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Shouting in the Dark?

The Arab Spring as an Expression of Social
Anomie in the Bahraini context



A Bahraini Shi'ite woman sits with Bahraini flag and cloth covering her mouth which reads "We are Staying", during a rally held by the main opposition al-Wefaq party, in Diraz, west of Manama July 29, 2011. (Reuters/Hamad I Mohammed/Files)

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Abstract

In the beginning of 2012, on the 25th of January, Egyptians celebrated the first anniversary of Egyptian Revolution, while Bahrain's anniversary of the February 14 Revolution was marked by violent protest demanding social, political and economic reforms and an end to discriminating policies. Even though one year passed since these revolutionary movements spread from Tunisia all over the Arab world, social scientists still do not provide adequate frameworks to understand and reconstruct the causes and effects of these popular movements. With that said, this research explains the Bahraini uprising from a sociological perspective, by applying Durkheim and Merton's theory of social anomie. It is argued that due to a non-existing or inconsistent norm and value structure, generated by context-specific social and political developments, young Shiites are particularly prone to develop anomic feelings, which lead to protest movements and culminated in the February 14 Revolution. By applying a mixed methods approach, it is possible to identify strong links between social anomie on the system level and the individual level, particularly affecting the young Shiite population, and the February 14 Revolution.

Keywords: Arab Spring, Bahrain, Political Transition, Social Anomie

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Abbreviations

AGS	Arab Gulf States
BICI	Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
ICG	International Crisis Group
ILO	International Labour Organization
NAC	National Action Charter
SAD	Swiss Academy for Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Research Problem

During my last four months in Bahrain I could sometimes hear them shouting in the dark, standing on the roof of their houses and shouting “Alahu Akbar” (Arabic for “God is great”), which, according to locals, is the only thing left to do in this revolution “...that was abandoned by the Arabs, forsaken by the West and forgotten by the world.” (AlJazeera English). Considering the causes and effects of the Bahraini uprising, also known as the February 14 Revolution, the western world including the academic circles also seem to be “Shouting in the Dark”, which is the title of Aljazeera’s awarded documentary about the revolution in Bahrain, an island kingdom where the majority of the population is Shiite, while the Kingdom’s royal family being in power for nearly 200 years is Sunni.

Starting with the suicide of Mohamed Bouazizi on December 17 in 2010, revolutionary movements started to spread to spread over the Arab world, which became generally known as the Arab spring. Bouazizi was a frustrated young Tunisian vegetable seller, whose business was threatened by a policewoman, who confiscated his vegetable cart and humiliated him by slapping the 26 year old, breadwinner of a family of eight (Abouzeid 2011, Levs 2011).

Even though various journalists (Massad 2011, Bowen 2011, LeVine 2011, Ryan 2011 etc.) address and describe the uprisings following the suicide of Mohamed Bouazizi, the academic circles do not yet analytically and critically rejoiner to the question of why these uprisings took place at this point in time and what the future will look like for these particular countries.

However, referring to Durkheim’s (1951) groundbreaking book in the field of sociology, called *Suicide*, the researcher noticed unexpected analogies between Buazizi’s suicide and Durkheim’s elaborations about the anomic suicide, which he classifies as a particular type of suicide alongside the altruistic, egoistic and fatalistic suicide. Characterized by a mood of anger, disappointment, pain and disillusionment, the anomic suicide, derives from societal disintegration and an under-regulating norm and value structure. As compared to the fatalistic suicide, which is committed on grounds of “... excessive regulation, that of persons with futures pitilessly blocked and passions violently chocked by oppressive discipline” (Durkheim 1951: 276) the anomic suicide can be seen as the reverse image of the fatalistic suicide as the suicidal act is committed on grounds of under-regulating instead of over-regulating norms.

This means that individuals' ability to fulfill their goals is prevented by a norm and value structure, which does not provide enough and the legitimate means to regulate one's objectives. The classification of different kinds of suicides was initially developed by Durkheim and since then adopted, amended and applied by various scholars for most diverse social settings all around the world (Aliverdinia and Pridemore 2009: 3010; Gane 2005: 235).

Following Buazizi's desperate act of self-murder, mass uprisings spread from North Africa to the Middle East, but Bahrain was the only country in the Gulf to experience similar movements like in Egypt, Tunisia or Libya. This may sound surprising due to Bahrain's development and democratic reforms, which brought about its reputation as a democratic role model in the region (Al-Hassan 2009; International Crisis Group (ICG) 2005: 3). Considering this circumstance in combination with Bahrain's wealth, very high human development status (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2011) and its demographic structure (Schmidmayr 2011: 80), Bahrain suits as an interesting example to understand and reconstruct the societal circumstances leading to the uprising in 2011.

Even though some researchers investigate potential relationships between democratic transitions, political unrest and social anomie (Atteslander, Gransow and Western 1999) – decisive factors for a country's development – Bahrain and the Arab countries have not yet been objects of research in this field. Based on these reflections, this study analyses the socio-political context and its effects on the scale of social anomie as well as its connection to the February 14 Revolution. Accordingly, the theory of social anomie is used as an instrument to understand the societal and political (conflict) structures contributing to the uprising in 2011. Considering the processual character of social anomie, Bahrain's political and social development is analyzed from a historical perspective starting with its independence in 1971. This approach enables to identify those political and social changes, which contain an anomic potential, and to draw a connection between the emergence of anomie on the system level and the societal groups' exposure and reaction to these anomic structures. Thus, social anomie can be seen as a cause and a consequence by assuming that anomic conditions emerge as a consequence of certain political and social developments, which are said to cause social change, namely the February 14 Revolution.

1.2 Literature Review

The concept of social anomie can be traced back to the sociologists Émile Durkheim and Robert K. Merton. Both researchers argue that a breakdown in the social regulation of individual conduct pressures individuals into deviant behaviors, as individuals no longer have the legitimate means to satisfy their needs. Following this assumption, most research about social anomie limits itself to the microlevel and focuses on the relationship between an individual's inability to satisfy its needs and the occurrence of crime/delinquency (Agnew and Passas 1997: 2-4; Luff 1998: 39). However, the concept of social anomie contains a broader scope of application.

For this reason, several social scientists tried to link the causes and effects of social anomie to the individual and the state level, which are said to occur particularly often during transitional periods¹. While effects of social anomie can also emerge in democratic countries or dictatorial regimes, transitional countries are more prone to anomic structures due to changing, inconsistent or a lack of regulation mechanisms. Based on these reflections, the German sociologist Peter Waldmann (2003) specialized in anomie research by transferring the concept of social anomie to developing/transitional countries. In his collected edition *Diktatur, Demokratisierung und soziale Anomie*, various case studies exemplify the connection between political changes, revolt and social anomie such as Fisac and Fernandez-Stembridge's (2003) contribution *Uncertainty and Social Change in the People's Republic of China*, which draws a connection between China's easing of political control, its liberalization and westernization process and the occurrence of social anomie.

Aside from Waldmann, the Swiss Academy for Development (SAD) undertook an anomie research project with the aim of comparing the sources and consequences of anomie in six diverse societies, cultures and economies in order to detect indicators of anomie for the development of an early detection system that can alert decision makers to rethink certain development strategies. This research project is based on the idea that social anomie is strongly linked to political instability and unrest – conditions highly detrimental for a country's development (Atteslander, Gransow and Western 1999).

¹ This research uses the term "transitional" in order to describe the democratic change of a political system, shifting from a dictatorial regime to a democratic governmental system.

While reviewing the literature available at present, it is worthy to note that anomie research in Arab countries is not existent. Neither Waldmann nor SAD's research project addresses the Arab world just as no elaborate theoretical framework exists, which explicitly links political unrest, democratic change and social anomie. On that account, this research aims to fill this gap in modern anomie research by studying the case of Bahrain and relating it to the Arab spring in general.

Despite the gap in academic literature, the study's feasibility is assured due to the various scientific publications analyzing Bahrain's and the Gulf region's development process, which take socio-political, cultural and other contextual circumstances into consideration. Herby, Michael Schmidmayr's (2011) extensive analysis of the political opposition in Bahrain should be mentioned as a particularly valuable contribution to this study.

1.3 Research Questions and Thesis Outline

Ensuing from a brief literature review, the theory of social anomie is applied to the Bahraini context by identifying the state of anomie and its causes and consequences for the Bahraini population. Beginning with a historical analysis of socio-political developments prone to cause anomie on a system level, the effects of anomic structures on the societal groups are studied, which are assumed to be reflected in revolutionary movements such as the February 14 Revolution. Considering the complex and circular character of social anomie, this thesis cannot be regarded as an exclusive and terminating research project assessing the status and definite causes and effects of social anomie on the outbreak of political unrest and instability in Bahrain, but rather as an attempt to put the current uprising under the umbrella of social anomie and to see in how far this approach sheds light on new aspects relevant for the current uprising. One also has to keep in mind that neither the status of social anomie nor the drawn links between social anomie and political unrest are exclusive. Nonetheless, this study refers to commonly applied methods of social anomie research and successfully reveals links between social anomie and political unrest in Bahrain.

Based on these delimitations, this study aims to answer the following questions:

1. In how far does Bahrain's political transition evoke social anomie considering its socio-political background?
2. Which societal group is (are) most affected by these anomic tendencies?
3. Which relationship can be drawn between these societal groups(s), social anomie and the February 14 Revolution?

Starting with an introduction to the research problem and context, the next chapter displays the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of this study, such as the sociological concept of social anomie and Bahrain's political transition. Following this, the political and social background is illustrated, while an introduction is given to the study area. Subsequently, the methods of data collection are explained and justified and hereinafter, the analysis addresses historical political changes and social movements relevant for the emergence of social anomie. Significant political changes are identified and, in the following chapter, the analysis relates these changes to social anomie measured by indicators such as crime, divorce or drug abuse in order to assess in how far Bahrain's transition leads to an increasing level of social anomie. Moreover, with reference to the societal and political background and the conducted interviews, it is analyzed which societal group is most affected by these anomic tendencies. Subsequently, the connection between the February 14 Revolution and social anomie on the system and the individual level, which is assumed to be differently pronounced by the societal groups, can be reconstructed.

Chapter 2: Theoretical and Analytical Framework

2.1 Social Anomie and Anomia

Based on this outline, the theoretical and analytical framework introduces not only the theory of social anomie and anomia, but also the concept of democratic transition in the Bahraini context.

The theory of social anomie has its starting point with Durkheim's study about the anomic suicide. Caused by rapid social and economic change associated with labor division and individualization, social integration and interaction between the different societal sections is

thought to be hampered and existing norms and rules regulating the interaction between the different sections are nonexistent, not followed or inappropriate (Böhnisch 1994: 62; Luff 1989: 39). Hence, it is argued that these societies are unable to control and regulate individual conduct as norms and means to achieve one's desires drift apart. On that account, individuals might set unattainable or ever-escalating goals, leading to the emergence of so-called anomic suicides, which are committed on grounds of an under-regulating norm structure and societal disintegration that evoke feelings of disappointment, anger, pain and revolt (Agnew and Passas 1997: 2). Transferring this concept to the Arab world, it is thought that due to rigid and unjust societal and political structures, a huge part of the population is left behind. While it is agreed that norms and values are subjected to change in every society, it is the dictatorial/authoritarian regime, which makes the difference by imposing a barrier between the people and the ruling regime that does not provide the legitimate means to fulfill one's goals.

While both, Durkheim and Merton, focus on the societal failure of norm regulation, Merton embraces a microperspective, whilst Durkheim confines himself to the system level. Referring to the individual level, it is assumed that the elusiveness of individual's goals leads to a psychological anomic state, labeled as anomia (Heins 1994: 33, Thome 2000: 1). Both phenomena are to be assessed by rising deviant behavior such as suicide, divorce or criminality, which are said to be unleashed by the nonexistence or inappropriateness of norms and regulations (Heins 1994: 33).

As social anomie and anomia refer to the same societal or individual condition, anomia can also be seen as a consequence of social anomie being prevalent on the system level (Thome 2000: 1). Therefore, this study refers to Merton's (1999: XV) extended definition of social anomie including Durkheim's concept "...by ascribing anomie to an acute disjunction between the social and cultural structures, this in turn leading to differing rates of conforming, deviant and revolutionary behavior among those having differential access to the evolving opportunity structure."

Considering Bahrain's rapid economic, social and political changes in connection with its history of political unrest and revolt, an analysis from a social anomie perspective seems promising and pellucid. While most political and sociological theories of revolution are based either on the conflict between capital and wage work, or between the ruling classes/monarchy

and the proletariat, the theory of social anomie considers not only economic factors but also political and social aspects as driving factors of revolutionary movements. Apart from that and in comparison to the above mentioned theories, social anomie constitutes a (post-) modern approach taking account of modernization processes and its associated societal changes while laying emphasis on marginalized societal groups, who are unable to equally benefit from the evolving opportunity structures. On that account, the theory of social anomie contains the potential to pre-eminently capture Bahrain's social, political and economic changes and particularly focuses on marginalized and underprivileged societal groups, which, in view of often-cited Shiite discrimination, is of outstanding importance in the Bahrain context.

2.2 From Dictatorship to Democracy

In order to reconstruct the links between social anomie, anomia and democratic change, this study refers to the political concept of democratic transition, while focusing on its effects on the emergence of social anomie.

Initially it has to be considered that a large portion of social anomie research relates to rapid economic changes such as the downfall of the communist or other socialist economic systems (Fisac and Fernandez-Stembridge 2003; Genov 1999; Heins 1994; Savelsberg 1995), which are seen as catalysts of anomic structures. Yet, as economic developments are mostly also associated with changes in the political system, more and more research can be found relating social anomie to democratization processes, which are often connected with the emergence of political violence.

While it is argued that social anomie can occur in all forms of governing, transitional countries are particularly prone to develop anomic structures. While in a dictatorship civil and individual rights and liberties are extremely limited, anomie is unlikely to develop due to excessive norms and regulations pressuring individuals in the societal structures. However, dictatorships do not only produce norms and regulations, but also norm conflicts and deficits in regulation. Thus, divergences in publicized and realized norms often occur and rulers lose their legitimacy by breaking norms, which are propagated and moralized in the public sphere. (Thome 2000: 9-11; Waldmann 28-34).

Referring to the transitional phase of a country Thome (2000: 12-15) mentions four possible scenarios, which might cause social anomie: lack of rules, missing competence of decision-making and responsibility, inconsistency and discrepancy between norms and values. It is obvious that after the breakdown of dictatorial regimes, new and binding rules are often still lacking and contain the potential to create anomic conditions. Referring to the second scenario, it is assumed that even though new rules and mechanisms have been introduced and applied, individuals might still lack the capacity and the knowledge to make use of them in order to fulfill their goals. Likewise, it occurs that transitional countries show an inconsistent or dualistic norm and value structure caused by the validity of rules and values from the old regime and recently introduced and propagandized norms of the new (democratic) system.

2.3 Authoritarianism in Bahrain

Based on this rather general introduction to the concept of democratic transition, it is necessary to apply these concepts to the Bahraini context as every transitional country exhibits certain particularities, which need to be explored in order to identify links between the political structure and the emergence of social anomie and anomie.

Applying the theoretical framework on Bahrain, the question arises of how to classify Bahrain's form of governance. While the spectrum ranges from labeling Bahrain as a democratic country to numbering Bahrain among dictatorships, this study complies with Schmidmayr (2011: 33-34), who ranks Bahrain alongside other authoritarian regimes.² Despite outstanding democratic reforms initiated after King Hamad's enthronement in 1999, Bahrain's democratic development stagnated in the following years, while the recent crackdown on peaceful protesters cast a shadow on Bahrain's overall democratic development progress. Hence, the Freedom House Index (Freedom House 2012) classifies Bahrain's civil liberties and political rights with 6, while the ranking 1 is attributed to perfectly free countries. As compared to dictatorships, authoritarian states such as Bahrain are barely ideologically founded and the monopolization of power is less prevalent than in totalitarian regimes, as individuals are still given some freedom for economic, political or social participation.

² Bahrain's political development explaining its classification as an authoritarian regime is more explicitly dwelled on in chapter 3.1

In line with the Exceptionalist School, which classifies the Arab Gulf States (AGS) as an exceptional group of states with unique economic and socio-political attributes (Abdulla 2000: 9), Bahrain features some specific characteristics worth mentioning: the phenomenon of neopatrimonialism, the problems of a rent-seeking state and the questions of confessionism. Hereby, the concept of neopatrimonialism, which refers to the ruler's neopatrimonialistic character of tying specific segments of the society to the ruler, is linked with the ruler's widely applied practice of distributing money and other benefits for the sake of establishing and guaranteeing social peace; labeled as rent-seeking. Aside from that, the question of confessionism constitutes one of the most important characteristics of Bahrain's social and political structure. With a proportion of 70:30, Shiite make up for the majority of the population, while the Royal family is Sunni and Bahrainis of Sunni religious orientation possess the most dominant positions in the country (Schmidmayr 2011: 22-23).

Based on these political characteristics of Bahrain's form of governance, it is assumed that on the individual level anomia occurs due to sectarian discrimination and deprivation manifested and consolidated by the regime's neopatrimonialistic policies and its rent-seeking behavior based in religious grouping.

Chapter 3: Political and Societal Background

3.1 Political Development in Bahrain

Whilst analyzing Bahrain's political development, one immediately envisages the continuous interplay of democratic reforms and its withdrawal - in combination with a distinctive conflict structure.

Dating back to 1971, Bahrain's independence marks the beginning of its modern political development. Already two years later, in 1973, Bahrain's first constitution was drafted and adopted, which provided extensive individual rights and legal protection, including freedom of speech. Moreover, elections were held for the recently established National Assembly. While the Islamic opposition did not emerge in a confrontational way up to this point, criticism from both blocs along with many independents emerged after the introduction of a new public security bill. As the opposition grew into an open test of power between the Assembly and the Amir, the National Assembly was indefinitely disbanded and political

activity became entirely forbidden. On behalf of the royal family this step was justified by blaming the leftist of bending and destroying the whole democratic experiment, while they claimed that foreign pressure (Saudi, Iran and America) lead to halt the democratic process (Cordesman 1997: 51-52; Nakhleh 1980: 170; Schmidmayr 2011: 124).

Absorbed by the oil boom and the new wealth following the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the dissolution of the National Assembly did not create a stir. However, tensions and diffidence between Bahraini Shiites and Sunnis as well as between the Shiites and the royal family significantly grew after the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979 and the revival of Islamic fundamentalism (Zahlan 2002: 76-81).

While the divide and mistrust between the two sects and the royal family did not surface in the following years, the economic recession leading to less government spending and rising unemployment levels, exacerbated the social problems and demands for more participation grew. Pressured by these political demands the Emir established a Consultative Council, which, however, did not meet the popular demands of the opposition such as parliamentary elections and legal reforms. The movement gained momentum in early 1994 as unemployment levels in mainly Shiite villages reached its toll. Between 1994 and 1996, also known as Bahrain's Intifada, massive demonstrations, bloody riots, acts of sabotage and large-scale detainments characterized public life in Bahrain (Cordesman 1997: 80-86; Schmidmayr 2011: 131-144; Zahlan 2002: 80-81).

Following the death of Emir Isa and the enthronement of his son Hamad in 1999, conciliatory steps were taken, prisoners were pardoned and several exiles returned to Bahrain. Further, a committee was formed to draft the NAC and Emir Hamad promised to reinstate the Parliament. Impressed by Hamad's will for reforms, 98,4% of the Bahraini population voted for the NAC in a popular referendum, which took place on the 14th of February in 2001 (Parolin 2011: 23-24; Schmidmayr 2011: 145-146).

Nevertheless, the vast majority of the opposition's main demands remained without reply. Despite the reorganization of several political institutions in the following years, Hamad did not keep his promises, but imposed a new constitution without public consent and proclaimed himself first king. Furthermore, a new decree barring political associations from taking part in electoral campaign was issued and lead to a boycott of the general elections in 2002. The

following elections in 2006 and 2010 were also characterized by boycotts of some political parties³ and several demonstrations demanding a new constitution among other things (The Muslim News 2010; Parolin 2011: 25-26, 30, 37; Schmidmayr 2011: 155-158).

Influenced by the revolutionary wave in the Arab world in 2011, the Bahraini uprising marks the peak of political unrest in Bahrain. Initially, protesters demanded political reforms such as the transition to a constitutional monarchy and various socio-economic problems were addressed such as rising unemployment levels among the Shiite population and other discriminating, neopatrimonialistic and rent-seeking practices referring to housing, the labor market or the political naturalization of Sunni foreign workers. In the course of continuous protests and clashes with the police the protesters' demands expanded, and calls to end the monarchy/remove the prime minister evoked. On 17 February, the Pearl Roundabout, the central place of demonstration, was cleared by security personnel and one month later King Hamad declared martial law and a three-month state of emergency. Since then, the demonstrations never gained again its momentum, but up to date protests continue in the Shiite villages outside Manama despite conciliating measures taken by the King (Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) 2011: 65-162; Jamali 2012)

Summing up, the Bahrain uprising has to be seen in relation to previous civilian resistance in the 1950s, 1980s and 1990s. It can be concluded that the political and socio-economic demands vary throughout Bahrain's history of political development and despite some similarities, the composition of protesters varies and the regime's answer alternates between concession and dictatorial power politics.

3.2 Determinants of Bahrain's Social Structure

3.2.1 Religion

Aside the political changes, the determinants of Bahrain's social structure, namely religion, ideological orientation, family, ethnicity and gender, are to be studied in order to adjoin the political developments with the societal structures leading to social anomie.

³ The term political parties and political societies are synonymously used. However, as the creation of political parties is illegal in Bahrain, political parties are administrated as political societies, which are allowed to be formed and discharge most functions of regular political parties.

Hereby, religion can be regarded as the most important determinant. Accommodating all main religions, Bahrain's population is mainly Shiite. As the question of confessionalism is highly sensitive in the Bahraini context the latest census dates back to 1941. Notwithstanding, most analysts agree that in consideration of the Shiite population growth, around 70% of the population belong to the Shiite community and 30% are said to be Sunni (Adawy, Wharton and Al-Hassan 2000: 30; Schmidmayr 2011: 80).

When aiming to understand the divide and tension between the two Sects, the origin of Shiite Islam as well as its root in Bahrain has to be understood. Emerged from a debate about the true line of succession, the murder of Al-Husayn, who is believed to be the true prophet among the Shiite community, is the most important element of identification for Shiites. Hence, injustice and discrimination are deeply rooted in the Shiite identity and are often reflected in their own perception as the most deprived and disenfranchised group. Against this background, one also has to class the often claimed and strongly feared relation between Shiites in Iran and Bahrain, which originates from the Shiite belief that legitimate sovereignty can only be practiced by the Imam, who derives from the prophet's progeny – a political perception which is put into practice in Iran (Ibid.: 83, 84).

In the Bahraini context, the perception of being a suppressed majority ruled by a Sunni minority is traceable to the arrival of the Sunni Al Khalifa family in 1783, who assumed power and brought allied Sunni tribes into Bahrain. Thus, in the self-perception of the native Bahraini population also labeled as Baharna, they are a suppressed class in their own country. The term Baharna is used to describe all Bahraini Shiites, who differentiate oneself from Sunni Bahrainis by their specific dialect known as Baharna, which significantly differs from the Arab dialect spoken by the Sunni community (Ibid; Holes 2005).

Aside from Al Khalifa's seizure of power and the origin of the Shiite doctrine, other economic, political and geographical factors have to be taking into consideration in order to understand the roots and excesses of Shiite discrimination in Bahrain. Thus, Shiites deprived societal and economic status can also be explained by higher birth rates, the lack of a modern work ethic, inferior education, language difficulties and the poor infrastructure in remote Shiite villages. All these factors are said to contribute to higher unemployment levels among Bahraini Shiites. In addition to that, it is claimed that the ruling family is reluctant to accept Shiites as participants in power sharing as their loyalty is questioned. Thus, in light of

neopatrianistic and rent-seeking policies Shiites are underrepresented in so-called ministries of sovereignty such as the ministry of defense or the ministry of interior as well as in the police and the armed forces (Cordesman 1997: 77; Parolin 2011: 39; Schmidmayr 2011: 59).

Concluding, it can be discerned that some factors contributing to the divide between Shiites, Sunnis and the ruling family are rooted in the Shiite doctrine, while other factors such as high birth rates or inferior education might apply to all poor Bahrainis and not just Bahraini Shiites. According to this, some analysts do not assume that the problems faced by the Bahraini Shiites are a result of overt discrimination, but rather the effect of lower socio-economic status (Cordesman 1997: 77). The perspective adopted in this research assumes that Shiite discrimination can be explained by socio-economic and sectarian factors, both causing and reinforcing each other.

3.2.2 Family, Nationality and Gender

Considering the above mentioned aspects, it becomes obvious that Bahrain's society is characterized by various social cleavages⁴ determining someone's socio-economic and social status. Beyond the question of confessionalism, family, ethnicity and gender are important factors to consider while assessing the present societal composition in Bahrain.

Accordingly, Al Khalifa's favoritism of Sunni citizens can also be understood from a tribal perspective. While members of the ruling family are said to be accommodated first, families and tribes with whom the rulers have traditionally allied are favored next. This means in the Bahraini context that less and lower positions are given to Shiites as no tribal or family ties had historically been developed between these two groups (Adawy, Wharton and Al-Hassan 2000: 43-44).

From a general point of view, the ruling system of the Gulf region is described as Arab tribalism meaning that major decision and position are taken in a collective manner. Hence, the consultative bodies (Shura council) firstly help to institutionalize and commit allied

⁴ Developed by the political scientists Lipset and Rokkan, cleavages are said to describe societal conflict structures reflecting clashes of interest and values characterizing a certain society. Hence, European societies of the 19th century were characterized by the following opposing cleavages: capital and work, church and state, city and country, centre and periphery (Lipset and Rokkan 1967).

families to the rulers. Even though the ruling families often made these consultative bodies known as a form of popular participation, it is rather an extension of the Islamic concept of Shura, which does not bind the ruler by any decision or resolution passed in the consultative body. Therefore, Bahrain can be described as a modern extension of an old tribal tradition despite so-called democratic reforms (Adawy, Wharton and Al-Hassan 2000: 43; Nakhleh 1980: 162).

Another important characteristic of Bahrain's family and demographic structure is its youthful population with 20% ranging between 0 and 14 years and 77% between 16 and 64 years (CIA 2012). Bahrain's young generation is thought to share some common characteristics, which are important to mention when analyzing the societal cleavages. Thus, Bahrain's youth is not only highly influenced by western lifestyle, but it also faces age-specific problems such as a high youth unemployment rate of around 31%, which is almost five times higher than the adult unemployment rate of 7% (Kabbani and Kothari 2005: 5). In addition to that, Bahrain's youth figured prominently during the February 14 Revolution, which justifies a closer analysis of Bahrain's youth and their expose to anomia.

Aside from family relations, the migration background of many Bahraini citizens is a distinctive characteristic of Bahrain's social structure leading to conflicts between the two sects. Already in the beginning of the 19th century Al Khalifa located allied Sunni tribes in the middle of Bahrain and provoked tensions between the local Shiite population and the recently arrived Sunni immigrants. This development intensified and it is said that during the last two decades more than 550 000 immigrants were (purposely) granted the Bahraini citizenship in order to change the demographic balance to the detriment of the local Shiite population. As new loyal citizens, these immigrants often find work in the Bahraini security apparatus (Hermann 2011: 276). While it cannot be denied that massive naturalization took place over the last decades, the Shiite opposition is persuaded that the naturalization process is of political nature aiming to create a loyal Sunni block opposing Bahraini Shiites, who are predominantly represented in the opposition (Schmidmayr 2011: 249; 288).

Considering these facts, one has to keep in mind that the societal conflict structure cannot just be reduced to a divide between Shiites and Sunnis. Neither are all Sunnis loyal to Al Khalifa nor are all Shiites part of the opposition. Hence, Sunni political opposition figures are as much target of the established power as their Shiites counterparts. Likewise it can be said that the

power elite is not automatically pro-tribal and anti-Shiite, but rather uses confessionalism and tribalism as a strategic option to extend and consolidate their power (Ibid: 89).

As a third determinant of Bahrain's societal structure, the gender perspective has to be mentioned. Based on Arab-Islamic tradition, male and female are considered two independent social categories characterized by distinctive attributes determining a woman's and a man's private and public life. Given this segregation, women are born a kinswoman and enter the world of kinfolk by consanguinity (blood relatives) or by affinity (relatives by marriage). This kinship provides identity, support, protection and security to a woman in all matters of life. While this institution itself as well as veiling or segregation are not per se oppressive, they can be abused by the group of kinsmen, who hold the control over a woman in all matters of her private and public life (El Guindi 1985: 75, 84).

Referring to Bahraini women's role in public life, it has to be mentioned that their share in the national workforce is limited to around 25%. Likewise, it should be considered that due to the mentioned gender segregation women's labor force participation concentrates on three broad occupational categories: nursing, teaching and the technical fields (Ibid.: 90; International Labour Organization (ILO): 5). In view of women's vulnerable status in private life as well as their limited employment opportunities and their general low share in the nation's labor force participation, the segregation of the sexes could be seen and articulated in discriminative practices.

Summarizing this section, it is important to state that these cleavages are overlapping and interlinked, segmenting the society vertically and horizontally (Schmidmayr 2011: 89). Hence, it is assumed that someone's societal and economic status constitutes an agglomeration of the mentioned and additional social determinants, while one or two determinants are more decisive for someone's status than the others. Hereinafter, these determinants are thought to be strongly linked to someone's exposure to anomic feelings, which are assumed to have contributed to the February 14 Revolution.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Research Paradigm

Based on the theory of social anomie, this research is of a mainly deductive nature as it aims to apply the theory of social anomie to the Bahraini context. However, when analyzing in how far Bahrain's transition evokes social anomie leading to political unrest, an inductive component is added as the theory of social anomie is not per se linked with revolutionary movements.

The research's epistemological standpoint follows the concept of interpretivism, which emanates from a social reality that is created by people's subjective meanings – visualized and institutionalized in social actions. Hence, as opposed to a positivist standpoint, acceptable knowledge can only be derived by interpreting motivation and structures of individual's and societal group's social actions (Gukenbiehl 2008: 12; Bryman 2008: 16). Based on these considerations, the study follows the ontological assumption that social reality is created by continuously changing, meaningful social action implying that the nature of objects is thought to be constructivist; an objective reality, external to social actors is denied (Bryman 2008: 18, Creswell 2007: 75).

Applying this epistemological and ontological standpoint to the research implicates that the sociological phenomenon of social anomie is subjectively created and can be understood as an interaction of individuals (or societal groups) with the existing norm and value structure. While it is apparent that qualitative methods allow a better insight in the process of constructing realities than quantitative methods (Bryman 2008: 366,367), this research applies quantitative methods for the analysis of anomia, which is thought to reveal societal groups' exposure to anomic feelings and its effects on the outbreak of the February 14 Revolution. It is important to mention that the usage of quantitative data is not conflicting with a constructivist perspective, as this data source just gives some indication of anomic tendencies on a national level, while qualitative data is still needed to explain why, how and for which societal groups these anomic feelings emerged meaning that the reality of social anomie is thought to be subjectively perceived and expressed.

4.2 Case Study Research Design

Synthesizing the theoretical framework, the research design follows a case study structure. As the phenomenon of social anomie in Bahrain takes place in a bounded system (by time and place), which - following the recommended methods for the analysis of social anomie - is investigated by a highly contextualized analysis, a case study design immediately suggests itself (Bryman 2008: 52-53, Yin 2003: 13, Creswell 2007: 37). Hence, the time frame for the analysis of social anomie spans over 30 years, starting with Bahrain's independence in 1971 and ending with the uprising in 2011. The location is restricted to Bahrain, a kingdom island with about 742.000 inhabitants and 283.000 non-nationals (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2012).

As Yin (2003: 13) mentions that a case study design "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" a historical analysis should not be part of a case study design. Yet, considering that anomic structures evolve gradually and differently affect the societal groups, it is necessary to analyze the historical development of social anomie in the Bahraini context in order to develop a full understanding of the case (Punch 1998: 15). According to that, the chosen case can be described as an instrumental case study, as it is aimed to come to a rather general understanding of the links between specific historical conditions, social anomie, anomia and political unrest (Stake 2000: 437-483). Thus, the in-depth analysis of the societal state of anomie as well as the analysis of anomia among the societal groups is thought to shed light on the emergence of political unrest in Bahrain in 2011. Accordingly, this case can be viewed as an analysis of a contemporary phenomenon with unclear boundaries between the (historical) context and the phenomenon (Yin 2003: 13).

4.3 Mixed Methods Approach

In addition to that, a deductive approach suggests applying qualitative methods. However, as stated above, this study uses both, quantitative and qualitative methods in order to strengthen and relate the empirical analysis of social anomie in Bahrain to the individual level and to adequately link social anomie with the February 14 Revolution. Hence, these quantitative results are used to determine the relationship between social anomie and political unrest in the Bahraini case – an analysis, which requires qualitative methods due to its particularity and contextualisation (Bryman 2008: 22).

Hence, in consideration of the research's nature and the proposed methods for the analysis of social anomie, a mixed methods approach is applied. Emile Durkheim (1975, 2002), founder and main proponent of social anomie argues that the societal state of social anomie can be examined by analyzing statistics of norm breaking behaviors such as suicide, drug abuse or crime.

Beginning with the first research question, contextual aspects, as introduced in the political background, are summarized from a social anomie perspective meaning that only those political developments are chosen, which suggest exhibiting an anomic potential. For this analysis, qualitative data and academic publications in a narrow sense serve as main data sources. Following, these relevant contextual aspects are aligned with quantitative data about social anomie in Bahrain by contrasting the state of anomie with specific political changes at a particular time in history. By comparing the different anomic stadia measured at a particular time, it is possible to assess to which degree Bahrain's political transition evokes social anomie.

Following the theoretical framework, these anomic structures are measured by increasing deviant behavior such as suicide, divorce or criminality. Due to the sensitivity of certain data such as suicide, which constitutes a forbidden act in the Muslim religion, the suicide rate might not be reliable as Al-Ansari (2009) mentions in the Bahraini context. Moreover, it has to be noted that no statistical assessments of the data in question were undertaken before 1985. Considering these circumstances, this study is based on crime rates, divorce and drug abuse rates due to the statistics' availability and reliability. All data is derived from the Central Informatics Organization of the Kingdom of Bahrain, while the crime rate is subdivided into drug abuse, robbery and assault due to the low number of other crime rates such as illegal employment or murder, which exacerbate to draw meaningful conclusions. Moreover, considering the Bahraini context, it immediately suggests itself to focus on crime rates such as robbery and assault as social or political changes in Bahrain seem to be reflected in raising levels of these criminal categories.

Referring to the second research question, qualitative data in form of semi-structured (group) interviews is used to determine which societal group is most affected by anomic tendencies. Herby academic literature outlines each societal group's probability to utter anomic feelings and behaviors. Interview groups and its participants were purposively selected in order to

establish a good relationship between the research's area of study and the sample (Bryman 2008: 458). All interviews took place in different locations, but mostly in private houses due to the research topic's sensitivity over a period of 3 months, from October 2011 to December 2011.

As it is assumed that the societal groups are differently exposed to anomic feelings depending on their societal status, family background, gender and age, homogenous groups were created in order to stimulate the members among themselves and to raise awareness about feelings of anomie (Bryman 2008: 481-482). As discussions and interaction between group members are rather of secondary interest, the method can be described as a group interview and not as a focus group discussion (Bryman 2008: 475). Following these reflections eight interview groups were aimed to be formed: a Shiite and Sunni elderly and young men and women group, as it is thought that the societal conflict lines are based on sectarian affiliation, gender and age.⁵

However, after having carried out the first interviews it became obvious that the societal structure is more complex and other factors like family affiliation or political attitude might overlap the sectarian or age component. Hence, a more flexible approach was chosen during the group formation process whenever interview participants seemed to incorporate the same group identity than the other participants. This means for example that the researcher allowed Sunni women to take part in the elderly Sunni men interview as they confirmed that their perspective/group identity is not based on gender difference meaning that they considered themselves rather as liberal Sunnis than as a Sunni man or a Sunni woman.

Notwithstanding, it has to be mentioned that no Sunni elderly women declared herself ready to take part in an interview. Due to the sensitiveness of the research topic, it can be understood that most interview participants were identified by snowball sampling, meaning that interviewees participated in the research due to trustworthy and personal relations. Considering the fact that the researcher's host family is of Shiite background and that several Bahraini elderly women expressed their discomfort of being interviewed in addition to their lack of political knowledge, a group discussion with elderly Shiite women could not take place. However, this shortcoming could partly be compensated by allowing Sunni women to

⁵ The interview participants in the youth groups were between 21-30 years, while the age of the elderly groups participants were above 55.

participate in the elderly Sunni men group interview. Self-evidently, interview participants were asked for their consent to take part in the study and were assured that no personal data will be displayed in the thesis.

In addition to the seven group interviews, three individual interviews were carried out with prominent political societies as it became evident that the political affiliation of Bahrainis is a major factor when determining the effects of social anomie on Bahrain's citizens. Likewise, interviews with political figures are seen as an approved method of exploring social anomie (Thome 2000: 18). Accordingly, interviews have been carried out with party members of Al Menbar Islamic Society, Al Wefaq National Islamic Society and the National Democratic Action Society. As it is aimed to represent the whole Bahraini society in order to identify diverging levels of social anomie and anomia, a Sunni Islamist party (Al Menbar Islamic Society) and the main Shiite Islamic party (Al Wefaq) and a liberal opposition party (National Democratic Action Society) were chosen as interview participants.

Referring to the interview questions, a semi-structured interview guide⁶ was used and continuously refined, which is a suitable approach when analyzing a phenomenon whereat no specific research has been conducted yet (Bryman 2008: 439). A semi-structured approach was chosen, as it is aimed to keep the focus on social anomie and its relationship to the uprising while letting the interviewees tell their story (Bryman 2008: 438). Generally, an operationalization of social anomie often measures individual perceptions of certain structural phenomena by creating an index of social anomie.⁷ However, this empirical research and the elaborated research questions were developed in the 50s and 60s and mostly apply to the context of the United States (Zhao 2008: 42-43). Considering this fact, the researcher borrowed the main content of these survey questions, which turn around the feeling of social isolation, normlessness, self-estrangement and powerlessness (Huschka and Mau 2005: 470), but reformulated them into narrative and rather open questions – suitable for qualitative research.

⁶ The interview guide for the political parties and the interview groups can be found in the appendix. As this research follows an open, semi-structured approach, it should be considered that these guides are not inclusive, meaning that the researcher neither asked all questions in all interview groups, nor did the interviewees' answer all questions posed.

⁷ A list comparing different surveys for the operationalization of social anomie, can be found in Zhao (2008: 157-160).

Considering the third research question linking the uprising in 2011 with social anomie, qualitative data derived from the interviews is used, while considering the historical, cultural and socio-political context. It is assumed that certain socio-political developments lead emerge anomic structures, which particularly affected Bahraini Shiites, who demand political change, which is being reflected in the February 14 Revolution.

4.4 Limitations and Quality Considerations

Summarizing the research's design and the methodological approach, it has to be mentioned that the interplay of deductive and inductive components might cause problems in terms of feasibility and comprehensibility. Until now, research connecting the theory of social anomie with revolutionary movements is limited and mostly focuses on assessing the state and development of social anomie during a certain period of time and just marginally asks in how far social anomie influences a society's stability (Waldmann 2003). Hence, the researcher breaks new grounds to a certain extent and this fact causes problems in terms of identifying appropriate methods revealing the relationship between social anomie and the uprising. It is however thought that this challenge could be tackled by the continuous refinement of the interview questions.

Referring to the quantitative data sources, the lack of reliable statistics about suicide is unfavorable as Durkheim (2002) estimates the suicide rate as the most important indicator of social anomie. Thus, the researcher had to focus on alternative, reliable and available statistics revealing norm breaking behaviors in order to circumvent this non reliable data source. In addition to that, the structure of the interview guide posed another challenge. Due to large differences between the groups in terms of education level, the continuous refinement of these analytical questions targeting the relationship between the uprising and social anomie was a demanding process. However, as interview participants were highly involved in the refinement of the research questions, the researcher could be assured that all interview questions are understood.

Aside from these shortcomings, it is important to guarantee the study's quality. Hence, the criteria of internal and external validity and reliability are thought to be inapplicable to a qualitative research that assumes that social settings are unique as they are constructed by the meaningful actions of social actors. Thus, scholars adopted different criteria for the

assessment of qualitative research projects. (Bryman 2008: 376, 379, 383). As the research's overarching structure is a case study design, it is followed Yin's (2003: 34) recommendation for assessment according to the criteria of construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability.

In terms of construct validity, which assess whether the types of changes, which are to be studied, are specifically selected and measured by appropriate means, it can be said that the usage of multiple sources evidence (crime rate, divorce rate, qualitative interviews etc.) and the review of the draft paper by key informants, increases the research's construct validity (Yin 2003: 36-37). Hence, in addition to a respondent validation, the usage of different data sources and theories – known as triangulation – increases the research's validity (Bryman 2008: 379,383).

In light of the research's internal validity, which examines the defensibility of the relationship between social anomie and the uprising, triangulation and a mixed methods approach increase the expressiveness of the conclusions drawn from the various data sources. Given the fact that the various data sources used in that research arrive at the same result meaning that social anomie contributed to the revolutionary movements in 2011 the study's internal validity is significantly increased. Referring to a case study's external validity, a certain replication logic leading to an analytical generalization should be apparent. Hence, the theoretical construct of linking social anomie with the uprising is tested by replicating the findings where the theory has specified that the same results should occur. Considering the study's length, a full-fledged transfer of the theoretical framework to another setting is not feasible. However, an outlook analyzing the theory's potential to also (partly) explain the other uprisings of the Arab world is undertaken. Additionally, by referring to the research context and the theoretical framework, this study aligns with other social anomie researchers, who explore the emergence of social anomie and anomia in transitional countries. In relation to the study's reliability, which states that another researcher should arrive at the same findings when applying the described methods and procedures, documentation of data collection will be given a high priority in order to understand and reconstruct the research's process and its conclusions (Yin 2003: 36-38). Hence, by applying acknowledged methods of anomie research and by documenting the conclusions drawn from the various data sources the study's reliability is ensured.

Chapter 5: Analysis

5.1 Linking Bahrain's Political Transition with Social Anomie

5.1.1 The Constitutional Experiment in 1971 and the Revival of Islamic Fundamentalism

In the following, the above described methods suitable for the analysis of social anomie in the Bahraini context are used to reconstruct the emergence of anomie generated by Bahrain's reform process.

Considering the fact that statistical data recording deviant behavior only exists from 1985 and onwards, the analysis of social anomie during Bahrain's constitutional experiment in 1971 and during the following years of Islamic revival merely resorts to academic publications linking these political changes with the social structure. Following Cordesman (1997: 77-78) and Nakhleh (1980: 167-168) it can be said that the election of the first National Assembly was accompanied by an open and enthusiastic atmosphere. Emerged from raising education levels and oil wealth, foreign ideas entered the Bahraini society and the traditional family-type communal relationship between the ruling family and the people began to face new social demands questioning traditionalism. This reform process did however not meet popular demands for more participation. Considering the National Assembly's unexpected resolution in 1975, the reform process can rather be classified as a rhetoric move, a "game of democracy", which came to halt when the ruling family considered its authority to be challenged by the people's political participation and their extensive and rising demands (Ibid: 174-175). Another source of tension and mistrust can be ascribed to the Shiite Islamic revival following the fall of the Shah in Iran.

Conclusively it can be said that the societal opportunity structures suggest that during this period anomic traits pull throughout the Bahraini society. It is thought that the constitutional process lead to legal insecurity and frustration as well as the Islamic revival stimulated distrust and tension between the Shiite and Sunni community and the regime. Following Atteslander's comparative anomie research (1999: 20) it is likely that the paradoxical combination of a continuously opening society and economy regulated by a rigid political system lead to the emergence of anomic feelings. In addition to that, these rigid political structures alternating between democratic change and authoritarian mastery do not only contribute to norm conflicts and norm uncertainty, but also feed the public perception that

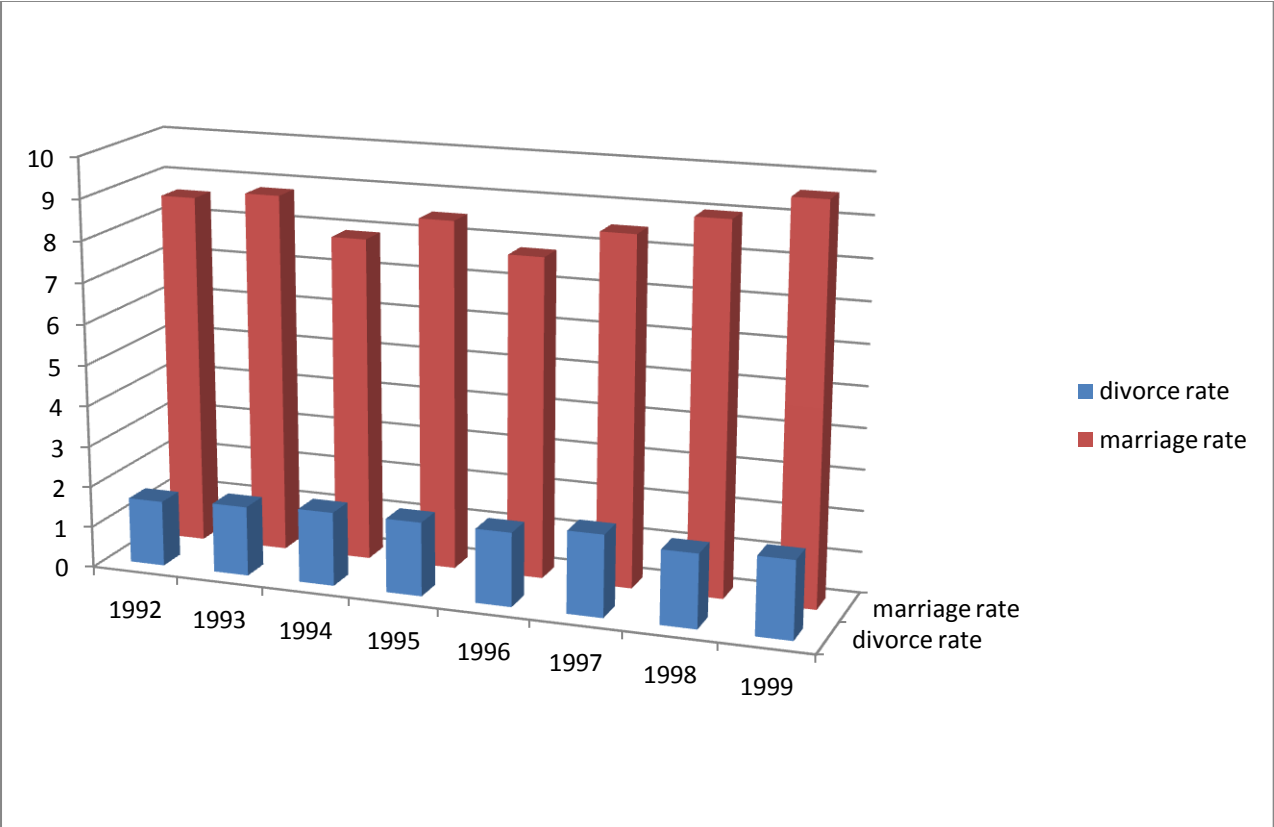
access to resources, facilities and goals are unequally distributed – a social perception which is likely to comprise and evoke anomic feelings and societal structures (Western and Lanyon 1999: 73).

Notwithstanding, one has to keep in mind that the relationship between these political and societal changes and social anomie in the Bahraini context is difficult to ascertain as no quantitative data can reinforce the conclusions drawn in this section. However, it can be assumed that anomic structures emerged as a consequence of the mentioned socio-political developments as the societal structures and public opinions described by historians are typically associated with social anomie.

5.1.2 Bahrain’s Intifada in the 1990s

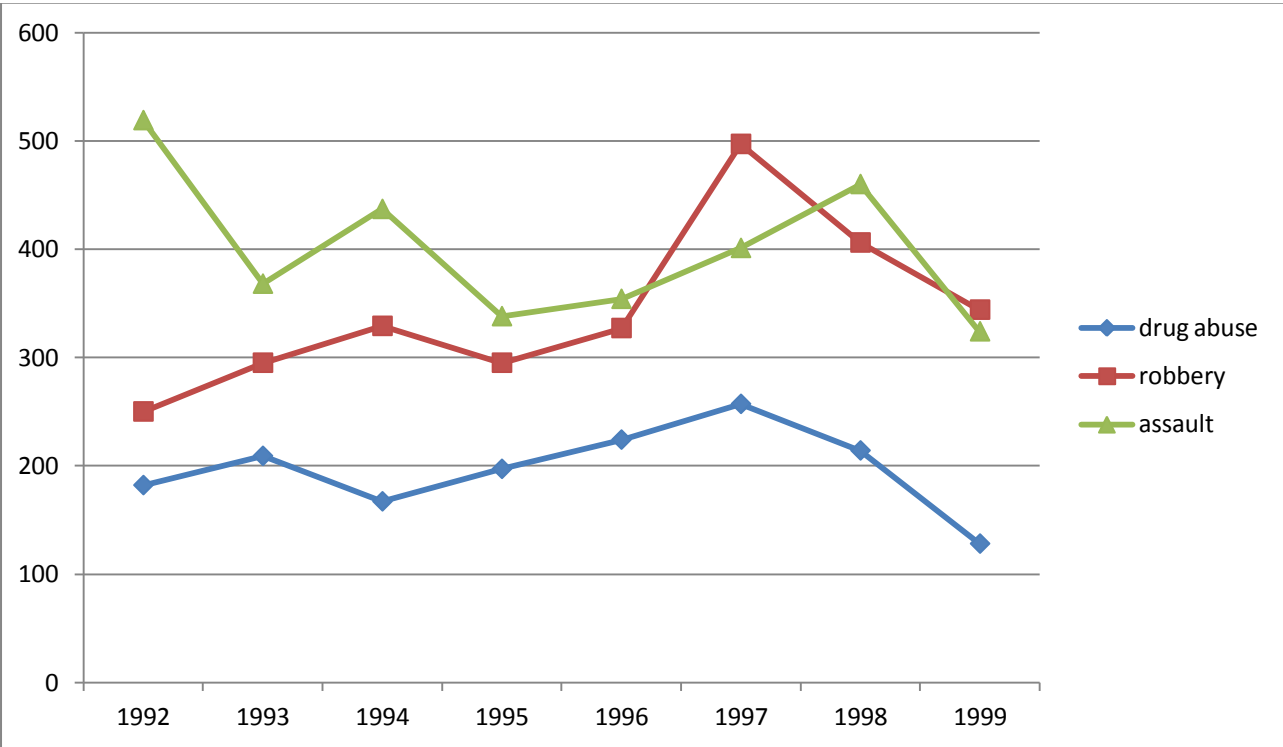
Unleashed by the economic recession, popular demands asking for democratic change and an end to Shiite discrimination gained momentum in the 1990s and lead to bloody protests as described in the political and societal background of this study.

Chart 1: Marriage and Divorce Rates (1992 – 1999)



Looking at the divorce and marriage rate during this period (Chart 1), the course of the curves does not exhibit an unpredicted increase or decrease. The divorce rate fluctuates between 1.6 and 1.9 while the marriage rate ranges from 7.9 to 9.0. Adopting the divorce rate as an indicator of social anomie, no unusual waveform can be spotted meaning that anomic structures are not assumed to be prevalent in that period of time. However, when comparing the marriage rates during the Bahraini intifada (1994 to 1996) with the rates before and after this peak of bloody protests, one can notice a slight drop in the marriage rate. Hence, it could be assumed that the willingness to marry is decreasing as these violent protests might fuel feelings of fear, insecurity and instability – emotions opposing the core values of marriage. Notwithstanding, it should be noticed that not only the above drawn relationship is rather an assumption than a fact, but also the reliability of the divorce rate as an indicator of social anomie is subordinate as the norm-breaking character of divorce is less marked in comparison to crime or suicide.

Chart 2: Criminal Cases by Type (1992 – 1999)



Analyzing the curve shape of criminal cases (Chart 2), one can immediately identify the ascending course of all curves between 1995 and 1998. While the incidents of assault and robbery reach another peak between 1993 and 1994, the cases of drug abusers declined during

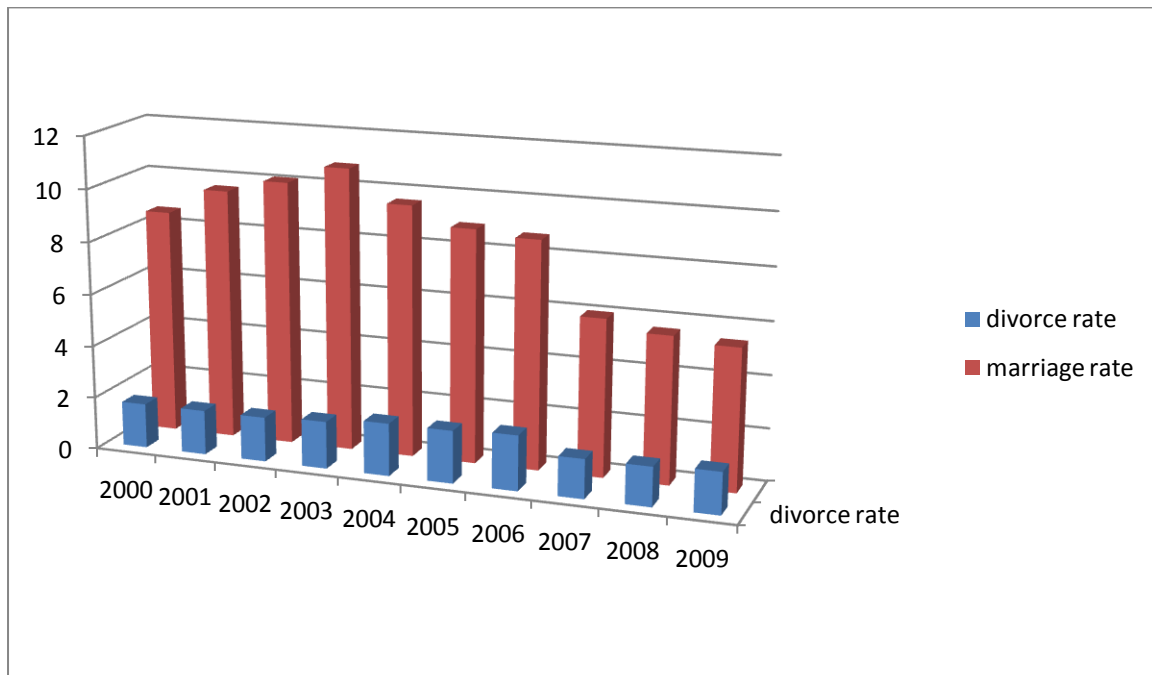
this period; followed by a constant increase culminating between 1997 and 1998. Interpreting these figures, it could be assumed that the delayed increase in drug abuses are rather an effect of the violent clashes occurring between 1994 and 1996 than a spin-off effect of the protests in question. Based on the non-linearity of the curves, it can be stated that social anomie is likely to have risen during this time frame.

Comparing these results with Nolte's (2003: 157 -160) research about social anomie during the Chilean military dictatorship (1973-1989), similar developments can be identified. Thus, following the economic crisis demonstrations erupted leading to massive detention and killing of protesters, who – in response to the repressive measure taken by the regime – become also more radical while seeking a political state of ungovernability. Likewise, the Eastern European change shows a similar picture as upcoming contradictions between desired states and actual conditions drifted apart and resulted in claim-making and revolt as a strategy of adaption to a societal situation of anomie and strain (Savelsberg 1995: 223). As in the case of Bahrain, violent crimes and drug abuse rose during the 1990s and can be seen as an indicator of social anomie and anomie emerging on grounds of deficient law enforcement and an inconsistent norm and value structure. Frustrated by the halting process of democratization, it is assumed that the worsening economic situation in addition to sectarian mistrust lead to anomia on the individual level erupting into protest movements. As described by Genov (1999: 92-93) and following Durkheim's assumptions, popular wants and needs are less matched by social and political means leading to frustration, escapism and political unrest.

5.1.3 The Reform Process following the NAC

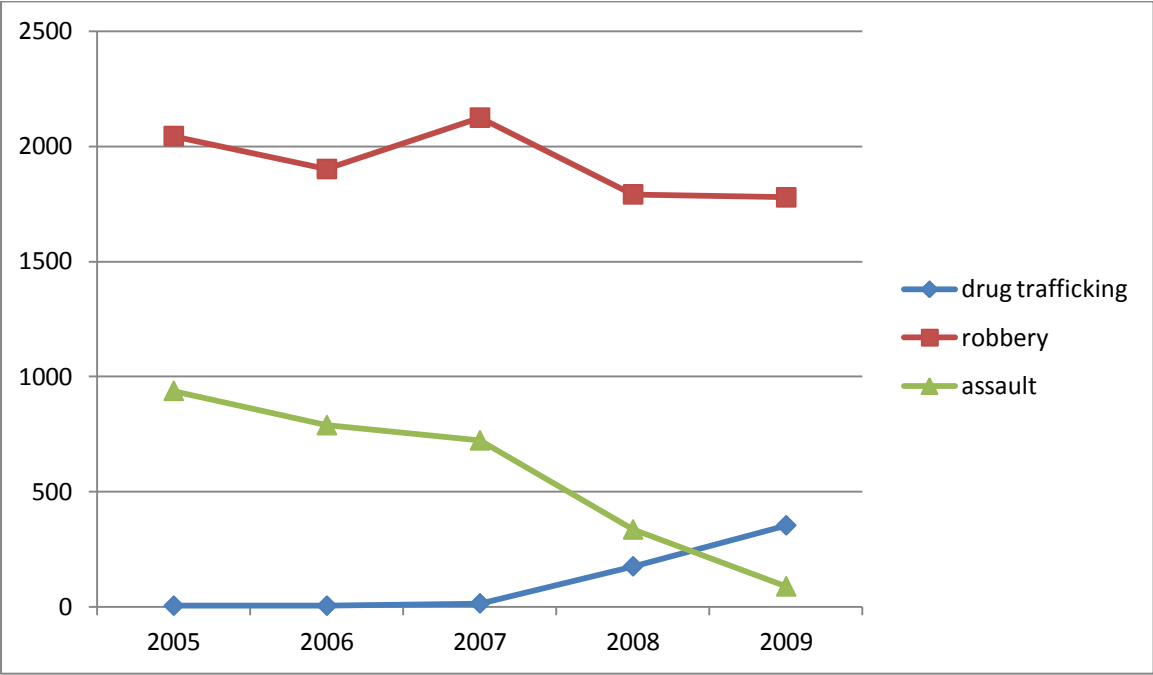
The tense internal situation in Bahrain calmed down with the enthronement of King Hamad and its reconciling steps. Nonetheless, it has to be reminded that over the course of the following years, this democratic reform process turned out to be rather incomplete, falling short of popular demands and expectations.

Chart 3: Marriage and Divorce Rates (2000 – 2009)



Looking at the divorce rate for the time frame in question (Chart 3), one finds an almost linear curve shape, which suggests that anomic structures did not flourish during this period; or rather that social anomie is not reflected in a raising divorce rate. As opposed to this, the marriage rate slightly rises up to the year 2003 until it continuously declines up to 2009. However, an increasing number of marriages cannot be regarded as a sign of social anomie as it is not a deviant behavior in itself.

Chart 4: Criminal Cases by Type (2005 – 2009)



Switching to Chart 4, it has to be mentioned that the Central Informatics Organization of the Kingdom of Bahrain changed the method of calculation/definition for drug abuse and robbery meaning that for the period from 2005 to 2009 the term robbery refers to robbery and armed robbery while Chart 2 only shows the robbery cases (without armed robbery). In addition to that, the category drug abuse was removed and replaced by the contravention of drug trafficking and drugs (other). On that account, it is not possible to directly compare Chart 4 and Chart 2; however as it is aimed to assess the development of criminal cases in the 2000s, this shortcoming does not affect the quality and explanatory power of the data.

Analyzing Chart 4, it can be said that apart from a slight rise in 2007, the number of drug robberies and assault cases drops for the period in question. Contrary to this curve shape, the number of drug trafficking cases rises continuously from 2007 to 2009. In light of the new calculation method and the strikingly low number of cases for the period 2005 to 2007, one should be careful about the explanatory power of this category. Thus and in combination with the declining cases for the other two categories, it is unlikely that social anomie emerged for the years 2005 to 2009.

Summarizing the results of this analysis, one can assume that Bahrain’s political development temporarily evoked social anomie on a system level. The time of the constitutional

experiment and the revival of Islamic Fundamentalism in 1971 as well as the troubled nineties are likely to have led to anomic structures being reflected in rising crime and divorce rates. However, with the enthronement of King Hamad in 2002, social anomie seems to decline, albeit the examined crime rates do not significantly drop. According to that, it can be stated that prior to the uprising in 2011, the Bahraini society was already exposed to anomic tendencies, which are thought to have shaped the popular mindset and the system itself. This means that in view of Bahrain's previous exposure to social anomie and anomia, it is assumed that the population and the state occupy a certain liability to evoke social anomie as distrust and tension within the society and between the ruling family and its people are rooted in Bahrain's collective memory.

5.2 Marginalized Societal Groups and their Exposure to Anomia

5.2.1 Women

Referring to the second research question, which aims to determine the societal group(s), which are most affected by anomic tendencies, three potential groups could be identified: women, youth and Shiites. Based on the historical, cultural and socio-political background as well as the surface impression of the conducted qualitative interviews, the researcher identified these three groups as particular susceptible to develop anomic feelings. Hence, it is argued that these societal groups might lack the legitimate means to fulfill their goals due to an under-regulating norm and value structure.

As worked out by social scientists such as Parolin (2011: 41), political participation and representation by Shiite or Sunni women falls short of expectation. In 2006, only one woman was elected to the lower house while in the parliamentary by-elections in 2011, four women won a seat in the parliament while two of them run unopposed in their respective constituency (Bahrain News Agency 2011). In addition to that and as described in the political and societal background, cultural and religious determinants, which exhibit the potential to hamper a woman's personal and economic independence, affect Bahraini women and explain their assumed predisposition to develop anomic feelings.

Analyzing the semi-structured interviews carried out with young and old Sunni and Shiite women, one reaches the conclusion that neither of the groups shows strong feelings of marginalization, discrimination or anomia. However, differences could be found between

elderly and youth women groups. Comparing the effects of sectarian discrimination with gender-based discrimination, participants of the elderly Shiite women's group stated that:

"...we have both if it. Sectarian discrimination, I believe, is much more overwhelming than gender discrimination..."

"Sectarian discrimination is worse; gender discrimination is more consistent."

While gender discrimination is said to be constantly present in the Bahraini society, but on a lower level than sectarian discrimination, invidiousness based on sectarian affiliation is experienced as a "brutal", which "is there [in society] since we are born".

In addition to that, it came to light that considering the overwhelming effects of Shiite discrimination affecting both women and men, gender discrimination decreases:

"After 14 February, in fact the discrimination became less and less because both [women and men] are discriminated; there are no jobs for them, no school of them...both of them are punished."

While another woman added:

"Now we are punished in the same way...yes...in the jail it is the same...they are beating the man and they are beating ladies and saying bad words for men and saying bad words for the ladies."

Summarizing the results of the qualitative interviews, it is noticeable that gender discrimination does not come into the picture as an important factor while assessing women's exposure to anomic feelings. Whilst the young Shiite women's group just as its Sunni counterpart denied that they are discriminated based on their gender, the elderly Shiite women group attested the prevalence of gender discrimination in personal and public life. However, faced with the intensified effects of sectarian discrimination, gender discrimination is said to be overlapped by this cleavage, which might even slacken the gender component as both sexes are equally targeted. While it could be assumed that in view of Shiite's sensitivity and awareness of sectarian discrimination, their awareness of gender discrimination is also raised, one has difficulties explaining the denial of gender discrimination among young Shiites. Hence, it is more likely that in association with Bahrain's liberalization process gender discrimination decreased over the last generation. Thus, the gender factor can hardly be seen as a source of anomia in the Bahraini context. Even though, based on a western equality

perspective, gender discrimination might seem to be an oppressive and common practice in Bahrain; it is the interviewee's perspective, which determines whether a social determinant contains the potential to evoke feelings of social anomie/anomie.

5.2.2 Youth

Considering Bahrain's age structure, Bahrain's young generation constitutes an important segment of the society. This population group is particularly affected by high unemployment levels among other economic and social problems. In face of the stagnating economic progress and corrupted political structures, Arab's young generation wanted their voices to be heard and opposed these oppressive structures. Growing up with Internet access and massive western influences, Arab's youth did not fob with the empty promises of the ruling families/governments such as their parents' generation did (Hermann 2011: 18-19). Aside from these factors, Bahrain's youth always mattered as a distinctive societal group such as during the protests in the 1990s, where Bahrain's shabab⁸ made up the opposition's popular basis (Waldmann 2003: 140).

Analyzing the qualitative interviews conducted with young Shiite and Sunni women and men, one can recognize that statements related to economic, social and personal aspects, which contain an anomic potential, run in accordance with sectarian lines. Thus, neither the young Sunni women's interview group nor the young Sunni men's group displayed strong anomic feelings.

While the Sunni men's group did not mention to face any economic, social or personal problems, the Sunni women's group marginally touched on the topic of discrimination by pointing towards unclear recruiting mechanisms.

“At Citibank they prefer Indians. It is in Bahrain but they prefer Indians...I don't know...”

“Everybody works for his own benefits, I can't control them. They want the Indian to be there instead of Bahrainis, he can have them.”

⁸ Shabab (Arabic for youth) is a widely used word in the context of the Arab spring describing Arab's young generation.

Hence, in view of the mentioned obscure recruiting mechanisms these young Sunni girls seem to evolve feelings of powerlessness and frustration, which could be translated as anomic tendencies. As a consequence, it can be argued that the target group of job aspirants has a differential access to economic opportunity structures whereby the reasons for success are unclear. However, analyzing the respondent's reaction in light of the unfair-felt opportunity structure, deviant or revolutionary behavior cannot be concluded. Instead, the interviewees rather express feelings of apathy and acceptance – feelings, which stand in contrast to anomia.

In the course of the interview, this assumption seems to be reconfirmed. According to that and even though the girls were able to critically question the ruling's family reforms and approaches towards the uprising, it becomes obvious that the interviewees are strongly and positively integrated and attached to their country and its system and structures despite the opacity of certain societal mechanisms such as the recruitment process. Talking about Bahrain's most controversial figure of the current political discussions, the Prime Minister, whose resignation was an often mentioned demand of Bahrain's opposition, one interviewee responded by saying:

“You can't change your brother and mother and we say our prime minister is like our father. I see him like my father even if he is wrong. If there is something wrong I can't judge him because the minister of work or education is bad. We can change the ministers, but we can't change our prime minister.”

Ensuing from this strong bond between the respondent and the ruling family and its practices, which are entirely pardoned, the emergence of anomia among these young Sunni girls has to be denied.

As opposed to this, the young Shiite girls and boys groups strongly express their dissatisfaction and frustration about the political, economical and social situation in Bahrain. Hence, both interview groups mentioned disruptive social bonds between the different societal groups and between the government and its people as an alarming, undesirable and overwhelming development:

“I am very frustrated. I am very disappointed with a lot of things. And people are trying from both sides to spread hatred and betray each other.”

“I am disappointed with a lot of friends and even the environment is not as it used to be before.”

While the elderly Shiite groups also expressed their concern about disruptive social bonds between the Bahraini population groups, frustration and hopelessness in face of the bad economic situation was only expressed by the young Shiite groups:

Bahrain is difficult; everything is becoming expensive; job opportunities are less. There is no clear future for the country. I don't see a future. I spent a lot of money for my education.

I am not working, he is not working. I am graduated for 3 years now. I am holding two different diplomas; it's not doing anything for me; I was a good student.”

Facing these economic and social problems, which are considered unjust and obscure, young Shiites express feelings of helplessness, revolt and anxiety about the future:

“We do not know what is coming, we do not know. We've been through a frightening period and the coming is very vague, unclear where we are heading as a nation as a state and as a government, as a political and social situation. It is all vague for me, in my opinion.”

“In previous periods you knew what is coming, you know the end of it but the unknown; it is endless. It is dark, really dark.”

“The point is one thing: I keep fighting. I keep fighting for my future; this is something.”

Summarizing the interviewee's answers clear anomic tendencies can be concluded. In addition to the above mentioned economic and social changes, these young Shiites are exposed to extreme political turmoil, which exacerbates their feeling of desultoriness. Having in mind that not only the reasons for the uprisings but also the protester's demands as well as the regime's and the world's answer to these events are partly obscure and inconsistent, it is assumed that the interviewees feel overwhelmed and unfit to see and understand each party's agenda. In view of this context, they develop typical anomic feelings such as anxiety about the future, revolt and desperation at the same time.

Comparing these answers with the elderly interview groups, it is discernible that the various upheavals are better and more rational understood by the elderly group, while their future prospect is mostly positive.

“Well I feel that it will change. I feel that it will be better because we are not first and last people in the world. We are relating to all the world now and you know definitely that it will change.”

“We went through a really good period in Bahrain before the revolution and then it went downhill from there and that’s because the request of people was really high and it couldn’t be achieved by the government.”

“The discrimination is getting less, but it is still there, it is present and you can feel it on daily basis. However, I think it is much less than before.”

Based on previous exposure to political turmoil, it is assumed that the elderly interview participants, either Shiite or Sunnite, women or men, are less concerned about their future and are able to better understand and reconstruct the current political and social situation. Accordingly, it cannot be assumed that the elderly Bahraini population exhibits anomic tendencies as the evolving societal structures do not unleash feelings of powerlessness, desperation or revolt. This fact strengthens the assumption that the younger generation of Shiites is particularly exposed to anomic feelings, whilst they consider themselves being discriminated and marginalized in the sense that they do not have the chance to fulfill their goals in life by legitimate means, neither in political, social or economic/career aspects. Instead, a pessimistic view of the future and the current events determines their thoughts and feelings, while this perspective is even transferred to the whole Arab Spring:

“When I come and see how the Arab ruler are treating their nations; when I come and see how the world is looking at us and when I can see all of this, I don’t think that I will be able to see a bright future, even now with the Arab spring when the Arab people tried to change. Take the example of Syria, Yemen, Bahrain or Egypt. Look what the world is doing to them.”

5.2.2 Shiites

Following political analysts, alongside gender and age structures, sectarian discrimination is said to be deeply rooted in Bahrain’s society, seething under the surface and erupting in violent protests during the uprising in the beginning of 2011. As already discussed earlier, the causes and effects of sectarian discrimination in the Bahraini context are complex and strongly entangled with cultural, linguistic and family factors. Starting with the Shah’s claim to Bahrain in 1968, the question of sectarian affiliation and discrimination became a solid

component of Bahrain' social, political and economic structures as analyzed by various scholars (Cordesman 1997: 76-78; ICG 2005). From this vantage point, it can also be understood that the uprising is mostly classified as a popular movement carried by mainly Shiites opposing discriminating and undemocratic policies and practices.

In accordance with the results of the political analysts, the Shiite interview groups describe sectarian discrimination as a historical development shaping and determining their identity and opportunity structure:

“People are raised in two different systems. Most Shiites are raised like that they want freedom of speech and those things because going back to history Shiites were farmers and they did not have the mentality of having a leader and following a leader, but Sunnis are raised in a way that they have to obey to a leader. We cannot expect them to think they way we are. Their grandfathers and all of them were thinking the same way.”

I am not optimistic. Bahrain used to be a wonderful place to live in but now my identity is Shiite, I never used to have this identity. I never say that I am Shiite because I am not really practicing or anything. Now, I became Shiite for half of the population. In their eyes I am Shiite; I am not a journalist, I am not a Bahraini, I am Shiite. Unfortunately, it is a bad identity. They gave me a bad identity, which I don't want.

Hence, it is argued that in addition to self-ascribed cultural differences between Shiites and Sunnis, the Shiite identity is experienced as an overwhelming burden overlapping all other personal characteristics. However, various Shiites and Sunnis also acknowledged that the sectarian affiliation might take second place after the question of the family's name and its loyalty to the royal family. More precisely, it is said that an individual's opportunity structure can also be based on his/her family's status and link to the royal family and replace the sectarian component. Nevertheless, after discussing the issues at stake, all Shiite interview participants agree that after the events in 2011, the sectarian dimension seems to have become the most important and decisive personal attribute superimposing the question of loyalty. This involuntarily process of Shiite identification is expressively described by a young man during an identity check at one of the various checkpoints installed during the uprising:

“I was arrested 16 March, the day they started the martial law. They asked me one question, one question. They did not ask whom I do support if I am loyal or not, or what I do. They asked me one question: Are you Shia or Sunni; one question. I was in my car; I was representing UN Habitat in Bahrain. I gave them my ID, my UN ID. They said fuck the UN; you are Shiite or Sunni. I said I am Shiite, so they took you [in custody].”

Contrary to this negatively-felt process of Shiite identification, Sunni interview participants did not express similar experiences and denied sectarian discrimination. However, in view of a strengthened sectarian identification, stereotypes about the other sect seem to flourish for Shiites and Sunnis. Hence, from a Sunni perspective, while benefiting from Bahrain's social system, the Shiite population is also blamed for having destroyed the social bonds of society.

“They made huge crack in Bahrain’s society, because they have seen what is happening in Egypt and Libya they took the advantage, but they crack Bahrain into half when they went to the road and they spoke in the name of the whole nation.”

“We don’t trust them anymore if they even get involved with the military, we don’t trust them. They can own the country by using force.”

“One of them has 20 kids, how can the government help them? It is impossible to find [families with] one or two kids. Imagine your country gives each of the 20 kids a house. Where you can find this?”⁹

“They are all sick, they are always sick, always in the hospital. And they drain the hospital like nothing.”

Hence, it can be said that based on this sectarian identification process, coexistence and social integration between Sunnis and Shiites worsened sharply. Thus, feelings of mistrust and divide could be equally identified in both sectarian groups. However, analyzing the Shiite interview group's answers, the feelings linked to the disruptive social structure are rather feelings of powerlessness and frustration as in contrast to the Sunni answers, which are characterized by anger and depreciation.

“I am very frustrated. I am very disappointed. There are lots of things. There is no communication. And people are trying from both sides to spread hatred and betray each other.”

In view of the predominating negative image of the Shiite population, as in contrast to the Sunni image, it is understandable that feelings of powerlessness and frustration, which can be translated as anomic tendencies, are rather pronounced among Shiites.

⁹ The interviewee refers to Bahrain's housing policy, which grants a house to every family. Hence, it is complained that Bahrain's state expenses rise significantly as Bahraini Shiite families tend to be larger than its Shiite counterparts.

In addition to the sectarian divide emerging from the society and the population itself, the political framework, as outlined in the background section, has a huge impact on the felt state of discrimination. As opposed to the Sunnis, who blame Shiites for the country's crackdown, Shiites hold the ruling family responsible for economic, social and political aberrations including discriminating practices and policies.

“They were doing something behind our back like the nationalization of foreigners such as Syrians or Jordanians. It is a long term strategy, they were working on it. In the end, they don't want to share. They want the power.”

“If you go for example to Jasra; it's just across the road from Janabia and you will see the infrastructure in Janabia and you will see the infrastructure in Jasra and you will feel the difference. The royal family used to stay in Jasra. The Emir was born there. Jasra is a heaven. Going to Janabia it is hell. And this is not something new.”

In addition to this historically developed context of Shiite discrimination, it is said that with the uprising a new dimension of Shiite discrimination has been reached. Explaining Bahrain's societal composition in the course of the uprising, one young Shiite said:

“It is clear to see that the majority of the country is Shia but the majority of the government is Sunni and all high positions in the country are even not to Sunni but to the royal family. They are only two percent of the population of , but they have all the high level position as we are not educated or not qualified to be in these position. Before February I always had like...not hope but that people will reach one day to get these positions either Sunni or Shia. If he is qualified he will get this position, but now it is worse and Shia are out. They are not even choices anymore; the choices are either Sunni or Sunni from the royal family.”

As opposed to the statement above, all Sunni interview participants entirely deny that Shiites are subjected to discriminating practices or policies. Instead, it is even argued that certain employer such as the ministry of work favors Shiite candidates and discriminates against Sunni jobseekers. In addition to and in sharp contrast to the Shiite perspective, it is conceivable that Sunnis feel well integrated in the societal and political framework while accepting and supporting the status quo. Even though certain national policies and societal and economic developments are critically questioned by some Sunni interviewees, drastic changes in the political framework or the regime are not subjected to negotiation. Hence, this pragmatic position is trenchantly reflected by a young Sunni, who opposes populist demands of the prime minister's reassignment in face of human rights violations and discriminating policies and practices by saying that

“...it is not a matter of unfairness. We can't change the government because they are leaders...”

Summarizing the results of the analysis, feelings of anomia can clearly be identified by most Shiite interviewees. It is obvious that they feel discriminated, marginalized and inwardly disintegrated in view of unequal economic opportunity structures. Moreover, feelings of powerlessness and hopelessness prevail as no legitimate means exist to raise and channel their voices. Referring to Agnew and Passas (1997: 66-67), who identify strong links between anomie and relative deprivation, for the case of Bahrain it can also be assumed that the Shiite population feels relatively deprived as compared to its Sunni counterpart. In defiance of an objective deprivation in the sense of demonstrably lacking something vital, Bahrain's Shiites feeling of deprivation derives from the comparison between Bahrain's Sunnis, who are experienced as the favored sectarian group.

5.3 Political Unrest

In view of the finding that young Shiites are a particularly marginalized and discriminated population group, the often quoted but also exaggerated role of Bahraini Shiites as initiators of the uprising can be reconstructed. While this study revealed that since Bahrain's independence in 1971, certain socio-political developments caused anomic structures on the system level, which impinged on the societal groups, the exact state of social anomie in 2011/2012 cannot be predicted as no data is available yet. Moreover, as outlined in the methodology, it has to be considered that social anomie shows an increase in deviant behaviors that can only be assessed retro-perceptively as reference data is lacking.

In addition to that, recent ratings of crime rates in Bahrain reveal conflicting results. While official sources indicated a sharp drop in crime rates including drug abuse (TradeArabia 2012), Bahrain falls 51 places in the Global Peace Index 2011, which considers internal and external conflicts as well as crime rates besides other determinants of placidity. Following this index, Bahrain's level of organized, internal conflict scores 4 (out of 5), while its level of political instability scores 5 and the level of perceived criminality in society and the level of violent crime scores 3 (Vision of Humanity 2011). On the evidence of these data sources and in view of data quality considerations, the level of social anomie for the year 2011 cannot be deduced from statistical data. However, considering the inconsistency of the data sources

available, it is still assumable that the violent uprising affected crime rates either in an accelerating or decelerating manner as well as it can be hypothesized that due to the present internal conflict structure the perceived state of security and social integration was negatively affected.

From a theoretical perspective, Luff (1998) identifies strong links between political unrest and social anomie on the system and individual level. Defined as rebellious violence against the apparatus of state, political unrest as erupted during the uprising in 2011 is assumed to alternate with an increase in anomic behaviors depending on the state's reaction to the inconsistent norm structure and the level of social integration. Thus, Luff (1998: 36) argues that in face of unequal opportunity structures increasing anomic conditions reflect disorientation and frustration. In the following, these anomic conditions are thought to erupt into violence when the state apparatus does not counteract or rather fortifies this process of desynchronization.

Reviewing the interviews with party representatives of opposition and loyal parties, the results reached are similar to the above drawn assumptions. According to that, Kahlil Almarzooq, Al Wefaq Secretary-General Political Assistant and Former Deputy Speaker of Bahrain's Chamber of Deputies, highly criticizes Al Wefaq's exceptional position of representing Bahrain's Shiite majority while being neglected and almost entirely excluded from the political circles and mentions:

“No, we feel that we don't have a state to belong to because all what is available now is a family structure regime that is directed by the family rather than by something that within politics that would be called the state.”

In addition to the mentioned feeling of disintegration, Almarzooq also refers to the inconsistent norm and value structure, which is translated into distrust towards the royal family and its reform process. Referring to King Hamad's conciliatory steps and political promises announced in the beginning of the 2000s, he responds by saying:

“We don't have reforms. At any moment it could be undermined, discriminated, tortured.”

“The people who were negotiating with the King said that the statement related to the bicameral is not very clear; whether the appointees will have authorities or not. He [Hamad] said: no trust me, I am a man, I am talking to men. So trust me, this is just for

consultation. They requested to change it and to make it clearer but he said: no trust me. It was on the 5th Feb. 2001 when they said that the appointees are having no legislative authority. They are all consultative and a year later they introduced [legislative authorities].”

As described in the theoretical framework of Luff, grievances in face of disintegration and de-regulation grew among the Shiite population and are answered by violent protest opposing unjust political and social structures. Hence, Shiite interviewees said:

“I would insist to say one thing, we are fighting for this since like 100 years and we are facing the same issues [referring to political reforms and its withdrawal] with the royal family.”

“Most of them were clearly saying that we are not protesting in order to get control, we want justice. We don’t care about control.”

“They protested because their rights were undermined and so they protested to return their rights which they believed had been taken from them.”

Reviewing the interview of the Sunni Al-Minbar National Islamic Society and other Sunni interviewees, satisfaction with the political and societal structures predominates, while the Shiite population is blamed of destroying these structures and betraying their country.

“I think I am really satisfied with all the institutional bodies that have been assembled.”

“The majority is thinking that we are happy with what we have so why should we change.”

“Those protesters they are mixed; the people that are running the show, their agenda is what you call evil.”

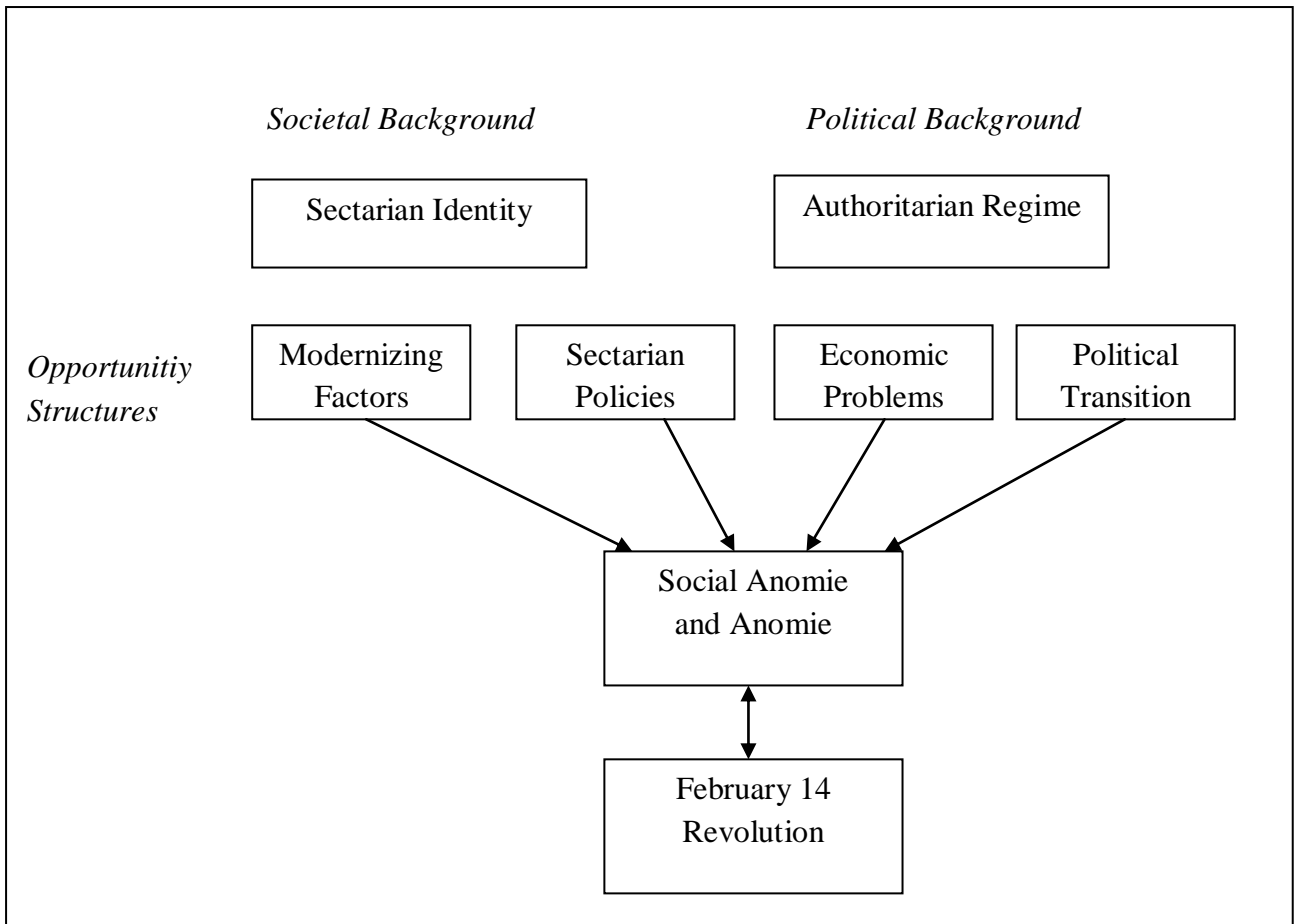
“We want Bahrain to be ok, we don’t want anything in-between, but there are still people causing problems. How will it settle down? Everytime it starts to settle down it will start again. There is so much hate. We don’t want to hate. We have a lot of Sunni and Shiite friends but when you see other people that are still fighting, it hurts.”

Therefore, in summary, it can be said that strong links exist between Shiite discrimination, social anomie and the February 14 Revolution. While the sectarian divide seemed to be a constant determinant of Bahrain’s social structures, the regime’s sectarian policies paired with economic problems, which seem to particularly affect the young Shiite population, lead to political unrest, which culminated in the February 14 Revolution. Whereas it is acknowledged

that Bahrain's cleavages are numerous and exceed the sectarian dimension, the current conflict is articulated and perceived in sectarian terms. Emerging from Shiite's self-perception is marginalized and discriminated population group, anomia is clearly observably as well as Bahrain's political system evokes social anomie due to inconsistent and non-transparent democratic reforms, which let them loose their credibility among Bahraini Shiites. Hence, based on the assumption that anomic conditions emerge as a cause and consequence of societal tensions (Atteslander 1999: 12) it is argued that due to certain socio-political developments and economic problems, social anomie emerged and impacted on Bahraini's young Shiites, who developed strong anomic feelings which are translated in anger, frustration and revolt such as during the February 14 Revolution.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

For the Bahraini context, this case study shows in how far the political and societal background, paired with temporarily occurring opportunity structures lead to the emergence of social anomie and anomia, which is reflected in the February 14 Revolution. Based on the historically developed sectarian identities and Bahrain's political system, which is characterized by the interplay of democratic reforms and authoritarian policies, social anomie and anomie is said to emerge due to the above mentioned opportunity structures, which prevent Shiite's to fulfill their goals by legitimate means.



As shown in the graphics, this study revealed that the concurrence of system factors as well as the religious and societal background in combination with the above mentioned opportunity structures cause social anomie and anomie, which surfaced during the February 14 Revolution. By applying a mixed methods approach including statistical data about norm-breaking behaviors and qualitative interviews, the development of anomic structures has been traced back to specific social and political developments containing an anomic potential, which is reflected and incorporated by Bahrain’s societal groups. Hence, it is demonstrated that young Shiites are especially prone to develop anomic feelings leading to revolt and protests, which culminated in the February 14 Revolution.

Aiming to reconstruct and understand the casual relationships between social anomie and the February 14 Revolution, this study shows that the current conflict cannot just be reduced to sectarian conflicts or to economic problems, but rather to a combination of historically developed sectarian policies and identities, an incomplete democratic transition paired with oppressive and obscure political mechanisms as well as economic problems such as high

levels of youth unemployment. As compared to other sociological or political revolutionary theories, the concept of social anomie excels, because it embraces not only a micro- and macro-perspective, but it also considers various political, societal and economic factors, which are suitable to understand developments in a (post-) modern world. Even though it is not reported about any suicide in connection to the Bahraini uprising such as it is the case for Tunisia or Egypt, the theory of social anomie enables to link the February 14 Revolution emerged with anomic structures on the system and individual level, which – considering the ongoing human rights abuses – might shift to apathetic conditions as described in the fatalistic suicide.

Even though the theory of social anomie includes a broad spectrum of application and various societal forces, it is an unfavorable concept when aiming to clearly identify and to distinguish between the factors causing social anomie. Hence, the theory of social anomie does not enable to determine how important the worsening economic situation was for the emergence of the February 14 Revolution. Instead, it only allows for identifying the factors without assessing their weight. Nevertheless, as the aim of this research is to reconstruct and understand the causes of the February 14 Revolution and not to clearly identify each factor's weight, the theory of social anomie proved suitable for the analysis of the uprising in Bahrain.

Likewise, when transferring the above mentioned cleavages to Egypt, overlapping causes and societal determinants of social anomie and anomia can be found. Hence, as well as in Bahrain, Egyptians demanded social justice, social equity and an end to corruption (Hamdy 2012: 46). Even though Egypt's societal composition varies significantly from Bahrain's, it is assumed that social anomie, defined as the non-adherence or non-existence of norms and values, contains the potential to also shed light and to reconstruct the social and political developments leading to the Egyptian revolution. This is trenchantly expressed by a young Egyptian (Ibid.):

“Mubarak's crime was not the billions that he stole. It was not even the millions of lives that he ruined, or the health of Egyptians that was damaged from all the cancerous food that he imported, or from the poverty that he subjected people to in the squatter neighborhoods. It was robbing us of our ideals, our morals. This was his biggest crime.”

Hence, as well as in the Bahraini context, the Egyptian revolution exhibits clear hints at the importance of inconsistent and under-regulating norm and value structures when analyzing

the causes and effects of the uprising. Considering this fact, it is hoped that the theory of social anomie gains in importance as a wide-ranging framework suitable for the analysis of complex societal and political developments, while considering the individual as well as the system level and its interplay in a (post-) modern society.

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Appendix

List of Interviewees

Interview group	Location	Time	Number of participants
Young Shiite girls	Interviewee's house in Isa Town	19.11.2011	5
Young Sunni girls	AMA International University	07.12.2011	5
Young Shiite boys	Restaurant, Manama	26.11.2011	5
Young Sunni boys	Café, Juffair	06.12.2011	4
Elderly Shiite women	Interviewee's house in Saar	03.12.2011	5
Elderly Shiite men	Interviewer's house in Bani Jamrah	30.11.2011	4
Elderly Sunni men	Interviewee's house in Ali	05.12.2011	5 (3 male, 2 female)
Party representative of Al Menbar Islamic Society	Café, Manama	15.12.2011	1 (male)
Khalil Ebrahim Almarzooq (Al Wefaq National Islamic Society)	Party office	21.11.2011	1
Party representative of the National Democratic Action Society	Party office	29.11.2011	1 (male)

Interview Guide: Group Interviews

Factsheet information

Date:

Location:

Number of participants	Age	Profession	Email address

General atmosphere during the interview:

1. How do you feel living in Bahrain right now? Is it frightening or do you feel empowered?
2. If you have to describe the last 5-10 (or more) years from your perspective, what would you say. How was it to live in Bahrain and how is it now?
3. Do you think that you live in a fair and just system? Can every Bahraini achieve what he/she wants or do you face constraints in terms of gender or sectarian affiliation?
4. Do you feel powerless towards these challenges?
5. Why do you think people protested? Has it something to do with the (unjust,unfair) system?
6. What do you wish for the future of Bahrain? How does your ideal Bahrain look like? And do you think it is a realistic vision, shared by most Bahrainis?
7. Is there anything else, which you want to share?
8. How do you feel about the interview?

Interview Guide: Political Parties

Factsheet information

Date:

Location:

Gender:

Age:

Profession:

Function/Membership in the party:

1. How is the situation for (Wefaq etc.) in Bahrain right now? Do you think that you have a say in the current discussions or do you rather feel excluded?
2. How was it the last 5-10 (or more) years?
3. Do you think that Bahrain has a fair and just system? Can every Bahraini achieve what he/she wants or do you have constraints in terms of gender or sectarian affiliation?
4. What do you wish for the future of Bahrain? How does your ideal Bahrain look like and which role should your party play in it? And do you think it is a realistic vision, shared by most Bahrainis?
5. Is there anything else, which you want to share?
6. How do you feel about the interview?