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THE SALAFI MOVEMENT IN JORDAN

Since the 1970s, the Salafi movement in Jordan has grown substantially. Today, Salafis are ubiquitous in every major city in the kingdom, and Salafi bookshops, lessons, and activities are common. The purpose of the movement is to institute religious behavior and practices that capture the purity of Islam, as understood by the *salaf* (early Companions of the Prophet). Salafis believe that because the *salaf* learned about Islam directly from the Prophet or those who knew him, they commanded a pure understanding of the religion. All decisions in life must therefore be based upon evidence from the Qurʾan and sunna, as recorded in authentic sayings (*hadiths*) by the *salaf*. In instances where particular actions or behaviors were not sanctioned by the original sources of Islam, they are rejected as “not Muslim.” Those who strictly adhere to this religious understanding are considered Salafis.¹

The structure of the Salafi movement in Jordan differs from that of many other social movements in the kingdom. Rather than operating through the more common formal, grass-roots organizations, Salafis mobilize through informal social networks based on a shared interpretation of Islam. Social relations and activities form the organizational grid and matrix of the movement, connecting like-minded Muslims through common religious experiences and personal relationships. This informal network serves as an institution and resource for fulfilling the movement’s functions and goals.

This structure stands in sharp contrast to that of the better-known Muslim Brotherhood, which dominates the literature on the Islamic movement in Jordan.² The Brotherhood is the most organized social movement in the kingdom and has formed a variety of formal organizations, including an array of grass-roots charitable and cultural organizations that provide the Brotherhood with a familiar public face. This high profile and level of organization have led to successful campaigns in the majority of professional associations and in electoral politics. Because of the organization’s success, the Muslim Brotherhood’s role (and that of the Islamic Action Front Party, the de facto political wing of the Brotherhood), in the new democracy has been examined in numerous studies. It has been used as a case study to explore the relationship between democracy and Islam and Islamic movements.³ In comparison, the Salafis have received little attention in Jordan or the broader Muslim world, despite the movement’s growing prominence in Muslim communities.⁴

Understanding the Salafi movement in Jordan is important, given its expanding presence and distinct identity. The Brotherhood may be more politically active, but

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Salafi leaders dominate the ulama of Jordan. They are the shaykhs of religious knowledge and attract the vast majority of students of Islamic learning in traditional lessons and study circles. The Salafi network, which links students of religious knowledge and prominent Muslim scholars in a system of religious propagation, is distinct from the Brotherhood and its organizations. This distinction is emphasized by Salafis themselves, who view the Brotherhood as a vehicle of political contestation that has little relevance to the development and understanding of Islamic thought. As a result, the Salafi movement utilizes separate institutions for collective action.

Through a variety of interactional settings, such as study groups, lessons in private homes, and other religious activities, the Salafis promote their particular view of Islam. Rather than engaging in these activities through the kinds of formal organizations favored by the Brotherhood and other social movements in Jordan, Salafis instead utilize the more fluid networks of personal ties. This article argues that the use of informal networks is a strategic choice informed by evaluations about the tactical efficacy of formal organizations. The growth of Salafi challenges to the regime has engendered responses that limit the use of formal organizations by members of the movement. As a result, Salafis turn to the social networks that characterize Middle Eastern societies. These networks fulfill the same functions as formal organizations, but are more effective in evading repression and limitation by the regime because of the fluidity and multiplicity of such informal institutions.

INFORMAL NETWORKS AND COLLECTIVE ACTION

According to social movement theory—in particular, its resource-mobilization variant—movements require resources and organization of some kind to mobilize sustained collective action.⁵ Though structural strains, relative deprivation, ideology, or the emergence of new political issues may engender grievances, resources and organization are necessary to channel these grievances into directed activism. Social movements are not irrational outbursts of spontaneous opposition; they are structured through mechanisms of mobilization that provide strategic resources for sustained collective action.

For many social movement theorists, the most important resource for mobilization is the formal social movement organization. Formal organization is viewed as an effective instrument for empowering collectivities because it decreases the cost of participation,⁶ facilitates the mobilization of aggrieved groups,⁷ and provides the necessary infrastructure to sustain collective action.⁸ William Gamson's seminal study of collective action, for example, concludes that formal, centralized, bureaucratic organizations are the most effective mechanism for realizing success for social movements because of a clear division of labor, efficient decision-making structures, and a high degree of "combat readiness."⁹ In contrast, he argues, other organizational patterns, such as decentralization, non-bureaucratic organization, or factionalism, are more likely to "doom" a group to failure.¹⁰ This view of formal organization has come to dominate social movement theory since the 1970s.

But formal organization is not the only pattern of organization available for movement mobilization, and a number of recent studies point to the use of informal social networks in collective action.¹¹ Stephen Buechler describes this pattern of organization

as a “social movement community,” composed of “informal networks of politicized participants who are active in promoting the goals of a social movement outside the boundaries of formal organization.”¹² In instances where overt protest and activism are absent, social movements often mobilize through social movement communities “with fluid boundaries, flexible leadership structures, and malleable divisions of labor.”¹³ This is particularly the case for many new social movements that reject the hierarchy and rigidity of formal organization. Instead, these movements mobilize through “networks of shared meaning,” which link individuals through a common understanding about how society should be organized and governed.¹⁴

The use of informal social networks in collective action is seen most often in less open political systems where overt protest and formal organizations risk harsh reprisals. Open and visible organizations represent public challenges to domination and are therefore targeted by political authorities and the state. Because formal organizations typically have a location, membership lists, and documents, they are vulnerable to repression. Under such circumstances, movements often mobilize through informal social networks, which are more impervious to state control because they embed collective action in everyday interactions.¹⁵ In his analysis of the 1989 “revolution” in Eastern Europe, Steven Pfaff finds that in “societies in which the state virtually eliminates an open public sphere and organization independent of regime control, informal ties are of critical importance. Tightly knit networks nurture collective identities and solidarity, provide informal organization and contacts, and supply information otherwise unavailable to individuals.”¹⁶ Similar patterns of organization were found in China among students and pro-democracy supporters. These activists used social networks, campus study groups, student unions, dormitory networks, and informal communications, such as protest notices, all of which facilitated protest.¹⁷

In the Middle East, informal networks are an indelible component of the social matrix and are frequently used in collective action. Tribes, patron–client ties, religion, norms of reciprocity, and *wasta* (connections) undergird the organizational structure of society and can be used to mobilize collectivities.¹⁸ Diane Singerman’s rich ethnographic study of Cairene urban quarters demonstrates how communities use social networks to perpetuate the family unit, obtain employment, acquire goods and services, and influence politics.¹⁹ These networks permeate civil society and the state and tie individuals together through a complex web of social relationships that sustain and support collectivities. Similarly, Asef Bayat shows how seemingly apolitical groups in Iran, such as squatters, the unemployed, and street vendors, use informal networks in survival strategies. Individuals from these groups share public space and develop “passive networks” that can be activated for collective action.²⁰ And Guilain Denoëux points to the potential volatility of informal networks and their role in urban unrest in the Middle East. Especially where formal organizations are limited, informal networks can be used for political purposes by social movements and communities.²¹

The Salafis’ use of such networks in Jordan thus represents an indigenous pattern of mobilization. As the rest of this article explains, the growth of violent Salafi groups in the kingdom has prompted the regime to limit the organizational activities of the movement. This, in turn, has led Salafis to reject formal organizations as ineffective, given the context of repression. Like other social movements operating

under conditions of limited freedom, the Salafis have turned to informal social networks that are more effective in promoting the Salafi message of religious change without severe state interference.

SALAFIS AND THE TREND TOWARD JIHAD

Although the precise date of the onset of the contemporary Salafi movement is unknown, most Salafis tie it to the wave of religiosity in Muslim countries that began in the late 1960s and early 1970s.²² The Salafi movement in Jordan began during the 1970s as the result of individuals being exposed to Salafi thought while studying abroad in Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria. At that point, it was common for students of religion to study outside the kingdom, because there were few religious scholars and centers of religious learning in Jordan. In particular, groups of Salafis traveled to Syria to study with Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Bani, a renowned Salafi shaykh who died in early October 1999, and over time the number of students traveling from Jordan increased. As interest in Salafi thought spread, a group of Salafis began to bring al-Bani to Jordan to give lessons, and the relationship strengthened. In 1979, during a brutal campaign by the Asad regime in Syria to crush the Islamic movement, al-Bani moved to Jordan.

Al-Bani's arrival on the Muslim scene in Jordan precipitated an explosion in Salafi activism. Because al-Bani was one of only a handful of well-known Muslim scholars in Jordan at the time, he became a natural focal point for young students seeking guidance in Islam, and the number of Salafis rapidly increased. The period after 1979 is considered the "second wave" in the movement because most of the young Salafis who joined at that time have now become leaders and scholars in the contemporary movement. Salafi lessons, sermons, and speeches increased, and the movement gathered large numbers of people, mostly because of al-Bani's reputation.²³ In his first lesson in Jordan, al-Bani gave an unadvertised lecture on the roof of a house. Though it was unannounced, the lesson drew 500 to 600 people, who filled the surrounding streets. Disconcerted by the large masses gathered around a single shaykh, the regime subsequently banned al-Bani from delivering public speeches.

As waves of fighters from the Afghan War returned after 1979, some Salafi groups emerged that adopted a more critical and militant posture vis-à-vis the political system and the regime. Many individuals who fought in the war not only gained military experience; they were also exposed to Salafi thought by Salafis involved in the fighting. They returned to Jordan with a more critical framework and understanding of Islamic legitimacy, which was coupled with military training. These Salafi "*jihadi* groups" formed militant, underground organizations designed to challenge the state through violence.

Jihadi thought among Salafis increased dramatically after the Gulf War in 1991 as a result of the Saudi regime's decision to allow non-Muslim foreign troops in the holy land. Disillusionment with Muslim regimes and frustration with the pace of political change resulted in the emergence of several militant groups in the early 1990s.²⁴ In 1994, a Salafi group known as "the Afghans" (because of their previous experience in the war in Afghanistan) was convicted of bombing cinemas and liquor stores. In addition to the bombings, the group had plotted to assassinate leading Jordanian

officials and peace negotiators and to bomb symbols of Western culture, such as night-clubs and video-rental stores.²⁵ In October 1996, members of another *jihadi* Salafi group, called Bay‘at al-Imam (Pledge of Allegiance to the Leader), were arrested and convicted of attempted sabotage and slander against the royal family. The group was led by Abu Muhammad al-Maqqisi (also known as Muhammad Tahir Muhammad), a leading proponent of the *jihadi* perspective. One tract by al-Maqqisi, which circulated underground in 1996, argues that Muslims are exempt from the laws of current regimes because contemporary rulers do not govern according to Islam and are therefore illegitimate. It calls for revolutionary struggle against the regime in an effort to create a true Muslim state. Al-Maqqisi’s publications have influenced other Salafi groups in the Arab world, including those responsible for the November 1995 bombing in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, which killed five Americans and two Indian nationals.²⁶ The most recent example of *jihadi* activism is the Reformation and Challenge Group, which was accused of a series of bombings and arsons in May 1998, including attacks on the American School in Amman, a traffic-police compound, and a car parked in front of the luxury Jerusalem International Hotel.²⁷

The issue of whether violent measures and jihad are permissible against incumbent regimes is the primary point of contention among Salafis and has fractured the movement not only in Jordan, but throughout the Muslim world. One Salafi informant described the division as follows:

In dealing with the system, the government, you have to describe it. There are two descriptions: it is either a Muslim leadership or non-Muslim. There is a sect of Salafis that believes that [even if] a Muslim leader is doing injustice, we have to tolerate this and try to resurrect the people, including the leader, by praying for change. There is another way of thinking among Salafis that describes the leader of the government differently. They say that the leader is a *kafir* (a person who becomes a Muslim and then is non-Muslim) to begin with because he adopted an ideology that is not in accordance with Islam, such as communism or liberalism. The first way is by peaceful means. The second is more violent and is called jihad. Because the leader is a *kafir*, he deserves to die; he deserves elimination. That is why there are two theories among Salafis, and this is the center of the argument between the two ways of thinking among Salafis.

The primary point of disagreement between these two groups is over *takfir*—declaring someone an unbeliever (*kāfir*).²⁸ At one end of the debate are those within the movement who argue that leaders are Muslims and not *kafirs* because there is no clear evidence that can directly prove apostasy. This group does not reject jihad as a legitimate tool of change; rather, it believes that the rules that condone the use of jihad against incumbent regimes in Muslim countries require narrow and absolute proof, something that is rarely available. From this perspective, it is impossible to know with certainty what is in a person’s heart; as a result, jihad against the regime is not permitted.²⁹ Instead, this reformist faction believes that religious change must come in stages, and that the current context necessitates *tarbiya* (education and cultivation to encourage proper Muslim practices).³⁰ Only when society properly applies Islam will jihad become a possible alternative for change. In addition, premature action could engender harsh reprisals by the regime, which would make even rudimentary *da‘wā* (religious propagation) difficult. Salim al-Hilali, a prominent Jordanian Salafi scholar, has argued that Muslims “should not say that the state is *kufir* [in a state of being *kafir*]

and change it with force. Otherwise the mosques would be closed, and scholars would be in prison. Change in Islam must be for the better.”³¹ Another Salafi shaykh has phrased the same perspective differently: “The hand cannot fight a fist of iron.” In essence, he argues, “if you cannot achieve your objective through jihad, then it is *haram* [forbidden according to Islam].”³²

This group endorses a tactic of grass-roots change that begins at the level of the individual and personal transformation, without directly challenging the system of power. The hope is that religious change will filter upward through individuals who will eventually create a more Muslim system. Violent tactics are viewed as counterproductive because the prospects of success are low and reprisals by the regime would prevent Salafis from promoting their religious message. Shaykh Muhammad al-Uthaymin of Saudi Arabia decries the use of unrest: “Let those who riot know that they only serve the enemies of Islam; the matter cannot be handled by uprising and excitement, but rather by wisdom.”³³ Mohammad Nasir al-Din al-Bani warns that “[t]he way to salvation is not, as some people imagine, to rise with arms against the rulers, and to conduct military coups. In addition to being “among contemporary *bid‘as* (heretical innovations),” such actions disregard texts of Islam, among which is the command to change ourselves. Furthermore, it is imperative to establish the basis upon which the building will stand.”³⁴ Ali Hasan al-Halabi, a former al-Bani student and one of the most respected Salafi scholars in the world, adds that “[a]nyone who examines the past and present of *Islam* would clearly see that extremism has brought for the [*umma*] disasters, bloodshed, eviction, and harm that cannot be known to the full extent except by Allah. It suffices in this regard to remember the turmoils of the [Kharijites] and the advocates of *takfir* from past to present.”³⁵

Education is viewed as a mechanism for creating change through the individual that will affect the heart and then broaden eventually to change society. Halabi supports this view of change:

[I]f the Muslims desire good, unity and establishment upon the Earth, then they should make their manners and behavior like that of the Salaf of this [*umma*] and begin by changing themselves. However, he who is unable to change even himself will not be able to change his family, not to mention changing the [*umma*].³⁶

The second faction within the Salafi movement is the *jihadi* group. This group focuses upon Ibn Taymiyya’s interpretation of jihad, which argues that even if a regime practices Muslim rituals, any failure to uphold Islamic law marks it as unbelieving and therefore subject to violence.³⁷ The *jihadi* Salafis argue that actions by rulers can be used as evidence in declaring them non-Muslims. Rulers who promote un-Islamic policies can be considered *kafir* regimes and are therefore subject to jihad. The ambiguity of this argument is that it is unclear where the threshold for jihad lies. Salafis themselves have difficulty living up to the pristine model of the Prophet, even while they try to follow his example, and any number of reasons could be used to declare a regime unbelieving. Such a declaration thus becomes a blanket weapon that can be used to oppose any regime through violent means. It is not that the *jihadis* disavow other reform measures, such as individual change, but they believe that all tactics should be pursued at once.

Many *jihadis* in Jordan imply that the Hashemites are unbelievers because they pursue policies derived from liberalism and support peace with Israel. In underground publications found in Jordan, the *jihadis* rarely named King Hussein or other Hashemites directly in their arguments, but the message is clear even when delivered in the abstract—any regime that does not pursue Islamic policies, as defined by *jihadi* Salafis themselves, is unbelieving and subject to violence. The assessment is based not on the ruler's beliefs, but on his actions.

At least in Jordan, the *jihadis* are financially strained, and their publications do not have the reach of those of the reformist faction. Most of the scholars from this group, who like to call themselves "independent" to emphasize their autonomy from governments such as Saudi Arabia, are from poor neighborhoods. Most are employed in non-religious occupations and pursue religious scholarship in their free time. There are few routes to publication and resources for those who espouse violent means, especially because the regime actively cracks down on this group. The result is that the *jihadi* faction must disseminate photocopied manuscripts secretly through informal networks.

Although non-violent reformists still dominate the Salafi movement, *jihadi* thought is becoming increasingly popular. This change is reflected in the growing number of *jihadi* publications that began to appear in Jordan during the 1990s. Pamphlets and religious tracts calling for the destruction of incumbent Arab regimes have become more common. During the period of research for this project, there were two sets of arrests of Salafis for distributing such literature.³⁸ Many of the younger Salafis I interviewed had either been members of an underground group at one point in time or had been arrested by the regime under suspicion of terrorism. The actual rate of participation in militant Salafi activities is extremely low and limited, but more individuals hold *jihadi* ideas, even if they do not act on them.³⁹ This has raised concerns among reformists who denounce the *jihadis* as non-Salafis. Muhammad Shaqra, for example, an imam at a mosque in Amman and a leader in the reformist faction, claimed that members of the Reform and Defiance Group are not Salafis. Such denunciations are becoming increasingly common.

The difficulty for the regime is that both the non-violent and *jihadi* Salafi factions use the same principles and textual references. As one *jihadi* Salafi argued, "The split is not in thought; it is in strategy." The importance of this foundational ambiguity from the point of view of the regime is that a fine line separates these two groups, and it is unclear at what point reformist Salafis might shift their perspective to a more radical stance. Even Salafis who on the surface appear quiescent and supportive of the regime privately discuss its lack of legitimacy and the need for eventual change. The difference is that while *jihadi* groups seek immediate change, the reformist faction believes that circumstances are not right for a direct challenge and that they must bide their time before acting. It is not that all Salafis seek an eventual violent overthrow. On the contrary: most prefer some sort of peaceful change. For most Salafis, premature action that challenges the regime in any direct or open way before circumstances are right would jeopardize the movement. What constitutes the necessary circumstances for an immediate challenge is unclear, but the framework that would underlie such a challenge is being constructed.

Another dilemma for the regime is that regardless of tactical differences, most members of both factions in Jordan decline to work through the current system. Some, such as Muhammad Abu Shaqra, do work with the regime and through state institutions, but these are exceptions. Most Salafis believe that, as one Salafi put it, “If you enter into this game, into this structure, you become a part of it. You cannot change it. The change comes from outside.” This view of political participation informs Salafi critiques of the politically active Muslim Brotherhood. As ‘Ali Hasan Halabi argues,

The senators and members of Parliament of the Muslim Brotherhood, when they entered Parliament or the Ministries, they became part of the system. And they think they are going to be able to force change and affect [the system], but in reality it is they who are affected, changed, and weakened.⁴⁰

Another Salafi complained that “their nature, their very thought, is pragmatic.” He argued that this compromise with the regime means that the Brotherhood will never effect real Islamic change in Jordan because the movement has been “captured by the system.” The Salafis believe that in the race for power, the Muslim Brotherhood has abrogated some of its ideological constants. From this perspective, pragmatism has superseded ideology and belief. In contrast, Salafis, especially those sympathetic to the *jihadi* perspective, view themselves in “total contradiction with the system.”

ORGANIZATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Since democratization began in 1989, more organizational opportunities have become available to social movements in the kingdom, including Islamists. Although the growth rate of charitable organizations remained steady during the martial law and post-democratization periods, the number of cultural societies has grown substantially since 1989, and a number of movements have mobilized through this type of organization. The Muslim Brotherhood, for its part, has taken advantage of new organizational opportunities by expanding its presence through a variety of civil society organizations in the fields of culture and charity. The Salafis, however, reject formal organizations as a mechanism of mobilization.

This rejection is primarily due to two factors. First, al-Bani’s negative experience with formal organizations in Syria before he emigrated to Jordan has colored perceptions among Salafis of organizational efficacy. The Asad regime’s crackdown on visible manifestations of the Islamic movement in 1979 led al-Bani to issue a fatwa (religious ruling) when he first arrived in Jordan stating that Muslim activism through organizations is forbidden. He believed that organizations prompted harsh reprisals from state authorities and therefore stunted the spread of the Islamic message. He instead preferred Islamic work through the traditional structure of lessons, the mosque, and meetings in homes. Although certain Islamic textual readings support this ruling, most Salafis argue that al-Bani’s decision was heavily influenced by his own experience. Further evidence of the experiential basis of this ruling is that when political circumstances changed in Jordan after democratization in 1989, al-Bani issued a second fatwa stating that organizational work is allowed. Despite this reversal, however, the first fatwa has had a lasting effect, and the vast majority of Salafis oppose work through formal organizations.⁴¹

Second, the brief experience of Salafi organizing in Jordan has led even proponents of formal Salafi organizations to view them as ineffective. In the mid-1980s, a group of Salafis tried to establish an organization called the Sunna Society but failed to garner enough support. Al-Bani's fatwa and the continued authoritarian practices of the regime convinced most Salafis that formal organizations were unwise. In 1993, however, this same group succeeded in forming the Qur^ʿan and Sunna Society, a cultural non-governmental organization (NGO) devoted to promoting Salafi thought through lectures, small publications, and seminars. There are general lessons in Salafi doctrine as well as more specialized training in sayings of the Prophet, law, and other Islamic sciences. Because of the specialized nature of these activities, members must have an expertise in the Qur^ʿan and sunna and be considered strong Salafi followers. Material resources are limited, and the society is located in a stark building in a less affluent section of East Amman. Members believe that the current deprived condition of Muslim societies is a result of deviations from the fundamentals of Islam, and that by teaching people about the Salafi understanding of Islam they are providing the foundations for a better society. There are only about fifty members, and the NGO is limited, but it provides a glimpse into Salafi experiences in organizing and points to some of the factors underlying the negative assessment of formal organization.

In contrast to the Muslim Brotherhood, which has experienced little state opposition in forming organizations,⁴² the Qur^ʿan and Sunna Society applied for a permit several times prior to the 1989 political liberalization measures but was rejected. Even after 1989, and despite new political openings, it took four years before the Ministry of Culture would issue a license. During this four-year period, the Jordanian Intelligence Directorate (*mukhābarāt*) harassed this group of Salafis and threatened to affect their employment opportunities, passport status, and well-being. Eventually, the organization was formed, but it has continued to encounter difficulties and repression.

There are several limitations to this organized work. First, although the internal law states that the society may form branches, it has thus far been prevented from branching beyond its current location, despite numerous offers of assistance from individuals in other neighborhoods in Amman. The members submitted multiple proposals to open ten additional centers, but they have been rejected systematically by the Ministry of Culture. This is in sharp contrast to the Muslim Brotherhood's Society for the Preservation of the Qur^ʿan, which engages in similar activities and has been permitted extensive expansion. Because the Qur^ʿan and Sunna Society cannot open branches, its organizational reach is limited.

Second, activities at the society clash with the administrative logic of the state bureaucracy, which limits civil society activities to a particular set of non-political functions. Like other Islamic groups, Salafis argue that Islam is at once political, economic, cultural, social, and religious. Religion serves as a framework that should regulate and guide behavior and action in all aspects of social existence. Because the Salafis believe in a unified Islamic discourse, many of the seminars and lessons blur the line between politics and culture. For example, a Salafi shaykh who is an expert on the Egyptian ideologue Sayyid Qutb presented a lecture that mixed religious, cultural, and political issues. In the lecture, he used Sayyid Qutb's arguments and interpretations as a framework for understanding contemporary political issues such as the crisis in Bosnia, the role of the United Nations, the hegemony of the United States,

the Taliban movement in Afghanistan, and the Palestinian struggle. The lecture obviously was not simply cultural. It was imbued with political meaning. The following day, agents of the state intelligence service came to the society and accused members of attempting to organize a political movement. One of the members was arrested, and the society was searched. Not only did the state view the lesson as provocative and political, but the shaykh who gave it had led an underground jihad group in 1979, thus furthering regime suspicion.

Finally, the regime targets this Salafi organization for repression and harassment. After the organization's permit was issued in 1993, the *mukhābārāt* attempted to intimidate members and potential recruits, and the harassment continued. As a result, many of the members quit the organization, and potential recruits were prevented from joining. The state also used its prerogative to interfere with the composition of the membership and leadership.⁴³ In particular, the state prevented several volunteers from participating in the society because of their radical ideology and forced one member of the executive committee to remove himself from a position of leadership. Of the ten members I met (out of a total of fifty), every one had been arrested or detained by the *mukhābārāt*, prior to and following registration, and during my period of research, all three of my primary informants from the society were brought in by the *mukhābārāt*. This kind of harassment is a constant burden for members. It also has a residual effect—the organization is unable to encourage new members because of fear. People are suspicious when the *mukhābārāt* interfere and would rather not place themselves in a position in which they can become targets. The result is that people who might have joined stay away because of repression. For a fledgling organization such as the Qur'an and Sunna Society, this is devastating.

Members of the society believe that the regime reacts this way because it fears that Salafis will educate people about “proper” Islam and provide them with a framework for critiquing the current political system. The president of the society summarized the members' opposition to the current system:

The separation between religion and government or social practice is really not credible. It is not right. There are things like liberalism which the government applies and would like to continue applying, but we have a different ideology. Islam as an ideology is different.

Another member of the society added, “If people understand Islam and apply it, then they would ask the governors about what they did and why they did it.” In other words, the regime would have to demonstrate its Muslim legitimacy in the face of a Salafi critique. Concerns within the regime about such critiques are further complicated by the fact that it is difficult to determine whether these organizations might be used by the *jihadi* faction at some point.

This harassment and the inability of the movement to sponsor its religious discourse effectively through formal organizations is recognized by the Salafis themselves. Members of this society claim that the organization is really only a superficial dimension of their work, and that the real action is “behind the scenes.” Many expressed disillusionment about the prospects for effecting change through the society. They feel betrayed by the lure of organizational opportunities, which seem to have stunted, rather than supported, their objectives. The members echo ʿAli Hasan al-Halabi's argument that

We have to go back to the teachings of the Qur^ʿan and sunna and not be affected by the materialistic world we live in. And we should not be restricted to a center or a society. If we want something specific and it does not agree with what leaders want, they would close it and finish off the organization. This is what we are trying to avoid.

He believes that such organizations are weak and ineffective:

They [other Islamic groups] are organized. They have societies and centers. But if they print a book or hold a lecture, they have only a few people who attend. But us Salafis, we do not have an organization or a center, but we have people who ask for the knowledge, people who agree on one thought. Much more than them. Many times these societies and organizations ask us to participate, and if they were more effective, they would not ask us to do so.⁴⁴

Salafis also believe that operating through a formal organization means surrendering to control by the regime and forfeiting their religious integrity. The ideological imperative that drives the Salafi movement makes it difficult for Salafis to give up the dogmatism of their beliefs for pragmatic reasons, and there is a general sense among Salafis that by participating in formal organizations, they are abandoning their ideological and religious integrity. One Salafi scholar made this observation: “[w]hat we have seen through formal organizations is that these institutions give up some Islamic constancies. Organized work is frightening because it often means you give up some principles.”⁴⁵

INFORMAL NETWORKS AND SALAFI ACTIVISM

Salafis’ evaluations of the tactical efficacy of formal organization have led them to rely on the informal networks that have characterized the transmission of Islamic knowledge through centuries of practice. Jonathan Berkey’s study of Islamic education in medieval Cairo captures many of the dynamics of the Salafi network:

Islamic education took place in a vibrant world of fluid categories in which social, cultural, and institutional barriers became indistinct. What will emerge is less a formal system than a dynamics network, loose but comprehensive in its inclusion of disparate social groups, and extraordinarily effective, not just in transmitting knowledge, but also in forging a common Muslim cultural identity.⁴⁶

In transmitting the Salafi understanding of Islam, members of the Salafi movement mobilize through personal, face-to-face interactions in which they communicate, recruit, educate, and facilitate the movement’s goal of transforming society through religious education. This network structure provides the Salafis with institutional resources that are more difficult to repress because of their fluidity and informal nature. This provides the movement with an alternative to formal organizations and facilitates mobilization.

Recruitment and Network Growth

The initiatory Salafi network in Jordan began with a small group of friends who traveled to Syria to sit with Mohammad Nasir al-Din al-Bani during the late 1960s. Muhammad Salik is considered to have been the first Salafi in Jordan by many in the

movement and began following al-Bani after he learned about Salafi thought while in Lebanon. Others involved in the early period of the movement include Muhammad Abu Shaqra, Hamdi Murad, and Yusuf Barqawi. Most of the early Salafis were from Hasmimi in the Zarqa area near Amman, which is why the movement is so strong in Zarqa today. These individuals promoted Salafi thought and gave lessons to members of the “second Salafi wave,” which includes Salafi figures such as Ali Halabi, Salim Hilali, Umar Abu Qattadeh, Hasan Abu Haniya, and Wafiq Nadif. This latter group spent more time with al-Bani once he emigrated to Jordan in the late 1970s. At the time, the second-wave Salafis were about 16 years old. In 1985, Mashhur Hasan Salman was brought to al-Bani by this younger group and quit the Muslim Brotherhood to devote his time to Salafi thought. He is currently considered one of the most knowledgeable Salafi scholars in Jordan. Each of these scholars has his own following and has adopted a slightly different Salafi path, though they are joined by the fundamentals of Salafi thought.

Virtually every Salafi interviewed described the involvement of friends and colleagues in their “conversion” to the Salafi perspective, a common pattern of social-movement recruiting.⁴⁷ The process of recruitment is quite simple and occurs through discussions about Islam. Pious Muslims typically socialize in friendship circles where Islam plays an important role in participants’ lives. In such circles, religion is a common topic of everyday conversations, whether sitting and sipping tea or visiting for dinner. Through those everyday interactions, Salafis expose friends to Salafi thought. In many cases, religious issues and interpretations of Islam are discussed, and Salafis use these opportunities to explain their beliefs to others. One of the most important ways in which Salafis promote the “conversion” of friends is by encouraging them to attend lessons by Salafi scholars. The conversion is not an unconditional acceptance of new ideas; there is discussion, debate, and dialogue. The process of recruitment takes place over a protracted period and through multiple interactions until the individual is convinced that the Salafi perspective represents the straight path of Islam and seeks more knowledge about Salafi thought.

In most instances, entire groups of friends eventually become Salafis, most likely because they are exposed to the same lessons, discussions, and thoughts. In various Salafi groups or clusters, participants indicated that they were friends with one another before they became Salafis. Groups grow over time as individuals help convert more friends to the Salafi cause. This overlays friendship and religious networks, creating a high sense of group solidarity within the Salafi movement. The movement includes many of these friendship–religious clusters, which are incorporated into the broader Salafi movement through lessons and other activities. These groups constitute cells of participants with high degrees of intra-group trust.

The majority of new recruits and converts come from other Islamic-movement groups. Muslims from a variety of Islamic groups interact in mosques, lessons, and religious gatherings. Most share general religious goals and objectives, such as obtaining religious knowledge and promoting a more Muslim society, and are linked through friendship networks. As a result of this religiosity and these connections, there is a level of predisposition toward Salafi thought that does not exist for individuals outside the broad Islamic movement. For non-Islamists, the leap to dogmatism and the puritanical approach of the Salafis is simply too great. Members of the Islamic movement,

in contrast, already possess a certain degree of receptivity to the Salafi message because of their religiosity.

Two Islamic groups serve as the primary pools of recruiting. The first is Jama'at Tabligh (the Islamic Missionary Society).⁴⁸ Tabligh is a religious movement predicated upon calling (*da'wā*) people to Islam. Members of the movement travel throughout the country and enjoin friends and strangers alike to practice Islam. It is purely a missionary movement and eschews involvement in politics and social-change issues. In Jordan, members of Tabligh who begin to articulate a more socially conscious message are ostracized by other members and driven from the group. These more socially conscious members are the potential recruits of the Salafi movement. Some Salafis remain in Tabligh and attempt to use its organizational structure to promote Salafi thought, but these individuals are usually found out and expelled before they can affect the direction of the movement.⁴⁹

The second major recruiting pool is the Muslim Brotherhood. Several prominent scholars, such as Muhammad Rafat and Mashhur Hasan Salman, have left the Brotherhood to pursue Salafi thought. Each time a scholar leaves the Brotherhood, he typically brings many of his followers with him. Rafat studied with al-Bani, and many members of the Muslim Brotherhood who studied under Shaykh Rafat were influenced by Salafi thought. Some of these individuals have Salafi tendencies but chose to remain in the Muslim Brotherhood to pursue Brotherhood goals rather than Salafi objectives. These Salafi-leaning Muslim Brothers include well-known hard-liners such as Hammam Said, Muhammad Abu Faris, Ahmad Nawfal, and Abd Allah Azzam.

Network Structure

Like other social movements predicated on informality, the structure of the Salafi network is decentralized and segmented.⁵⁰ Decentralization reflects the fact that no hierarchical leadership guides or regulates the movement. There are numerous Salafi scholars with various followings, and this creates overlapping clusters and a high degree of fluidity. The movement is also segmented by differences over tactics and religious interpretation. Groups of scholars can be identified who disagree on particular points of doctrine and the best tactical means for achieving Salafi goals. The single most important disagreement is between the reformists and the *jihadi* groups, discussed earlier in the article, and this division has become heated as proponents of each side denounce the other faction as unknowledgeable.⁵¹ Despite these divisions and the decentralized nature of the movement, a certain locality does result from the importance of spatial proximity for face-to-face interactions.

Although Salafis argue that there is no hierarchy in the movement, there is a loose and informal ranking. This ranking is based on the reputation of various scholars, as recognized by the Salafi community and determined by levels of knowledge. Until his recent death, al-Bani was at the top of this informal ranking. He was considered the greatest Salafi scholar in Jordan, and his work in the science of the sayings of the Prophet is renowned throughout the Muslim world. The next level consists of al-Bani's best students. These include Halabi, Hilali, Shaqra, and Salman. Because al-Bani was prevented from giving lessons or making public appearances, this tier of scholars was more active in promoting Salafi thought in Jordan (though al-Bani published

prolifically). These shaykhs are considered “tied to Saudi” because they receive Saudi financial support through contributions for proselytizing and publishing and are unwilling to articulate a challenging discourse that would threaten the Saudi regime.⁵² Beneath this second tier of scholars are less well-known Salafi shaykhs who either work without giving lessons or enjoy small followings.⁵³ All of these scholars are tied to less erudite Salafis, who are seeking knowledge about Salafi thought through the student–teacher relationship (that is, through lessons).

In the Salafi movement, the proliferation of scholars means that there is no single leadership elite. There is no centralized figure who determines the overall direction or objectives of the movement. No single person or group of individuals can make binding decisions on behalf of the movement. Even al-Bani did not dictate the direction or tactics of the movement. The Salafi movement is instead led by multiple leaders with different, but overlapping, followings of students and knowledge-seekers. These scholars may be able to influence a cluster of individuals who are tied to particular shaykhs, but there is no regulatory power over the rest of the network. This makes state repression of the network difficult, because there is no central figure or institution that can be targeted to weaken the movement. If one group or leader is repressed, the network itself continues to function.

Although students may spend more time with one shaykh than others, they attend lessons with more than one scholar. This is partially the result of specialization among Salafi scholars. Each aspect of the Islamic sciences constitutes a discipline of study, and expertise requires concentrated effort and focus. Most Salafi scholars are educated in various aspects of the Islamic sciences, but they usually specialize in a particular area of application, such as sayings of the Prophet. If Salafi students want exposure to a comprehensive Salafi ideology, they must sit with multiple shaykhs. Patterns of attendance also depend on a student’s personal field of interest. Students seek out specialists in their preferred area of interest, including non-Salafi shaykhs if they are considered experts in the relevant field.

This student–teacher relationship is the most important social tie in the Salafi community because it connects Salafi groups to one another and perpetuates the movement. Because the Salafi movement is based on the sponsorship of Salafi thought through education, student–teacher relationships represent the primary conduit for the movement’s message. This relationship is a nexus that links network clusters together. Salafi groups that might otherwise remain isolated from one another are connected through interactions at lessons and shared student–teacher experiences. The student–teacher relationship is also an engine for network expansion. As more students are incorporated into lessons, meetings, and informal interactions, they learn about the Salafi belief system through informed and knowledgeable Salafi scholars, and the network grows. The scholars are important nodes in the network because they connect individual Salafis through a common ideological orientation.

The ideological system that fosters these connections and a certain level of unity in the Salafi network, however, is also the principal cause of segmentation and division. Although a certain level of “cognitive closure” exists, whereby core beliefs are no longer subject to questioning,⁵⁴ there are different views that create internal division. Personal rivalries, differences in interpretation, and tactical disagreements have engendered divisions within the movement. These disagreements often obtain personal dimensions because of the importance of reputation in the Salafi community.

Attacks against a particular perspective are frequently interpreted as threats to a scholar's sense of self. In addition, scholars are building their own base of students through the Salafi network, and there is a certain modicum of competition. Each scholar claims that he espouses the true understanding of the *salaf* (and thus the straight path) and argues that those who disagree are misguided, even though they share many of the same Salafi understandings. Because this stance entails that there can only be one correct understanding of Islam, it in effect delegitimizes other Salafi interpretations and results in divisions among scholars and different clusters of students.

In addition to the decentralized and segmented dimensions of the Salafi network, there is also a certain degree of spatial locality to the movement. The reliance on face-to-face interactions through informal networks requires that participants be able to gather and meet. To attend lessons, for example, scholars must be physically accessible. Long distances can serve as a discouraging impediment to students who want to sit with knowledgeable Salafi shaykhs. Although individuals can learn about Salafi thought through books, the sheer volume of published material on Salafi doctrine requires some measure of guidance from scholars and teachers. Learning about Salafi thought through books is certainly one of the catalysts that encourages individuals to seek out like-minded Muslims, but it is a difficult and rare trajectory of joining. Recruiting more often occurs through social interactions, which require a person's physical presence. Geographical proximity matters.

As a result, the movement is located in the cities and centers where Salafi scholars live. The movement began in the Zarqa area, and the city of Zarqa represents the strongest center of Salafi activism. There are numerous scholars, students, bookshops, and lessons in Zarqa, and it constitutes the geographical center of the movement. There are also numerous scholars in Amman, and Salafis are active there, as well. There are some Salafis in the Salt area because of extended student–teacher linkages, but they are not scholars in the movement as yet. The absence of scholars in Salt means that there is little opportunity for building a strong Salafi presence in the area. It does not preclude the possibility, however, and the existence of even one strong Salafi scholar could facilitate the emergence of a Salafi group in Salt.

This locality is not inevitable, and the student–teacher relationship can serve as a vehicle for network expansion by transcending geographical barriers. Students often bring their teachers to new neighborhoods, quarters, and cities in order to promote Salafi thought. Because some students do travel to sit with a shaykh, they serve as connections to other locations. In at least a few observed instances, students invited teachers to give lessons in their home town or neighborhood. While giving lessons, a scholar may encourage new followers, thus extending the informal network. The student–teacher relationship serves as a mechanism for transcending the limitations of physical distance by creating “geographical peel-off.”⁵⁵

Interactional Contexts and Publications

In disseminating Salafi beliefs, the movement uses several mechanisms that are rooted in informal networks. These include informal interactions, mosque-related activities, seminars, conferences, and publications. In these contexts, participants define what it means to be a Salafi and propagate Salafi thought.

Initially, the primary mechanism of Salafi activism was the religious lesson, or *dars*, in mosques. The mosque represents a context of religiosity, and individuals gathered in mosques or who attend lessons are predisposed to religious learning. Without announcing themselves as Salafis, Salafi shaykhs often give lessons in mosques about various religious rituals and issues from a Salafi perspective. Although some members of the audience may already recognize the teacher as a Salafi, this is not always the case, and in many instances, scholars may purposely obfuscate their identity to avoid discouraging members of other Islamic groups from attending the lesson. Lessons not only serve as an opportunity to propagate the Salafi message to an interested audience; they can also inspire individuals to seek more information about Salafi thought, thus pulling them further into the Salafi network.

The pre-eminence of lessons in mosques has dissipated since the peace process with Israel, at which point the regime tightened its control of the mosque and limited who could use its space because of widespread Muslim opposition to the peace treaty.⁵⁶ Legally, a shaykh must receive government permission to give lessons in the mosques. So long as the shaykh does not challenge state policy or the regime, permission is obtainable. But because Salafis vehemently oppose reconciliation with Israel, Salafi lessons in the mosques have become less prevalent.

Lessons have instead moved into private homes, where they are less vulnerable to the surveillance and control of state officials. These lessons are more difficult for the regime to control, because they are advertised within the Salafi community and avoid formal government monitoring mechanisms. Advertising occurs by word of mouth, and the content of the lessons is Islamic education—ostensibly, not a direct threat to state power. The state can still use informants, but private homes are outside state-controlled religious space. As a result, Salafis enjoy more latitude in propagating the Salafi message in such forums. These lessons are popular and are often attended by as many as 150 people, depending on the teacher. The lessons address a number of religious issues from a Salafi perspective, including rituals, sayings of the Prophet, and *da'wa*. Lesson sponsors try to recruit young men in the hope of indoctrinating the next generation of Muslim leaders.

Although most of these lessons are ostensibly non-political, such gatherings provide an opportunity to discuss politics and issues related to state power and the legitimacy of the regime. Prior to one lesson, for example, the speaker began by explaining the concept of jihad to the young audience and criticized King Hussein for “fighting against the Islamic movements.” He also critiqued the current political system as un-Muslim and argued that jihad is more than simply fighting—it means liberating human beings from constrained circumstances. A lecture on proselytizing thus began with political tones and represented an opportunity to construct and disseminate a critique of the system within an educational context. For impressionable youth, this kind of presentation can have a lasting impact, because it is articulated by someone who is considered a respected scholar in the religious community. After the lesson ended, the adults who organized the lesson remained and discussed other political issues in more depth. Although this informal lesson was not used explicitly to organize opposition to the regime, it did act as a forum in which an oppositional discourse was constructed and presented without direct government surveillance. This provides a relatively safe institution for those with critical postures vis-à-vis the political system,

especially *jihadi* Salafis. Other informal contexts are more akin to study circles, in which groups of friends meet to discuss particular books or religious issues.

There are also Salafi conferences and seminars, though these are rare in Jordan. More often, these conferences are held in other countries and are sponsored by Salafi organizations outside the kingdom. Salafis from Jordan, especially those tied to Saudi Arabia, attend these conferences and seminars. Such events serve as opportunities for networking with Salafis from other countries and extend the informal network to the international level.

Despite the absence of Salafi-based conferences in Jordan, there are Islamic seminars and meetings sponsored by Muslim NGOs that are attended by Salafis. During these seminars, Salafis have an opportunity to present their views and arguments to the broader Islamic movement community through lectures, debates, and dialogue. These seminars are arenas for networking with other Islamic groups. NGO-sponsored seminars are tightly controlled by the state, however, and are therefore constrained. Limited by this reality, Salafis use these forums not as an organizing mechanism for the movement, but as opportunities to expand the network and advertise Salafi thought. The informal network thus penetrates formal organizations without actually tying the movement to an organization.

Publication is also an important mechanism for the Salafi movement. Salafi scholars are prolific, and their writings are widely distributed throughout the Muslim community. Written publications are usually inexpensive paperbacks that address a variety of issues from a Salafi perspective. Cassettes have also become increasingly popular, and because they are inexpensive and readily accessible, sales are quite robust. Cassettes reproduce lessons and sermons by Salafi scholars and are popular not only because of the low cost, but also because they allow Muslims to listen to some of the greatest Salafi shaykhs in the world.⁵⁷ Many leading Salafi scholars have strong oratory skills that inspire Muslims to believe. The tone, the fluctuating pitch and tenor of speech patterns, and the learned classical Arabic all combine to create a religious experience that ties the religious message to an emotive dimension. This experience also directly links individuals to prominent shaykhs and connects Salafis across time and space, drawing the community closer (even at the international level). The fact that a Salafi in Jordan can directly experience a sermon by Shaykh ibn Baz of Saudi Arabia through a cassette fosters a stronger sense of an “imagined community,” which transcends national boundaries and links Salafis through a shared religious discourse.⁵⁸ The use of publications and cassettes helps transcend the limits of spatiality.

In Amman, there are a number of Salafi bookshops, predominantly located next to the King Hussein Mosque downtown.⁵⁹ There are also some bookshops in other cities, especially in Zarqa, many of which are owned by prominent Salafi shaykhs. For example, ⁵Ali Hasan al-Halabi owns one of the largest Muslim bookshops in Zarqa. While passing along one of the main streets of the city, one is assaulted by Salafi cassettes blasted over a speaker outside the store. Smaller shops also exist throughout Amman, Salt, Zarqa, and other cities. Because these stores do not want to provoke the ire of the regime, which could lead to closure, *jihadi* publications are extremely rare in Muslim bookstores.

Through these mechanisms and interactional contexts, the informal network of the Salafi movement disseminates and propagates Salafi discourse. Salafis use informal

social networks for recruiting, mobilization, communication, and information dissemination. The fluidity and flexibility of informal networks allow the movement to avoid extensive repression. No single leadership structure, group, publishing center, meeting space, or membership list exists that would allow the regime to target a responsible center of activism effectively. Attacks against one segment of the movement will not destroy the movement. A certain adaptiveness is inherent in informal networks created by dynamic social ties.

This network is not a rigid matrix of intersecting and overlapping linkages; it is characterized by dynamic change as linkages grow, disappear, or reorient themselves toward other nodes. Not only do new individuals become participants and add to the expanding network, but individuals leave, as well. Islamic interpretations are not indelible or immutable, and in various instances Salafis adopt different leanings or approaches, even as they remain within the movement. This creates opportunities for forging new relationships with similar-minded Salafis and creates new linkages across groups or clusters. Constant dynamic change is introduced by shifts in attitudes, beliefs, and values as participants learn new information about Salafi thought or are drawn to alternative arguments and ideas. Exogenous factors in the social and political environment ineluctably impinge on how beliefs are formulated and the salience of perspectives at a particular moment. Ideas are not static. They change as a result of interactions, experience, and new information.

CONCLUSION

Research on the Islamic movement in Jordan has focused almost exclusively on the Muslim Brotherhood. The Brotherhood's constellation of formal organizations in civil and political society are highly visible and therefore tempting topics of study, with relatively easy access for academics. A research focus on the Brotherhood has led many scholars, the press, and politicians in Jordan to use the terms "Muslim Brotherhood" and "Islamic movement" interchangeably. But despite its importance as a political and social force in Jordan, the Brotherhood is not the only manifestation of Muslim activism in the kingdom, and it is important to elucidate the growing activities of the Salafi movement if one is to provide a more complete picture of the Islamic movement in Jordan.

The structure of the Salafi movement differs dramatically from that of the formally organized Brotherhood and represents an interesting example of informal social-movement mobilization. Given the effectiveness of the Brotherhood's organizations, why have the Salafis rejected such institutions as mechanisms of collective action? This article has argued that the use of informal networks by the Salafis is a strategic choice based on an assessment of the tactical efficacy of formal organizations. Because Salafis pose a growing challenge to the regime, the movement's organizational opportunities have been limited by repression. Concern about the growing presence of *jihadi* Salafi groups, especially since the 1990s, has led the regime to limit the organized activities of the movement, including activities at the Qur'an and Sunna Society, the only registered Salafi organization in the kingdom. Like other social movements facing a context of repression, the Salafis have instead turned to informal social networks as a less visible alternative for the mobilization of collective action. The decentralized and segmented structure of the network, with its loose student-

teacher ties, multiple leadership, and dynamic followings, renders the movement more impervious to state interference because Salafi activities, such as lessons and discussion groups, are embedded in social relationships and informal settings.

The Salafis' use of informal networks and rejection of the Muslim Brotherhood model of organization do not represent a distinct innovation in Middle Eastern mobilization patterns. On the contrary, networks constitute the underlying structure of society, and the use of social ties is common. The Salafis have thus adopted an available indigenous model of mobilization that fulfills the same functions as more formal organizations. Movement recruiting, communication, dissemination of information, and activities are all accomplished through networks. This model of activism has created "networks of shared meaning,"⁶⁰ which are common among new social movements. Although the Salafi network structure may not coincide with traditional notions of Islamic-movement organization, the informal meetings in private homes, mosque-related activities, publications, and student–teacher relationships all link Salafis together through a less visible, but nonetheless active, mechanism of mobilization.

NOTES

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⁴For a discussion of Islamist groups in Jordan, see ʿAwni Jaduʿa al-Abidi, *Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islami* (Amman: Dar al-Liwa Press, 1993); Musa Zayd al-Kaylani, *Al-Harakat al-Islamiyya fi al-Urdun* (Amman: Dar al-Banshir, 1990); and Ibrahim Ghuraybah, *Jamaʿat al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin, 1946–1996* (Amman: Al-Urdun al-Jadid Research Center, 1997). Two good sources for other material on the Islamist movement in Jordan are the al-Urdun al-Jadid Research Center (www.ujrc-jordan.org) and the Middle East Studies Center (www.mesc.com.jo).

⁵For an overview of the resource-mobilization approach in social-movement theory, see Mayer N. Zald and John D. McCarthy, ed., *Social Movements in an Organizational Society* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1987).

⁶Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York: Free Press, 1984).

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⁸Jo Freeman, "The Origins of the Women's Liberation Movement," *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (1970): 792–811.

⁹William A. Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1975).

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 108.

¹¹Luther P. Gerlach and Virginia H. Hine, *People, Power, Change: Movements of Social Transformation* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1970); Pamela E. Oliver, "Bringing the Crowd Back In: The Nonorganizational Elements of Social Movements," in *Research in Social Movements, Conflict and Change*, vol. 11, ed. Louis Kriesberg (Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 1989); Alberto Melucci, *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society*, ed. John Keane and Paul Mier (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989); *idem*, *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Roger V. Gould, *Insurgent Identities: Class, Community and Protest in Paris from 1848 to the Commune* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Matthew Schneirov and Jonathan David Gezik, "Alternative Health's Submerged Networks and the Transformation of Identity," *Sociological Quarterly* 37, 4 (1996): 627–44.

¹²Steven M. Buechler, *Women's Movements in the United States* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 61. For a further application of the "social movement community" concept, see Verta Taylor and Nancy E. Whittier, "Collective Identities in Social Movement Communities: Lesbian Feminist Mobilization," in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, ed. Aldon D. Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992); and Randy Stoecher, "Community, Movement, Organization: The Problem of Identity Convergence in Collective Action," *Sociological Quarterly* 36, 1 (1995): 111–30.

¹³Buechler, *Women's Movements in the United States*, 42.

¹⁴See Melucci, *Nomads of the Present*.

¹⁵See, for example, Karl Dieter Opp and Christiane Gern, "Dissident Groups, Personal Networks and Spontaneous Cooperation: The East German Revolution of 1989," *American Sociological Review* 58 (1993): 659–80; Cathy Lisa Schneider, *Shantytown Protest in Pinochet's Chile* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995); Mara Loveman, "High-Risk Collective Action: Defending Human Rights in Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina," *American Journal of Sociology* 104, 2 (1998): 477–525; and Dingxin Zhao, "Ecologies of Social Movements: Student Mobilization During the 1989 Prodemocracy Movement in Beijing," *American Journal of Sociology* 103, 6 (1998): 1493–1529.

¹⁶Steven Pfaff, "Collective Identity and Informal Groups in Revolutionary Mobilization: East Germany in 1989," *Social Forces* 75, 1 (1996): 99.

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¹⁸Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Late Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967); *idem*, "Hierarchies and Social Networks: A Comparison of Chinese and Islamic Societies," in *Conflicts and Control in Late Imperial China*, ed. F. J. Wakemann (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975); Samih K. Farsoun, "Family Structure and Society in Modern Lebanon," in *Peoples and Cultures of the Middle East*, ed. Louise Sweet (Garden City, N.Y.: National History, 1970); Ernest Gellner and John Waterbury, ed., *Patrons and Clients in Mediterranean Societies* (London: Duckworth, 1977); Guilain Denoëux, *Urban Unrest in the Middle East: A Comparative Study of Informal Networks in Egypt, Iran, and Lebanon* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993); Diane Singerman, *Avenues of Participation: Family, Politics, and Networks in Urban Quarters of Cairo* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995); Asef Bayat, *Street Politics: Poor People's Movements in Iran, 1977–1990* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); *idem*, "Un-Civil Society: The Politics of the 'Informal People,'" *Third World Quarterly* 18, 1 (1997): 53–72; and Sato Tsugitaka, ed., *Islamic Urbanism in Human History: Political Power and Social Networks* (London: Keagan Paul International, 1997).

¹⁹Singerman, *Avenues of Participation*.

²⁰Bayat, *Street Politics*.

²¹Denoëux, *Urban Unrest*.

²²The first Salafi movement was the Wahhabi movement, which swept the Arabian Peninsula in the mid-18th century. The contemporary Salafi surge, however, is generally tied to the late 1960s.

²³Because the Salafis operate through informal social networks, as discussed later in the article, it is difficult to estimate the size of the movement. Unlike a social movement predicated on formal organizations, the Salafis do not maintain membership lists or records of participants. Although Salafis themselves estimate that the movement is as large as the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, which is usually deemed the largest Islamic group in the kingdom, precise numbers are impossible to determine. During my fieldwork, however, it became readily apparent that Salafis are numerous and ubiquitous throughout Jordan. My primary informant kept a black book with Salafis' phone numbers and put me in touch with Salafis all over the kingdom. In virtually every neighborhood in the large cities, there are clusters of Salafis. Interviews with non-Salafi Islamists confirmed this impression.

²⁴These new militant groups include Muhammad's Army and the Vanguard of Islamic Youth. For more on militant groups in Jordan, see Beverley Milton-Edwards, "Climate of Change in Jordan's Islamist Movement," in *Islamic Fundamentalism*, ed. Abdel Salam Sidahmed and Anoushiravan Ehteshami (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1996).

²⁵*Jordan Times*, 29 September 1996.

²⁶Four of the men responsible confessed that their actions were inspired by *jihadi* writers such as Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi (*Jordan Times*, 18 August 1997).

²⁷*Ibid.*, 11 May 1998, 23 May 1998.

²⁸For more on *takfir*, see Ibrahim Karawan, *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, ed. John L. Esposito, s.v. "Takfir" (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 4:178–79.

²⁹For the reformist Salafi interpretation of *takfir*, see Ahmad Fareed, *On the Issue of Takfir* (Suffolk, U.K.: Jamii al-Ihya' al-Sunnah, 1997).

³⁰Ali Hasan al-Halabi, "Tarbiyah: The Key to Victory," *Al-Ibanah* 2 (1995): 15–19. The most thorough discussion of *tarbiya* and Islamic movements is in Roald, *Tarbiya*.

³¹Interview with Salim al-Hilali, Amman, 2 April 1997.

³²The reformist Salafi group benefits from a sponsorship of discourse. The Saudi regime and other governments promote this variant of Salafi thought, as opposed to radical interpretations, in an effort to prevent the emergence of a more dangerous and challenging Salafi discourse that could undermine state control. Through financial assistance and publication support, the Saudis provide reform-oriented Salafis with resources to propagate their interpretation. This support allows its proponents to act as full-time scholars without economic burdens.

³³As quoted in Ali Hasan al-Halabi, *Fundamentals of Commanding Good and Forbidding Evil According to Shaykh Ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyya* (Cincinnati: Al-Quran Wa's-Sunnah Society of North America, 1995), 2.

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵*Ibid.*, 3–4.

³⁶Al-Halabi, "Tarbiyah," 16.

³⁷For Ibn Taymiyya's interpretation of jihad and its effect on contemporary Islamic movements, see John O. Voll, "Fundamentalism in the Sunni Arab World: Egypt and the Sudan," in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 353–54; Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and the Pharaoh*, trans. Jon Rothschild (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 191–222; and Emmanuel Sivan, *Radical Islam: Medieval Theology and Modern Politics* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press), 94–107. For a Salafi perspective on Ibn Taymiyya, see al-Halabi, *Fundamentals of Commanding Good and Forbidding Evil*.

³⁸These arrests were not publicized by the media but were well known within the Salafi movement. During my research, I spent a great deal of time with a graduate student who was arrested in Salt during one of the crackdowns.

³⁹A good example is one Salafi who is not involved in militant operations but has published a book entitled *Al-Umma wa Al-Sulta*, which critiques current Arab systems of power. The book condones the use of force as a method of change. The book was published in Lebanon, and copies were confiscated by Jordanian authorities, although I later found a copy in an Islamic bookstore. This Salafi was detained by the *mukhabarat* for two days and was released only after he used *wasta*, or personal connections.

⁴⁰Ali Halabi, interview by author, 26 October 1996.

⁴¹This reading of al-Bani's motives was proposed by several Salafis from the "second wave" whom I interviewed and interacted with during my fieldwork. Despite al-Bani's reputation, a group of Salafis rejected the first *fatwa* and left al-Bani's circle of followers to pursue their own objectives. Although al-Bani is a renowned scholar of *hadith*, he is not widely respected in *fiqh*, and his *fatwas* have little impact beyond the

Salafi movement. His weakness in *fiqh* made it easier for this group to oppose the spirit of the initial *fatwa* against organizations.

⁴²See Wiktorowicz, "Islamists, the State, and Cooperation."

⁴³See Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Civil Society as Social Control: State Power in Jordan," *Comparative Politics* (forthcoming).

⁴⁴Ali Hasan al-Halabi, interview by author, 26 October 1996.

⁴⁵Shaykh Huthayfa, interview by author, 25 March 1997.

⁴⁶Jonathan Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), 20.

⁴⁷For the use of social networks in social movement recruitment, see, for example, Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, "Networks of Faith: Interpersonal Bonds and Recruitment to Cults and Sects," *American Journal of Sociology* 85, 6 (1980): 1376–95; David A. Snow, Louis A. Zurcher, Jr., and Dheldon Eklund-Olson, "Social Networks and Social Movements: A Microstructural Approach to Differential Recruitment," *American Sociological Review* 45, 5 (1980): 787–801; and Doug McAdam and Ronnelle Paulsen, "Specifying the Relationship Between Social Ties and Activism," *American Journal of Sociology* 98 (1993): 640–67.

⁴⁸*Tabligh* has been translated in various ways, but implies a missionary purpose. For the various definitions, see Muhammad Khalil Masud, *Oxford Encyclopedia*, ed. Esposito, vol. 4, s.v. "Tabligh." For the Jamaat Tabligh, see Ahmad Mumtaz, *Oxford Encyclopedia*, ed. Esposito, vol. 4, s.v. "Tablighi Jamaat."

⁴⁹There is frequent confusion in distinguishing members of Tabligh from Salafis. Not only do the members of both movements have a similar appearance, but they also share many religious perspectives. However, the more active Salafi agenda is distinct from the *da'wā*-orientation of Tabligh. Tabligh is purely a missionary movement, and its members are not usually as well educated or involved in the Islamic sciences because they are committed primarily to *da'wā*. In a few instances, both Jordanian academics and non-Salafi Islamists conflated Tabligh with the Salafi movement.

⁵⁰A good comparison is with the Pentecostal and Black Power movements discussed in Gerlach and Hine, *People, Power, Change*.

⁵¹The claim that a person is not knowledgeable is used as an insult within the Salafi movement and as a polemic tool to discredit particular Salafi perspectives.

⁵²Although al-Bani published through Saudi companies, he was reputedly independent of Saudi influence. This is most likely due to the fact that after al-Bani taught at Medina University, he was banned from the country because some of his former students participated in the 1979 seizure of the Grand Mosque.

⁵³This group includes *jihadi* scholars who do not enjoy the financial success of reformists. As a result of scarce resources and their radical message, *jihadi* scholars maintain small followings.

⁵⁴Gerlach and Hine, *People, Power, Change*, 161.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 46.

⁵⁶See Quintan Wiktorowicz, "State Power and the Regulation of Islam in Jordan," *Journal of Church and State*, 41, 4 (1999): 677–96.

⁵⁷Most of the tapes deal with the basic principles of Salafi thought. For example, see Suleiman al-Audah, *Hadith hawl Manhaj al-Salaf* (Amman: Tasjilat Bayt al-Maqdis al-Islamiyya, n.d.).

⁵⁸For the concept "imagined community," see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1991).

⁵⁹These Islamic bookshops sell mass quantities of religious tapes in addition to written materials.

⁶⁰Meluci, *Nomads of the Present*.