantaged primarily the state- dependent East Bank Jordanians. Economic liberalisation opened the country to foreign investment and privatisation increased private ownership. King Abdullah II pushed for extensive economic liberalisation using the electoral system to recruit a new technocratic elite in parliament to vote for neoliberal reforms. Parliamentary elections in 2007 were the first to set the stage for the new elite.¹⁹⁵ Many projects of the new technocrats sparked criticism amongst the old elites of king Hussein, such as the sale of the King Hussein

¹⁹² *ibid.*, p. 104.

¹⁹³ *ibin.*, p. 105.

¹⁹⁴ International Crisis Group (2012), p. 19.

¹⁹⁵ However, king Abdullah dismissed the parliament again in 2009 because parliament would not vote fast enough for his neoliberal reforms and would not support them adequately. (Bank, André (2010), p. 4.)

Medical Center to Gulf investors.¹⁹⁶ However, the government continued with neoliberal reforms aggravating the livelihood of East Bank Jordanians who fear to become a minority in their own country with no one to back them. From a Transjordanian perspective, Palestinians always had the support of international NGOs which prioritised their empowerment. They have also dominated the private sector which is why East Bankers claim not to get jobs in the private sector. Now they even dominate the parliament, since some of the new technocrats are of Palestinian origins. Mistrust is deep and constantly reinforced on national as well as regional level. Besides many Iraqi refugees, who have never left Jordan, and the new wave of Syrian refugees, al- Watan al- Badee, the alternative nation, hangs like the sword of Damocles over the East Bankers. They fear that heightened Palestinian influence would lead to the delegitimisation of the Hashemite family and to a Palestinian state.¹⁹⁷ Therefore, they demand a harsher policy against Israel.

Palestinians on the other hand blame tribal structures to be the reason for Jordan's bad economy and emphasise their contribution to the country's development. Instead of being acknowledged for their contribution they are institutionally excluded from the state bureaucracy and the military. They accuse the state and the East Bankers to treat them like second-class citizens.

„Many Palestinians migrated to the Gulf for jobs and they were well qualified. They were educated and enlightened, and they worked not as laborers, but as managers and engineers, while Transjordanians were working in the public sector in Jordan, the military and government. Palestinians sent money home and helped to develop Jordan and make it flourish. And Arab leaders poured millions into Jordan because of the Palestinians. And this country became as you see it now. But the tribal parts of society are not used to private enterprise and even to labor. Many see it as beneath them. Unlike tribal culture, which limits what people are willing to do, Palestinians invested capital, developed banks,

¹⁹⁶ Yom, Sean L. (2009), pp. 151.

¹⁹⁷ Tobin, Sarah A. (2012), p. 97.

businesses and companies. The Jordanians remained running the state.”¹⁹⁸

Societal cleavages run deep in Jordan and despite many common grieves a pacification any time soon seems unlikely. However, one could interpret the common protests, short as they were, as a positive step. But the country seems to be caught in stalemate. Palestinians don't wanna demonstrate without the East Bankers out of fear their protests would be misinterpreted as “just another cry for more rights”. East Bankers, on the other hand, fear that a political emancipation of Palestinians would be the end of their privileged position and the end of a Jordanian state. Future coalitions will be difficult as long as all groups have another idea of national unity:

„Clearly, this term now means very different things to different groups of people. For the monarchy, to speak of national unity is to underscore Jordan's security concerns in a perennially tense region, to urge a collective pulling-together and, frankly, to enjoin all sides to indulge in less complaining. For Transjordanian nationalists, unity means preserving the state as is, and staunching the perceived hemorrhaging of the “Jordanian” parts of Jordan's identity. For many Palestinians, unity translates into much less emphasis on sub-national forms of identity and cessation of the practice of blaming the country's assorted problems on the Palestinian part of the population. Finally, for the country's many pro-democracy activists, who hail from all of Jordan's component communities, national unity is a call for deepening democratization and popular participation in politics, which they feel will enable a more inclusive and hence less explosive debate, whether over identity or other issues.”¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁸ Curtis, Ryan a(2010)

¹⁹⁹ Curtis, Ryan (2010a).

Until now, the regime has profited from Transjordanian-Palestinian mistrust. The relationship between East Bankers and the Hashemite king might be too closely connected as if they both want to end it. However, the king must take the concerns of East Bankers very seriously or otherwise Ryan Curtis' assessment could materialise in another late round of Jordan's spring:

"Transjordanian nationalists see themselves as the backbone of the country, but not necessarily (anymore) of the regime."²⁰⁰

3.4 External assistance

"Students of regime change know well how external factors such as Western democracy promotion and structural diffusion can help to ease the way for democratic transitions. Jordan presents a case of converse linkage- that is, how the international environment can strengthen autocratic states when their leaders procure vital support from foreign powers."²⁰¹

To a great extent, Jordan's survival has always depended on external forces, more precisely on their payments. Since the British held king Abdullah I financially on short leash, he started to do business with the Zionists. Jordanian-Zionist secret relations held up until the war in 1967. During the period of pan Arabism, king Hussein cut British ties, after Syria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia promised to replace the £12,5 million Britain had offered in exchange for his signing the Baghdad Pact. Even before the Arab Solidarity Pact was signed, Hussein secretly turned to the US, who had just announced the Eisenhower doctrine. His request seemed necessary, given the fact that in the end only Saudi Arabia paid up. Jordanian dependence on US payments began.²⁰² Since 1951, Jordan receives

²⁰⁰ Rany, Curtis (2010a)

²⁰¹ Yom, Sean L. (2009), p. 162.

²⁰² Fieldhouse (2006), pp.

economic aid and since 1957 military aid from the United States. US total aid for 2013 amounted to \$ 13.83 billion. In 2008²⁰³, the two countries agreed upon an annual foreign assistance of \$660 million²⁰⁴ which was renewed in February 2014. President Obama granted Jordan another \$1 billion loan „to help Jordanian economic development overall“²⁰⁵, but also to help the country deal with the Syrian refugee crisis. US economic assistance comes in form of cash transfer and USAID programs. About 53% of Jordan’s ESF is used to pay back Jordan’s foreign debt. USAID’s programs focus on a variety of sectors such as democracy assistance, education and water preservation, etc. Additionally, Jordan receives millions of food aid to purchase wheat. In 1996, Jordan was granted Major-non- NATO Ally status (MNNA), by the United States, which is a necessary designation for military bilateral contracts. Jordan is now allowed to receive weapons, training and loans to build up a conventional weapons system including F-16 fighters and Advanced Medium Range Air-to- Air Missiles (AMRAAM). In September 2013, the United States granted Jordan „its first-ever loan guarantee“²⁰⁶ of \$ 1.25 billion over a 7 year period, and in April 2013 Congress granted another \$ 200 million in cash transfer.²⁰⁷ Furthermore, Jordan is funded by the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) which invests \$ 275.1 million in an extensive water project to improve access and quality in Zarqa Governorate.²⁰⁸

This brief selection of US assistance only reveals a fractional amount of Jordanian foreign aid. The country needs every dollar, since Transjordanian loyalty is closely tied to state benefits. The kingdom can not pay for its expenses, since its economy is weak and ineffective. Jordan is a small country, with hardly any natural

²⁰³ The deal came at a time when US foreign aid was constrained and was meant to be a „testament to strong U.S.- Jordanian relations.“ In: Sharp, Jeremy M. (2014): Jordan: Background and U.S. relations. In: Congressional Research Service Report, p., 13.

²⁰⁴ \$ 660 million of foreign assistance split up in \$ 360 million as Economic Support Funds (ESF) and \$ 300 million as Foreign Military Financing (FMF)

²⁰⁵ Wolfgang Ben (2014): Obama offers \$1B loan to Jordan for refugees: It’s important to be ‘supportive of the kingdom’, In: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/feb/15/obama-offers-1b-loan-jordan-refugees-its-important/> (29.02.1014).

²⁰⁶ Sharp, Jeremy M. (2014), p. 15.

²⁰⁷ *ibid.*, pp.13.

²⁰⁸ MCA: *Jordan Compact. Quarterly Status Report*. In: <http://www.mcc.gov/documents/agreements/qsr-2013002126504-jordan.pdf> (27.02.2014).

resources, a business climate which is only “mediocre,”²⁰⁹ a small domestic market and a precarious geopolitical location. To compensate for these deficiencies, Jordan has to offer an extraordinary business climate, including beneficial taxation and regulations as well as an excellent infrastructure to leave the country’s competitors behind. Unfortunately, Jordan can not provide any of that. Rather, Jordan’s state-business relations suffer from many deficiencies caused by favouritism, in Jordan referred to as *wasta*. State- business relations are unfair and intransparent, since only those people with *wasta* get exclusive access to information and state contracts while administrative barriers do not exist for them. At times, even jurisdiction and taxation are arranged in their favours. The majority of ministers and MPs are businessmen or at least, businessmen have a relative or a close friend in parliament. These relationships set the barriers for people without *wasta* inaccessibly high while they only represent the interests of those people with *wasta*. Furthermore, people don’t get hired because they are the most qualified candidates, but because they are the brothers, sisters, cousins, or friends of someone important. This hiring procedure leads to a lot of unqualified and unmotivated employees. More importantly, rent-seeking is prioritised over innovation and competitiveness. Instead of inventing a good product, it is more profitable to seek access to decision makers. Overstuffing, unfair structures and rent-seeking takes up much of public funds and aggravates the country’s dependence on foreign aid. To overcome *wasta* is not that easy, since it is perceived by many Jordanian’s as part of their culture. Indeed, Jordanian politics is build on *wasta*, starting by the king who distributes benefits to close clients or the family at large.²¹⁰

Question remains, why international donors such as the United States or the IMF don’t condition their loans on, for instance, the fight against corruption? The answer here lies not with Jordan, but with the United States. The United States has two main interests in the region: stability and Israel. A stable region guarantees them the continuous flow of oil, which they are/ were very dependent on. The other reason concerns the security of Israel. Since Jordan shares the largest border with Israel, and since it is one of only two countries which signed a peace treats with them Jordan’s stability became a high priority for the United

²⁰⁹ Blume, Jonas; Loewe, Markus; Speer, Johanna (2008): *How favouritism affects the business climate: empirical evidence from Jordan*. In: *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 48, No. 2, p. 263.

²¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 265.

States. The USA benefits as much from a tribal Jordanian parliament as Jordan itself. "For Western powers, sustaining the peace treaty with Israel took precedence over any desire to deepen the nascent democratic reform agenda in Jordan, since the most vocal democratic groups in the kingdom also happen to oppose the accord."²¹¹ Consequently, the US reduced its critical rhetoric towards Jordan and instead, praises its democratic achievements and its stability.²¹² Jordan's economic situation is a key variable for its foreign relations policy. „In short, small indebted countries like Jordan tend to be inherently constrained in their foreign policy decision-making. Jordan, to be blunt, cannot afford to alienate its creditors and its source of foreign aid."²¹³ It has experienced financial turbulences in the past which it does not want to repeat. Jordan's stance in the Gulf war led to a decrease of foreign aid. The Iraq war terminated the Jordanian-Iraqi oil deal, which provided Jordan with 100% of oil but of which 50% were free.²¹⁴ Jordan's small budget and its huge expenditure make it necessary to keep good relations with foreign countries, who in return stabilise the Hashemite regime. As long as Jordan will not replace foreign aid with a solid economic development, it will keep the status quo.

²¹¹ Al- Momani, Mohammad; Yom, Sean L. (2008): *The international dimensions of authoritarian regime stability: Jordan in the post-cold war era*. In: *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 1. p. 40 (39-60)

²¹² Yom, Sean L, (2009), p. 164.

²¹³ Curtis, Ryan (2004): "Jordan First": *Jordan's inter- Arab relations and foreign policy under king Abdullah*. In: *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 3, p. 46. (43-62)

²¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 46.

4. THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

“Saudi Arabia is one of the late twentieth century’s most tightly controlled polities. The rocal family is very much in control of its territory and its peolpe (...). Yet the Al Saud do not rely only on repression to stay in power: they have **carrots as well as sticks** (...)²¹⁵

4.1 Saudi Arabia’s Arab spring

Already in March 2011, it was obvious that the protests in Saudi Arabia lost its momentum and would not attract nationwide mass protests. Yet, Saudi Arabia witnessed its largest and longest protest movement in its modern history. It was „an amalgam of protests, petitions, and online debates about political reform and the release of political prisoners that was influenced by the Arab spring.“²¹⁶ As in all other countries, Saudi Araia’s Arab spring was coordinated via social media where numerous activists expressed their demands for a constitutional monarchy and coordinated their actions, of which two prominent events found their way into international media. The first, was the failed „Saudi Day of Anger“ which was suppose to take place in several major cities and towns on March 11. The Saudi regime started an extensive media campaign and announced to use force if necessary. On TV and via text messages the Saudis were urged to stay at home. They also denounced the protests as an Iranian conspiracy. The uncertainty about who called for the protests as well as the fact that the facebook page was allegedly taken over from radicals²¹⁷ - other sources say it was the security service who spread false messages- contributed to the unwillingness of people to join. Additionally, official clerics issued fatwas prohibiting demonstrations and petitions. On the day of the protest, the Saudi regime blocked the site with a huge security presence, including checkpoints and helicopters. At the end, the “Day of Anger“

²¹⁵ Herb, Michael (1999), p. 168. (emphasised S.B.)

²¹⁶ Matthiesen, Toby (2012): *A “Saudi spring?”: The Shi’a protest movement in the eastern provinces 2011-2012*. In: *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 66, no. 4, p. 629.

²¹⁷ Lacroix, Stéphan (2011): *Is Saudi Arabia immune?* In: *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 22, No. 4, p. 54.

was no more than “little day of anger”²¹⁸ which attracted only a few hundred protester in the Eastern provinces, and none in Riyadh.

The second event which went viral on the internet was the video of Manal al-Sharif, an employee of Aramco, which showed herself driving a car. Since driving for women is not allowed, she was arrested on May 21. The arrest prompted activists to demonstrate for her release which happened on May 30. On the subsequent Twitter campaign #Women2drive at least five women drove cars.²¹⁹ It wasn't the first campaign of this kind. In 1990, around 50-70 women drove cars in Riyadh whereupon their passports were confiscated, and those holding university offices were fired. Their misdoing was derogatorily published in pamphlets and distributed in mosques all over Saudi Arabia. Although the women got their passports back and were allowed to teach again, female students refused to visit their classes because they “did not want to be taught by women of such morals.”²²⁰ As Gwenn Okruhlik mentioned, it couldn't have been the sole decisions of the women: „Each women would have sought the consent of her family before taking a public action that could harm the family reputation. Therefore, this demonstration likely had the support of many elite families in the three major cities.”²²¹ Furthermore, she states that “(t)he women drivers apparently had the permission of the al- Saud, likely granted by Prince Salman.”²²² It is plausible to assume that Manal's family knew about her action. Moreover, in the compounds of Aramco, which kept its U.S. corporate culture, women are allowed to drive.²²³ Al-Sharifs video as well as #Women2drive were good news for the regime, since they

²¹⁸ Al Nafjan, Eman (2011): *Saud Arabia's little day of rage. Saudis ignore calls for protests on Friday because of tight security and fears about manipulation by extremists*. In: <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/mar/12/saudi-protests> (12.12.2013)

²¹⁹ Lacroix, Stéphan (2001), p. 57.

²²⁰ Okruhlik, Gwenn (1999): *Rentier Wealth, unruly law, and the rise of opposition. The political economy of oil states*. In: *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 31, No. 3, pp. 302.

²²¹ *ibid.*, p. 303.

²²² *ibid.*, p. 303.

²²³ Hertog, Steffen (2013): *Saudi Aramco as a national development agent: recent shifts*. Policy brief. In: *Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF)*. http://www.peacebuilding.no/var/ezflow_site/storage/original/application/8d7708f9c4cc3073faf2501e793929c4.pdf, pp. 2. (13.12.2013)

diverted the attention from political reforms. Some religious officials even declared, that „there was nothing in Islam to prohibit women from driving.“²²⁴

The main stage of Saudi Arabia's Arab spring were the East provinces,²²⁵ home to Saudi Arabia's Twelver Shia, which amount to 10-15 per cent of the population. (2.5 out of 25 million) Protests mainly took place in towns and villages such as Qatif, `Awamiyya, Safwa and al- Rabi'a'iyya where the Shia has build up its own „semi- autonomous civil society and public sphere.“²²⁶ These towns have a long history of oppositional movements. In mixed Sunni-Shia regions protests hardly took place. Since the 1950s, Shi'a has been suffering from state-led social and economic discrimination which turned the East provinces into a centre for political opposition. Indeed, open and direct religious discrimination of the Shia by the Saudi ulama dates back to the time of Muhammad ibn `Abd al- Wahha. He was disgusted by the Shia's veneration of holy shrines and tombs and deemed them corrupt and unworthy.²²⁷

The first demonstrations took place on February 17 in `Awamiyya as silent protests, demanding the release of local prisoners. After the regime fulfilled their requirements, the protesters felt encouraged to demand the release of more prisoners, including nine „forgotten prisoners“²²⁸ who were arrested without trial for their alleged membership in Hizbullah al- Hijaz and their involvement of the 1996 Khobar Towers bombings. No Saudi had dared to touch this highly sensitive topic in public.²²⁹ While security forces arrested protesters, Saudi officials urged Shia leaders to stay at home on March 11. In February, the king returned from medical treatment abroad and immediately announced a domestic aid program worth \$ 37 billion and an additional \$ 97 billion aid package, which includes unemployment

²²⁴ Lacroix, Stéphan (2001), p. 57.

²²⁵ While the Shia in the Eastern provinces receive the most attention, they are not the only Shia community in the country. Small Shia communities also live in Najran and Medina but are apolitical and have not joined the fight of the Eastern provinces. Nevertheless, they also face religious discrimination on a much smaller scale. In: Ismail, Raihan (2012): *The Saudi ulama and the Shi'a of Saudi Arabia*. In: *Journal of Shi'a Islamic Studies*, Vol. V, No.4, p. 406.

²²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 631.

²²⁷ Ismail, Raihan (2012), p. 403.

²²⁸ Lacroix, Stéphan (2011), p. 52

²²⁹ Matthiesen, Toby (2012), p. 635.

benefits, housing subsidies, and public sector jobs. While some parts of the package will benefit Shia as well, large parts are dedicated for religious institutions and the Ministry of Interior²³⁰, which announced sixty-thousand new security jobs, and from which Shia are excluded. Although the primary receivers are young people and the poor, government employees received extra an payment and a minimum wage of 3,000 riyals. To secure the continued loyalty of the religious clerics, a new press law passed, in April, forbids any criticism of senior clerics.²³¹ Shia protests got particularly fierce after Saudi troops were sent to Bahrain on March 14 to crackdown on Bahraini protesters. Especially the notable Shia families were shocked by these demonstrations. They usually act as interlocutors between the Shia community and the regime and feared for their positions. Indeed, the government pressured them to stop the demonstrations. In April, all important Shia clerics together with the clerics of the ulama, signed a petition calling for an end to the demonstrations. Only Nimr al-Nimr endorsed the demonstrations and became an important voice for the Shia community.²³² In an attempt to end protests, king Abdullah announced municipal elections, the second in the history of Saudi Arabia. At the same time, he declared that women are not allowed to vote until 2015. Saudis can only vote for half the seats while the other half is appointed by the king to councils with only limited power. According to Al Jazeera, not more than 300,00 men registered to vote.²³³ The clashes between Shia protesters and regime forces continued until it reached one of its peaks after a teenager was shot dead in November. At his funeral 20,000 Shia marched through the streets in Qatif chanting “death to Al Saud”²³⁴

The Saudi spring failed to unite a nationwide front against the al Saud family who managed to repress, coopt or scare them with a massive counter campaign. The state has not changed the situation of the Shia and it is unlikely that they will, since

²³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 363.

²³¹ Lacroix, Stéphan (2001), p. 54.

²³² Matthiesen, Toby (2012), pp. 641.

²³³ Al Jazeera (2011): *Low turnout in Saudi Arabia's local polls*. In: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/09/20119298149855126.html>, (14.02.2014).

²³⁴ Matthiesen, Toby (2012), pp. 650.

discrimination has become institutionalised.²³⁵ But it is too simple to reduce the “success” of the al Saud family to prevent mass protests to one counter campaign and its will to use force. Both is not new for Saudis. Instead, the al Saud family has managed to build up a system with *sticks and carrots* which affects every aspect of social life. Its most important weapon here is the “state-religion” Wahhabism.

4.2 Wahhabism

“The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a sovereign Arab Islamic State. Its religion is Islam. Its constitution is Almighty God's Book, The Holy Qur'an, and the Sunna (Traditions) of the Prophet (PBUH). Arabic is the language of the Kingdom. The City of Riyadh is the capital.”²³⁶

The kingdom of Saudi Arabia has always been, first and foremost, a religious state. Power is shared in many ways between the al Saud family and the Wahhabi establishment. This alliance has not only been the basis of the al Saud's rule for more than 300 years. In fact, it was the only reason it came into existence.

Wahhabism represents a strict form of Islam which has its roots in Najd, where, despite several attempts, the Ottomans never extended their rule. Tribals remained independent and towns and oases were ruled by their own amirs. It was an economically weak area and its population had to look beyond its “borders” to survive. Muhammad ibn Saud lived in a small settlement called Dir'iyyah consisting of only of 70 households and a mixed population of farmers, artisans, merchants, minor ulama and slaves. Since 1727 the landholding merchant without tribal origins was accepted as the local amir and became the defender of the population in return for tributes. Muhammad ibn Saud enjoyed authority only within his small community, but not beyond.

²³⁵ *ibid.* p. 655.

²³⁶ Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia: The basic law of governance. Article one. In: http://www.saudiembassy.net/about/country-information/laws/The_Basic_Law_Of_Governance.aspx (20.01.14)

Muhammad ibn `Abd al- Wahhab belonged to the tribe of Banu Tamin whose members lived in several oases in Najd. He received religious education in Madina, Basra and Hasa before he returned to the Najd. Al- Wahhab believed in the strict interpretation of shari`a, insisted on monotheism and rejected every form of cult, worship or even the visit of tombs, which would only lead to *kufr* (unbelief), polytheism and blasphemy. He insisted on the payment of zakat, in form of wheat as well as gold and silver. Al- Wahhab even formulated religious instructions regarding practical matters, such as the regular performance of communal prayers and the abstention from smoking tobacco. His first attempt to reform the people of `Uyaynah ended in his expulsion. Al- Wahhab fled to the close settlement of Dir`iyyah, where he was welcomed with open arms, and a pact was sealed. Al Wahhab acknowledged the amir as political leader after he agreed to al- Wahhabs central demand for jihad, a war against non-Muslims and those Muslims who refused to adopt his version of Islam. Al- Wahhab was granted control over all religious interpretations and he started preaching in his own, newly build mosque. Attendance of men and children was obligatory and could only be avoided by paying a fine or shaving one's beard. The Wahhabi movement provided ibn Saud with an extra source of legitimacy, extra wealth in form of *zakat* and territorial expansion. "The historical alliance between the Wahhabi religious reformer and the ruler of Dir`iyyah that was sealed in 1744, set the scene for the emergence of a religious emirate in central Arabia. Without Wahhabism, it is highly unlikely that Dir`iyyah and its leadership would have assumed much political significance. There was no tribal confederation to support any expansion beyond the settlement, and there was also no surplus wealth that would have allowed Muhammad ibn Saud to assemble a fighting force with which to conquer other settlements. The settlement itself did not have sufficient manpower to initiate conquest of other oases or tribal territories."²³⁷

Two groups were indispensable for the expansion of Wahhabism: the mutawwa`a and the ikhwan of Najd.

Mutawwa`a was a Najdi phenomenon which described Najdi men of religion. They were not to be mistaken with the ulama, who usually received an expertise beyond *fiqh* while mutawwa`a specialized in Islamic norms and rituals. They came into existence in the 18th century as a socio-political group with al- Wahhabs reform

²³⁷ Al- Rasheed, Madawi (2002): *A history of Saudi Arabia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 18.

movement. Despite their lack of theological expertise, they were decisive for the state formation process and its continuity. Between 1902, the year Ibn Saud captured Riyadh and 1932, the year of the declaration of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the mutawwa'a „was essential for domesticating the Arabian population into accepting the political authority of Ibn Sa'ud.“²³⁸ They facilitated the expansion by spreading Wahhabims before Ibn Saud's troops came to their homes. “Their main concern was with the disciplining of the others in the pursuit of the main Islamic rituals such as prayer, fasting, jihad, payment of zakat and hajj (pilgrimage). (...) Among other things, they taught people how to perform ablution without water, to pray without literacy, to recite the Qur'an without understanding, to practice true Islam without innovations, to bury the dead without marking their graves. and to worship God without mediators.“²³⁹ Their teaching often involved physical punishment²⁴⁰ Ibn Saud employed them to be “full-time religious specialists, loyal to him and dependent on his resources.“²⁴¹ Today, they are known as the state's “religious police“ which comprises approximately 3,500 men who make sure everyone abides by the religious rules.²⁴²

The mental coercion of the mutawwa'a was accompanied by a brutal, physical coercion conducted by the ikhwan. The ikhwan was a tribal fighting force and consisted of those nomads who accepted the indoctrination of the mutawwa'a. The ikhwan were known for their uncompromising attitude and their severe punishment. To follow the central demands of Wahhabism, the ikhwan had to abandon their nomadic life and settle down. Since their agricultural work was not successful, the ikhwan depended on their share of the raids as well as on regular and generous subsidies and gifts of Ibn Saud. “The ikhwan proved to be an efficient fighting force for the expansion of Ibn Saud's realm, but turned out to be problematic in the consolidation of his authority“,²⁴³ as demonstrated during the

²³⁸ *ibid.*, p. 50.

²³⁹ *ibid.*, p. 52.

²⁴⁰ Their punishment did not even spare Ibn Saud himself. They criticised him for wearing a long shirt and ordered it to be shortened while he was wearing it. (*ibid.*p. 53)

²⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 57.

²⁴² Steinberg, Guido (2007): *Saudi- arabische Religionspolitik nach 2001. Instrument zur Fortsetzung eines Zweckbündnisses*. In: http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/fachpublikationen/Sbg_Faath_2007_ks.pdf (30.09.2013), p. 183.

²⁴³ Al- Rasheed, Madawi (2002), p. 69.

ikhwan rebellion 1927-1939, right after the capture of Hijaz. The ikhwan shayks began to see themselves as equal and legitimate partners of Ibn Saud and urged him to share power. Since he refused, they started to criticise his unislamic behaviour, while secretly planing to divide the kingdom and share it between themselves. Ibn Saud responded to their criticism by directing this urgent matter to the ulama of Riyadh, who, in fact, agreed to the ikhwans criticism regarding his behaviour, yet confirmed the king's political prerogatives, including jihad. They accepted the subordination of religion to politics. It had taken the al Saud family almost two centuries to seize the right to declare jihad. Since then, decisions about war have been dominated by political considerations.²⁴⁴ In 1932, after two failed attempts, Abd-al Rahman al Saud declared the kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Like every other new state, the Saudi state needed a national narrative to establish obedience to the ruler.

Historical accuracy is subordinate. The ruling family is portrayed as a hegemonic force in a historical context alternating between the golden age of Islam and the emergence of Wahhabism. Islam's history is concentrated on the ideal Muslim community at the time of Prophet Muhammad. The Islamic civilisation is synonymous with success and achievement while non-believer who adopted other ideas and concepts undermine the only true thinking. Religious sectarianism and tribal solidarity, which should be replaced by loyalty to faith, are reasons that caused Islam's weakness. Shia Islam is ignored and Arab nationalism, communism and Westernisation are rejected for they would fight to destroy Islam. The local context is introduced with the appearance of Wahhabism and its alliance with Ibn Saudi, who fought to stop Muslims moral, social and political decay. The alliance between Abd- el Wahhab and Ibn Saud in 1744 is described as a division of labour between the military and political leader and the religious leader. Najd is presented as the region predetermined to lead the Islamic world. State-building is declared as the historical right of the al Saud family to rule over the land of their ancestors uniting (not conquering) the people living there. The Saudi state is the logical consequence of an Islamic unification which ignores the international context. Students of Saudi history are suppose to identify themselves with the Muslim umma, not necessarily with their fellow citizens.

²⁴⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 62.; Steinberg, Guido (2007), p. 176

“Historical memory is concerned with promoting the legitimacy of the ruling group at the expense of creating a national identity. History textbooks overlook the achievements of the people in all its manifestations. While the early Muslim period is celebrated as an ideal episode of the past, Saudi pupils are reminded of the degeneration in the pre-Saudi- Wahhabi era. The golden Islamic age is contrasted with the darkness of the second Arabian *jahiliyya*, the age of ignorance before the rise of the Wahhabi movement.”²⁴⁵

Religion is the most important component of national identity which is why it also has its primacy in domestic politics. The religious ulama hold several important political offices such as the minister for religious affairs, the justice minister as well as the minister of hajj.

Besides the political offices, the ulama presides over its own institute as well. The Council of Senior Scholars was founded in 1979 and consists of 17 members who are Wahhabi ulama from the Najd. They represent the highest religious authority and publish - individually or collectively - fatwa (pl. fatawa). In times of crisis they legitimise controversial government decisions such as the presence of American troops in Saudi Arabia in 1990. The highest religious leader is the Grand Mufti who presides over the Council of Senior Scholars. The Grand Mufti as well as the members of the Council of Senior Scholars are appointed by the king. The king is not free to choose whoever he wants but he can choose amongst those who climbed up the religious hierarchy and who has a devotional and docile reputation. These are important attributes because Saudis can choose themselves which fatwa they follow and some well-known “non-official” Mufties, who are not constrained by political pragmatism, attract attention. When strong Islamic opposition movements appear, the royal family shows more interest in religious politics.²⁴⁶ The al Sauds need the Wahhabi establishment which is why they refrain from reforms of the religious establishment. The only exception being was “religious police” which was put under the control of the government after they

²⁴⁵ Al- Rasheed, Madawi (2002), p. 195.

²⁴⁶ Steinberg, Guido (2007), pp. 179.

prevented girls from leaving a burning house because they were not wearing their abayas.²⁴⁷

The religious establishment has a major influence on the education system. 30 % of the curriculum in non- religious schools consist of religious classes. Hate against the West, primarily against the United States and against Jews are sytematically taught.²⁴⁸ Especially “after 1979 “society was given an overdose of religion“²⁴⁹ “Wahhabi Islam is all about boundaries and prescribed and proscribed behaviours. A four- year course of study beginning in the third year of middle school includes Hadith and Islamic Culture, Koran exegesis, Islamic jurisprudence, and Islamic monotheism. Every text, regardless of subject, constructs membership in the community of believers in oppositional terms: men versus women; closely related men versus those not closely related; Muslims versus Jews and Christians; and Muslims who worship rightly versus Sufis and Shiites. Students are taught to respect the names of God, and to shun those who show disrespect to God’s names. They learn to address God alone in their prayers, but also to charge with unbelief those who pray to saints or engage spirits. A polite greeting using prescribed words must be extended to Muslims, but a nonbeliever must not be greeted at all unless the Muslim is addressed first. Unless she is a close relative, a man should never look at a woman, not even if she appears vicariously in a photo, film, or magazine. Nor should he ever shake hand of an unrelated woman, except, perhaps, if she is elderly. Girls learn that God requires good women to cover themselves completely, including their face, and not to work with men, unless they are closely related. Although “Islam“ prefers they stay home, women can go to the mosque, as long as they keep separate, pray inaudibly, and are not menstruating. Neither men nor women should emulate foreigners in dress, speech, or in the way they socialise. The tests on monotheism teach students which ritual performance are forbidden and identify the violators. They also teach respect for the revivalist movement of Muhammad ibn Abd el Wahhab and for the ancestors of the present rulers whose military success

²⁴⁷ ibid. pp. 191.

²⁴⁸ ibid., p. 191.

²⁴⁹ Bronson, Rachel (2005): Rethinking religion: the legacy of the U.S.- Saudi relationship. In: The Washington Quarterly, vol. 28, no. 5, p. 124.

brought the revival of fruition.”²⁵⁰ Memorising is prioritised over critical thinking, closed information circles over understanding. This leaves the students with insufficient skills for a globalised economy.

Politics in Saudi Arabia is a constant tug-of-war between the al Saud family and the religious establishment. It is not an easy relationship but one of mutual interdependence.

Modernising strategies are therefore much harder to achieve and can only appear with consent and support of the ulama. However, exceptions do exist. Political reforms are unlikely to occur anytime soon. However, lines might have already started to move in the voluntary sector. According to Caroline Montagu, the al Saud family is tightly locked in a process of interdependence with the voluntary sector of which both sides have profited.²⁵¹ In this regard, it is important to recall that the Saudi society, including its ruling family is not a homogenous entity but as complex and diverse as any other society. For Muslim societies, the voluntary sector, due to its role for zakhat, has always been fundamental. But it also provides an informed opposition, which exists parallel and not in the shadow. It is an open arena in which the al- Saud family and the civil society fight for progress and control at the same time. “(M)any Al Sa’ud wish to see change and can attempt it only through the voluntary sector. Thus, they create a reverse patrimonialism by acting as „clients“ on the voluntary sector in order to achieve reform.”²⁵² The al-Sauds usually “take the back door”: “The voluntary sector starts campaigning on issues, the government takes them up, be they endogamy or thalassaemia. Quietly, the private sector takes it up; some time later a major business family will be featured in the papers handing a senior prince a check for an institute to promote “research“ into what actually turns out later to be directly related to the problem originally identified by the voluntary sector. Then the paper will start a publicity campaign and the Al- Sa’ud will come out in favor of this “back door“ reform.”²⁵³ This way, the al Saud family can face the dilemma of Islamic identity and modernisation. As one activist put it. “The Ministry of Social Affairs is

²⁵⁰ Abdella Doumato, Eleanor (2002): *A dialogue: Saudi Arabia*. In: *SAIS Review*, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp. 204.

²⁵¹ Montagu, Caroline (2010): *Civil Society and the voluntary sector in Saudi Arabia*. In: *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 64, No. 1, pp. 67.

²⁵² *ibid.*, p. 76.

²⁵³ Herb, Michael (1999), p. 81.

concerned about housing and sheltering battered women. we have offered to help because the ministry is bogged down by *haram* (forbidden) spaces and social restrictions, while we don't mind going all the way."²⁵⁴ The al Sauds are aware of the opportunities but at the same time are seeking tight control on the voluntary sector. The scope of action for civil society actors is very limited and by no means directed at a political transformation. Despite some careful and limited exceptions, transformation is not in the interest of the al Saud family, since it would threaten the *staus quo*.

4.3 Family Business

“A ruling class which has a mechanism to regulate its own internal conflicts, which dominates a modern state, and which can attract at least some support within society, is extremely hard to overthrow.”²⁵⁵

Dynastic families are modern innovations which did not emerge because of the royal families willingness to share power with each other or because of familiar affection but because the family members need each other. Dynasticism could also be described as intra- family divide and rule strategies. Instead of excluding family members from state affairs and risking their disaffection, they were appointed into the new oil related offices. Such a system only works if no “red line” is crossed, e.g. if the underlying norms regulating family relations are not violated. Norms structuring the internal organisation of the family include respect by younger members for seniors; the same respect for those family members who do and do not hold a top office; respect and appreciation for the father of every family member, namely the king; and the understanding that family interests are greater than individual interests. ²⁵⁶ If disputes should arise they are solved within the family which follows a standard pattern: “Two or three princes of shaykhs start arguing about the rulership, seeking support of as many family members as possible. If, usually after a few years, no compromise can be reached, and the

²⁵⁴ *ibid.*, p. 81.

²⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p. 4.

²⁵⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 31.

disputants can not be satisfied in another way, a dominant coalition will form and expels one of them from their offices. The crucial aspect here lies in the “bandwagoning against the renegade family faction.”²⁵⁷ A number of incentives granted by the family rule encourages the family members to bandwagoning instead of splitting the family in pitched battles. Princes and shykes who have no access to rulership will not gain anything from supporting a “deviationist” faction. The other family members can switch sides while the disputes last without risking their privileges.²⁵⁸

The following example will illustrate how the al Saud family settles family disputes before introducing important actor for regime stability.

Immediately after the death of Ibn Saud a fierce power struggle began between his sons Saud and Crown Prince Faysal which brought the kingdom several times on the verge of a collapse. Saud was named king but turned out to be an incompetent successor to his father. Faysal became crown prince. Oil revenues dropped and the debt that Saud had inherited from his father raised from \$200 million in 1953 to \$480 million in 1958. Aramco and international banks refused to grant more credit to the kingdom while Saud continued to spend money on luxurious palaces or the salaries of his sons. Saud and Faysal are portrayed as antagonists: Saud is described as the lavish traditionalist who is plundering state revenues while Faysal is described as the pious, puritan moderniser with financial skills.²⁵⁹ Inside the palace three power blocs crystallised: one around Saud (and his sons), one around Faysal (later to be known as the *Sudairi Seven*) and one around Talal (and the Free Princes). The arena for their fights was the Council of Ministers which was created one month before Ibn Saud died. “During his lifetime, Ibn Sa’ud had relied heavily on his Arab advisers and managed to post members of his own generation to distant provinces as governors, while promoting only a limited circle of his own sons. Once the council was created, internal rivalries over its membership and role erupted. (...)For although he delegated some responsibilities to his two senior sons, there was no doubt that he was the ultimate authority. His death removed the implicit understanding among his descendants

²⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p 47.

²⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p. 48.

²⁵⁹ Al- Rasheed, Madawi (2002), p. 107.

that the Sa'udi King was an absolute monarch."²⁶⁰ Saud tried to gain influence over the cabinet by promoting his own sons and named them, amongst others, minister of defence and commander of the National Guard, which was the first time a prince held this office. Having been deprived of power, Faysal left the country for medical treatment. In 1958, plans were revealed that Saud had planned to kill Gamal Abd al- Nasir, who was at his peak at this time. This revelation was so damaging for the country's reputation that a group of Saudi brothers demanded the transfer of powers back to Faysal.²⁶¹ By the year 1960, Saud, who had not been deposed, managed to get his powers back. The game of dynasticism was fully established leaving only open the question who would win. Saud's coalition consisted of his sons and, necessarily included some younger brothers around Talal. Talal and his brothers were influenced by Nasir's pan- Arabism which resulted in an ideological gap between the two fractions. Talal's coalition wanted a constitution and even told Mecca Radio that the regime would be willing to draft one. A couple of days later the palace announced that the message was wrong. Since Saud had his powers back from Faysal he was not willing to end his absolutist rule by granting a constitution. Nevertheless, Talal stayed as finance minister but the tensions grew until in February 1961 senior princes urged Saud to reinstate Faysal and to get rid of Talal. Talal and his „Free Princes“ fled to Cairo while Faysal was restored. A commoner, Abdullah al- Tariqi took his post as finance minister and is said to be the last non- family member with tremendous influence.²⁶² After king Saud came back from another medical treatment abroad in 1961, power had shifted again to the Faysal coalition who refused to give them back. The reshuffle went into a new round leaving Faysal with the office of premiership and foreign affairs. Saud's sons lost their position as minister of defence to Sultan while Fahd took over as minister of interior and Khalid as deputy prime minister. By 1963 all of Saud's sons were replaced except for the commander of the Royal Guard, Mansur bin Saud. In March 1964, the power struggle exploded. Saud placed the Royal Guard around his palace while Faysal ordered the mobilisation of the National Guard against the king. No tribal shayks and no royal family members except his sons came to his side, leaving Saud no

²⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p 108.

²⁶¹ *ibid.*, p. 117; Herb, Michael (1999), p. 94.

²⁶² Herb, Michael (1999), p. 96. see also Al- Rasheed, Madawi (2002), pp. 110.

other choice as to abdicate. In 1964 a group of Saudi brothers deprived him of his last authorities and the ulama was asked to confirm the royal change after everything was settled.²⁶³

When Faysal emerged as the winner of the power struggle which led to the reallocation of offices in 1962, he started a process which ended in the development of “states within the state”²⁶⁴ During the 1970s, the Ministry of Defence and Civil Aviation, the Ministry of Interior and the National Guard all developed parallel infrastructures including their own security forces. Every institution has been seeking for a technological edge over the other ones which contributed to an unequal and fragmented development of the overall institutions, and especially of the armed forces. The Saudi armed forces are not at all as effective as the high military spending might indicate. Instead, they still suffer from years of patronage policies.²⁶⁵ However, today, the armed forces are a loyal bulwark of the regime willing to use brutal force against their fellow citizens. The reason for their loyalty lies in their fragmentation. During the 1950s and 1960s, afraid of pan-Arab nationalism and army-led coup d'états, the Saudi family kept its military poorly equipped and poorly trained. Saud's paranoia²⁶⁶ was confirmed, when a group of thirteen Saudi officers, who were trained in Egypt, tried to overthrow him in 1955. During the oil boom, new military institutions under the patronage of Saudi princes were built, not only to satisfy or to reward family members, but also to watch each other. “The distribution of members of the dynasties throughout the military establishments provides the ruling families not only with reliable commanders, but also with what is, in essence, an effective spy network. Members of the ruling family occupy posts from which they can keep an eye out for any signs of incipient disloyalty or unusual activity. The profusion of shaykhs and princes in the military does not, by any means, contribute to the effectiveness of these militaries against external foes.”²⁶⁷ The armed forces contain approximately 233,500 soldiers of which 75,000 are employed in the

²⁶³ Herb, Michael (1999), pp. 96.

²⁶⁴ Hertog, Steffen (2011): *Rentier militaries in the Gulf states: the price of coup-proofing*. In: *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 3, p. 400.

²⁶⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 400.

²⁶⁶ Al-Rasheed, Madawi (2002), p. 116, pp. 112.

²⁶⁷ Herb, Michael (1999), p. 35.

regular army while 100,000 are employed in the National Guards which is specifically concerned with the protection of the royal family. In 2007, 35,000 new forces were created to protect the oil fields in the Eastern provinces out of fear Al Qaeda could target the facilities.²⁶⁸ In 2011, king Abdullah announced the creation of 60,000 new security jobs in the Ministry of Interior. Despite the latest military technology, professional, well trained soldiers are rare. Nevertheless, the armed forces are loyal and their fragmentation prevents them from overthrowing the regime. As long as the succession line is secured, the forces are likely to remain loyal. However, they could become a critical factor if succession should not occur smoothly.²⁶⁹ Scholars are united in their opinion that succession in Saudi Arabia will be a critical moment for the kingdom. King Abdullah (born 1923) has been abroad several times for medical treatment leaving state affairs with Interior Minister Nayef bin Abdelaziz (born 1933). The current horizontal succession mechanism is in place since Ibn Saud died in 1953 declaring the eldest of his 43 sons king. It is most likely that Salman will be the last of Ibn Saud's sons to ascend the throne after Nayef. Given the advanced age of all the sons, it is obvious that a new succession mechanism has to be found. For the next few years the succession is secure but the critical moment will be once the succession goes over to the next generation. While every family is already placing their members in important offices, it will be difficult to maintain the current horizontal succession mechanisms within the second generation since it encompasses several hundred princes from different families. Chances might be that one family would try to impose their lineage as the dominant one, or that one family would seek support from reformists.²⁷⁰ Time will show if the family will still be able to solve their problems within the family. In 2007, king Abdullah formalised the procedure by introducing the allegiance commission which is comprised of the 15 living sons of Ibn Saud and the most respected family members of the next generation, including one son of the current king and one of the crown prince. In total, the commission consists of 35 members of which every member has one

²⁶⁸ Steinberg, Guido b (2011), p. 36.

²⁶⁹ Gause III, Gregory F. (2011): *Saudi Arabia in the new Middle East*. In: *Council on Foreign Relations Special Report No. 63*. pp. 6.

²⁷⁰ Lacroix, Stéphane (2011), p. 58.

vote in a secret, first-past-the-post voting procedure.²⁷¹ Another purposes of the allegiance commission was to prevent one of the Sudairi brothers from becoming the next king. The Sudairi Seven is a group of brothers from one mother of the Sudairi family, including late king Fahd, Sultan, Nayef and Salman, the powerful governor of Riyadh. King Abdullah's appointment was long blocked by the brothers who have been trying to limit his powers. Chances are good that the commission would prevent the Sudairi's election as king, since it puts them in a minority position.²⁷² But already in 2009 it was obvious that the commission will have to wait. Being pressured by the Sudairi Seven king Abdullah appointed his brother Nayef as second Deputy Prime Minister which sealed his succession. King Abdullah tried to initiate some cautious reforms regarding women, and Shia and even tried to limit the religious establishment's influence. Nayef is widely regarded more conservative with closer ties to the religious establishment. It is feared that the cautious reform process will be stopped or reversed after Nayef will be king.²⁷³

4.4 Economic rents

“There has been resistance since the 1960s to any innovations that are deemed too Western — to television, to girls' education,” (...) “But that hasn't stopped them from happening. Even the most conservative sheik drives an S.U.V. and has a nice house. He's not living in the desert in a tent.”²⁷⁴

The most prominent explanation for Saudi Arabia's strength and survival has been its oil-related wealth. Saudi- Arabia contains almost one-fifth²⁷⁵ of the world's oil

²⁷¹ Steinberg Guido a (2011): *Thronfolge in Saudi Arabien*. In: *SWP- Aktuell* 53, p. 2.

²⁷² Steinberg, Guido b (2011), p. 38.

²⁷³ Steinberg Guido a (2011), p. 3.

²⁷⁴ Ouroussoff, Nicolai (2010): Saudi urban projects are a window to modernity. In: http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/13/arts/design/13desert.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 (01.02.2014).

²⁷⁵ That is about 265 billion barrels plus 2,5 billion barrels in the Saudi- Kuwaiti shared Neutral Zone.; U.S. Energy Information Administration: Saudi Arabia. In: <http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=SA> (15.01.2014)

reserves, including the world's largest oil field Ghawar.²⁷⁶ In 2011, the oil price rose to \$ 107.8 per barrel, compared to \$ 77.75 per barrel in 2010. The daily average of crude oil production in 2011 rose from 9.3 million barrels per day from 8.2 million barrels per day in 2010.²⁷⁷ Saudi Arabia was the largest producer and exporter of petroleum in 2012. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration Saudi Arabia's production of total petroleum liquids in 2012 amounts to 11.6 million barrels per day.²⁷⁸ Saudi Arabia's budget surplus 2011 stood at Rls. 291.1 billion of which 92.5 % of total revenues were oil revenues.²⁷⁹

Money is an important feature of the Saudi kingdom, which would not be what it is without its oil- related wealth. Contrary to the general assumption, it has not bought the state autonomy or immunity from its society. Rather it has created new roadblocks the regime needs to remove. As Gwenn Okruhlik has argued: "Money does not spend itself"²⁸⁰ There is always someone who is disadvantaged. As has been obvious in Saudi Arabia, even before the Arab spring, this has been the Shia community of the Eastern provinces. But they are not the only one. The Saudi family has disgruntled others as well such as the Hijazi merchant class. During the last fifteen years, the al Saud have transferred Riyadh into the financial and diplomatic centre of the kingdom shifting the centre of commerce away from the Hejaz. Since the regime has restricted pilgrim's mobility directly from the airport to the holy cities, the Hejazi economy has been divested of an important source of income. While the Hejaz has been neglected, a new private Najdi business class emerged supported by the distribution of state contracts and investment incentives. The new business class shares many social and familial ties with the Najdi bureaucrats who administer the growing economy. This bureaucratic-economic allegiance opposed the al Saud family when they tried to restructure the

²⁷⁶ It is estimated to have 70 billion barrels of remaining oil reserves. *ibid.*

²⁷⁷ Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (2012): *48th Annual Report*. In: http://www.sama.gov.sa/sites/samaen/ReportsStatistics/ReportsStatisticsLib/5600_R_Annual_En_48_2013_02_19.pdf, p. 21 (10.01. 2014).

²⁷⁸ The other 1.8 million barrels per day consist mainly of natural gas liquids (NGL). U.S. Energy Information Administration: Saudi Arabia. In: <http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=SA> (15.01.2014)

²⁷⁹ Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (2012): *48th Annual Report*. p. 24.

²⁸⁰ Okruhlik, Gwenn (1999), p. 297.

economy.²⁸¹ The al Saud family was forced into a “constructive dialogue“ with the business sector which ended into “an attempt to modernise Saudi authoritarianism (...) along „corporatist“ lines“.²⁸² Discussions about business issues include private actors who are allowed to give their opinion and to revise economic regulations. Though the state is anxious not to loose control, more and more private actors are sought for advice because the state bureaucracy reaches its limits. „(...) the state wants more from the private sector, but can deliver less - in managerial and administrative terms, as well as in terms of capital and, often, information.“²⁸³ The business sector was granted time „to develop the highest stage of economic maturity in all of the Middle East,“²⁸⁴ including well trained and educated workers, a good organisational structure and growing international networks. “The fact that the private sector is being given *specific* formal access means that its partnership with the regime is being modernised. This does not mean that the ground for broader political participation is being prepared- the new procedures outlined above are rather a corporatist alternative to an openly political role for the private sector.“²⁸⁵ Economic reforms are undertaken at the regime’s pace and under its conditions. Foreign investment, for instance, is not allowed in certain areas relating to Mecca and Medina, the Hajj and Umrah and security sectors, etc.²⁸⁶ Given the high unemployment rate of Saudi Arabia it is obvious that the state needs the private business sector. Unemployment rates in Saudi Arabia affect especially young Saudis but even the business sector has not (yet) created enough jobs to absorb all the university graduates. Moreover, Wahhabism and modernisation do not go well together. The education system is primarily concerned with religious education which makes it incompatible with modern work standards and requirements. This explains why private technical schools, which teach students English, computer skills, accounting and how to behave in an

²⁸¹ *ibid.*, p. 298.

²⁸² Hertog, Steffen (2006): *Modernization without democratization? The introduction of formal politics in Saudi Arabia*. In: <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/29882/>, p. 66. (18.02.2014)

²⁸³ *ibid.*, p 73.

²⁸⁴ *ibid.*, p. 74.

²⁸⁵ *ibid.*, p. 75.

²⁸⁶ SAGIA: *List of businesses prohibited for foreign investment*. In: http://www.sagia.gov.sa/Documents/Investor_pack/Business_not_permitted.pdf (14.03.2014)

office, are one of the few growing industries in the kingdom.²⁸⁷ Economic income in Saudi Arabia has become more than just an income, it has become part of the national identity and part of the self-perception of Saudis. Being Saudi means “I am not an imported laborer.”²⁸⁸ The oil boom years brought many foreign workers to the country which eventually outnumbered the number of Saudi workers in the private sector. It was then, the regime began to buy their citizens support on a national scale. They prioritised the Saudi nationals over the million of foreign workers by adding an economic dimension to the national narrative paradigm. With this discrimination came another problem. Today, non- Saudi work forces compose around 89,1% of the total workforce of the private sector (compared to 10.9% of Saudi workforces).²⁸⁹ Most foreign workers perform menial jobs most Saudis consider unworthy for themselves, such as manual, clerical or service jobs. Saudis have gotten accustomed to state income and regard high salaries and higher managerial jobs as self-evident. After all, acquiring income in Saudi Arabia means acquiring state income.²⁹⁰ One must consider governmental efforts to reduce unemployment amongst Saudi citizens through “Saudisation”²⁹¹ of the economy in this context. In 2013, the government started a campaign blaming Ethiopian workers for having violated labour laws and for having attacked Saudi citizens. This campaign prompted many angry Saudis to violent attacks on Ethiopian workers and their families. Arrested foreign workers are brought into detention centres where they are exposed to inadequate treatment. Officials don’t provide them with enough food, shelter and medical treatment.²⁹² Some economists expect the „Saudisation“ of the economy to be successful. They hope that an increase in wages might attract Saudis to accept formerly shunned jobs.²⁹³

²⁸⁷ Abdella Doumato, Eleanor (2002), p. 206.

²⁸⁸ Okruhlik, Gwenn (2005): *The irony of islah (reform)*. In: *The Washington Quarterly*. Vol. 28, No. 4. p. 155.

²⁸⁹ Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (2012): *48th Annual Report*. p. 25.

²⁹⁰ Gray, Matthews (2011), p. 20.

²⁹¹ The economist (2013): *Go home, but who will replace you?* In: <http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21589871-saudi-edict-limit-reliance-foreign-workers-fraught> (20.01.2014)

²⁹² Human Rights Watch (2013): *Saudi Arabia: Labor Crackdown Violence*. In: <http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/11/30/saudi-arabia-labor-crackdown-violence> (20.01.2014)

²⁹³ The economist (2013)

The future of Saudi Arabia's national oil company Aramco is even more crucial for the regime. Originally, Aramco's tasks were limited to the hydrocarbon sector, some refineries and the management of infrastructure of the Eastern provinces. It has been concerned with state exports and revenues, accompanied by some corporate social responsibility programmes. Since the 1990s, however, Aramco took on new responsibilities ranging from more training programmes, support for small and medium enterprises to worldwide joint ventures. It also expanded into petrochemicals, renewable technology and industrial development. It aims to become one of the world's leading technology producers and invests heavily in R&D. The king himself tasked Aramco with the Jizan Economic City, a struggling government project in the south, as well as the *King Abdullah University of Science and Technology* and the *King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Centre*. Question remains if Aramco, which has been known for its autonomy, can manage all the new tasks without getting distracted from its core competence.²⁹⁴

Saudi Arabia latest prestige projects is the creation of four economic cities all over the country with the objective of „enhancing the competitiveness of the Saudi economy; creating new jobs; improving Saudis' skill level; developing regions; diversifying the economy.“²⁹⁵ These megaprojects - of which none are build in the Eastern provinces - reveal more than anything the antagonism that characterises the country. Over a million new jobs and four million new homes are planned. Cities such as the King Abdullah Economic City - KAEC -at the Red Sea are „closer to Las Vegas than to Riyadh.“²⁹⁶ Sexes will not be separated, everyone is allowed to drive and windows are open for everyone to see in. KAEC will include apartments, houses and villas next to a business district, a port, an industrial zone and a university. But the modernisation stops at the city's border which is surrounded by highways to create a world of its own, far away from the highly regulated society of Riyadh. It is „envisioned as another island of relative liberalism within Saudi Arabia“²⁹⁷

²⁹⁴ Hertog, Steffen (2013): *Saudi Aramco as a national development agent: recent shifts. Policy brief*. In: *Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF)*. http://www.peacebuilding.no/var/ezflow_site/storage/original/application/8d7708f9c4cc3073faf2501e793929c4.pdf, pp. 2. (13.12.2013)

²⁹⁵ SAGIA: *Saudi Arabia's economic cities*. In: <http://www.oecd.org/mena/investment/38906206.pdf>

²⁹⁶ Ouroussoff, Nicolai (2010)

²⁹⁷ *ibid.*

But all that glitters is not gold. The cities have outraged some of the conservative clerics, who condemned the Western lifestyle envisaged in the projects. “When a member of the Saudi Council of Senior Scholars, Sheik Saad al-Shathry, openly criticized the university, calling it evil, the king promptly fired him. Security was beefed up, and people involved in the project were forbidden to speak to the news media about “social issues” regarding the university — meaning women.”²⁹⁸ Besides clerical criticism, the projects have outraged many people in Jiddah as well. Jidda desperately need an economic upgrade. If the government will not turn to them as well, they might create an additional hot spot.

“You’re looking at decades,” Mr. Haykel said. “If these cities don’t work, and they can’t produce jobs and, say, the price of oil drops, you could have masses of people mobilizing against the government, and it could take the form of religious extremism. But in the long run if they don’t produce an economy that’s not dependent on oil, the country itself becomes unviable. I don’t know how they would be able to sustain life there. It’s an end-of-the-world scenario.”²⁹⁹

It might not be an “end-of-the-world scenario” (yet), but the reality hasn’t evolved according to plan. The number of the economic cities has already been reduced from six to four since not enough private investment could have been attracted. “These cities are going through the teething problems of new cities.”³⁰⁰ Due to the economic crisis, the government had to provide several loans, including \$ 1.3 billion for KAEC. By 2020, the four economic cities are suppose to contribute \$ 150 billion to gross domestic product and provides homes for 4.5 million people. Despite the transfer of the responsibility for the economic cities from Sagia, the country’ s official investment authority, to the Economic Cities Authority, KAEC’ economic city has only provided 12,000 new jobs. Saudi Arabia needs these jobs, but the

²⁹⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹⁹ cf Bernard Haykel, professor of Near Eastern studies at Princeton University in *ibid.*

³⁰⁰ Hall, Camilla (2012): *New champion for Saudi’s economic cities*. In: <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/6c25a83c-ae25-11e1-b842-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2wCXfKjOn> (13.03.2014)

process needs to be speed up if ambitions wants to be met.³⁰¹ The regime has no other choice as to guarantee the success of the project.

4.5 External actors

In an area that conflictive as the Middle East, allies are of utmost importance for a country but the have not been decisive for its stability. Saudi Arabia's geopolitical argument with regard to monarchical stability comes threefold: The first one is Saudi Arabia's relationship with Israel which, according to Larry Diamond, led to regime stability. From time to time, Saudi Arabia uses the transnational anger of its people regarding the illegal occupation of Palestine to divert attention from their own corruption or human rights abuses. While it is not allowed to demonstrate or criticise the regime openly, the population is allowed to bring its anger about Israel to the street.³⁰²

Secondly, the literature stresses the relationship between Saudi Arabia and the United States, which has always been based on mutual interests than on shared values or norms. The high US oil consume has long provided Saudi Arabia with the necessary financial means to stabilise its dynastic rule. But, according to the International Energy Agency, the Unites States will be the largest oil producer by 2017, and the largest gas producer by 2015. By 2020, more natural gas will be exported than imported and by 2035 the same applies to crude oil.³⁰³ The US in cooperation with the Canadians have improved the method of hydraulic fracturing³⁰⁴ which allows them to reach *tight oil* deep inside of rocks. A mixture of water, sand and chemicals cracks the rock open by blasting fissures into it. The exposed oil is pumped up via pipes and then transported all over a country through the Keystone XL. Greens object the project because environmental

³⁰¹ *ibid.*

³⁰² Diamond, Larry (2012): *Why are there no Arab democracies?* In: Journal of Democracy, Vol. 21. No. 1, p. 101.

³⁰³ Spiegel Online (2012): *Prognose der Energieagentur: USA werden Ölmacht Nummer eins.* In: <http://www.spiegel.de/wirtschaft/soziales/energieagentur-iea-sieht-usa-2017-als-groessten-produzenten-von-oel-a-866723.html> (27.02.2014)

³⁰⁴ for more explanation see: Heinritzi, Johannes (2013): *Kurz erklärt. Was ist Fracking?* In: http://www.focus.de/finanzen/news/kurz-erklaert-was-ist-fracking_aid_914220.html (27.07.2014).

consequences would be devastating. More greenhouse gases would be produced while antibacterial solutions, necessary to preserve the pipes., destroys the environment. Already existing wells in the US have proven that the success is not at all guaranteed and the process is in fact very costly. Production of most fracking wells declined by 60 to 70 percent in the first year while traditional wells keep pumping far longer with less decline in productivity. Though, it is not sure at all that the current US oil boom won't turn into a bust.³⁰⁵ Even if it won't, Saudi Arabia is still on the safe side. China already has to import more oil from OPEC countries than the US for higher prices. However, US independence from oil might have more consequences for the region. US oil interest led to their increased efforts to stabilise the whole region. What happens if the US does not need Saudi oil anymore and will be a net-exporter themselves? A full retreat of the US from the region and a dropping of Saudi alliance seems unlikely since their relationship is based on two more common interests, namely the prevention of a nuclear Iran and the fight against terrorism.³⁰⁶ Time will show if the US is willing to pay all the costs of stabilising the region. China's role is yet unclear, but it could take over responsibilities from the US. Given their increased dependence on Middle Eastern oil and their aspirations to be a world power, some say it should.³⁰⁷

Thirdly, geopolitical Saudi interest include the survival of other monarchies, which in return will stabilise their rule as well. „It is here that Saudi policy is truly counterrevolutionary.“³⁰⁸ And it is in this context that Saudi's support for Bahrain needs to be seen. Saudi Arabia feared an increase in Iranian influence in Bahrain as well as spillover effects. „The al-Saud believe they can handle their own domestic situation; it is the region they worry about.“³⁰⁹

Beside the huge amount of \$ 130 billion for domestic reforms, Saudi Arabia promised Oman a grant of \$ 10 billion over 10 years. This payment enables Sultan

³⁰⁵ Lyder, Asjylyn (2013): *US- shale oil boom may not last as fracking wells lack staying power*. In: <http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2013-10-10/u-dot-s-dot-shale-oil-boom-may-not-last-as-fracking-wells-lack-staying-power#p2> (27.02.2014)

³⁰⁶ Gause III, Gregory F (2011), pp. 22.

³⁰⁷ Zand, Bernhard (2013): In: China und der Nahe Osten: Die wiederstrebende Weltmacht. In: <http://www.spiegel.de/wirtschaft/soziales/china-importiert-mehr-oel-aus-opek-als-usa-a-927499.html> (27.02.2014)

³⁰⁸ Gause III, Gregory F (2011), p. 18.

³⁰⁹ *ibid.*, p. 18.

Qaboos to calm the protesters with major economic benefits.³¹⁰ It also promised Jordan \$ 487 million in addition to the \$5 billion the GCC countries promised the kingdom for development projects.³¹¹ Beside financial help for Oman, and Jordan Saudi Arabia pushed for the admission of Jordan and Morocco into the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). In May 2011 they extended the invitation before the GCC withdrew it again in December 2011. The invitation was issued at a time when no one knew which way the events in both countries would take and they feared spillover effects on their own countries. The invitation came as a surprise for Jordan, after their application got rejected in the 1980s. Except for the opposition, the overall reaction to the invitation was positive. For Jordan and Morocco, membership would have meant more funds while they would have provided military personal, equipment and training. However, the GCC withdrew its invitation for which two explanations are possible: Not all GCC countries were convinced of Jordanian and Moroccan membership. Qatar opposed Saudi attempts do dominate the agenda of the GCC and Kuwaitis refused Jordan because of their pro- Saddam stance during the Gulf war. When it turned out that Jordan and Morocco handled the Arab spring quiet well the GCC withdrew their invitation.³¹²

Protest against Israel, close US relations and Arab monarchical stability are not decisive for the regime. At best, protests against Israel can be seen as a welcome distraction, but not as a regular means. US-Saudi relations increased al Qaeda's hatred and provided another source of instability. Arab monarchical stability may be a close concern to the regime, but it can not trigger protests without further causes. "In sum, while Western support is useful to the surviving monarchies (and sometimes indispensable against *external* enemies), the surviving Middle Eastern monarchies have not proven resilient simply because they have friends in the West, nor have the failed monarchies suffered revolutions because the actions of Western nations. The difference between the surviving and fallen monarchies are

³¹⁰ Barany, Zoltan (2012): *The "Arab Spring" in the kingdoms*. In: *Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies, Research paper* , pp. 23

³¹¹ Hazaimah, Hani (2012): *Jordan secures financial assistance from Saudi Arabia*. In: <http://jordantimes.com/jordan-secures-financial-assistance-from-saudi-arabia> (16.03.2014).

³¹² *ibid.*, pp. 34.

to be found inside, and not outside, their borders.”³¹³ Saudi monarchical stability has never depended on other actors. Rather Saudi Arabia is one of the foreign actors others can rely on.

5. Conclusion

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have both survived the Arab spring because of a combination of different factors which have been identified in this thesis as religious and traditional legitimacy as well as divide and rule strategies, dynasticism, rentierism and international support. Both kingdoms have worked hard to create a ruler based legitimacy which declared them the decisive historical actors. Jordan relies on its descent of Prophet Muhammad, a prerogative refused to the al Saud family. Instead, the custodians of the two holy cities of Islam emphasise their achievements for the *true* Islam. Divide and rule strategies secured the rule on a profane level. The inclusion and prioritisation of the Transjordanian community created a small loyalty which profited as much from a Hashemite rule as the ruler profited of their help. A cleavage was created between the Transjordanian community and the Jordanians of Palestinian origin who were politically marginalised but financially better off than the Transjordanians. While there is only one societal group in Jordan who relies on the government it is the whole society in Saudi Arabia. Oil related rents provide the regime with stability yet not with immunity. The last factor securing monarchical stability rests on international allies which are crucial for Jordan. Without the financial assistance of the United States, the Hashemite ruler could not bear the financial brunt of its regime loyal entourage. For Saudi Arabia international allies have been useful, yet not essential for survival. The events in the other Arab countries, as they have evolved so far, might contribute to monarchical stability as well. Both populations are accompanied by a constant threat of fear. While in Saudi Arabia this threat stems from a much more coercive apparatus than in Jordan, a common fear concerns the possible chaos, insecurity or war that might result out of a monarchical overthrow. Both kingdoms have managed to survive by creating a system that permeates the whole society. Its interplay guarantees the system's stability. However, both countries face new challenges which will

³¹³ Herb, Michael (1999), p. 249.

inevitably affect the monarchies. The most important challenge for both kingdoms will be unemployment.

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7. Appendices

7.1 Abbreviations

Advanced Medium Range Air-to- Air Missiles	AMRAAM
Economic Support Funds	ESF
Foreign Military Financing	FMF
Gulf Cooperation Council	GCC
Import substitution industrialisation	ISI
International Monetary Fund	IMF
Islamic Action Front	IAF
Major-non- NATO Ally	MNNA
National Dialogue Committee	NDC
National oil company	NOC
Nongovernmental Organization	NGO
Rentier state theory	RST
Single non transferable vote	SNTV

7.2 Abstract

The Arab spring renewed the scientific interest in Arab monarchies. While they did not attract a lot of attention, people are wondering why none of the eight monarchies were overthrown. Even more, why has hardly anyone called for the overthrow of the monarchies? The thesis will try to answer the question why the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have survived the Arab spring. It will identify a group of social, political and economical variable and will prove that their interplay created a stable monarchical system. The identifies factors include religious and traditional legitimacy, divid and rule strategies, rentierism, dynasticism and external actors.

7.3 Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Der Arabische Frühling überraschte nicht nur Beobachter der Region, sondern erneuerte auch das Interesse an arabischen Monarchien. Bisher haben sich nur Republiken dem Druck der Straße beugen müssen, nicht aber eine der acht autoritären Monarchien, welche vergleichsweise kleine bis gar keine Aufstände erlebten. Diese Diplomarbeit geht der Frage nach warum das Haschemitische Königreich Jordanien und das Königreich Saudi Arabien den arabischen Frühling überlebten. Diese Frage lässt sich natürlich nicht nur durch eine Bestandsaufnahme der Gegenwart erklären. Stattdessen müssen historische Entwicklungen mit einbezogen werden. Die Autorin geht davon aus, dass in beiden Fällen die Stabilität der Königreiche auf eine Kombination von sozialen, politischen und wirtschaftlichen Faktoren zurück zuführen ist. Bei keinem der identifizierten Faktoren handelt es sich um kulturinhärente Gründe, wie dies lange Zeit von Historikern und Politologen wie Bernhard Lewis oder Samuel Huntington angenommen wurde. Mithilfe literaturwissenschaftlicher Analyse konnten

stattdessen folgende Variablen bestimmt werden: Religiöse und traditionelle Legitimität, Teile-und Herrsche Strategien, Rentenökonomie, Dynastizismus und externe Akteure. Während beide Königreiche ein eigenes religiös basiertes nationales Verständnis „erschufen“, geht die Stabilität in Jordanien vor allem auf Teile-und-Herrsche Strategien zurück. Diese führten zu einer gespaltenen Gesellschaft und verschärften Jordaniens Abhängigkeit von internationalen Finanzflüssen. Für Saudi Arabien führt die Literatur vor allem den Ölreichtum des Landes an, aber auch das Herrschen durch die ganze Familie führt zur Stabilität des Landes. Internationale Akteure spielen für Saudi Arabiens Stabilität hingegen kaum eine Rolle. Ziel der Diplomarbeit ist es, das Zusammenspiel dieser Faktoren herauszuarbeiten. Denn nur durch das Zusammenwirken aller Faktoren kann in beiden Fällen die Stabilität erklärt werden.

7.4 Curriculum Vitae

Sarah Barakat

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University of Vienna: *Development Studies*

- Central focus: Transformation studies, political Islam, postcolonial critique, conflict studies, international relations, gender studies, critical development theories;
- main focus on the countries of the Middle East and Latin America