FRAMING PROTEST: 
A SOCIAL MOVEMENT ANALYSIS OF THE JORDANIAN 
MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD AND MOROCCAN JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY 
IN THE 2011 ARAB UPRISINGS 

A thesis 
submitted to the faculty of the 
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences 
of Georgetown University 
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the 
degree of 
Master of Arts 
in Arab Studies 

By 

Reena Nadler, M.A. 

Washington, DC 
April 24, 2014
Copyright © 2014 by Reena Nadler
All Rights Reserved
FRAMING PROTEST:
A SOCIAL MOVEMENT ANALYSIS OF THE JORDANIAN
MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD AND MOROCCAN JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY
IN THE 2011 ARAB UPRISINGS

By Reena Nadler, M.A.

Thesis Advisor: John O. Voll, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

This thesis uses social movement theory to examine how the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and the Moroccan Justice and Development Party (PJD) frame their roles in the 2011 Arab uprisings and in the political shifts that followed. My primary theoretical lens is the concept of “framing,” a process whereby social movement actors strategically produce and mobilize ideas and meaning for a variety of audiences. My analysis traces how both the MB and PJD departed from the regional trend in 2011 by continuing to articulate reformist rather than revolutionary goals. However the MB used non-institutionalized tactics by participating in street protests and boycotting Jordan’s parliamentary elections, while the PJD used more quiescent institutionalized tactics by not participating in street protests and by running in Morocco’s parliamentary elections. Building off of the work of Douglas McAdam (1996), I argue that the MB and PJD’s choice of goals (reformist vs. revolutionary) and tactics (institutional vs. non-institutional) constitute a core signifying matrix that activists consciously deploy in order frame the nature of the movement to both the regime and the public. Each movement’s choices on where to locate itself in this signifying matrix have been significantly impacted by its history, the regional context of the Arab uprisings, the institutional context of electoral authoritarian monarchy, and the specificities of national politics. Moreover, these framing choices were not self evident; they
developed over time in response to changing events, prompted intense internal contestation, and exhibited a complex, nonlinear relationship with ideologies both internal and external to each movement. In making this argument, this thesis offers both empirical and conceptual contributions to the existing scholarly literature. Empirically, it examines two longstanding opposition movements that have been relatively understudied in the context of the 2011 Arab uprisings. Conceptually, it extends the democracy-centric theory of framing within social movement theory by applying it to Islamist movements in an authoritarian context.
This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my father, Allen Nadler, who supported me through all my decisions, listened avidly to stories about my fieldwork adventures, and would have loved to see the final product. I also want thank the many people who helped make this thesis possible, including my wonderful and supportive advisor, John Voll, and second reader/research mentor, Rochelle Davis. Many thanks to Nabil Ali, whose patient and accurate translations allowed me to analyze my interviews in vivid detail. Special thanks to Diane, Susannah, Jacob, Jeff, and the many other family members and friends who encouraged and helped me every step of the way.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: A TALE OF TWO MOVEMENTS ................................................................................. 1
   Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 1
   Methodology ....................................................................................................................... 5
   Theoretical Framework: Social Movement Theory .............................................................. 8
   Historical Background ....................................................................................................... 10
   Review of the Literature ..................................................................................................... 16

CHAPTER 2: CORE MOVEMENT FRAMING DECISIONS .............................................................. 33
   Framing and the Post-2011 Regional Context ................................................................... 33
   Movement Goals as Framing (Why Reform and Not Overthrow?) ..................................... 46
   Movement Tactics as Framing (Street Protests vs. Parliamentary Politics) ....................... 57

CHAPTER 3: CONTESTATION AND ADAPTATION OF FRAMING .............................................. 74
   Internal Framing Disputes .................................................................................................... 74
   Changes in Movement Framing Over Time ......................................................................... 92
   Appropriating Hegemonic Ideologies .............................................................................. 100

CONCLUSION ......................................................................................................................... 108

REFERENCES ......................................................................................................................... 115
Chapter 1: A Tale of Two Movements

Introduction

As political change swept across the Arab world in early 2011, toppling four authoritarian regimes and sparking a protracted civil war, Jordan and Morocco appeared relatively untouched. The bulk of scholarly work on the 2011 Arab uprisings has focused on countries that experienced the most dramatic changes, like Egypt and Tunisia, and on the loose coalitions of protesters that ousted regimes there. In fact, however, both Jordan and Morocco have also experienced important social and political shifts, including mass protests, offers of reform from their respective kings, and numerous new governments. Yet the major political actors in each country have remained in place, including both kings and both legal Islamist opposition movements, the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in Jordan and the Justice and Development Party (PJD) in Morocco. How has the sudden swell of regime-toppling social movements in the region impacted these two longstanding Islamist movements, which for years have worked within the political system to demand reform? How have the local and regional uprisings impacted their discourses, their tactics of contention, and their perceptions of the political opportunities that are open to them?

This research seeks to answer this question by using social movement theory (SMT) to examine how the Jordanian MB and the Moroccan PJD frame their role in the 2011 uprisings and in the national political shifts that followed. My primary theoretical lens is the concept of “framing,” a process whereby social movement actors strategically produce and mobilize ideas and meaning for a variety of audiences. I use the concept of framing in its broader sense; beyond written and spoken discourse, the actions and tactics of movement actors also constitute a crucial part of their signifying work by signaling to both opponents and adherents the nature of the movement and the potential threat it poses to the status quo.
Social movement theory, and framing in particular, offers a valuable analytical tool for understanding the strategic decisions of MB and PJD activists during the 2011 uprisings and their aftermath. SMT offers a thorough and systematic schema for understanding why and how diverse actors organize into groups and mobilize to make claims that resist structures of authority. The MB and PJD represent two longstanding Islamist social movements with their own preexisting reform claims, while the 2011 uprisings constitute one of the most widespread series of social movement mobilizations in Arab history. SMT offers a powerful lens for exploring how these two longstanding social movements encountered a dramatic new cycle of movement mobilization both regionally and nationally. Moreover, framing is at the heart of this encounter. Movement actors respond to evolving cultural and institutional opportunities by strategically crafting their discourse and actions to construct meaning for adherents, opponents and each other in order to achieve their goals. However, the relevant theories of framing were developed primarily for movements operating in democratic contexts. I contribute a new strand to this theory by examining how it applies in the context of electoral authoritarian monarchies.

Moreover, the structural similarities between Jordan and Morocco offer a fruitful field for comparison that has been somewhat overlooked in studies of the 2011 Arab uprisings. Both are hereditary authoritarian monarchies that hold elections, allow some degree of political pluralism, and allow some legal political organization, including the two legal Islamist opposition groups that are the object of this study. Jordan and Morocco thus represent a distinct institutional type that differs from hegemonic party autocracies like Egypt or Tunisia and from the closed, oil-rich monarchies of the Gulf region. This type has been variously classified but I will refer to it as “electoral authoritarian monarchies.” Beyond their structural similarities, Jordan and Morocco have experienced political progressions since 2011 that are similar enough for comparison but

---

1 For example, see Wegner 2011, Diamond 2002, and Gause 2013.
also intriguingly different. Both countries saw national protests calling for reform rather than the overthrow of the regime, and both kings responded by offering reform packages. However, in Morocco this resulted in a new constitution and parliamentary elections that brought the main opposition party, the PJD, to power, whereas in Jordan, over two years of protests resulted in no significant reform deal between the MB and the monarchy.

My research will examine these differences and similarities, and the reasons behind them, from the perspective of the two Islamist opposition actors themselves, the MB and the PJD. The MB and the PJD are comparable, but not directly similar. The PJD is an Islamist political party that separated from its parent movement, the Movement of Unity and Reform (MUR), but contains a variety of affiliated subordinate organizations, including the PJD Youth Sector, the Organization of PJD Women, and the newspaper *al-Tajdid*. The MB is a broader movement that includes a central movement organization, a political party (the Islamic Action Front), and several other organizations. From a social movement theory perspective, the PJD can be considered a small group of social movement organizations (SMOs) that focuses primarily on electoral politics and is linked to broader Islamic movement but is not formally beholden to that movement. By contrast, the MB can be considered a larger and more varied group of SMOs that are tightly linked in a formalized movement structure, including a party that focuses on electoral politics but is beholden to the central movement organization. In spite of these differences, the two movements furnish an effective comparison because they occupy structurally similar positions within MENA’s two electoral authoritarian monarchies: both are legal Islamist opposition groups that have long worked, not to overthrow their respective regimes, but to enact reforms within the existing system. Charles Tilly, a seminal social movement theorist, articulates the quandary such movements face: “there lies the eternal dilemma of the militant group which
finds a protective cleft in the legal system: solidarity resistance with a chance of destruction, or adaptation with a chance of absorption or dissolution” (1978, p. 168). For legal, institutionalized movements like the MB and PJD, overly radical goals and tactics will likely result in regime repression and loss of legal privileges, while overly quiescent ones will likely result in cooptation and ineffectiveness.

My analysis traces how both the MB and PJD departed from the regional trend by continuing to articulate reformist rather than revolutionary goals from the start of the Arab uprisings in early 2011 through the summer of 2013. However each movement devised a different solution to the dilemma Tilly cites—the MB used non-institutionalized tactics by participating in street protests and boycotting Jordan’s parliamentary elections, while the PJD used more quiescent institutionalized tactics by not participating in street protests and by running in Morocco’s parliamentary elections. Building off of the work of Douglas McAdam (1996), I argue that the MB and PJD’s choice of goals (reformist vs. revolutionary) and tactics (institutional vs. non-institutional) constitute a core signifying matrix that activists consciously deploy in order frame the nature of the movement to both the regime and the public. I argue that each movement’s choices on where to locate itself in this signifying matrix have been significantly impacted by its history, the regional context of the Arab uprisings, the institutional context of electoral authoritarian monarchy, and the specificities of national politics. Moreover, these framing choices were not self evident; they developed over time in response to changing events, prompted intense internal contestation, and exhibited a complex, nonlinear relationship with ideologies both internal and external to each movement. In making this argument, my thesis offers both empirical and conceptual contributions to the existing scholarly literature. Empirically, it examines two longstanding opposition movements that have been relatively
understudied in the context of the 2011 Arab uprisings. Conceptually, it extends the democracy-centric theory of framing within SMT by applying it to Islamist movements in an authoritarian context.

In the remainder of this chapter, I describe my research methodology, theoretical framework, and the relevant historical background. I also review the existing literature on the MB and PJD, with an emphasis on the few existing studies since the 2011 uprisings. In chapter two, I first examine how MB and PJD activists adjusted their framing in response to the regional uprisings, responding first to the opening of dramatic new political opportunities and then to the challenges that arose as regional events deteriorated in 2012 and 2013. Second, I analyze how each movement’s choice of goals and tactics since 2011 constitutes a core signifying matrix that activists consciously use to frame the nature of the movement to various audiences. Extending the democracy-centered theory on this question, I argue that both the institutional context of an electoral authoritarian monarchy, and specific strategies of regime legitimation, have significantly impacted each movement’s calculus of reformist or revolutionary goal articulation and institutional or non-institutionalized tactics. In chapter three, I start by examining the internal frame disputes within the MB and the PJD since 2011. Far from being an empirical quantity, the level of internal frame dispute is itself defined by the framing efforts of movement activists and regime opponents. Finally I examine how movement actors conceptualize the strategic evolution of their framing over time and the relationship between framing and ideology.

**Methodology**

The data for this thesis derive from twenty personal interviews that I conducted, nine with MB members in Amman, Jordan in late May 2013, and eleven with PJD members in Rabat, Morocco in June and July 2013. Interviews took anywhere from forty minutes to two hours.
They were structured around an interview guide but did not always follow a predetermined set of questions depending on the flow of the conversation. The Jordanian and Moroccan interview guides were as closely as possible alike to ensure comparability, though historical differences required slight differences (for example, in Jordan I asked what the MB’s role in the 2011 protests was, while in Morocco I asked why the PJD had not participated in the protests). Most interviews were with individual subjects, but I interviewed one pair and one group of three at the same time in order to accommodate the schedules of interviewees. Sixteen interviews were conducted in Modern Standard Arabic and four were conducted in English, according to the preference of the interviewees. All twenty interviews were recorded, translated into English if necessary, and transcribed with the help of a research assistant.

Interviewees were recruited primarily through network sampling, in which I leveraged my personal and scholarly contacts in Jordan and Morocco to “locate one or more individuals and ask them to name others who would be likely candidates” (Bernard, 2006, p. 105). For both the MB and the PJD, a local researcher provided contact information of some movement members who in turn recommended others. I also used purposive sampling to ensure that my interviews covered a broad range of perspectives (Maxwell, 1996, p. 70), taking particular care to include both younger and older movement members and a variety of organizational affiliations and roles within each movement. For example, my MB sample includes two older MB members (one a former leader), two members of the MB’s Islamic Youth Movement, three leaders of the Islamic Action Front Party (one from the central party, one from the Youth Sector, and one from the Women’s Sector), one MB member who is a leader in the breakoff initiative Zamzam, and, one editor at the MB-affiliated newspaper al-Sabīl. My PJD sample includes three PJD party members, five PJD Youth Sector members (two of them organizational leaders and three of them
Members of Parliament), and an editor and a journalist at the PJD-affiliated newspaper *al-Tajdid*. Reflecting the demographic makeup of movement leadership, my sample was overwhelmingly male, but I was able to interview one woman in each movement.

This qualitative, personal-interview-based approach allows me to analyze the discourse of interviewees with great nuance, an important advantage for any study on framing. However, it also creates methodological limitations. First, given the small sample size and informal sampling techniques, the data does not constitute a representative portrayal of the MB or PJD. Indeed, as my analysis suggests, there is no one unitary movement framing and considerable disagreements exist among movement members. I attempted to cover the various sides of the issues, but my analysis is intended to be illustrative, not comprehensive. Second, my sampling has a top-down bias because it includes a greater share of movement leaders than the proportion within the movements themselves, a common problem in social movement studies (Benford 1997 p. 421-2). I attempt to mitigate this problem by including the voices of ordinary movement members and by capturing generational diversity, including the interplay between the older leadership and the youth sectors’ framing of contentious issues. Third, my own positioning as a young, female, American researcher and movement outsider undoubtedly affected the way interviewees portrayed various issues. As interviewees described their movements’ broader framing strategies, they were also engaged in a more immediate process of framing the movement for me, the American researcher. Thus, throughout my analysis, I consider how interviewees’ statements represent many complex layers of framing, not the objective “truth” about the movement.

To supplement my interview data, I examined a variety of additional sources, including statements from movement officials, interviews and newspaper articles from both Western and Arab media sources, and open source survey data. I also conducted informal interviews with
Jordanian and Moroccan journalists and academics to get background information on events in each country since 2011. This supplemental analysis allowed me to triangulate my results (Maxwell, 1996, p. 75) and provide a thicker description of these two movements' framing of the 2011 uprisings and their response to them.

**Theoretical Framework: Social Movement Theory**

My theoretical approach to the two cases in this thesis derives from the body of social movement theory (SMT). Social movements are processes for resisting power relations in which one party asserts claims or negotiates authority vis-à-vis another. According to seminal authors Charles Tilly and Lesley Wood, social movements entail three components: 1) an organized, sustained public effort at collective claim-making, 2) employment of public political performances like rallies, demonstrations, and statements in public media, and 3) public displays of participants’ worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment (WUNC). A social movement therefore links three parties: claimants, the object of their claims, and the public, and it is the interactions of these three parties that constitute the social movement (2013, p. 4). SMT initially focused on “political opportunities,” or structural factors that impact social movements but are external to them (Johnston & Noakes, 2005, p. 20). However, in the 1980s, scholars began to critique SMT as overly structural and failing to account for movement actors’ work in constructing meanings (see Klandermans, 1984, 1992; Cohen, 1985; Tarrow, 1992). During this period, Robert Benford and David Snow developed and elaborated the concept of “framing,” which by the 1990s was widely recognized as a central approach to studying social movements (See Benford, Snow, Rochford, & Worden, 1986; Benford & Snow 1988, 1992, 2000).

Benford and Snow define framing as “the struggle over the production of mobilizing and countermobilizing ideas and meaning” (2000, p. 613). Movement actors are signifying agents
who engage actively in the production and maintenance of meaning for a variety of audiences. Framing involves constructing “collective action frames,” an action-oriented set of beliefs and meanings that both inspire and legitimate movement activities (Benford and Snow 2000, p. 614). Collective action frames often emphasize and embellish the seriousness of something that was previously viewed as unfortunate but perhaps tolerable, thus inspiring collective action (Benford and Snow, 1992, p. 137). There are three basic types of framing: Diagnostic framing, which identifies a problem that needs to be changed and who or what is to blame; prognostic framing, which articulates a proposed solution to the problem and the strategies for carrying it out; and motivational framing, which provides a rationale for engaging in ameliorative collective action, including vocabularies of motive (Benford and Snow 2000, p. 617). The process of generating, elaborating, and deploying frames is a contested one, and actors who engage in framing are “embroiled in the politics of signification” (Benford and Snow, 2000, p. 625).

Scholars’ traditional approach to framing has four important shortcomings. First, Douglas McAdam has rightly criticized the “ideational bias” in most framing studies. Studies often focus only on the speech and writing of movement actors when their tactics and actions also constitute an important part of their signifying work (1996, p. 354). Actions and tactical choices encode the degree of threat embodied in the movement, and thus critically shape the reactions of various publics to the conflict (McAdam, 1996, p. 341). Second, scholars have tended to study either political opportunities or framing individually, and more studies are needed that identify the relationships between these two factors (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, 1996, p. 7). Theorists have suggested that the relationship is recursive: changes in political opportunities shape movement framing, and movement framing in turn can cause openings or closings in political opportunities (Johnson and Noakes, 2005, p. 20). Third, recent debates have centered on the
distinction and relative importance between framing, which changes quickly in response to strategic imperatives, and ideology, which constitutes a more constant and pervasive set of beliefs and values. Scholars have begun to theorize the complex relationship between framing and ideology, but relatively few case studies have addressed this nascent area (see Johnson and Oliver, 2005a and 2005b, Benford and Snow 2005, David Westby, 2005). Fourth, most framing theorists have developed their models by studying movements operating in democratic environments. Recent efforts to apply social movement theory to Islamic movements are beginning to rectify this omission (for example see the essays in Wiktorowicz ed. 2004).

In this thesis, I analyze the framing strategies of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood and the Moroccan Justice and Development party in relation to the 2011 uprisings in each country. I address the gaps in the literature by analyzing the role of actions and tactics in movement framing, the relationship between framing and political opportunities, and the distinction between ideology and framing. Most importantly, I seek to extend the theory in each of these areas by examining how it applies to the authoritarian political contexts in Jordan and Morocco.

**Historical Background**

**MB Formation and History**

The Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood (MB) was founded in 1946 as an offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. The king granted the MB legal status to counterbalance leftist opposition. Over the next decade, the MB evolved into a cohesive political organization advocating gradual implementation of sharia law through education, while avoiding overtly critical positions toward the government (Boulby, 1999, p. 37-38). During the two most serious

---

2 Officially, the Jordanian Brotherhood remains administratively subordinate to the Egyptian Brotherhood, but it has actually functioned autonomously. However, it has maintained close ties with the Palestinian Brotherhood, and Palestinian issues have traditionally been at the forefront of the movement’s agenda (Boulby, 1999, p. 73).
threats to the monarchy—from leftist-nationalists in the 1950s and Palestinian movements in the 1960s—the MB stayed neutral and was exempted from crackdowns (Brown, 2006, p. 5).

The MB’s legal status allowed it to develop a large grassroots base during the 1970s and 1980s, and it expanded into a range of charitable activities, religious institutions, and professional associations. When parliamentary elections resumed in 1989 the result was a landslide for the MB, and when parliament passed a new, liberalized party law in 1992, the MB founded the Islamic Action Front (IAF). Unlike the Moroccan PJD, which has separated from its founding movement, the IAF maintains a close partnership with the MB: the MB selects the head of the IAF, and the party defers to the MB on critical decisions (Brown, 2006, p. 6). However, a faction within the MB strongly opposed creating a separate political party and continues to oppose political participation in what it sees as a skewed system, leading to ongoing conflicts about whether to participate in or boycott parliamentary elections (Brown, 2006, p. 6).^3

Beginning in 1989, the Hashemite regime sought to contain the rising electoral challenge of the MB. The regime changed electoral laws to introduce a single nontransferable voting system (referred to as “one man one vote”) that encourages voting along familial and tribal lines, disadvantaging the MB. It also drew new electoral districts that underrepresent the large, urban, and Palestinian-dominated populations favorable to the MB (Amis, 2013, p. 39). Nevertheless, the IAF won an impressive 16 seats in its first election in 1993. However, each round of parliamentary elections has sparked new debates within the movement over whether or not it should participate in what it sees as a skewed process. The MB’s relationship with the regime

---

^3 The MB and IAF could certainly be analyzed separately as two different social movement organizations (SMOs). However, because they have extremely close ties, consider themselves part of one Islamist movement, and make joint decisions on strategy and framing, I have chosen to include both organizations as a unitary movement in this study. When I refer to “the MB,” I am therefore designating the movement as a whole, inclusive of both the IAF and the MB organizational structure. However, I occasionally designate the IAF separately when discussing electoral gains. When citing individual interviewees, I also clarify their roles within one or both of these organizations.
suffered following the 1994 peace accord with Israel, which the MB staunchly opposed, and the IAF boycotted the 1997 elections. However, it ran in 2003 and won more seats than any other political party, though regime loyalists still dominated. The 2005 al-Qaeda hotel bombings in Amman and 2006 Hamas victory in Palestinian elections led to an unprecedented regime crackdown on the MB. The IAF ran in the 2007 parliamentary elections later that year, but secured only 6 seats amidst widespread allegations of electoral fraud and manipulation. Increasingly frustrated and alienated, the MB and IAF shūra (consultative) councils overwhelmingly voted to boycott the 2010 parliamentary elections, demanding the reform of the “one man one vote” system as its main condition for participation (Amis, 2013, pp. 39-40).

**2011 Arab Uprisings and MB Response**

The events in Egypt and Tunisia gave new impetus to long-simmering tensions in Jordan. Protests began in January 2011 and continued into 2012 as protesters demanded constitutional reform, a reduction in the king’s power, and changes in the electoral and political party laws. Protesters also decried rising food and fuel prices, inflation, and unemployment. However, unlike in Egypt or Tunisia, virtually no protesters demanded the downfall of the monarchy (Schwedler, 2013; Ryan, 2011a; Tobin, 2012). The MB officially participated in the Jordanian protests. It coordinated with professional associations and political parties across the political spectrum to organize ongoing weekly protests in all major urban areas and many rural ones (Schwedler, 2013, p. 259). As the protests continued, the MB’s unified national infrastructure proved essential to generating protest turnout, and MB demands eclipsed those of the more fragmented and disorganized local reform movements or “Hirak” (Amis, 2013, p. 47). The regime was generally tolerant of the protests, though occasional violence erupted between police and protesters (Ryan, 2013a).
King Abdullah responded to the protests by dismissing Prime Minister Samir Rifa’i, calling for a national dialogue, and forming a Royal Committee to consider constitutional reforms. He also put $500 million into salary increases for government employees and food and fuel subsidies (Susser, 2011). The king invited MB leadership to participate in a joint reform process. However the MB, which was calling for major constitutional reforms to limit the king’s power, refused to take part in the Royal Committee and rejected its proposals as insufficient. In September 2011, the IAF announced a boycott of the forthcoming municipal elections to protest the lack of substantive reform. The king responded by ousting another prime minister and installing the reform-friendly ‘Awn al-Khasawna with instructions to accommodate the MB. He also offered the MB additional cabinet-level representation, which the movement rejected, calling for more substantial limitations on the king’s power (Amis, 2013, p. 50).

In May 2012, al-Khasawna submitted his resignation, claiming that royal interference had blocked reform and thus precluded any agreement with the MB. The prospect of a reform settlement between the regime and the MB ended when al-Khasawna’s successor, Fayez Tarawna, enacted new election laws that retained the “one man one vote” formula and ruled out further constitutional amendments (Amis, 2013, p. 51). The king replaced Tarawna after only five months with another conservative, ‘Abdullah al-Nsour, Jordan’s fifth prime minister in eighteen months. The IAF, several leftist parties, and most of the Hirak boycotted the January 2013 parliamentary elections, which resulted in a solidly pro-royalist parliament. Regular protests have continued through 2013, though in much-diminished numbers (Ryan, 2013a).

**PJD Formation and History**

Like in Jordan, the Moroccan monarchy initially encouraged Islamist movements as a counterweight to Leftists and later repressed them as they grew stronger (Wegner, 2011, p. 19).
In 1996, the Movement of Unity and Reform (MUR) was formed through a merger of Islamist organizations that had rejected revolutionary and violent activities and begun pursuing inclusion into the formal political process in the 1980s (Wegner, 2011, p. 20-29). MUR defends religious values and aims to Islamize society has also always been ideologically flexible, pursuing “the invention of an ideological repertoire compatible with the paradigm proposed by the power center to other political actors” (Tozy, 1999, p. 235). The other major Islamist movement in Morocco, Shaykh ‘ Abd al-Salam Yasin’s Justice and Spirituality movement, has refused to compromise with the monarchy to an extent that would allow it to participate in official politics.

In 1996, MUR merged with the inactive political party Popular Constitutional Democratic Movement (MPCD), which changed its name to the Justice and Development Party (PJD) in 1998 (Wegner, 2011, p. 27). King Hassan granted the PJD legal recognition in an effort to increase his legitimacy among the growing numbers of Islamists, believing the PJD could be controlled (Storm, 2007, p. 88). The PJD ran in the 2002 elections but agreed to only present candidates in a limited number of districts, thus ensuring it would not become too dominant (Willis, 2004). However, the party did surprisingly well and became the third largest party in the Moroccan parliament (Wegner, 2011, p. 63). In 2003, all Moroccan Islamist movements came under pressure following terrorist attacks in Casablanca. Thereafter, the PJD began to distance itself from MUR to improve its electoral chances. This led to MUR’s withdrawal of support from the party in 2007, claiming the PJD was not invested enough in Islamist ideological principles and was too pragmatic, uncritical, and office-oriented (Wegner, 2011, pp. 64-71).[^1]

[^1]: As this history shows, the PJD, which separated from its parent movement, is not directly comparable to the MB, which includes both a social movement organization and political party. I take these differences into account while drawing any comparative conclusions.
2011 Arab Uprisings and PJD Response

Events in Tunisia and Egypt in early 2011 quickly sparked similar ideas among Moroccans. In mid-February, the “February 20th Movement” was established, bringing together a cross-section of previously unaffiliated activists (Maddy-Weitzman, 2012, p. 89). On February 20, large nonviolent protests took place in 53 different Moroccan cities and protests continued through July (Akdim, Boudarham & Hamdani, 2011). Protesters were fragmented, with over 27 websites claiming to represent the movement leadership (Buehler, 2013a, p. 5). Like in Jordan, demands centered on institutional reform and the downfall of particular governing elites and did not call for the overthrow of the king himself (Maddy-Weitzman, 2012, p. 89).

The Justice and Charity movement pledged support for the February 20th Movement, and Moroccan Salafis also joined the protests (Beuhler, 2013, pp. 14-15). However, PJD General Secretary Abdelilah Benkirane banned PJD members from representing the PJD in the protests. Members could participate, but only as individuals. In reaction, the PJD’s Youth Sector released a statement declaring that they wanted “to preserve the party’s unity and respect for its institutions” but thought the leadership should “grant its activists the freedom to participate in the protests” (Beuhler, 2013a, p. 16). The PJD Youth formed the “Baraka” movement (“enough” in Moroccan dialect) to coordinate their protest participation (Ain, 2012). Some older PJD members joined Baraka in the streets, including three or four prominent leaders, who resigned their leadership positions to protest Benkirane’s decision (Buehler, 2013a, p. 16).

King Mohammad responded to protests similarly to King ‘Abdullah, by increasing state subsidies and offering “a package of comprehensive constitutional amendments” that would be worked out by a special commission with the changes submitted for approval by referendum (Alami, 2011). Unlike the MB, which rejected their king’s Royal Commission as cosmetic, the PJD participated in the committee consultation process. An initial version of the constitution
included more liberal formulations that limited the king’s powers. However, the final version, which passed referendum with an overwhelming 98.5 percent of voters, enhanced the powers of the prime minister and parliament but kept the king’s supreme authority and religious legitimacy largely intact (Maddy-Weitzman, 2012, pp. 90-91).

The February 20th Movement members, aware of the limited nature of the constitutional reforms, tried to launch a new round of protests but was unable to generate significant momentum. February 20th groups, including Justice and Charity, boycotted the November parliamentary elections, which were marked by widespread apathy and relatively low turnout. However, the PJD participated and won 107 out of 395 parliamentary seats, more than any other party. Following the dictates of the new constitution, the king selected Benkirane as prime minister and the PJD formed a coalition government with the conservative nationalist Istiqlal party (Entelis, 2011, p. 3). In June 2013 Istiqlal withdrew from the coalition, citing the “slow pace” of reforms. The king brokered a new coalition between the PJD and the palace-backed National Rally of Independents (RNI). However, this left the PJD outnumbered by regime loyalists and allowed the king to oust the party from several major ministries (Errakkouki, 2013).

**Review of the Literature**

The literature on the Jordanian MB and Moroccan PJD is part of the broader literature on political Islam, which since the 1980s has focused on the question of whether Islam is compatible with democracy. Scholars have argued on both sides of this question.\(^5\) However, Asef Bayat has convincingly characterized the question itself as “irrelevant” because no singular, abstract, or ahistorical “Islam” exists that determines how Muslims behave (2007, p. 4).

---

\(^5\) This literature is vast and beyond the scope of this paper. However, for a sample of work arguing Islam is virtually incompatible with democracy, see Pipes 1983: 144-7; Huntington 1984, pp. 193-218; Ajami 1992, pp. 218; Kedourie, 1992 pp. 5-8; and Lewis, 1994, pp. 57-8. For the opposite perspective, see Esposito and Piscatori, 1991, pp. 427-40; Kramer, 1993, pp. 2-8; and Voll and Esposito, 1994; Abdul Rauf, 2005, pp. 100-108).
Recognizing this, a new generation of scholarship has examined the behavior and ideologies of specific Islamic movements and groups. Studies of the MB and the PJD have constituted an important part of this trend. Case studies of the MB and PJD examine how each responds pragmatically to opportunity structures, how this has prompted them to participate in politics and cooperate with their respective monarchies, and how such inclusion impacts their potential for democratization. Another relevant strand of the literature analyzes the uprisings in Jordan and Morocco and their aftermath, though this scholarship is somewhat impressionistic and inconclusive. Most scholars point to the reformist nature of these uprisings and the adeptness of the regimes’ responses. The few studies that focus on the MB or PJD emphasize how each has worked pragmatically to leverage the political openings generated by the uprisings, but sometimes question the effectiveness of their tactics.

Scholarship on the MB

Cooperative relationship with the regime

Of these two movements, the Jordanian MB has garnered by far the larger share of scholarly attention. Numerous case studies have presented the MB as a moderate and pragmatic Islamic movement that participates in the political process. Over its fifty-year history, the MB evolved a symbiotic relationship with the regime in which it received the benefits of legal status in return for avoiding open criticism of the regime and maintaining a moderate reformist agenda. Moreover, it has demonstrated its willingness to work for reform through the parliamentary system and publically upholds the compatibility of Islamic and liberal democratic principles (Boulby, 1999; Wiktorowicz, 2001; Wegner, 2011).

The semi-cooperative relationship between the MB and the regime has served the interests of both parties. The regime has favored the MB in part in order to check the popularity
of more confrontational Islamic social movements, like the Salafis, and to channel Islamic activism towards a moderate agenda. The MB enjoys many distinct legal and organizational opportunities in sharp contrast with the Jordanian Salafis, who have been forced to organize through informal networks under the constant threat of repression. In order to keep their favored status, the MB has thus been incentivized to act through the institutions of the political system without challenging the *raison d’être* of regime power and legitimacy, while Salafis have had a far more confrontational relationship with the regime (Wiktorowicz, 2001). The MB’s symbiotic relationship with the Jordanian regime has also been contrasted to the antagonistic relationships between regimes and Islamic movements in Egypt, Syria, and Iran (Moaddel, 2002).

Cooperation with the monarchy undoubtedly brings benefits, but it also creates challenges for the MB. It requires the movement to curb its rhetoric and compromise on many of its goals, raising the risk that others will consider the movement as co-opted by the regime. A number of internal movement disagreements have centered on how much to cooperate with the regime. Most activists believe it is best to pursue tactics and goals that accommodate the regime, but others question the efficacy of this strategy (Wiktorowicz, 2001, Wegner, 2011).

Scholars also agree that the historically cooperative relationship between the MB and the regime has become increasingly strained, though they identify different timing and reasons. Ellen Lust-Okar suggests that the relationship began deteriorating in the mid-1980s due to the MB’s increased strength, and continued to deteriorate in the 1990s due to the king’s foreign policies (2005b, p. 156). Marion Boulby argues that the relationship began disintegrating around 1993, due in part to the fact that the MB’s reformist tactics were failing to accomplish the movement’s agenda, “leaving major questions with regard to its future course of action” (Boulby, 1999 p. 1-2). Glenn Robinson (1997) goes even further, claiming—perhaps too strongly—that as of the late
1990s, “The Muslim Brothers’ special relationship with the Hashemites is clearly over” (p. 338). Nathan Brown (2006) argues that the MB’s relationship with the regime become steadily more adversarial after 2000, due to tensions over the regime’s support for the United States in the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the MB’s support for Hamas during the second intifada. However, he explains that the MB remains thoroughly integrated into the legal political environment in Jordan and thus—more realistically than Robinson—predicts a continued oscillation between confrontation and détente. My research bears out Brown’s prediction: during the tumultuous aftermath of the 2011 uprisings, the MB has carefully guarded what remains of its “special relationship” with the king even though the relationship is increasingly fraught with tension.

In contrast to the scholarship discussed above, a vocal minority of scholars views the MB as fundamentally antagonistic to the Jordanian regime simply by virtue of being an Islamist movement. These scholars claim that the central goal for all Islamists is creating an Islamic state as a foundation for a great Islamic caliphate, though some use violence to achieve this goal while others use peaceful means (for example, see Tibi, 2008; Tal, 2005). The Jordanian MB falls into the “nonviolent” camp, and its antagonism to the regime therefore consists of “a limited form of rivalry based on a controlled dynamic of ‘confrontational coexistence’” (Tal, 2005, p. 239). This analysis is problematic on a number of levels. First, scholars have convincingly demonstrated that most Islamic movements orient their activism toward domestic, national-level politics, not the worldwide community of believers (see Zubaida, 1993, p. 50; Roy, 2006, p. 58; Shehata, 2012, p. 7). Second, as Samer Shehata explains, for many Islamic movements, “calls for the establishment of an Islamic state often function more at the symbolic level than as realizable short-term objectives” (2012, p. 7). This is true of the Jordanian MB, which, has not only sought reform from within and never attempted to capture the state, but has also actively supported the
regime during times of crisis, including the coup attempts in the 1950s, the 1970 civil war, and the 1989 and 1996 bread riots (Wiktorowicz, 2001, pp. 4-5).

Pragmatism, ideology, and democratization

In the most convincing scholarship, the MB is thus portrayed as a pragmatic political actor looking out for its best interest in a complex political arena, and whose interests have led it to cooperate with the monarchy to a large degree. However, this raises interesting questions about how the movement’s pragmatism intersects with its ideology. A number of scholars have highlighted the complex, nonlinear interactions between ideology and pragmatic political maneuvering in MB decision-making. The MB has been shown to respond pragmatically to both “supply side” conditions, like the state’s opening and closing of political space, and “demand side” conditions, like the lack of social services that make the population more responsive to the movement (Sahliyeh, 2005). However, the movement’s pragmatic decision-making and its rhetoric about ideology sometimes come into conflict. For example, the MB’s reliance on middle class networks is in tension with its articulated ideal of charity toward the poor (Clarke, 2004). In the early 1990s, the MB demonstrated the greatest pragmatism and positional flexibility regarding governmental and domestic politics, while its positions on the Arab-Israeli peace process and women’s role in society have been driven by stricter ideology (El Said, 1995).

Part of the complexity of this interaction lies in the contentious nature of movement framing and other strategic choices. The MB is not a monolithic block driven by a static ideology. Rather, movement choices reflect a variety of competing political, economic, social, institutional, religious, and even individual material interests. How these factors come together is the unpredictable and fluid outcome of personalities and coalitions. The decision-making process is therefore “context dependent” and the movement far from a unified and homogenous entity
My own research similarly suggests that intra-movement contention shapes strategic framing decisions, that movement members carefully distinguish between the movement’s ideology and its pragmatic tactics and discourse, and that the relationship between the two is unexpectedly complex.

Perhaps the most commonly asked question in the literature about MB pragmatism and ideology is whether the MB (or indeed any other Islamist group) truly accepts democratic values. Since 1989, the MB has claimed actively to espouse democratic values. The movement’s 1989 program platform emphasizes the need for democratic freedoms and public liberties (though it is also supportive of the Hashemite regime and pro shari’a). The IAF’s first party platform in 1992 parallels the MB program platform but is even more explicit in its call for democratic expansion and individual freedoms (Hurani & Kilani, 1993, p. 31). However, many scholars argue that the MB does not endorse liberal democracy as a final goal, but instead aspires towards a sort of “theo-democracy” (Boulby, 1999, p. 1) or “illiberal democracy” (Robinson, 1997, p. 380). This strand of scholarship contends that the MB cares primarily about preserving its political power. It advocates for democratic institutions because these will serve its best interest as an opposition movement, and uses democratic language because this helps the movement attract adherents. Though not ideologically invested in democracy, its willingness to play the parliamentary game shows it is not inherently opposed to democracy (Sahliyeh, 2005; Robinson, 1997).

Within this branch of scholarship, much attention has also been devoted to the “inclusion-moderation hypothesis,” the question of whether the participation of Islamist groups in formal politics leads to their behavioral or ideological “moderation,” and therefore their acceptance of democratic values. Jillian Schwedler (2006) concludes that, in contrast to Yemeni Islamists, the Jordanian MB has both entered into pluralist coalitions and substantially shifted its worldview to
include a democratic narrative perceived to be fully consonant with Islamism. Schwedler concludes that participation has led to moderation for the MB, but that the Yemeni case shows there is no fixed relationship between the two. Janine Clarke (2006) also questions the presumed causal link between cooperation and ideological moderation, but she presents Jordan as the doubtful case. Clarke argues that, although the IAF has participated in a multiparty coalition (the HCCNOP), its cooperation is limited to issues on which the IAF is already in agreement with these parties. The non-binding nature of the cooperation means the IAF is not pushed to compromise on its many strictly enforced “red lines.” My own research supports Schwedler’s, suggesting that additional shifts toward a religiously sanctioned democratic worldview may have occurred since 2011 in response to the pro-democracy master frame of the Arab uprisings.

A number of these studies, including the ones cited above, offer useful insight into the priorities and behavior of the MB. However, as Samer Shehata (2012) points out, this literature as a whole suffers from some important conceptual problems. One is its normative slant, whereby “moderate” often means no more than alignment with U.S. interests. More importantly for our purposes, the inclusion-moderation debate obscures a crucial factor influencing movements like the MB and the PJD: they operate in authoritarian environments. As Shehata explains, “at times debates about the merits and/or risks of including Islamists in the political process obscures the primary dilemma facing these politics: Entrenched authoritarian regimes, often avowedly secular, unwilling to give up power or reform. Moreover, it is also quite likely that the authoritarian political contexts in which Islamists find themselves also impact their behavior and ideology” (p. 5). Indeed, Eva Wegner has found that a large share of both IAF and PJD decisions have been driven by the authoritarian political environment in which they operate. These two groups must consider an actor that is simply not there in a democracy: the monarchy,
a “veto player” that can outlaw them if they cross a red line (2011, p. xv). My own research strongly supports this perspective, demonstrating that each movement constantly considers the responses of the authoritarian monarchy, and that this profoundly impacts how they formulate goals and tactics, target audiences, and respond to internal debates.

The MB and the Jordanian uprisings

Most scholars point out that, unlike in Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, or Syria, virtually none of the protests in Jordan have called for the overthrow of the regime (Bouziane and Lenner, 2011; Ryan 2011a, 2013a; International Crisis Group, 2012; Tobin, 2012; Schwedler, 2013; Susser, 2011). However, there has been considerable debate over whether the crisis will ultimately snowball and lead to the downfall of the Hashemite regime. Most scholars argue on the side of regime resilience with the caveat that events remain unpredictable (for example see the essays in Lynch (Ed.), 2012). Gregory Gause (2013) argues convincingly that the Jordanian and Moroccan monarchies remain essentially stable, not because they enacted better reforms or are more naturally legitimate, but because they successfully maintained powerful supporting coalitions of domestic interest groups, regional allies, and foreign patrons.

Many scholars have argued that the outcome of the Jordanian uprisings will hinge on the unity of the opposition and the king’s ability to divide them (Pelham, 2011; Susser, 2012; Ryan, 2011a, 2011b). The monarchy has historically used identity politics to suppress democratic opposition and this has worked well with the 2011 uprisings because of variance in which reforms are deemed most essential. East-bank Jordanian activists from the southern youth movements generally emphasize more equitable state investment in economic development, while most Palestinian reform activists emphasize equal political rights and opportunities, though all agree on curbing corruption (Ryan, 2011a). Moreover, the pro-reform coalition in Jordan is
broad, loose and highly pluralistic, in comparison to a tighter anti-reform coalition embedded in the state itself. However, the king and his advisors represent something of a “wild card.” Most advisors are opposed to reform but some are dedicated reformers who remain emphatic that the king supports reform and is simply thwarted by the old entrenched elite (Ryan, 2011b).

Another strand of the literature examines how the geography of space and class impacted Jordan’s protests. Jordan’s protests have adhered to a longstanding tradition of “safe” protests, obeying space permits and keeping informal negotiating channels with the regime open. A March 24 protest at “Dakhiliya” circle that broke these boundaries resulted in violence, and thereafter protests became largely spectacles intended to gain international visibility (Schwedler, 2011b). Moreover, protests may have remained small because neoliberal reforms heightened notions of middle-class status and created spaces for “aspiring cosmopolitanism” that reinforced the status quo (Tobin, 2012). The political geography of protests also reflects physical changes resulting from liberal economic reforms, with regime security responses differing depending on the neighborhood in which a protest is held (Schwedler 2012).

Only a few studies deal specifically with the role of the MB in the protests. Jacob Amis (2013) argues that the Arab uprisings radically altered Jordan’s political balance in the MB’s favor. Though no senior MB leader called for the king’s downfall, the movement succeeded in directing popular pressure in unprecedented ways to challenge the king’s once-sacrosanct authority and call for the end of his effective rule. It did so by embracing a new discourse on constitutional change, mobilizing grassroots protests in partnership with other political actors, and resisting co-optation. My own research concurs that MB activists felt the balance of power shifted their way at the start of the 2011 uprisings—however, as I will discuss, regional events have since shifted the balance back toward the monarchy.
According to the literature, elements within the ruling regime seem to hold varying estimations of the threat posed by the MB. According to Jillian Schwedler, the monarchy preferred protests organized by the MB because the movement carefully directed critiques toward particular policies rather than the regime itself and adhered to a longstanding, well-established protest script in which the regime’s legitimacy was never challenged. Thus, “it was clear that the uprisings around the region had not shaken Jordan’s Islamists from their role as the regime’s quiescent and loyal opposition” (2013, p. 262). By contrast, mobilizations among East Bank Jordanians, particularly in the south, violated the conventional protest script by shutting down major roads, holding indefinite sit-ins, and personally critiquing the king, thus presenting a higher threat level (Schwedler, 2013). My research confirms that MB leaders intended to present the movement as a “loyal opposition,” but some MB activists advocated departing from the “safe” script, leading to significant internal movement debate. Moreover, not all regime elements considered the MB to be the less threatening protesters. Curtis Ryan (2013a) explains that the regime’s General Intelligence Directorate views the MB as the real threat and fears that greater democratization would lead to an Islamist takeover, empowering Palestinians at the expense of East Jordanians and Islamists at the expense of conservative secularists. My research illustrates that the MB makes the opposite argument: that the security forces are controlling the state and thwarting democracy to preserve their own privileges.

Scholarship on the PJD

Cooperative relationship with the regime

There is considerably less scholarship on the PJD, both because the PJD is newer than the MB and because less work exists on Islamism in Morocco generally. Scholars generally agree that the PJD grounds its opposition in the principle of “reform from within” by participating in
existing political structures. The party’s remarkable willingness to accommodate the Moroccan monarchy can be seen in the deal it struck to only present candidates in a limited number of districts in the 2002 parliamentary election, thereby ensuring it would not become too dominant in parliament and limiting the level of threat it posed to the regime. This led to an ongoing collaborative “pact” between the party and the monarchy that allows the party to participate in the political system as an opposition actor without threatening the system itself (Storm, 2007; Willis, p. 2004, Zeghal, 2008, Wegner, 2011). According to Emad Shahin, a similar pattern of movement incentives can be seen throughout North Africa: “when a movement is perceived as constructive and moderate, it resorts to a set of rational tactics to draw the support of the social forces in society and the recognition of the government” (1997, p. 243).

Recent analysis of the MB has focused on whether its cooperation with the monarchy has been breaking down; by contrast analysis of the PJD has focused on whether it has become completely co-opted by the monarchy. Malika Zeghal argues that it has not: by including the PJD in formal politics, the monarchy allowed the party to grow in popularity and become the dominant party in the eyes of the public. This makes it more difficult for the regime to exclude the PJD even when the party uses popular mobilization outside the system of political competition (2008, p. 159). However, other scholars argue that the PJD has become so willing to play the regime’s game that it may not be able to resist co-optation (Ottoway and Riley, 2006) and that public has begun perceiving the movement as co-opted (Storm, 2007, p. 158). Eva Wegner suggests that this perception created a crucial “credibility trap” that explains PJD’s poor showing in the 2007 parliamentary elections (2011, p. 121).

Wegner (2011) explicitly compares the PJD and the IAF of Jordan, arguing that the PJD is more accommodating of the Moroccan monarchy than the IAF is of the Jordanian monarchy.
The two parties operate in similar institutional environments, with authoritarian monarchies that hold elections, have some political pluralism, and allow political organization. Under this type of “electoral authoritarian regime” an opposition party has to choose its mobilization intensity on two levels: on the “electoral level,” the party must choose how much to invest in contesting flawed elections and convincing broad constituencies to support it at the ballot box, while on the “regime level,” it must choose how much to challenge the regime’s “rules of the game” through tactics like electoral boycotts and street mobilizations (p. 123). The PJD has focused on broadening its popular support on the electoral level and became increasingly non-confrontational on the regime level. By contrast, the IAF has devoted less energy to reaching out to new constituencies that would help it on the electoral level, and has become increasingly confrontational on the regime level (p. 125). My research suggests that this dynamic continued in the two years following the 2011 uprisings: the MB used electoral boycotts and street mobilizations to push for changes to the regime-level rules of the game, while the PJD instead chose to play the game, participated in elections, and worked to gain broad electoral support.

**Reacting to “divide and rule”**

Just as scholars contrast the MB’s inclusion and cooperation with the exclusion and confrontation of the Jordanian Salafis, many scholars contrast the inclusion and cooperation of the PJD with the exclusion and confrontation of Morocco’s Justice and Spirituality movement, headed by Sufi leader ‘Abd al-Salam Yasin. The Moroccan monarchy intentionally integrated the PJD in order to control a possible center of opposition while marginalizing more radical Islamic movements like Justice and Spirituality (Zemni and Bogaert, 2006). This continued the monarchy’s longstanding strategy of “divide and conquer.” As Malika Zeghal explains, by dividing the structure of contention into “radicals,” and “moderates,” the monarchy incited the
PJD to adopt a moderate stance for fear of being excluded as Justice and Spirituality was. For this reason, during the early 2000s, “the PJD generally avoided assembling its activists to perform the repertoire of street demonstrations for fear of provoking a de facto alliance with more radical groups and a repression of all of them, which would end up damaging and excluding it from the system” (2008, p. 159).

Ellen Lust-Okar (2005a) has generalized this “divide and conquer” model. She argues that, in several Arab countries, liberalizing regimes divided the opposition into groups that were formally recognized those that were excluded. Included groups then remained moderate out of fear that the regime could restrict their preferential avenues of participation. Lust claims that this occurred in Morocco during the 1970s and 1980s, where some opposition parties were legalized, but not in Jordan, where the opposition was uniformly unrecognized (2005b). However, I would argue that, at least concerning the Islamist opposition in each country, the difference between Morocco and Jordan is more a question of degree than of type. Since the late 1990s, both regimes have taken a remarkably similar approach to the Islamist opposition, constructing a division between the legally recognized groups (the PJD/MUR and the MB) and the excluded ones (Justice and Spirituality and the Salafis). Therefore, we should not be surprised to see the dynamic Lust-Okar describes playing out to varying degrees for both the MB and the PJD. As the formally recognized group in a divided opposition, we would expect both movements to exploit the early stages of a crisis to demand reforms and then stop mobilizing to avoid the possibility that radicals will exploit unrest to demand more radical reforms (2005b, p. 147). Indeed, both movements have followed variants of precisely this trajectory since the 2011 uprisings (though the PJD did so to a greater degree, reflecting the more strongly divided opposition in Morocco). Moreover, my research suggests that activists from both movements
were motivated by concern that they would jeopardize their preferential status by becoming associated with more radical opposition elements, who would demand radical reforms beyond their preferred agenda, precisely what Lust predicts should happen to divided opposition in a crisis.

*Mobilizing cultural and religious legacies*

Another important strand of the literature on Morocco examines how cultural, religious, and political legacies have shaped the contestation between the monarchy and the Islamists. Modern nonviolent Islamic movements in North Africa follow a long tradition of mobilizing Islamic reformism to defy illegitimate authority, dating back to Salafi movements in the early days of colonial occupation (Entelis, 1997, p. 44). Both Islamist opposition movements and the Moroccan monarchy use a tradition of Islamic discourse to achieve conflicting political goals. The king is conceived in historically Islamic and Moroccan terms as the “commander of the faithful,” giving him an added dimension of support (Voll, 1997, p. 110). This helps explain why Moroccan Islamists chose the reformist path rather than explicitly challenging a king who has successfully established his religious authority (Shahin, 1997, p. 244). This is arguably true in Jordan as well, where the king derives his legitimacy through his Hashemite lineage that traces directly back to the Prophet Mohammad.

However, the Moroccan king arguably has additional sources of historical legitimacy that make him particularly difficult to challenge. As John Entelis explains, “Morocco is unique in the Middle East and North Africa in that the struggle for independence centered around the capture, revival, and renovation of a traditional institution, the monarchy” (1980, p. 35). King Hassan II effectively leveraged this framing of the monarchy as a uniquely Moroccan and historically

---

6 The same argument could be made about Jordan’s monarchy, which claims authority to rule as a member of the Hashemites and therefore a direct descendent of the Prophet Mohammad.
legitimate institution, and his son Mohammad V continues to do so. ‘Abdullah Hammoudi (2011) argues that authoritarianism in Morocco (and to some extent in the rest of the Arab world) reflects a cultural model symbolized in the relationship between masters and disciples in the religious brotherhoods of the Arab world. This hegemonic leader-follower, teacher-student relationship guides elite and popular imaginings of political association and thus accounts for the resilience of authoritarianism in Morocco. My own research confirms that King Mohammad in Morocco enjoys far broader popular support and legitimacy than King ‘Abdullah in Jordan, but does not suggest any definitive answer for why this is.

The PJD and the Moroccan uprisings

Some scholars argue that the emergence of the February 20th protests reflects the failure of the monarchy’s longstanding strategies to manipulate opposition groups through “safety valve elections” (Buehler, 2013b), patronage, and the king’s symbolic position as “commander of the faithful (Silverstein, 2011). However, others argue that the near absence of calls for regime change illustrates the continued popularity of the king. Mohamed Daadaoui (2011) argues that the king’s continued popularity results from years of ritualization of political discourse performed by the regime around specific sociocultural sources of legitimacy. Other scholars (like Hibou, 2011) argue that monarchy has remained stable because Morocco has historically undertaken liberalizing reforms. Gregory Gause (2013) argues more plausibly that regime stability in Morocco and Jordan alike derives primarily from the successful maintenance of a powerful supporting coalition of domestic interest groups, regional allies, and foreign patrons.

Whatever the source of its underlying stability, scholars generally agree that the Moroccan regime successfully maneuvered to diffuse the tensions that arose from the regional uprisings without offering real structural changes. Although the king presented the new
constitution as a concession to popular demand, the final version preserved both his essential powers and religious legitimacy (Ottoway, 2012; Maddy-Weizman, 2012; Maghraoui, 2011; Manjib, 2011; Storm, 2012). By quickly creating the royal commission, the king shifted public debate away from street grievances and towards constitutional reforms, dampening the protest momentum while giving political centrality back to the monarchy and political parties (Dalmasso and Cavorta, 2013). Gause (2013) classes the Jordanian and Moroccan cases as two of a kind, arguing that both kings deflected and co-opted public anger better than any other Arab rulers by offering limited elements of reform while keeping ultimate power in their own hands. However Dalmasso (2012) argues that, although the institutional changes have been relatively minor, they represent a significant directional change: the king, who had been increasing his direct control of the political sphere over the past decade, was forced to formally retreat from it.

More debate exists on the question of whether the election of the PJD constitutes a real change in Morocco’s balance of power. Many scholars argue that the election of the PJD as the majority party in parliament does not signal any real change because the party is co-opted by the monarchy and thus will not challenge the king on any significant issue (Entelis, 2011; Gause, 2013; Ottoway, 2012). In this reading, the king used the elections just as he used the new constitution: to present the appearance of real change to domestic opposition and international observers without giving up any substantive authority (Maddy-Weizman, 2012). However, other scholars argue that the PJD’s election does represent a significant change. Dalmasso (2012) points out that the PJD is not nearly as subservient to the monarchy as the loyalist Party of Authenticity and Modernity (PAM), which got voted out. Buehler (2013a) similarly argues that the PJD has never been “co-opted” like PAM; sometimes it embraces regime policies and sometimes it resists them, and there is often internal debate about how much to cooperate. My
research indicates such debate has continued during the PJD’s two years as a ruling party, though the ultimate party decision has generally fallen on the side of cooperation with the regime.

Interestingly, Buehler characterizes the PJD decision not to participate in the protests as a strategic move, not a sign of cooptation. The party leveraged the protests to its advantage by threatening to leave formal party politics for the streets without actually doing so, thus sidelining its rivals and winning its policy demands. This behavior defies what co-optation theory would predict from a regime-created puppet opposition: Instead, “The PJD acted like a pressure group. It asserted itself for crucial policy demands while it remained quiet on issues of lesser importance” (2013a, p. 5). (This is precisely how PJD leaders frame their own decision-making, as I will discuss—though this does not confirm that it is objectively “true”). Ashraf El Sherif (2012) similarly argues that the PJD carefully maneuvered to leverage the angry streets without being controlled by them and to pressure the king without clashing with him. This elevated the party from an opposition group to a partner in national political decision-making, restructuring the political balance of power. Dalmasso and Cavorta suggest that pragmatism based on structural constraints took precedence over fixed ideology for the PJD, both in its negotiations with the monarchy in 2011 and in its behavior since coming to power (2013). This explains the party’s willingness to compromise on lifestyle rulings, to ally with secular parties, to appropriate Western-inspired values in order to advance their own understanding of those values (2011).
Chapter 2: Core Movement Framing Decisions

This chapter analyzes the fundamental movement framing decisions of the MB and the PJD since the 2011 Arab uprisings began. First, I examine how each movement adjusted its framing in response to the regional context, responding to new opportunities in 2011 and facing increasing constraints as regional events deteriorated. Second, I argue that each movement’s choice of goals and tactics since 2011 constitutes a core signifying matrix that activists consciously mobilize to frame the nature of the movement. Extending the democracy-centered theory on this question, I argue that both the institutional context of an electoral authoritarian monarchy, and specific strategies of regime legitimation, have significantly impacted each movement’s calculus of reformist or revolutionary goal articulation and institutional or non-institutionalized tactics.

Framing and the Post-2011 Regional Context

From the start of the Arab uprisings in January 2011 to the ouster of Egyptian President Mohammad Morsi in July of 2013, regional political events have had a profound impact on the MB and the PJD. In 2011, the beginning of a powerful new protest cycle opened many new opportunities for both movements. However, subsequent regional violence and instability has since partially closed the window of opportunity, particularly in Jordan. Movement activists have constantly adjusted their framing in response to these shifting regional events.

Opportunity in the New Protest Cycle

Master frames and opportunity structures in Social Movement Theory
In 2011, a new protest cycle emerged in the Arab world when Tunisian and Egyptian protestors successfully mobilized what can be considered an innovative master frame calling for democracy and dignity for ordinary citizens. Within the social movement literature, master frames are defined as particularly powerful interpretive packages that inspire a number of related, movement-specific collective action frames (Benford and Snow, 1992). Master frames are associated with cycles of protest, or periods of intense social movement activity in which the mobilization of different movements are linked to one another. At the initiation of the cycle, an innovative master frame sparks derivative collective action frames and tactical innovations. This clearly occurred when mass mobilizations with similar messages and slogans spread from Tunisia and Egypt to many other Arab countries in 2011, creating what I will call the “Arab uprisings protest cycle.”

How did the Arab uprisings protest cycle impact the framing of the MB in Jordan and PJD in Morocco? In examining this question, it is important to distinguish theoretically between the institutional and cultural dimensions of political opportunity. According to Gamson and Meyer, the institutional dimension of political opportunity (which I will refer to as “institutional opportunity”) concerns factors like elite alliances, governmental structures, and election laws. The cultural dimension of political opportunity (which I will refer to as “cultural opportunity”) concern factors like the prevailing cultural climate, national mood, or zeitgeist. When a change occurs in cultural opportunity, “outside events or the maturing of internal tensions and contradictions shake up the working political consensus. This opens the door for a variety of challenges in a new cycle of protest which takes its shape from the nature of the breakdown” (Gamson and Meyer (1996) 1996, p. 281).
Studies of social movements often focus either on framing or on political opportunity, but important new insights can be gained by combining these two concepts. For example, Gamson and Meyer’s distinction between cultural and political opportunity can arguably explain the causal mechanisms behind Benford and Snow’s theory of master frames and protest cycles. The emergence of an innovative new master frame arguably leads to a new cycle of protest in part by changing the cultural opportunity in places that may be far removed geographically from the initiating movement. This dynamic emerged clearly in my interviews with both MB and PJD members, who agreed to a person that the calls for democracy and dignity in Egypt and Tunisia sparked the mobilizations in their own countries. Earlier movements in Egypt and Tunisia created openings in the cultural opportunity in Jordan and Morocco by shifting their national moods and shaking up the prevailing political consensus. PJD and MB activists saw this new zeitgeist as a new window of opportunity for them to shape the national discussion.

New cultural opportunities for the MB and PJD

PJD activists discussed how the success of protests in Egypt and Tunisia in overthrowing authoritarian regimes made Moroccans aware of their own power to address their social dissatisfactions through collective action. As one PJD leader explained, “The Moroccan youth who descended [into the streets] on February 20th had lots of demands previously, social, economic, political—then they saw what happened in Tunisia and Egypt and saw that they had the power to put pressure on decisions in the government and create reforms, get rid of corruption” (Personal Interview 15). This interviewee expresses that many grievances existed in Morocco prior to 2011, but that mass mobilization emerged to address them only after the events in Tunisia and Egypt sparked a change in consciousness among Moroccans, giving them a sense
of empowerment. A leader of the PJD Youth Sector said the new feeling of empowerment transformed the national mood:

Moroccans are dramatically interested in politics now and discuss it everywhere, in the bus, tramway and on the streets. They used to discuss sport and music before but now it’s all about politics… Not only the youth but even older people. My grandmother, who is 72 year old, follows the news daily now. When I go to see her she tells me what [Moroccan Prime Minister Abdelilah] Benkirane has been talking about (Personal Interview 11).

The rise in political consciousness among Moroccans is combined with a new feeling of immunity vis-à-vis the repressive forces of the state. The same youth leader explained, “The Arab Spring removed the people’s fear of the government, not only in Morocco but in all Arab nations. The force of the government police doesn’t scare people anymore. People can now demonstrate against corruption and tyranny” (Personal Interview 11). The successful protests in Egypt and Tunisia caused an increase in political awareness and the breaking of the fear barrier among Moroccans, creating an important opening in cultural opportunity for political opposition movements like the PJD. Another PJD member called the outbreak of regional uprisings “a golden and historical opportunity for the party” (Personal Interview 14).

MB members argued similarly that Jordanians had many existing grievances, which the regional uprisings ignited into action, “The unemployment increased and job opportunities decreased. The situation was about to explode then the Arab Spring started” (Personal Interview 1). Thus, in the mind of one MB member, the shift in the national mood due to the regional protest cycle transformed Jordanians’ perceptions of the MB and its longstanding calls for reform:

“The Arab spring supported us a lot and gave us lots of momentum. At the beginning of the Arab Spring, it was very hard for us to talk to the people. When people spoke to us, some of them weren’t interested, some were scared, they had a mix of feelings. After two months or so it changed. When [Tunisian President Zine al-Abidine] Ben Ali and [Egyptian President Hosni] Mubarak fell… people came to us in bigger and bigger numbers. We would call for awareness and then organize protests and people would listen to us more and more and come to protests more and more” (Personal Interview 3).
In this MB member’s framing, the MB had been pushing and demonstrating for reform “even before the Egyptians and before the idea of the Arab Spring movements developed” (Personal Interview 6). The 2011 uprisings prompted a shift in Jordan’s national mood by making Jordanians more politically aware, creating a dramatic opening in cultural opportunity for the MB as a longstanding reformist movement.  

*New structural political opportunities for the MB and PJD*

The shift in political opportunity structures for the MB and PJD was not limited to the cultural dimension. Both PJD and MB activists also described key openings in structural opportunity that arose as their respective regimes reacted to the new national moods. In other words, the new protest cycle created openings in cultural opportunity, which in turn prompted openings in political opportunity. In Morocco, for example, the king responded to the February 20th protests in 2011 by announcing a Royal Commission that would create a new constitution, in order to calm the mood on the streets. One PJD member explained:

>The February Movement receded after the vote, since it achieved many goals, especially [the reform of] the constitution. The King was ahead of the rest of the Arab leaders and made the changes in order to absorb the anger before things got out of control. His speech announced seven important points (Personal Interview 14).

A remarkable new intuitional opportunity was opened for opposition activists when the king invited PJD representatives to participate in an official discussion to reform the constitution. Further opportunities emerged as the PJD was elected to office with no other parties challenging the results, gained control over key ministries, and built a coalition with four relatively weaker parties (Personal Interview 12). However, as the above quote implies, some PJD activists viewed the king’s constitutional concessions as a double-edged sword: it opened new institutional opportunities

---

7 To be sure, the openings in cultural opportunity in 2011 may have been more tentative than MB and PJD framing portrays. In February 2011, Jordanians strongly supported the broader regional protests (73 percent supported and to 23 percent opposed) but remained split on the protests in Jordan itself (47 percent supported and 23 percent opposed) (Center for Strategic Studies, 2011a). No similar data is available for Morocco.
opportunities for the movement, but it also weakened street protests and thus undermined the cultural opportunity that led to the opening in the first place. All PJD interviewees agreed that the king had done this intentionally, and that he had been clever to do so. As one interviewee said, “Many people trusted it [the King’s March 9 speech] and were fascinated by the promises, but the streets slowed down. And then why do I have to give you more than you demand? It’s politics. So this small opening was given” (Personal Interview 16). This indicates that cultural and institutional political opportunities have a complex relationship: each can reinforce or undermine the other based on the actions and reactions of contending social actors.

The Jordanian case further elucidates this theme. Similar to King Mohammad VI in Morocco, King ʿAbdullah II in Jordan responded to Jordan’s protests by offering constitutional amendments and new parliamentary elections. However, the MB was far more negative than the PJD about the effects of this calculated institutional opening. This is not surprising, since the institutional opening offered in Jordan was more modest, and while the PJD officially accepted the reforms on offer, the MB rejected them. As one MB member explained:

“Unfortunately [our activities in 2011] led to bogus changes in the election committee and in the constitution. This partial and simple response didn’t extend to article 25, which says the people are the source of sovereignty and nation or articles 34, 35, and 36, which give the king power over parliament… But unfortunately the regime benefitted from these changes by easing the pressure from the streets… so the fight against corruption is just for the sake of appearances, to absorb the people’s anger” (Personal Interview 3).

To a person, MB interviewees considered the 2011 amendments to the constitution and election law to be cosmetic changes meant to diffuse popular anger and discontent. In their view, these putative reforms were not intended to open institutional opportunities for the MB or other opposition activists as the king claimed—instead, they were intended to close the newly opened cultural opportunity by neutralizing the national outrage and discontent that drove mobilization. The question for movement, therefore, is whether the reforms on offer are worth the price. The PJD took the tradeoff and accepted their king’s reforms, while the MB rejected it. One IAF
Youth Sector leader explained this by framing the Moroccan reforms as more substantial than those proposed in Jordan: “They have a monarchy and we have the same thing. But the king in their country is very smart. He made some changes to the constitution, meaningful changes. So there are some points in which we can take their advantages and learn from it” (Personal Interview 3). In this framing, if King ʿAbdullah had offered the MB more substantive institutional opportunities, like those in Morocco, they too would have taken the tradeoff. However, as I will discuss later, differences in MB and PJD tactics go deeper than this framing suggests, reflecting differences in movement structure, relationship with the regime, and historical trajectory.

Adjusting Frames to Shifting Regional Events

The potential closing of political opportunity in Jordan

The MB rejected King ʿAbdullah’s offer of new (albeit modest) institutional opportunities. Instead they tried to keep leveraging the cultural opportunities opened by the protests to pressure the king to give them a better offer. However, regional events have interfered with this strategy. The ongoing and deeply destructive civil war in Syria has made many Jordanians more cautious in their reform demands, raising the value of national stability over the urgency of reform. The uprisings against Syrian leader Bashar al-Asad began as peaceful street protests in March 2011. However, after the regime responded to initial demonstrations with brutal crackdowns by security forces and, by the fall, it had transformed into an armed insurgency. The situation has since deteriorated into widespread and destructive civil war that is ongoing at the time of writing. The British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights announced that, as of mid-February 2013, over 140,000 people have been killed in the conflict, 7,000 of whom are children (Reuters, 2014). The number of Syrian refugees has reached well
over two million. Nearly 600,000 refugees have flooded into Jordan, which was already struggling with prior waves of Iraqi refugees (UNHCR, 2013). According to the University of Jordan’s Center for Strategic Studies (CSS), 72 percent of Jordanians said Syrian refugees lived in their neighborhood in October 2013. Of these, 76 percent said refugees had a negative effect on their neighborhood, including employment (40 percent) and cost of living (30 percent).

The national mood in Jordan has of course been deeply affected by the presence of a violent civil war on its borders and the influx of so many new refugees. Some MB activists worry that the window of cultural opportunity from the Arab uprisings might now have therefore closed. An IAF Women’s Sector leader said, “We don’t want to become another Syria. This makes it harder and harder for us. This is what we hear from people. Whatever happens, we have safety and security, and bread on our table. Democracy, human rights, etc. doesn’t amount to anything because of the example of Syria” (Personal Interview 4). Another MB member explained how closely Jordan’s national mood is tied up with regional events: “At the beginning stage in 2011, when the Tunisian and Egyptian uprising happened, everyone came out. Now it’s different. Things in Syria are having a big influence. If Egypt doesn’t succeed in solving many of the problems it faces, it will really influence the position of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood”

(8) (Personal Interview 8). Moreover, the MB activists believe the regime has used this fear to frame the Syrian case as a warning. “The Jordanian regime scared people by telling them if the reform demands continue, than there will be blood and killings just like in Syria” (Personal Interview 1). Just as the early success in Egypt and Tunisia shifted Jordan’s national zeitgeist, the ongoing violence in Syria has shifted it again, replacing a mood of political optimism and desire for

---

8 My interviews in Jordan took place in May of 2013, prior to the July 3 2013 military coup that unseated Muslim Brother Mohammad Morsi as Egypt’s President and has since led to severe repression of the Egyptian Brotherhood. Even prior to these events, MB activists felt strongly that the fate of their own movement would be influenced by the outcome for the newly ruling Egyptian Brotherhood.
change with one of fear and desire for stability. Instead of favoring MB framing, it now favors regime framing.

Some interviewees expressed regret for not pushing harder when the moment was ripe, and perhaps achieving MB objectives while the window of opportunity remained open:

RN: Do you think the movement leadership always responds in the best way as events unfolded? Interviewee: Maybe if two years back we had taken the momentum of Egypt and exerted more pressure, events would have continued unfolding with continuity. Now people have become afraid and unwilling to be bothered. Maybe if we had done that things would be better. But taking the context and consequences of Jordanian society, what could they have done? I’m not very optimistic honestly (Personal Interview 4).

Unsatisfied with the results of their current efforts, this IAF Women’s Sector leader wondered if the movement should have pushed harder with bigger protests or more radical goals while the momentum of the region was with them. In the opposite vein, an IAF Youth Sector leader thought the movement should have pushed less and accepted more—it missed its chance to solidify institutional gains by reaching a compromise on Jordan’s electoral laws when the king appointed a sympathetic prime minister, ‘Awn al-Khasawna, in 2011.

We made some mistakes. Maybe there were some chances we missed. For example, with ‘Awn al-Khasawna, the ex-prime minister, we should have taken advantage of the opportunity when he was in the government. He was willing to change the electoral law and he made some changes but we didn’t support him very much because we believed, and still do, that he is not the decision maker, the decision maker is the secret service police… But Khasawna, he was perfect, we had an opportunity with him (Personal Interview 3).

The concerns of some interviewees that the moment of opportunity may have passed supports Gamson and Meyer’s theorization of the potential volatility of cultural and institutional opportunity structures. Volatile opportunity structures provide limited windows during which movement framing can be particularly potent, and social movement activists must often fight to keep such windows of opportunity open (1996, p. 22). In both Jordan and Morocco, the cultural opportunities opened by the Arab uprising protest cycle, including a rise in political activism and a decline in fear of repression, were clearly volatile. In Jordan, institutional opportunities for the
MB have also been volatile as regime offers on cabinet representation and legal and constitutional reform came quickly on and off the table.

In contrast to the few interviewees who expressed doubts, however, most MB activists framed the window of opportunity from the Arab uprisings as still very much open. The extent and nature of political opportunity in any society is rarely a clear and easily read structural entity; rather, the presence and type of opportunity is subject to interpretation and framing (Benford and Snow, 2000, p. 631). Moreover, as Charles Kurzman has shown, people can perceive and act on opportunities for mobilization even in the absence of empirical opportunities, and this can actually create new empirical opportunities that did not previously exist (1996). Defining the extent of political opportunity is itself a powerful act of framing. Therefore, the official MB narrative maintains that cultural opportunities are still as wide open as ever, and that institutional opportunities will surely follow. One IAF leader argued: “The opposition is spreading, it’s getting stronger. If they think that it’s getting weaker than they are very wrong. It’s getting wiser. It’s waiting for things to be finished in Syria” (Personal Interview 7). Another interviewee even claimed that the regime’s continued refusal to give in to MB demands has actually strengthened the movement:

Everyone is rushing in Jordan to achieve the goals but probably the will of god is postponing it. The more we wait the more goals we achieve. So far, we haven’t achieved any of the seven points we asked for, but we have achieved hundreds of other goals like awareness, relationships with people, revealing the truth about the regime… Thankfully, the more the regime delays responding the more it loses and we win (Interview 5).

This Islamic Youth Movement member credits the MB for the recent changes in the public consciousness, and frames apparent weaknesses in movement momentum as latent strengths that will inevitably emerge to accomplish true reform. This style of discourse aligns with the MB’s public discourse, which frames the moment for true reform as still immanent and inevitable. For example, in late August 2013, MB Deputy General Supervisor Zaki Bani Irshaid announced in a
press conference: “protests are far from being over. No one has the luxury of waiting for a solution.” Bani Irshid also described the Jordanian movement as “a sponge that absorbs shocks and stores them for a while before being set off again” (Al Samadi, August 24 2014).

*Regional events prompt new tactics to boost frame credibility*

In response to the changing regional environment, both PJD and MB activists also used a variety of techniques to bolster the credibility of their reformist frames. According to Benford and Snow (2000), the degree of a frame’s “resonance”—or the extent to which it connects with its intended audience—depends in part on its “credibility.” The components of credibility are 1) *frame consistency*, or the consistency between the different parts of the frame; 2) its *empirical credibility*, or the apparent fit between the frame and events in the world, and 3) the *credibility of the frame articulators* or claim makers. As destabilizing events unfolded regionally, the argument that corrupt ruling elites were the cause of the problems in each country remained salient—but the argument that mass protests or fair elections leading to Islamist rule would fix these problems by offering a path to a stable democracy declined in salience as regional events demonstrated opposite outcomes. In other words, MB and PJD diagnostic framing remained empirically credible, but their prognostic and motivational framing lost empirical credibility.

In response, both MB and PJD activists re-oriented their framing to focus on their own credibility as claim makers and distinguish themselves from discredited Islamic opposition movements like the Egyptian MB and Tunisian al-Nahda. In essence, movement actors responded to a decline in one basis of their frame’s resonance (empirical credibility) by emphasizing another basis of resonance (their own credibility as frame articulators). PJD activists, whom I interviewed in the immediate aftermath of the military coup against Morsi in Egypt, sought eagerly to differentiate themselves from Morsi’s Egyptian MB, emphasizing the
PJD’s extensive experience participating in politics, and contrasted this with what they claim to be the political inexperience of their counterpart in Egypt.9

RN: Have the events in Egypt created new challenges?
Interviewee: There’s a fear of that path that they [the Egyptian Brotherhood] took. The Muslim Brotherhood and their mistakes are clear. … But I don’t think it influences Morocco. We have prior political experience. An-Nahda and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt left prison and immediately entered parliament. They don’t have a tradition of cooperating with other political parties. In Morocco it’s the opposite; we have a long tradition of being in the opposition, and not an intractable opposition, but being an opposition that has worked with others toward reform for a long time (Personal Interview 15; “prison to parliament” line repeated in Interview 16).

One PJD Youth Sector leader claimed that the difference goes even deeper. The Islamic movements in Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, and Palestine are all linked because those countries have a shared experience of Ottoman rule. However, “The Ottomans didn’t enter Morocco. Morocco was an independent empire. Therefore the Islamic movements formed differently.” For this reason, “The PJD and our reformist movement has nothing to do with the Muslim Brotherhood” (Personal Interview 10). By juxtaposing their own credibility and experience with the failures of Islamic movements elsewhere, PJD activists attempted to inoculate their movements’ framing and tactics of contention from destructive events in the region.

I interviewed members of the Jordanian MB in May 2013, prior to the coup and resulting violence in Egypt, but public statements show that they too sought to distinguish their movement from the Egyptian MB. As evidenced in a media interview shortly after Morsi’s ouster, Bani Irshid declared that the coup against Morsi “will not stop the [Jordanian] Islamists peaceful reform demands which are not linked to any party outside the country” (Asaadi, 2013). Similarly, head of the MB shūra council Hammam Said released a statement saying, “the Jordanian Brotherhood does not need to review its political vision in light of the course of events in Egypt and the coup against Morsi” (Al Samadi, 2013). MB leaders condemned Morsi’s overthrow and described Jordan’s quick recognition of Egypt’s military-backed government as

9 Contrary to this framing, the Brotherhood in Egypt does have a long history of participating in politics, though its relationship with the ruling regime has been far more contentious than that of the PJD.
“shameful” (Al Sharif, 2013a), but also dissociated themselves and their agenda from the fate of their Egyptian counterparts.

In the interviews, many MB interviewees discussed how they had responded to the events in Syria. The chaos and violence in Syria particularly harmed the empirical credibility of the Jordanian MB’s prognostic framing. Unlike the PJD, the MB called for mass street protests to pressure the regime into enacting reforms, and the example of Syria threw the effectiveness of this tactic into doubt. According to CSS (2011a, 2011b), there was a deep increase in the share of Jordanians who opposed street protests in Jordan, from 46 percent in February 2011 to 80 percent in May. Among those who opposed protests, the most commonly cited reason was that they “lead to chaos and sabotage and undermine security and stability.” Fully 55 percent said this in May, as the situation in Syria deteriorated (and after the March 24 violence in Jordan), up from 40 percent in February. MB interviewees acknowledged this problem openly and said that they had adjusted their framing to differentiate themselves from Syrian protesters, emphasizing their moderate, reformist goals and willingness to work with the regime. As one IAF Youth Sector leader explained:

The situation in Syria has affected us sadly and made the people back off a little bit...it gives negative messages to us and to the people, saying let’s slow down. It will affect us whether we like it or not. But this will not make us back off, because what we’re articulating is not extreme, bloody goals but just amendments to our constitution, having we the people be the real source of power. We have not changed our objects and goals, but we developed them, amended them a little bit (Personal Interview 3).

This interviewee emphasized his movement’s moderate, institutional goals to differentiate it from the Syrian movement’s revolutionary goals. He implies that the movement “amended” its framing to emphasize this distinction in response to the rising fear among Jordanians due to ongoing violence in Syria. Another interviewee claimed the MB’s unusual discipline would keep street protests from descending into violence or revolution in Jordan as it did elsewhere:

The Brotherhood is 68 years old. Not even one problem happened during that time. It is a disciplined group. Everyone knows when we go out into the streets, the hand and the tongue are disciplined because the heart is
Clearly, both PJD and MB activists were highly aware that their own opportunities in this protest cycle are impacted by the activities and outcomes of other reformist Islamic opposition movements, and both engaged actively in framing to protect themselves from potential negative effects.

**Movement Goals as Framing (Why Reform and Not Overthrow?)**

Both the MB and the PJD have long histories as movements with reformist goals that have worked, not to overthrow their respective regimes, but to enact reforms within the existing system. However, the Arab uprisings protest cycle launched with an innovative master frame articulating a primary prognostic frame of “*isqāṭ al-nizām*,” or “the downfall/overthrow of the regime.” As the protest cycle spread to Morocco and Jordan, activists from both movements needed to decide whether to adopt the new master frame’s prognosis. Both ultimately decided against this, instead amending the slogan to “*iṣlāḥ al-nizām*,” or “the reform of the regime.” This significant departure from the trend of the protest cycle has important empirical implications for the MB and PJD—and interesting theoretical implications for the relationship between social movement goals and framing in electoral authoritarian monarchies.

**Goal Articulation as Framing**

Douglas McAdam (1996) argues that the goals articulated by social movement actors are a crucial part of their framing work. A movement’s stated goals encode the degree of threat embodied in the movement, which largely determines how other groups will respond to the movement. Movement goals can favor either “revolution” or “reform” depending on whether or not they require a major redistribution of wealth and power. Historical evidence suggests that
reformist social movements tend to be more successful at achieving their more modest goals than revolutionary social movements, at least in a democratic context. For example, in his study of oppositional groups in America from 1800 to 1945, Gamson found that groups whose goals required the “displacement” of their opponents were much less likely to be successful than those whose objectives were “non-displacing” (Gamson, 1990: pp. 41-44). Another element that impacts responses to the movement is its primary tactics of contention, which can be either “non-institutionalized or “institutionalized.” McAdams argues that, “when combined, these two variables largely determine the extent to which a given group is perceived as threatening by established political actors. In turn, this ‘perceived threat’ can be expected to powerfully shape the broader environmental response to the group in question” (1996, p. 341). In this section, I focus primarily on goal articulation as a form of movement framing. In the next section, I turn to the question of tactics of contention as a form of framing and discuss how the two interact.

I argue that the goals of a social movement should be considered an act of framing in response to—and also recursively impacting—the available opportunity structures. I build on McAdam’s theory, which he developed for social movements in democratic contexts, by applying it to movements operating under electoral authoritarian monarchies. My research indicates that the institutional context of electoral authoritarian monarchy significantly impacts the calculus of reformist or revolutionary goal articulation for movement actors. The specificities of national politics also have an important impact as movement actors adjust their framing to respond to varying strategies of legitimation by their monarchies.

Justifying a Reform Frame

Both the MB and the PJD (and its antecedents) have articulated reformist goals for decades. However, their adherence to reformist claims takes on new significance in the context
of the Arab uprisings protest cycle. Most other movements in the cycle have made revolutionary claims, spreading a new master-frame of “al-shāb yurīd isqāṭ al-nizām,” “the people want the downfall/overthrow of the regime.” MB and PJD activists thus had to make a choice: should they stick with their reformist goals or should they too call for “overthrow”? When they ultimately chose to continue calling for reform, they faced the need to justify their departure from the dominant new master frame.

My research supports McAdams’ basic theoretical model, indicating that the MB and PJD chose their reformist goals as a strategic signifier to both the regime and the public about the level of threat embodied in their movements. However, in an authoritarian context, the need to signal a low level of threat takes on a new urgency because of the risk of regime crackdowns. One IAF Women’s Sector leader cited fear of repression as a key reason why the movement chose “reform” rather than “overthrow” towards the start of the protest cycle. This leader describes the effects of a March 24 rally in Dakhiliya circle in Amman, which led to violence:

This was an experiment to see where the people stand in terms of replicating the Egyptian experience, do they really have the guts to do that. They were silenced in a brutal way. I was there. Security forces came. Even women were kicked away, and they used water, tear gas, we ran for our lives, I personally had to run for my life. This is why the Islamic movement is being wise—they tried that and they saw the results were not that good, so they learned their lesson and tried something else (Personal Interview 4).

According to this interviewee, the MB tested out the idea of mounting a movement that could escalate to revolution, but an early experience of regime repression prompted them to choose the safer goal of reform. However, in an authoritarian context, even reformist goals can prompt regime repressions. According to one interviewee “anyone who wanted reform” is pressured

---

10 See Schwedler 2011b for an analysis of how the Dakhiliya rally broke the longstanding Jordanian tradition of non-threatening protests in an attempt to recreate the “Tahrir Square” experience, resulting in unusual violence. After the shock of Dakhiliya, Jordan’s protests became somewhat toothless “spectacles” intended to get international media attention. The documented drop in support for protests between February and May 2011 (Center for Strategic Studies, 2011a and 2011b) is likely due to these domestic events in combination with the outbreak of war in Syria.
with “imprisonment, threatening, even assassination attempts that were made to look like car accidents or natural causes or street fights but were almost confirmed” (Personal Interview 7).

The fear of repression is arguably even stronger for the MB than for the more loosely organized Hirak. “It’s very easy for the regime to accuse an organized political movement,” explained one MB member (Personal Interview 1). According to another interviewee, this incentivizes the MB to use more moderate rhetoric during protests than the Hirak do:

Interviewee: The Brotherhood is a historical political movement with a stable discourse. Other Hirak placed high standards for reform and broke red lines by talking about the king directly. The Brotherhood doesn’t talk like that. We use a framework of request instead of a vocabulary of accusation.
RN: What is the reason for this difference?
Interviewee: The Brotherhood is a political movement that has been stable throughout history, with leaders and an organization. The others are just popular movements of angry people expressing angry ideas out of temper, unlike the 60-year-old Brotherhood. We pay the cost of our actions but they don’t pay a political cost so they can ask for more (Personal Interview 3).

More than the Hirak, the Brotherhood pays a high political cost for directly calling for the king’s downfall, because regime repression could dismantle their highly organized movement. This supports the theory of Asef Bayat (1998) that reformist social movements under authoritarian regimes develop a stake in the political status quo. The fear of losing permitted privileges under the existing political system discourages these movements from articulating revolutionary goals.

No PJD interviewees directly referenced the fear of repression when discussing their reformist goals. However, they did so indirectly. One interviewee explained that the memory of historical repression from attempts to overthrow the monarchy acted as a deterrent:

We had a bad experience in the conflict between the monarchy and the national movements from independence through the 1980s. Thirty years were lost in Morocco because of the conflict, and we have lost a lot. So the parties are not willing to repeat the experience. All the radical parties that adopt revolutionary goals failed. All the parties learned that. Demanding reform is realistic. To us it’s a road map (Personal Interview 12).

The memory of past repression that resulted from revolutionary goals, and the fact that those attempts failed, leads the PJD to articulate more “realistic” reformist goals today. Another interviewee pointed to current violence and chaos in other Arab countries as a similar deterrent:
Look at what happened in Tunisia. When you change everything in the system it’s dangerous. Thankfully we have big reforms in our constitution and the king has stayed head of the government. Lots of our goals haven’t been reached, and it’ll be a long process. But we agree that it’ll be change not through a coup but through the institutions (Personal Interview 13; repeated in 16).

In these framings, the safety of reform relative to overthrow is worth it even if it takes longer.

One PJD member went even further, arguing that, because it avoided violence between protesters and the regime, Morocco is actually producing change faster than other countries: “Morocco’s reform is ahead of the rest of the Arab countries, because fighting and disorder are still happening in Egypt and Tunisia. The situation is still unstable in these countries, unlike Morocco. Morocco is an exceptional case because it achieved reform without an armed conflict and with only one or two deaths” (Personal Interview 14). In an authoritarian context, the risks of articulating revolutionary goals are far greater than in a democratic context. To the MB and PJD, simply avoiding a regime crackdown constitutes a form of success.

Movement actors framed this choice to avoid chaos and violence as good for the nation as well as the movement. Stability is framed as a primary national need, with both the monarchy and the movement serving as co-guarantors of that stability. One MB member explained, “The Brotherhood decided in an early stage that the situation in Jordan doesn’t have to resemble the situation in Egypt and Tunisia, that we can make reforms happen within the monarchical framework. This was a political decision that focused on the element of stability… so the higher goal of the movement has to be reforming the regime, not overthrowing it” (Personal Interview 8). A similar equation emerged for PJD respondents: the monarchy ensures stability, and the movement therefore must ensure the monarchy. One PJD leader explained:

**RN:** Some Moroccans were calling for “overthrow,” not reform. Why did the PJD object to this?
**Interviewee:** Because the party itself bears responsibility for the issue of stability and believes the institution of monarchy is a fundamental part of this, and doesn’t believe things will be simple and easy in the case of its overthrow… we appreciate that there is a relationship of trust with the institutions, and those calling for regime overthrow aren’t offering alternatives that would protect the stability of the country (Personal Interview 15).
Another PJD member described how some small groups in Morocco wanted overthrow, but the PJD answered, “I am with you regarding your political and social demands but we want to achieve these goals and also keep stability. That means we want change in the shadow of the monarchy and an agreement between the people and the monarchy” (Personal Interview 12; repeated in 16). Both movements thus portray themselves as responsible political actors who perceive the necessity of the monarchy to preserve stability and so pursue reform in its shadow.

Almost to a person, MB and PJD interviewees also justified their reformist frame by portraying their own regimes as less violently repressive and more politically open and than others in the region. When asked what makes Jordan different from other Arab states that called for overthrow, one IAF leader offered a typical response: “Because of the type of the regime. In Egypt or in Syria, or Tunisia or Algeria, you can’t ask about someone who was detained by the secret service police. People got melted in bathtubs by al-Asad. In Libya, thousands were killed before the revolution. Thank God we have a different type of regime” (Personal Interview 9). PJD activists similarly argued that, unlike other Arab regimes, “the Moroccan regime is not a kind of hard authoritarianism, there was a political opening… the behavior of the regime is always ambivalent but also there were good signs that the regime wanted to make some progress” (Personal Interview 16; repeated in 12). Thus, both movements justify their reformist frame by claiming their regime is less repressive and morally bankrupt than these others, and is therefore worth saving through reforms. Of course, this framing conflicts somewhat with the admission of some activists that fear of repression drove their decision to stick to reformist goals. The two explanations represent different poles of justification for reformist goals.
Targeting the Royal Entourage

The MB and PJD chose reformist goals in part to mitigate the level of threat they signaled to the regime. However, in a monarchical authoritarian context, regimes may perceive even “non-displacing,” reformist goals as quite threatening. How can one push for reform without vilifying the king, who has failed to undertake the needed reforms on his own? The answer is to target the people around the king. Both MB and PJD activists focused the brunt of their diagnostic framing, not on the king himself, but on perverse and corrupt advisors who prevent him from cooperating with the movement or instituting real democratic reforms. One interviewee explained that the king’s entourage blocks reform because they are afraid to lose their special privileges (Personal Interview 1). Another explained in more detail:

There are people around the king trying to tell him that the Islamic movement is his adversary and that meeting them halfway is impossible. The Islamic movement and other political forces have thus far been unable to deliver positive messages directly to the king to convince him that what is said to him to frighten him isn’t true, that he can establish a good relationship with them for the greater interest of the country (Personal Interview 8).

This MB activist blames the king’s refusal to work constructively with the movement toward meaningful reform, not on the king himself, but on the entourage around him, which turns the king against them. If the MB were able to cut out these duplicitous middlemen and communicate directly with the king, a relationship of trust and compromise could be reached. One IAF leader even framed MB reform goals as an effort to help the king.

There’s no other way for the regime to sort out the deep problems that the regime is in apart from reforming the system. He has to do it… We have to be patient. We believe and hope that the king will say soon that there is no other way out. And we hope that soon the king will see that Jordan needs real reform. That it’s for the good of the country and the people and the regime itself (Personal Interview 7).

In this framing the king is surrounded by poor council and does not understand that reform will provide salvation for himself as well as for the Jordanian people. The MB must therefore work for reform while waiting patiently for the king to come around.
However, MB interviewees did criticize the king for listening to the false council of his advisors, and saw this as a sign of his cultural alienation from Jordan. One IAF Women’s Sector leader opined: “The entourage around the king encourages him to be more reluctant and stubborn in our relationship. This is a difference between King Hussein and [his son] ‘Abdullah, who’s less rooted in Jordanian traditions. Whatever people tell him, they’ve scared him from the Brotherhood, saying they’re the next danger, they will bring monarchy to an end” (Personal Interview 4). This activist puts primary blame on the king’s entourage, but also blames ‘Abdullah himself for listening to their false council, unlike his more popular father Hussein. One Islamic Youth Movement member took this line of criticism even further: Unlike Hussein, “King ‘Abdullah is not Jordanian…he hates the Islamic movement…he’s more Western than Jordanian in his culture and customs and this is the main problem” (Personal Interview 9). This interviewee suggests a more fundamental problem than the presence of bad advisors: the king is “Western” and fundamentally alienated from Jordanian culture, and he therefore “hates” the Islamic movement, which is presumably aligned with or representative of Jordanian culture.

Like the Jordanian Brotherhood, the Moroccan PJD centered their diagnosis of key problems, not on the king himself, but on the people around him. However, there was a difference in tone between the two framings. The MB blamed saboteurs around King ‘Abdullah while also holding him responsible for listening to these saboteurs. The king was conceived as abetting, though not creating, the problem. By contrast, PJD activists argued that King Mohammad is not part of the problem at all. They insisted that all Moroccans, including the PJD, love the king and maintained this claim vigorously when I expressed skepticism.11 Even more

11 Indeed, my general experience in Morocco was that King Mohammad enjoys far stronger and more organic popular support than does King ‘Abdullah in Jordan As I discuss in chapter 1, scholars put forward a variety of explanations for how the Moroccan monarchy maintains its unusually high legitimacy and popular support. See Entelis 1980, Voll 1997, Shahin 1997, Daaoudi 2011, Hammoudi 2011.
than the MB, the PJD therefore focused its prognostic framing on the need to remove the corrupt individuals surrounding the king to enable reform. According to one PJD Youth Sector leader:

PJD leaders believe the King is a good person regardless of his agreement or disagreement with PJD ideologies--and he’s also important, that’s what I believe. So, it’s important to isolate the King from his retinue. This includes businessmen, lobbyists, military and religious figures, and politicians. The King must be isolated from these corrupted ones. The PJD has to take responsibility and stand strong in order to change this atmosphere of people around the King. The King is irreplaceable. That’s how the PJD’s leaders see it (Personal Interview 11).

In this framing, the king is a fundamentally good person who plays a vital role. It is the PJD’s responsibility as loyal subjects to replace his corrupt retinue with better council. An editor at the PJD-affiliated newspaper similarly said, “in Morocco we don’t have a problem with the King, we have a problem with the people in his entourage, but never with the king. We have nothing but respect for him. [I look skeptical] It’s the truth” (Personal Interview 13; reiterated in 12 and 19).

A number of PJD activists asserted that the king himself wants reform while voicing concern that the king’s retinue could derail its implementation. One PJD leader said, “The new constitution was a direct agreement between the king and the street. The political class was not really involved in that agreement. Now there’s a fear that we’ll go back on that constitution in a non-democratic way” (Personal Interview 15). In this frame, the king was able to enact real democratic reforms in 2011 by bypassing his retinue in the political class and making an agreement directly with the people. However, when it comes to implementation, that political class has a chance to spoil this outcome and block the democracy that the king and the people both want. Once again, the king is portrayed as a good person (though perhaps not the most effective ruler, the well-intentioned dupe of his scheming entourage. The utility of this kind of diagnostic framing is clear: it provides an avenue for criticizing the status quo without crossing any political “red lines” by criticizing the king himself. Clearly, the context of an electoral authoritarian monarchy has a significant impact on the strategic calculus of prognostic framing for both the MB and the PJD.
Reform Goals and Framing Wars in Jordan

Beyond the structures of electoral authoritarian monarchy, movement framing is also shaped by the specificities of national politics as movement actors adjust their framing to respond to varying strategies of legitimation by their monarchies. The Jordanian case is illustrative. King ‘Abdullah regularly frames the MB as “wolves in sheep’s clothing” (Goldberg, 2013; Assadi, 2013) whose goal is to force him into “surrendering the country to the Brotherhood” (Abu Rumman, 2013). The king seeks to garner public support by claiming that the alternative to his rule would be the rise of these dangerous Islamists. MB activists explained that they constantly emphasize their reformist goals as a strategic tactic to counter this regime framing that the movement is dangerous. As one IAF leader put it, “We’re sticking to the peaceful means of change and reform, and we will not be dragged into violence…. They [the Secret Service Police know our approach is peaceful, and they’ve tried so many times to change that. Then they could paint us very badly in front of the Jordanians, because Jordanians don’t like violence” (Personal Interview 7). This interviewee argues that the regime’s security apparatus tried to elicit violence from the MB to undermine its popularity with Jordanians, but the MB successfully resisted. These contestations are part of a framing war between the MB and the regime, in which the regime presents the MB as dangerous and the MB presents itself as a reasonable political actor.

Some MB members said that overthrowing the regime would not be a realistic goal in Jordan because the monarchy leverages identity politics between Palestinians and East-Bank Jordanians in its effort portray the MB as threatening. In Jordan, the MB is generally viewed both as the primary opposition to the king and as the political voice of Jordanians of Palestinian origin. By contrast, East-Bank Jordanians have historically constituted the backbone of support for the monarchy. According to an IAF Women’s Sector leader, framing wars around identity
politics have influenced the movement’s decision to stick to reformist prognostic framing in spite of the example of other movements in the Arab uprising protest cycle:

RN: Why has the Brotherhood called for “reform of the regime” instead of “the downfall of the regime”?
Interviewee: Reforming the regime is a better goal in Jordan’s political landscape.
RN: Why? What makes Jordan different from other Arab countries that called for downfall?
Interviewee: In Jordan we’re not unified. There’s a split between East-Bank Jordanians and Palestinians. The government and secret service police have played on these differences to widen the gaps and play them how they like in politics. They create this scarecrow whenever something happens, telling East-Bank Jordanians, “Palestinians will rule you,” and vice versa. This has directed us toward the peaceful path of reforms, because they could easily put us in a clash… If they [the Brotherhood] took a strong stand, the government would just paint it as Palestinians vs. East-Bank Jordanians. And we have the experience of Black September, which was very formative. No one wants to go back to that era (Personal Interview 4). The MB’s goal of reforming and not overthrowing the regime serves as a counter-frame to the regime’s narrative that they are a Palestinian-dominated movement that wants to take over and rule the East-Bank Jordanians.  

A number of other interviewees cited this divide-and-rule tactic, describing how they “scare Palestinians and Jordanians against each other so the regime is the common denominator” (Personal Interview 2; repeated in 1). The civil war in “Black” September 1971 gives resonance to the regime’s framing and reinforces the MB’s desire to counter this framing by keeping mobilizations peaceful. For the MB as for the PJD, historical legacies of violence impact current movement calculus about the relative safety of reform.

An IAF Youth Sector leader reflected on the importance of identity politics from a different angle. He said that East-Bank Jordanians’ strong support for the monarchy made overthrowing the regime an unrealistic goal. “The regime has a great deal support, respect, and love from the tribes [i.e. East-Bank Jordanians]; so that’s dangerous. In Libya, Syria, it was different. Everyone hated al-Qaddafi and al-Asad. If we have the opportunity to have peaceful change, why resort to violence?” (Personal Interview 3). According to the same interviewee, the

---

12 As part of this counter frame, the MB also vigorously counters the narrative that Jordanians of Palestinian origin dominate the movement. Existing data supports this claim, at least as far as the IAF is concerned. Hamed El-Said and James Rauch, who surveyed IAF members and analyzed their family names, found that 63 percent are of East Bank origin while 35 percent are of Palestinian origin (the remainder are Syrian or other) (2012).
need to counter-frame the Palestinian versus East-Bank Jordanian narrative influenced the
Brotherhood’s insistence on building equal partnerships with other protest groups since 2011,
including the mainly East-Bank Jordanian Hirak movements in southern Jordan:

We insisted on cooperating with others instead of leading the protests. This was very important in our
movement, that there be partners and cooperation. Because we need them, we don’t want the regime to think the
only movement is the Brotherhood, we want them to understand that the tribes [i.e. East-Bank Jordanians] are
protesting. It was especially important that the tribes be there because they were the main supporters of the
regime. That’s why we had a protest in the south with many protesters, more than the protest we had in Amman.

MB interviewees responded very defensively when I asked if the Brotherhood had taken a
leading role in the protests, as I discuss in the next section. Unaware of this particular framing
dispute, I did not understand at first why they insisted so strongly on representing themselves as
“partners” and not “leaders” in Jordan’s post-2011 protest movement. The history of violence
between Palestinians and East-Bank Jordanian, and the regime’s identity-politics-based counter
framing, encouraged the MB to use a prognostic frame of peaceful reform achieved through
partnerships that cut across Jordanian society.

**Movement Tactics as Framing (Street Protests vs. Parliamentary Politics)**

**The Signifying Matrix of Goals and Tactics**

As the previous section demonstrates, my research supports McAdam’s contention that
movement actors strategically choose movement goals in order to signify the level of threat
embodied in the movement, but suggests that this framing choice is influenced both by the
context of electoral authoritarian monarchy and by specific strategies of regime legitimation.
McAdam also argues that a movement’s tactics of contention represent a crucial contribution to
its overall signifying work by signaling the level of threat it embodies (1996: p. 341). Together,
goals and tactics interact to shape overall perceptions of the movement.
McAdam (1996) outlines the responses movements in democratic societies can expect from the four possible combinations of goals (reform and revolutionary) and tactics (institutional and non-institutional).

1. **Revolutionary goals through non-institutionalized means**: this strategy is perceived as most threatening. Activists signify their threat to the status quo through both goals and tactics, often including violence, and they often face total opposition and extreme repression.

2. **Revolutionary goals through institutionalized means**: This strategy makes little tactical sense. Gamson explains groups using this strategy “seem to pay the cost of violence without gaining the benefits of employing it. They are both threatening and weak, and their repression becomes a low-cost strategy for those whom they attempt to displace” (1990, p. 87).

3. **Reform goals through institutionalized means**: This strategy works well if a movement can mobilize sufficient institutional allies. “Having eschewed the leverage that often comes from disruptive action, the hopes of professional reform groups hinge on their ability to mobilize more allies than opponents. Should they succeed in this, they are likely to prove an effective agent of slow, piecemeal change. Failing to do so, they are apt to die a slow, unpublishable death” (McAdam, 1996: p. 344).

4. **Reform goals through non-institutionalized means**: This strategy often proves most effective in a democratic context. A movement’s willingness and demonstrated ability to disrupt public order makes others view it as threatening, while its adherence to moderate reform goals invites widespread support and restrains the response of opponents. However, this is a difficult balance to achieve, one that depends on a “highly developed and flexible capacity for framing. In effect, radical reform groups must master the art of simultaneously playing to a variety of publics, threatening opponents, and pressuring the state, all the while appearing
nonthreatening and sympathetic to the media and other publics.” If successfully achieved, this balance can be a source of tremendous political leverage (McAdam, 1996: p.344).

McAdam’s fourfold schema provides a useful rubric for comparing the PJD and the MB. Both the MB and the PJD articulate reformist goals. However, the tactics of contention these two movements have pursued since 2011 have been somewhat different. The PJD falls into the category of reform goals through institutionalized means: the movement refused to join the February 20th street protests, participated in the constitutional drafting process, and ran in the 2011 parliamentary elections. By contrast, the MB falls into the category of reform goals through non-institutionalized means: it organizes street protests, refused to participate in the regime’s National Dialogue Committee, and boycotted the 2011 parliamentary elections. This raises a number of important questions. How do movement activists explain and justify these divergent framing choices? How does the context of electoral authoritarian monarchy—and the specificities of national politics—impact their calculus of how movement tactics will be perceived?

**Non-institutionalized tactics: The Street Protest**

Both the MB and the PJD explain their choice of tactics as an intentional signal to different audiences. The PJD decided not to protest in order to signal its trustworthiness to the monarchy; by contrast the MB decided to protest in order to signal its trustworthiness to the Jordanian public, but also worked hard to signal only a limited threat to the monarchy.

*The PJD: Deciding against street protests*

PJD members described the movement’s decision to not participate in the February 20th protests as an intentional tactic to frame the movement to the monarchy as a reliable institutional actor and thus reap a political reward. One PJD leader explained: “It would have been a golden
and historical opportunity for the party to push the demonstrators to demand toppling the regime, but instead the party defended the monarchy through these difficult times. This was appreciated and remembered by the government” (Interview 14). As I discussed earlier, the Arab uprisings protest cycle opened new cultural opportunities to push for regime overthrow. By defending the monarchy instead, the PJD earned the king’s trust and thereby opened new avenues of institutional opportunity. A PJD Youth Sector leader described this tactic as a kind of hedging of the movement’s bets: “the PJD reaction as an official political party was good with regards to not participating in the demonstrations. In politics there are different tactics. As we say: ‘don’t put all the eggs in one basket.’ We have many options. In the end, politics is a game of power. The foes have many tools so we should have many tools as well” (Personal Interview 11). If the PJD had participated in the protests, and protest escalated to calls for overthrow, all of the party’s proverbial eggs would be broken. By not participating, they left themselves a range of options for political maneuvering within the political system. This highlights once again the importance of the context of electoral authoritarian monarchy for movement framing. Unlike movements operating under closed authoritarian systems, the PJD has institutional privileges to lose. Yet unlike movements operating in a democratic context, it faces a powerful and unpredictable “veto” power in the king, who can outlaw them if they cross a red line (Wegner, 2011, p. xv). This raises the stakes of signaling a low level of threat, making non-institutionalized tactics risker.

In addition, PJD actors saw their goals and their tactics as strategically intertwined, arguing that institutionalized tactics offered the best chance to achieve reformist goals, whereas non-institutionalized tactics might quickly lead to revolutionary goals. One member explained, “In Moroccan history, when a street protest gets bigger it turns to overthrow. The parties might
not be able to control the situation…PJD participation would accelerate the situation” (Personal Interview 12). A PJD leader similarly argued that protest outcomes balance on a knife’s edge:

The PJD was concerned that things might get out of control. If the PJD participated, the number of participants would have multiplied… the PJD leadership said that the number of the demonstrators were big enough to send the message that things are not good in Morocco, and that something has to change because society is outraged. But the number of people wasn’t big enough to cause instability in the country and threaten the regime (Personal Interview 15; repeated in 16).

PJD leaders viewed the protests as an important tool for conveying the urgency of reform to the regime. However, they also wanted to limit its size and scope to prevent the unintended outcome of revolution. A couple of interviewees said that the quick transformation of protests in Egypt and Tunisia from reformist to revolutionary made the PJD even more wary, especially since they did not know which groups were part of February 20th and what their demands really were (Personal Interviews 12, 14, 16). Interestingly, as I will discuss later, PJD members who wanted to join the protests made precisely the opposite argument: that PJD participation and not abstention could control the crowds and prevent escalation to violence or regime overthrow.

**The MB: Protesting through Partnerships**

In contrast to the PJD, the MB has worked for reformist goals using non-institutionalized means. While the PJD abstained from the protests to improve its credibility with the monarchy, the MB joined the protests to improve its credibility with the public. One MB member explained:

The Brothers’ representation in the streets gave them authority. The people viewed the Brothers as the most popular and reliable group… Any protest that the Brotherhood isn’t involved in has only a quarter of the turnout. All the Hirak know that coordinating with the Brotherhood guarantees that the protest will have the power and the prestige of the Brotherhood’s credibility on the streets (Personal Interview 2; reiterated in 9).

When the Arab uprisings protest cycle began, the MB’s mobilizing capability came into high demand. In this framing the MB strategically deployed of this capability, raising the movement’s prestige and authority among Jordanians. Academic accounts corroborate the importance of MB leadership in organizing mass protests and turning out protesters throughout 2011 and 2012 (for
see Schwedler, 2013, p. 259; Amis, 2013, p. 47). However, empirical the question of whether this led to greater popular support and prestige remains open.

In spite of their emphasis on the importance of their street presence, MB activists also insisted nearly to a person that the MB did not lead protests, it merely participated as an equal partner with the various Hirak. The MB used this “cooperation” frame in order to signal—both to the king and to the public—that the movement does not represent a fundamental threat to the existing balance of power. In other words, their moderate and cooperative behavior while deploying non-institutionalized tactics was intended to signal their future potential for appropriate cooperation through institutional channels, were they to come to power. An IAF leader indicated that the cooperation frame was intended to send this message directly to the king:

[In the protests] we had the capability to cooperate with any Jordanian. I personally said to his majesty the king, “your majesty, we cooperate with the communists, you think we can’t cooperate with you?”. We have no quarrel with any Jordanian… That’s why we don’t go for a majority in parliament… Anybody who wants to get a majority now needs their brain tested. The problems are so vast, internal, external regional, that we need everyone’s cooperation to face them… (Personal Interview 7; repeated in Interviews 1, 6, and 3)

Just as McAdam’s model predicts, the MB faces a difficult balancing act in which it must simultaneously appear threatening (to force an institutional opening) while also appearing nonthreatening (to allow them into that opening). The cooperation frame was also intended to signal a low threat level to the Jordanian public, countering the regime’s use of identity politics.

The Brotherhood doesn’t want to lead or control other movements. The regime claimed that to scare people about it, but the opposite was proven. The Brothers want to cooperate with others in spite of being more powerful. Unlike what you said, that the Brothers wants to lead. No, no, never! This removed people’s fears and led them to accept the Brotherhood as a safe, comforting and assuring alternative (Personal Interview 5)

As I discussed above, by suggesting that the Brotherhood had led protests, I unwittingly stumbled into a framing war between the movement and the monarchy. The cooperation frame was intended to disarm the regime claim that the MB seeks to mount a Palestinian, Islamist takeover of Jordan and instead present the MB as a safe alternative to the absolute power of the
king. The cooperation frame thus illustrates how the MB constantly considers what its tactics convey to both the regime and the public and adjusts its framing in response to the regime’s strategies of legitimation. Indeed, this frame is just one of many tactics that the MB used to signal its trustworthiness and to mitigate the risk of using non-institutionalized tactics in an authoritarian context. For example, it also carefully adheres to a well-established protest script in which the regime’s legitimacy is never challenged, directs critiques toward particular policies rather than the regime itself (Schwedler, 2013), and targets the king’s entourage instead of the king. This case thus illustrates the complex balancing act which reformist movements using non-institutionalized tactics must perform: the MB uses ability to fill the streets as leverage to demand a more meaningful role in institutional politics—but the act of filling the streets with supporters can be perceived and portrayed as a threat to the political system the MB is seeking to join. The cooperation frame (among other tactics) represents an attempt to minimize the appearance of threat and project the capability for compromise that would be required were the Brotherhood to achieve its goal of participation in democratic governance.

**Institutionalized tactics: Electoral Participation**

As with street protests, the PJD and MB take very different tactical approaches to elections. Once again, the PJD opted to use institutionalized tactics by participating in the 2011 elections, while the MB opted to use non-institutionalized methods by boycotting them. For the PJD, *not* boycotting elections has become an important component of the movement’s framing of its own identity, in opposition to the other Moroccan Islamist party, Justice and Spirituality. As one PJD Youth Sector leader explained,

The PJD chose to work within the government establishment, unlike Justice and Spirituality, which is politically involved but doesn’t participate in elections. The PJD’s goal was not to benefit from politics and not to be in the opposition but to cooperate with the regime to achieve reform and contribute to the nation’s development. Moroccans realized that [about the PJD] (Personal Interview 11).
In this framing, the PJD could have curried public favor by boycotting as Justice and Spirituality did, but instead chose to be a responsible institutional actor for the good of the country. In line with McAdam’s theory, participating in elections (and avoiding protests) constitutes a strategic attempt to frame the party as a responsible institutional actor. The consensus of the PJD leadership, at least, is that non-institutionalized means should be avoided because institutional, electoral means are the best way to portray the movement and effectively achieve its goals.

The importance the PJD places on electoral participation relates to what Benford and Snow (2000) describe as the “fit” between tactics of contention and other elements of movement framing. A good fit between a movement’s tactics and broader frame increases empirical credibility, thus bolstering frame resonance. For example, Czech democracy protestors in 1989 purposely did not seize government ministries signal interest in seizing power. This increased the resonance of their prodemocracy frame and helped mobilize mass protests (Oberschall, 1996). Like the Czech protesters, the PJD seeks to bolster the empirical credibility of its reform frame by demonstrating the consistency between this frame and its tactics of contention. The movement calls for democratic reform, so it participates in the democratic rituals of parliamentary elections.

Once again, the MB differed from the PJD by using non-institutionalized means to achieve its reformist goals. The MB boycotted Jordan’s 2011 parliamentary elections and the 2013 local elections. One of the main reasons interviewees cited is that the movement already tried participating in institutional politics to reform the system from within—and it just didn’t work.

**Interviewee:** There are a lot of improvements since ’89. The decision at that time was to work from within the system, that’s why we participated in the parliamentary elections. But sadly we found out, after more than twenty years of working to reform the system from within, that it doesn’t work.

**RN:** did that inform your decision to boycott the recent elections?

**Interviewee:** Yes. Yes. Because we have reached an understanding from our experience that our institutions have no power. And you cannot carry out any real reforms from within. You know, boycotting the elections is a method of objecting to the rules and the ways things are dealt with (Personal Interview 7; reiterated in 9).
The MB tried participating in electoral politics in 2003 and 2007, but came away frustrated by its inability to make real changes from within the government. In this frame, participating in a powerless parliament only legitimized that parliament, and therefore actually made things worse.

In fact, when protests in Jordan escalated in 2011, the MB decided to pull back from its existing institutional relationships with the regime. One interviewee explains, “After the Arab Spring, the Brothers decided to end all its relationships with the regime and with all government branches. Unless there was a real dialogue, and guarantees of good intentions from the government… The Brothers don’t want to attend meetings with the regime in order for the regime to show it in the media” (Personal Interview 5). In this framing, participating in institutions under the control of the king just plays into his hands, allowing him to frame himself as a reformer without implementing real reforms. The new leverage opened by the protest cycle therefore prompted the MB to focus on what it saw as more productive non-institutional methods, like turning out large crowds in street demonstrations. However, this decision did create some tensions for the movement. Explaining why the MB refused to attend the King’s 2011 National Dialogue Committee the same member explained: “The Brothers refuse to be a tool in the regime's hand. Contrary to what others believe, the Brothers are ready to participate in the election and become part of the political process if even the minimum standards of the seven points they demanded earlier were met” (Personal Interview 5). This defensive rhetoric shows once again the dilemma facing movements like the MB that pursue reformist goals through non-institutionalized tactics. The movement may gain more leverage through non-institutionalized tactics, but it struggles to portray itself as willing and able to engage constructively with institutions if its goals are met.
**Radical Flank Effects**

As the discourse of the MB indicates, disruptive tactics may be effective, but they are often in tension with the tactics necessary to win standing within established political institutions. Disruptive tactics require, novelty, polemic, and confrontation, while the political establishment rewards predictability, moderation, and compromise (Gamson and Meyer, 1996). “Movements can manage this in part through a division of labor among actors. Those who engage in the actions that open political opportunities do not attempt to be the main spokespersons; for this, they defer to partners who do not carry the baggage of deviance but can articulate a shared frame on the issue” (Gamson and Meyer, 1996, p. 289). However, internal rivalries and framing contests often undermine this kind of division of labor.

McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald describe the dynamic that emerges from this type of relationship as “radical flank effects.” They posit that “moderate” social movement organizations (SMOs) benefit from the presence of “extremist” groups within the same social movement. The presence of extremists encourages support for the moderates as a way of undercutting the influence of the radicals. Particularly when it comes to a movement’s relationship with the state, “the presence of groups deemed extremist can actually help legitimate and strengthen the bargaining hand of more moderate SMOs” (1996, p. 14).

For the PJD February 20 Movement can be conceptualized as a variety of radical flanks, including Leftists on one side, and Justice and Spirituality and the Salafis on the other, each of whose claims the PJD had to navigate and leverage carefully. One PJD member explained:

**Interviewee:** If you follow the discourse of the PJD, you can always hear that the Arab Spring is not gone. It can come back.  
**RN:** Why do they say that?  
**Interviewee:** to express the seriousness of reform…We want to explain that if we hesitate to make reform then there will be a very strong threat to stability in Morocco (Personal Interview 12)
The threat that protests that could escalate and begin calling for regime overthrow encouraged the monarchy in 2011 to offer reform concessions to weaken the message of extremists and empower the more “moderate” PJD. The PJD positioned itself as the responsible institutional actor that could serve as an alternative to these groups. The PJD still holds up the threat that threatening protests could re-emerge to maintain pressure for reform. However, according to one PJD interviewee, Morsi’s ouster in July 2013 strengthened the Salafi radical flank: “I met with many Salafis, they are very happy about what happened in Egypt. Why? Because they say ‘we told you democracy wouldn’t work.’ The [PJD’s] paradigm of “al-mushāraka la al-mughālaba” [participation not domination] is now in a crisis… People stop believing in democracy” (Personal Interview 16). This interviewee fears that the PJD’s Salafi radical flank, with its revolutionary goals and non-institutionalized tactics, are gaining legitimacy vis-à-vis the PJD’s reformist goals and institutionalized. The framing that institutional participation will bring real democratic reform loses credibility when the situation in Egypt shows just the opposite.

Similarly, the MB has been attempting to leverage two radical flanks—the southern Hirak and the Salafis—to make the movement seem like an attractive alternative. Like Justice and Spirituality, Jordan’s various Salafi groups participated in the 2011 protests. Salafis were among the most provocative of the protesters, bringing knives and clubs into the streets, calling for the regime’s downfall, and clashing directly with police forces (Davis, 2011). As the Syrian civil war intensified, Jordanian Salafis have joined with Islamist fighters there, raising fears within the regime that, if the influence of the MB recedes, the role of Salafis will increase (Al Sharif, 2013a). The regime has historically offered the MB legal avenues for organizing in order channel Islamic activism away from more radical groups like the Salafis (Wiktorowicz, 2001). However, in 2011, the MB too sought to manipulate this dynamic, pushing the regime to offer
reforms that would give the movement a greater institutional role to prevent public anger from spilling into more radical channels, perhaps empowering the Salafis.

Salafi movements have long represented a radical flank for the MB; since 2011, the southern Hirak have come to represent another. An IAF Women’s Sector leader articulated how the MB has tried to leverage the effects of this new radical flank:

**RN:** When tribes in south were calling for the overthrow of the regime, why was it smarter for the IAF to say, no to “the downfall of the regime”?
**Interviewee:** This is politics, where you show cooperation but you’re also threatening them with the radicalism of the south. Take what we’re offering rather than being—you know, carrot and stick (Personal Interview 4).

Since 2011, the MB has apparently deployed radical flank framing intentionally and strategically, as a political tactic to squeeze concessions from the regime. Only this interviewee described this frame as a strategic political tactic, but many activists represented it to me as a straightforward fact:

But the problem is that if the regime rejects these [MB reform] demands, which is happening now, then the minimum standard of the demands will be increased. That’s what happened in the neighboring countries. This might lead to a shift to another level of demands. So far this shift didn’t take place but chances are the situation can shift just like what happened in *habit tishreen*\(^\text{13}\) when fuel price went up and people protested… and people wanted to topple the regime (Personal Interview 5).

This MB informant warns that, if the MB’s moderate demands are not met, the Hirak (the radical flank) will shift to “another level” of demands—perhaps even escalating to demand regime overthrow. Thus, the MB frames itself as the reasonable actor whose demands should be met to calm the anger of more radical protesters, including Salafis and the Hirak.

**Explaining Divergent Tactics**

Given their similar reformist goals role as legal opposition movements in electoral authoritarian monarchies, what explains the MB’s choice of non-institutionalized tactics and the PJD’s choice of institutionalized tactics? My research demonstrates various justifications and

\(^\text{13}\) “*Habit tishreen*” refers to a series of protests in southern Jordan in the fall of 2013 in response to cuts in fuel subsidies, in which the Hirak targeted the king explicitly and some called for the overthrow of the regime.
drawbacks on each side, leaving no definitive answer. However, it is important to note that each movement’s tactics represented a continuation and intensification of a course the movement had already chosen the Arab Spring. Since its formation in 1998, the PJD has participated in parliamentary elections, targeted a broadening constituency of voters, and increasingly avoided challenging the regime directly. It has focused on playing the game, not challenging the rules of the game. The MB has done just the opposite, boycotting elections and increasingly confronting the regime to contest the unfair rules of the game (Wegner, 2011, p. 125). These differences can be attributed in part to differences in movement structure. The PJD consists of a small group of social SMOs that focus primarily on electoral politics and are linked to broader Islamic movement but is not formally beholden to that movement. By contrast, the MB consists of a larger and more varied group of SMOs that are tightly linked in a formalized movement structure, including a party that focuses on electoral politics but is beholden to the central movement organization. Both the MB central organization and the PJD’s founding SMO, MUR, ultimately decided that contesting flawed elections is a misallocation of resources. However, the PJD’s formal autonomy from MUR allowed it to continue contesting elections, while the IAF could not. The IAF’s total dependence on the MB central organization also prevented the party from deepening its institutionalization and using that organization to reach out to new groups of voters outside of the movement, as the PJD has done (Wegner, p. 140). The basic institutional differences between the PJD, which separated from its parent movement to focus on elections, and the MB, which includes a political party and many other SMOs in one tight movement structure, undoubtedly influenced each movement’s post-2011 tactical choices as well.
Evaluating Divergent Tactics

Scholars suggest that neither the MB nor the PJD tactics gained any real improvements in political rules or practices in the decade prior to the 2011 protest cycle (Wegner, 2011, p. 142). Evaluations of success within each movement since 2011 remain mixed. The PJD was generally positive about the results of its institutionalized tactics of contention, arguing that the movement will be able to make meaningful progress toward change under Benkirane’s government. “We have gained something this time. It’s not perfect but it’s better than what we had before. The division of powers into separate branches of government was achieved. The monarchy’s responsibility and the executive’s responsibility were determined. The executive branch gained more independence. This is a good thing for Morocco and therefore good for the PJD” (Personal Interview 18). Another activist also argued that the party developed new skills from working within the system:

Now we have an opportunity to realize our political, economic, and social program. Now that we’re inside the institutions we can realize it. There’s a big difference between being inside and being outside… Now it’s clear to us how to work with the king and his people. It wasn’t all clear before when we were in the opposition, we didn’t understand like we do now (Personal Interview 15).

Overall, there was a reasonably positive and congratulatory tone among PJD members and a view that movement goals were well on their way to achievement, with the acknowledgement that the work would undoubtedly take time to complete. “Surely, all Moroccans understand that ending corruption and tyranny won’t be completed in the first year—not even in the first five years. It’s very difficult. There will be serious work, good will, and real attempts to meet the demands [of the February 20th protests] (Personal Interview 19; reiterated in 16).

However, when pushed, PJD members also expressed frustration with the slowness and constraints of using institutionalized tactics to achieve their reform goals. One member said:

Despite the fact that the new constitution gives the Prime Minister absolute authority, his [Benkirane’s] authority is not really absolute. There’s always the need to negotiate with the monarchy. And although we lead the government, there’s still the problem of the three other parties in our coalition. They sometimes disagree with the PJD and they
could be used, they could stop reform and some institutions that are not under the parliamentary umbrella could play a major role against reform (Personal Interview 12)

This interviewee admits that the PJD’s power to implement reforms is greater in theory than in practice, where they face constraints from the king, other parties, and existing institutions. A number of Interviewees cited the challenge of working with coalition partners who “want us to fail” (Personal Interview 13), particularly the Istiqlal party, which left the PJD’s coalition as I was conducting my interviews (Personal Interview 20). Many interviewees complained about the influence of individuals surrounding the king who continue to try to block reform (Personal Interviews 10, 11, 12, 14, 15) and the consequent challenge of implementing the constitution democratically (Personal Interviews 15, 18, 19). As a PJD leader explained “One challenge is that, even though there’s a new constitution, the new constitution is being implemented in the old-school political culture, by people who don’t see the new constitution as a requirement and a priority for democratic change” (Personal Interview 15).

Thus, there did appear to be underlying doubts about whether the movement will be able to implement its desired reforms through the institutional channels to which it is now committed. Some activists suggested that a second round of protest pressure and reform concessions was needed to ease the existing institutional restraints. One PJD Youth Sector leader said:

If February 20th brought constitutional reform then we need another February 20th to achieve political reform...Moroccans agree that the constitutional reform brought new positive changes but the political reform was delayed. What worked in 1996 is no longer valid for the 2011 constitution. We’re trying to implement the new constitution with the same mindset as the previous constitution (Personal Interview 19).

Another PJD member concurred: “This is what we are able to achieve in the current period, but after this it is unacceptable to us for there not to be a second and a third wave of reform” (Personal Interview 12). PJD framing thus contained both positivity about current achievements and caveats about the continued constraints on the movement and the necessity of future reforms.
The Jordanian MB presented a somewhat more negative assessment of their attempts to achieve reformist goals through non-institutionalized means. As discussed above, though the dominant, publically articulated frame remains one of successful tactics that are building slowly towards results, many interviewees viewed the civil war in Syria as a major damper on their efforts. One narrative questioned whether the MB should have reached a compromised with the regime earlier in the Arab Spring when the environment was more favorable, particularly when ‘Awn al-Khasawna who was sympathetic to the MB, was appointed prime minister (Personal Interview 3). Another narrative emerged that the political pressure exerted by the peaceful street protests wasn’t enough to pressure the king, leaving the movement stranded in a kind of limbo. One IAF leader described this situation vividly:

The Brotherhood has been wise in trying to present its own version of reform, not imitating what happened in Tunisia and Egypt… But it didn’t amount to much within 2-3 years, because there’s no real intention or seriousness from the monarchy. It’s just sedation, keeping them daydreaming and nothing really materializes. This is the problem—it makes me question the effect of peaceful demonstration in the long term. But the catastrophe in Syria reminds me that we don’t want to plunge into that dark way either… People sometimes say we are to blame that nothing is happening because we’re not exerting enough pressure in the form of civil disobedience. But poverty, the economic situation—people can’t take a long stand like that, looking for daily livelihood. Their reforms are cosmetic, our reaction is symbolic still, so nothing is really happening, we’re going from worse to worse (Personal Interview 4).

A couple of interviewees questioned whether anything could be accomplished without calling for the overthrow of the regime. One MB member said,

The pressure from street didn’t resolve in anything. So long as these protests, and especially the Brotherhood, don’t call for overthrow, there is no pressure and no reforms; the regime is satisfied; it is assured of no problem so it makes no changes… The relationship with the regime alternates. But there is the hair of Mu’awiyah.¹⁴ We’re careful to maintain our rhetoric to maintain the status quo and so is the king but there’s no real cooperation. We just maintain stability (Personal Interview 2).

---

¹⁴ Mu’awiyah was a seventh century Caliph known for his hesitance to resort to force. He famously said: “I do not apply my sword where my lash is enough, nor my lash where my tongue is enough. And even if there is one hair binding me to my fellow men [whom he rules], I do not let it break: When they pull, I loosen, and if they loosen, I pull” (McMillan, 2013, p. 19). The “hair of Mu’awiyah” thus refers to the balance of give and take between ruler and subjects that maintains the status quo and prevents escalation into violence.
Both sides carefully modulate their framing to support stability, which ultimately results in no change at all. Though this activist insists reform is the right goal, he also believes that there must be more pressure on the regime (perhaps from a radical flank) for any real change to be achieved.

These testimonies illustrate the difficulty for a reformist movement of navigating the relative benefits and pitfalls of institutional versus non-institutionalized tactics of contention. Scholars agree that non-institutionalized tactics are more effective in a democratic context (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, 1996: p. 13). Gamson (1990) found that historical American opposition groups that used “force and violence” against opponents were generally “more successful” than groups that did not. In his synthesis of social movement scholarship, Tarrow (1994) also argues that it is disruption or threat of disruption that makes movements effective vehicles of social change. However, my research raises serious doubts about whether this relationship holds in electoral authoritarian monarchies like Jordan and Morocco. To be sure, many scholars doubt whether the PJD’s institutionalized tactics have truly changed Morocco’s balance of power (Entelis, 2011; Gause, 2013; Ottoway, 2012). Moreover, movement “success” is subjective and difficult to define and events remain in flux, making it impossible to say which movement will ultimately achieve a better outcome. However, thus far, the greater dissatisfaction and pessimism of the MB and its acknowledgment that the PJD has exhorted more serious reforms from its king, suggest that institutionalized tactics of contention have thus far proven more effective than non-institutional ones.
Chapter 3: Contestation and Adaptation of Framing

In chapter two, I analyzed the core framing decisions of the MB and the PJD since the start of the Arab uprisings, arguing that movement goals and tactics together constitute a critical signifying matrix that frames the nature of the movement to various audiences. In this chapter, I examine the internal disputes among social movement actors concerning these core framing decisions. I argue that internal framing disputes are ubiquitous and that activists on each side are influenced by the context of electoral authoritarian monarchy and by regime counter-framing. Finally I examine how movement actors conceptualize the strategic evolution of their framing over time and the relationship between framing and ideology.

Internal Framing Disputes

Framing as a Contested Process

As Benford and Snow (2000) explain, there is widespread agreement that generating, elaborating, and deploying social movement frames is a contested process. All actors who engage in the framing process are “embroiled in the politics of signification” (p. 625). The most obvious framing contests are external, occurring between movement activists and other actors who oppose the movement’s goals. However, social movement actors are also often embroiled in internal frame disputes with one another. According to Gamson and Meyer, internal frame disputes should be considered the status quo of social movements, not the exception: “The degree to which there are unified and consensual frames within a movement is variable and it is comparatively rare that we can speak sensibly of the movement framing. It is more useful to think of framing as an internal process of contention within movements with different actors taking different positions” (1996, p. 283).
My research supports Gamson and Meyer’s contention that internal frame disputes are ubiquitous. Both MB and PJD interviewees identified an ongoing process of internal framing contention. Both movements experienced significant debates over the relative opportunity for institutional versus non-institutionalized tactics and the utility of frame extension, and both experience generational divides. For each movement, internal frame disputes are significantly shaped by the context of an electoral authoritarian monarchy, in which the movement must simultaneously appease the monarchy and appeal to the voting public. However, each movement’s public framing of internal disputes, and its ultimate decisions, differed significantly.

**Frame Disputes within the MB**

*Deploying a unity frame*

When asked about potential differences of opinion within their ranks, all MB interviewees emphasized that there are no disputes within the MB on core goals and values. Interviewees mobilized this “unity frame” as a counter-frame to dispute the monarchy’s contention that the MB is divided and therefore weakening. For example, one Islamic Youth Movement activist said, “the Brothers have one goal and one vision…. The regime tries to discredit, beat up and imprison the opposition. So it does the same with the Islamic movement and claims that the movement is not united” (Personal Interview 5). Just as Gamson and Meyer suggest, for the MB, the process of framing movement “consensus” on a set of issues is itself a process of contention (1996: p. 284). When I saw that internal division was a sensitive area, I began reframing the way I posed the question. Instead of asking, “what are the divisions within your movement?” I said, “I understand that the Brotherhood shares core goals and values, but all major movements have internal discussions about tactics, and I want to understand what the differing positions on tactics have been within your movement.” When approached this way,
nearly all interviewees admitted to some internal framing disputes, including disputes over what goals to articulate, how to achieve these goals, and whom to target with the message.

In chapter three, I discuss how the availability of “political opportunities” for a movement is not an empirical question, but instead is subject to framing. Here, we see that the same is true of internal frame disputes within a movement. Far from being an empirical, measurable quantity, the level of internal frame dispute is itself defined by the framing efforts of movement activists and external opponents. This more fluid conceptualization highlights the potential for dialectical interaction between internal and external frame disputes. In the case of the Jordanian MB, the presence of internal frame disputes has become the subject of an external frame dispute between the movement and the monarchy. This external dispute over whether the movement is divided recursively impacts the way MB activists respond to internal disputes.

*Debating relative opportunity*

When I did convince MB interviewees to discuss their internal frame disputes, it became clear that most disputes centered on the nature of the opportunity structures open to the movement and how best to take advantage of them. This supports Gamson and Meyer’s (1996) contention that internal frame disputes often center on opportunity structures. This is the case precisely because the presence and nature of opportunity structures remain open to interpretation, representation and therefore contention: disputes arise as movement actors justify different tactical approaches based on their framing of relative opportunity. “Classical debates within movements often concern the issue of relative opportunity for institutional versus non-institutional actions or campaigns… Sometimes there is a shared framing that an open moment exists but arguments about whether institutionalized means will absorb, coopt, and slow the process so long that the opportunity will be gone” (1996: p. 284). Internal movement debates
about whether “now” is a good time for reformist or revolutionary goals, and institutional or noninstitutionalized tactics, are not discussions of “objective” reality. Rather, they constitute a war of signification about how the movement should define and frame relative opportunity structures.

Indeed, contrary to the MB’s framing of the obvious need to push for “reform” and not “overthrow” in the Jordanian social context (see chapter three), a vigorous internal debate on this question arose in early 2011. As one IAF Youth Sector leader explained:

At the beginning of the Arab Spring there were two camps within the Brothers, those who wanted the slogan to be “the people want the downfall of the regime,” and those who wanted it to be “the people want the reform of the regime” I was with the reform camp. So there was this problem of the slogans, but then we decided on the slogan “the reform of the regime.” We had discussions on this question, and there were two streams. Ten to twenty people wanted “downfall,” and the other 70 percent were behind “reform” (Personal Interview 3).

According to this interviewee, most MB activists wanted the “reform” slogan for the movement’s basic prognostic frame. However, a vocal minority favored “overthrow” and discussion was necessary to come to a group decision. Thus, the “reform” prognostic frame, which most interviewees portrayed as inevitable, was initially embroiled in contention. Even once movement leadership decided officially to call for reform, some activists may have outwardly accepted this framing while working toward different goals:

There was an official decision at the beginning to call for reform of the regime, not overthrow. But some people talk about reform, and what they mean is overthrow. This group is very small, the extremists among the hawks. Most of the group wants reform… Then there are people who don’t want any change—they say they want reform but they want everything to stay the same; they are just playing a game (Personal Interview 8).

According to this MB member, once the official decision was made to articulate a reformist prognostic frame, some members continue to prefer a revolutionary frame, while others preferred a more tepid reformist frame that would not produce major political changes.

The MB not only experienced framing debates over whether to articulate reformist or revolutionary goals since 2011, but also over whether to use institutional or non-institutionalized tactics. One IAF leader explained:
When we received offers to participate in the government, they said, “we’ll give you 25 seats, or 30, in the parliament.” Some people said that’s good, it’s better to be working within the system rather than from outside the system. Others said no, that’s not good. And then there was the voting. But nothing [no divisions] once it’s been voted on. Otherwise anyone, regardless of their position within the organization, will find themselves out [of the party]. I’ll give you an example. Some of the people who participated in the last elections; there was a position by the party not to participate. Some of us participated in the elections, and they found themselves outside [kicked out of] the organization (Personal Interview 7).

The MB experienced internal debate over whether or not to accept the king’s offer of parliamentary seats, which would allow the movement to pursue its goals through institutionalized tactics of contention from within parliament. Some preferred this option, while the majority (for reasons explored in chapter three) preferred to focus on the non-institutionalized tactics of street protest. A similar debate occurred over whether or not to participate in the 2011 elections, with the majority opinion once more in favor of the non-institutional tactic—boycotting the election. However, some members disagreed so strongly with this decision that they participated in the elections anyway and were ousted from the MB. These anecdotes illustrate the fact that even the core, identity-defining framing of the MB movement since 2011—its reformist goals and its non-institutionalized means of achieving them—did not emerge self-evidently. Rather, it emerged through a series of hotly contested internal frame disputes, some of which are ongoing.

This description of continuing internal debate contradicts the claim I heard more often: that though there may be initial debate on some issues, once a decision gets made, everyone unites behind it. As discussed above, this dominant “unity” frame serves as a counter-frame to regime claims that the MB is divided and therefore dysfunctional. Likely due to this framing war, the movement leadership tries hard to keep its debates strictly internal. Most interviewees saw this as positive, but one Islamic Youth Movement member complained about it quite openly:

There is a big problem in some people’s mentality. We are like the followers of Prophet Mohammad, we have to follow the leader, we are like a corps--when I tell you to run in a circle it's like a command, like we’re soldiers. This is a problem here in the Islamic party. For example anyone on Facebook who tries to criticize the Islamic party on his timeline will face a problem: ‘why are you talking this way in public, we have to discuss this in private in our meetings.’ But the world is changing” (Personal Interview 9).
This interviewee feels the unity frame imposes an unnecessary constraint that is no longer practical. His description evokes the public discipline to which movement members are expected to adhere, even as they are encouraged to express their opinions internally.

“Zamzam” and frame resonance disputes

The definition of relative opportunity structures and whether they favor institutional or non-institutional goals and tactics is not the only locus of internal MB frame disputes. Questions of frame resonance, including which audience to target and how to shape the message to best connect with them, also constitute an important area of contention. My research indicates that one powerful potential source of division over frame resonance relates to what Benford and Snow call “audience effects” (2000: p. 630). Activists from any given social movement must appeal to multiple audiences with varying interests, values, beliefs and knowledge, who can play a variety of movement or countermovement roles. According to Benford and Snow, shifts in the target audience often explain periodic shifts in a movement’s collective action frame. A related area of contention concerns “frame extension,” in which a movement expands its message beyond its primary interests to include issues believed to be important to potential adherents. According to Benford and Snow (2005), empirical examinations have shown that “frame extension activities spawned increases in intramural conflicts and disputes within movements regarding issues of ideological ‘purity,’ efficiency, and ‘turf’” (p. 625). The case of the MB supports Benford and Snow’s theory that “audience effects” and “frame extension”—including the question of whether and how to shift movement framing to target a broader audience—prompt a large share of intra-movement framing disputes.

Some MB members with whom I spoke depicted an active internal debate over how best to attract a wider (especially East-Bank Jordanian) audience for their reformist message, a goal
that seemed more easily within reach since the protest cycle began in 2011. As Benford and Snow would predict, this case of frame extension sparked major intra-movement contention. For the MB, frame disputes included the question of whether or to focus more attention on Jordanian national issues, like corruption and economic problems, or on issues that were traditionally more central to the movement, but failed to attract a wider audience, like the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and election gerrymandering in favor of rural East-Bank Jordanian parliamentary candidates. The breakup of the side-movement Zamzam was apparently due in part to these internal debates. On October 5, 2013 two MB leaders, Ruhayil al-Gharaiba and Nabil al-Kofahi, announced the launch of Zamzam, a new movement intended, according to Gharaiba, “to renew the Islamic discourse and present Islam as a cultural framework that encompasses the nation while emphasizing religious, sectarian, political and racial pluralism” (Al Sharif, 2013).

The regime-backed media portrayed the new initiative as a major challenge to the MB movement and as evidence of a damaging split between the “extremist” MB leadership, which is beholden to Hamas and promotes a Palestinian agenda, and the “moderate” wing of the movement, which wants to move away from the Palestinian agenda. An intense framing contest over Zamzam between the regime and the MB ensued. Survey data suggests that the media framing of a damaging “split” was initially successful. Of the 19 percent of Jordanians who heard of Zamzam the month it was founded, only 19 percent thought the MB would support the initiative, while 40 percent thought it would not (Center for Strategic Studies, 2013). The framing war over Zamzam explains why MB interviewees responded so defensively to questions about internal divisions, and why so many of them initially asserted that there are none.

Most of the MB members with whom I spoke vigorously countered the media framing of Zamzam, contesting both the severity and the nature of the split. From the MB perspective, the
media and the regime worked together to frame Zamzam as a damaging sectarian dispute inside the MB. The MB responded with the counter-frame that the MB agrees with Zamzam’s ideas, and the dispute was merely a minor one about timing and procedure. One IAF leader said:

Their [Zamzam’s] idea was not a wrong idea. Their idea was to create some sort of a society or coalition without the control of the Brotherhood organization. To be independent of it to make it easier for the general people to join. To open the gate in front of the people, to make all the people participate regardless of what they think or believe, or how long they can work with you. The idea as it stands is a good idea. I am with the idea. But the idea was rushed, it came out at the wrong time and there was no consultation with the leadership, and we think that’s wrong. But we’re not against the idea at all (Personal Interview 7).

MB leaders consistently emphasized that the leaders of Zamzam remained members of the MB, and that MB leadership had maintained a good relationship with them. (This contradicts the earlier assertion those who disagree with a majority decision—like the members who participated in the 2011 elections—always get kicked out of the MB. Presumably the counter-framing imperative of presenting a united front trumped this organizational rule). In the MB framing, Zamzam and the Brotherhood are partner organizations: Zamzam strives to create a platform for a mass public movement in support of the Brotherhood’s reform objectives. The same IAF leader told a story about how Zamzam leaders and the MB teamed up to present this counter-frame and thwart the regime and media framing of their supposed “split”:

When Zamzam was founded] the media, the government, and the secret service police were so happy because they thought the Brotherhood organization has fallen to pot. They encouraged the people in Zamzam and opened the whole media to them, and allowed them to talk in the media as they wished. But when the people who lead Zamzam declared several times, “we are members of the Brotherhood and the IAF, and we did this to encourage people to join more and more, to make the reform movement easier,” they cut them off [laughs] (Personal Interview 7).

In this narrative, regime framing of a split failed because Zamzam leaders countered it with their own framing: that they remain MB members and are dedicated to broadening the movement.

When I spoke with a leader of Zamzam, he presented a similar frame of the relationship between the two organizations, but with a small twist: “A form of real change within the Brotherhood resulted from the Zamzam initiative. Zamzam is not part of the Brotherhood but those who came up with it are leaders of the Brotherhood… yet we look for a wider framework
that unites all” (Personal Interview 2). Like the IAF leader, the Zamzam leader (and MB member) portrayed the new movement as aligned with the MB agenda while seeking to extend it to a wider audience. However, he also referred to Zamzam as an example of change within the Brotherhood, implying that the direction Zamzam is taking is where the MB must soon follow.

Not all MB members agree with this friendly framing of Zamzam. One former MB leader sounded downright angry: “they wanted to establish a wider organization. I say the Brotherhood is a wide organization that can contain everyone. They said no, we want a typical organization. In Sudan, Hassan al-Turabi said ‘let’s leave the Brotherhood.’ He wanted a traditional organization and what was the result? Sudan was destroyed.” This interviewee argues that the MB already is the broad platform Zamzam aspires to be. He contradicts the dominant MB frame that Zamzam is not damaging to the MB by comparing it to Turabi’s National Islamic Front in Sudan, a formerly Brotherhood-affiliated organization that mounted a governmental coup in 1989. Another interviewee also contradicted the friendly framing of partner movements with joint goals, and expressed anger that those who started the initiative have not been punished: “It [Zamzam] doesn’t represent the Brothers, and those who are involved do not represent the Brothers. Nothing has been done to them until now. They are only few people. They have a certain vision and opinion which doesn’t effect the framework of the Brothers’ work, unlike what the media claims” (Personal Interview 5). An IAF women’s sector leader suggested that personal leadership disputes were responsible for the break-off of Zamzam, and that it was therefore damaging to the MB: “It became a personal rivalry or clash between the leaders. The people who don’t like the wing of [MB Secretary General] Zaki Bani Irshaid are joining Zamzam. This is not a healthy situation for Brotherhood. The work, not the person should direct you” (Personal Interview 4). The founding of Zamzam, and the debate over how to respond, may
have been partly driven by a personal rivalry within the MB leadership, between the “wing” of Zaki Bani Irshaid and the “wing” of Ruhayil al-Gharaiba.

A few interviewees suggested that the emergence of Zamzam was related to an internal debate about whether to move away from a Palestinian-centered agenda in order to attract more East-Bank Jordanians to the reform movement. The IAF Women’s Sector leader explained:

The Brotherhood was blamed for caring about Palestinian issues more than Jordanian issues, and for the relationship with Hamas. Ruhayil [al-Gharaiba] and Zamzam are more interested in focusing on the Jordanian issues, rather than scattering their focus. That’s the source of disagreement… Jordan is deteriorating but the Brotherhood still focuses on the Palestinian question. There has to be a split with Hamas (Personal Interview 4; reiterated in 9).

The Jordanian MB has long fought for the rights of Palestinians and has worked fairly closely with Hamas, which considers itself the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. However, the master-frame of the 2011 Arab uprisings protest cycle centered on a different issue: democratic political reform on a national level. This apparently prompted debate within the MB about whether to extend the movement’s basic frame from the Palestinian rights frame to a broader frame about Jordanians’ rights to good governance. This would presumably allow the movement to ride the wave of mobilizing energy that emerged in 2011 to attract a broader audience and spearhead a national reform movement. In the two and a half years since, the MB has clearly experienced deep contention about the relative importance of this frame extension and whether it should prompt major changes in the way the movement operates.

Indeed, an IAF Youth Sector leader said that Zamzam attempts to remedy the problematic narrowness of the MB’s outreach strategy, not only when it comes to mobilizing East-Bank Jordanians, but in working with other opposition groups.

The idea behind Zamzam is that maybe the Brotherhood has problems dealing with the tribes [i.e. East-Bank Jordanians] or other groups because we used to be closed minded due to the political situation in the 1970s and ‘80s. We were under pressure and the police were behind us, so we used to be very secret… In our mentality we are not used to being open minded with others. Zamzam is a small initiative to get others to accept us and to have a better platform to cooperate with others, Christians, leftists, independents (Personal Interview 3; repeated in 9).
In this view, the Brotherhood has been conditioned by regime repression and therefore remains stuck in its old way of operating as a secretive, closed-off organization. Now, when the MB is trying to mount a national movement, these tactics no longer work.\(^{15}\)

To some degree, the issue of pluralism within the MB may straddle a generational divide. When I asked the same Youth Sector leader if his generation of MB members would do things differently in the future, he said that they would work much more with other opposition groups: “it was very hard to convince the ‘old guard’ in the Brotherhood to work with the Leftist parties because they had years of disagreements and problems between them, but we [the MB youth] have no problems because we have the same political objectives” (Personal Interview 3). An Islamic Youth Movement member similarly argued that the MB structure had become too “closed in on itself. The distance between the society and the movement began to grow.” He too cited a generational divide that has been exacerbated by the political shifts since 2011:

I think as the Arab Spring changed the regime it started raising some questions for the Islamic movement, especially for the youth. Many started to think about what we want, to criticize the leadership, to ask the question, ‘why are we not acceptable to some sections of society?’… In my point of view some issues that are very important to Jordanian citizens, the Islamic party up until now did not provide or try to act to give its vision for this…Until now the Islamic party did not understand why the East Bankers are afraid of it and don’t think it is their party. This is a problem (Personal Interview 9).

Some members of the younger generation within the Brotherhood, which hasn’t had the same experience of regime repression and opposition infighting, want to create a more open movement that attracts a broader swathe of Jordanians, including East-bank Jordanians. They appear to be more open than their elders are to “frame bridging”—i.e. creating alliances across the political

\(^{15}\)Zamzam’s framing of itself as a pluralistic movement resonated fairly well with the Jordanian public. Of the 19 percent of Jordanians who heard about Zamzam the month it was founded, more than twice as many supported it as opposed it (48 percent to 22 percent). Jordanians were more likely to doubt than to believe that initiative would succeed at constructing a partnership between society and the government (34 to 23 percent). However, doubters overwhelmingly cited the government’s unwillingness to work seriously with Zamzam as the main obstacle, while believers cited the fact that “those performing the initiative are pluralistic and moderate” and that “the goal of the initiative is in the interest of the homeland and the citizens” (Center for Strategic Studies, 2013).
spectrum to achieve shared objectives. Both of these young interviewees supported Zamzam, viewing it as an effort to move the movement in this more inclusive direction.

**Frame Disputes within the PJD**

Unlike MB interviewees, no PJD interviewees suggested that the question of pushing for “overthrow” was a source of internal debate at any time during the Arab uprisings protest cycle. Debate over reformist or revolutionary goals was apparently off the table; however, PJD activists did describe a major debate on whether relative opportunity structures favored institutional or non-institutionalized tactics—i.e., whether the PJD should participate in the February 20th protests. One component of this debate centered on frame extension. Like the MB, the divide here seems to have been generational, with the PJD Youth Sector eager to extend PJD movement claims to encompass the February 20th Movement claims. Even once the PJD had definitively chosen to use institutionalized tactics, the question of how strongly to pressure the regime for reform has remained contentious and generationally fraught. Throughout these debates, PJD actors constantly consider how their actions and tactics frame the movement to both the monarchy and the Moroccan public. Internal frame disputes are thus substantially shaped by the context of an electoral authoritarian monarchy, in which the movement must simultaneously appease the monarchy and appeal to the voting public.

*Dispute over participating in February 20th Protests*

Every PJD member with whom I spoke said that the debate over whether or not to participate in the February 20th protests had been the movement’s primary dispute in the last few years. As Gamson and Meyer predicted, this can be understood in part as an internal frame dispute over whether relative opportunity structures favor institutional or non-institutionalized tactics. In chapter two, I analyzed the side that ultimately won out: the argument to stay off the
street and stick with institutionalized tactics. In this chapter, I examine the counter-arguments others made claiming that this decision was a mistake. In spite of the official party decision not to participate in the February 20th protests, the Youth Sector insisted on taking part and established the “Baraka” movement as a vehicle to do so. The debate about whether or not to participate in the February 20th street protests not only divided generations a, but went right to the top of the party’s leadership, as one interviewee explained:

On February 20th, many disagreements and discussions took place. It even led some leaders to resign. Mustapha Ramid, the current minister of justice, Lahbib Choubani, the minister of parliamentary and civil society relations, and ‘Abdilali Hamidin, one of the important leaders ... they all participated in the protests...They were blamed for participating in the protests because, despite being leaders, they didn’t follow the party’s policy. So they resigned from the PJD’s General Secretariat but not from PJD itself. Some said they resigned because they were not obedient to the Party’s policy so they were ousted as punishment while others said they didn’t agree with the policy so resigned so as not to put the Party in a difficult situation (Personal Interview 10).

As with the MB and Zamzam, PJD members were ambivalent about the movement’s response to the departure of some senior leaders from official party policy, and the question of whether or not they were appropriately “punished” remains open.

At the heart of this debate over institutional versus non-institutionalized tactics was the question of which audience the movement needed to target in order to position itself as a legitimate mediator between the regime and the streets. In chapter two, I analyzed the official PJD framing that protesting in the streets would have damaged the movement’s credibility with the regime, negating its ability to play the responsible mediating role. However, a senior leader who joined the protests (and later “stepped down” from his office) describes a very different argument: “Whoever goes into the streets can pressure the political elites and be at the heart of the movement. Who would go between the protesters and the governments and translate their demands into rational demands? We couldn’t swoop in from outside the streets and play this go-between role. So we asked to participate” (Personal Interview 15). Like the leaders who argued against street protests, this PJD leader wanted to position the PJD as an interlocutor between the
government and the streets (classically leveraging radical flank effects). However, while they focused on projecting a trustworthy image to the regime, he focused on projecting a trustworthy image to the protesters and to the Moroccan public: failure to participate in February 20th would damage the movement’s credibility with the protesters and thus prevent it from achieving a mediator role. In other words, both sides shared the same objective—positioning the movement to mediate between the government and a radical flank of protesters—but they had opposite tactical prescriptions for reaching it. One side believed the PJD should enhance its *popular credibility* joining February 20th, and the other thought it should enhance its *institutional credibility* by abstaining. This case illustrates clearly how the context of electoral authoritarian monarchy shapes internal frame disputes for legal opposition movements. The PJD faces a dual imperative of cultivating support and legitimacy within the electorate (and thus not appearing co-opted) while also projecting a trustworthy image to the monarchy (and thus not appearing too threatening).

Another important PJD goal was preventing protest escalation to violence or calls to overthrow. As I discussed in chapter two, the dominant movement framing claimed that additional turnout from PJD networks could push the protests out of control, perhaps leading to revolutionary demands. However, once again, PJD members who joined the protests claimed just the opposite: that their participation through Baraka actually enabled them to control the February 20th crowds and guide the protest objectives toward reform rather than overthrow. One Youth Sector leader who participated explained: “It [Baraka] was a distinguished movement. It helped form the objectives [of the Feb 20th Movement]. It directed the demonstration to certain demands in order to avoid other demands like toppling the regime or dismissing certain individuals. It helped unite the objectives so the king would quickly agree on them and announce
political and constitutional reformation” (Personal Interview 10). Many interviewees who had participated in Baraka framed the group as highly influential in the February 20th protests (personal Interviews 10, 14, 19). Once again, PJD members agreed on the goal—putting pressure on the king but not too much pressure—but the two sides had very different ideas about whether institutional or non-institutionalized tactics would be most likely to promote these goals.

The debate over whether or not to participate in the protests was not just about defining relative opportunity structures; it was also partly a debate over the utility of frame extension. PJD activists disagreed over whether the goals of the protesters were close enough to the PJD’s longstanding goals that the PJD should simply adopt them. The senior leader who left his post and joined the protests explained:

There was a big divide within the party before February 20th between those who thought it was our duty to go out into the streets, and those who didn’t want to, each for a variety of reasons. The first group (and I’m one of them) said that we agreed with 70 or 80 percent of the demands of the protesters, and the written demands were reasonable (Personal Interview 15)

As discussed in chapter three, the PJD leadership’s official framing was that they could not participate in the February 20th protests because did not know what the protesters really wanted. However, this interviewee counters that the PJD should have participated because the written demands of the protesters largely aligned with the PJD’s own demands. In other words, the PJD could easily construct a frame extension to include the February 20th demands. All PJD interviewees who had participated in the protests similarly asserted that there was major overlap between PJD and February 20th Movement goals.

In contrast to the MB, which was reticent about its internal debates and the creation of Zamzam, PJD activists readily told me about their dispute over protesting and the creation of Baraka. Some PJD members were even proud to showcase their disagreement with the leadership about the decision not to join the protests. In part, this difference may stem from the absence of
an external framing contest between the PJD and the Moroccan regime over the question of division within the movement. However, PJD members also viewed the divide over protesting as an important chance to display the truly democratic nature of the movement, in which each member is entitled to disagree with the leadership, participate in discussion, and come to a group decision by which all abide. One PJD Youth Sector leader explained, “PJD leadership evaluated [the situation], but others had a different opinion. However we work under one principle, ‘al-ra’i hurr wa al-qarār mulzim’ [opinion is free and the decision is binding]. We are free to have our own opinions, but are obligated to act according to the party’s decision” (Personal Interview 10). Three other PJD Youth Sector members discussed the same quote in reference to this dispute and then asserted that the PJD is “the most democratic party” (Personal Interviews 16, 18, 19). These interviewees proudly held up their freedom to say publically that they disagreed with movement leadership, in implicit distinction with the constraints that prevent such criticism in Morocco’s broader political sphere. This “internal democracy frame,” constitutes another attempt to bolster the empirical credibility of the party’s democratic reform frame by demonstrating consistency between this frame and the party’s internal processes. The movement calls for meaningful democratic reform, so it very publically applies those values to discussion and decision-making within its own ranks.

_Framing disputes beyond February 20th_

When I asked about divides within the PJD since 2011 aside from the debate over the February 20th protests, interviewees struggled to think of any. This may be because the February 20th dispute was larger and more formative than any other. It could also mean the movement presents a unity frame on most issues, while opting for an “internal democracy” frame only in the case of a major and publically visible dispute like the one over the February 20th protests. As
I probed further, and gave examples of potential types of disagreement within the party, other framing disputes did emerge. One PJD member told me about a disagreement that centered on whether to accept the constitutional reform that the king offered following the protests: “[There was disagreement] on the issue of constitutional reform, for example. I and some other party members wanted more constitutional reform, and some others said this isn’t the time to demand that. And now we have questions about the application of the constitution” (Personal Interview 15). Like the MB, the PJD experienced continuing internal disputes over how to frame relative opportunity structures: some wanted to hold out for more substantive constitutional reforms, while others wanted to accept the reforms that were offered. Unlike the MB, the PJD ultimately decided to accept the reforms, run in the parliamentary elections, and attempt to implement reforms from within the government.

However, as the above quote suggests, once the PJD accepted the new constitution and took the reins of power, the challenges of implementing reform raises a new set of potential disagreements. Since taking the majority in the parliament, many of the PJD’s internal debates have centered on how to deal with corrupt officials and intransigent coalition partners who block the implementation of their agenda. According to one Youth Sector member, “we have thousands of members which means we have thousands of opinions. For example, in each member’s head there’s a strategy on how to fight corruption. Even the party leaders have different opinions on different issues that Parliament discussed, like the departure of the Istiqlal party from the government”\(^\text{16}\) (Personal Interview 20). Each of the challenges the PJD must navigate within the government, from corrupt officials to intransigent coalition partners, sparks debates on the best way to proceed. However, a central locus of debate remains the level of

\(^{16}\) At the time of these interviews in July 2013, the Istiqlal party had just withdrawn from the PJD’s ruling coalition, citing the slow pace of reforms. The PJD had an internal discussion over whether to hold elections or find a new coalition partner, and decided in favor of the former.
cooperation with the monarchy and how much to push the king on reform implementation. As one member put it, “We disagree a lot. We disagree about how to deal with the regime, Should we be flexible or strict with the regime?” (Personal Interview 10). He then gave me an example of one such debate. Some Moroccan customs officers were caught in a corruption scandal, and the king issued an arrest warrant and sent them to court. However, Abdilali Hamidin, one of the PJD leaders, announced that it was the PJD-led government’s responsibility to issue the warrant, not the king’s. As the interviewee explained:

The media divides the Party’s leaders into ‘hawks’ and ‘doves.’ That was the hawks’ opinion. The doves announced that they would let it go this time because they wanted to earn the king’s trust in order to achieve future reforms. Honestly, no reform can take place without the king’s involvement…if the king doesn’t want reform to happen, then it won’t happen. The hawks, on the other hand, said that there’s a constitution that the king should follow literally. These discussions take place all the time, and the disagreements might increase or decrease according to the subject. (Personal Interview 10).

Unlike most PJD members with whom I spoke, this interviewee embraced the media nomenclature of “hawks” and “doves.” He described two distinct wings within the movement, one of whom wants to hold the king strictly to the dictates of his powers under the new constitution, and other of whom wants to be flexible with the king so as to earn his trust and build a long-term working relationship. Even once they have fully committed to institutionalized tactics and are actually running the government, the PJD thus faces internal debates over how to define and signal to the monarchy the level of threat to embodied in the movement.

Interestingly, this Youth Sector leader presented the hawk-dove division as part of a larger generational divide within the PJD. Though he himself agreed with the “doves” on the issue of the customs officer, he said that in general the young generation is more in the camp of the “hawks”: “PJD leaders maintain an even relationship with the regime, and sometimes pardon the regime when it crosses the line. However, the younger generation is outraged, as can be seen of Facebook and Twitter…we [the younger generation] don’t have compromises, we have
demands. The older ones have both. Their compromises paved the way to meet current demands” (Personal Interview 10). Like the MB, the PJD is apparently facing an ongoing generational framing dispute. The younger members want to articulate more stringent demands for reform and take the regime to task when it fall short, while the older members want to make moderate reform demands and be flexible with the regime to build a better long-term working relationship.

**Changes in Movement Framing Over Time**

**Framing versus Ideology in Social Movement Theory**

Earlier sections have made it clear that MB and PJD members engage actively in a process of framing that responds strategically to changing events on the ground. This raises the question of whether and how PJD and MB framing may have evolved overall since the new protest cycle began in 2011. The social movement theory literature provides a useful starting point for examining this question. Social movement theory (SMT) conceives of framing as a dynamic process, in which movement activists shift their framing in response to both events and counter narratives. For this reason, Benford and Snow (2000) suggest that the term “frame,” which implies a static construction, may be less useful than the term “framing,” which implies a process of constantly constructing and revising a variety of frames. According to Benford and Snow, movement activists engage in a “frame alignment processes” in which they strategically adjust their collective action frames to improve their “resonance,” i.e. how well they resonate with a targeted and potentially mobilizable audience. The three ingredients for good frame resonance are 1) *centrality* to the lives of targets of mobilization, 2) *experimental commensurability* or congruence with the personal everyday experiences of targets, and 3) *narrative fidelity*, or cultural resonance. Together, these three elements ensure that a frame is highly salient to the lives of those the movement wishes to mobilize (Benford and Snow, 2000).
Thus, according to SMT, movement framing does indeed change over time as movement activists respond to shifting events on the ground. More contentious is the question of whether the underlying values and beliefs of movement activists change as well. Do movement activists strategically adjust their framing while their basic values and beliefs remain the same? Or do framing and beliefs both develop over time? If so, does each change in response to the other, or do they evolve independently and at different rates?

Recent SMT debates have addressed these questions by investigating the distinctions between “ideology,” conceived as a pervasive and integrated system of beliefs and values, and “framing,” conceived as a process of strategic messaging about oneself and one’s ideology. According to Benford and Snow, ideology has “considerable staying power,” while framing is far more changeable (2000, p. 613). Nevertheless, the two remain in a close relationship: “Collective action frames function as innovative amplifications and extensions of, or antidotes to, existing ideologies or components of them. Accordingly, ideology functions as both a constraint and resource in relation to framing processes and collective action frames” (2000, p. 613). Thus, a movement’s framing may change frequently, but it is both fed and bounded by a more stable movement ideology.

Oliver and Johnston (2005a, 2005b) argue that Benford and Snow, and those who followed in their footsteps, marginalize ideology in order to emphasize framing as an analytical variable. According to Oliver and Johnston, social movement actors do not just repackage themselves and their ideas to attract adherents (i.e. adjust their framing); they also actively engage in periods of intense internal interaction and discussion in which they self consciously reconstruct their ideology, developing new systems of values norms, theories of society, and
understanding of the world. Thus, both a movement’s framing and its ideology evolve in significant ways, though there may be a difference in frequency.

Overall, my research supports the perspective of Benford and Snow on the constant nature of ideology relative to a far more volatile framing process. When asked whether the goals or ideas of MB and PJD had changed since before the Arab Spring, all interviewees claimed initially that they had remained constant. However, when pushed, some interviewees distinguished between ideology and public discourse (i.e. framing), explaining that, though ideology had remained constant, the movement’s discourse had indeed shifted since the Arab uprisings began in 2011. A couple of interviewees also admitted to shifts in the interpretation of longstanding ideology. These claims themselves represents a form of framing, and should not be taken as evidence of the actual immutability of movement ideology. We can merely conclude that, when speaking to an American researcher outside their movements, most MB and PJD activists were adamant in denying any periods of active ideology reconstruction such as Oliver and Johnston describe. However, some admitted that movement framing does strategically evolve, and described how this had occurred since 2011.

The “ Constancy” Frame

The majority of MB and PJD activists responded “no” when asked if the movement’s goals or ideas had changed since 2011. A number of interviewees went out of their way to point me to pre-2011 documents that “prove” that their movement was ideologically aligned with democracy and dignity prior to the Arab Spring (Personal interviews 1, 10, 11). One IAF leader pointed me to the movement’s 2005 platform and said, “you will find it’s more or less the same as what we’re asking for now. What we asked for in 1989 is the same as what we’re asking for now. It’s the reform of the regime” (Personal Interview 7; reiterated in 3, 5, and 6).
A central element of what we might call the “constancy” frame was the claim that the movement had been braving authoritarian repression and demanding democratic reform long before the 2011 protest cycle began. Then, at start of the cycle, the rest of society caught up and began signing on to the longstanding movement vision. One IAF Youth Sector leader explained:

Before, since the early stages we called for reform, fighting corruption, fighting the regime. For a very long time we called for this. When the Brotherhood ran for elections in 1989, 25 guys out of 80 won. We got a lot of votes. People trusted them. But people were afraid—Jordan was under marshal law. Then the Arab Spring came, and the Brotherhood was already in position to demand reform and had the trust of the people. The Arab Spring broke the fear barrier, which was very important (Personal Interview 3).

In this framing, the MB was a kind of vanguard, the innovative precursor to the Arab uprisings. The new protest cycle did not change the goals of the MB; rather, it changed Jordanian society, which broke out of its fear and finally came into alignment with the MB activism. PJD activists similarly claimed that their movement’s goals and ideas had remained constant since 2011 and long before. One Youth Sector leader explained, “the PJD wasn’t waiting for the Arab uprising to express its goals. We weren’t waiting for Mubarak or Bin Ali to express dissatisfaction with the situation in Morocco. We always expressed this” (Personal Interview 10). Another said, “The PJD’s objectives combined with the objectives of the Arab Spring to end corruption” (Personal Interview 11). As with the MB, interviewees expressed the idea that the PJD had always called for the democratic reforms that other Moroccans only started demanding in 2011.

One key to understanding this constancy frame is the normative value associated with constancy of ideals, which activists considered key to both the integrity of their movement and its popular success. For example, activists from both movements expressed a conviction that the movement’s basic goals and values should never change. As an IAF Youth Sector leader expressed it, “In the future nothing will change. Maybe it will develop a bit but the basics will stay the same. If you look at the Brotherhood’s constitution we call for human rights, benefitting the people, dignity. This should not be changed” (Personal Interview 3). Similarly, an editor of a
PJD-affiliated newspaper opined, “if the party continues on its path, it will have a good place in society twenty years from now… The key is whether our morals change or not. They need to stay the same” (Personal Interview 8). Both of these views admit implicitly to the possibility that the movements’ goals or ideals will indeed transform, but both see this as a negative outcome that would jeopardize the movement’s integrity and success.

However, two interviewees mentioned what might be called an ideological shift: a new acceptance of the concept of a “civil state.” According to one MB member and former leader:

**Interviewee:** One thing changed in the Brotherhood, which is the acceptance of a civil state (“dawla madaniyya”). A civil state is a democratic state, not an Islamic state (“dawla Islāmiyya”).

**RN:** When did this change take place?

**Interviewee:** This is a new change since 2011. Now you can hear that the Brotherhood is talking about a civil state. You might find a few members who say no to this but the majority agrees. In Islam there’s nothing called an “Islamic State”… When the Prophet Mohammad passed away, the first Caliph Abu Bakr came and he was elected by the people. The Qur’an didn’t impose it, nor did the prophet. The People selected him…so selecting representatives of the people exists in Islam. This is what a civil state is…yes, it is a new development. We admit that. We are not leaving religion, we understand it better (Personal Interview 1).

Unlike most other interviewees, this member claims that a major change in the MB’s ideological platform took place since 2011: the acceptance of a *dawla madaniyya*, a democratically elected “civil state” or instead of a *dawla Islāmiyya*, an “Islamic state” presumably run by shariʿa law. However he frames this change, not as a shift in religious ideology itself, but as a shift in *interpretation* based on a better understanding of what that ideology always meant. The foundation of the constancy frame thus remains intact for him. Indeed, he told long parables illustrating how Islam requires respect for religious diversity and rights for minorities and does not allow compulsion in religion, implying that the Islamic ideology of the MB always included the pluralistic foundations of civil state. Other MB interviewees made similar claims about Islam, but presented it as a longstanding interpretation, not an interpretive shift: “The head of the International Union of Muslim Scholars, says “freedom before belief.” If I am not free, I am not Muslim” (Personal Interview 6; similar comments in 7). Jillian Schwedler argued in 2006 that
the MB had substantially shifted its worldview to include a democratic narrative perceived to be fully consonant with Islamism. On the one hand, my research suggests that such shifts can occur, even under the cover of the “constancy” frame. It also suggests that this type of ideological shift may have accelerated since 2011 as the movement sought to align with the pro-democratic master frame of the Arab Uprising protest cycle.

On the other hand, my research leaves open the question of whether this “ideological” shift may in fact be merely a framing shift. One other interviewee, a member of the Islamic Youth Movement, agreed that that the MB began calling for a civil state after the Arab uprisings popularized this term, but he describes it as more of a strategic framing shift:

**Interviewee** In Egypt when they started to call for a civil state in the Arab spring it became a term and they [the MB leadership] tried to “Ikhwanize” [Brotherhood-ize] the civil state in an Islamic way…

**RN:** So this is new?

**Interviewee:** Yes we are now calling for a civil society and for democracy…but there are some leaders here who still don’t have a clear answer on whether we want a civil state or not  (Personal Interview 9).

The interviewee went on to describe a demonstration in Amman on January 23 when the MB used slogans calling for an Islamic state, not a civil state. “The next day there was a meeting of the coalition for reform. They asked, ‘what are you calling for? There is a difference between what you called for here and what you were chanting in the streets [earlier]...’” (Personal Interview 9). According to this interviewee, the MB adopted the term “civil state” after Egyptian protests popularized it, i.e. when it became part of the master frame of the Arab uprisings protest cycle. This frame alignment has provoked internal contention, with some leaders for it and some leaders against it, but the MB faces pressure from reform coalition partners to maintain the civil state framing. However, he says the MB tried to “Ikhwanize” the term, making it actually mean something Islamic. To this interviewee, therefore, the term “civil state” seems to constitute form of framing, in part for the benefit of coalition partners, papered over the same Islamic ideology. In sum, my research does not conclusively show whether or not an ideological shift occurred
concerning the nature of the state; however, it does show that movement actors assign a positive normative value to the idea of constant movement ideology and use various forms of framing to project such constancy.

The “Strategic Change” Frame

Nevertheless, when pushed, some activists distinguished between their basic ideology and their discourse and strategy—i.e. framing—which they admit has indeed evolved since 2011. Just as the theory literature predicts, interviewees described a process of frame alignment in which movement adherents actively shaped their collective action frames to improve the frames’ centrality, narrative fidelity, and experimental commensurability to targets of mobilization.

For example, some MB activists explained that movement discourse had shifted to focus on corruption and its economic effects because this had greater centrality to Jordanians daily lives than broader political rhetoric about democratic reform, and thus served as a better call to action.17 One Youth Sector leader explained the framing decision sparked by this situation:

The goals developed as time passed. At the start of the Arab Spring, the people were demanding reform and the end of corruption. But Brothers were calling for improving the constitution to make the people the source of power. We continued developing our constitutional agenda, but adjusted our presentation as we got their message out. People could feel what corruption means. 400JD becomes nothing for them now, and we asked them, “why this is happening to you? Because of corruption… When we used to go to tribes and say “we need changes in the constitution,” they were not very excited about this—they said “ok, but what does this mean to me?” But when we said there is a big connection between politics and the economy—that a good constitution will fight corruption and get rid of the cats in government—people started to listen to us. That was the main message that connected with people (Personal Interview 3).

According to this interviewee, the MB’s basic political goal of instituting democratic reforms to has remained constant, but activists reframed this issue to align with the concerns of its mobilization targets and increase its centrality to their lives. They did this through a process that Benford and Snow (2000) call “frame bridging”: linking two or more ideologically congruent but

17 This reading of the public mood has empirical validity: a May 2011 survey showed 79 percent of Jordanians favoring economic reforms before political and democratic reforms, and national surveys consistently rank “rising prices and the cost of living” and other economic concerns as both the most important problems Jordan faces and the reason the country is headed in the wrong direction. (Center for Strategic Studies, 2011b, 2012, 2013).
structurally unconnected frames relating to a particular issue or problem. MB activists told mobilization targets that their daily economic problems were due to corruption and bad governance, and thus inherently related to the movement’s core issue of democratic reform. The “corruption” frame thus served to unite two structurally unrelated frames—the MB’s longstanding democratic reform frame and the Jordanian protesters’ economic duress frame. This “bridging” improved the centrality of the democratic reform frame, making it more salient to a broad swathe of Jordanians, and thus more likely to mobilize them.

Like the MB, some PJD members described how they had shifted their framing to respond to changing political conditions since 2011. Specifically, the transition from being an opposition party to being part of the government prompted some important changes in framing. As an editor of the PJD-affiliated newspaper explained, “What changed for us in 2011 wasn’t the goals, but the situation. Now we have to forget the rhetoric of opposition and use the rhetoric of participation and governance. We have to change our ideas, from protesting to working.” When I asked for a specific example, he elaborated:

When we were in the opposition, we strongly opposed [the annual music festival] Mawazin, because the state was paying for it and we’re in a recession. Now we’re still against the festival, but we started an association that finds sponsors so the state doesn’t pay for it. Then we went quiet on it. We stopped talking about it in the media. In earlier years we would have come out against some of the singers who came [to Mawazin]. The easiest thing is to oppose, to say no, to be in the opposition. But when you’re in the majority you have to find solutions. You have to work (Personal Interview 13).

Once they had achieved a parliamentary majority and needed to work closely with the king, the PJD made some pragmatic shifts in their framing. This meant toning down their oppositional framing on certain issues of importance to the monarchy, like the state-sponsored music festival.

Multiple PJD interviewees framed these compromises as part of a move away from talking, which opposition parties do, towards acting, which ruling parties do. One Youth Sector leader explained, “Our language changed after joining the government. People in the opposition talk more. When you’re in the government you achieve more” (Personal 10; echoed in 20). In
this framing, by pulling back on its oppositional framing, the PJD gained more room to achieve movement goals. PJD members insisted that the movement retained all the same goals, and that they merely stopped talking about the ones that did not seem currently achievable. As one Youth Sector leader put it, “No, our objectives didn’t change. But anyone who works with the government has to balance and compromise for the sake of the situation and consider objectives and priorities. Some objectives must be achieved now and others can be postponed and we will achieve them in the near or far future” (Personal Interview 10). Like the MB, the PJD admitted to strategically shifting its framing in response to changing conditions—but insisted that this shift was merely a tactical strategy, and did not represent a fundamental change in the movement’s ideology or long-term goals. Another interviewee explained, “It is probably not a change in our ideology but a change in our approach since we are no longer the opposition but actually in the government. Our concepts and our reform project are still the same but the approach will vary according to the situation. This is a situation that we haven’t encountered before. But our principles are unshakeable” (Personal Interview 18). The question of whether, empirically speaking, tactical framing shifts like the ones these activists describe tend to give rise to changes in its ideology is beyond the scope of this paper. However, in activists’ framing to a movement outsider, such ideological transformation is considered both undesirable and unlikely.

**Appropriating Hegemonic Ideologies**

**Theorizing Ideology, Framing, and Strategic Imperatives**

In the previous section, I analyzed how PJD and MB activists distinguish between framing, which they admit to adjusting strategically to achieve their objectives, and ideology, which they present as a constant. David Weston theorizes the tensions that can emerge from this situation as movements struggle to maintain their “structurally grounded interest in ideological
maintenance while facing a shifting and complex—yet broadly obdurate—strategic imperative conditioned, sometimes even imposed, by the flow of events” (2005: p. 221). The need to maintain a constant ideology while responding to changing strategic imperatives creates tension for social movements, as we saw in the example of the MB and the “civil state” and the PJD and Mawazin. According to Weston, framing can play an essential mediating role here: “Ideologies interpret the world in a relatively unified, complex, and historical mode; a strategic imperative mandates interpretations that are particular and situational. Movement framing designates persuasive discourse that in one way or another incorporates both.” Weston conceives of framing as a kind of bridge that interprets and presents ideology in a way that responds to strategic imperatives. The examples elaborated above support this perspective, demonstrating how movement actors can use framing to reconcile contradictions between their ideology and their strategic imperatives. For example, when calling for a civil state became a strategic imperative for the MB, activists framed this as a new interpretation of longstanding ideology. When compromise with the regime became a strategic imperative for the PJD, activists framed this as a question of prioritization, where they work for certain goals now put others off for the future. As Weston points out, this leads to some complex and non-straightforward relationships between ideology and framing. As movement activists adjust their framing to fit strategic imperatives, they may construct frames that ignore, deviate from, or even contradict their ideology (2005).

Framing and hegemonic ideology

Weston theorizes a variety of potential relationships that can occur between ideology and framing. However, for our purposes, the one of particular interest is “framing that strategically appropriates hegemonic ideology.” In this model, movements draw not only from their own internal ideology to shape their framing, but from hegemonic ideologies as well. For example, in
the 1960s the U.S. civil rights movement appropriated America’s dominant liberal-democratic rhetoric to strengthen its own oppositional framing. The movement claimed that African Americans deserve civil rights because America’s constitutional value of universal equality applies to them too. Weston describes a variety of different processes that movements use when appropriating hegemonic ideology, including “exposure of contradiction” and “moral political cover.” The Civil Rights movement provides an ideal example of “exposure of contradiction”: a central premise of the movement’s framing was that a contradiction existed between the abstract code of American equality and the extent of its reach. The Tiananmen Square protests provide a good example of a movement using hegemonic ideology as a form of “moral political cover.”

According to Zuo and Benford (1995) Chinese activists in Tiananmen Square incorporated communist and nationalist ideology—key parts of the extant cultural stock that included ethical implications about authority and rule. This was intended not just to appeal to the masses, but to create as strong a moral shield as possible for this potentially dangerous opposition movement.

Weston theorizes that movements operating in democratic polities tend to appropriate hegemonic ideologies in order to expose contradictions, whereas those operating under authoritarian regimes tend to use it for moral political cover. However, my research suggests that this is not always the case: in electoral authoritarian monarchies, where ruling regimes use democratic rhetoric to legitimate their rule, exposure of contradiction can prove a valuable tool to opposition movements. Moreover, the threat of violent repression under authoritarian conditions makes moral political cover an important imperative as well. Opposition movements under electoral authoritarian monarchies may therefore appropriate hegemonic ideologies simultaneously to expose contradictions (and thus inspire popular support or mobilization) and to achieve moral political cover (and thus protect their own safety).
Appropriating Internal Hegemonic Ideologies

Nearly all of my MB interviewees appropriated Jordanian’s hegemonic political discourse, using exposure of contradiction to frame the movement’s reform agenda. MB interviewees emphasized that the Jordanian constitution currently stipulates that power of the government rests with the people—but that a contradiction exists between the abstract rhetoric of democracy and the way it is actually implemented. For example, an IAF Youth Sector leader explained, “the Brothers are calling to improve the constitution to make the people the source of power. Article 14 says the people are the source of power, but this is not practically true. Really the king is the source of power. So we want to change this, and it developed finally to the goal of amending four or five articles in the constitution to curtail the power of the king” (Personal Interview 3). This framing was repeated to me in very similar language from nearly every MB interviewee. For example, an IAF leader stated:

The Jordanian constitution states that Jordan is a parliamentary monarchy, but in real life it’s an absolute monarchy. We want to go back to the constitution. The constitution says the source of power is the people, but in real life, it’s the secret service police, so we want that to change, we want to go back to original constitution… It’s already present in the constitution; it doesn’t require legislation or legitimation (Personal Interview 7; reiterated in 1, 8).

Clearly, MB activists are using exposure of contradiction as a central framing tactic. In this frame, the current political reality contradicts the political liberalism of the regime’s own stated ideology, and the democratic reform which the MB demands would rectify this contradiction. In this framing, the MB merely wants to actualize Jordan’s already extant hegemonic ideology.

Interestingly, it became clear to me that MB activists use this exposure of contradiction framing, not just as a tool for mobilizing potential adherents, but also as a way to provide the movement with moral political cover. The claim that they were merely actuating what was already enshrined in law appeared intended to make them seem less threatening to the regime. This case thus offers an interesting extension of Weston’s theory of appropriating hegemonic
ideology, which associates exposure of contradiction with democratic polities, and moral political cover with authoritarian ones. This case suggests that exposure of contradiction can be a prominent framing tool for social movements operating under electoral authoritarian monarchies that legitimize their rule with democratic rhetoric, and that, in such a case, exposure of contradiction may be concomitant with moral political cover.

Unlike the MB, the PJD did not use the exposure of contradiction as a major framing tactic. As I discussed earlier, PJD members only reluctantly admitted that there could be challenges in implementing the provisions in the new constitution (Personal Interviews 15, 18, 19) and that the Prime Minister could not practically wield all of his constitutional authority (Personal Interview 12). This is likely because the PJD leads the current Moroccan government, and could therefore be faulted for any discrepancy between the newly created constitution and the operations of that government. The strategic imperative for the PJD is thus to minimize any contradictions, not expose them. This suggests that the simultaneous use of hegemonic ideologies to expose contradictions and provide moral political cover may be restricted to opposition movements outside of the power structure in electoral authoritarian monarchies.

**Appropriating External Hegemonic Ideologies**

Both MB and PJD activists also appropriated hegemonic ideologies external to Jordan and Morocco in order to bolster their various movement frames. Numerous interviewees told me that they wanted to actualize a constitutional, parliamentary monarchy similar to the United States, the United Kingdom, or Turkey. As one MB Youth Sector leader put it, “we want a better life, a more democratic life, a better constitution. We deserve a government like you have in the United States or in Britain, a good, democratic government” (Personal Interview 3; repeated in 9). The same interviewee later held up Turkey as an example of the kind of Islamically informed
democratic government the MB hopes to create: “Look at Erdogan. At the beginning everyone was upset at his methods, but then he was great. We do respect his experience, he’s an excellent model for us” (Personal Interview 3). In this framing, the MB is simply trying to achieve the kind of democratic governance extant in Western countries, or the Islamically informed democratic governance that has succeeded in Turkey. Similarly, a PJD leader blamed the challenges facing his movement to flaws in Morocco’s electoral system, which should aspire to work as well as systems in the U.S., the U.K., and Turkey:

The election system in Morocco doesn’t help in the reform process. In the U.S. there’s a Democratic Party, Republican Party and other smaller parties. It’s the same with the U.K. and Turkey. So in those countries one or two parties win the election. This can empower implementation of reform. If there were five or six parties with differing ideologies [as in Morocco], then it would be difficult (Personal Interview 14).

For the PJD as for the MB, the U.S., the U.K., and Turkey are held up as successful examples of the kind of system the movement is currently working to achieve. Interviewees consistently proffered this kind of framing, in spite of the fact that many also openly criticized the United States and other Western powers for its policies in the Middle East, from supporting Israel to bolstering authoritarian regimes.

A number of MB activists also appropriated the example of the U.S. political system to justify their “unity” frame. As discussed above, this frame refutes regime claims that divisions within the movement jeopardize its fundamental strength and unity. After explaining that there is no distinction between Palestinians and East-Bank Jordanians within the MB, one IAF leader said: “I mean look at American society, look at Madeleine Albright. She became nationalized as an American about ten or fifteen years before she became Secretary of State. Why does that work for America and not for us? It works for us too” (Personal Interview 7). In this frame, Jordanians of Palestinian origin are as Jordanian as their East-Bank peers, just as immigrants to the United States become nationalized and then can rise to high government office. The
American example here serves as a counter-frame to regime-proffered frames that maximize and leverage the Palestinian-East-Jordanian divide. Another interviewee similarly used the example of American and Iranian political parties to show that disputes within the MB are normal and not evidence of the movement’s weakness:

In the United States there is the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. Bush’s policies are different from Obama’s. However, they both have the same policy when it comes to some things, like the Middle East. In Iran as well, Ahmadinejad will leave office and Rafsanjani will come in, but Iran still has certain general interests. The same is true with the Islamic movement. We’re like any other political group. In non-pressure times there might be some disputes. This is normal (Personal Interview 5).

This interviewee frames the MB as similar to the ruling parties in the United States and Iran, which disagree on some issues but share overarching interests. Here, the MB is conceived as analogous not to a single ruling party in the United States or Iran but to the entire political spectrum in these countries. In this way, the interviewee frames the MB as encompassing Jordan’s entire national interest, including both its divisions and its over-arching unity.

The most surprising appropriation of an external ideology came when one MB interviewee framed his movement’s future growth as analogous to the growth of Zionism, whose rise to dominance was successfully planned and executed over a century.

RN: What will the Brotherhood’s future look like in the next 20 years?
Interviewee: It’s just like the way [Zionist Movement founder Theodore] Herzl and the Zionists made plans fifty or one hundred years ago. The Muslim Brotherhood founder Imam Hassan al Banna said “We start with an individual, then a family, then a country, then world dominance,” and that’s happening.

This interviewee compares Hassan al-Banna’s vision for the Muslim Brotherhood’s growth and dominance with Theodore Herzl’s vision for the growth and dominance of the Zionist movement. Remarkably, he actually appropriates a model for his movement’s future from the MB’s bitter rival, the Zionist movement. Another MB member and former senior leader used the analogy of Israel to explain how the MB could be religious and still lead a democratic government: “Israel, for example, is a democratic and civil country yet its culture is not religious” (Personal Interview 1). As these example illustrates, movement activists are willing to
frame their own movement as comparable to external groups to whom they are openly hostile as long as these groups embody traits (unity, stability, growth, democracy) that activists want to associate with their own movement. This applies not only to the much-criticized political parties in the United States, Iran, and the United Kingdom, but even the hated Zionists.

To be sure, this framing must be understood in the context of its intended audience: the American researcher and her future American readers. Activists from both movements seemed to be trying to make their movement frames more resonant for me by articulating them in terms of dominant discourses I would find familiar and comfortable. After making his U.S. analogy, the IAF Youth Sector leader made this explicit: “So what we are looking for is everyone’s rights, not something strange or unusual or very weird. This is our message for everyone, we are good guys, not bad guys” (Personal Interview 3). The former MB leader was even more explicit: “We as the Brotherhood, we believe in the same thing you believe in in the West, like minorities rights, justice, democracy, freedom, women’s rights and everything else that you believe in, we believe in. The only minor difference between us is Israel” (Personal Interview 1). This quote provides a radical example of the way interviewees sometimes adjusted their framing to resonate with an American audience composed of myself and my future readers; one can hardly imagine MB activists dismissing America’s stance as a “minor difference” to any Jordanian audience. This provides a window into the many complex layers of framing that occurred throughout these interviews. As activists described their strategic framing to various audiences, they were also engaged in a more immediate process of framing the movement to an American audience.
**Conclusion**

In 2011 a wave of regime-toppling movements swept across the Arab world. Jordan and Morocco were both deeply affected by the new protest cycle, experiencing mass mobilizations, offers of reform by the kings, and new governments. However the major political actors in each country have remained in place, including both kings and both legal Islamist opposition movements, the MB in Jordan and the PJD in Morocco. In this thesis, I have examined how these two longstanding movements, which for years had worked within the political system to demand reform, encountered this dramatic new cycle of regional and national mobilization. I have used the SMT concept of framing to examine this encounter from the perspective of movement actors themselves, tracing how MB and PJD actors responded to evolving opportunities by strategically formulating discourse and actions to construct meaning for adherents, opponents, and each other. This analysis has yielded both empirical and conceptual contributions to the existing literature.

**Empirical Findings**

Empirically, my account adds to the sparse literature on the Arab uprisings in Jordan and Morocco and the even sparser accounts of the roles and responses of the MB and PJD. My research shows that the Arab uprisings protest cycle initially opened up important new cultural opportunities for the MB and the PJD, but as uprisings elsewhere devolved into violence and counter-coups, these opportunities began to close. Both MB and PJD activists continue to frame the window of opportunity as open in an effort to keep it so. As regional events have shifted, movement actors have also used a variety of techniques to improve the resonance of their frames and distinguish their own credibility as claim makers from that of embattled Islamist movements elsewhere in the region.
The MB and PJD had plenty to work with in making such a distinction. Both movements departed significantly from the regional trend by continuing to call for reform rather than the overthrow of their respective regimes. Building off of the work of Douglas McAdam (1996), I argue that the MB and PJD’s choice of goals (reformist vs. revolutionary) and tactics (institutional vs. non-institutional) constitute a core signifying matrix that activists consciously deploy in order frame nature of the movement to both the regime and the public. As the events of 2011 unfolded, each movement made different decisions for where to locate itself within this signifying matrix of goals and tactics: the PJD pursued reform goals through institutional means, contesting elections and abstaining from street protests, while the MB pursued reform goals through non-institutional means, participating in street protests and boycotting elections. The context of electoral authoritarian monarchy significantly impacted MB and PJD decisions on both goals and tactics. For example, the heightened risk of repression and lost privileges for a legal organized movement in a partially liberalized authoritarian system incentivized them to signal a low level of threat by maintaining reformist goals. Specific strategies of regime legitimation also influenced their choices. For example, the Jordanian king’s “divide and rule” strategy vis-à-vis East-Bank and Palestinian Jordanians incentivized the MB to craft a “cooperation frame” and insist that it merely participates in, but never leads, protests. To be sure, this characterization is not intended to offer a purely institutionalist explanation for activists’ strategic choices or to negate the role of individual agency. Rather, I argue that the conditions of electoral authoritarian monarchy create a predictable set of political, social, and institutional incentives for movement actors.

Indeed, within this framework of incentives, individual movement actors and coalitions make different evaluations of the relative benefits of various framing approaches, and the
ultimate decisions of the leadership may be personality or context dependent. I found that core movement decisions over signifying goals and tactics were highly contested across both cases. The MB experienced internal framing disputes over whether relative opportunity structures favored reformist or revolutionary goals and institutionalized or non-institutionalized means. By contrast, the PJD unanimously accepted reform goals and debated only tactics. Both movements experienced internal disputes over whether to extend their framing and “bridge” it with the framing of other opposition groups, with significant generational divides on this question. Framing disputes were clearly shaped by the context of an electoral authoritarian monarchy, often centering on the tension between the need to simultaneously appease the king and appeal to the public. Specific regime counter-frames, such as the Jordanian regime’s framing of a damaging “split” with Zamzam, also impacted movement responses to internal divides.

These results indicate that MB and PJD members engage in a dynamic framing process that responds strategically to changing events and circumstances. However, I found that activists themselves put a normative value on constancy and were reluctant to admit to any changes in their movements’ goals and ideas since 2011. However, some activists distinguished between movement ideology, which had remained constant, and framing, which had strategically shifted since 2011. For example, MB activists described a shift in movement discourse to focus on corruption and its economic effects because this has greater centrality to Jordanians than discourse on democratic reform. One MB member also admitted to a shift in the interpretation ideology to include the idea of a “civil state.” PJD activists described how, since leading the government, they have toned down oppositional framing on certain issues of importance to the monarchy like the state-sponsored music festival Mawazin.
The need to maintain a constant ideology while adjusting framing to changing strategic imperatives creates tensions for both the MB and PJD. Each movement also has a complex relationship with ideologies external to the movement. MB activists deploy frames that appropriate hegemonic ideologies and expose the contradictions within them, claiming that they merely want to actualize the regime’s own stated ideology of political liberalism. This is intended both to mobilize adherents and to give the movement moral political cover. By contrast, the PJD seeks to minimize rather than expose such contradictions due to its role within the ruling coalition it. However, both MB and PJD activists appropriate hegemonic ideologies external to Jordan and Morocco, framing their own aspirations as comparable to groups in the U.S., U.K., Turkey, and even Israel. This represented an attempt to make movement frames more resonant for a Western audience by articulating them in terms of dominant discourses an American researcher and her readers would find familiar.

**Conceptual Findings**

This thesis also offers conceptual contributions to the literature. Chief among them is my attempt to extend the often democracy-centric theory of framing in SMT by adapting it to social movements operating in the context electoral authoritarian monarchies. My analysis indicates that McAdam’s basic theorization of the signifying role of movement goals and tactics generally applies in this context. However, risks, priorities, and incentives that inform movement actors’ framing decisions are significantly impacted by the structure of electoral authoritarian monarchy. Indeed, the shared context of electoral authoritarian monarchy helps explain some of the similarities between the MB and PJD’s framing choices, including the choice to maintain a reformist frame. To be sure, the macro-structural level is not in itself determinative; national
political contexts, strategies of regime legitimation, and the movements’ own internal structural differences also influence movement framing decisions.

Nevertheless, my analysis suggests a number of ways in which movement framing in an electoral authoritarian monarchy may tend to differ systematically from movement framing in a democratic context. First, under a democratic regime, SMT predicts that the combination of reform goals and non-institutionalized tactics will generally prove most successful. However, my research raises serious doubts about whether this relationship holds in electoral authoritarian monarchies. For a movement that has been given special legal status in an otherwise repressive political environment, non-institutionalized tactics pose a heightened risk of repression or loss of privileges. When such a movement chooses to pursue non-institutionalized tactics, like the MB did, it may therefore tend to shy away from tactics that would appear truly threatening to the king, like the Dakhiliya protest that was quickly shut down. Non-institutionalized activities in this context tend to serve more as spectacles that evoke the possibility of threat rather than actually posing a threat. Moreover, regime control over the media makes it harder for such movements to frame their demands as moderate and thus generate popular support. Thus, the framing of a credible threat is lost on the monarch, while the framing of moderate trustworthiness is lost on the public: The effective balance theorists identify remains elusive.

On the other hand, my research does not suggest that pursuing reform goals through institutionalized means works especially well in electoral authoritarian monarchies. The PJD benefited enormously from a credible radical flank in the February 20th Movement bolstered by the initial success of the broader Arab uprisings protest cycle. This allowed the PJD to benefit from the leverage of disruptive action without perpetrating it personally. Once that flank had receded, the success of an institutionalized movement like the PJD hinges on its ability to
mobilize sufficient institutional allies, including government ministers, political parties, and members of parliament. This is arguably an unusually difficult task in an electoral authoritarian monarchy. As my PJD informants expressed, the system is open enough that the movement must placate coalition partners and appeal to voters, but authoritarian enough that it must also appease the king and undermine regime elements that are against reform. Success for such a movement rests on the knife’s edge: on the one hand it must not appear coopted (and lose public support) and on the other it must not appear threatening (and lose regime support). Thus in the end, there is no easy option for a reformist movement facing the institutional constraints of an electoral authoritarian monarchy. Reform goals through institutionalized merely represents the best of the bad options.

Beyond the question of application to electoral authoritarian monarchy, my analysis extends the theory of framing in a number of other ways. First, it reinforces the importance of looking beyond discourse, the typical object of studies on framing, and examining how movement actors use actions and tactics as a crucial part of their signifying work. Second, my analysis suggests that the traditional methodological separation between opportunity structures and framing in the study of social movements is artificial and limiting. Important new insights can be gained by studying these two concepts in tandem and examining how they recursively impact one another. For example, The concept of “cultural opportunity” can help explain the link between master frames and protest cycles: the emergence of an innovative master frame sparks related protest in part by changing the cultural opportunity structures in places far removed geographically from the initiating movement. Moreover, the availability of opportunity structures is subjective and thus open to interpretation and framing. Movement activists can sometimes impact the opening and closing of political opportunities simply by framing them as open or
closed. Moreover, internal frame disputes often center on the nature of opportunity. Disputes arise as movement actors justify different tactical approaches based on their framing of relative opportunity for different kinds of goals and tactics. Finally, this thesis supports the perspective of Benford and Snow on the fairly constant nature of ideology relative to a more volatile framing process. When periods of active ideological construction do occur, it is deeply difficult to separate the ideological change itself from the movement’s framing of this change. Movement actors who place a normative value on ideological constancy may portray ideological shifts as framing shifts or as new interpretations of existing ideology.


Interviews:
Personal interview 1, Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood member and former senior leader. Amman, Jordan. 16 May, 2013. Conducted in Arabic.

Personal interview 2, Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood member and Zamzam initiative leader. Amman, Jordan. 18 May, 2013. Conducted in Arabic.


Personal interview 5, Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood Islamic Youth Movement member. Amman, Jordan. 20 May, 2013. Conducted in Arabic.

Personal interview 6, Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood leader. Amman, Jordan. 21 May, 2013. Conducted in Arabic.

Personal interview 7, Islamic Action Front Leader. Amman, Jordan. 21 May, 2013. Conducted in English.

Personal interview 8, Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood member and editor at al-Sabil newspaper. Amman, Jordan. 23 May, 2013. Conducted in Arabic.

Personal interview 9, Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood Islamic Youth Movement member. Amman, Jordan. 25 May, 2013. Conducted in English.


Personal interview 18, Justice and Development Party Youth Sector member and Member of Parliament. Rabat, Morocco. 23 July, 2013. Conducted in Arabic.
