Regime Survival during the Arab Spring:
A Case study of how the Moroccan leader addressed the popular discontent during and after the Arab Spring in 2011.
Abstract

The Arab Spring, the protests that spread through the Arab world, led to very different outcomes in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. That some regimes survived during the Arab Spring and some experienced regime-change has been explained through political, economic and social perspectives. This desk-study investigates how the Moroccan government addressed popular discontent during and after the Arab spring in 2011. In order to examine the case study through a new theoretical angle, this research applies the Theory of Policy Substitutability by Amy Oakes (2012) to the chosen case study. This study identifies that the Moroccan government used political reform, repression, a sort of economic reform and the use of cultural symbols were put in place to lower the intensity of protests. The findings underline that the government used a number of tactics that can be analysed through the concept of diversionary tactics, meaning the diversion from internal struggle.

This research adds value to the discussion about regime survival in the case of the Moroccan Arab Spring not only by applying the Theory of PS as a structuring device for existing explanations of regime survival, it furthermore adds value by giving an example of how scholars can examine qualitatively how the concept of diversionary tactics (military and non-military responses) can have applicability.

Keywords

Regime survival, Arab Spring, Morocco, Theory of Policy Substitutability, Diversionary Tactics
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Abbreviations

20 FM  20th February Movement
CCRC  Consultative Commission for the Referendum of the Constitution
MENA  Middle East & North Africa
POLISARIO  Polisario Front, Frente Polisario
Theory of PS  Theory of Policy Substitutability
UN  United Nations
WS  West Sahara

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1 Introduction

The beginning of the so called ‘Arab Spring’ is commonly marked to be the 17th December 2010, the day of 26-year-old Mohamed Bouazizi’s self-immolation, after his produce cart was confiscated by the Tunisian authorities (Debasi, 2012). With this act he aimed to protest against corruption and ill-treatment of the common people that suffered from a system where rulers and a small elite profited from corruption (Mansfield & Synder: 2012). This incident led to the Arab Spring movement in Tunisia which ended in the fall of President Ben-Ali on 14th December 2011. Much more than this, Bouazizi’s self-immolation was the start of mass-demonstrations in several countries in the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA) where protesters united against the dominant position of elite and authoritarian rulers (Ibid.: 724). This act of protest had very wide effects on the Arab world and led in the short-term to mass protests and in the long-term to implications that have had a social, political and economic impact for the region (Ibid.).

The Arab Spring has been a “youth rebellion driven by grievances about unemployment and dissatisfaction with existing regimes” (Hoffmann & Jamal, 2012: 168). Thousands of people protested against what Arab regimes have tried to keep up for decades. A combination of greed (economic explanations) and grievances (political and social explanations) thus motivated people to demonstrate (Ibid.). But these protests were not just threatening the elite’s position, they also led to sometimes violent responses by leaders and governments (Brownlee et al., 2014: 10). Brownlee et al. (Ibid.) point out that “in the first thirty months after December 2010, approximately 90,000 people in sixteen countries died in Arab Spring related violence, but autocrats only fell in four.”

The long-term effects of Bouazizi’s self-immolation are of interest because they led to very different outcomes in those Arab countries which experienced the mass protests that characterised the Arab Spring. Firstly, Egypt and Tunisia “have experienced regime change in a democratic direction” (Mansfield & Synder, 2012: 724), although Egypt experienced a backlash into authoritarian rule (Grimm, 2015). This happened extremely fast in Tunisia, where, “within a month, the 23-year reign of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali ended and the “Jasmine Revolution” took hold, leading to a set of democratic reforms” (Ibid.). Secondly, there are nations that experienced conflict, such as Libya
which fell into a civil war, followed by a Western intervention and Syria, where the conflict between the regime and the opposition led to the involvement of several international forces and an ongoing conflict (Byman, 2012). Although having caused the death of thousands of people, the Arab Spring movements created a prospect of change when several elections in the area raised “the hope that a wave of democracy and peace might envelope a region where both have been in short supply” (Mansfield & Synder, 2012: 722). Thirdly, countries like Jordan and Morocco, where the Arab Spring did not lead to a regime change, have been steered through the revolts by strategic responses from their leaders (Campante & Chor: 2012)

But the Arab Spring did not have the same wide-reaching effects within Morocco as it did in other countries. The Arab Spring officially arrived in Morocco with the advent of the so called “February 20th movement” (20 FM) taking its name from the mass protests on 20th February 2011. The protests “reached a non-negligible scale (240,000 – 300,000 participants according to the organization [the February 20th movement]; 37,000 according to the Ministry of the Interior, in more than 50 cities), but they certainly were not massive“ (Molina, 2011: 437). This is why the

“case of Morocco raises several issues, among which the conditions for the possibility of collective action within authoritarian regimes and the reciprocal influence created by the interaction between collective action and the political regimes’ responses are prominent” (Desrues, 2013: 410).

Regimes in the Maghreb such as Morocco whose survival was in question during the Arab Spring “survived over a period of decades in which democratic waves rolled through East Asia, eastern Europe, Latin America, and sub-Saharan Africa” (Gause III & Gregory, 2011: 81). Morocco has not been one of the four countries where leaders fell during the Arab Spring, although displaying good characteristics of a country to experience a regime change.

The commonly accepted explanation for regimes successfully averting a regime change after the Arab Spring would be that these countries had “substantial oil and gas wealth that has helped the regimes to avoid - at least in the short or medium term - the worst of the upheavals through massive targeted public spending to placate restive section of the
population” Willis (2015: 433). Morocco did not have these natural resources and in fact has had poverty and inequality levels similar to and “often exceeding most other states in the Arab World” (Ibid.). The fact that poverty and inequality was that high before the unrest in 2011 means that there was a high probability of an escalation of the population’s grievances leading to more intense demonstrations and unrest and even regime change (Ibid.).

Cases of different use of force during the Arab Spring show the “utility of coercive power for suppressing threats from the street: without it, regimes fall; with it, they hold onto power” (Lawrence, 2017: 699). When Ben Ali’s rule ended quickly after the first movements in Tunisia, the military’s refusal to use force against protesters “was a crucial factor why the regime could not survive” (Ibid.). Furthermore, “in Egypt, military defection was also the regime’s undoing. Egyptian police had used force to defuse street action for a decade” (Ibid.) and in 2011 the military “attempted to block protesters headed to Tahrir Square, but as the number of protesters swelled, the army refused to attack and Mubarak fell” (Ibid.). In contrast, the military in Bahrain was pro-monarchy and “brutally repressed peaceful protesters, crushing the movement” (Ibid.). The military as a factor for regime survival during the Arab Spring thus comes of interest to be a factor for investigating the specific outcome in the case of Morocco.

1.1 Research Problem and Relevance

This research is related to the discussion about resilience converted into the case of regimes and regime survival. Resilience, which is defined to be

“the ability of households, communities and nations to absorb and recover from shocks, whilst positively adapting and transforming their structures and means for living in the face of long-term stresses, change and uncertainty“ (OECD, 2017).

has gained more and more prominence. The idea behind strengthening resilience is to protect people and states from risks such as shocks and crisis on an economic, social and political level (Mitchell, 2013). Keeping in mind, that doing so relies on the assumption that stability on an economic, social and political level leads to a secure
environment for people to survive the crisis or risk they are facing, the question emerges whether one can convert the focus from the resilience of people and ask what is it that makes leaders resilient? What enables regimes to survive a crisis and what makes them resilient? It is important to research how leaders react to a crisis in order to estimate the political risk and potential escalations connected to this risk. E.g., if leaders are able to handle a situation in their country by encouraging democratization and allowing protests and this leads to a peaceful transition, researchers are able to apply these observations to other cases which is important to the safety of people but also to investors. Analysing the Moroccan strategies, one can gain an important insight on how the Moroccan leader steered the country through the Arab Spring. These findings are then important to analysts of political risk and for investors since it can indicate a future trend in Morocco.

The discussion about resilience is thus important to be looked at through the discussion of regime survival/durability. Scholars who analysed the causes of the Arab Spring have found arguments from different disciplines within the social sciences. It is argued that the respective regime types of authoritarian regimes caused the uprising (Brynen, R., et.al., 2012). Besides this political explanation stating that people had the aim to achieve regime change and democratization, it is argued that deprivation, especially of the youth, has led to protests that are mainly against the current socio-economic standards and unemployment levels and asking for less inequality and more education (Mulderig, 2013). The desire for change can thus be explained through political, social and economic angles. Furthermore, appreciating the link between democratization and the use of force is important to understand the relevance of this research. Conflict in connection to regime survival is investigated by scholars that analyse transitions to democracy (Russett and Oneal, 2001, Mansfield & Synder, 2012). If, however, regimes that have survived over a long period of time, without any transition being achieved, it is the view of some scholars that there is a need for a democratic development, as “regime change toward democracy is likely to reduce the risk of conflict” (Ibid.)

Another way of explaining regime survival is through the assumption that leaders distract their people from internal issues which originates from the theory of diversionary war (Levy, 1989). This approach explains that leaders survive uprisings by diversionary tactics that were traditionally based around the military, when the leader
decided to initiate an external conflict to distract the people from the internal conflict (see chapter 2.1.); as based on the rally-around-the-flag-effect, people would gather behind their leader. Although the traditional approach (Levy, 1989) concentrating on military diversion, was often criticised for having little applicability outside the U.S., the diversionary theory of war and the connected rally-around-the-flag-effect can still be of use in interpreting the findings of this research. In the case of Morocco, the ongoing West Sahara conflict is a factor that makes the Moroccan case interesting. The conflict in the West Sahara must have had, although not directly being used as a response to the Arab Spring, some sort of effect on the socio-political structures in the country which led to the survival of the monarchy through the Arab Spring.

As scholars from the field of Peace and Development Studies connect political sciences, sociology, economics, conflict studies and security studies, this research tries to contribute its small piece to the literature of regime survival and the discussion of the responses of leaders/governments to the Arab spring. To achieve this, this research aims to tackle the matter through a different theoretical angle that will hopefully allow a more holistic analysis.

The fact that poverty and inequality was that high before the unrest in 2011 means that there was a high probability of an escalation of the population’s grievances leading to more intense demonstrations and unrest and even regime change (Willis, 2015: 433).

This is where the dilemma, which this research tries to investigate, reveals itself: Even though this high probability of escalation existed, the February 20th Movement as a protest “was never crystallized into a revolt” and neither did it lead to a regime change (Brownlee, et al., 2014: 4). And based on this dilemma, the question how Morocco’s leader steered the country through the Arab Uprising raises itself.

1.2 Research Objective and Research Question

This research aims to investigate how the Moroccan government survived the Arab Spring by analysing how the Moroccan leader addressed popular discontent during and after the Arab spring in 2011.
Extracted from this research objective, the following research question will be the focus of this research:

How did the Moroccan leader address the popular discontent during and after the Arab spring in 2011?

1.3 Methodological and Theoretical Approach

This qualitative desk-study offers an in-depth single-country analysis. In order to answer the research question how the Moroccan king addressed popular discontent during the Arab spring in 2011 this research will apply the Theory of Policy Substitutability (PS) by Amy Oakes (2012) to the chosen case study of the response of the Moroccan leader to the popular discontent during and after the Arab spring in 2011.

The Theory of PS (Oakes, 2012) was developed based on diversionary theories that suggest that a leader reacts to internal unrest by engaging in an external conflict (Levy, 1989). Based on this line of thought, Oakes argues that a leader has different tools to distract from internal conflict and does not necessarily have to create an external conflict to distract the population's attention. The Theory of PS offers a way to analyse the response of a leader by acknowledging that the policy option ‘diversionary war’ can have different manifestations (full-scale and low-level diversionary wars). This framework explains that a leader can as well choose from non-military policy options such as political reform, economic reform, muddling through, and repression. These non-military tactics are seen as diversionary tactics in a broad definition that can have the same effects as a military one. With this approach Oakes (2012) identifies reasons why a leader might be unwilling or unable to respond with diversionary military tactics, and she incorporates a broader range of non-military policy options into a leader's toolbar of diversionary tactics.

The traditional approach of the diversionary theory is described by Levy (1989) as a process in which
“domestic problems lead to incentives for a nation’s leader to engage in aggressive foreign behaviour, perhaps even war, to boost the nation’s cohesiveness, to enhance the leader’s popularity, and to thus increase her chances of remaining in power” (Tarar 2006: 169).

The traditional approach of diversionary tactics is interesting for this research, as the basic assumptions of mechanisms that create cohesion and distract from internal conflict are important for both, military and non-military, diversionary tactics. This is why, in order to understand the Theory of PS, one must as well achieve an understanding of the diversionary theory of war which is the base for Amy Oakes’ (2012) framework.

The chosen theoretical framework captures explanation of regime survival from the same angle as causes of the Arab spring were explained, but also allows this research to open the analysis to the field of conflict and security studies. With this it will combine possible social, political, economic and even military responses into one single analysis which displays the interdisciplinary character that both students and scholars in the field of Peace and Development Studies are combining to investigate possible connections between these disciplines.

This research adds value to the discussion about regime survival in the case of the Moroccan Arab Spring not only by applying the Theory of PS as a structuring device to combine different explanations to a more conclusive approach. It furthermore adds value by giving an example of how diversionary tactics can be seen as non-military. This is helpful in order to find applicability of the diversionary tactics and related mechanism such as in-group-outgroup thinking or the rally-around-the flag-effect outside the U.S. case to explain regime survival qualitatively.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

After this introductory chapter, this research shall present the methodological approach (chapter 2) which will give an overview of the qualitative case-study approach and the relationship between theory and research. This will be followed by a presentation of the theoretical framework (chapter 3) which will explain how the findings presented shall
be analysed. After that, (chapter 4) is concerned with the presentation of the findings, which will be done in a chronological order starting in February 2011. Additionally, the findings will then present responses and influencing factors unconnected to the chronological order. In the analysis (chapter 5), this research will then apply the chosen Theory of PS to the findings and will interpret them. The last chapter of this research will then present the findings in a more cohesive way and will review the utility of the chosen framework to answer the research question.
2 Theoretical Framework

As formulated in the research problem, this thesis aims to look at regime survival within the case study from a different theoretical angle than existing literature has done so far. The existing literature has found different explanations for the Moroccan regime survival, but has not tried to explain them through the theoretical approach of diversionary tactics (military and non-military). In order to do so, this following chapter will review the relevant literature for this research.

2.1 Literature Review

Responses by leaders or governments to internal unrest are investigated by literature surrounding regime survival. Looking into the ruling and/or regime type, the scholars investigating regime survival and regime durability can be separated into two groups. Firstly, Knutsen & Nygård (2015) point out that there are many authors focusing on the (1) regime type (autocratic or democratic or mixed up types) to explain regime durability (see Gurr, 1974; Epstein et al., 2006). These mostly quantitative studies find a correlation between regime survival and regime type but cannot find a causality. And similar to regime type, scholars of comparative politics focus on the form of government (presidential or parliamentarian) to explain regime durability. These scholars focus on regime survival due to specific preconditions in the political environment (type of government).

Secondly, rather than explaining what institutional context or traditional ways of ruling are influencing the environment a leader is acting in, explanations of regime survival that rather focus on (2) the leader as an individual, base their arguments on the fact that the leader has the interest to stay in power when facing a specifically challenging event, such as a popular discontent. Guriev & Treisman (2015: 1) point out that “dictators survive not because of their use of force or ideology but because they convince the public—rightly or wrongly—that they are competent” and with this they stress the problem occurring when only explaining regime survival by whether a dictator represses uprisings or not. This argument focusses on regime survival rather than
regime durability over time. The focus is furthermore on the individual rather than the structural setting and assumes that in line with the concept of a cost-benefit calculation, the leader wants to minimise costs (Wintrobe, 1990). This calculation compares the costs of repression against the costs of change (Davenport 2007). According to Davenport (2007: 488), leaders of autocratic regimes

“Weigh the 'benefits' of utilizing coercive action … against the 'costs' (i.e. what repression will deplete/detract from). Simultaneously, they consider the availability of other alternatives (diverse ways of influencing socio-political thought and behaviour) as well as the potential effectiveness of repressive effort… When benefits exceed costs, no alternatives are available, and the probability of success is high, coercive behaviour will be increased. If the costs exceed the benefits, alternatives are available, and the probability of success is low, however, then coercive behaviour will be decreased or withdrawn completely.”

According to this line of thought, dictators would repress “only to the modest extent necessary to stay in office and collect the fruits of monopolizing political power” (Wintrobe, 1990: 849). While this argument rather focusses on repression, the cost-benefit calculation is also the base for other arguments by scholars that investigate regime survival through analysing the responses to discontent that aim to distract from problems in society. This kind of strategy impairs connotations such as controlling, the use of force and manoeuvring (Ryan, 2001). Ryan (Ibid.) identifies three strategies (in the case of three Egyptian governments): containment, repression and external diversion.

In connection to regime survival in the Arab Spring, some scholars focussed on monarchical regimes and investigated the respective regime type in Arab monarchies as a factor leading to regime survival during and after the Arab Spring (Yom & Gause III, 2012; Kühnhardt 2012). Abrams (2012) points out that it is the concept of monarchical ruling as a traditional regime that enables leaders to survive popular uprising in their countries. This is the case because of the specific institutional structure in royal autocracies, such as the Moroccan monarchy, wherein the monarch’s leadership has a cultural foundation (Yom & Gause III, 2012).
Literature concerning the responses of leaders to the Arab Spring often runs comparative analyses looking for the reasons of regime survival (or failure) in comparison to other Maghreb states (see Willis, 2014). These scholars often see regime-survival connected to the fact that there are oil-rich and resource poor countries which is then used to analyse the ability of the monarchies to respond in a way that enables regime survival (see Barany, 2013; Winckler, 2013; Michael, 2011). In these studies, regimes with more resources are seen to overcome the popular discontent because they can distract the people through greater economic means. Brownlee et. al. (2014: 54) argue that “oil-rich countries used their wealth to stem popular discontent in 2010-2012” and cites Kuwait as an example (Ibid.: 5) when the government gave $3,500 “to every man, woman and child, as well as a year’s worth of free staples such as sugar, oil, rice, and milk” (Ibid.).

Josua & Edel (2015) see repression as an essential strategy used by leaders in response to the Arab Spring. Repression as a tool to achieve regime survival is then separated into different types and layers of repression ranging from limited repression to full-scale civil wars. Sonia L. Alianak (2014) shifts the focus on how leaders achieved regime survival to the hypothesis that they distracted their people by using different kinds of reforms. She offers a broad analysis of reforms including a very detailed analysis of the Moroccan king’s reaction to the Arab spring. She identifies co-optation, repression and democratic experiments as tools that the king used to “push the pendulum back as far as he could in order to re-establish stability, mainly through religion” (Alianak: 2014: 99). Maghraoui (2011) gives an insight in how political reform has been used as a policy in reaction to the Arab Spring as well as prior to the unrests. Already in March 2011, Thomas Schiller (2011) identified that there is a deviation between the political reforms promised by the Moroccan king and the fact that the king’s power position has not changed at all.

Literature that incorporates military aspects within the analysis, either looks into the army’s likeliness to shut down popular unrests by force or the likelihood of the army to turn against the leader (Brownlee, et.al., 2015). Connected to the argument of hereditary rule (long standing monarchies) outlined above, one can identify that the army in regimes that are based on hereditary leadership have been far more obedient and are less
likely to turn against the leader (Ibid.). Looking into military aspects of the responses to the Arab Spring one can concentrate on the army’s role and intra-military cohesion. This is connected to the ruler because intra-military cohesion is connected to identification with the regime. The level of intra-military cohesion influences whether defection is likely. Bellin (2012) further mentions the military’s role in authoritarian regimes to be a cohesive institutional apparatus. The aspect of loyalty to the leadership is seen as a factor that influences the outcomes because it determines whether an army suppressed uprisings by force while being loyal to their leader or not. Nassif (2015) focuses on the civil-military relationship influencing the Egyptian experience of the Arab Spring. This author looks into the relationship between the autocrat and senior officers (generals) and investigates how loyalty between military leaders and the regime leader is an influencing factor.

In the Moroccan case, Sater (2016) identifies the response of the Moroccan king as unprecedented (Sater, 2016). Scholars have identified aspects that make the Moroccan case exceptional three main aspects: Firstly, it is argued that as a hereditary monarchy, Morocco is within a group of countries wherein the leader’s response to unrest more easily leads to regime-survival due to traditional institutional structures (Yom & Gause III, 2012; Kühnhardt 2012). Secondly, scholars argue that Morocco has been seen as a democratic and Western-oriented country since independence and the king has been seen as the “reformist”, though widely criticized for still remaining in an autocratic leadership style (Hashas, 2013; Brownlee, Masoud, & Reynolds, 2015). What King Mohammed VI has been “trying to do since 1999 is to inaugurate a “new era” (al’ahd al jadid) without taking the initiative to make constitutional changes” (Hashas, 2013: 9). Thirdly, economic explanations argue that it was easier for resource rich countries to respond to internal unrest by having access to oil and gas wealth to calm the demonstrations (see Barany, 2013; Winckler, 2013; Michael, 2011; Willis, 2014). Morocco and Tunisia “are different in that they are more diversified and depend on agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, and mining” (Khan & Merzan, 2016: 1). Even though studies have identified that countries that survived the Arab Spring did so because of their oil and gas wealth, “the only old regimes that still survive in the same form as they were before the Arab Spring are the two non-oil Arab monarchies (Morocco and Jordan)” (Winckler, 2013: 69).
Alianak (2014) also identifies religion as a main factor that not only creates cohesion the population as a policy option but coheres each policy with each other. Nevertheless, she leaves out military diversionary tactics. Besides the traditional historical aspects of regime type explained above it is argued that monarchies in the Middle East basing their rule on religious decedents and “traditional hereditary rule” ultimately stabilized these monarchies during the Arab Spring (Kühnhardt 2012: 59).

2.2 The Theory of Policy Substitutability (PS)

Keeping in mind the problems listed above, Amy Oakes (2012) points out that there is a need for a framework which allows researchers to work qualitatively when aiming to analyse the government’s or leader’s responses to internal unrest. Based on the traditional approaches of diversionary war, Oakes developed a theory that exceeds the focus on military diversionary tactics to come up with a tool to comprehensively analyse how leaders reacted to unrest besides the option of military tactics.

In her book *Diversionary War: Domestic Unrest and International Conflict* (2017), Amy Oakes comes up with the *Theory of PS*. This framework enables scholars to identify a leader’s and/or government’s “policy menu” from which they choose when facing social unrest (Oakes, 2012: 6). The options on the policy ranking are low-level diversionary conflict (diversionary spectacle), diversionary war, repression, political reform, economic reform, foreign military intervention and “muddling through” (Ibid.).

A leader prioritizes a preferred policy option based on two aspects, namely the willingness and opportunity of the implementation of this policy. In her framework, Oakes (2012) relates to these categories as ‘leader’s preferences’ and ‘environmental factors’ (Ibid.). Leader's’ preferences describe “how the decision maker assesses the desirability of each option on the policy menu and then ranks the options from most to least attractive” (Oakes, 2012: 6). This can be tested by the research by analysing how leaders traditionally reacted to internal unrest (Ibid.).

On the other hand, environmental factors are defined to be “those conditions that enable or constrain a leader’s ability to pursue these options” (Ibid.). The political culture and the ability of a leader to exercise the particular power position can be considered as an
environmental factor. Additionally, a state’s extractive capacity is the most crucial environmental factor. The extractive capacity of a state is defined to be “a state’s ability to efficiently mobilize societal resources” (Oakes, 2012: 7-8). These resources are mainly gathered through revenues, e.g. taxation (Ibid.). Since some options such as diversionary war, economic reform and repression are costlier than others (e.g. diversionary spectacle, political reform, requesting foreign intervention and muddling through) it is assumed that governments with a high extractive capacity (princely states) have a wider “range of response to unrest” (Ibid.: 14) than pauper states, which is defined to be a state with limited financial resources, that have a low extractive capacity (Ibid).

With her focus on diversion, Oakes (2012) aims to explain how and when diversionary tactics occur as a policy option. Oakes states that the substitutability approach can explain how “diversionary wars occur not because they are an intrinsically attractive response to unrest but rather because environmental factors have eliminated higher-ranked options” and she further explains “war might occur rarely because most leaders place it low on their policy ranking and at least one of the more-appealing policies will generally be practicable” (Oakes, 2012: 7).

2.2.1 Diversionary Theory of War

The use of diversionary tactics is associated with military action. Although diversion is in this research seen through a broader definition, that is not just militarily, it is important to have a valuable insight in the theory of diversionary war. The definition used in this research is that ‘diversionary’ means “tending to draw attention away from the principal concern” and diversion is “the act or an instance of diverting from a course, activity, or use” (Merriam-Webster, 2016). The traditional approach of the diversionary theory is described by Levy (1989) as a process in which “domestic problems lead to incentives for a nation’s leader to engage in aggressive foreign behaviour, perhaps even war, to boost the nation’s cohesiveness, to enhance the leader’s popularity, and to thus increase her chances of remaining in power” (Tarar 2006: 169). The traditional approach of diversionary tactics is interesting for this research, as the basic assumptions of mechanisms that create cohesion and distract from internal conflict are important for both, military and non-military, diversionary tactics. This is why, in
order to understand the Theory of PS, one must as well achieve an understanding of the diversionary theory of war which is the base for Amy Oakes (2012) framework.

Jaroslav Tir (2010: 413) points out “according to the diversionary theory of war, the cause of some militarized conflicts are [sic] not a clash of salient interests between countries, but rather problematic domestic circumstances.” The need for a diversion is caused by either “economic adversity or political unrest” (Tir, 2010: 314).

The traditional definition of ‘diversionary war’ is based on the assumption of the in-group-outgroup mechanism that was developed by Coser (1956) which can cause “a feeling of loyalty to the state and its leader” (Tir, 2010: 413). The leader reacts, according to Russett (1990), with a foreign policy that creates a rally-around the flag effect (Tir, 2010: 314). The rally-around the flag effect has been mainly used with a focus on the population of the U.S. and explains the gathering behind the presidents in times of war with an external target. This increased feeling of cohesion has then increased the president's popularity (Baker & Oneal, 2011).

Bodin (1955: 168) points out that “the best way to preserving a state and guaranteeing it against sedition, rebellion and civil war is to keep the subject in amity one with another and to this end, find an enemy to whom they can make common sense.” In general, a huge proportion of the literature about diversionary war was written concerning U.S foreign policy (e.g., Fordham 2002; Hess and Orphanides 1995; Ostrom and Job 1986 in Tir 2010). These studies mostly analysed the diversion by an engagement into an “a far-away, unknown-to-the-public foreign enemy” in a conflict where the U.S. is clearly dominant when it comes to military capacities (Tir, 2010: 414).

The assumption made by political scientists that external struggle increases alliance cohesion is stressed by authors such as Holsti, Hopmann & Sullivan (1973). But in general the literature on the connection between conflict and cohesion offers a broad range of explanations that are rooted in sociology, social psychology, anthropology and political sciences.

Psychological explanations point out the individual as an agent of analysis and are divided into situational and experimental (Stein, 1976: 149). The origin of the
assumption that the external conflict increased internal cohesion is based on discussions by sociological theorists such as Simmel (1955). In general, opinions differ from the explanation whether the prevalent conflict is considered to be violent or non-violent but Coser (1956) points out that not all types of conflict (violent or non-violent) cause cohesion. Furthermore, he states that “conflict can also lead to anomie [and] external conflict does not necessarily increase cohesion” (Stein, 1976, p.144). Thus Coser argues that the group needs to fulfil certain preconditions of common interest and he refers to Robin Williams (1947) who first mentioned the intervening variables that (a) the group existed before the emergence of the external conflict and must be aware of this and that (b) the external threat needs to be seen as one threatening the whole group (Stein, 1976: 144).

Tir argues that territorial conflicts have a better chance to create the in-group-outgroup feeling than other threats “(e.g., trade, humanitarian intervention), in part because territory speaks more directly and convincingly to the people’s instincts and their conceptions of national identity” (Tir, 2010: 413).

2.2.2 Decision Making

In order to meet the research’s objective to investigate how diversionary measurements have been used by the Moroccan king to address popular discontent during the Arab Spring in 2011, this following section will introduce the concept of decision making. This section will help to answer the research question by providing concepts that are important in Amy Oakes’ (2012) Theory of PS. Understanding the concept of decision making is important to understand the chosen framework because it shows how leaders prioritize policies on their “policy menu”, the ranking of possible policies in response to internal unrest.

The concept of general decision making is based on two main approaches: the organizitional level and the individual level of decision making (Levy et al., 2010). The organizitional level of decision making focusses on the national and internal issues of decision making “within the executive branch of the government” (Ibid.: 164). The organizitional level attempts to analyse the governmental structures and how the country’s institutional framework allows leaders to act.
The individual level offers two explanations: The rational models of decision making, and psychological or cognitive models of decision making (Levy et al., 2010: 137). Psychological models argue that the decision maker is influenced by his environment, meaning culture and worldview. Personal characteristics, as well as the way a leader was socialized influence a leader’s way of making decisions. “Different decision-makers will respond differently under similar situations, and those differences may be significant enough to have a causal impact on state decisions for war or peace” (Ibid.: 133). The second concept, based on the economic model of rationality, argues that the decision maker decides as if a leader would make a decision depending on the expected utility. This means that the decision maker prefers outcomes that provide the highest utility. This “concept of rationality can be applied to both individuals and collective decision-units” (Ibid: 141). Most of the actors have more than one goal in their ranking while a goal is a policy that is preferred based on a high expected satisfaction of interests. A ranking of policy options is from a rational perspective very important. What Alexander L. George calls “value complexity” requires specification of goals which needs a ranking of policy choices (Ibid.: 139).

The rationality approach offers a tool to prioritize depending on interest maximizing as well as constraints such as risk of escalation. The estimation of the ranking is as much based on the estimated utility as it is on the expected level of risk. Both aspects can cause high opportunity costs and thus the final policy decision is not always the highest interest of the decision maker (Ibid.).

“A decision requires a prioritization of goals so that the actor knows how much of one goal it is willing to sacrifice in order to achieve one goal given the increased probability that it might not achieve the other goal” (Ibid.: 139).

Specification and prioritization of policy strategies is a “key element of a rational decision-making process” (Ibid.) and “theories at the individual level [that] trace international conflict to the behaviour of key individuals in important decision - making roles” (Ibid.: 133). On the other hand, this research will include both foreign policy and national policy options. This research will test aspects from the individual and the organizational level of decision making but will leave out structural explanations to the
issue. For this research rational explanations of decision making are most important to explain how the Moroccan leader ranked policy options.

This section explained how concepts of decision making are important to understand how leaders create their policy menu. The policy menu and the Theory of Substitutability will be presented in chapter 3.4. after introducing the theory of diversionary war.

2.2.3 The Policy Menu

In order to meet the research’s objective to investigate how diversionary measurements have been used by the Moroccan king to address popular discontent during the Arab Spring in 2011 this following section will explain which diversionary measures might have been chosen by the Moroccan king in 2011. The policy options have already been mentioned in previous sections, here they shall be explained in greater depth to provide greater salience.

The first option on the menu is repression. Leaders might use violence against the unrest that includes “forcefully dispersing demonstrations, torturing regime opponents, committing genocide” or they can react to social unrest by “banning political parties, halting elections, with-drawing the right to freely assemble, imprisoning dissidents” (Oakes, 2012: 17).

Secondly, leaders/governments might choose a political reform to respond to the call of the social movement. Examples for a political reform are “permitting competitive elections, allowing greater freedom of the press, and legalizing civil society organizations” (Ibid. 17-18).

The third option is an economic reform that can be used to “jumpstart the national economy, reduce poverty and inequality, or buy off opponents” and Oakes defines “tax reform, deregulation, tariff adjustments, social welfare spending, and land redistribution” as possible measurements in reaction to dissidents (ibid.).

The fourth option is inviting foreign military intervention which means “leaders may request troops from friendly country to aid in suppressing a domestic uprising” (ibid.).
The fifth policy option is ‘muddling through’. This “often means simply doing nothing” (ibid.) and can be used to weather the struggle long enough, until the point where the opposition movement loses its intensity, allowing the leader time to stabilize the country (ibid.). This option can include “attempts at reform or repression that amount to little more than tokenism—that is, repressive measures, economic reforms, or vague promises of future political concessions that buy the government time but are not expected to end the unrest” (Ibid.).

The sixth option on the policy menu is a low level diversionary conflict. These diversionary spectacles are used instead of a traditional diversionary war that would be far more cost intensive, whilst still being of use as a unifying act that creates group cohesion. Diversionary spectacles are defined to be a “threatening to use force against a symbolic target that is unwilling or unable to resist” (Ibid. 17f). Oakes states that when engaging in diversionary tactics an “unstable regime selects a target that promises to unify the public, such as reclaiming territory that has cultural, historical, or symbolic significance, or defending the country against a generally recognized threat” (Ibid.: 14).

Finally, a leader/government can engage in a full-scale diversionary war. As discussed in detail in section 3.3.1, a diversionary war is an interstate war “initiated in large part to bolster the government against growing domestic opposition” and “domestic unrest is a necessary condition for the government’s decision to use force” (Oakes, 2012: 14).

This chapter introduced literature relevant to this research. It was concluded that there is a variety of explanations that should be looked at through a new theoretical angle. This is where the chosen framework comes in to investigate the issue from a different theoretical angle. Furthermore, in a subsection, this chapter explained the theory of diversionary war that is necessary to understand the chosen theory of PS (Oakes 2012). This chapter also showed that, although the theory of PS bases its assumption on the theory of diversionary war, diversion is according to the broader definition an act that is not exclusively militarily.
3 Methodology

This chapter will introduce the methodological approach of this thesis. This chapter will first show how the method of a qualitative desk-study was chosen in order to help this research to run an in-depth single-country analysis. Then this chapter explains the qualitative approach, and its ontological and epistemological implications, used to analyse the case study of the response of the Moroccan king during and after the Arab Spring in 2011. Furthermore, it will be shown why the case study was chosen and what this means for the generalization and reliability. Finally, this chapter is concerned with understanding how data was collected and how several factors limited this research.

3.1 Qualitative methods

The focus on a single country analysis will help to provide qualitative answers to the research question, as the qualitative approach is defined to offer “means of understanding the complexity of a situation by exploring the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social problem” (Creswell, 2013: 4). Bryman (2015, 394) points out that "Qualitative researchers are much … inclined … to provide a great deal of descriptive detail when reporting their findings. This is not to say that they are exclusively concerned with description. They are concerned with explanations.”

The epistemological characteristics of qualitative studies usually have an interpretivist approach on how the collected data is used (Bryman, 2015). This means, in contrast to positivism, interpretivism is defined to be a “view of writers who have been critical to the application of the scientific model [positivism] to the study of the social world” and furthermore, they believe that “the subject matter of social sciences – people and institutions- are fundamentally different from that of the [positivistic] natural sciences” (Ibid, 26). In addition to that, qualitative studies have the tendency of relying upon a constructivist ontological basis, defined as a view where culture and institutions are not pre-given but where social reality is constructed (Ibid., 29).
3.2 Relationship between theory and research

The relationship between theory and research is important to understand in order to know how this research justifies its data collection and data analysis (Bryman, 2015). Qualitative studies usually have an inductive or abductive mode of interference (Bryman, 2015). Inductive is defined to be a research strategy where the theory is generated out of the research and abductive is defined as “a reasoning with strong ties to induction that grounds social scientific accounts of social worlds in the perspectives and meanings of participants in those social worlds” (Ibid., 688). In contrast to that, quantitative studies are often associated with deductive reasoning. Commonly characterized as a “top-down” approach, deductive reasoning starts off with a theory, which is the basis for a hypothesis that is then tested and potentially revised in the conclusion (Bryman, 2015). That the relationship between theory and research is separated in this division of (1) inductive and/or abductive (mostly qualitative), and (2) deductive (mostly quantitative) reasoning is, however, according to Bryman (2015: 24) “not a clear cut” and “deductive and inductive strategies are possibly better thought of as tendencies rather than as separated by a hard-and-fast distinction.”

This is important to understand for this research, because, although being a qualitative study, when applying the Theory of PS to the case study this research displays aspects of a deductive study. This is the case as this research applies a theory at the beginning of the research and will then, according to the theory, gather data and form a conclusion. It does, however, not deduce a hypothesis from a theory and neither does it test this hypothesis quantitatively which, as explained above, deductive studies usually do.

Nevertheless, based on the results obtained, when applying the framework to the findings the Theory of PS failed to explain some aspects of the case study. Thus, in the process of this research, the mode of interference developed an abductive character which is defined as a reasoning with which one “grounds the theoretical understanding of the context and people … on the language, meaning and perspective that from their worldview” (Ibid., 394). This means the researcher does not simply apply a theory without considering what data the case study offers outside the chosen framework. This implies that the chosen framework helped to describe and understand the case study but
the abductive reasoning of this research is justified by the fact that it is not sufficient for the researcher to simply come to a “social scientific account” from the perspective of the individuals, groups or societies studied but that the researcher must furthermore “not lose touch with the world” (Bryman et al, 2012: 401).

3.3 Case study selection

The "core goal of qualitative research is the explanation of outcomes in individual cases" (Mahoney et al, 2006: 230). Furthermore, qualitative studies are “focusing on particular cases” and this is why it was decided to use the case study of the responses of the Moroccan leader to the popular discontent during and after the Arab Spring in 2011.

A case study is defined as an “in-depth, multifaceted investigation, using qualitative research methods, of a single social phenomenon” (Feagin, 1991: 2). Focusing on the individual Moroccan case will help to examine in-depth how strategies were used by the Moroccan leader to address popular discontent during the Arab Spring in 2011.

3.4 Generalization & Reliability

As explained above, using a case study means focusing on particular cases and the individual outcome of these cases. This case study method was thus not chosen in order to achieve generalizable results but to understand the specific case.

The constructivist ontological character of this research (as explained above) impairs the assumption that “meanings are highly variable across contexts of human interaction, and do not seek generalizable findings” (Blanche, 2006: 91).

This research rather offers value in terms of transferability, meaning that it aims to give “the reader a detailed and rich description of (the context) …These understandings can then be transferred to other contexts in other studies to provide a framework with which to reflect on … these new context” (Ibid.: 92). In other words, when applying the Theory of PS, this research can offer an example for other, new contexts in which responses to internal unrest can be investigated.
3.5 Data collection

To conduct the case study this research relied on text-analysis of secondary sources. This research is what Bryman (2012: 383) calls a “collection and qualitative analysis of texts and documents” (Ibid.: 383). This research relies on secondary sources: mainly academic articles, books and reports in English.

Literature regarding the Moroccan Arab Spring offers different explanations of how the unrest in 2011 is to be interpreted, yet does not offer a common conclusion surrounding the matter. Secondary data available on the topic of political reform in Morocco is rich and mostly compares promised reforms with the actual outcomes and current situation. To investigate military diversion this research used data on battle-related deaths, general military expenditure and number of troops to investigate the influence of the West Sahara (WS) conflict to the case study. In order to overcome problems of data collection (see 2.1.), this research sought to triangulate information by conducting interviews and/or requesting data from organizations such as the Middle East Institute and the United Nations (UN). A triangulation adds value to this qualitative research since it includes “more than one method or source of data in the study of social phenomena” (Bryman, 2012: 392). The information used from this interview is, however, not information that is directly cited in this research. It was used as a preparation to undertake this research and was helpful to confirm some arguments.

3.6 Limitations and Delimitations

This research is investigating responses to the 2011 Arab Spring, however, the WS conflict is an ongoing and major part of the regime's approach to security, so must be taken into account as a structural factor. This is why this research limits its time frame to 2010-now, but includes the WS and cultural pre-conditions as necessary structural issues, without which, there would be a gaping hole in the context and analysis.

This research faced problems when trying to access certain information and can thus not be fully conclusive because of the limited accessibility of data concerning military activity in the West Sahara region. Additionally, based on the triangulation it was suspected that subsidies of commodity goods were used as a form of economic reform,
which however is difficult to prove and thus is not mentioned as one of the main findings.

In general, literature about the WS conflict is rather limited and this research faced problems when trying to examine Morocco’s military activities, as military data is not accessible due to the sensitive nature of the topic.

Furthermore, this research is limited through the reliance on literature from the English-speaking world. This is a limiting factor as the inclusion of literature in either French or Arabic might offer a different perception of the Moroccan king’s answers to the Arab Spring in 2011. Although this research has tried to incorporate some Arab authors to offer balance with regards to this issue, it must be stated that an additional range of perspectives from a selection of Moroccan authors would be beneficial. However, this research will still remain meaningful since facts and dates about key events that can be seen as reaction by the Moroccan leader are available through other sources. The language issue should rather be of concern, because Arab authors and scholars do not seem to have influenced the literature available in Western countries as much as they perhaps should. This could be because they publish only in Arabic, but more likely, as became apparent during this research project, the debate seems to be dominated by Western scholars writing about the uprising in the Arab world.
4 Findings

The following chapter presents the findings on how the Moroccan leader responded to the popular discontent in 2011. To do so, this chapter will first give background information about the Moroccan political system, which is crucial to understand how the king responded to the uprisings and in order to understand why this research focusses on the Moroccan king as head of state. This chapter will then present findings in a chronological order. This is done in order to give an additional understanding what responses were highest on the policy menu of the Moroccan king. Finally, this chapter will present findings that are to be taken into consideration when analysing the responses by to the Arab Spring in Morocco, while it is not entirely possible to put them into the chronological order of the other responses mentioned in part 4.2.

4.1 Background: The Moroccan Political System

The so called ‘Makhzen principle’ is the crucial aspect shaping the Moroccan political system in which the two divisions of state, the administrative apparatus and the political elite, “are not clearly separated but confused, producing the subordination of a rational-legal legitimacy (dominant in Western governments) to a tradition-oriented legitimacy” (Desrues 2001: 28). This means that a limited number of elite actors have authoritarian power “controlling the bureaucratic-administrative and infrastructural power and consequently the state’s capacity to truly penetrate civil society and take political decisions within national territory” (Ibid.). This group around the king is a network of high-ranking public sector servants that hold crucial positions to steer the country. This elite “has been in power since Morocco’s independence in 1956 and have been skilled at justifying the continuity of the authoritarian practices of the Makhzen in the guise of a technocratic developmental discourse” which conceives modernisation “as a modernity pruned of all the emancipating political or cultural content characteristic of Western thought” (Desrues 2001: 28).

The Moroccan political system and society combine traditionalism and modernization. This combination can create the impression of progress even though dominant monarchical traditions are reproducing the power position of Moroccan kings as being
the political, spiritual, military and economical leader. Desrues (2001:28) argues that the modernisation process commonly seen as a positive one is not what modernity means in the Western debate (Desrues 2001: 28; see also Entelis, 1996: 4). The Moroccan political context has a two-sided character in which seemingly modern policies are carried out in a system based on the makhzen principle creating the opportunity of the monarchy to exercise his power in political, spiritual, military and economical spheres.

The Western-oriented position of the king can create an impression of progress even though dominant monarchical traditions are reproducing the power position of Moroccan kings as being the political, spiritual, military and economical leader. Desrues (2001:28) argues that Morocco’s modernisation process, which commonly seen as a positive one, is not concerned with what modernity means in the Western debate (Desrues 2001: 28; see also Entelis, 1996: 4). The Moroccan political context has a two-sided character in which seemingly modern policies are carried out in a system based on the Makhzen principle, creating the opportunity for the monarch to exercise his power in political, spiritual, military and economical spheres.

In the regional context, Morocco is seen as a Western- and reform-oriented country (Hashas, 2013). This exceptionalism did not just occur with the Arab Spring but can be observed since independence. Since 1956 the Moroccan monarchy has been an ally of Western countries, especially the U.S. (Ibid.: 2). Morocco’s regime survival is often identified as a result of it being one of those countries that has a very traditionally rooted institutional structure (Brownlee, Masoud, & Reynolds, 2014).

4.2 Early Reaction in 2011

4.2.1 Before the February 20th movement

Before the 20th February Movement started, there has been some responses already arranged to lower the probability of an escalation (Molina, 2011: 437). These arrangements were

“pre-emptive actions designed to neutralize the mobilizations in the run-up to the first demonstration were socio-economic measures (increased
subsidization of basic food products and fuel, salary raises for civil servants, the creation of jobs for unemployed graduates and a subsidy for the unemployed, the establishment of obligatory medical insurance and an expansion of free health care provision) and intensified contact with all the relevant political and social actors” (Ibid.; see also).

These actions cost Morocco 20% of its budget (Thakore, 2014) but the subsidization of consumer goods brought, according to (Thakore, 2014), “social peace” to Morocco.

When Morocco faced terrorist attacks in 2003, the monarchy tried to create a sense of unity against the terrorist attackers. The aim was to send a message to the outside world that Morocco is not a terrorist cell but furthermore, it was a campaign to unify the people against a common enemy (Rogers, 2012). The state reacted with a “public (state-sponsored) response [which] upped the political-imagistic ante: protests circulated a locally resonant icon – a Hand of Fatima emblazoned with the slogan ‘Ma Tqi ch Bla da’ (Don’t Touch my Country)” (Ibid.: 458). This symbol, the Hand of Fatima, is a “gendered referent in North Africa; in addition to a folkloric association with the Prophet’s daughter, the icon and other ‘popular’ religious practices are considered the domain of women – in contrast with male-dominated spaces of the mosque” (Dialmy 1995, Mernissi 1997 in Rogers 2012: 472). The Hand of Fatima became an icon “for demonstrations: it appeared on T-shirts, banners, billboards and posters and continues to function as a cultural marketing device – multiple levels of signification operate within the isolated image” (Ibid. 458).

Rogers (2012) speaks of a ‘religious nationalism’ that uses indigenous symbols and tradition to create group feelings and steer political decisions:

“The Moroccan regime ... has triumphed ... far through its careful crafting of a religious nationalism unique in the region, defined through powerful symbols. The hands of Moroccan women [hand of Fatima] prove resonant images in the fight against terrorism, populist discontent and the spectre of regional regime change. Fatima’s hennaed palm serves as a terrain on which to articulate and contest national identity, revolutionary struggle and the people’s voice in forging a new and more open future” (Rogers, 2012: 456).
These religious aspects present in Moroccan politics are seen to have the power of “mobilization and disputation” and the use of cultural symbols (hand of Fatima) and religious traditions in connection with politics creates a cohesive effect and is used as a tool to control “potential political threats” such as terrorist groups or internal unrest (Ibid.: 462).

In 2011, Morocco responded to the Arab Spring before the Moroccan version of the 20th February Movement was even born. When “Morocco’s pro-reform contingent scheduled a day of demonstrations on 20 February” Moroccan authorities had already installed placards, showing the Hand of Fatima in the capital, Marrakech (Figure 1). This happened before 20th February, specifically “on 19 February, [when] the billboards familiar from Casablanca 2003 were quietly resurrected in city centres throughout the country” (Rogers, 2012: 464).

Over the course of time, the symbol of the Hand of Fatima became a recurring icon. No longer installed as placards, but used by the demonstrators themselves (Figure 2). The associated colour scheme changed and sometimes other slogans, such as “Enough Mocking Us”, sympathizing with Arab Spring movements in other countries as well, were used (Ibid.:567).
Figure 2 shows a “defiant young woman among the marchers held aloft, with hennaed hands, a banner in the familiar shape” yet without the same connotation embedded in the slogan “‘Don’t steal my country’, [that] appeared on previous signs, subtle changes to its visual depiction carried a subversive new message” (Rogers, 2012: 469). This message was then used instead of what which the state-sponsored campaign had intended to be communicated (Ibid.).

4.2.2 Directly after the 20th February (March – July 2011)

The Makhzen principle (see chapter 4.1) enables the king to be the first politician, first businessmen and first military officer. Impersonating all these combined power positions, the king addressed his people three weeks after the 20th February Movement was born, in his speech on the 9th of March 2011, the king promised “reforms in the political, economic, social and cultural domains, and in development-related sectors” (Mohammed VI, 2011). This section will show that the king as ‘amir al muminin’ (Commander of the Faithful) bases his rule on the fact that he is a direct descendant of the Prophet Mohammed. This section will then accordingly identify how the king used
these power positions (political, economic, military and religious) to respond with political reform, economic reform and repression to the Arab Spring in 2011.

Within the year following the 20th February Movement, the monarchy had initiated a process of constitutional reform. This process started within one month of the 20th February movement in 2011. On March 9th 2011, the king announced constitutional reform and a referendum which was held on the 1st July 2011, after which “the constitution was adopted with a majority vote - out of a turnout of 72%, 98% consented to it” (Hashas, 2013: 11). Maggi (2013: 21) states that “if there is a pattern of institutional reforms in Morocco it is called guided change, introduced from the top-down and lead from above.” This announcement of the reform was a “surprise” and was taken “under the pretext of taking forward the ongoing process of ‘advanced regionalization’ … [but] without mentioning the 20 February Movement” (Molina, 2011: 349). At this point the king promised that this reform will include measures to increase “powers of the prime minister, establish a separation of powers and the independence of the judiciary, increase individual and collective liberties and turn Amazigh into an official language” (Ibid.). The quick announcement by the king was followed by a quick first draft of the new constitution. To accelerate the reform process

“By the month of June, the king established an ad hoc Consultative Commission for the Reform of the Constitution (CCRC) made up of experts and representatives of civil society, who were all appointed by him (thus ignoring the historic demands, now renewed, for a constituent assembly)”

Whose members were chosen by the king which was a reason for the 20th February movement to reject the draft (Ibid.).

The work of the CCRC was under the supervision of a ‘Political Mechanism for the Monitoring of the Constitutional Reform’ which enabled actors such “leaders of political parties and trade unions” to hand in suggestions (Ibid.). This process was “headed by royal adviser Mohamed Moatassim” (Ibid.). This strategy “in the name of ‘participatory approach’, [included] all the recognized political and social organizations of the country – even the 20 February Movement – were invited to submit proposals to the CCRC” (Ibid.). The whole process of constitutional reform was
“Characterized by the imposition of a tight timeframe (little more than three months) and the secrecy of proceedings. The parties complained that they had not received a written copy of the draft submitted by the CCRC until the day before (17 June) the king called on all Moroccans to participate in the referendum on the new constitutional text that took place on 1 July; a week earlier they had been briefed on its main contents, but only verbally. This opacity, along with some leaks, raised speculation about the final content of the text” (Ibid.).

Three hours before the royal speech on 17th June “Moatassim introduced some modifications to the draft of the CCRC ..., even on the day before the referendum, three articles were furtively corrected in the official bulletin” (Ibid.). The referendum was influenced by a

“campaign preceding the referendum was marked by an express call from Mohamed [sic] VI to vote ‘yes’ – contravening his theoretical neutrality as head of state – and an attempt by the authorities to ensure massive participation with the aim of legitimizing the process” (Ibid.).

Although there was no “systematic censorship, representation of the various positions in the media was unbalanced” (Ibid.). The outcome of the referendum was “overwhelmingly positive for the regime, with 98.5 per cent voting in favour of the new constitution and an official rate of participation of 73.5 per cent” (Ibid.: 440) To ensure that the international arena still sees Morocco as the democratic role model and the king the ‘reformist’, the “constitutional reform process was accompanied by an intense diplomatic campaign aimed at ‘selling’ the results – even before they were known” (Ibid.: 440)

Khan (2014: 1) states that political changes in Morocco and Jordan were “controlled by the rulers, whereas in the other four countries they were driven by the protesters.” Those reforms “enacted in Morocco appear to be ... incisive, especially the ones dealing with the political process. A notable reform was the decision to appoint the Prime Minister—
who had previously been directly appointed by the king at his discretion—based on the leader of the winning party in legislative elections” (Molina, 2011: 440).

It appears that the Moroccan king accepted “validity of most ... demands [of the 20 FM] and announced far-reaching amendments to the constitutions” which prevented the riots from becoming larger and more violent protests, whilst allowing the king time to organize countermeasures to ensure the survival of his regime (Khan & Merzan, 2016: 3).

Buehler (2015: 92f) and Alianak (2014: 101) describe how Moroccan kings have continuously used repression to shut down both union and urban unrest. Examples are “persecution, imprisonment, fragmentation [...] of opposition groups, evacuations, deportations, ‘disappearances’ and exile (Ibid.). From a highly repressive leadership style, King Hassan II (1961–99) “constructed a political regime that, while recognizing a multi-party system, relegated the political parties to a marginal and subordinate position” (Desrues 2001: 20). In the 1960s and 1970s the country experienced an increase in repression wherein it was hard for “anyone suspected of being critical of the monarchy—could potentially be subject to a wide range of punishments, often just for the “crime” of a rumoured political affiliation” (Ibid.). During his reign the style of repression changed into “a softer style of repression that blended handsome rewards and harsh punishments”, now the “preferred tactic was to neutralize potential power contenders through incentives such as generous land grants, business deals, and offers of well-paid government positions” (Ibid.).

In 2011 repression became evident as well. Although the reform process had started, the protests did not disappear (Monila, 2011). With repression as a tool to avoid possible further outbreaks, the monarchy temporarily de-escalated the intensity of the protests. Demonstrations and

“‘national marches’ organized once a month (20 March, 24 April, 22 May, 19 June) ... were interpreted as indications of some form of radicalization and, in the weeks following the bomb attack in Marrakesh on 28 April, they served as a pretext for the government to ban some demonstrations and repress them with
overwhelming violence, to the point of prompting criticisms from the EU” (Ibid.).

Even though studies have identified that countries that survived the Arab Spring did so because of their oil and gas wealth, “the only old regimes that still survive in the same form as they were before the Arab Spring are the two non-oil Arab monarchies (Morocco and Jordan)” (Winckler, 2013: 69). Morocco “had negligible oil resources, ranging from zero dollars to 450 in per capita value” (Brownlee, 2014: 4). Therefore, Morocco is a counterexample to the mentioned studies’ findings and the question for the reason why Morocco survived the Arab Spring arises.

Morocco’s unrest was triggered by the high prices of consumer goods. This, combined with demonstrations aiming for democratization, made

“the Moroccan monarchy respond... to both types of protest by announcing constitutional change, although not fully in line with the protesters’ demands, and subsequently in late April, economic improvements involving increases in the basic national minimum wage and in public service salaries”

But the monarchy still managed to preserve “the essential prerogatives of the existing power-structures intact, thus avoiding key popular demands for genuine democratic participation” (Joffé, 2011: 510f).

4.3 Factors Stabilizing the Regime

4.3.1 The ongoing conflict in the West Sahara (WS)

Moroccan policy on the West Sahara has stagnated with one strong position being maintained for many decades (BICC, 2016: 2). The military invasion in 1976 and following disputes between the independence movement Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguía el Hamra y Río de Oro (Polisario) situated in Algeria and Morocco have resulted in armed conflict, deaths and long lasting frozen diplomatic relations between Morocco and Algeria (Ibid.). These events added a conflict in the
region that was triggered by decisions made by colonial powers concerning the territory (Ibid.).

The presence of Moroccan military personnel and the military expenditure per capita have been consistently high since 1997. There have been small recurring disputes, such as when, three months after the Moroccan Arab Spring, the two conflict parties started negotiations about the dispute which once more did not lead to any solution (Ibid.). The negotiations are still blocked because of the status of the territory. Morocco remains resolute in its position that the West Sahara is the so-called ‘Southern province’, whereas Algeria together with the Polisario demand a referendum about the final status (Ibid.).

The Moroccan military’s main tasks include “the service in the conflict against the Polisario- Liberation Front as well as the defending against potential external threats. Furthermore, the internal security and stability of the monarchy” (BICC, 2016: 2). The Moroccan troops have been modernized in order to achieve an “absolute ... superiority” of military capabilities towards Algeria (Ibid.). The military is overall “pro-Western and anti-islamist” and the king is the “supreme commander” with strong power over both “the internal security apparatus and the military itself” (Ibid.)

Looking at the Global Military Index Morocco’s by Bonn International Centre for Conversion (BICC) [1] that weighs a country’s militarization in relation to its society, one can identify that Morocco has not noticeably increased in militarization level (Figure 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<td>Militarization</td>
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<td>718</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>720</td>
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<tr>
<td>Index-ranking</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Global militarization Index - Morocco’s rank. Source: BICC, 2016

1 Indicators are Expenditures: Military expenditures as percentage of GDP, Military expenditures in relation to health spending; Personnel: Military and paramilitary personnel in relation to population, Military reserves in relation to population, Military and paramilitary personnel in relation to physicians; Weapons: Heavy weapons in relation to population
In direct response to the 20th February movement,

“media outlets close to the regime carried out an intense campaign to discredit the promoters of the protests, accusing them of serving ulterior objectives or being the ‘enemies of territorial integrity’ (in reference to the Western Sahara conflict), while not holding back from intimidation and harassment of activists (anonymous telephone calls, brief detention and interrogation, pressure on family members, hacking into email accounts or social network communications)” (Molina, 2011 438).

This shows, how the WS conflict as one of the three topics that no one is able to criticise without persecution is a topic that influenced the dynamics of the Arab Spring in Morocco.

4.3.2 Religion

Based on the so called ‘Sharifian principle’ the Moroccan kings “lay claim to being the direct descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, making them both the temporal and spiritual rulers of the country” (Ibid.). The Moroccan king is the *Amir Al Mu’minin*, the ‘Commander of the Faithful.’

Morocco’s population is highly homogenous both ethnically and religiously. 99% of Moroccans are Arab-Berber. Religiously, 99% of Moroccans are Sunni Muslims and the rest of the population is Christian, Jewish, Shia Muslim, and Baha’i (Abbott & Teti, 2016:9). The *Makhzen principle* that grants the king competence within the political, economic and military spheres is thus rooted in the claim to the throne based on spiritual authority because it combines both spiritual and temporal legitimacy (Kisaichi, 2007: 15). The Moroccan people have a “profound identification with and attachment to Islam, Arabism and Moroccan nationalism” (Entelis, 1996: 4). These three aspects (Islam, Arabism and Moroccan nationalism) have been the “overwhelming bases for individual and local as well as collective identity” (Ibid.).

Since this is used to justify the rule of the king, it is also the base for ruling other spheres of society, namely the political, economic and military. During the
constitutional reform process religion was a topic as well. In the old constitution the fact
that the king is the *Amir al Mumini* was explained in Article 19. In the new constitution
the “article 19 of the previous constitution has simply been split into two parts (41 and
42) while failing to remove the ambiguity surrounding the role of the king” (Molina:
2011). Article 41 “grants him the title of amir al muminin, the presidency of the
Superior Council of the Ulemas and the function of ‘caring for the respect of Islam’, at
the same time as guaranteeing ‘freedom of worship’ (Ibid.: 440).

The 20FM demanded limits to the king’s power, as being the spiritual leader he used
religious terms and justifications in his speech on the 9th of March. The king started off
by saying “Praise be to God. May peace and blessings be upon the Prophet” and ended
the speech with “I only desire (your) betterment to the best of my power; and my
success (in my task) can only come from Allah. In Him I trust, and unto Him I look.
True is the Word of God” (Mohammed VI, 2011). The position as Commander of the
Faithful is seen as a role of a protector of the Moroccan people and its territorial
integrity which becomes clear when the Moroccan king stated that

> “the sacred character of our immutable values, which are unanimously supported
by the nation - namely Islam as the religion of a state which guarantees freedom
of worship; Imarat al-Muminin (Commandership of the faithful); the monarchy;
national unity and territorial integrity; and commitment to democratic principles
- provides solid guarantees for a historic consensual agreement and a new
charter between the Throne and the People” (Ibid.)

This shows how the Moroccan king used the three aspects identified above Islam and
Moroccan Nationalism in his speech to introduce the constitutional changes.

4.3.3 Economic Process

The 20th February Movement “also called for economic reforms to provide broad-based
growth and much needed jobs (Khan & Merzan, 2016: 3). In recent years Morocco
initiated “prudent macroeconomic policies … [that] helped reduce external and fiscal
imbalances in recent years. The completion of the subsidy reforms initiated in 2014
coupled with a solid fiscal management and financial oversight contributed to further
reducing the fiscal deficit to an estimated 3.9 percent of GDP in 2016 and to stabilizing
the public debt at around 66 percent of GDP” (World Bank, 2017). In the Arab transition countries leaders “recognize[d] that generalized subsidies systems are unsustainable. Not only are they very costly for public finances, they are highly inefficient as the benefits do not go just to the segments of the populations that need subsidies. Nevertheless, in the first two years after the uprisings, these subsidies were maintained” (Khan, 2014: 5).

This chapter described the main responses by the king to the Arab Spring in Morocco chronologically. It identifies historical factors (how Moroccan kings traditionally respond) and economic factors (Oil and gas wealth). By applying the Theory of PS in the next chapter it will be shown how these two factors (historical and economic) influenced the position of the policies on the ranking.
5 Analysis

In order to answer the research question, this chapter shall apply the Theory of PS to investigate how the Moroccan king responded to the popular discontent during and after the Arab Spring in 2011. Based on the chosen framework, this chapter will separate the analysis of findings in subsections. The Theory of PS suggests that there are two main factors that influence what policies are chosen to respond to internal unrest, namely the leader’s preferences and environmental factors. This chapter will look into these two factors which includes the fact that pre-existing structures such as the existence of the WS-conflict and its impact on the socio-economic structures that enables regime survival are characteristics of the case study which cannot fully be understood through Amy Oakes’ (2012) approach. This is the case because the Theory of PS does not consider environmental factors, such as culture and already existing conflicts, as a possible factor that can influence regime survival.

This section will be concerned with analysing which policy options were the preferred answer to the unrest in 2011. The key findings of this research showed that the Moroccan leader employed a strategy to respond to the popular uprisings in 2011 by political reform, economic reform, and the usage of cultural symbols. Furthermore, the findings showed that the WS conflict and the socio-economic structures are crucial pre-conditions that enabled the Moroccan leader to address the 20th February Movement.

All in all, one can say the Moroccan leader and his closest collaborators have “managed to take control of the situation and take hold of the reins of political change” (Molina, 2011: 441) which was mainly evident in the process of political reform. But also the other responses “provided the regime with sufficient internal consensus and international support to weather the storm” (Ibid.).

5.1 The Moroccan Leader’s responses to the Arab Spring

The Theory of PS assumes that a leader prefers certain policy options over others to respond to internal unrest. The leader’s preferences (Oakes, 2012) that describe “how the decision maker assesses the desirability of each option on the policy menu and then
ranks the options from most to least attractive” became clear in the findings chapter (Oakes, 2012: 6). Analysing the earliest reactions by the Moroccan king, one can see that there have been two policy options that one can identify as being prioritized by the Moroccan king. The earliest response, which started with the speech by the Moroccan king, was political reform.

The Theory of PS offers a way to analyse the response of a leader by acknowledging that diversionary tactics can also be non-militarily and that the policy option ‘diversionary war’ can have different manifestations (full-scale and low-level diversionary wars). This framework explains that a leader can as well choose from non-military policy options such as political reform, economic reform, muddling through, and repression. These non-military tactics are seen as diversionary tactics in a broad definition that can have the same effects as a military one. With this approach Oakes (2012) identifies reasons why a leader might be unwilling or unable to respond with diversionary military tactics, and she incorporates a broader range of non-military policy options into a leader's toolbar of diversionary tactics.

The way the Moroccan king broadcasted his speech on television can be identified as a tool with which he could reach out to many people, including illiterates, the youth and older members of society. Not just the initiation but the implementation of the promised reforms has been carried out on a tight schedule: The constitutional reform was organized and executed within a very short period of time which furthermore speaks for a response that succeeded in undermining potential further escalation of the issue. The impression that the political reform was steered and orchestrated becomes even more evident in the establishment of the ad hoc CCRC commission that was appointed by the monarchy to supervise the transition. The political reform as a response to internal unrest has clearly been used as a way to react to the demands of the demonstrators whilst still remaining in power.

5.2 Environmental factors

The environmental factors are those factors, limiting or enabling a leader to execute certain policy options. The environmental factors are embedded in the political culture and the society.
The extractive capacity of Morocco, meaning the “state’s ability to efficiently mobilize societal resources” is comparatively low due to the negotiable income through oil and gas revenues (Oakes, 2012: 7-8). Thus, Morocco can be identified as a pauper state, as such Morocco could not afford some policy options on Oakes’ (2012) policy menu. According to the Theory of PS (Oakes, 2012), diversionary war, economic reform and repression are costlier than others (e.g. diversionary spectacle, political reform, requesting foreign intervention and muddling through) and it is assumed that states with a high extractive capacity (princely states) have a wider “range of response to unrest” than pauper states that have a low extractive capacity (Ibid: 14). This is an explanation of why a full-scale diversionary war did not become evident in the findings. Nevertheless, it seems Morocco’s king did not choose a diversionary spectacle either, but the findings show that he chose the policy option of repression right after the policy option of political reform. The fact that he chose repression, contradicts with the Theory of PS (Oakes, 2012) and its assumption that pauper states cannot chose costlier policy options.

5.3 Other Factors Enabling Responses

Some factors which became evident in the findings could perhaps count as environmental factors in a broad term (when allow or restraining the ability of Morocco’s king to respond in a certain way), they are however not clearly marked as possible environmental factors by Amy Oakes (2012) because the Theory of PS has a clear tendency to focus on financial resources when talking about the extractive capacity of a state as the most important environmental factor.

While it became clear that a full scale diversionary war was not chosen by the Moroccan king, the diversionary theory of war and the connected rally-around-the-flag-effect can still be of help to interpret the findings of this research. The ongoing conflict in the West Sahara has had, although not directly used as a response to the Arab Spring, an effect on the socio-political structures in the country. This became evident in the fact that protesters were presented as ‘enemies of territorial integrity’, using the territorial dispute to create internal cohesion (Molina, 2011). The aspect that the ongoing conflict involves a big part of the Moroccan military is also an important factor. Barany (2013:
160) states that “much of the Moroccan army has been kept busy for decades in the West Sahara” and connects this fact with the two unsuccessful military coups experienced by Morocco in the 1970s. With this he refers to military cohesion within the military apparatus. He argues that this cohesion within the institution decreases the probability of military coups (Ibid.). The aspect that the conflict exists can thus be seen as somewhat stabilizing the internal political sphere when successful military coups become less likely and a military apparatus loyal to the monarchy can be used to enforce repression as a sort of direct answer to popular uprisings.

It has become evident that the West Sahara conflict was used as a response to the Arab Spring in Morocco, but in a different way than this research first predicted it to be. Not as a military diversionary response but as a mean to increase group cohesion, the WS conflict was used to place the promoters of protest as an enemy of state when accusing them of objectives to threaten the ‘territorial integrity’. This shows the influence the WS conflict was intended to on group dynamics in Morocco. Although it does not become clear from the findings whether these accusations actually had an impact, it is however interesting that at least the initiators of this campaign thought, the WS conflict could have a certain influence in the people to create a rally-around-the-flag-effect without initiating any further military actions.

Furthermore, it was shown that cultural identity unifying factor should not be neglected when analysing this particular case study. The ‘Sharifian principle’ as the justification with which the Moroccan monarchs claim their descendants from Prophet Mohammed is the very reason why the monarch is enabled to exercise power in all levels of society. It is clear that religion itself cannot be seen as a direct response either, yet it became evident that it outshines the other policies chosen by the Moroccan king. The findings suggest that the political/constitutional reform was connected to the religious and/or cultural foundations. In his speech, when starting and ending with religious expressions, the Moroccan king repeatedly reminded his people that the religious background of his rule is a strong and dominant tradition in Morocco. Furthermore, culture is also connected to the policy option of repression, since the monarchy is keen on defeating any sort of critics against the three topics of monarchy, West Sahara conflict and Islam. As described in the findings, the religious homogeneity of the Moroccan people is strikingly high. The religious nationalism outlined by Rogers (2012) can thus be seen as
a unifying factor that has a supporting influence deescalating the situation by reinforcing the diverting impact of the policy option political reform and repression.

The fact that placards showing the Hand of Fatima with the slogan “don’t steal my country” were installed before the movement had officially started, is an interesting finding that is, however, hard to explain with the chosen framework. This is in line with the earlier 2003 Casablanca symbols, which were used to unify the country against the common terrorist threat, showing that the use of the Hand of Fatima was used in a similar vein to invoke the group feeling that was created in 2003 (Rogers, 201).

The reference to the religious/cultural affiliation of an extremely homogenous country is a way of responding which is not yet a part of that which the Theory of PS offers as policy option. Nor does the Theory of PS offer explanations of a leader reacting to internal unrest before it was even born. One has to admit that the Moroccan authorities have certainly been aware of some disruptive tendencies in the country, influenced by the self-immolation of Bouazizi in 2010. This means it is somewhat logical that leaders might try to respond as early as possible.

The symbol of the Hand of Fatima chosen to create a pro-regime cohesion, was indeed helpful to create a feeling of belonging, however it did not function as diversion from the internal struggle and the desired rally-around-the-flag effect never materialized. Instead, it was adapted by the demonstrators to create their own symbols to reinforce group-identity.

This finding is of special interest, because it was an official symbol that was adopted contrary to the regime’s intended use, despite having been put in place before the movement had started. Furthermore, it included elements that called for religious cohesion or attempted to create a religious diversion.
Conclusion and Recommendations

The research question *how did the Moroccan king respond to the Popular Uprising during and after the Arab Spring in 2011* was answered by analysing the findings through applying the *Theory of PS* by Amy Oakes (2012). This analysis has shown that the Moroccan king chose political reform and repression as preferred policy options.

The key findings of this research showed that the earliest responses were the installation of cultural symbols, political reform and repression. The analysis identified political reform and repression as the leader’s preferred answer to unrest. This research furthermore pointed out that cultural/religious diversion through the enforcement of religious cohesion can be a unifying factor, which is, however, not built within some years, but over a long period of time. This is why this research showed that long-term socio-economic pre-conditions are important to understand the Moroccan case. In line with this, it became evident in the analysis that the ongoing West Sahara conflict can be seen as, despite not being a direct diversionary response, a factor which creates a feeling of unity and a military apparatus that is loyal towards the monarchy, which enables the king to carry out other policy options such as repression more easily. What was identified as environmental factors by Amy Oakes (2012) is, however, more to be seen as structural or contextual factors and the term environmental factors can be a bit misleading.

By applying the *Theory of PS*, this research used Amy Oakes’ (2012) approach. The theory is a good tool that helped to answer the research question. The theory suggests that a leader chooses from a policy menu of possible responses to internal unrest in order to distract its people and secure regime survivability. The political reform initiated and executed in an extremely short period of time is the one policy option where one could possibly compare the impact the response had on the development of the 20th Movement.

In conclusion, one can say that the regime survival of the Moroccan monarchy can be explained through their applying the *Theory of PS*. Amy Oakes’ (2012) approach to combine military and non-military diversionary responses into one framework allowed this research to use a strategy to discover those responses and was thus still the basis for
what this research was able to suggest as an additional measurement that should be incorporated into the framework. The analysis revealed some aspects where the framework could be improved: The Theory of PS should include environmental factors that are not just focused on materialistic resources to enable a leader to overcome internal struggle. This section should also include possible factors, such as culture and socio-economic structures, to count as a factor allowing leaders to exercise their responses to internal unrest. Furthermore, the framework is not clear on how to deal with aspects that were already in place before the protests have started. The Theory of PS could furthermore be improved by measurements that allow the researcher to show whether a response was successful or not. One can only explain that responses were chosen and the researcher can assume that chosen responses to popular uprising influenced the outcome of the protests, but it does not do so by measuring the actual impact of policy responses.

This research did not want to investigate the impact of reforms. Nevertheless, during the research process it became clear that the chosen framework cannot measure the impact of reforms. One can compare the promised reforms with the actual implementation but although comparison of the promised reforms and the outcome might glimpse through some parts of the findings chapter, it is important to say that the Theory of PS does not give tools to measure the actual impact of the diversionary policy measurement. This research offered an overview of the Moroccan leader’s responses to the popular uprisings during and after the Arab Spring in 2011, but a valuable extension of this research would be to measure the connection between the survival of the regime and the chosen response by the Moroccan leader through field work. Future research on the topic of this research could add value to the discussion surrounding regime survival by developing frameworks for measuring the actual impact of the chosen policy response. New approaches on how to measure the impact of regime survival strategies should be able incorporate the voices of protesters and citizens and measure whether the response by the leader had an impact on them or not.

When analysing regime survival, researchers should not just analyse tactics to avoid an escalation of conflict as *per se* negative. The chosen framework does not explain whether the fact that military or non-military diversionary tactics were used is something that is in general negative for the population and the democratization
processes or if it actually avoids further violence and even deaths on both sides. This is as well connected to the aspect that the framework fails to give tools to measure the impact of diversionary responses, when it does not allow a measurement of whether a de-escalation of popular uprisings actually led to a de-escalation of violence, hence avoiding negative effects such as civil war (like in Syria and Libya). The ethics behind the decisions of a leader are presented as greedy self-interest in staying in power. This is something that this research did not aim to answer but it certainly is of interest for future research to investigate whether diversionary tactics (both military and non-military) are ethically justified, because they might de-escalate conflicts or avoid violence.

This research added value to the discussion about regime survival in the case of the Moroccan Arab Spring not only by applying the Theory of PS as a structuring device but also adds value by giving an example how diversionary tactics can be seen as non-military. By reviewing the framework’s applicability to the chosen case study, this research encourages future research to further develop approaches of diversionary tactics and related mechanisms such as in-group-outgroup thinking or the rally-around-the flag-effect that can help understanding regime survival outside the U.S. case.

In recent months, Morocco experienced a new wave of protests starting in al-Hoceima, in the North of Morocco after a local farmer killed himself when being exposed to corruption and confiscations of his belongings. Unfortunately, this research was not able to capture these events, mainly because reliable sources on the matter do not exist yet. It is, however, extremely important to point out that this research and the chosen framework can just explain how the Moroccan regime survived temporarily and the new developments show that regime survival does not mean that protests will not be able to occur again.
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