



ANALYSIS

Jordan's youth after the Arab Spring

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite the lack of a full-scale uprising, protests in Jordan and unrest across the Arab world convinced Jordan's King Abdullah to announce a series of political reforms. Yet while the result of these reforms has been underwhelming, popular and youth pressure for change since November 2012 has declined. In particular, youth activists in Jordan have stepped back from public demonstrations demanding broad socio-political change. Observing the disastrous aftermath of the Arab Spring in Syria and Egypt in particular, Jordanian youth are caught between a desire for political reform and a fear of instability.

The activism encouraged by the Arab uprisings is not dead, however. Youth activists are exploring the political openings created by the uprisings in creative ways. Broader socio-political demands, which are both difficult to implement and potentially destabilising, have given way to more targeted and achievable single-issue campaigns. The youth are also pursuing more future-focused endeavours such as platform development and civic education.

I feel nostalgia for 24 March 2011. We slept in the street; we thought we had done it. Then, ten hours later I had stitches in my head. People thought that a few brave people in the streets could change the country's destiny. We need the brave people. They are necessary, but not enough.¹

— Jordanian youth activist, Amman, 10 June 2014.

Observers of the Middle East have been writing about the 'youth bulge' in the Arab world for many years. With up to 65 per cent of Arabs being under the age of 30, commentators have long discussed the socio-economic and political consequences of having such a large youth population combined with high youth unemployment.² The Arab uprisings, at least in part, seemed to give life to these concerns. Young people often initiated the demonstrations, which resulted in possibly the largest upheaval in the Arab world since the end of colonialism.

Now that the uprisings have largely faltered — with a return to authoritarianism in Egypt, a bloody civil war in Syria, chaos in Libya, and an uncertain political outcome in Yemen — it is worthwhile seeking to understand the thinking of those youth activists who were at the forefront of protests. This Analysis will do this by looking at one specific case: Jordan. While a full-scale uprising did not occur there, sizeable popular demonstrations led the Jordanian authorities both to crack down on dissent and announce a program of political reform.

This paper is based on recent fieldwork in Jordan, where youth activists were interviewed about their views on political and social change in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings, not just in Jordan, but in the Arab world in general. This sample, heavily weighted towards the liberal, English-speaking middle class, is not representative of the Jordanian population or even of Jordanian youth. However, this group was centrally involved in the demonstrations that occurred in Jordan, as were similar socio-economic cohorts in other countries affected by the Arab Spring.

This Analysis first provides a brief overview of the manifestations of the Arab uprisings in Jordan, before moving to a more focused discussion of the tension the uprising has generated between desire for stability and desire for change. The final section looks at some new forms of activism that young people are undertaking in an attempt to navigate that tension.

THE JORDANIAN 'UPRISING'

On the eve of the demonstrations that toppled President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in Tunisia, the situation in Jordan was, in the words of an NGO worker, "ripe."³ The economy was struggling with rising public debt and high youth unemployment, and cuts to subsidies — a key instigator of

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previous unrest in Jordan — were on the horizon.⁴ There had already been significant labour protests in 2010. Cascading protests across the Arab world in 2011 meant the potential for civil unrest in Jordan was very high.

The first major protests in Jordan occurred on 14 January 2011, when nearly ten thousand people marched in cities throughout the country.⁵ This was the same day the Tunisian president fled his post, and before mass protests began in Egypt. For the next two years, Friday protests became a regular feature of life in Jordan, and something like 6000 demonstrations occurred in the country between January 2011 and mid-2014.⁶ In 2011, there were more than 800 documented labour actions, with a similar number of labour protests in 2012.⁷

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Protests were, however, smaller in Jordan compared with other parts of the Arab world, and for the most part demands were reformist rather than revolutionary. Initially economic in focus (reversing subsidy cuts, increasing public service wages, fighting corruption, etc.), they shifted towards political demands once political parties — especially the Muslim Brotherhood's Islamic Action Front — became involved. Broadly, political demands concentrated on increasing the power of the legislature vis-à-vis the executive, dismissing particular government members, amending the constitution, and, most importantly, amending the unbalanced election law.

As an indication of the reformist nature of protests (or possibly the caution with which activists approached governmental red lines on political action), it was only in late 2012, following an increase in fuel prices that instigated mass protests and even riots, that the overthrow of the regime was demanded. Only on a small number of occasions, and only from a small number of people, was that quintessential Arab Spring chant heard: “*Ash-sha’ab yurid isqat an-nizam*” (“The people want the downfall of the regime”).⁸

In the post-2011 period, opposition activists in Jordan are usually broken up into three groups: Islamists, traditional leftists, and newly formed, often politically independent youth groups.⁹ These groups cooperated to varying degrees, but the Muslim Brotherhood, being the largest political organisation in the country, came to dominate the protests once it fully committed its resources.

The monarchy's responses to protests were multifaceted. First, police and gendarmerie used a ‘soft’ approach to protests: containing without interfering, and even, supposedly on the advice of Queen Rania, handing out water to demonstrators.¹⁰ Second, the King was quick to use the favoured tactic of the Jordanian monarchy in response to civil unrest — the dismissal of prime ministers and cabinets. Within a month of protests starting, Prime Minister Samir Rifai was removed, and Jordan would see five different prime ministers in the two years between the start of 2011 and the end of 2012. Third, the King launched a program of

political reform that would result in constitutional amendments, the creation of new institutions, the transfer of some of the monarchy's powers to the legislature, and parliamentary elections held under revised election and political-party laws.¹¹ The constitution had its biggest overhaul since 1952, a constitutional court and an independent election commission were established, and more restrictions were placed on prosecuting civilians in military courts. King Abdullah announced that through "successive parliamentary cycles" the "transition to parliamentary government will deepen."¹²

Political reform has, however, been slow, and opposition demands have not been met. The alterations to the election law were cosmetic, and the January 2013 legislative election was boycotted by many opposition groups.¹³ International observers stated that while the election saw "marked improvements in procedures and administration...systemic distortions remain."¹⁴ The election was meant to showcase the monarchy's top-down democratic reforms, yet a poll conducted in March 2013 found that 52 per cent of Jordanians felt that vote-buying had influenced the outcome of the election. Further, 49 per cent reported they voted for a candidate based on either tribal connection, "personal acquaintance," or "for services the candidate renders."¹⁵

The King still has the power to dismiss prime ministers, and while he consulted with parliament on the reappointment of Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour in March 2013, he is not constitutionally obliged to do so. He can still dismiss parliament, and the royally appointed upper house selects the judiciary.¹⁶

Nor have economic conditions significantly improved. The influx of Syrian refugees has put downward pressure on wages and upward pressure on rents, and Jordan was forced to take a \$US2 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund in 2012.¹⁷ Economists privately suggest that \$US5 billion in grants from the Gulf states since 2011 "rescued the Jordanian economy";¹⁸ and Jordanians themselves are pessimistic about the economic outlook: a recent poll found that 73 per cent of Jordanians stated that they were struggling economically, whereas, in August 2008, that figure was only 48 per cent.¹⁹

REFORM VERSUS STABILITY

Despite the slow pace and limited nature of political reform and the lack of socio-economic improvements, protests since November 2012 have been smaller and more disjointed. Any momentum for change that might have existed has well and truly diminished.

Part of the explanation for this is the factors that have made Jordan a surprisingly stable country over many decades. Perhaps the single most important reason for that political stability has been the support the monarchy has received from so-called East Bank Jordanians — original

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Jordanian citizens from before the influx of Palestinian refugees from Arab–Israeli wars in 1948 and 1967.²⁰ The monarchy has consistently protected the rights and privileges of East Bankers against those of a growing Palestinian population that, by most accounts, now makes up more than half the Jordanian population.

In return for their political support, East Bank Jordanians have received jobs in the public sector, the military, and the intelligence services, as well as patronage delivered along ‘tribal’ lines. Under the election law, parliamentary constituencies are gerrymandered so that the votes of Palestinians, who are concentrated in urban areas (particularly the cities of Amman, Irbid, and Zarqa), count for much less than Jordanians of East Bank origin. In the 2013 election, conducted under the reformed election law, the governorate of Amman was allocated 25 seats for its 2.4 million people, or about one parliamentarian per 96 000 people. In the southern governorates of Tafileh and Maan, by contrast, each parliamentarian represents between 22 000 and 30 000 residents.²¹ In the words of former Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Marwan Muasher, this is “a system designed to keep the number of parliament members of Palestinian origin to a minimum.”²²

This system of patronage has, however, come under increasing pressure as both the current King and his father sought to implement economic reforms. In particular, by attempting to curb the bloated bureaucracy (somewhere between one-third and two-thirds of *all* workers are on the government’s payroll)²³ and by privatising public assets, the regime decreased its ability to distribute rents to its East Bank support base. Economic reforms have also benefited the private sector, dominated by Palestinian businesspeople. And these privatisation programs have in turn been marred by corruption allegations, with many Jordanians believing that much of the money resulting from the sale of public assets has gone into private bank accounts, rather than into government coffers. At the same time, in the eyes of East Bankers, political reform can only serve to increase the political power of Palestinians, and decrease their own ability to influence the political process.

Many of those interviewed for this paper acknowledged that the demographic divide was a serious dampener on political change. It is understandable that those seeking political reform do not want to be perceived as promoting ‘Palestinian’ interests. As one young activist working in the tech sector noted:

The old guard implicitly argues that if we change the election law, the Palestinians will take over and the King will be gone. That is the type of thing we have to contend with.

And from another:

We will not take the risk of going out in the street if we fear that there will be a clash between 'the two Jordans'.²⁴

A more recent factor has, however, also entered the stability versus change equation. This is what one young activist described as "regional relativism."²⁵ This manifests in two ways: a fear of the chaos that has followed uprisings in other countries, and a view that despite its shortcomings, Jordan has come a long way politically and economically and that those achievements should be protected.

Jordanians have experienced the turmoil related to the Arab uprisings in a very real sense, with more than 600 000 Syrian refugees officially residing in their country, equivalent to about 10 per cent of Jordan's population.²⁶ This has placed an intense strain on Jordan's resources and social fabric. In addition, divisions over the Syrian civil war have further polarised Jordanian politics, split opposition movements, and increased the risk of instability.

In Jordanian households, the Syrian conflict has apparently become "the biggest talking point."²⁷ Public opinion on the conflict is mixed, with many in the opposition supporting the Syrian uprising, at least initially, before extremist rebels came to play such a prominent role.²⁸ But the war in Syria has divided the opposition, with Islamists and many liberals promoting the overthrow of President Bashar al-Assad, while some traditional Arab nationalists and leftists support the Syrian regime. A young online journalist described this situation aptly: "We have leftists supporting the repression of the Syrian regime while opposing the much more moderate Jordanian regime."²⁹ Leftist support for the Syrian regime stems from a perception that the Ba'athists are the only Arab government truly standing up to Israel, and from a fear of Salafis.

The combination of the economic impact of the refugees from Syria and the fear something similar could happen in Jordan has made youth activists wary about pushing too forcefully for reform. The author was told in Amman that a government official had been heard to say, "If you want democracy, go look at Za'atari [the large Syrian refugee camp in northern Jordan]."³⁰

In another sense, many of the youth activists the author spoke to are concerned that instability associated with political action, if it develops to uprising levels, could damage the economic, social, and political gains Jordan has made in recent decades. "Things are bad, but they're not that bad," said an online editor:

We can mostly say what we think, we are richer than Egypt despite our meagre resources, and we are safe, unlike in Syria.

The fear of civil war and the strain caused by the number of Syrian refugees have resulted in youth groups stepping back from protests.³¹

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All this combines to instill a 'culture of stability', where activists know what they want their country to look like but are, understandably, wary of the potential volatility that could result from instability. Internal divisions as well as regional lessons mean that Jordan is, according to one activist, "now in a situation where a lot of people think that reform and stability are mutually exclusive."

NEW FORMS OF ACTIVISM

A lack of street protests and the desire for stability do not mean that political activism is dead.

A lack of street protests and the desire for stability do not mean that political activism is dead. As recently argued by academics Lina Khatib and Ellen Lust, there have been enormous changes to activism in the Arab world over the past four years, and even more so now that protests have given way to frustration. Observers need to be careful not to assume that a lack of street demonstrations equates to a lack of activist engagement.³²

At the same time, a lack of trust in, and respect for, existing political parties, as well as the apparent failure of the Arab uprisings to bring concrete changes to political structures, has led many youth activists to explore other areas of political engagement. As the author was told in Amman:

We have learnt a lot from what has happened in the region. We witnessed the failures on television. So, instead of planning revolution we are exploring models... we need to develop successful and ethical models that people can look to and say, "That is a good idea."³³

Despite the absence of significant political reform in Jordan, there seems to be more space for young people to express themselves. If there is one thing all interviewees agreed on, it was that the political conversation in Jordan is now more open — previously taboo topics can be discussed, and politics has become a popular subject of conversation.

According to a young activist:

It is really enough that [the Arab uprisings] broke youth's fears. So, even if we didn't achieve something remarkable, we succeeded in breaking the fear barrier. And we started talking more comfortably about politics.³⁴

Another stated that:

Politics has become the talk of the town, every day, every minute; even people who had no interest in politics are starting to read up.³⁵

Naturally, people do not agree on the cause or significance of this opening, or whether it was simply a tactic by the regime to allow citizens

to blow off steam. However it is real, and activists are using it in creative ways. Four ways in particular stand out.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE EDUCATION

“Enlightening people before revolutionising them,” is how a prominent young NGO executive director describes his mission. His organisation aims to take democracy promotion to the grassroots, and attempts to do this by, for example, organising televised debates in public spaces, where ordinary people can hold officials accountable for their decisions and policies.

He cited one example where, in February 2014, the Mayor of Amman had decided to implement a law, on the books since 2008, to not renew licences for venues serving *nargileh* water pipes due to health concerns. A televised public debate was organised, and, citing a lack of public consultation and communication over deadlines, there was strong criticism of the Mayor (a royal appointee), with one shop owner calling him a “dictator.”³⁶

The author also met with two undergraduates who helped found *Bas lthamouna* (loosely translated as “Understand Us”), an organisation initially committed to combatting the ‘tribal’ violence that has plagued Jordanian university campuses in recent years.³⁷ It branched out into constitutional education in high schools, with one representative telling me that Jordanians “don’t even know how to make use of the democracy they have.”³⁸

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Another initiative of this organisation aimed to decrease the amount of sexual harassment during *Eid al-Fitr* celebrations. Rather than singling out men accused of harassing women, volunteers handed out candy to revellers with a message “not to harass women.” In the opinion of the organisers, this was an attempt to educate and admonish young men without publicly shaming them.

PLATFORM FORMATION

In 2012, the Political Party Law was amended; a key reform aimed at removing obstacles to the formation and registration of political parties, as well as easing state interference in political party activities.³⁹ Still, many consider the new Party Law too restrictive.⁴⁰ One way around these restrictions has been to focus less on building a party per se than providing a platform for the broader community to become more politically aware and active.

In October 2012, 36 Jordanians founded the organisation *Taqaddam* (“Progress”) to, in the words of one of the founders:

Fill the space of the liberal, secular, green agenda, and act as a counterweight to the louder voices of government and Islamism.⁴¹

According to the organisation's website, its goals are as follows:

- A modern, democratic Jordan needs the voice of its community of open-minded, future-oriented democrats.
- Jordan needs a citizen-driven platform for positive political, economic, and social change.
- Jordan's progressive, open-minded, democratic, productive, and sustainability-oriented community is fragmented. It urgently needs to go through a process of self-discovery, to find its voice, and to organise itself.⁴²

Activists affiliated with *Taqaddam* were keen to emphasise that the organisation was not a political party or an advocacy group with specific policy goals, but rather "an interactive informational and activism platform."⁴³ Initially focused on online content creation and distribution, *Taqaddam* is now organising debates and public outreach, while attempting to launch campaigns targeting particular issues.

One member, however, cautioned that while *Taqaddam* understands the reform drive of the liberal youth, it is seen as "West Amman elitist," and by preferring a non-confrontational approach to gradual reform, it risks eventually becoming another part of a largely ossified political elite.⁴⁴

ONLINE ACTIVISM

Much has been made of the role of social media in the Arab uprisings.⁴⁵ Social media websites, online activism, and the emergence of alternative news platforms played a key coordinating and mobilisation role in protest movements across the region. Jordan was no exception, and a number of online platforms emerged during the uprising. Some remain prominent, including Amman Net, JO24, Saraya News, and the innovative 7iber. Facebook 'penetration' is relatively high in Jordan, and many of the new forms of activism described in this paper use social media platforms and new media to mobilise and inform supporters.⁴⁶

The Save Bergesh Forest campaign is an illustration of the use of online activism and social media in the political opening created by the Arab uprisings. In January 2011, the Jordanian Cabinet approved plans to construct a new military academy in the region of Bergesh Forest, near the city of Ajloun in Jordan's north. The building would have resulted in the uprooting of something like 2200 trees in one of Jordan's few remaining forested areas.⁴⁷

A 'National Campaign to Save Bergesh Forests from Execution' Facebook group was created, which would remain the only 'physical' presence of the group mobilising to prevent construction of the academy in that location.⁴⁸ In one of the first Jordanian examples of environmental activism resulting in a shift in government policy, a succession of

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protests and representations from activists compelled the authorities to, temporarily at least, halt construction.

According to one activist, “social media has proved to be a very quick and powerful tool” in this particular campaign.⁴⁹ And according to the administrator of the Facebook page:

Facebook helped to increase communication between the members, became a place for serious discussions, and helped to gain more supporters from all over the world, who held activities to support the campaign. For example, some members in United States of America who joined us through Facebook organised activities there [and] sent letters to the King, and embassies abroad. We had other members living in the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia who joined us through Facebook and shared [in] the discussion, and we exchanged views and information on the Facebook group. Thus the role [of] Facebook was communicative and provocative for those who joined the group, but alone [it] is not enough without realistic activities on the ground.⁵⁰

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SINGLE-ISSUE CAMPAIGNS

Another avenue of activism being explored is single-issue campaigns as a means to build coalitions around specific causes. A good example of this is the “My citizenship is the right of my family” campaign. Under the constitution, if a Jordanian woman marries a foreigner she is unable to pass on her citizenship to her children (or her husband). The children of these marriages have to pay for permits in order to work in Jordan, and do not have access to basic services such as health and education.

Observing clear gender discrimination, a number of organisations and activists banded together in February 2013 to launch “My citizenship is the right of my family.” The coalition has engaged parliamentarians, ministers, and journalists, providing research showing that rather than being an economic impost, granting citizenship to such children would benefit the economy by increasing tax revenue.⁵¹

Opposition to the proposal centres on demographic issues. Myassar Sardiyah, an East Bank Jordanian parliamentarian, argues that granting citizenship to these individuals would increase the number of Jordanian-Palestinians and “transform original Jordanians into a minority,” leading to “the disappearance of Jordanian identity.”⁵²

In July 2014, Minister of Political and Parliamentary Affairs Khaled Kalaldeh stated that the Government would grant “free health and education services” to the children of these marriages, “as well as ease restrictions on driving licences, property ownership and investment opportunities.”⁵³ Not a total victory, to be sure, but a demonstration of

what new forms of activism can do in the new political environment created by the upheaval in the Arab world since 2011.

CONCLUSION

Today's youth activists will be important to Jordan's future. How the Government chooses to engage with these individuals and groups will help determine Jordan's political development. This segment of the political class is often ignored or marginalised in a country — and a region — where the overarching discussion of political development seems to revolve around the interaction between authoritarian governments and Islamist movements.

These activists, cognisant of the unsavoury outcomes of uprisings in other Arab states and recognising the potential for volatility in their homeland, are generally not pushing for street protests as a means to achieve domestic political reform. Instead, many are using the political opening created by the Arab uprisings to pursue more limited (and achievable) single-issue campaigns, or to focus future-orientated endeavours such as platform development and civic education. The protests may have stopped and the world's attention is focused on more sinister developments in the Middle East, but the evolution of Arab activism after the uprisings should not be ignored.

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NOTES

¹ Confidential interview with author, Amman, 10 June 2014.

² See for example Navtej Dhillon, "Middle East Youth Bulge: Challenge or Opportunity?" Briefing to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 22 May 2008), <http://www.brookings.edu/research/speeches/2008/05/22-middle-east-youth-dhillon>; Ragui Assaad and Farzaneh Roudi-Fahimi, "Youth in the Middle East and North Africa," (Washington DC: Population Reference Bureau, April 2007), <http://www.prb.org/pdf07/youthinmena.pdf>; and Graham E. Fuller, "The Youth Crisis in Middle East Society," brief paper, (Clinton Township, Michigan: Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, April 2004), <http://www.ispu.org/files/PDFs/graham%20fuller%20paper.pdf>. In Jordan, the percentage of the population between 10 and 24 years old is currently about 32 per cent, compared with 20 per cent in North America and 18 per cent in Europe; see Population Reference Bureau, *The World's Youth: 2013 Data Sheet* (Washington DC: Population Reference Bureau, 2013), 8.

³ Confidential interview with author, Amman, 10 June 2014.

⁴ Youth unemployment in Jordan in 2011 was about 30 per cent, compared with a world average of 13 per cent; see Amin al-Azzam and Sayel al-Serhan, "Youth Bulges and Political Demonstrations in Jordan: Level of Acceptance of Demonstrations Among Youth After the Arab Spring," *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, vol. 15, no. 5 (2014): 275.

⁵ Johnny McDevitt, "Jordanians Protest Against Soaring Food Prices," *The Guardian*, 15 January 2011, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/15/jordanians-protest-over-food-prices>.

⁶ Azzam and Serhan, "Youth Bulges," 271.

⁷ Fida Adely, "The Emergence of a New Labor Movement in Jordan," *Middle East Report*, vol. 264 (Fall 2012), <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer264/emergence-new-labor-movement-jordan>; and Phenix Center for Economic and Information Studies and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, "Labor Protests in Jordan in 2013," *Labor Watch Reports* (Amman: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, March 2014).

⁸ Suleiman al-Khalidi, "Jordan Protesters Call for 'Downfall of the Regime'," Reuters, 16 November 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/16/us-jordan-protest-idUSBRE8AF0LK20121116>.

⁹ See for example Mona Christopherson, "Protest and Reform in Jordan: Popular Demands and Government Response: 2011 to 2012," *Fafo Report No. 50* (Oslo: Fafo, 2013), 8; and Musa Shteivi, *The Role of Civil Society Organizations in the Political Reform in Jordan* (Amman: Center for Strategic Studies, University of Jordan, 2013), 7.

¹⁰ Jeffrey Goldberg, "The Modern King in the Arab Spring," *The Atlantic*, 18 March 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/04/monarch-in-the-middle/309270/>.

¹¹ The reforms are explained in all their necessary detail in Christopherson, "Protest and Reform in Jordan."

¹² King Abdullah II ibn al-Hussein, "Each Playing Our Part in a New Democracy," *Third Discussion Paper* (Amman: the Office of His Majesty Abdullah II ibn al-Hussein, 2 March 2013), http://kingabdullah.jo/index.php/en_US/pages/view/id/249.html.

¹³ It is difficult to have an appreciation of the Jordanian political system without understanding the infamous election law. See "Jordan's 2013 Parliamentary Elections at a Glance," *Impatient Bedouin* (blog), 23 January 2013, <http://impatientbedouin.com/jordans-2013-parliamentary-elections-at-a-glance/>; Kristen Kao, "Jordan's Ongoing Election Law Battle," *Sada* (blog), 5 July 2012, <http://carnegieendowment.org/sada/2012/07/05/jordan-s-ongoing-election-law-battle/fbdu>; and Ziad Abu-Rish, "Romancing the Throne: the *New York Times* and the Endorsement of Authoritarianism in Jordan," *Jadaliyya* (blog), 3 February 2013, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/9949/romancing-the-throne_the-new-york-times-and-the-en.

¹⁴ National Democratic Institute, *International Observation Mission: Jordan 2013: Preliminary Statement* (Washington DC: National Democratic Institute, 24 January 2013), <https://www.ndi.org/files/Jordan-International-Mission-Prelim-Statement-012413-ENG.pdf>.

¹⁵ International Republican Institute, *Jordan Post-Election Public Opinion Survey* (Amman: International Republican Institute, April 2013), <http://www.iri.org/news-events-press-center/news/iri-poll-jordanians-believe-rising-prices-are-chief-cause-concern>.

¹⁶ Jeremy Sharpe, "Jordan: Background and US Relations," *CRS Report RL33546* (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 8 May 2014), *passim*.

¹⁷ Reuters, "Jordan's Central Bank Urges Sticking with IMF Reforms," *Al-Arabiya*, 27 January 2014, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/business/economy/2014/01/27/Jordan-s-central-bank-urges-sticking-with-IMF-reforms.html>; and "Jordan Prospects Look Better on GCC and IMF Support: QNB," *Gulf Times*, 11 March 2014, <http://www.gulf-times.com/Mobile/Eco.-Bus.%20News/256/details/384247/Jordan-prospects-look-better-on-GCC-and-IMF-support%3A-QNB>.

¹⁸ Confidential interview with author, Amman, 9 June 2014. For details on the grants see Suleiman al-Khalidi, "Jordan Taps \$5 billion Gulf Fund to Ease Economic Woes," *Al-Arabiya*, 27 February 2013, <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2013/02/27/268715.html>.

¹⁹ Mohamed Younis and Chris Rieser, "Fewer Jordanians Than Ever Are 'Thriving'," *Gallup*, 12 July 2014, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/163481/fewer-jordanians-ever-thriving.aspx>.

²⁰ Those whose roots lie on the East Bank of the Jordan River. The term usually includes minority groups closely aligned with the Hashemite monarchy, such as Circassians and East Bank Christians.

²¹ "Jordan's 2013 Parliamentary Elections at a Glance," *Impatient Bedouin*.

²² Marwan Muasher, "A Decade of Struggling Reform Efforts in Jordan: the Resilience of the Rentier System," *The Carnegie Papers* (Washington DC:

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 2011), 7, http://carnegieendowment.org/files/jordan_reform.pdf.

²³ Sharpe, "Jordan: Background and US Relations," 12.

²⁴ Confidential interviews with author, Amman, 9 June 2014.

²⁵ Confidential interview with author, Amman, 9 and 11 June 2014.

²⁶ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "Needs Soar as Number of Syrian Refugees Tops 3 Million," media release, 29 August 2014, <http://www.unhcr.org/53ff76c99.html>.

²⁷ Confidential interview with author, Amman, 10 June 2014.

²⁸ See for example Khaled Neimat, "Majority of Jordanians Call for End to Syrian Refugee Influx," *Jordan Times*, 15 April 2015, <http://jordantimes.com/majority-of-jordanians-call-for-end-to-syrian-refugee-influx>; and Pew Research Center, *Widespread Middle East Fears that Syrian Violence Will Spread* (Washington DC: Pew Research Center, 1 May 2013), <http://www.pewglobal.org/files/2013/05/Pew-Global-Attitudes-Project-Syria-Report-FINAL-May-1-20133.pdf>.

²⁹ Confidential interview with author, Amman, 10 June 2014.

³⁰ Confidential interview with author, Amman, 16 June 2014.

³¹ Lina Khatib and Ellen Lust, "The Transformation of Arab Activism: New Contexts, Domestic Institutions, and Regional Rivalries," *The Project on Middle East Democracy* (Washington DC: Project on Middle East Democracy, 15 May 2014), 3.

³² Ibid.

³³ Confidential interview with author, Amman, 10 June 2014.

³⁴ Confidential interview with author, Amman, 11 June 2014.

³⁵ Confidential interview with author, Amman, 12 June 2014.

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